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*** Heineken Regatta Preview Edition *** #1034 --- Monday, 2/29/2016 -- 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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Weekly News is part of JMB's St. Maarten / St. Martin website: www.everythingsxm.com

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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, 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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28 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:

RENTAL 3/27/2016 4/3/2016 Week 13 Simpson Bay Resort and Marina Beautiful newly renovated stylish, spacious top floor one bedroom unit - sleeps four. 4th floor unit, B432, private balcony with sitting area and spectacular ocean and sunset views overlooking Simpson Bay. Air-conditioned, TVs, internet, fully equipped all new stainless kitchen, large private bedroom with king-size bed, living room with memory foam Murphy beds. Resort offers several pools w/swim-up bars, restaurants, tennis courts, fitness center, a convenience store, water sports, casino, short walking distance to many more restaurants, bars, and entertainment. Renter pays \$50.00 timeshare tax on checkout. More info: <http://www.simpsonbayresort.com>. \$1,000.00 Eric - 541.915.4664 eric@ericschiff.com

RENTAL 5/7/2016 5/14/2016 19 Royal Islander Club-LaPlage Fourth floor (unit 4105, near elevator and ice machine), two bedroom/two bath condo that sleeps 6 comfortably, fully-equipped kitchen, with eating area and two balconies (off living area and master bedroom), with patio furniture, overlooking the pool and Maho Bay. Within walking distance of restaurants, grocery store, liquor store, shops, spa, casino and nightclubs. Right on Maho Beach and a short walk to beautiful Mullet Beach. \$1,400/week Kathy 214.385.0246 connellkaz@yahoo.com

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 3/5/2016 3/19/2016 10 and/or 11 Royal Palm Beach Resort Unit 8406. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms with sleep sofa in living room. King size beds. Televisions in each bedroom and the living room. Fully equipped kitchen and large living/dining room. Balcony with table and chairs overlooks Simpson Bay and the Caribbean Sea. Resort has it's own beach and features of the resort include: a health club, hair salon, bar, restaurant, pool, pool bar, internet cafe and mini-market. Within walking distance of many fine restaurants. Close to 3 casino's. 5 minutes from airport. \$4500 per week or \$8000 for both Paula 410-661-7283 avon93021@verizon.net

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

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- 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://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

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. Update on jetBlue Flights to SXM

Last week, we published an article stating that Jet Blue was planning to drop San Juan (SJU) to St. Maarten flights. Apparently a few people read the headline and not the article and assumed Jet Blue would be pulling out of SXM. *That is not what the article said and that is not what Jet Blue is doing.*

As we said last week, Jet Blue's popular nonstops from New York and Boston are unaffected. If you have reservations on the San Juan - St. Maarten route, contact Jet Blue. The change is effective in May.

As it continues to grow, we expect Jet Blue to add flights to SXM. We don't know when, but we believe new flights could well be coming from either Ft. Lauderdale or Washington Reagan -- or both, which are major Jet Blue focus cities that the airline is growing. We also expect Southwest to come to SXM, possibly in the next year, likely from BWI.

2. Eastern Air Lines 737 Flight Arrives in SXM

To the astonishment of many, an Eastern Air Lines 737 -- yes, you read that right, *Eastern Air Lines* -- landed in SXM last week, deplaned passengers, picked up passengers, then headed to Canada.

A Miami-based company a while ago bought the intellectual property rights to the Eastern name and livery, and the airline started flying last year -- initially mostly charters from Miami to Havana.

It is expanding from charter into scheduled service and has its sights set squarely on the Caribbean. It has or is ordering new 737 and A320neo jets. It could become an interesting new competitor in SXM over the next few years, likely aiming at travelers from the freezing northeast.

Who knows, it could even revive the old Eastern's tagline, *Number One to the Sun*.

We've already been in touch with their CEO and we'll keep you posted. Their new website is <http://easternairlines.aero>.

3. Air Travel Complaints Skyrocket 30% in 2015

More complaints were filed against American Airlines last year than against any other carrier, in a year when overall complaints surged 30% ahead of prior-year figures. In the case of AA, that's not surprising, since the airline was up to its eyeballs merging its systems with the former US Airways -- a process that almost always is temporarily disruptive to service quality. Over the next couple of years, their service should improve.

Fairing even worse was the much-maligned low-fare carrier Spirit Airways, which had the highest rate of complaints per 100,000 passengers of any airline. In recent years they've been criticized for abysmally slow check-in lines which have caused passengers to miss planes, arrogant or unresponsive service, etc.

