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*** Heineken Regatta Special Edition *** #1035 --- Monday, 3/7/2016 -- 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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the end of this newsletter. Stay with us for all the latest tourist-oriented news from St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM all year long. We now have over 260,000 readers around the world...

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



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

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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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- Heineken Regatta Results & Pictures**
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[31](#) 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 3/12/2016 3/19/2016 Week11 Simpson Bay Resort and Marina Third floor ocean views. King bed Master, private bath. Granite and stainless,full kitchen. Full dining room,living room with two murphy beds. Full AC. Next to Olympic swimming-pool, with swim up bar. Parking elevator to third floor. Sat to sat check in B310. Beaumontia first B bldg. Great views. \$1,100.00 Karen. 508-636-3926 rinky51@aol.com

RENTAL 3/25/2016 4/1/2016 Royal Palm Two bedroom condo with king size beds. Full kitchen. Pool with swim-up bar. Gym. Excellent location. Price adjusted for one couple. \$2400 per week Harvey 937-274-5853 hrtuck@att.net

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 1/21/2017 3/18/2017 Week 4, Week 5, Week 6, Week 7, Week 8, Week 9, Week 10, Week 11 Simpson Bay Resort & Marina Simpson Bay Resort & Marina2 Bedroom Villa: 211A - 211B (Master and Junior Suites) together accommodate 6 people. Master suite consists of King size bed/master bedroom, 2 Murphy beds/living room, full kitchen, dining/living room, spacious bathroom with separate double vanity area. Beautiful, large deck overlooks Simpson Bay. Junior suite (lock out) 2 full beds, a small kitchen, dorm size refrigerator, microwave, toaster, coffee maker. The bathroom is spacious with a separate double vanity area. Deck overlooks Simpson Bay & Pool. **All boat excursions are located onsite and available directly from the resort. \$18,000.00 Matt O'Donnell 609-780-6845 mess113@yahoo.com

SALE 3/18/2017 3/25/2017 11 Simpson Bay Resort 5-Star timeshare with great view of Simpson Bay. Large, 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath, Living room, Dining area and fully equipped kitchen with patio across from the D-pool. Sleeps 6. Short walk to Simpson Bay Beach in the best rated resort on St. Maarten. Unit #12. \$16,000 Stan 203 245-4727 cell 203 962-9630 lsnvr@sbcglobal

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

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

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

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

C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads: Links are on the Secret Website (see a, above.)

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

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

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

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

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

Contact Us:

[Revised 2/24/15]

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

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

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

All JMB Newsletters Read *From JMB*

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

THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest.

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

1. Weather

Mostly hot and humid. Widely scattered brief showers some days. Generally dry conditions in the hills.

2. 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.

3. Where to Find Current Weather Observations & Forecasts

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

4. Sapphire Beach Resort Sitbon vs. Verdier Case Results Due Tomorrow

The Sitbon family, which ran the resort for a few years under contract to resort developers the Verdier family, will find out on Tuesday whether they get to buy Sapphire Beach Club. The Sitbons allege that the Verdiere breached a lawful purchase and sale contract. The court in SXM is to render its verdict tomorrow (Tuesday) -- in Dutch. As soon as we're told what it says by people close to the case, we'll pass that info along to our JMB Website Supporters members in a special bulletin. We'll also publish it in the March 14 edition of *SXM Weekly News*.

5. Mary's Boon Beach Resort Is For Sale

Rumors float around SXM constantly so we asked Mary's Boon owners Mark and Karla Cleveland directly if this one is true. Mark quickly replied:

"Yes I guess for the right price about everything is for sale. About from the day we bought back the hotel in 2012 we let a realtor friend list it. As before with growing kids and grandkids it's a bit to manage 100%. Not expecting or pushing that anytime soon and if I ever did I would be involved. By the way, we had a great 2015 and even better 2016 high season so far."

The story was in the London *Daily Mail*. Here you go: <http://tinyurl.com/zbe4q4w>

6. Mandara: Another One Bites The Dust?

Yet another would-be residential development in SXM appears to have bitten the dust.

Mandara, a swath of land above Tamarind on the island's East Coast between Dawn Beach and Guana Bay, has a sign that has seen better days -- and nothing else. We asked Natasha Laurent, a real estate agent on the online Mandara website, whether it's dead but had not heard back from her by presstime. The project had been announced during the Great Recession.

