

Can't see this newsletter? Go [here](#).

#1029 --- Monday, 1/25/2016 -- 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*

Copyright ©, JMB Communications, 2016. See [Legal](#) for reprint requests, page bottom.

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.

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 over 260,000 readers around the world...***

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



Protect your vacation and business travel with SkyMed Emergency Medical Evacuation Membership



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](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?>

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

## 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).

*In This Week's SXM Weekly News:*

- *Winter Weather in SXM***
- *Advice on Buying and Selling Timeshares***
- *Should You Walk Away From Your Timeshare? Try "Hot Bargains" Instead***
- *Sam Runza Has Returned To Cugini; Come and See Him***
- *Some Orient Beach Businesses Now Occupy The New Buildings; What Happened?***
- *First Case of (Mild) Zika Virus Appears on French SXM; Heads Up for Pregnant Women***
- *Mariah Carey Relaxes on Grand Case Beach, Visits Butterfly Farm & Dines From Spiga***
- *Seaweed Is Gone...***
- *Spiga & Le Pressoir: The Top Two Grand Case Restaurants***
- *Cheryl Formally Says No To A New Orient Beach Bar/Restaurant***
- *Lots of Restaurant Updates***
- *Best Island Massages: See Tricia at AIA Massage***
- *Questions & Answers about SkyMed Medical Evacuation***
- *We're Giving Away Ten SXM Vacations... and Tons More***
- *Interact With Fellow SXM Visitors on Our Everything SXM Facebook Page***

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

**Section One:** Getting There: Airlines, Airports, Cruises, & Weather [Go To This Section](#)

1. Winter Weather in SXM
2. Where to Find Current Weather Observations & Forecasts

**Section Two:** Accommodations (*Hotels, Inns, Timeshares*) [Go To This Section](#)

3. Advice on Buying and Selling Timeshares
4. Should You Buy a Timeshare Directly From Sapphire Resort?
5. Renting Out Or Buying SXM Timeshare Weeks Directly from Owners
6. Should You Walk Away From Your Timeshare? Try "Hot Bargains" Instead

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

**Section Three:** Island [Go To This Section](#)

7. Sam Runza Has Returned To Cugini; Come and See Him
8. Some Orient Beach Businesses Now Occupy The New Buildings; What Happened?
9. First Case of (Mild) Zika Virus Appears on French SXM; Heads Up for Pregnant Women
10. Mariah Carey Relaxes on Grand Case Beach, Visits Butterfly Farm & Dines From Spiga
11. Seaweed Is Gone...
12. Beaches Quickly Recover After Storm-Tossed Seas Jostle Them
13. Club Orient Hosts The Busiest Beach?
14. Small Island, But Huge Take-Out Choices
15. Spiga & Le Pressoir: The Top Two Grand Case Restaurants
16. Our 2016 "Everything SXM Awards of Excellence" are Coming
17. Cheryl Formally Says No To A New Orient Beach Bar/Restaurant
18. Lots of Delicious Flatbread Appetizers at IZI
19. Sushi at Big Fish (Which Is Not Just Fish)
20. Look At This Gorgeous Hilltop Villa in Point Blanche
21. Restaurant of the Week: Island Pizza, in the New "Culinary Village" in Dawn Beach
22. Best Island Massages: See Tricia at AIA Massage
23. Questions & Answers about SkyMed Medical Evacuation
24. Got Other SkyMed Questions? Here's Where to Ask
25. Our New \*Triple\* SkyMed Bonus
26. **We're Giving Away Ten SXM Vacations... and Tons More**
27. Interact With Fellow SXM Visitors on Our Everything SXM Facebook Page
28. Where to Find Past Issues of *SXM Weekly News*

**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://everythingsxm.com/sxm/about\\_sxm/paypal.shtml](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](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. Winter Weather in SXM

Close to perfection; daytime temps around 84, nighttime temps around 75. Puffy clouds in a clear blue sky. Showers are quite infrequent now but they can still happen. If that's better than where you are, it's time you got down here and stayed a while, don't you think? (After the storm is fine too.)

---

#### 2. Where to Find Current Weather Observations & Forecasts

Go to [www.everythingsxm.com](http://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](http://cluborient.com) and look at the web cam.... (in good weather). He may just be waving at you....

