

Esme, age 6, I wish to go to Maui!

Esme was first diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL) in late 2013. Treatment for ALL involves chemotherapy and may include steroids, growth factors, radiotherapy and bone marrow transplant or a stem cell transplant. Sometimes, treatment also involves much needed time on the beach with your parents and siblings.

Esme got a big dose of sun and sand in February 2016 when she and her whole family were whisked off to Maui on a WestJet flight. The family learned that getting there is half the fun, receiving a gift basket mid-flight from the WestJet crew, and a tour of the flight deck upon arrival in the state of Hawaii. Then it was off to the hotel.

"We stayed at the Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa, which is pretty much the nicest hotel we will ever go to in our lives," said Esme's dad, Don. "It was spectacular, with great snorkeling and boogie boarding at the beach just steps away." Esme's parents said that each day the whole family splashed in the surf, built sand-castles and ate fresh fruit and fish tacos. "A lot of fish tacos," said Don.



There was also a whale watching tour included in Esme's week, bringing her up close to the breaching humpback whales that could be seen even from the shoreline. A highlight of that experience was when a baby humpback, just a few weeks old, came right past the boat, jumping out of the water as it swam by.

"We had some dark days over the last couple of years but to cap it all off with such a great adventure leaves a great feeling and puts everything behind us," said Don. "A colossal thank you to Make-A-Wish and everyone else who pulled together to make our trip so stunning."

