



SENSORY-FRIENDLY TRAVEL GUIDE

Visiting Franklin, TN

A sensory-friendly travel guide for autism families

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Planning your visit

Franklin works for sensory-sensitive families because its best experiences are wide-open and self-paced: farm parks, paved trails, a walkable historic downtown, and a dedicated sensory gym. It sits south of Nashville, so you get the calm without the Broadway noise.

- **Start at the Visitor Center downtown.** It's at 400 Main St and has a free public restroom and a water filling station, plus free maps and the official vacation guide. Hours: Mon–Sat 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Sun noon–5 p.m.
- **Go early.** Parks and downtown are quietest on weekday mornings. Pinkerton Park in particular fills up on nice Saturday afternoons.
- **Check the festival calendar first.** Downtown and Harlinsdale host big events (Main Street Festival, Pumpkinfest, Pilgrimage music festival in September). Great for some families, a lot for others.
- **Call ahead about accommodations.** Few Franklin attractions advertise formal autism certification, so ask about quiet times, headphones, and a break space when you book.
- **Fall timing matters.** Gentry's Farm is open only on October weekends, so plan around that if you want the pumpkin patch.

Getting there

Fly into Nashville International Airport (BNA), about a 30-minute drive from Franklin. A taxi or rideshare runs about \$40. A rental car is the easiest option, since Franklin's attractions are spread out.

BNA offers several supports for autistic and sensory-sensitive travelers through its [BNA Cares](#) program:

- **Social stories:** Printable guides to the airport made with Autism Tennessee, one for children and one for teens and adults. Review them together before the trip.
- **Hidden Disabilities Sunflower:** BNA takes part in the Sunflower program, so staff recognize the lanyard as a sign that a traveler may need extra time or support.
- **TSA Cares:** Help through security screening. Register online ahead of time, or call (855) 787-2227 within 72 hours of your flight.
- **GoodMaps:** A free indoor navigation app with step-by-step directions through the terminal.
- **Help at the airport:** The Information Center is open daily, 6:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., at (615) 275-2098.

Franklin at a glance

FLY INTO

Nashville (BNA), about 30 minutes away

WHERE TO BASE

Cool Springs hotels with free breakfast

QUIETEST TIMES

Weekday mornings

SENSORY GYM

We Rock the Spectrum Franklin

SENSORY-FRIENDLY MOVIES

AMC Thoroughbred 20

FREE RESTROOM AND WATER

Visitor Center, downtown

Where to stay

Franklin has plenty of hotels, and the Cool Springs area puts you close to most stops in this guide. Three good options are Embassy Suites, Homewood Suites and Tru by Hilton. All three include free breakfast, which means one less meal to plan around a child's routine.

Hotel	Why it works for sensory-sensitive families
Embassy Suites by Hilton Franklin Cool Springs 820 Crescent Centre Dr	Suites give everyone room to spread out and decompress. Cooked-to-order breakfast and an indoor pool.
Homewood Suites by Hilton Nashville Franklin Cool Springs 2225 E McEwen Dr · 615-465-0400	Suites with full kitchens, so you can prepare familiar foods. Hot breakfast and a heated indoor pool.
Tru by Hilton Franklin Cool Springs 1001 Knoll Top Ln	A simpler, budget-friendly pick with breakfast served 6 to 9 a.m. No pool.

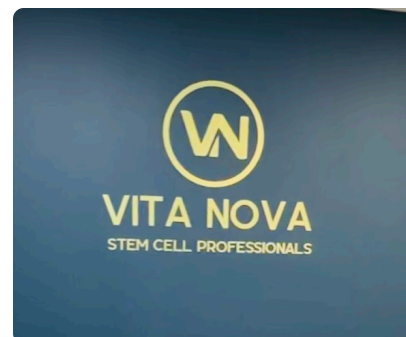
Booking tip: When you book, ask for a room away from the elevator and ice machine, and on a higher floor if street noise is a concern.

Visiting Vita Nova

A visit to Vita Nova Stem Cell Professionals takes less than an hour. It moves at an unhurried pace, with plenty of room for questions.

What to expect

- 1. Check in and wait in the lobby.** Comfortable seating makes for an easy first stop.
- 2. Tour the facility.** A walk-through helps families get familiar with the space.
- 3. Meet with the doctor.** Dr. Mehta meets families in the consultation room. Parents can share concerns about their child and learn how stem cell therapy works.
- 4. See the options demonstrated.** Dr. Mehta simulates the different ways stem cell therapy can be given.



The Vita Nova lobby, where visits begin.

Good to know

The consultation covers a lot of detailed information, and families are encouraged to ask questions until everything is clear. Seeing each delivery method simulated helps parents consider which option their child would be most comfortable with, rather than choosing from a description alone.

Tips for families

- ☐ Write your questions down before the visit.
- ☐ Ask for a plain-language explanation whenever you need one.
- ☐ Ask to see the delivery methods demonstrated.
- ☐ Bring comfort items for the lobby wait.
- ☐ Plan for about an hour, then follow it with a calm activity.

Things to do

This route mixes high-energy play with calm, open-air breaks. The stops are listed in a suggested order, so families can follow it as written or pick and choose.

