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Orient Beach & Dutch Side Timesharing Special Edition
#1028 --- Monday, 1/18/2016 -- 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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Download PDFs of Recent Editions ---- Attention iPad, iPhone, Note, and Android Users

This narrow format is easily readable on all mobile devices. Scroll down for this week's news.

You can also download PDFs of 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.

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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 (Tuesdays during some holiday weeks).

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- *Sapphire Timeshare Petition Drive Elicits Lots of Poignant Comments***
- *Orient Beach Bar/Restaurant Tenants Refuse to Sign Contracts Until Grievances Properly Addressed***
- *Renting Out Or Buying SXM Timeshare Weeks Directly from Owners***
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- *Look At This Gorgeous Hilltop Villa in Point Blanche***
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27 news 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:

Not in archives.

SXM Timeshare Sales of The Week:

Not in archives.

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

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

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.everythingxsm.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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Section Four: For Members Only (Revised 12/31/14)

- 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 password" in the orange login box near the masthead at 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://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. Weather Changes

As usually happens about now, it is getting slightly less hot (84 usually instead of 86) and drier; the hillsides are showing a bit of brown now, after going totally green after a very wet November. Nighttime lows have dropped from 77 to 75 or even a (brrr) chilly 74. You will not need sweaters...

2. Where to Find Current Weather Observations & Forecasts

Go to www.everythingsxm.com and you'll find the forecast; click for details. You can also click "Weather" on our site for lots of satellite images and radar loops.

To see Jeff at Orient Beach, go to cluborient.com and look at the web cam.... (in good weather).

3. "Alex" Formed Last Wednesday -- But Hurricane Season Begins June 1

It started as a weak system near the Bahamas, passed Bermuda, and then was near the Azores when the NHC named it Alex, a subtropical storm that quickly intensified into a rare January hurricane; the 2016 Hurricane season goes in the history books early. This does not mean 2016 will be busy -- or that it won't. We'll see. The last January hurricane was 1938. That Summer, one of the worst storms on record slammed into Long Island and southern New England. Hope for no parallels....

4. Open Enrollment In The SkyMed Travel Club For One Month Only: How To Join

Open Enrollment in the low fare SkyMed Travel Club is back for one month only... January. Here goes:

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 members prices 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 since shortly after the millennium.

The SkyMed Travel Club offers exceptional pricing on everything and almost invariably beats everyone else's pricing. We have been testing it for the past few weeks and have found the pricing to be extraordinary — even on the wildly popular river cruises that are a tourism phenomenon throughout Europe and are quickly gaining popularity here in the US.

And normally, this organization charges you \$99 to join plus \$99 annual renewals. But for our JMB Website Supporters members, and during a brief introductory period for everyone else, the cost to join is zero as will be the cost for renewals. Exclusively through us, you get access to a world-class global ticketing mechanism without paying one cent to get in the door.

This is a new benefit for JMB members. During this Open Enrollment, everyone can join by going to www.SkyMedtravelclub.com, clicking the sign up link on the top right corner of the homepage, and providing the requested information. It's very important to complete the first sign up item (SkyMed Membership Number or Representative ID) by entering the code 391330 — entering that code is what ensures that you pay nothing to be a member of the SkyMed Travel Club. If you fail to enter that code, you will not gain free entry to the club's phenomenal pricing.

Do join — you will not be disappointed once you've booked travel through them.

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 site help support *SXM Weekly News* and our SXM island discount program, JMB Website Supporters.

Important: Expedia recently took over the "back end" functions of the site from Orbitz. It should be operating normally soon. Expedia says. In any case it is worth the wait...

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

6. Sapphire Timeshare Petition Drive Elicits Lots of Poignant Comments

The petition -- started by a few timeshare owners only about a week ago -- had 200 signatures in a few days and lots of comments. Most posters who commented found conditions far below their reasonable expectations, saying maintenance fees had been collected but that no maintenance had been undertaken. Nonfunctioning appliances and elevators, musty smells, and generally unacceptable conditions were widespread.

