

#1016 --- Monday, 10/26/15 -- News From St. Maarten / St. Martin



This Week's Stories

Airfare, Airlines & Weather News

Everything SXM Home Page

Island News

Lodging News

Members SECRET Website Login

St. Maarten and St. Martin "SXM" Weekly News

*St. Maarten & St. Martin's Most Relied-Upon Source
for Tourist-Oriented News & Information*

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Part of www.everythingsxm.com

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Important Note:

You are receiving St. Maarten and St. Martin Weekly News because you subscribed to it and/or are a JMB Website Supporters member. Unsubscribe info is at the end of this newsletter. Stay with us for all the latest tourist-oriented news from St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM all year long. We now have nearly 250,000 readers around the world...

Get Important SXM News as it Happens & Lots of Pictures Too from our Facebook and Twitter Pages:



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This format has been further narrowed so it is now easily readable on all mobile devices. Scroll down for this week's news.

You can also download PDFs of all recent editions here:

http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

On that page, the link beginning with the highest number is the most recent edition.

Get Your Own Free Weekly Copy of SXM Weekly News:

<http://www.everythingsxm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?>

Just enter your email address at the top, and click SUBMIT. When you receive the confirming email, just click the confirming link and you're in.

TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE

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This is Jeff Berger's / JMB Communications' *St. Maarten and St. Martin (SXM) Weekly News*, published every Monday all year long (Tuesdays during some holiday weeks). You're receiving this because you subscribed or are a JMB Website Supporters member. Scroll Down for Full Table of Contents; this edition features many new stories about your favorite island:

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-- Thanksgiving in St. Maarten: Not Too Early for Reservations

37 new stories this week

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Timeshare Rentals and Sales of the Week

Each week JMB randomly picks timeshare condominiums for rent and for sale in SXM from the huge selection at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml and features them here.

To rent out or sell timeshares you own in SXM or anywhere else, worldwide, at no charge, join JMB Website Supporters. Visit http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml for info. Membership now delivers a growing list of 237+ St. Maarten and St. Martin-focused travel benefits, and your subscription also helps keep these weekly SXM newsletters coming.

SXM Timeshare Rentals of The Week:

RENTAL 1/16/2016 1/30/2016 weeks 3-4 fixed Royal Palm Beach Diamond International Extra LG 1 bedroom, sleeps 4 with pullout sofa in LR, Remodeled, fully equipped kitchen, deli, laundry, gym on site. Market and many restaurants within walking distance. Will also sell for \$2000.00 per/week plus transfer fees \$ 1495.00 per/week Barry 570-588-3086 (May18 - Oct 19, 2015) 561-733- 9477 after Oct 20 2015 ew223@optonline.net

RENTAL: January 16 to January 23, 2016 (week 3) Sapphire Beach Resort on Cupecoy Beach, sleep-four unit faces sunny Cupecoy Beach and the Caribbean Sea. Includes a genuine Jacuzzi whirlpool hot tub on the balcony, king size bed, full a/c, cable TV, DVD player, refrigerator with ice maker, marble bath, beautiful furnishings throughout. Resort has shops, restaurants, mini-mart, plus a large pool, whirlpool, and bar -- all on the ocean. Close to Starz Casino (formerly Atlantis World), many great restaurants including Dino Jagtiani's multi award-winning Temptation, plus Mullet Bay Beach, the Cupecoy clothing-optional beach, Baie Longue, and Baie Rouge on the French Side, with famous Orient Beach not much more than 20 minutes away. And did I say incredible restaurants? Reduced to \$1049 for rent or \$3749 to buy. Photos available. Phone Jeff at (508) 747-8281 or email jeff@jmbcommunications.com

SXM Timeshare Sales of The Week:

SALE: January 16 to January 23, 2016 (week 3) Sapphire Beach Club on Cupecoy Beach, sleep-four unit faces Cupecoy Beach and the Caribbean sea. Includes a Jacuzzi® whirlpool hot tub on the balcony, king size bed, full a/c, cable TV, DVD player, refrigerator with ice maker, marble bath, beautiful furnishings throughout. Resort has shops, restaurants, mini-mart, plus a large pool, whirlpool, and bar -- all on the ocean. Close to Starz Casino (formerly Atlantis World), many great restaurants including Dino Jagtiani's Temptation, plus Mullet Bay Beach, the Cupecoy clothing-optional beach, Baie Longue, and Baie Rouge on the French Side, and did I say incredible restaurants? Reduced to \$3749 (negotiable) to buy or \$1049 to rent. Photos available. Phone (508) 747-8281 and ask for Jeff or email susan@jmbcommunications.com .

