PORT DAY REAL TALK · ST. THOMAS

There is no beach *you can walk to.*

This is the single most important thing to know about St. Thomas, and the thing people most often find out at the pier. The ship docks, you walk off easily — and then every good thing on the island needs a taxi.

The short answer

ASHORE	Docked
FREE BEACH	None within walking distance
HARDEST PART	Hills, and a step up into safari taxis

What the day *asks of you*

Getting ashore is the easy part here. The demands come after.

- **Distance.** Charlotte Amalie is about a mile and a half from the West Indian Company dock. That is too far on foot for many people, especially in the afternoon heat.
- **Hills.** St. Thomas is genuinely hilly, unlike flat ports such as Grand Turk or Key West. Short distances on a map can be steep in person.
- **Transfers.** Everything worth doing involves getting into and out of a vehicle, usually an open-air safari taxi with a step up.
- **Negotiation.** Fares are set, but travelers regularly report being overcharged. Agreeing the price before you get in is part of the day here.

Run through the Port Fit Check before you plan this port — particularly the questions about distance on flat ground and steps up into a vehicle.

THE MISTAKE PEOPLE MAKE HERE

They plan a free beach day. St. Thomas doesn't have one within reach, so the choice is a taxi to Magens Bay, a taxi to town, or a day aboard. Deciding that in advance is much easier than deciding it on the pier at ten in the morning with everyone else in the taxi line.

1.5 **Miles from the dock to town**, on a hilly island with no walkable beach. Everything here needs a taxi.

What's *genuinely good here*

- **Magens Bay** is world-class, and a single taxi ride each way. Go, settle in one place, and stay put.
- **The Skyride to Paradise Point** gives you the island's big view with very little walking — among the better effort-to-reward trades in the Caribbean.
- **Shopping near the dock** is extensive, and it's the one thing here that doesn't require transport.
- **Accessible water activities** are unusually good on this island, including accessible scuba.

BOOK IT BEFORE YOU SAIL

Accessible equipment here is genuinely scarce — by at least one account there is a single beach wheelchair on the island. If an accessible activity or beach chair matters to your day, arrange it weeks ahead, not on arrival.

The low-effort version *of this port*

One taxi to Magens Bay, one spot on the sand, one taxi back. Or the Skyride, a drink with a view, and back aboard for lunch. Both are complete days, and both leave you with something for tomorrow.

Pre-book your transport rather than negotiating at the pier. It costs a little more and removes the part of this port that goes wrong most often.

> *“They plan a free beach day. St. Thomas doesn't have one within reach.”*

Check with your cruise line

- **Ask which dock you're using.** Havensight and Crown Bay are different distances from town, and it changes your plan.
- **Ask whether accessible transport can be arranged** through the shore excursion desk before you sail.
- **Ask about the step height** on any excursion vehicle — open-air safari taxis are common here and the step up is real.
- **If you use a scooter,** ask how it will be handled on the tour, and remember crew are not permitted to lift devices.

Questions people *actually ask*

Is there a beach within walking distance in St. Thomas?

How far is town from the cruise port in St. Thomas?

Are there accessible excursions in St. Thomas?

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.

Ports change. This reflects publicly available information and recent sailings, and it is not a guarantee for yours — always confirm with your cruise line. Found something different on your visit? Tell us and we'll correct the page.

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