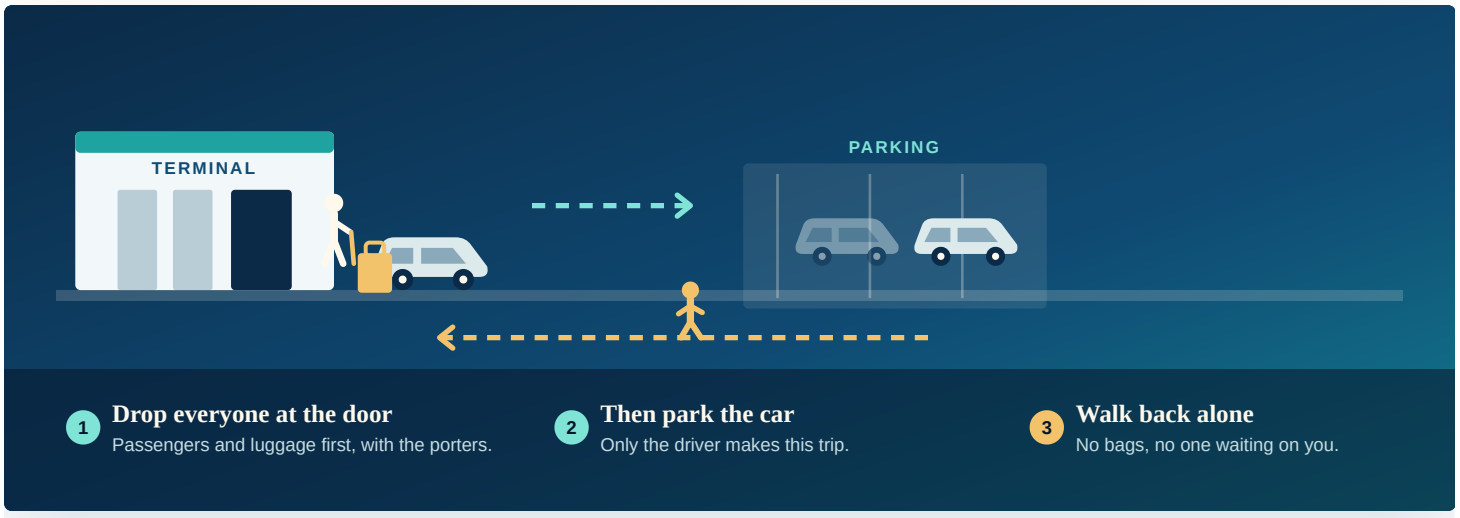
DEPARTURE DAY · JACKSONVILLE (JAXPORT)

One terminal, one lot, *and smaller ships.*

Jacksonville is the easiest departure port in Florida to navigate, and that isn't an accident. Ships here sail up the St. Johns River and under the Dames Point Bridge, so only smaller vessels fit — which means fewer passengers, shorter lines and a calmer morning than the mega-ship ports.

WHY A SMALLER SHIP PORT SUITS A BODY WITH LIMITS

The bridge caps the size of ship that can call here, so you're boarding alongside a couple of thousand people rather than six or seven thousand. Shorter check-in queues, less standing, and a single terminal building with parking beside it. If queuing is what costs you, that matters more than any accessibility feature.



Parking at the port: *whoever needs the shortest walk should never ride to the garage. Drop them at the door first, with the luggage, then park. Private lots work differently — you park first and ride a shuttle in.*

Who sails *from here*

- **Carnival** sails year-round to the Bahamas.

- **Norwegian** sails seasonally, roughly November through April, to the Bahamas, Key West and the Eastern Caribbean.
- **One terminal serves both**, at 9810 August Drive off Zoo Parkway on the city's north side — so there's no terminal confusion to manage.

FREE PARKING, AND EXACTLY WHO QUALIFIES

JAXPORT publishes the clearest statement of Florida's rule we've found anywhere. Under Florida Statute 316.1964, the fee is waived only when **both** conditions hold:

1. The vehicle is transporting the person with the disability, and that person is the one the permit or plate was issued to.

2. And the vehicle also meets one of these: it has **adaptive equipment** such as ramps, lifts or hand or foot controls; or it displays a **Florida Disabled Veteran plate**; or it displays a **Florida Toll Exemption permit**.

A standard disabled placard or plate on its own does not qualify. That surprises people at the gate, so it's worth knowing before you're sitting in the lane.

