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### **Participant in Cruise Disabilities Awareness Panels**

Cruising fun for everyone!

New ships provide wonderful accommodations for guests with special needs! My recent explorations in search of “fun for everyone” was rewarded with excellent surprises for room accommodations, entertainment, dining and even shore excursions! With a little advanced planning, the world is much more accessible than it once was. With a few families in mind, these are the treasures of my search:

Several cruise lines offer special services. Princess Cruise Lines, based in Los Angeles go “over the top” when it comes to making the cruise experience fun and easy for the whole family. Handicapped Staterooms are well appointed and meet ADA requirements. There are only a few on each ship, and usually only accommodate a maximum of 3 guests, so advance reservations are a must. The “Pool Dipper”, available on some ships, enabled guests to enjoy the pool and splash with the rest of the family! Depending on needs, the children were able to participate in the onboard children’s’ program allowing Mom and Dad some well deserved time off. A private table in the dining room assured the family of quality time in comfortable surroundings. Princess was also able to accommodate the guide dog- even providing a “relief deck” and onboard liaison.

Holland America Line also provided excellent services onboard, and offer special shore options too. Our young guest became “King of the Beach” in his specially designed Beach wheelchair – which became the highlight of his trip!

Royal Caribbean was also very accommodating onboard, and the accommodations excellent. At several “beach” ports, beach wheelchairs are available, and really make the port stay enjoyable for all.

Carnival Cruise Line was a delightful surprise, with excellent questions in advance, which were followed through well on the ship.

Destination is key when choosing a vacation for families with special needs children taking into consideration flying, driving, train travel and ports of call. Work with an agent who has experience in asking all the necessary questions, and can follow thru with the required details in advance. The cruise lines say it best...”Escape Completely”, “Just Get Out There”, “Carnival’s Got The Fun”!



Carnival Cruise Line Interior ADA stateroom



Beach all terrain wheelchair