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Happy New Year --- #1025 --- Monday, 12/28/15 -- News From St. Maarten / St. Martin



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## 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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From: [www.jmbcommunications.com](http://www.jmbcommunications.com)

Weekly News is part of JMB's St. Maarten / St. Martin website: [www.everythingsxm.com](http://www.everythingsxm.com)

Add [jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com) to your address book to be sure you receive this newsletter every week. "Jeff1620" is a send-only email address. For Contact info, see Contact Us at the end of this newsletter.

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***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 over 260,000 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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Download PDFs of Recent Editions ---- Attention iPad, iPhone, and Android Users

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](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml)

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

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#### TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE

Scroll Down for Full Table of Contents; this edition features many new stories about your favorite island:

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:

*In This Week's SXM Weekly News:*

- Renovations Virtually Completed, Simpson Bay Resort "Grand Opening" is Coming**
- No Sale at Sapphire, But Major Renovations Coming, Source Says**
- Last Call From Jeff for Week Three Sleep Four Studio at Sapphire**
- Among Our Newest Discounts: Cugini; Thrifty Car Rental; Piazza Pascal, Sushiitto; Korry's of Toronto, and more**
- Conversion of Discount Vouchers Completes Today; Important Changes for JMB Members**
- New Year's Eve Will Be a Bang-Up Time On SXM, Three Times Over**
- What's Going on at Orient Beach's New Shops?**
- Last Call for Low Prices on 240+ Discounts: Holiday Membership Sale Must End Mon. Jan. 4**
- Seaweed / Chikungunya**
- "Name" Hotels Coming**

**34** news stories this week

Scroll down for our complete Table of Contents

## 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](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](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 Rental / Sale of The Week:**

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? Now reduced to only \$849 for rent or reduced to only \$2499 to buy or make an offer. We will walk away from this if not sold this month. Photos available. Phone Jeff at (508) 747-8281 or email [jeff@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff@jmbcommunications.com)

### **SXM Timeshare Sales of The Week:**

Returns next week.

### **Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:**

See them all at [http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare\\_rent\\_sale/index.shtml](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

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest. This week's Table of Contents follows these links:

"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](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](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](http://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](http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml)

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

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27. Our New \*Triple\* SkyMed Bonus
28. We're Giving Away Nine SXM Vacations... and Tons More
29. Interact With Fellow SXM Visitors on Our Everything SXM Facebook Page
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**Section Four:** For Members Only (Revised 12/31/14)

- A. Where to Get Member Info: [www.everythingsxm.com/secret](http://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 password" in the orange login box near the masthead at [www.everythingsxm.com](http://www.everythingsxm.com).
- C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads: Links are on the Secret Website (see a, above.)

**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://everythingxm.com/sxm/about\\_sxm/paypal.shtml](http://everythingxm.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](mailto:support@jmbcommunications.com)

NON-members who wish to contact us should write to [jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com](mailto: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](http://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. Airport Loaded With Private Jets - Who Are They Carrying?

Ever wondered who's aboard those private jets visiting SXM?

If your camera has a telephoto lens and you can read the aircraft's registration number, you can Google it to find its flight track and possibly its owner and passengers.

A year or two ago, when he bought property in the Lowlands, Donald Trump's 757 was here; its number is N725DT. P4NGK, the Aruba-based 737 that spends a few weeks here each winter, is reportedly owned by a Russian vodka magnate. Trace away -- it may take some digging but you could find what you're looking for. If you use Google for images of N818TH you'll see who flew here last winter and dined at Spiga in Grand Case. He has good taste....

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#### 2. Weather Update; December Winds Continue, Changes Coming

Windy and sometimes showery weather -- typical for December -- continued last week. Saturday was a now you see me, now you don't day for sun -- scattered showers, some brief but heavy, punctuated the day. Changes usually come late in the first week of January, or by midmonth. That's when drier conditions start to prevail.

We'll keep you posted.

