

CELEBRITY TRAVEL

Romeo feels like mermaid in water

By Jae-Ha Kim
Tribune Content Agency

For Abbey Romeo, having her life featured on the Netflix reality show “Love on the Spectrum” was a way to show viewers that autistic people are not that different from individuals who are neurotypical. Smart and charming, Romeo said that travel has helped her reflect on who she is.

“From all my recent trips, I have learned that there is always going to be noises I don’t like or triggers around me,” said Romeo, 27. “But I have to learn to ignore them and use my strategies. Sometimes on vacation, I need to remember that I need alone time to listen to music, so I can feel regulated and not overwhelmed.”

This interview with Romeo has been edited for clarity and length.

Q: Where are some of the places that you filmed “Love on the Spectrum”?

A: We got to film season two in Maasai Mara (Kenya). That was a trip of a lifetime with my amazing boyfriend, David. I got to see lionesses with (their) cubs in their natural habitat.

Q: What about a recent trip?

A: I just got back from a trip to Beaches Turks & Caicos with my mom and brother. I got to meet the “Sesame Street” characters. They were all so nice to me. I also got to swim with sea creatures and do the waterslides. It made me feel like a real-life



“Love on the Spectrum” star Abbey Romeo said that visiting Italy is on her travel bucket list. BEACHES RESORTS

mermaid.

Q: Do you have any upcoming trips planned for 2026?

A: I will be going to New York City in the spring for a chef’s gala with Autism Speaks. I hope I get to try yummy new foods there. We might also get the chance to go to Australia and see koala bears. I always wanted to go there. ... Good day, mate!

Q: What trip you took as a child that stands out?

A: I used to love going to Boston every year to visit my aunts and uncles. We went in the summertime, so it wasn’t so cold. We would go swimming, camping and make s’mores.

Q: Do you prefer a food truck or fine dining?

A: I would prefer to eat at a fine dining restaurant because it’s more fancy and it makes me feel like a princess in a castle. Usually on fancy menus, they have octopus or escargot, and I like eating bugs because it reminds me of (“The Lion King” characters) Timon and Pumbaa.

Q: Where are your favorite weekend getaways?

A: I like going to the San Diego Zoo Safari Park for the Roar & Snore (Safari) because there are lionesses. You can hear them roar in the middle of the night. Or I like going to waterparks like Hurricane Harbor and Soak City.

Q: Where would you like to go that you have never

been before?

A: One day, I really want to go to Italy because I want to eat spaghetti and meatballs and pizza there. I also want to go to see where “The Sound Of Music” was filmed. It was in Austria and so I will go there, too.

Q: When you go away, what are some of your must-have items?

A: I have to have my headphones in case there is a noise I don’t like, like a screaming baby on an airplane. I like to have my journal with me so I can write down my thoughts when I’m feeling dysregulated. I also have to have my sunglasses because I recently noticed that I like wearing them on the plane and in airports because the lights bother me.

Q: What is your guilty pleasure when you’re on the road?

A: I always play Candy Crush because the music is soothing and I feel so happy when I get to the next level.

Q: What is your best or worst vacation memory?

A: The worst vacation was my brother Ben’s graduation from Purdue University in 2022. We had to drive all the way to Indiana because mom had a detached retina. The doctor told her she couldn’t fly because she could have gone blind in one eye. So my cousin, Mary, drove us, but she also had a broken foot.

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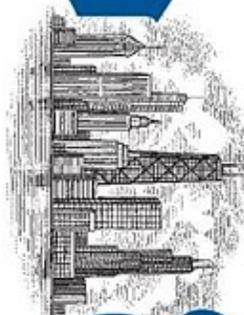


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