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://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

Renewal memberships:

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

Membership Reinstatements:

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

SECTION 3: Island

8. Up-To-Date Report On The Zika Virus: A Case of Mistaken Identity?

The aedes aegypti mosquito is not a nice bug. Black with white racing stripe-like markings, that mosquito carries dengue fever, Chikungunya, Zika, and other maladies *if and only if* it bites a person infected with any of those diseases.

During a conversation with a writer/reporter in SXM early during the Regatta, it became clear that we all do not necessarily know what is going on with Zika.

The writer, who is well known and well respected in SXM, said some scientists are openly doubting that the Zika virus has anything to do with microcephaly, the purported Zika-caused birth defect that causes children to be born with small brains and to die months after birth. The reporter told us that in Brazil, where microcephaly is occurring, authorities are spraying insecticide everywhere, apparently including reservoirs. They say a number of pregnant women drinking water from those reservoirs are having children born with microcephaly. They add, she said, that the insecticide is causing the birth defects, not the otherwise mild and transitory Zika virus.

There was no info about the Guillain Barre syndrome, a serious autoimmune disorder that some people are saying may somehow also be linked to Zika in Brazil. More on that is here:

http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/gbs/detail_gbs.htm

The larvacide (insecticide) that many suspect is causing microcephaly is made by Monsanto:

<http://ecowatch.com/2016/02/12/larvicide-cause-not-zika/>

The question is whether Zika is a mild disease which is symptomless in a majority of cases and has no side effects, or whether it can cause microcephaly and/or Guillain Barre. Many who thought they knew the answer are now not so sure.

9. Heineken Regatta Results & Pictures

Although about 200 sailboats in many categories participated in this year's Heineken Regatta, one stood head and shoulders above the others for its revolutionary design and its record-breaking performance.

On Friday, the 70-foot-long carbon-composite triple-hull Phaedo "gunboat" flew around the island in an hour and 19 minutes, beating the 1:29 record it had set last year. Its huge sails often propel it along at speeds in excess of 40 kts and it is frequently seen with only part of a single hull touching the water. It is the most fascinating piece of sailing engineering and ingenuity we've ever seen.

During the cover date of this newsletter we will have posted dozens of Regatta pictures (including some we shot of Phaedo as it flew through Baie Orientale) on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#). You will see complete results at www.heinekenregatta.com.

For great pictures and lots of information on Phaedo, see <http://www.teamphaedo.com/>.

10. Dengue Fever Vaccine Being Tested

Although it is currently not at all widespread in SXM, Dengue Fever is the worst of the several viruses which potentially can be spread in the Caribbean by infected aedes aegypti mosquitoes. A vaccine for has been developed and is in clinical studies (finally). More:

http://www.who.int/immunization/research/development/dengue_vaccines/en/

11. Where Should You Buy Cheese?

As a half-French, half-Dutch island, SXM offers many of the cheeses you'd find in France or Holland. Carrefour in Cole Bay has a good selection in its house "Carrefour" brand and good prices as well. Both Simply Markets, in Marigot and Orient near the road to Pinel, have a large selection.

But once again Super U seems to us to have the best selection. Super U is a relatively new market next to McDonalds in Marigot. Great prices, fresh stock, good service, but slow register lines much of the time. Not big but very busy.

12. SXM In Serious Need of Hospitality Training

As SXM Rotary pointed out in a campaign a few years ago, tourism in SXM is everybody's business. The SXM economy revolves around tourism. That's why SXM schools should teach hospitality to all students -- starting with the basics like please, thank you, and brisk response to consumers.

Beyond that, job training is essential. Businesses need standard operating procedures which are strict and unwavering and which are strongly enforced for consistency. The best businesses do this -- top restaurants are a great example. Watch most employees at Spiga, IZI, Pineapple Pete, Sushiitto, SkipJack's, Toppers, Mario's Bistro, Daniel's By The Sea / Busby's, Cugini, and Vesna Taverna (among others) and you see people in constant motion getting things done.

It leaves a lasting impression that helps bring back tourists. Smiles are a big deal, too....

13. FIG Restaurant Getting High Marks At Its New Location

"FIG" - Randy Attin's excellent restaurant which relocated to the second floor of La Terrasse where Charolais used to be (in Maho) -- is getting rave reviews from just about everyone who visits.

The food at FIG has always been excellent, but now parking is easier (there's an underground garage in the building), service has been kicked up a notch, and the setting has been entirely renovated and is modern and beautiful.

If you haven't tried FIG lately, do it; you won't be disappointed. "FIG" is an acronym for Food Is Good and it certainly is at FIG.