Jan Borsje returned about three weeks ago to help improve things, but some Sapphire timeshare owners told us they have been down this road before and thought that he was there to make timeshare owners feel as though something was being done while actually doing nothing meaningful. You can read many of those comments -- and add your own -- here: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/754/035/937/maintenance-fees-sapphire-hotel-sint-maarten/>

7. Court Hears Impassioned Testimony About Alleged Betrayal in Sapphire Resort Saga

At the trial proceedings pitting the Sitbons against the Verdiers, the Sitbons alleged that they had an agreement to buy the resort contingent upon receiving certified financials from the Verdiers. The Sitbons alleged that the Verdiers never provided the financials, but the Verdiers declared anyway that the Sitbons defaulted on their agreement to buy because they lacked the required financials. From there it gets more complicated. The Sitbons showed proof of their claim that they've spent millions of dollars of their own money starting to fix the resort. They also claimed that the Verdiers when claiming default took several hundred thousand dollars of down payment which the Sitbons said the Verdiers had no right to do.

The Judge heard it all and seemed quite angry at times at the Verdier's lawyer, who wasn't readily able to answer some questions. The verdict is expected March 8.

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, claiming a profit on resales for timeshare owners, treat that claim with skepticism.

See everythingsexm.com and you'll find hundreds of timeshare weeks for rent or for sale **directly from the timeshare weeks' owners**, our JMB members. Most SXM resorts are well represented. You'll find the prices are far less than the resorts would charge were you to buy directly from them.

SECTION 3: Island

9. Sale Ends Sunday Night 1/17; Lowest Prices on 250+ St. Maarten / St. Martin Island Discounts

It's almost over -- your last shot at great prices in our Holiday Sale. Ends this Sunday night January 17 (midnight PST).

What You Get:

- A growing list of over 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 our reg. \$59**)

http://everythingsexm.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.everythingsexm.com/secret Go to the *Membership Renewal Center*

Holiday Sale Membership Reinstatements:

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

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

10. Sam Runza Returns To Cugini For a Few Weeks; Come and See Him

Sam Runza, who for many years co-owned "Cugini" in Marigot with his cousin Tony and relocated it a bit over a year ago to Simpson Bay to big crowds enjoying great food, returns there this coming week to see all his friends on the island.

Sam had been battling cancer for the past year and will spend 2-3 weeks here just seeing people at Cugini before he goes home. Do go ... it's a great restaurant and yet another reason to visit now....

11. Far-Away Storm Moves Lots of Sand Around on SXM Beaches

Midweek last week, rough surf kept excursion boats at their moorings, it jostled beachgoers at most SXM beaches, and it blew sand off Maho beach creating plowable sand bars on Beacon Hill Road, the road by Sunset Bar. Some beaches grew - like Dawn beach - and others, like Cupecoy, temporarily disappeared. Orient was reshaped and the much photographed sign at Club Orient disappeared, though that may have happened earlier.

Late on Thursday things calmed and normalcy started to return. The cause of all this evidently was early stages of the formation of Hurricane Alex, which churned up waters in the Northeast Caribbean Greater and Lesser Antilles as it swirled toward the Azores and strengthened Wednesday and Thursday.

We received no reports of SXM damage.

12. Orient Beach Bar/Restaurant Tenants Won't Sign Contracts Until Their Grievances Have Been Properly Addressed

The new bars/restaurants/shops on Orient beach were originally scheduled to open in October, 2015, but thanks to French Side bumbling they have yet to open.

To make matters worse, it appears that prospective tenants were never consulted about kitchen room, delivery access, placement of toilets, construction of seating areas, etc. The result is a not-so-delightful mixture of chaos and consternation. A project that was billed as a savior of French tourism has disemboweled it instead. Club Orient is doing fine as are the other beach bars outside the redevelopment area, but the net number of people at the beach is down except at Club Orient.

Among the problems: toilets open directly into the dining area. No drainage on kitchen floors. No access for delivery. Dirt roads in the complex and a severely rutted access road (apparently worse than in years). Inadequate kitchen space (less than before). And there is no roof on the outside dining area, a rather fatal design oversight. The buildings were designed by the Collectivite, not the restaurants.

What's worse, the rentals are 2500 Euros / month, every month. Consequently, prospective tenants met with the French Side government (the Collectivite) last week and the Collectivite agreed to look seriously at their issues. No prospective tenants have agreed to sign contracts until their grievances are handled.

The exorbitant price of rentals -- far higher than before -- is in lockstep with a sharp reduction in chair rentals, which had been a key revenue source. And the dining area is smaller. Bottom line: this will be a gigantic white elephant unless the Collectivite finally listens to prospective tenants and meets their needs.

The wooden project was budgeted at \$3.8 million but doubtless cost far less. We will keep you posted.