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

#### 3. Advice on Buying and Selling Timeshares

Several quick, clear points:

- a) Do not buy directly from resorts, regardless of their incentives. Their prices are far higher than you'll pay in the secondary market and all you're doing is paying hefty commissions to sales people.
- b) Do not have your resort sell or rent out a unit you're not using. Same reasons as above and there's no guarantee they'll be successful.
- c) Buy or rent units on our [everythingsxm.com](http://www.everythingsxm.com) site directly from the owners. All weeks listed are from JMB members only, on whom we have seller data -- these are not anonymous strangers.
- d) If you are selling or renting out units, use our timeshare sales / rental pages. They give you detailed heads up about scams and you should read that info thoroughly. Start at [everythingsxm.com](http://www.everythingsxm.com) and click the Timeshare Rentals / Sales link.
- e) See the story in today's issue about walking away from timeshares. There are other alternatives.

---

#### 4. Should You Buy a Timeshare Directly From Sapphire Resort?

We won't tell you not to. We will say if we were in the market we'd never buy any timeshare directly from any resort anywhere, since you can buy the same thing in the secondary market for far less.

Sapphire has other issues. A reader wrote us and alleged that someone identifying himself as Pasquale, the "hotel manager," offered to sell him a unit for about \$15K. The same Pasquale said the value of it would jump to \$45K.

There are a few issues here:

First, the acting general manager at Sapphire is Jan (pronounced Yon) Borsje, a straight shooter. There is no GM named Pasquale.

Second, because of the court case and because of many complaints about the condition of the resort, timeshare weeks for sale or for rent there are a dog on the market. Not only are many not selling, timeshare owners by the thousands have simply given their weeks back to the resort, losing their total "investment." The chance of any timeshare weeks bought at Sapphire appreciating to a multiple of what you pay for them (as "Pasquale" claims) is about equal to the possibility of a blizzard hitting SXM on your next vacation....

Bottom line answer: in our opinion, not now. See the prior story for other advice.

---

#### 5. Renting Out Or Buying SXM Timeshare Weeks Directly from Owners (More)

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 [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 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.

---

#### 6. Should You Walk Away From Your Timeshare? Try "Hot Bargains" Instead

Tens of thousands of St. Maarten timeshare owners have sold or walked away from their timeshares over the last 10+ years. Many did it when Simpson Bay Resort levied huge Supplemental Maintenance Fees on timeshare owners to finance its decision to do heavy renovations. It was a clever ploy on their part since they knew many would walk, giving them inventory to sell at full retail. (Tweaking timeshare owners like this is a common ploy in the timeshare business.)

Because of the clear failure of Sapphire developers Jean and Philippe Verdier to maintain their resort to the satisfaction of timeshare owners, local authorities, and RCI, that resort has seen thousands of timeshare owners walk away in disgust.

Let's vent a little: It's not easy. You spend \$15,000 or more on a timeshare week expecting the resort will keep its promises about maintenance. It collects the money but there is no evidence to support that it is spent on maintenance as called for in the timeshare contract. And of course, there is no Timeshare Owner Consumer Protection in St. Maarten and the Dutch Side government never seems to take any steps on behalf of the island's tens of thousands of beleaguered timeshare owners who, it just so happens, are its most loyal visitors. They're far more loyal than one-and-done tourist visitors or window shopping cruise passengers who spend next to nothing while clogging the island's roads in diesel-belching buses while going to one end of the island to gawk at planes or the other to gawk at naturists.

The island's priorities are quite screwed up. Philosophically, many timeshare owners already have decided that enough is enough and have left SXM and sworn never to return. (Caravanserai). Others, many of them, are trying to figure out what to do with a timeshare they no longer want that costs too much and is worth next to nothing on the



open market.

Hot bargains: As a last resort -- for those who don't want to lay out another dollar -- offer to sell it as a "hot bargain" for \$500 or less. Effective today, Monday, January 25, everythingxsm.com is introducing a new "hot bargain" section to its timeshares for sale page. "Hot bargains" are units to be sold for \$500 or less and they will be the first units offered at the beginning of the 2016 listings (and 2017 when we start showing them in March).