More: <http://tinyurl.com/zqhfdws>

4. Our "FlyTravelGo" Travel Website Lets You Easily Compare Fares, Buy What's Best

Our flytravelgo.com website has been redesigned to give you clear preferences when you buy airfare. Now, you can quickly and easily select what's important to you: getting there fast with a minimum number of stops (or none); price; specific airline; time of day. The site also lets you look at fares for specific dates or nearby dates, which may save you money.

FlyTravelGo has become a favorite of many of our readers and their families and friends. Check it out at www.flytravelgo.com.

5. Where to Find Current Weather Observations & Forecasts

Weather the last couple of weeks has been unusually showery. At this point weather usually is getting drier by the day, but not this year.

For current weather, go to www.everythingsxm.com -- the SXM forecast is on our home page and on our Weather page; you can click those links for detailed forecasts. Our Weather page also includes constantly updated satellite images and radar loops for SXM and the Caribbean.

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

6. Best Smaller SXM Hotels

SXM has all kinds of hotels, large to small, chain to local...

Increasingly, visitors seek the intimacy and serenity of smaller properties, on or near beaches, and the island excels in that area.

Here are several we recommend:

L'Esplanade in Grand Case, in a gorgeous setting overlooking Grand Case Bay, is a family-owned, family-run, award-winning resort complete with its own yoga/exercise area, award-winning Spa, and a location near many of the island's best restaurants and its most popular beach, Orient Bay. L'Esplanade just received our 2016 Everything

SXM Award of Excellence -- and a vacation there is among the top prizes in our upcoming vacation giveaway. See story 18.

Baker's Suites in the heart of Simpson Bay, built only a couple of years ago, offers suite accommodations with all the amenities at very reasonable pricing. It's definitely worth a close look. It's owned and operated by the Baker Family, which also has Tropical-Tropicana Car Rental (now with an almost 100% new fleet) and The St. Maarten Party Bus. A Baker's Suites vacation also is among the prizes in our upcoming giveaway and Bakers, too, has received our 2016 Everything SXM Award of Excellence.

Summit Resort in Cupecoy, with stunning views of distant mountains, the Anguilla Channel, and the northern part of Simpson Bay lagoon, has undergone extensive renovations in the last year and it both looks and feels great. It's located near Starz Casino and its many fine restaurants, the Medical School at the American University of the Caribbean, and the breathtaking clothing-optional Cupecoy Beach. Summit is also a winner of our 2016 Award of Excellence and is also providing a vacation in our giveaway.

El Zafiro Resort on Simpson Bay Beach is a brand new resort with its own beach, restaurant, and bar. This small, intimate property has gorgeous rooms and personal service. A vacation at El Zafiro is also among our upcoming giveaways. See story 18.

7. Where To Rent or Buy an SXM Timeshare

If you want a SXM timeshare condo for a fraction of what the resort would charge, buy directly from the timeshare owner -- not the resort. Go to our www.everythingsxm.com and click Timeshare Rentals / Sales and you'll find hundreds of them. Most are for sale for far less than the timeshare owner paid, and way less than you'd pay the resort.

We also accept ads only from our JMB Website Supporters members, people who are not strangers to us.

If you're the seller, how much should you ask? Look at the hundreds of ads on our page and keep your prices competitive with others for the same size unit at the same resort.

N. B., despite total renovations, prices at Simpson Bay Resort remain depressed. In the resale market weeks are plentiful and they may currently offer the best bang for the buck.

Want to advertise your timeshare for sale or for rent? Members only can do that:

New memberships:

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

Renewal memberships:

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

Membership Reinstatements:

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

SECTION 3: Island

8. Warning to Pregnant Women Concerning the Zika Virus

If you are pregnant or attempting to become pregnant and are planning to go anywhere where the Zika virus is present, you should ask your doctor what to do. Although in upwards of 70-80% of cases the virus presents no symptoms at all (it's extremely mild), doctors believe the virus can cause microcephaly in infants particularly if the mother is infected during her first trimester. Microcephaly is a birth defect related to small brains / small heads and is usually fatal to the child within months of birth. Authorities are also saying now that Zika may be sexually transmitted.

The disease is not harmful to anyone other than the fetuses of pregnant women, doctors are saying.

There are now a reported seven cases of Zika on the French Side, two on the Dutch. If you're on the island, you should always use protection against mosquitoes. The Mosquito Milk roll-on is highly effective; see story #14.