SALE 2/27/2016 3/5/2016 Week 9 Flamingo Beach Resort Deluxe Oversized Beachfront Studio, Unit 7106. Step off the porch onto the beach. Great sunsets. King size bed and pull out couch. Full kitchen with all utensils and appliances, bathroom, dining area, two flat screen TV's, Wi-Fi, DVD Player. Resort offers pool and numerous on-site amenities. Several top rated restaurants within the resort area. Short walk to supermarket, casino, watersports, and additional dining. \$3,000 Joel 843-838-0089 jholden850@gmail.com

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

See them all at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml

St. Maarten / St. Martin Homes, Villas, Businesses, Commercial Properties, and Residential Properties for Sale (NEW): [Click to access our recommended real estate agents](#)

This Week's Stories

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"Like" Our "Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin" Facebook Site:



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/6297726366/>

"Like" Our Facebook SXM Timesharing Group People for Timeshare Owner Consumer Protection in St. Maarten

http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_205834172765083

Search the **SXM Weekly News** Archives:

Current Archives (Since 4/2014) in PDF Format (New):

http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

Archives prior to April 12 2014 (old format):

<http://everythingxsm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?flavor=archive:list=sxmweeklynews>

Check Out Our Linked-In "St. Maarten and St. Martin Travelers" Group (Free; Timeshare Focus):

www.linkedin.com

Get a growing list of 210+ Money-Saving SXM-focused travel discount benefits through JMB Website Supporters:

http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

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Section Five: Where To Find Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) (Revised 12/31/14)

How To Get a **GROWING LIST of 230+** Money-Saving St. Maarten- and St. Martin-Focused Travel Benefits

Visit <http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret> , the *secret* site for JMB Website Supporters members only, for low fares to SXM from cities across the USA, Canada, and Western Europe, plus a total of a growing list of 200+ additional major travel benefits, including reduced-cost access to

Not a member yet? See http://everythingsxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml . Cost: \$59 for one year, or \$99 total for five full years. Other durations available. Join us today...

Now a growing list of 200+ benefits... and more coming soon.

Contact Us:

[Revised 2/24/15]

All member discounts and benefits are explained in detail on the members-only *secret* website, <http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret> . If you're a JMB Website Supporters member and have a question not answered there, please contact us at support@jmbcommunications.com

NON-members who wish to contact us should write to jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com with the subject *Free Newsletter Recipient,* but due to the huge volume of mail received, we may not be able to respond individually.

Our main St. Maarten / St. Martin website: www.everythingsxm.com .

All JMB Newsletters Read *From JMB*

This newsletter and mail from JMB Website Supporters to members (including *Low Airfare Bulletins*) read *From JMB* in the subject area so you won't misinterpret them as spam.

THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest.

SECTION 1: Getting There: Airlines, Airports, Cruises, & Weather

1. Engine Fails on SXM Flight to Miami; Everyone OK

A weekend social media post claimed that an early morning commercial flight from SXM to Miami was disrupted by an aircraft engine failure and had to make an emergency landing in the Bahamas. The plane landed uneventfully, the post said, though emergency equipment aligned near the runway gave passengers a jaw-dropping greeting.

Airports invariably greet disabled planes with emergency equipment, whether the problem is an engine, landing gear, hydraulic fluid, etc. -- anything that can impact the safety of the landing. The process is rather routine now -- it usually is not reported in the media -- and it works very well.

2. Norwegian Air To Serve SXM from the USA? Columnist Agrees With Us

Several weeks ago, we said Norwegian Air was scheduled to start nonstop flights from Boston to Martinique as well as Guadeloupe. We called Norwegian and asked whether SXM was a possible future target. They said they were set through 2016 but after that "anything is possible." The low-fare airline is expanding rapidly and is taking advantage of the US "open skies" program which enables foreign carriers to fly to the EU. Since many Caribbean islands are technically part of the EU, flights there are fair game, though US carriers aren't happy about it.

We told SXM Airport chief honcho Regina Labega about Norwegian and she said the airport was definitely interested. Now we read the following: "At a dinner in August in Sint Maarten, the cabinet finance secretary for this autonomous part of the Netherlands asked me and a fellow reporter which airlines Sint Maarten should seek to entice. Both of us immediately answered 'Norwegian', because Norwegian is open to new ideas and could legally serve Sint Maarten both from the USA and from major European cities." It turns out that Norwegian is also acquiring a number of long-range, advanced Boeing 787 Dreamliners which could make European nonstops from more cities to SXM possible at a reasonable price.

This could well happen. See more here: <http://tinyurl.com/ps2l2rx>

3. Complete Winter Reservations Now: Seats Disappearing Rapidly

A very busy winter is expected in SXM and many flights, particularly on Saturdays, are already heavily booked. Seats are available on many weekday flights but they, too, are quickly filling up. If you plan to visit SXM this winter and have not yet booked, do it soon.