It's worth a shot for you... Jeff got the idea when he sold his Sapphire unit for \$500 plus the 2016 maintenance fee and transfer fee. That led to this idea to help those who want to sell timeshares at very low prices. JMB Website Supporters members only. See below for more on JMB memberships.

### **SECTION 3: Island**

#### **Now 255+ St. Maarten / St. Martin Island Discounts & Other Benefits for Three Years for \$95 (one yr. \$59)**

What You Get:

- A growing list of over 255 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: Use Your Benefits on Your Next Trip

New memberships:

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

Renewal memberships:

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

Membership Reinstatements:

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

---

## 7. Sam Runza Has Returned To Cugini; Come 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, returned last week to see all his friends on the island.

Sam had been battling cancer for the past year and will spend a bit of time here just seeing people at Cugini before he goes home. Do go ... it's a great restaurant and yet another reason to visit now.... One of SXM's most loved restaurateurs.

---

## 8. Some Orient Beach Businesses Now Occupy The New Buildings; What Happened?

Some prospective tenants of the new buildings on Orient Beach between Kon Tiki and Pedros had alleged that the buildings violated French building codes and had a number of undesirable and unacceptable design issues, so they said a week ago they wouldn't occupy the structures until their demands were met. They were asked by the Collectivite (French Side government) to occupy a smaller space than before, pay far higher rent, and have less opportunity to earn revenue through renting beach chairs. A talk with the government about all this seemed promising so some decided after our last week's issue had mailed to get the keys. Aloha was among the first.

Whether other issues will be resolved remains to be seen. We'll keep you posted.

---

## 9. First Case of Mild Zika Virus Appears on French SXM; Heads Up for Pregnant Women

For everyone but pregnant women, Zika is similar to but considerably milder than its cousins Dengue Fever and Chikungunya. Dengue is rarely fatal, but Chikungunya (which in 2013 was near epidemic levels in many countries) can last for months and is hardly ever fatal unless you're quite ill to begin with.

If you are pregnant or trying to get pregnant, it may be wise to avoid any area where Zika is widespread; Zika can cause serious birth defects. The World Health Organization has much info on Zika for pregnant women here: <http://tinyurl.com/jyebw26>.

---

## 10. Mariah Carey Relaxes on Grand Case Beach, Visits Butterfly Farm & Dines From Spiga

Mariah Carey isn't new to SXM -- she has visited here several times in the past. This time she was on her Australian billionaire boyfriend's megayacht Arctic when she came to Grand Case Beach to relax with her kids. She also took them to The Butterfly Farm near Orient Beach -- its butterflies are perennially fascinating. Her chauffeur at her request got a menu from Spiga (see separate story on Spiga), took it to her, then someone -- believed to be boyfriend James Packer -- phoned the order into Spiga co-owner Lara Russo as Ms. Carey was telling him what she wanted in the background. (The two just got engaged.)

What they ate is nobody's business and we didn't ask.

---

## 11. Seaweed Is Gone...

As of mid-day Thursday when this story was written, there was really no sign left of sargassum seaweed on the island, that annoying stuff that had sometimes made a few east-facing beaches a bit less ideal for vacationers. Good riddance.

---

## 12. Beaches Quickly Recover After Storm-Tossed Seas Jostle Them

When hurricane Alex formed in the central Atlantic it churned up the sea over a wide area, including the Northeast Caribbean. It flung plowable sand onto Beacon Hill Road and briefly caused rough waters in the area, making the sea less clear (not good snorkeling at all at the time).

Fast forward to now and seas are calm, the water is crystal clear and warm, and the angel fish at Orient beach are again dining on bread offered by hand from tourists....

---

## 13. Club Orient Hosts The Busiest Beach?

This beach gets mobbed sometimes by ships passengers who prefer the look of no tan lines. Last Wednesday was the busiest day we've seen there in a long time -- and vacationers from around the world were part of it. Americans, Canadians, Germans, French, Panamanians, Scandinavians, and many others were there. Orient is bigger in total than Mullet Bay and seemed much busier to us when we visited last week. It's clearly one of the most beautiful tropical beaches on the island, as are its clothing-optional competitors, Happy Bay and Cupecoy Beach.