14. Restaurant of the Week: SkipJacks

SkipJacks is a bit deceiving when you first look at it. A long hallway takes you to the dining area but first, you pass by their little fish market which has a good selection of local and some cold water fish. You'll also pass their lobster tanks with spiny Caribbean lobster plus cold water lobster flown in fresh from North Atlantic waters. Spiny lobster prices are very reasonable compared to many other quality restaurants -- and it's Saba lobster, too, the best.

The dining room is huge, with both elevated seating and seaside seats offering a great view of megayachts moored in the lagoon.

But the home runs start getting hit, one after another, as soon as you sit down. Kelvin, our waiter, had been with Pineapple Pete before; both restaurants have great waitstaffs that know exactly what to do and when to do it -- and they *move*.

The night we visited, about 10 days before Regatta, the place was packed. We later heard that night totalled 225 dinners, an average night for SkipJacks. Many ordered lobster -- there were lots of them in the lobster pool. Others, me included, ordered fish and chips because here they use Cod, just like in Boston (not mahi). Their crab cakes are also outstanding and have practically no salt, a good thing. No MSG, either.

They're also renowned for their steaks and we'll try one when we go back in a week or two. All in all, SkipJacks is an outstanding restaurant. Owner George Shetter knows his stuff and this place shows it. Great staff. Great food. Great location. Just go... for us it was a wonderful experience and we'll be back.

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 3/7/16)
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)
Dany & John's Cupecoy Beach Bar (on Cupecoy beach; follow the car path from the far side of Ocean Club to get there). (featured 4/27/2015)
FIG, Maho complex at Le Terasse
St. Maarten Yacht Club, at the Dutch Side Drawbridge
Jimbo's, www.jimboscafe.com (featured 4/13/15)
Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 11/10/14)
Topper's / Topper's By The Sea <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 6/29/15)
Taloula Mango <http://www.taloulamango.com/> (featured 4/20/15)
Bylbos, Simpson Bay
Sushiitto Japanese Restaurant, Port de Plaisance <https://www.facebook.com/sushiitto.sxm> (featured 1/12/15)

15. Best Places To Try Journey "Johnny" Cakes on SXM

If you Google or Wikipedia Johnny Cakes, you'll see they have a worldwide following. But their preparation and use can be far different.

Produced in Rhode Island, Kenyon's Corn Meal, made in a grist mill that is over 250 years old, created Rhode Island's signature "johnnycakes" which are like corn meal pancakes, sweet, delicious, and served with maple syrup. They're also cooked like pancakes.

In the Caribbean, "Journey Cakes" were the original of a very different concoction intended to be used by travelers -- hence "journey." You can see exactly how they're usually made in this video that we produced several years ago: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XurYtUpZI20>

Not all Caribbean Johnny Cakes are made that way.

At Mr. Busby's Beach Bar you can order practically any sandwich on homemade Johnnycakes -- even breakfast or lunch sandwiches, and they are really good. A link to the Mr. Busby's website is in the previous article.

Johney Burger's in the departure lounge at SXM Airport uses great tasting Johney Cakes that are baked, not fried. Their burgers are fantastic, named for different geographical areas on the island. Definitely try them at the end of your next SXM vacation.

16. St. Maarten's Own: Buy DAS Cigars

If you like really good cigars, you owe it to yourself to try DAS cigars when you're next in SXM. With tobacco grown from Cuban seeds in the fertile soils and ideal climate of the Dominican Republic, these cigars are all slowly handcrafted in SXM using custom-grown wrappers from Connecticut and elsewhere. They are a St. Maarten company that soon expects to have US and Canadian distribution (it's being established now). In the meantime, ask for it by name at better Cigar shops across the island.

See more here: <https://www.facebook.com/DasCigars/> Tell the owner, Andi, that we sent you.

17. Restaurants at Porto Cupecoy

From a culinary perspective, Porto Cupecoy has really come of age.

Although there have been a number of restaurants here for years, only now is real excellence showing up. A few weeks go, and also a few months ago, we featured "Mario Bistro" at its new Porto Cupecoy location, to which it moved well before high season. And we'll soon be visiting and telling you about Shanghai Brasserie, across the plaza from Mario...

Mario's former restaurant in Marigot had seen better days. The food was as spectacular as it had always been but the neighborhood had declined and the building owner wasn't doing the best possible job of building maintenance. So Mario made the big move to Porto Cupecoy, where the building is new and gorgeous and the dining is spectacular. Mario is in the kitchen making sure everything comes out just as you expect and he's doing a marvelous job according to virtually all who visit, including us. We love it. Go... it's clearly one of SXM's best.