4. No Apathy as Hurricane Season Remains Quiet

Except for superstorm Patricia in the Pacific, there hasn't been much news lately regarding hurricanes. Although the season currently is quiet, there is no apathy in St. Maarten since some quite serious storms have hit as late as mid-to late November. Eyes on the island are wide open. Hurricane season ends November 30.

5. Finally, Some Much-Needed Rain

Some rain fell on the island last week. It was welcomed by most locals, since the island has had a drought for some time, but tourists were not amused.

A heavy thunderstorm hit on Saturday morning, punctuating that Mother Nature is in charge.

6. What Should You Pay for Airfare? Our Low Fare Grid Has The Answers

The Low Fare Grid on our members-only "Secret Website" lists fares you should look for when making reservations. The fares have changed little in recent months as airlines rake in mammoth profits from fees and from the low cost of jet fuel. The carriers could do sales but instead pile on profits, in part to help pay off the cost of

hundreds of new aircraft.

If you're not a member of JMB Website Supporters, our low fare grid -- *plus* a great way to get low fares -- are two of about 240 SXM discounts and benefits you get from membership. See story 7, below, about fares and see article 12 in Section 3 about what *you* can get out of a JMB membership.

7. A Great Source of Low Airfares & More Available Free to JMB Members

JMB Website Supporters now gives you access to a private, "members only" travel wholesale club that offers incredible prices not only on airfares but on packages not just to the Caribbean, but worldwide.

Retail travel sites — the ones whose names you know very well — are heavily regulated. But private travel clubs like this, which normally charge their members for membership/admission, are regulated differently and consequently, can offer much better pricing.

The organization providing these travel benefits has been traveling under the radar for 25 years and is only now making its travel reservations prowess publicly known. It's SkyMed Travel Club and it is entirely separate from the [SkyMed "takes you home" medical evacuation service](#) we've been recommending to you for years.

SkyMed Travel Club offers exceptional pricing on everything and almost invariably beats everyone else's pricing. We have found the pricing to be exceptional — even on the wildly popular river cruises that are a tourism phenomenon throughout Europe and are gaining popularity in the US.

Normally, this organization charges you \$99 to join plus \$99 annual renewals. But for our JMB Website Supporters members, the cost to join is zero as will be the cost for renewals. Go to the members-only Secret Website and click on the Low Airfare Grid for details on the SkyMed Travel Club. Log in through the orange login box below the masthead at everythingxsm.com. Your username is the email address you have registered with Membership Services. If you forgot your password, click "forgot password" in the login box.

Do join the SkyMed Travel Club and use them to make all your travel reservations; you will not be disappointed once you've booked through them.

Not a JMB member? See the lead story in the next section.

8. Available to All: FlyTravelGo Is The Easiest-to-Use Travel Reservations Website

Check it out; it's remarkably fast and easy. All profits from our www.flytravelgo.com site help support *SXM Weekly News* and our SXM island discount program, JMB Website Supporters.

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

9. Alegria Resort Still Depriving Marty's Dream Pool Bar of Water

Alegria wants to evict Marty's Dream Pool Bar from the grounds but can't since the court ruled Marty's lease is valid and cannot be broken. So Alegria is providing no water to the bar, a situation Alegria could have remedied quickly but hasn't. The resort is virtually empty, and it reportedly has had little occupancy for a number of months.

10. Next Business Day Rental / Sale Ads Introduced for JMB's Platinum-Status Members

Effective early this week, JMB Website Supporters Platinum-Status members will find themselves with a new benefit: the ability to place timeshare rental and sale ads through an interface designed specifically and exclusively for them, which enables them to place 150-word ads for timeshare rentals or sales for posting the next business day, in most cases. Other members can place ads containing a maximum of 125 words through our regular input on the members-only Secret Website; those ads are published during the next *regular* update. Only Platinum-Status members are entitled to submit ads posted through our special Platinum-only interface for next business day posting.

JMB members become "Platinum Status" when their membership expiration is beyond nine years into the future.

11. SXM's "Best Timeshares" Now Listed On Our Everythingsxm.com Website

Go to the home page of our site, www.everythingsxm.com, tonight (Monday) and you'll find a link to our newest page with lots of recommendations of SXM timeshares.

SECTION 3: Island

12. JMB Price Increase Coming Quickly in November; Join, Renew, or Reinstate Your Membership Now

What You Get:

- A growing list of 240 discounts for restaurants, shopping, hotels, car rentals, activities, jewelry, art, and tons more
- Benefits including free ads to rent out timeshare or other condos you own in SXM and worldwide
- Low Fare Guidelines to help you know what fares are reasonable
- Big Discounts on SkyMed, the world's premier provider of medical evacuation services for Americans, Canadians, and ex-pats virtually anywhere you travel, including Cuba (see stories 29 & 30).