---

## 14. Small Island, But Huge Take-Out Choices

For an island that's rather small, SXM has an abundance of choices open all day that are willing to create box lunches you can take on island excursions.

Pineapple Pete in Simpson Bay is quick, reasonable, and has very good variety.

Vesna Taverna in Simpson Bay has delicious sandwiches (offered on delicious bagels if you like) plus some Greek specialties.

Mr. Busby's Beach Bar in the "culinary village" at Dawn Beach near Oyster Bay Beach Resort, in a gorgeous beach setting that may draw you to stay, has great sandwiches and salads and even authentic Philly cheese steaks. Island pizza is nearby if taking pizza slices might be on your menu (it's also our Restaurant of the Week; see below). And if you need snacks, Pier Grocer is across the street. They also have delicious freshly baked pastries if you get there early enough....

Prefer to do a dinner take out? All the above offer dinner takeouts. Davide Foini of iZi Ristorante Italiano in Simpson Bay opens at 5pm and does lots of take-out business early and late. And of course, as you read, even Mariah Carey does nighttime take-out from Spiga in Grand Case. Yum...

---

## 15. Spiga & Le Pressoir: The Top Two Grand Case Restaurants

There are many fine restaurants in Grand Case but only two we'd call downright extraordinary, both of which are multiple award winners.

Le Pressoir Restaurant Francaise' chef/owner Franck Mear was recently declared "Caribbean's Best Chef for 2015" by *Caribbean Journal*. Pressoir has been published in many bucket lists of "100 things to do before you die," and that accolade is richly deserved.

Equally as great is Spiga, nominally Italian but with such incredible creativity and innovation you'll wonder why you ever wasted time with meatballs and spaghetti. As you'll quickly learn following one meal there, this is not your father's Italian restaurant. It's different and way, way better. Just go. See story # 21 for websites of these and other restaurants, featured as previous Restaurants of the Week here in *SXM Weekly News*.

---

## 16. Our 2016 "Everything SXM Awards of Excellence" are Coming

About three dozen St. Maarten / St. Martin business will soon receive our "Everything SXM Awards of Excellence" for "outstanding managerial leadership, strategy development, customer orientation, and strategy implementation."

Of course quality is at the heart of it; these are among the top businesses in SXM in terms of what they deliver to their customers.

We'll announce all the winners in an upcoming edition of *SXM Weekly News*. Watch for the awards to be prominently displayed in businesses across the island.

---

## 17. Cheryl Formally Says No To A New Orient Beach Bar/Restaurant

Andy & Cheryl's was for many years "the" landmark Orient Beach beach bar / restaurant. Andy passed away a few years ago and the restaurant was among those demolished for the new buildings we've been writing about for more than a year.

When walking toward the outdoor showers near the security building at the entrance to Club Orient late one

afternoon recently, Jeff bumped into Cheryl and her new husband who were also leaving the beach. He congratulated the just-married couple. He also formally asked the question that has been on the minds of many readers -- are you returning to the beach? We already knew the answer was no, and Cheryl confirmed it.

Andy & Cheryl's was an institution, as were "Surf Club South" in Grand Case, their original restaurant, and Andy & Cheryl's Baywatch, the original name of the beach bar. Andy is greatly missed by many and Orient is not the same without their restaurant.

---

## 18. Lots of Delicious Flatbread Appetizers at IZI

iZi Ristorante Italiano owner David Foini is always advancing his Simpson Bay restaurant, which has been packed nightly for weeks.

Davide is always manic about quality and consistency and flies in top-quality foods daily from world-class sources. He also keeps his offerings on track to accurately reflect the state of the culinary art in Italy. "In Italy, we don't eat lasagna at restaurants now," he told us last week. "We eat that only at home."

Among his recent changes: an array of amazing and delicious flatbread appetizers on their own special menu. Just do it ... lots to love, as always. Shrimp and salmon flatbreads are our favorites.

---

## 19. Sushi at Big Fish (Which Is Not Just Fish)

Big Fish Restaurant -- in the emerging Culinary Village at Dawn Beach, along the road to Oyster Bay Beach Resort - has several fish offerings but also meat and vegetarian offerings. Although known for fish, their other menu items are equally delicious and creative. And the ambiance is bright, light, and wonderfully creative as well.