13. Cheap and Good Ice Cream in SXM? Yes, It's for Real...

The Dutch Side charges outrageous prices for ice cream. Where you normally buy 1.5 qt. sizes in the US for \$1.99 on sale, those same packages in SXM are usually \$6.99 on sale -- if that. And as we reported in our Grocery Store ratings last week, in bigger Dutch Side markets we've seen ice cream often sticky, sometimes out-of-date, and sometimes just plain rotted.

On the "A" list of markets in last week's ratings was Super U in Marigot. There, we found 1-liter containers of Super-U ice cream for about US\$2.50 - great price, delicious contents. We also found none that were sticky, spoiled, or outdated.

The Dutch Side should take note. There is no comparison at all between Super U and any large Dutch Side market: Super U beats them all by a country mile.

14. Best Island-Made Ice Cream

Etna. Fresh ingredients, all-natural, a terrific product. Buy it on both sides of the island.

15. Best Burgers (Maybe It's The Location That Matters)

Burgers -- many of them a hefty eight ounces -- are widely available here. We've tried them at Papagayo (the restaurant at Club Orient), Mr. Busby's Beach Bar (Dawn Beach), Vesna Taverna (Simpson Bay), Jimbo's (Simpson Bay), and elsewhere. They just seem to taste better here.

Some restaurants add salt and pepper. We like the natural taste of black angus burgers, and we always order them without added spices. All four of the above locations serve great burgers ... give them a try.

16. Best Bagels (and Croissants)

Years ago, when it first opened, Vesna Taverna was known as "The Bagel House." Although this restaurant in Simpson Bay just north of the drawbridge serves breakfast and lunch seven days a week, it's known more for its American-French-and Greek food, served Wednesday through Sunday nights. (Saturday is Greek night, with many Greek specials plus their regular menu.)

They make fresh bagels early every morning. You can get them with lox, with egg sandwiches, or with whatever else you want. Unfortunately you can't buy them by the dozen since they're really for dining in the restaurant. But they are homemade and quite delicious, not that frozen junk you may see elsewhere. Good stuff.

Croissants are regular and whole wheat. The aroma will sell you even before you taste it... Vesna is a multi-year winner of our Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence.

17. Restaurants With The Most Exotic Ambiance

Three, in no special order:

Jimbo's in Simpson Bay: with swimmable pools meandering through it, has a true Caribbean setting unmatched anywhere. One time actor Jimbo, born on Valentine's day, has great food and reasonable prices and is a past winner of our Everything SXM Award of Excellence.

Daniel's by the Sea offers dining in gazebos on the beach under the palms, again uniquely Caribbean. The same beautiful tradewinds-caressed setting is the home of Mr. Busby's Beach bar at breakfast and lunch. One of the island's biggest, busiest, and best places to dine. Also a multi-year Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence winner.

Go to IZI in Simpson Bay to celebrate. You'll see how it morphs from a Ristorante Italiano with better food than ever to a place of fun.... And IZI is a Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence winner.

18. How You Can Help Island Dogs: Contribute to "Camp Goldendog"

Just look: <http://teamgoldendog.org/CampGoldendog.html>.

19. Where to Buy Your Island Home or Island Real Estate

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

20. Look At This Gorgeous Hilltop Villa in Point Blanche

Villa Onyi - featured on HGTV multiple times -- delivers breathtaking views of the St. Barths channel and St. Barths in the distance, making it an amazing place to watch both the Heineken Regatta and New Year's Eve fireworks on our neighboring island. Or sunrises. Or the sky, with a glass of wine in hand. Or snooze under your own tropical canopy.

Inside, both bedrooms have windows to the sea -- even through the mirror in the master bedroom. Top-of-the line stainless steel appliances highlight the gourmet kitchen, next to an attractive living room. Two baths, two bedrooms, plus a study and your own private pool. Amazing isn't a good enough word to describe this place.

It's now available for rental or for purchase after the season; email jeff@jmbcommunications.com and we'll get you to the realtor. You'll find pictures in the Albums section of our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#).

21. Where To Find Accurate Info on The Number of Cruise Ships in P-Burg

Look on our [home page](#) and you'll find current weather right at the top. Click the link for the forecast, and click Weather on [everythingxsm.com](#) for current satellite images and radar loops 24/7/365.