Here are JMB prices and details:

New memberships:

\$59 for one year but 3 years for \$95 or five years for just \$125

http://everythingsxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

Renewal memberships:

One year \$39; Seven years just \$119

www.everythingsxm.com/secret Go to the *Membership Renewal Center*

Membership Reinstatements:

One year \$39; Seven years, \$125

<http://everythingsxm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

12a. French Side Residents Shut Down Traffic In PLU Protests

The protests are over and things are back to normal at least for the time being, but late last week was truly chaotic on the French Side. Here's the story:

French Side citizens rose in protest late last week over the PLU, a Draconian plan hatched by the French Side government which affects property ownership and would increase housing density.

For more than a day, they protested against the plan by initially blocking all streets to Marigot, later expanding the blockage to include all access from / to the French Side. Some unconfirmed reports allege that this caused some cruise ship tourists to miss their ships.

Late in the week, a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) was reached between the protestors and the government where the government agreed to bring the PLU back for public discussion.

Alain Duzant from SXM wrote about this late last week and here are his comments, translated from French:

1. PLU is the new zoning plan that they are trying to pass during October, areas that should be able to develop in the future and being turned into Green Zones, meaning that you cannot even do agriculture.
2. Same PLU, buildings allowed in the new one can be built up to four floors. Can you imagine this in Orient Bay and other beach front areas on the island?
3. Areas that should be able to build hotels or other tourist-oriented projects, low cost housing is being built.
4. And many more issues that are just not right for the island.

Domain Land...

1. Land that has been claimed by the state, around the shorefront areas (+/- 80 Meters inland from the sea).
2. People like my grandparents built homes on that land before this "law" ever went into effect and today we do not own the land.
3. You cannot get a loan to restore or use the house as a guarantee to a bank to restore it or even buy or build something new, because you do not now own the land.
4. The younger generation cannot get a loan from a bank to start or expand a business because they have no "guarantees" to give the bank.
5. We have been paying taxes every year on land which they (now) claim is not ours, so if it is not ours, why do we pay taxes?
6. Old homes with beautiful architecture cannot be restored to (their) original beauty because the families cannot get a loan or that they are in a "succession" with other members of the family and if just one person in that family decides not to regulate the succession, it stays that way in French law.

So conclusion, if it continues like this there will be NO future for the French side and its citizens. Then again, maybe that is what they are looking for, so that the state can take over their properties and do what they want with them in the future and get rid of the last SXM'ers that still OWN something here, BUT then again, do we own it (or not)?

[End of translated quote.]

We will continue to update this situation in future issues of *SXM Weekly News* and on our Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin Facebook Site: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/6297726366/>

13. Simpson Bay Gourmet Marche Closes, Casino Coming; Lal's Stays

The smallish Le Gourmet Marche market in Simpson Bay has closed. Lal, who operates an Indian restaurant on the lagoon side of the building, tells us a small casino will open there. His restaurant, which we recommend, is not affected. Lal's has great food, a scenic location, and very reasonable prices.

14. Coconut Groove Restaurant, Formerly SPN, Closes

Earlier this year, the "SPN" sports bar next door to Pineapple Pete closed and was replaced by a restaurant called Coconut Groove, now closed. We'll keep you posted on what's happening.

15. Mario's Bistro Officially Opens at Porto Cupecoy

After a reasonable time getting things down in a soft opening, Mario's Bistro in Porto Cupecoy, Dutch Side, has formally opened for business. Long one of the top French Side restaurants, Mario's had been in its Marigot location for many years until owner Mario Tardif decided to make the move, as a number of others have in recent years.

One other restaurateur who made the switch said, "We couldn't stay there [the French Side] any longer. This side [Dutch Side] is friendlier toward business and safer than Marigot." Another restaurateur who still operates a restaurant on the French Side says it "gets more challenging every year to do business" on the French Side thanks to the high cost of doing business there.

On the Dutch Side, most restaurants are concentrated in Simpson Bay with an increasing number at Starz Casino and Porto Cupecoy, both at Cupecoy Beach. A police substation opened recently in nearby Maho seems to have improved safety in the area.

16. Elisa Cohen Sets Nov. 3 For Opening of Shanghai Brasserie at Porto Cupecoy

Elisa Cohen, who for many years was chief honcho at the Bikini Beach Bar on Orient Beach, opens Shanghai Brasserie at Porto Cupecoy next week on November 3. We plan to visit during November and will tell you more about it. Noted SXM restaurateur Jim Goldman has been an advisor to Elisa as she was creating this new concept.

17. Reminder About Cugini Restaurant

Sam Runza, the driving force behind the highly successful Cugini Restaurant in Simpson Bay, returned last winter to Toronto to fight cancer. The great news is that he has beaten cancer and was given a clean bill of health by his medical team. He's devoting his time to getting his strength back, and decided several weeks ago to close Cugini, as we published at that time.