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### 3. Carnival's Advance Bookings "Well Ahead" of Last Year

Published reports say Carnival's advanced bookings for January to September '16 are well ahead of last year, despite higher prices -- and similar results are echoed industry-wide.

But recent reports from Front Street indicate cruise ship passengers are keeping their hands in their pockets. Only during the last week have things picked up. Before that business was slow, according to retailers who contacted us.

Restaurateurs in SXM say both November and December sales are less than last year. No one knows the cause, but world news may have played a role. We do know reservations for winter here are very high -- it should be a good year. And in the last couple of weeks, weather in North America started turning wintry. That helps, too.

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### 4. Join The SkyMed Travel Club Free: Book Low Fares Directly With Them

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.

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.

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](http://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 Section 3: *our Holiday Sale ends Monday January 4, so this is the time to join.*

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### 5. "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](http://www.flytravelgo.com) site help support *SXM Weekly News* and our SXM island discount program, JMB Website Supporters.

## **SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares**

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### 6. Renovations Virtually Completed, Simpson Bay Resort "Grand Opening" is Coming

If you've wondered when the major renovations at Simpson Bay Resort would finish, they're virtually there now. In fact, SBR is advertising for employees for its "Grand Reopening" to ballyhoo changes, which are spectacular -- a huge difference from the drab looks of the past 20 years.

Expect heavy sales pressure from the resort -- for many reasons. First, tens of thousands of its timeshare owners have sold or walked away from SBR as the resort coped with bankruptcy, court cases, a sale to Hard Rock International that fell through (Hard Rock was ready but SBR wasn't), and a huge unwillingness by many timeshare owners to pay huge renovation fees.

Should you buy new timeshare weeks directly from SBR or any other SXM resort? See story 8 for our answer.

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## 7. No Sale at Sapphire, But Major Renovations Coming, Sources Say

We've heard from multiple sources inside Sapphire that the proposed buyout by Bruno Sitbon won't happen, and a court case related to it apparently ruled against Mr. Sitbon. We've not been able to get word from Mr Sitbon verifying this, nor do we know if he is contemplating other moves.

However multiple sources inside Sapphire have told us that Jean and Philippe Verdier, Sapphire's developers, will now get back to upgrading the resort at their own expense. The upgrades, costing several million dollars, are to be completed in two years. All resort business tenants either have reopened or soon will, the sources say. We're told that there will be no assessments on timeshare owners for the renovations, a nod to recent timeshare issues.

Once critical renovations have been completed, the resort will be in contact with RCI to re-establish that affiliation. We hope to learn the timetable for that in the next couple of weeks.

When we hear anything more, we'll publish it here.

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## 8. Renting Out Or Buying SXM Timeshare Weeks Directly from Owners

We do not recommend buying timeshare weeks / intervals directly from timeshare developers. Timeshares are a notoriously bad investment (save perhaps for Hard Rock properties), and in SXM most timeshare intervals sell for a fraction of their original purchase price *when they were bought directly from the resort*. If resorts present evidence contradicting this, and claim a profit on resales for timeshare owners, treat it with skepticism.

See [everythingxsm.com](http://everythingxsm.com) and you'll find hundreds of timeshare weeks for rent or for sale *directly from the timeshare weeks' owners*, our JMB members. Most resorts are well represented. You'll find the prices are far less than the resorts would charge were you buying directly from them.

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## 9. Last Call From Jeff for Week Three Sleep Four Studio at Sapphire

Like many other timeshare owners, JMB's Jeff Berger no longer uses his unit -- week 3, in January -- and is ready to walk away from it if it isn't sold *this week*.