Among their many appetizers: several sushi offerings. Want nigiri sushi? Several sizeable sushi rolls? Both are offered, with healthy low-sodium soy sauce. We've already had several of their sushi selections: fresh and delightfully delicious. One night we watched playoff football at the bar while munching on sushi. (Patriots football, of course.)

New restaurant managers Mike and Teresa, formerly of Bajatsu, really know their stuff. Reservations essential - this is one busy restaurant. Tell them Jeff Berger sent you.

More stories follow.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**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](mailto: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. Restaurant of the Week: Island Pizza, in the New "Culinary Village" in Dawn Beach

Only opened for a few years, Island Pizza has become one of the busiest and most sought-after pizza emporiums on the island. Its pizza is the authentic thin-crust style, well-baked to be crisp and delicious. There's a horde of topping choices so everyone -- vegetarian to carnivore -- gets exactly what they like best. The ingredients are scrupulously fresh, flown in daily to guarantee perfect flavor.

Just go; you will not be disappointed.

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](http://www.iziristoranteitaliano.com) (featured 12/14/15)  
Canoa, [www.canoasxm.com](http://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.dawnbeachsxm.com](http://www.dawnbeachsxm.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](http://www.spiga-sxm.com) (featured 12/21/15)  
Fusion, [www.fusionrestaurant-sxm.com](http://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](http://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 1/25/16)  
Pineapple Pete, [www.pineapplepete.com](http://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](http://www.jimboscafe.com) (featured 4/13/15)  
Vesna Taverna, [www.vesnataverna.com](http://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)

---

## 22. Best Island Massages: See Tricia at AIA Massage

Tricia Altenau is clearly the most sought-after massage therapist on the island, as she has been for years. In our experience, she's very much unlike others; with other massage therapists, you feel good after your treatment but hours later, you're back to where you were. Tricia really knows what she's doing. Her treatments deliver results for what ails you -- results that last several days at least. In our experience, it's often significantly longer. Not just soothing, but healing. See much more at [www.aiamassage.com](http://www.aiamassage.com). Tell Tricia Jeff Berger sent you.

## 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](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. 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™; 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.** Please tell them you're calling because you heard about them from Jeff Berger.

---

## 24. Got Other SkyMed Questions? Here's Where to Ask

If you have questions about SkyMed not answered above, email [jeff@getskymed.com](mailto:jeff@getskymed.com) and Jeff will get back to you. Please also include your phone number and best time to call; he'll be in touch.

SkyMed Takes You Home® - what else matters?

---

## 25. 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.)

---

## 26. 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 Sushiiitto  
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  
NEW Dinner for two at The Palms Restaurant, 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.

---

## 27. 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*.

---

## 28. 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)

---

## 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\\_xsm/paypal.shtml](http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_xsm/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).

---

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.

Get Your Own Free Copy Of St. Maarten and St. Martin Weekly News:

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

LEGAL:

Entire contents copyright (c), JMB Communications, 2016. World rights reserved. Excerpting, quotation, and republication, in any form, print, electronic, or archival, is expressly prohibited without written advance permission. You can forward this newsletter in its entirety only to your friends. For reprint permission, email us. JMB vigorously defends its copyrights. \*Everything St. Maarten\*, \*Everything SXM\*, and \*Everything St. Martin\* are service marks of JMB Communications. \*JMB Communications\* is a trademark of JMB Communications, P. O. Box 1812, Plymouth, Massachusetts 02362-1812 USA. Join our free St. Maarten / St. Martin newsletter mailing list at <http://www.everythingsxm.com> . You cannot join by emailing us.

Our email headers also contain subscribe / unsubscribe / address change links.

To see the JMB Communications Privacy Policy, visit [http://everythingxm.com/sxm/privacy\\_policy/index.shtml](http://everythingxm.com/sxm/privacy_policy/index.shtml)

1/25/16 #1029 1/22 6am AST 7.8

| [Terms of use](#) |

Copyright ©, JMB Communications, 2016. World rights reserved.

##