9. St. Barths Hit Hard By Dengue Fever

Dengue Fever, which is much worse than the mild Chikungunya which was at near-epidemic levels here in late 2013, is making a comeback now in St. Barths where there are several hundred cases. We know of no other major outbreaks of Dengue anywhere including SXM. If you were thinking of a day trip to St. Barths, either use lots of mosquito repellent or stay in SXM.

10. Seaweed Update

Pilot reports and satellite images last week indicated that sargassum seaweed from the Sargasso Sea was heading this way and by late in the week it had started to reappear. Most beach businesses, working with the government, are clearing off east-facing beaches rather quickly. As reported before, the southern "naturist" end of Orient beach is barely affected by the seaweed, which appears to be shunted farther north along Orient by the reef. West-facing and southwest-facing beaches are unaffected.

11. Cupecoy Beach Update

Cupecoy changes daily according to currents, wind conditions, and surf buffeted by far-away storms. It can change from lots of sand to none in a matter of hours. Ask Dany, at Dany's Beach Bar; he watches it. Regardless of sand conditions, Cupecoy is downright gorgeous and if you're a beach person don't miss it.

12. Orient Beach Update

The southern clothing-optional part of Orient Beach at Club Orient is the most popular naturist beach in the entire Caribbean. Protected by a coral reef, it seldom gets much seaweed. Virtually the entire beach is mechanically swept every morning to remove whatever comes overnight.

Club Orient, the naturist resort, has given us a vacation to give away in our 10-vacation giveaway celebration. See story 18.

Meanwhile, the tenants at the new buildings housing bars, restaurants, and shops on Orient are still hopping mad. By press time there was no resolution of what they regard as outrageous rents (€2500/month year-round), alleged building code violations, and other problems. Don't be surprised if public demonstrations soon snarl traffic on paved area roads there.

13. Grand Marche Super Market Plans Major Renovations

We met Grand Marche / Carrefour SXM owner Anil Sabnani last week at the Carrefour market, which has been quite a substantial success. We asked about Grand Marche.

"The Carrefour upgrade cost well over \$2-million," he said, "and the market is doing very well. We are planning a major makeover of Grand Marche, and it will happen later this year."

No decision has been made yet whether the makeover will transform Grand Marche to another Carrefour, though that's a possibility. "The problem is that most Carrefour products are French. That works on the Union Road where we have many French customers, but we have many fewer in our Bush Road Grand Marche store. So we don't know yet," Mr. Sabnani said.

Super U in Marigot is competition for Carrefour, but that store is much smaller than Carrefour and has less of a selection. A new shopping area between Grand Case and Marigot, near La Savanne, is expected to have a larger Super U ... but it is farther from the border and probably won't be a competitive factor.

As always we'll keep you posted.

14. A Look at Two Types of Mosquito Milk Repellent

There are two formats of "Mosquito Milk" repellent sold in SXM -- roll-on, and atomized spray. The roll on is cloudy and the spray is clear. You can buy about 50% more spray than roll on for only about \$1 more, so we asked Jaico, the manufacturer in Belgium, what the difference is. Turns out it's significant. Mosquito Milk is used in a wide portion of the world:

"The difference between the formulas of the spray and roll-on device is largely the concentration of active ingredient, which keeps the mosquitoes away, and the mode of application.

"The spray formula contains 9.5% DEET which is safe for use on children. Parents should spray the formula on their own hands and apply this on the parts of their children's body which are not covered by clothing. This formula shows good repellency against the most common mosquitoes (6h) and malaria mosquitoes (5h). You can reapply this product when necessary as the instructions on the label advise you. The formula is not greasy and dries immediately.

"The roll-on formula contains 24.5% DEET which is excellent for use on adults and children over 12 years old. This formula is easy to apply due to the roll-on device. In contrast to an aerosol device, no harmful particles can be inhaled.

There is no need for the customer to spread the formula with their hands. The formula is milky white and soft for the skin.

"Due to the higher concentration of DEET this formula gives excellent protection against all mosquitoes: 7h for most common mosquitoes (Culex which spreads Dengue virus), 4h for Aedes spp. (Zika virus, yellow fever,...) and 6h against Anopheles spp. (malaria).

"These efficacy results of the spray and roll-on were demonstrated by several studies which are performed according to the WHO-protocol (world health organization) by recognized European institutes."

15. Our Everything SXM 2016 Awards of Excellence

Within the next week or two, we'll formally announce the winners of our 2016 Everything SXM Awards of Excellence. Most of the three-dozen awards presented this year are in the hospitality sector -- hotels, car rentals, restaurants, sailing. Others involved shopping and other areas. We'll publish all the winners soon.