Here's the ad:

Enjoy Gorgeous Caribbean Sunsets, Both a Textile and a Clothing-Optional Beach Nearby, Great Nightlife, and Even a Jacuzzi Whirlpool on Your Deck In This Sleep-Four Studio

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? Asking only \$849 to rent or \$2599 to buy or *make an offer*. *We will turn this unit back to the resort if it is not rented or sold in the next week*. Photos available. Phone Jeff at (508) 747-8281 or (faster) email [jeff@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff@jmbcommunications.com)

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## 10. Why You Might Want to Avoid "OPCs"

Simpson Bay Resort is advertising to hire "OPCs" -- "Off-Premises Consultants," often young men and sometimes

women wearing bikinis who fan out across the island to try to con -- er, convince you to listen to a 90-minute timeshare sales pitch in return for which you get a dinner for two, a boat trip, or some other incentive.

Most of the time, these folks are obtrusive, waving at you from the side of a road or hawking you at some tourist destination. They sometimes have scratch tickets and feign great surprise when you, miracle of miracles, that never happens -- win. (They all win....)

If you have money to waste and time to kill, go ahead. But before you do, reread story 8: it may save you a lot of money.

Please also see story #21.

### **SECTION 3: Island**

#### **11. Last Call for Low Prices on About 250 St. Maarten / St. Martin Island Discounts: Holiday Membership Sale Ends Mon. 1/4**

It's almost over -- your last shot at great prices in our Holiday Sale. Ends Monday January 4.

What You Get:

- A growing list of nearly 250 discounts for restaurants, shopping, hotels, car rentals, activities, jewelry, art, and tons more
- Benefits including free ads to rent out or sell timeshare or other condos you own in SXM and worldwide
- Low Fare Guidelines to help you know what fares are worth buying -- and which are just too high
- 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 in this section).
- Buy Now: Holiday Sale Prices Now In Effect

Holiday Sale New memberships:

3 yrs. \$75; 5 yrs. \$109; 7 yrs. \$139 (one year is \$59)

[http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about\\_sxm/paypal.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml)

Holiday Sale Renewal memberships:

One year \$33; 3 yrs. \$64; 6 yrs. \$107 -- our best offer by far

[www.everythingsxm.com/secret](http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret) Go to the *Membership Renewal Center*

Holiday Sale Membership Reinstatements:

One year \$39; 4 yrs. \$88; 6 yrs. \$107

<http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/reinststate/index.shtml>

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11a. Among Our Newest Discounts: Cugini; Thrifty Car Rental; Piazza Pascal; Sushiiitto; Korry's of Toronto, Ontario; Super Dollar Store; Orange Grove Pharmacy...

We're now on a tear adding a significant number of new discounts for our JMB members. As always most discounts are on SXM, but now we'll also be adding occasional new discounts in places in the US and Canada where we have large concentrations of JMB members.

Among our newest discounts: Cugini Restaurant, Simpson Bay (we love it, as readers know); Thrifty Car Rental, for members who prefer a global brand (Thrifty is the largest car rental operator on SXM); Piazza Pascal Restaurant, Grand Case; Korry's Men's Clothiers, Toronto, our first benefit / discount available to members at home in Ontario; Sushiiitto Japanese Restaurant at Port de Plaisance Resort; Super Dollar Store near Grand Marche / Philipsburg; and Orange Grove Pharmacy in Cole Bay.



All of these new discounts and others have been confirmed and we expect them to be live on our site by the middle of this week. A detailed email on this and on additions to our nine vacation giveaway goes to members later this week. Related stories: 11b, 18, 24, and 28.

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## 11b. JMB Discount Voucher Conversion Completes Today; Effects on JMB Members

As we've told members in recent months, we've been updating virtually all discount vouchers on the Secret Site to include this language: "Valid JMB Website Supporters membership card & photo ID required to use this voucher."

We've told all our partners / benefits providers to expect the new vouchers. Through January, they may still accept older vouchers without the new language. But after that they will be looking for new vouchers only. Be sure to download all the vouchers you need before you travel to SXM. They'll all be live on the Secret Site by midnight Monday night (tonight).

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## 12. Real Winter Weather Arrives at Home, Further Snarling Air Traffic

Starting in the west and midwest, real winter weather hit much of the country over the last few weeks. Snow is forecast for parts of the Northeast early this week -- where temps in the 60s and 70s were experienced days ago.