17a. Female-Owned Leisure Car Rental Joins JMB's Car Rental Discount Program

Jacqueline Fitzpatrick-Joseph owns Leisure Car Rental and Jimmy Fitzpatrick is the GM. Together they operate a fine car rental agency that's literally a stone's throw from SXM Airport, has a close-knit staff, and gives excellent service. We're updating their discount offer today (Monday) and expect to post it on our members-only "secret" website in the next day or two. Their prices are highly competitive; their cars are in good shape; and they're closer to the airport than just about anybody.

Give them a try. Their site is www.leisurecarrental.com.

18. About Erosion at Orient Beach

Summer / Fall in SXM seems to cause a fair amount of erosion, but the sand seems to return through the winter. This year shows more of the same at orient, accentuated by the new stone wall being built between Pedro's and KonTiki in front of the replacement bars / restaurants there. The sand will be back; see next story.

19. Update on Orient Beach Bar / Restaurant Reconstruction

Construction started a few months ago, after demolition in June. It began near Pedro's and progressed northward toward Kon Tiki. Buildings near Pedro's are now getting their finishing touches, while buildings at the other end of the renovation area were started later and are earlier in the process. The original completion target for all buildings was November but that won't happen. Our guess is mid to late December; we'll know more when we see the crews next month. We also hope to find out which business are staying and which aren't.

20. Halloween on SXM

If you're on the island for Halloween, you'll have a lot of company. Halloween night is celebrated in restaurants and on the streets, as is the case around the world. Watch the advertising in the local paper and decide where to go — then make your reservations. We're also posting promos we see on our Everything SXM site on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/6297726366/>

See next story.

21. Thanksgiving in St. Maarten: Not Too Early for Reservations

When we called Topper Daboul at Topper's Restaurant in Simpson Bay Sunday afternoon for Thanksgiving reservations, we figured we might be first in line. We weren't. "I have 35 reservations already," Topper laughed.

Bottom line, Topper's is one of many restaurants serving thousands of Thanksgiving dinners — and it is definitely not too early to make reservations.

22. No JMB Membership Card, No Discounts or Benefits in SXM

JMB members who don't have their JMB Website Supporters membership card will not be able to get any discounts in St. Maarten or St. Martin. We've told this to our partners across the island and we're also nearly finished modifying all of our discount vouchers to reflect the fact that they must be used with a valid JMB Website Supporters membership card. Bottom line, bring your card: you are not entitled to JMB discounts without it. Check the secret site to be sure you print the vouchers you need. Login through the orange login box below the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com.

23. Where To Vote for Crystal Pineapple Hospitality Awards

If you're a frequent visitor to SXM, you may know many of the candidates; vote here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Crystalpineappleawards2015voting>

The guy we know best is Wendel Laurence, formerly at IZI and New York Brasserie, now at Big Fish. Vote....

24. Where Does Simpson Bay End and Cole Bay Begin?

Some people say Simpson Bay ends north of the drawbridge, which is where Cole Bay begins. Others say Simpson Bay extends down to the area which Pineapple Pete and IZI are, and Cole Bay begins farther south. Others say Cole Bay is on the east shore of Simpson Bay. Still others say Simpson Bay ends where Welfare Road ends, at the roundabout at the bottom of "the hill." That's also where the Union Road (the road that goes to the French border) begins.

Whatever. As Hillary said, what difference does it make?

25. SXM Business Families #1: The Bakers

The Baker family is an entrepreneurial bunch. The matriarch and patriarch, two fine people, own [Tropical Car Rental](#); [Unique Car Rental](#); [the St. Maarten Party Bus](#); and [Baker's Suites](#) boutique all-suites hotel. We recommend all of them and have for many years (20 years in the case of Tropical). All of them give discounts to our JMB Website Supporters members. Log in to the Secret Website for details and discount vouchers where necessary. Bring your JMB membership card (see story #22).

Follow the links to learn more.

26. SXM Business Families #2: The Jurczenkos

There's actually only one Jurczenko — Daniel. It just seems like there are more, because he's the guy behind [Mr. Busby's Beach Bar](#), [Island Pizza](#), [Pier Grocer](#), and [Daniel's by the Sea](#) restaurant. He can be seen at any one of them at any hour which is why you could swear he's twins or triplets. They are terrific businesses, most of which offer discounts to our JMB Website Supporters members. Follow the link to their site for more info. To see their discounts, login to our secret website. If you're not yet a JMB member, see the beginning of this section.

27. SXM Business Families #3: The Budhranis

The Budhrani family is big into the jewelry business in St. Maarten and beyond.

Manu Budhrani started [Caribbean Gems](#) 20+ years ago, and currently has two stores on Front Street, Philipsburg — two of the most popular stores on the island.