16. Heineken Regatta Preview

Of all the events in SXM throughout the year, the biggest is the Heineken Regatta.

Running from March 3-6, this year's 36th regatta features more than 200 boats from around the world, a number of which are record holders. It's great fun for participants, spectators aboard boats and on land, and partygoers since the Regatta's "Serious Fun" tagline really is taken seriously by the organizers.

You can read about the parties, the entries, and much more here: <http://heinekenregatta.com/news.php>

We'll post lots of Regatta news and pictures on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) and right here in Weekly News... stay tuned.

17. Here's The Real Reason Business Is Down Across SXM

Stayover tourists are the people who propel the St. Maarten economy. Most stayover tourists are timeshare owners since the clear majority of accommodations here are in timeshare resorts.

Since the island has never enacted any genuine Timeshare Owner Consumer Protection legislation, owners / developers at several resorts, feeling unrestrained, have run amuck on several occasions and "screwed" timeshare owners, to use a term first applied by a revered local TV talk show personality, Oral Gibbes. Big problems have occurred at Caravanserai, Atrium, Diamond Resorts, and others.

The island has focused on attracting cruise ship tourists by the boatload instead of more remunerative stayover tourists, and as we said above it hasn't passed consumer protection for them. Consequently tens of thousands of timeshare owners have left with no intention to return. As we've said many times, cruise ship passengers do not spend money in Front Street stores according to the people who really matter -- the merchants themselves.

Why?

For some time, a good friend has been asking cruise ship passengers where their ships stop prior to SXM. Apparently, he says, SXM is well down the list of stops in many cases, which means that passengers are spent-out or ported-out when they arrive in SXM. A number of ships go to Tortola first (new cruise facilities) or St. Kitts or St. Thomas, where they shop and spend money.

Cruise ships promote two primary things in St. Maarten / St. Martin, apparently: Orient Beach (naturists), where passengers gawk and have a beer at Pedro's; and the Airport, where passengers gawk and have another beer. Those that go to Front Street window shop, buy next to nothing, and drink beer.

"Port St. Maarten's" job is to bring people onto SXM who buy things. People who gawk, drink a beer, and leave don't cut it. Visitors often remark that the first thing they notice is that "mountain" in town with heavy equipment on top -- the dump. That's not a good thing. Neither is the fact that the best island with the best restaurants, beaches, and *shopping* is one of the last on the itinerary of many ships, our source found. The result has been a big drop in business, Front Street stores are telling us.

The other problem is the astounding lack of promotion of SXM. We're told that Aruba's tourism promotion budget is \$20-\$24-million. SXM's is roughly \$1.5-million, we're told by government sources. That's useless. And in the face of Cuba, it's also foolhardy and dangerous.

We'll have more comments about this to come. Infrastructure needs serious immediate improvement to attract the numbers of visitors the island needs, and the island *must* give heavy priority to tourism promotion if it is ever going to realize its potential and mark its territory before the Cuba Craze takes hold.

Right now, it's nowhere close.

18. Our 10 Vacation Giveaway is Three Weeks Away: Final Two Weeks to Enter

Here's a complete list of everything we're giving away as of now...

Entries officially close on Monday, March 14, 2016. Read down to enter.

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](#) (Naturist)
- [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 aboard the [Classic Schooner Passaat](#)

One-week car rental (Hyundai i10 or equivalent) from [Leisure Car Rental](#)
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 Sushiiito
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:

Entry period ends at midnight on March 14, 2016. We'll draw the vacation winners live on the air on Island 92 radio on March 21. After we give away all 10 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. *You must give us a phone number you can answer regardless of where you are when we call.*

Enter here:

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

Full rules are on that page.

The Drawing:

It starts March 21 at 9:15 a.m. Atlantic time. We know that's early but to give away 10 vacations by 11 a.m. Atlantic Time we must start early. Answer your phone when we call... if you don't answer (the call will be from Island 92's US line or SXM line), we hang up and you lose. You must answer your phone to win. Entries officially close on Monday, March 14.

19. How To Complain To a Restaurant

How do you react when you don't like a restaurant? There are lots of reactions, including not returning; bashing them on TripAdvisor; telling everyone how bad it was -- or simply walking away while muttering.

But the single best way to judge a restaurant that has screwed up is to tell the manager and see how they react. Cold food, wrong food, improperly prepared food, etc. are all reasons to be unhappy.