Bad weather has been snarling air traffic. See below for how to deal with it.

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## 13. Get To Your Airport Early...

Three hours ahead of departure is not too early, especially for international flights. Don't go later -- that will worsen your shot at mitigation in case your flight is delayed or cancelled. See below.

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## 14. What To Do If You're At The Airport and Your Flight is Cancelled

If there aren't many passengers and your airline seems to have an organized response to the cancellation, follow their lead. Being patient and understanding goes a long way; being confrontational will aggravate your situation and irritate those who can help you.

If lots of people are affected and you find yourself in chaos, try phoning the airline's 800 number. It may also be slow or busy but it's worth a shot. We've done that and obtained new reservations before moving up in the airport queue. If you're an "elite" flyer, you know who to call.

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## 15. Warning: As Always, Never Leave Valuables Anywhere In Your Car

SXM is paradise, not utopia. The difference is important since sometimes, unexpected things happen in paradise.

We still see people put cameras, pocketbooks, and other valuables under hats inside their car or in their car trunk, two bad ideas. If we see it so do people who might want your stuff....

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## 16. New Year's Eve Will Be a Bang-Up Time On SXM, Three Times Over

Fireworks go off at midnight at the boardwalk in downtown Philipsburg; from a barge near the Lagoon Causeway in Simpson Bay, making Causeway travel challenging; and at Porto Cupecoy.

It looks like the French Side may be comparatively quiet.

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## 17. So What's Going on at Orient Beach's New Shops?

Last Tuesday, tenants were to be picked and, supposedly, given keys to occupy the dozen+ new shops built by the Prefecture.

In the week since there has been no sign of activity whatsoever. Some interested businesses say they've heard nothing. Repeated emails to the Prefecture / Reserve Naturelle have not been answered. Nothing definitive has been published in local papers.

Perhaps this is just poor communications, but there are problems.

First, there is virtually no room for chair rentals now -- and they were key to profitability.

Second, the Prefecture / Reserve Naturelle erected stone walls on the beach in front of the new buildings and those stone walls appear to be aggravating erosion.

Third, part of the season, November and December, is already lost and part of January is certain to go down the drain. That fact and the lack of chair rentals make profitability very difficult.

Fourth and perhaps worst of all, the rent for each unit is about €2500. Paying that through the other eight months is a very tall order.

We'll keep you posted.

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## 18. Car Rentals Just Got More Economical for JMB Members

We've enhanced our car rental discount offerings in recent months.

Tropical-Tropicana Car Rental, the first company we ever recommended, has replaced almost its entire fleet now and has new headquarters at Baker's Suites Boutique Hotel in Simpson Bay.

Last year we introduced woman-owned Leisure Car Rental which now offers all JMB members 15% off car rentals.

And today, we've introduced our new affiliation with SXM's largest car rental company, Thrifty, which has over 650 vehicles including a spectrum of makes and models. They're ideal for anyone who prefers a large global provider over the local companies we've always recommended.

The new Thrifty discount will go into effect this week. We'll email members once it and the other new discounts described in story 11a are in effect.

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## 19. Seaweed Update / Chikungunya Update

There is much less mention of Sargasso seaweed now both in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. Although some beaches are affected, many here aren't -- Mullet Bay, Simpson Bay, Cupecoy, the southern (clothing-optional) part of Orient, and most west-facing French beaches are in perfect shape. We'll post some new beach pictures on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) soon so you can see.

Two years ago, Chikungunya made headlines across much of the Caribbean. Today it's hardly ever in the news. The drought helped, educational programs have helped, and continued anti-mosquito activity should keep things as they are, which is good. We've been on the island for several weeks and have seen few mosquitoes of any kind and no Aedes Aegypti mosquitos which can be carriers of Chikungunya if they bite an infected person.

This is what they look like -- much different from "ordinary" mosquitoes:

<https://naturalunseenhazards.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/aedes-aegypti.jpg>

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## 20. Traffic Update

Thanks to everybody on the island doing Christmas shopping, traffic during the couple of weeks leading up to Christmas was heavy and slow. Now it's normal -- not bad. There's no question that the Simpson Bay Causeway, which just hit its second anniversary, has done a huge job of improving traffic.