Parking, *and what it costs*

- **About $17 a day** for a passenger vehicle, with oversized vehicles roughly double — so around $85 for a five-night cruise.
- **A fenced, well-lit surface lot immediately beside the terminal.** No garage levels, no shuttle, no transfer.
- **Cash or card.** Prepaying online has been available, though reservations were reported discontinued in mid-2026 — check before you count on booking ahead.
- **The lot opens at your port arrival time**, the one printed in your cruise documents, and you may not be able to enter the terminal before that time. Arriving very early just means waiting in the car.

Where to park: *port-run and private, together*

WHERE	WHO RUNS IT	ROUGHLY	WHAT TO KNOW
JAXPORT terminal lot	Port-run	about $17/day	A fenced, well-lit surface lot immediately beside the terminal. No shuttle needed. Oversized vehicles roughly double. Opens at your printed port arrival time.
The Parking Mall	Private	less than the port	Across the street on Zoo Parkway, reserve online. Free shuttle covers **up to four passengers**, with a charge for each extra, running to the ship roughly 11am to 3pm.
Hotel park-and-stay	Private	varies	No hotel near this terminal publishes a pier shuttle, so a park-and-stay night still ends with a paid ride to the port. Price that ride in.

The off-site option, *and its catch*

The Parking Mall sits across the street on Zoo Parkway, costs less, and includes a shuttle — but the shuttle covers **up to four passengers**, with a charge for each extra person, and it runs to the ship between about 11am and 3pm. If you're a larger party, they ask you to drop the extra passengers and luggage at the terminal first.

WORTH WEIGHING CAREFULLY HERE

At $17 a day, the port's own lot is among the cheapest in Florida, and it's **adjacent to the terminal with no shuttle at all**. The saving from going off-site is smaller here than

at Miami or Galveston, and it costs you two shuttle rides on the days you have least to give. For most people with mobility limits, parking at the terminal is the better deal.

Getting there

- **The terminal is on the north side**, reached from I-295 at Exit 41 onto Zoo Parkway.
- **Jacksonville International (JAX)** is the nearest airport and an easy drive, which makes flying in the day before straightforward.
- **No hotel by the terminal publishes a pier shuttle**, so a park-and-stay night still ends with a paid ride to the port. Price that ride in before assuming a hotel package saves money.
- **Rideshare is readily available** in Jacksonville if you'd rather not drive at all.

Coming home, *which is its own problem*

Disembarkation is early, after a week of doing more than usual. Put your name down for priority debarkation the evening before if you need wheelchair assistance. The compensation here is that a smaller ship clears customs faster than a mega-ship — the queue you're standing in is a fraction of the size.

Questions to ask *before you drive*

1. Do you waive parking for my vehicle or plate, and what documents do I bring?
2. Where are the accessible spaces, and how close are they to the terminal or the elevator?
3. Can I drop my passenger and bags at the terminal first?
4. For off-site lots: does the shuttle have a wheelchair lift, and can it take my scooter?
5. What's the height limit if I drive a lifted van?

WHEELCHAIR HELP AT THE TERMINAL — ASK AHEAD

Royal Caribbean: crew push wheelchairs on and off the ship at embarkation and disembarkation. Request it on the Guest Special Needs Form **at least 30 days** before you

sail.

Celebrity: tick "wheelchair assistance at the pier" on the special needs form, at least 30 days ahead.

Princess: has an **Accessibility Lane** at check-in, and assigns crew when you request wheelchair help.

Every line's form and deadline →

Check with your cruise line

- **Ask how to request pier and wheelchair assistance**, and by when — 30 days is the usual deadline.
- **Ask what your port arrival time is**, since the lot and terminal both run on it.
- **Ask whether there's an accessibility lane** at check-in and whether your companions can use it.
- **Ask about the walk from the lot to the terminal door** if distance is your limiting factor.

RULES AND RATES CHANGE — CALL BEFORE YOU DRIVE

This is a starting point, not legal advice. Parking rates, free-parking rules and terminal assignments change without notice. **Call the port's parking office before you set off**, and check with your own cruise line.

PRICES CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

Rates here are a guide, not a quote, and JAXPORT's parking arrangements changed during 2026. Confirm the current rate, the payment methods and whether reservations are available directly with the port before you travel.

Where this comes from

- Firsthand observation on recent sailings, with the date noted above.
- How we check things — our method, and what "last checked" means.

Last checked 22 September 2026.

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