22. Restaurant of the Week: Canoa, in the New Culinary Village at Dawn Beach

Take one classically trained chef -- Sherman Maarten; blend culinary aspects of Europe and the Caribbean; locate a beautiful restaurant in a marina on Oyster Bay... and you're at Canoa, in the emerging (de-facto) culinary village on Emerald Merit Road (the Oyster Bay Beach Resort Road) in Dawn Beach.

Along with two other renowned restaurants - Daniel's by the Sea and the under-new-management Big Fish, both of which we'll be talking about in the weeks to come -- the "culinary village" (our term) brings you excellence in dining from the beginning of your meal to the end.

Canoa is beautiful. Canoa has impeccable service. Canoa has innovative dishes, attractively presented. Canoa appeals to everyone with seafood, meats, and vegetarian selections. Great salads and desserts. And of course seasoned, attentive service from servers who know what they're doing. Their website is undergoing a re-do but look anyway: www.canoasxm.com. Go; one of our long-time favorites. Simply great dining, and a consistent winner of our Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence.

See past Restaurant of the Week selections below. 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 that end Sunday 1/17: see story 9 for details.

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 12/14/15)

Canoa, www.canoasxm.com (featured 1/18/15)

SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 6/15/15)

Cugini (12/7/15)

Trattoria Pizza Pasta, Maho Plaza near Casino Royale (featured 5/11/15)

Daniel's By The Sea, www.dawnbeachxsm.com (featured 11/16/15)

Domino's Pizza <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dominos-Pizza-St-Maarten/95635717338> (featured 8/11/14)

Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 12/21/15)

Fusion, www.fusionrestaurant-sxm.com (featured 1/26/15)
The Hideaway, <http://www.lavistaresort.com/restaurant.html> (featured 4/28/14)
Stone Restaurant, www.thestonerestaurant.com (featured 9/2/14)
Le Pressoir, <http://www.lepressoir-sxm.com> (featured 7/6/15)
Temptation, <http://www.rareandtemptation.com/EN/temptation/>
Lal's Curry In A Hurry Indian Restaurant, Airport Road, Simpson Bay (featured 1/19/15)
Mr. Busby's Beach Bar <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 2/23/15)
Island Pizza, <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 5/18/15)
Pineapple Pete, www.pineapplepete.com (featured 2/2/15)
Papagayo, <http://www.cluborient.com/papagayo.php> (featured 5/4/15)
Coconut Grove (formerly SPN Cafe), <http://www.pineapplepete.com/sport.html> (featured 8/18/14)
Dany & John's Cupecoy Beach Bar (on Cupecoy beach; follow the car path from the far side of Ocean Club to get there). (featured 4/27/2015)
FIG, Maho complex at Le Terasse
St. Maarten Yacht Club, at the Dutch Side Drawbridge
Jimbo's, www.jimboscafe.com (featured 4/13/15)
Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 11/10/14)
Topper's / Topper's By The Sea <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 6/29/15)
Taloula Mango <http://www.taloulamango.com/> (featured 4/20/15)
Bylbos, Simpson Bay
Sushiitto Japanese Restaurant, Port de Plaisance <https://www.facebook.com/sushiitto.sxm> (featured 1/12/15)

23. Questions & Answers About SkyMed Medical Evacuation (Updated 1/8/16)

Here are constantly 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.

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 your 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. What is the maximum age for applying for membership?

A. No maximum.

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. Does SkyMed cover us no matter where we travel?

The basic SkyMed plan covers you in the USA (all 50 states), Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba, plus Costa Rica and Belize. The Ultimate membership covers you globally -- or you can add a global rider to annual memberships (at \$100/year) which adds rest-of-the-world coverage.

SkyMed does not cover countries where there are open hostilities -- Iraq, Iran, Syria, Somalia, North Korea, etc.

SkyMed *Takes You Home*TM; What else matters?

For more, see skymed.com/jmbspecial (JMB members) or www.getskymed.com (non-JMB members) 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 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.** Please tell them you're calling because you heard about them from Jeff Berger.

24. 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 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.)

25. We're Giving Away Ten SXM Vacations... and Tons More

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):

- [Club Orient](#) Naturist Resort, Orient Beach (Must be taken May, 2016)
- [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 (new)

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 Sushitto
- 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 [Vesna 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

Full rules are on that page.

26. 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*.

27. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

Look here for our PDF archives: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

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.

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

To unsubscribe, click the Unsubscribe link here: <http://everythingxsm.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://everythingxsm.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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<http://www.everythingsxm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?>

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