His brother Deepu Budhrani also has two stores, [Zhaveri Jewelers](#) on Front Street near the center of town and Caribbean Gems Alaska in Ketchikan Alaska.

Raju Budhrani owns two [Oro Diamante](#) stores, one just west of the center of Philipsburg on Front Street and the other in a large resort hotel. Both his stores, like those of Manu and Deepu, get consistently high ratings on TripAdvisor.

All the St. Maarten stores offer discounts to JMB Website Supporters members. Log into the JMB secret website for details. If you're not a member, see the beginning of this section.

28. A Butterfly / Milkweed Story

Monarch butterflies -- the ones that enhance summer across North America -- are threatened by habitat destruction. Their favorite food is milkweed so if you grow it in your yard, you help the Monarchs.

There are different types of milkweeds. In northern states, there's one that produces wispy silks attached to seeds; they drift away in breezes, creating new plants. Picture:

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/00/Milkweed-in-seed2.jpg>

The tropical type is common in SXM: <http://tinyurl.com/pbguyuo> . Where you see the latter flowering, butterflies will come, giving you a great opportunity to photograph them. For Monarchs at home, plant either variety next spring. Or look for milkweed pods in your area, open them near your garden, and spread the seeds. We did that about 20 years ago and have had milkweeds and butterflies since.

29. Questions & Answers About Medical Evacuation (Updated 10/25/15)

Here are updated questions and answers about SkyMed, the folks who fly you home on an ICU-equivalent medical evacuation jet when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. *It's a life-saving flight that could easily cost you upwards of \$45,000 in cash in advance without SkyMed; thousands of you have bought it through us.* To learn more, see www.skymed.com/jmbspecial .

Q. Why do you promote this?

A. *We first heard about SkyMed* in a mailing years ago from the old Pelican Resort. We thought the idea had great merit for many people and started promoting it in *St. Maarten Weekly News*.

Several months later, driving back to Sapphire Resort after dinner in Grand Case, my wife was very hot and felt nauseous. She started making unusual breathing noises and passed out. Dinner had involved no drinks for either of us and we never drank much anyway; I feared a mini-stroke.

When we arrived at Sapphire minutes later, I immediately called an ambulance. She was treated symptomatically at the resort and later, felt much better.

Although we later discovered that her incident was related to a serious food allergy, it was a big wake-up call and we became much more interested in getting SkyMed membership for ourselves.

Later, based on the number of people we were referring to them, SkyMed phoned me and suggested I become a representative. I declined, saying I didn't have time. The SkyMed executive who had called, Rolly Jodoin, said they would simply provide a webpage for my referrals to use when signing up so SkyMed could track my signups and pay me rep commissions. Instead of simply referring people to SkyMed, I would continue to do what I had done for a number of months and they would compensate me based upon sign-ups. It made sense, since I was joining on my own after being scared by the incident related above and I expected to recommend SkyMed long-term anyway.

That's how it started. I have since signed up several thousand JMB members and readers to SkyMed memberships, *dozens of whom have suffered serious medical emergencies in St. Maarten and elsewhere for which they have had to use the service.* Every one of them with whom I've spoken has told me the evacuation was handled with military precision and consummate professionalism. SkyMed transported them by ambulance from the hospital located near where their incidents occurred to the plane, then by jet to their destination city, then in another waiting ambulance to the hospital where a medical team familiar with the situation was waiting and had a bed reserved for them. *SkyMed makes an average of about three dozen calls to make all this happen.*

Q. What's so special about SkyMed? Aren't these services all the same?

A. *Not by a long shot.* Most other programs take you to "the nearest appropriate facility," *not* home like SkyMed. If you're in SXM, that means *SkyMed competitors* would likely take you to Puerto Rico. Some others also raise prices after you reach a certain age. Or they cancel you on a particular birthday, or cancel your membership when you get sick. *SkyMed does none of that.* Sign up for SkyMed today and when you reach age 109 you pay the same price as everyone else. No age discrimination at all -- as long as you pay your membership fee you're good to go.

Q. What other evacuation-related services do you offer besides the evacuation itself?

There are 18 other services, some of which you've never even thought about but all of which are important. You'll find them on our downloadable SkyMed Benefits PDF, now on our [SXM Weekly News PDF Archives](#) page.

Q. Do they cancel me if I get really sick?

A. *No, they don't.* Once you're a member, as long as you continue to pay your membership fee your membership continues regardless of your health or age, if you buy an annual or multiyear membership and keep it in force. SkyMed does not throw you out if you get sick. If you allow your membership to lapse, you will need to reapply to determine if you're still medically acceptable -- so just don't let it lapse.

