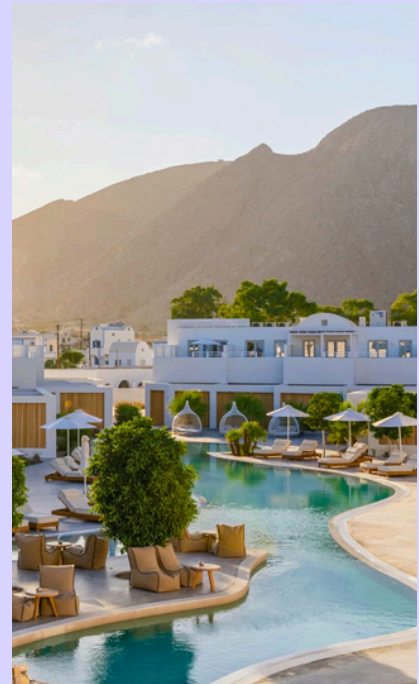


ACCESSIBLE LUXURY IN SANTORINI

OUR WEDDING, OUR HONEYMOON, AND EVERYTHING WE NEVER KNEW WAS POSSIBLE



The stunning sun-kissed island of Santorini can also be described as dramatic, steep, and unforgiving. When we told people we were getting married here, the questions came quickly. Mostly kind. Mostly practical. Mostly rooted in assumption.

Is it not all steps on a sunken volcano? How will that work with your chair?

I understood the concern. I had asked some of those questions myself. But I also knew that with time, honesty, and the right people around us, there might be another version of this story.

One that did not ask us to shrink our plans or lower our expectations. One that allowed ease alongside beauty.

Rolling into our room at TUI Blue Meltemi, I instantly felt lighter. A sense of calm, excitement, and confidence in every decision we had taken. A dream that had once felt unlikely was now becoming very real.

The suite was stylish, spacious, and softly designed. A swim up terrace where mornings could begin in water, with coffee and quiet conversation, rather than coordination and planning. A private whirlpool for romantic evenings with a glass of Assyrtiko. The kind of luxury that gives you ease, not spectacle.

Before we travelled, we had open conversations about access. Not in a tick box way. In a human one.

Accommodation, ceremony venues, wedding transport, and all the details that come with organising a wedding, but with accessibility at the heart of it all. What might be tricky. What would help.

What could be adjusted, so the experience felt calm rather than managed.

When we arrived, those conversations were already reflected in the space. Ramps were in place. A shower stool waited quietly. Nothing was pointed out or explained awkwardly. It was simply there, offered with warmth and care.

That matters more than people realise.

We spent the next few days leisurely exploring the island and gently shaping the final details of the big day. Everything had been carefully handled before we arrived and then passed into local hands, allowing us to slip seamlessly into holiday mode and look forward to the nuptials.

From the moment we met our wedding coordinator in Santorini, we connected instantly. He understood our vision completely. Luxury, boho, intimate, relaxed, and rooted in love. His knowledge of the island was invaluable. He visited venues ahead of us, sending photos and videos, checking access routes, facilities, and disabled toilets. All the practical stuff without us ever needing to ask.

He thought of everything, quietly and thoroughly, which allowed us to simply enjoy the build up.

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The setting for our ceremony was the idyllic Santo Wines. It sits peacefully with the caldera stretching endlessly behind it, iconic white and blue meeting sky, and sea as far as the eye can see. When we exchanged vows, everything felt expansive and still at the same time. The views were breathtaking, somehow even more beautiful than the pictures. Twenty-four degrees, a soft breeze, and a day filled with smiles, love, laughter, and two small families coming together.

Nothing rushed us forward. Nothing asked us to hurry. Access was not a separate consideration. It was simply part of the planning, part of the space, part of the day.

We chose for Martin to walk down the aisle to me, a small adaptation he suggested that meant the world. No wheelchair. No crutches. Just presence. The freedom to be fully in the moment as I declared my love for the man of my dreams through traditional Greek vows.

We were allowed to take our time.
We were allowed to take up space.

Afterwards, while our parents headed off for pre-drinks before lunch, Martin and I explored the heights of an Oia church with our wonderful photographer, Lenia. She did not avoid my wheelchair or work around it. She embraced it and worked with us. Instinctively. Creatively. Steps became pauses. Heights became perspective.

The photographs capture the essence of the day because they were allowed to. I still pinch myself they are our wedding pictures. They're beyond anything we could have ever imagined creating.



Savva Popeye felt like family before we even sat down. From the very first visit to see if it might work, Elina welcomed us with warmth, openness, and experience. She just 'got it.' By the time our wedding day arrived, it felt inevitable we would be there. Toes in the sand. Fresh red snapper straight from their fishing boat that morning. Yorkshire rose themed flowers, for that hint of home, and candles placed with care.

We shared family stories, ate divine chocolate and dark fruit wedding cake with Popeye's signature ice cream, sipped ouzo, and lingered over coffee.

Later, as the light softened, we rolled along the boardwalk to Wet Stories. Cocktails on volcanic sand. Music drifting. A sunset that stopped us in our tracks. That Santorini glow that stays with you long after you leave.

Nothing felt managed.
Nothing felt like effort.

The day drew to a close with one final surprise. Back in the suite, candles, flowers, rose petals scattered through to a tealight lit pool, champagne, and sparklers glistened under a full moon. A perfect ending to the most perfect day.

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At sunrise, still wrapped in the emotion of the day before, we made our way down to Perissa beach to pause and take it all in as newlyweds. Boardwalks. Familiar rhythm. Wedding clothes catching the light. Pink sky. Quiet water. Later, a floating breakfast was delivered to our pool. Coffee. Fruit. Pastries. A splash of bubbles. And the realisation that everything we had hoped for had happened. And more.

Moving through the island

Accessibility did not end at the hotel gates.

Touring the island felt collaborative rather than cautious.

VIP Santorini Premium Tours provided our transport, and we also spent a full day during the honeymoon, exploring with our driver and guide, Panos.

From the beginning, it felt like a shared endeavour. Routes were discussed openly. Possibilities were explored rather than ruled out.

That meant navigating cobbled streets and winding paths, being carried up steps in my wheelchair by my husband and Panos, chariot style, but without stress or hesitation, just open hearts and minds.

It meant steady support through uneven ground and careful moments, but together, we reached the monastery at the highest point of the island, where I was able to light a candle.

Nothing felt rushed. Nothing felt awkward. There was space for laughter, ease, and a sense that we were all moving together.

Sometimes that meant lifting. Sometimes patience. Always dignity.

It allowed us to focus on where we were, not how we were getting there.



Why I Share This

I write Access Life because places like this are often ruled out before they are understood.

Santorini did not become accessible because it was perfect.

It became accessible because people listened.

Because questions were welcomed.

Because conversations were open.

Because solutions were explored together rather than dismissed.

As we prepare to return in May for our first wedding anniversary, Santorini no longer feels like a place we navigated carefully. It feels familiar. It feels welcoming. It feels like somewhere we are allowed to return to with ease.

Some journeys stay with you because of where you go. Others because of how you are met. This was both, and so much more.

As we look ahead to returning for our first wedding anniversary, Santorini no longer feels like a place needing careful navigation. It feels familiar. It feels welcoming. It feels like home.

Mr & Mrs H
Santorini



MAY 2025

Mr & Mrs H

Santorini



MAY 2025