The only new issue is the conversion of the Grand Marche in Cole Bay to Carrefour, a French chain, which has made it busy and affected traffic on the Union Road, Cole Bay.

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## 21. "Name" Hotels in SXM: More are Coming

There are supposed to be new hotels coming to SXM, as we've reported over the past year. What brands isn't yet clear, but here's a rundown:

A convention center / destination resort is planned for the harbor area. There are no real convention hotels here now, though both Sonesta Maho and the Westin handle some groups.

A hotel has long been on the drawing board for the Indigo Bay area, timetable uncertain.

Hurricane Luis destroyed Mullet Bay Beach Resort in 1995, where redevelopment has never occurred. It's the island's prime development site but nothing has been announced.

A huge redevelopment plan is in motion for Marigot including a cruise port and major hotel. The project is 1 a few years from realization.

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## 22. Restaurant of the Week: IZI Ristorante Italiano

iZi is really hitting its stride. Owner Davide Foini is a relentless perfectionist who looks at everything, every day, from food sources to kitchen processes to recipes to wait staff organization and responsiveness -- you name it.

The results speak for themselves. His new crab and mahi cakes are luscious. His special the other day -- Chilean sea bass -- was the best sea bass dinner we've ever had, and we've done a number of them on SXM.

Just do it. IZI is in Simpson Bay opposite Pineapple Pete. Plenty of off-street parking. Also a great place for celebrations of all kinds. Innovative, fun restaurant with great food.

See past Restaurant of the Week selections below (the list returns next week). Most of the listed restaurants offer discounts to JMB Website Supporters members; see the Secret Site for details. We'll cover another restaurant here next week. Sill not a member? You're spending way too much for practically everything you buy in SXM. Get hundreds of discounts and other benefits at great Holiday Sale prices: see story 11.

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## 23. Breakfast at Mr. Busby's...

Mr. Busby's Beach Bar is the island's busiest and best known beach bar/ restaurant. But did you know it serves breakfast, too?

It does, starting around 7:30, and they are outstanding. Beyond that, the view is spectacular. You dine in open-air gazebos under tall coconut palms, caressed by gentle trade winds. There's nothing else like it....incomparable.

Try the Egg BLT, poached eggs, and anything else that appeals to you: great stuff cheerfully served by "Wonder Woman" herself, "LuLu" who is one of the island's top servers.

Just go -- great breakfasts and of course, legendary Mr. Busby's Beach Bar lunches. Great stuff.

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## 24. JMB Members: Don't Forget to Use Your Discount Vouchers & Bring Your JMB Membership Card

JMB members who don't have their valid 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 finished modifying all of our discount vouchers to reflect that *they must be used with a valid JMB Website Supporters membership card*. Bring your card *and* your vouchers: no discounts without them. (Story 11b has the details.)

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## 25. Short-Term SkyMed Memberships Cover Your Pre-Existing Conditions

Short Term SkyMed Medical Evacuation memberships -- lasting a few days and ideal for short trips and for people who seldom travel -- cover your pre-existing conditions *but are not renewable*, which means you must reapply for future trips. It's always wiser to buy SkyMed annual (one-year) or multiyear memberships which renew when you pay the standard renewal fee regardless of your health or age at the time of the renewal. *They also cover your preexisting conditions after a short 90-day waiting period*. See more on SkyMed in the next story. It's time....

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## 26. Questions & Answers About SkyMed Medical Evacuation (Updated 12/28/15)

Here are newly 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.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com).

### **Q. What's so special about SkyMed? Aren't these companies 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. Once you're a member, there's no age or health discrimination -- as long as you pay your membership fee you're good to go. (Applies to all annual and longer memberships. Short-term memberships, lasting only a few days, require medical requalification when you buy another.)

