

# Beach treat

## Family fun grows up at Beaches Turks and Caicos

BY STACEY ZABLE

**T**he first time my family visited Beaches Turks and Caicos my girls were ages 3 and 6 years old. Imagine how thrilled they were to mingle with such beloved “Sesame Street” favorites such as Big Bird, Elmo, and Zoe. Our return visit, when the girls were then 7 and 10, held equal excitement with the characters and the long list of kid-friendly activities designed for the youngest guests. But when we made our third visit this August to the all-inclusive beachfront resort, I wondered if Beaches Turks and Caicos could deliver for my now “sophisticated” tween and teen, ages 10 and 13.

The answer is “yes!” Families with newborns to college-age children will find a stress-free vacation at Beaches Turks and Caicos, where

virtually everything is included in the package rate. The resort is one that your family can grow with, and is ideal for multi-generational family reunions where all ages can have fun doing what they love. The list of included activities in the water and on land is long, and even your picky-eaters will find something to please them with the resort’s 16 restaurants.

The resort offers an extensive children’s program divided by age group from newborn to age 17. Dedicated programming featuring age-specific activities include sandcastle-building, crafts, scavenger hunts, and boat rides.



Families with young kids will be delighted by all the “Sesame Street” specials: the weekly parade, stage shows, a twice-weekly breakfast where kids sing and dance with seven characters (at an additional cost), and the chance to “Bake with Cookie Monster.” The characters are often seen walking around the resort, where they provide hugs for kids and the coveted photo op.

Twens and older kids will want to spend time at the Shadow Lounge, a game room with a pool table and foosball, and home to Scratch DJ Academy, where they can learn how to mix and blend music. The Xbox 360 Game Garage provides free-play video games. Pirate’s Island Water Park features nine slides, a lazy river, surf simulator, water cannons, cranks, and spray features.

Our tween and teen found happiness at the Shadow Lounge and water park, and, yes, even spending time with us. We had epic family foosball games (the one “sport” I excel in), and spent long fun-in-the-sun days. The resort fronts the Caribbean Sea bordered by a 12-mile pristine white beach. The water was so calm and clear that you could spot fish even without use of the complimentary snorkeling gear. We spent most days dividing our time between the beach, where we tried kayaking and aqua trikes, and relaxing or participating in family activities, such as water balloon toss and







relays, at one of the seven resort pools. The girls loved the never-ending virgin pina colodas available at the swim-up bars, and lounging on rafts in the pools. My husband played tennis each morning with the resort pro, and my 13-year-old and I were pampered at the Red Lane Spa with a “Couple’s Massage.” It was her first and long-anticipated massage, and needless to say, she is hooked for life.

The resort is made up of three “villages,” creating an intimate feel, despite its large size of 614 rooms and suites on more than 65 acres. A guest room in any village allows for the use of amenities at all three. The Italian Village, where we stayed, is the most-recently added accommodations with spacious Family Suites with separate kid’s rooms with bunk

beds with trundles, flat-screen TVs, Xbox, and lower-sized vanity sinks, all of which the kids will love.

Kid-friendly fare is easy to find among the 16 restaurants, which feature a range of cuisine including Caribbean, Japanese, Italian, French, and seafood with a la carte, buffet, and casual- to fine-dining choices. Our favorite was Barefoot by the Sea, due to its unique setting literally in the sand seated at upscale picnic tables. Children even have their own picnic tables sized for them so parents can eat on their own. Evening entertainment beyond the “Sesame Street” shows included beach and swim parties, family karaoke, and live entertainment poolside.

We ended every night of our trip with dessert at Bobby Dee’s. Open

19 hours a day, the 1950s-style diner offers kid-friendly food staples, as well as made-to-order sundaes and milkshakes. And for us, no matter what age the kids are, nothing says family togetherness more than sharing a banana split sundae under a moonlit sky.

*Stacey Zable is an award-winning veteran travel writer and family travel expert who has written about destinations, resorts, and cruise lines around the world. Her favorite trips are those that she shares with her husband and two daughters. Send travel questions and comments to Stacey at [info@familytraveltrails.com](mailto:info@familytraveltrails.com).*

At Beaches Turks and Caicos, nothing beats the soft sand and clear water at the beach (above). But you can also enjoy a boat ride, take a dip in the pool, or enjoy kids activities at Bobby Dee’s.

## Beaches Turks and Caicos

Here are some family fun facts about Beaches Turks and Caicos, Providenciales

- Ideal for families with children of any age.

- Nightly starting rate for a family of four is \$761 including accommodations, dining, unlimited

premium brand wine and spirits, nightly entertainment, water-sports (including snorkeling and scuba diving for certified divers), airport transfers, and all resort taxes and fees.

- Contact: [www.beaches.com](http://www.beaches.com); (888) BEACHES [(888) 232-2437].