Q. I have a few medical issues and I'm in my late 60s. Does SkyMed only accept people in phenomenal health?

A. In its brief application process, completed online or by phone or in person with a rep, SkyMed asks for your name, DOB, current medications, medical conditions, and hospitalizations in the last six months. It also asks where you want to be transported should you need a medical evacuation. It now also requests your passport number to help expedite customs / immigration should you require an international medical evacuation flight. *The vast, vast majority of applicants are readily accepted.* You do not have to be in "phenomenal" health at all.

Q. We stay away for weeks at a time. Do we have to tell SkyMed where we're going?

A. No, you don't. As long as you're home in the US or Canada more than six months per year, you're fine. If you spend more than half of each year away (in aggregate), then you're considered an expatriate (ex-pat) and would need a program custom-tailored for ex-pats because you are away a majority of the time and that means you represent increased exposure. That program is called NATO - the North American Transport Option. Even as an ex-pat living in SXM, you can still be transported back to your city of choice in the USA.

Q. Does SkyMed cover pre-existing conditions?

A. Yes, after a 90 day waiting period. To make sure you're covered for everything when you travel, including pre-existing conditions, just buy your annual or multi-year Ultimate SkyMed membership more than 90 days ahead of your initial date of travel.

Q. I seldom travel now. Do you have short-term plans?

A. Yes, at about \$18/day per family or about \$9/day for singles. Since they only last a specified number of days, they end when the term of coverage ends. If you want another short-term plan later, you must apply again and medically requalify. Annual plans cost roughly \$1.30/day for your entire family (parents and minor kids); plans for singles are less. And Annual plans are renewable without medical requalification, assuming they haven't lapsed.

Q. I'm from Canada. May I join SkyMed? I have to get back to my province if I'm seriously ill or my health insurance won't work.

A. Both Americans and Canadians are eligible to join SkyMed.

Q. Is there a best time to buy?

A. Yes -- exactly like fire insurance, buy it before you need it! Now is a particularly good time because JMB is offering special benefits and discounts; see next story. Those incentives won't be around forever.

Q. Where does SkyMed provide service?

A. SkyMed plans are focused on members' needs. Most members travel within about 34 countries so SkyMed's basic plans cover all those countries: the USA (all 50 states), Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba, plus Belize and Costa Rica.

On annual plans you can buy a \$100 annual rider to cover the rest of the world. SkyMed's "Ultimate" plan, available in three- and five-year versions, covers you worldwide except for places you'd probably not want to visit anyway -- such as Iran, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, North Korea, and Afghanistan, to name some.

SkyMed Takes You Home™; What else matters?

For more, see skymed.com/jmbspecial or email Jeff Berger directly at jeff@jmbcommunications.com with the subject SkyMed. If you include your phone number, he'll call you about SkyMed as well, to answer any other questions you may have including all pricing options. Or call us any day during regular business hours, Eastern Time. Our number is 508-830-3456.

30. Our Double SkyMed Bonus

----- SkyMed On Sale: Lots of Life-Saving Benefits, Low Cost -----

If you've been thinking about buying SkyMed but just haven't done it, this is the time.

SkyMed takes you home when you become critically ill or injured while traveling — home to doctors and hospitals you know and trust. With rare exceptions, your medical insurance from the US or Canada isn't valid in St. Maarten. There is also no trauma center there, and the sophisticated medical care available at leading US hospitals is not present in St. Maarten / St. Martin. So if you become critically ill or injured, you really do need to get home to the US or Canada and get the help you need.

Thanks to this sale, that has now become a whole lot easier. There are two key reasons.

First, for every year of SkyMed medical evacuation protection you buy from us during the sale, you get an equivalent year of JMB Website Supporters membership free, on us, which brings you an increasing spectrum of benefits and discounts, soon to number close to 250. If you are already a JMB member, we will extend your membership on us for a number of years equal to your new or upgraded SkyMed membership. If you are not a JMB member and buy SkyMed through us, we will establish a JMB Website Supporters membership for you equal to your new or upgraded SkyMed membership's duration of one year or more.

SkyMed costs next to nothing when you buy it for a few days (less than \$18/day per family), or it costs \$499 for a family plan covering an entire year. The critically important advantage of buying yearly coverage is that you are covered for as long as you continue to renew your membership regardless of your age or health at the time of the renewal. Buy a "short term" plan for a week or so, and you must requalify medically every time you re-apply for another short-term plan.

That same crucial benefit also applies if you get a SkyMed three-year or five-year "Ultimate" membership, the best they offer. (It's also what Jeff has had for a number of years).

The SkyMed Ultimate normally sells for a three-year or a five-year term. One critical advantage of the Ultimate — besides the fact that it covers you around virtually the entire world — is that you are covered in case the price of crude oil makes a U-turn and starts skyrocketing again; jet fuel is a big part of the cost of a medical evacuation. A five-year Ultimate membership will cost you either \$59 per month per family, or much less if you prepay it and are a JMB Website Supporters member.