Stop	What it is	Sensory notes
<u>We Rock the Spectrum Franklin</u> 1113 Murfreesboro Rd, Ste 203	Inclusive sensory gym with suspended swings, a zip line, a climbing wall, crash pit and trampoline.	Built for sensory regulation; siblings welcome. Call ahead for open-play times (615-807-1627).
<u>The Factory at Franklin</u> 230 Franklin Rd	The Carousel of Dreams: hand-carved animals made by one local artist over about 35 years.	A short, predictable ride. Two wheelchair-accessible chariots. The Factory gets busy, so go early.
<u>Downtown Franklin</u> Main Street and the public square	A short stroll along historic Main Street and the public square.	Keep it brief; weekday mornings are calmest. Free restroom at the Visitor Center.
<u>Pinkerton Park</u> 405 Murfreesboro Rd	Playground stop with a picnic area and a 1-mile paved loop.	Fencing around the play area, plus a communication and learning board for non-speaking kids. Busiest on Saturday afternoons.
<u>SOAR Adventure Tower</u> 3794 Carothers Pkwy	A four-level harnessed obstacle tower with about 110 climbing elements, plus an 18-hole mini golf course.	Ground level has a section for ages 4–7. Mini golf is a calmer option for anyone who doesn't want to climb. It's outdoors, so check the weather and hours before you go.
<u>Kings Dining & Entertainment</u> 1910 Galleria Blvd	Bowling, arcade games and billiards.	50+ TVs and big sound systems, so pack headphones. Go in the daytime; timed bowling runs \$19 per person Sun–Thu.
<u>AMC Thoroughbred 20</u> 633 Frazier Dr	AMC's Sensory Friendly Films.	Lights up, sound down, and everyone is free to get up, move and talk. Not every AMC shows these films, so confirm this location's schedule on AMC's site.

Where to eat

Keep meals simple: a scratch-made breakfast, a classic Southern lunch, and a dinner spot with room for kids to move nearby.

Restaurant	Why it works	Tip
<u>Biscuit Love</u> Breakfast · 3100 Village Plains Blvd, Ste 130 (Berry Farms)	Scratch-made biscuits and brunch favorites in a bright, diner-style space.	Arrive early to skip the line. The downtown location is permanently closed.
<u>Puckett's</u> Lunch · 120 4th Ave S (downtown)	Southern comfort food and a Franklin classic.	Go before noon to beat the lunch rush. Some evenings have live music.
<u>Culinary Dropout</u> Dinner · 4020 Aspen Grove Dr, Ste 101 (McEwen Northside)	Kids menu, plus an area with activities for kids right outside the restaurant.	Live bands play here, so eat early or ask for a table away from the stage. Reservations on OpenTable.

Around Franklin

A look at the stops in this guide.



A platform swing at We Rock the Spectrum.



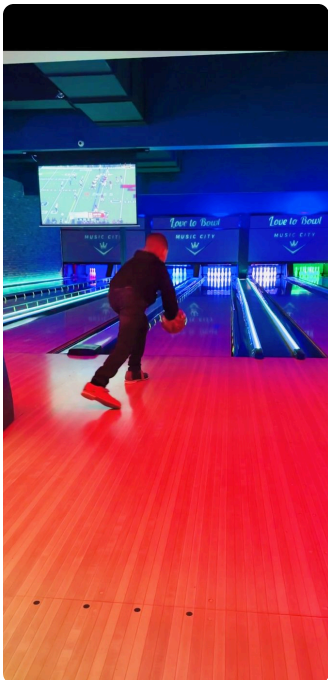
The climbing wall has thick crash mats underneath.



The cannons on the public square make an easy downtown stop.



Pinkerton Park's playground.



Bowling at Kings. Lanes are brightly lit and screens play overhead.



The Kings arcade is loud and bright, so headphones help.



AMC Thoroughbred 20, home of Sensory Friendly Films.



The lawn at McEwen Northside gives kids room to move before or after dinner.

More sensory-friendly options

If you have extra time, these are worth adding.

- **Williamson County Performing Arts Center:** sensory-friendly shows with lower sound, house lights on low, a take-a-break area and a printable social story.
- **The Park at Harlinsdale Farm,** 239 Franklin Rd: 200 acres of soft trails and a catch-and-release pond.
- **Gentry's Farm:** October weekends only, with a pumpkin patch, indoor straw maze and farm animals.
- **Merridee's Breadbasket,** 110 4th Ave S: a calm, scratch-made bakery for breakfast or lunch. Closed Sundays.



Pumpkin patches pop up around Franklin every October.

Prep checklist

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| ☐ Call We Rock the Spectrum for open-play hours | ☐ Pack headphones, fidgets, safe snacks and a sunflower lanyard |
| ☐ Check AMC's Sensory Friendly Films schedule | ☐ Plan a quiet break between busy stops |
| ☐ Book SOAR and Culinary Dropout ahead | |

Helpful links

[Nashville International Airport: BNA Cares](#)

[Visit Franklin: Visitor Center](#)

[We Rock the Spectrum Franklin](#)

[The Factory at Franklin and the Carousel of Dreams](#)

[City of Franklin: Pinkerton Park](#)

[SOAR Adventure Tower](#)

[Kings Franklin: bowling and games](#)

[AMC Theatres in Franklin](#)

[Biscuit Love \(Berry Farms\)](#)

[Culinary Dropout Franklin](#)

[Williamson County Parks & Rec: sensory-friendly performances](#)