### **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 quite important. You'll find them on our downloadable SkyMed Benefits PDF, now on our [SXM Weekly News PDF Archives](#) page.

### **Q. You mean they don't 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 70s. Will SkyMed accept me?***

A. In its brief application process, completed online or by phone or in person with a rep, SkyMed asks for your name, DOB, current Rx medications, medical conditions, and hospitalizations in the last six months. It also asks where you want to be transported when you need an emergency 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. By the way: if you travel very little and only for short periods, you can apply for SkyMed's short-term memberships. They cover all pre-existing conditions.

***Q. We travel 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're away a majority of the time and that means you represent increased exposure. That program is called X-Pat - the program for American and Canadian expatriates living overseas. Even as an ex-pat living in SXM, you can still be transported back to your city of choice in the USA or Canada.

***Q. Does SkyMed cover pre-existing conditions?***

A. Yes, right away for short-term memberships and after just a 90 day waiting period for all memberships lasting a year or longer. 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. Do you require a physical exam for renewal or when I reach a certain age?***

A. No, SkyMed requires neither. Once you join and buy an annual or multiyear membership, we'll renew it every year upon payment of your renewal fee. No physical exam is required regardless of your age or health if you've paid your membership on time. You can be age 109 and still be protected by your SkyMed membership.

***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. *Annual* and multiyear 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. American and Canadian ex-pats living overseas also are eligible.

***Q. What types of policies are there?***

A. SkyMed Memberships (often called policies by members though they actually are memberships) come in several flavors: short term, for people who travel little and for short durations; "annual" for people who want full-year protection that is guaranteed renewable for life when you pay the membership fee on time regardless of age or health at the time of renewal; and Ultimate multiyear memberships which offer low annual cost, maximum benefits, and global coverage and are also renewable for life regardless of age or health when membership fees are paid on time.

***Q. Which membership gives the biggest bang for the buck?***

You clearly get the most for the least with our three-year or five-year Ultimate memberships. Coverage is global, guaranteed renewable, and can not be cancelled due to increasing age or declining health - ever. You'll also pay the same fee as all other members -- there's never an increase related to your personal health or advancing age. And annual memberships are upgradeable to Ultimates at any time.

***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" plans, available in three- and five-year versions, include coverage worldwide except for places you'd probably not want to visit -- Iran, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Yemen, North Korea, and Afghanistan, to name a few.

SkyMed Takes You Home™; What else matters?

For more, see [skymed.com/jmbspecial](http://skymed.com/jmbspecial) (JMB members) or [www.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com) (non-JMB members) or email Jeff Berger directly at [jeff@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jeff@jmbcommunications.com) with the subject SkyMed. If you include your phone number, he'll call you about SkyMed as well, to answer any questions you may have including all pricing options. You can also call SkyMed directly (in Scottsdale AZ, Mountain standard time year round.) Their number is 1-800-475-9633; ask for Nan. If you're a JMB member, say so and have your membership card ready, **All multiyear plans offer major discounts to JMB members.**

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## 27. Our New \*Triple\* 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. Credit Card evacuation programs take you to the nearest appropriate facility; what good is that? There is also no trauma center in SXM, and the sophisticated medical care available at leading US and Canadian 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 that's exactly where SkyMed takes you.

*Thanks to this sale, that has now become a whole lot easier. Here's why:*

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. See below for how this works.

Second, for a five-year SkyMed Ultimate, non JMB members pay \$3495 in advance; JMB members pay only \$2495 through us (or only \$59/month) — 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 non JMB members.* So... the #2 advantage of buying through us is low cost, no matter how you buy.

For contact info (answers to questions about SkyMed), see the last paragraph of the previous story.

*Third: When you sign up for the bonus SkyMed memberships shown above, email [support@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:support@jmbcommunications.com) and tell us. We'll verify the signup and that it is through us, then process your JMB membership extension bonus. But do it soon... this won't last forever.* The third benefit: a dream vacation. Email us after you're signed up through us and for a limited time SkyMed will give you a vacation for a small fraction of its usual cost. (Oyster Bay Beach Resort is one of their vacation sites.)