For a five-year SkyMed Ultimate, non JMB members pay \$3495 in advance; JMB members pay only \$2495 through us — and remember, because of the bonus we mentioned above, when you sign up we will also give you a five-year JMB membership *enabling you to save that \$1000 on a five year Ultimate membership. That discount is not available to nonmembers.*

For answers to questions about SkyMed, or to sign up, regardless of whether you are a current JMB member, and to get these JMB membership bonuses and discounts, call JMB Communications weekdays during normal business hours at area code 508-830-3456 and ask for Jeff. This offer can be withdrawn at any time, so please do it soon. That's \$1000 off a five-year Ultimate plus a free JMB membership or membership extension -- available only by calling our office. You can learn more about SkyMed at www.skymed.com/jmbxsm but these JMB discounts are not available online. JMB members only, see www.skymed.com/jmbspecial . You can also contact Jeff at jeff@jmbcommunications.com with the subject SkyMed.

When you sign up for the bonus SkyMed memberships shown above, email support@jmbcommunications.com and tell us. We'll verify the signup and that it is through us, then process your bonus. But do it soon... this won't last forever.

31. Why We're Giving Away Eight SXM Vacations, & How to Enter

We expect to surpass 4.5-million visits to www.everythingsxm.com during the first half of 2016 -- or conceivably earlier -- depending literally on how often you visit the site.

Here's where you could be going:

- [Mary's Boon Beach Resort](#);
- [Oyster Bay Beach Resort](#);
- [La Vista or La Vista Beach](#)
- [Summit Resort](#)
- [Baker's Suites](#)
- [Club Fantastico](#)
- [Hotel L'Esplanade](#) OR [Le Petit Hotel](#) OR [Blue Pelican](#)
- [Simpson Bay Resort](#)

We'll be adding dinners for two and more.

Enter here:

http://everythingxm.com/sxm/getting_here/entry-form-for-our-seven-vacation-giveaway.shtml

Full rules are on the page.

32. Interact With Fellow SXM Visitors on Our Everything SXM Facebook Page

Our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#), which has been around for several years, covers SXM happenings in words and pictures from its thousands of users, and enables people to ask questions, get answers, post trip reports, etc. We also post things there between issues of *SXM Weekly News*.

Besides that ... the 5000th person to "like" that page will be among the "Final 60" people we call when we give away eight vacations early next year. You are welcome to join our Facebook Site.

33. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

Look right here: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

34. Restaurant of The Week

This feature return in November.

35. Tech Talk:

This column returns shortly.

Advertising, Sales Promotion, Marketing Collateral, PR, Publicity, and Complete Website Strategy, Copy, & Design (Traditional or WordPress). Plus, JMB Website Supporters Get Hefty Discounts.

It's what else we do.

See www.jmbcommunications.com for more.

Rent Out or Sell Your Timeshare (both SXM and Worldwide) -- Frequently Updated

JMB members can run up to 10 free ads on our website per 12-month period to rent out or sell St. Maarten / St. Martin timeshare weeks they own -- or any timeshares, anywhere worldwide. If you're not a member, learn more about membership here: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml .

Want to rent or buy a week?

2015 St. Maarten / St. Martin Timeshare Weeks For Rent or Sale are posted at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml Listings are now updated every few weekdays. Ads are free (no commission) but are accepted from JMB Website Supporters

members only.

Meet Our Sponsors (updated 9/27/13) Returns Next Issue

SECTION 4: For Members Only (Constantly Updated)

A. Where to Get Member Info: www.everythingsxm.com/secret

B. Password Recovery Info: Your username is the email address you have registered with JMB Website Supporters. If you forget your password, click "forgot / change password" in the orange login box near the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com. To change your password, click that same link.

C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads or Update the Price in an Ad: See www.everythingsxm.com/secret .

SECTION 5: Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) Updated 10/18/15

See www.everythingsxm.com.

CONTACT US

JMB Website Supporters members wishing to contact us should visit the secret site, www.everythingsxm.com/secret , for detailed JMB Website Supporters information. JMB members can email us at support[at]jmbcommunications.com. If you have misplaced your password, you can get a new one by clicking the orange "forgot password" link below the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com.

About Email Address Changes / How To Unsubscribe (Updated 9/7/13)

To unsubscribe, click the Unsubscribe link here: <http://everythingxm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi> You CAN NOT unsubscribe either by replying to this email or, if you are an AOL user, by clicking the *spam* button on AOL.

To change your email address, visit <http://everythingxm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi> , select *2014 St. Maarten Weekly News* list, and follow the unsubscribe instructions. Then, subscribe your new email address. JMB Website Supporters members no longer need to notify Membership Services of the new email address for continued Secret Site access and to receive Low Airfare Bulletins. We'll be notified automatically.

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<http://www.everythingsxm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?>

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