But the manager can't correct problems unless he/she knows about them. That's why we suggest you make management aware of what's wrong. If they apologize and fix it and thank you, that matters a lot. If they say "everyone has a bad day" or just "we're busy" or something else that doesn't fix the problem, you can react however you like. But don't bash restaurants without first giving them a chance to address what's wrong. In many cases, they'll do what's right.

St. Maarten / St. Martin Homes, Villas, Businesses, Commercial Properties, and Residential Properties for Sale (NEW):

[Click to access our recommended real estate agent](#)

20. Restaurant of the Week: IZI Ristorante Italiano

David Foini is an unrelenting, unapologetic perfectionist. From his original "La Raviolina" in Sandy Ground to his gourmet "La Gondola" which reigned in Cupecoy for many years, he has always demanded much from his suppliers and his employees.

In his upbeat "IZI" Ristorante Italiano in Simpson Bay a few weeks ago he was saying how well everything was going while sitting with us at our table. Our dinners arrived and David quietly touched the underside of the plate, muttered something in Italian, said "Excuse me," and took the plates into the kitchen. About 10 minutes later, new plates came out and everyone warned us that the plates were very hot.

"Hot food has to be served hot and stay hot. Your food came out on plates that were warm, not hot, so I brought them back and..." he made his point in the kitchen. Dinner that time was the best Sea Bass we had ever had anywhere -- thin and totally delectable. When we returned a few nights ago, we had their salmon, one of our long-time favorites, along with a side of ultra-creamy, fresh fettuccine alfredo. The appetizer was salmon carpaccio -- exactly as David had served it all those years ago at La Gondola, on a purposefully cold plate.

IZI doesn't vary. It is consistently excellent and amazing, It earned our Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence for 2016, its fourth consecutive year. We said of La Gondola all those years ago, "This place is perfection." We can tell you without hesitation that the dinners at IZI (pronounced "Easy") are every bit as great as La Gondola. Just Go. Great place from every perspective, and tell David and Marco we sent you.

A dinner for two at IZI is among our prizes in our upcoming 10 vacation giveaway. IZI also gives something special to all JMB members; see the Secret Site for details.

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: see story 7.

Big Fish Restaurant www.bigfishsxm.com/ (featured 2/8/16)
IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 2/29/16)
Canoa, www.canoasxm.com (featured 2/1/16)
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 (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 2/19/16)
Island Pizza, <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 1/25/16)
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)
Bylbo, Simpson Bay
Sushiitto Japanese Restaurant, Port de Plaisance <https://www.facebook.com/sushiitto.sxm> (featured 1/12/15)

21. Traveling This Spring Or Summer? How To Handle SkyMed's 90-Day Pre-

Existing Conditions Exclusion

SkyMed "Takes You Home"® one-year and multi-year memberships include a 90-day waiting period for pre-existing conditions. Most members want to be sure any pre-existing conditions are covered when they travel so... if you are traveling 90 days or more into the future .. get SkyMed now so when you're ready to go, everything is covered.

Got questions? Email jeff@getskymed.com. If you want us to call you to talk SkyMed over, include your phone number and best time to call as well as your time zone. SkyMed is available to Americans, Canadians, and ex pats only.

For details now, see www.getskymed.com.

22. Age Is No Deterrent to Getting SkyMed Medical Evacuation Protection

SkyMed has no upper age limit on applications for its medical evacuation protection. It does not matter if you're 89 -- apply anyway, there is no charge for unsuccessful applications. SkyMed Takes You Home® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. See the entirely new website www.getskymed.com for more but read the next few articles; they answer many questions. You can also contact Jeff for more info at jeff@getskymed.com.

23. Questions & Answers About SkyMed Medical Evacuation (Updated 2/25/16)

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 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 on-time 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 *at all*. Apply away.

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

A. Yes, at about \$9/day per person or maximum \$18/day per family. 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. That's a big advantage over short-term plans.

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, assuming renewals are paid on time. 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 "Takes You Home®" plan covers you in the USA (all 50 states), Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba. The Ultimate membership covers you globally

through SkyMed Global -- or you can add a global rider to annual memberships (at \$100/year) which adds rest-of-the-world coverage, also through SkyMed Global. 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 (JMB members) or www.getskymed.com (non-JMB members) or email Jeff Berger directly at jeff@getskymed.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 and Jeff will get back to you. Please also include your phone number and best time to call; he'll be in touch. *Please use the subject "SkyMed" in your email.*

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 over 260. 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 for the family plan (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.)

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

See story #18.

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

Updated weekly.

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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