## 28. Lots More Added: We're Giving Away Nine SXM Vacations

Our giveaway has expanded again with three new items...

First, the all-new El Zafiro Boutique Hotel, operated by a couple from Boston, is opening on beautiful Simpson Bay Beach. It will offer the ninth vacation in our upcoming giveaway to celebrate our SXM site reaching 4.5-million visitors early in 2016. We toured it; it's quite a beautiful property with the beach right outside the door of every room.

Here's a complete list of everything we're giving away as of now -- the list has grown since you last saw it:

Vacation prizes (almost all are eight days / seven nights):

- [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](#)
- El Zafiro Boutique Hotel, Restaurant, and Bar, Simpson Bay

Here are our newest items:

- Sunset Cruise for Two about the [Classic Schooner Passaat](#) (new)
- One-week car rental (Hyundai i10 or equivalent) from [Leisure Car Rental](#) (new)
- Dinner for two at [Mario's Bistro](#), Porto Cupecoy
- Dinner for Two at [Temptation](#), Cupecoy Beach
- Dinner for Two at Big Fish, Oyster Pond
- Dinner for two at [Spiga](#), Grand Case
- Dinner for two at [Le Pressoir](#), Grand Case
- Dinner for two at [Beau Beaus](#) (Oyster Bay Beach Resort)
- Dinner for two at Infinity (OBBR)
- Dinner for two at Sushiitto
- Dinner for two at [Pineapple Pete](#)
- Dinner for two at [Daniel's by the Sea](#)
- Dinner for two at Lal's Curry In a Hurry
- Dinner for two at [Toppers](#)
- Dinner for two at [Toppers By The Sea](#)
- Dinner for two at [Yesna Taverna](#)
- Dinner for two at [Fusion Restaurant](#), Simpson Bay
- Dinner for two at [iZi Ristorante Italiano](#), Simpson Bay
- Massage from [Tricia Altenau of AIA Massage Therapies](#), the island's most sought-after massage therapist

To enter:

We'll draw the vacation winners live on the air on Island 92 radio in late March. After we give away all nine vacations, we'll call the winners back randomly. The first person picked gets our selection of some of the prizes above; that will be our first prize winner. The second person called at random will get our Grand Prize, which has our selection of dinners and other prizes.

As always, anyone who doesn't answer loses and will not be called again.

Enter here:

[http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/getting\\_here/entry-form-for-our-seven-vacation-giveaway.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/getting_here/entry-form-for-our-seven-vacation-giveaway.shtml)

Full rules are on that page.

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## 29. 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*.

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### 30. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

Look here for our PDF archives: [http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free\\_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml)

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### 31. Tech Talk: We Welcome Your Suggestions

In the nearly three months since we've been publishing Tech Talk, we've covered a number of critically important topics. Now we have a simple request: let us know what PC-related topics you'd like to see covered in 2016. We'll make your suggestions the heart of what we do. Email us at [jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com) with the subject Tech Talk.

Index of all past Tech Talk stories (alphabetical); returns next week.

Access these stories in the issue # noted above in our *SXM Weekly News* PDF Archives pages, here: [http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free\\_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml)

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### 32. Introducing Your Trip Reports

We want to publish your SXM trip reports, JMB members: favorite places, things to do, you name it. Mail them (max 250 words) to [susan@jmbcommunications.com](mailto:susan@jmbcommunications.com) with the subject "SXM Trip Reports" and we'll take it from there. Your first name and last initial only will be published. Tell us what you think.... JMB Website Supporters members only.

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#### 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](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](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](http://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](http://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](http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret) .

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

See [www.everythingsxm.com](http://www.everythingsxm.com).

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## CONTACT US

JMB Website Supporters members wishing to contact us should visit the secret site, [www.everythingsxm.com/secret](http://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](http://www.everythingsxm.com).

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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 \*2015-16 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. We'll be notified automatically.

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