Also check out Shanghai Brasserie under Elisa Cohen with some start-up energy from long-time culinary entrepreneur Jim Goldman. It has a large menu, great food, and a very authentic ambiance like the best of the best. We'll be going soon as well.

Rendezvous Cafe and Ernest & Fidel's round out the restaurants at Porto Cupecoy. Visit soon...

18. Scout Out New Restaurants Where You Want Discounts

For almost 15 years, JMB Website Supporters has been giving its members dozens of restaurant discounts across SXM -- in fact it's now over 260 total discounts for practically everything you do on the island.

Although we offer airfare guidelines, car rental discounts, jewelry gift cards, shopping discounts, free ads to rent out or sell timeshares in SXM and elsewhere, art discounts, and far more, our major thrust has always been discounts and incentives from a broad cross-section of appealing SXM restaurants. Dozens now participate.

If you're a JMB Website Supporters member, check the Discounts Master Index on the members-only Secret Website to see current benefits. If you have favorite places that aren't listed, give us the name of the restaurant or other business; the owner's name and email address (we approach only by email); and info on what kind of food the restaurant offers. We'll email them and offer them participation in our program which offers them increased foot traffic with no charge for participation.

Since we approach only by email, we must have all this info.

If you're not a JMB member, join us soon -- you won't be disappointed.

New memberships:

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

Renewal memberships:

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

Membership Reinstatements:

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

19. Two Old Favorite Restaurants: Topper's & Pineapple Pete

Two of St. Maarten's most popular restaurants have a lot in common. And some other things not so in-common.

Pineapple Pete's "head pineapple" is Pierre "Pete" Ferland, a Canadian. "Topper" Daboul is an American who has been in the Caribbean making great food as long as anyone can remember. Pierre and Topper run two of the busiest restaurants on SXM.

Both are culinary experts with knowledge they freely share with others. Pierre also owns Sushiitto, which has great sushi and teppanyakki at reasonable prices, and he is redeveloping a concept to re-introduce a new restaurant this Spring next door to Pineapple Pete.

When asked *how do you make this*, Topper freely tells you some culinary secrets (if time permits), and he does exactly the same thing some time between 10 and 11 local time most Thursdays on Island92 radio, 91.9 FM and online at www.island92.com.

Both of them believe in charging reasonable prices and they do exactly that.

Both deliver plenty of food and have truly attentive service. Their staff people know what they're doing.

Both offer fresh and delicious lobster. Try both for a variety of different cooking approaches; great stuff and you'll love the research. (Both Daniels by the Sea and SkipJack's also offer lobster and sell a lot of it.)

Both offer lots of choices. When you're hungry, just go. You will not be disappointed. Nothing pretentious here, just truly excellent food and plenty of it. You'll also see that both restaurants are repeat recipients of our Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence which is proudly displayed in each restaurant. Go... great stuff.

20. Want To Meet Gendarmes? Here Are Three Sure-Fire Suggestions

On the French Side there are three easy ways to meet gendarmes, the pumped police who are actually members of the French military. The bad news is that these methods will cost you.

a) Drive after having several drinks. French Side drunk driving laws are very very strict and at the very least you will be pulled over and heavily fined by gendarmes. Drive around carelessly and you're sure to wind up in jail as well.

b) Do not wear, and do not have any of your passengers wear seat belts. The fine is about \$200 per person per offense, payable in cash. This is best accomplished in the daytime on the waterfront in Marigot. Wave at the gendarmes to make sure they see you. Do not be surprised if they approach with automatic weapons.

c) If you see gendarmes while driving, put your cellphone up to your ear and toot your horn to be sure the gendarmes see that you're violating the French Side ban on driving / talking on your cell phone while driving.

Of course, if you're drunk, driving with no seat belt, and talking on your cell phone while driving drunk belt-less, you'll likely hit the jackpot and meet lots of gendarmes who may even require you to stay over in jail.

All of these are remarkably bad ideas and we do not recommend them at all...

21. Avoid Pic Paradis

If you want to visit the Loterie Farm nature park, do it; it's great from top to bottom. Zip lines, natural food emporium, hikes, pool, lots more. Monkeys too, sometimes. And the view from the top of the zipline trail is tremendous.

But we urge you not to drive or hike to the top of Pic Paradis (Paradise Peak), the highest elevation on the island. The road is a terrible mess and police don't patrol it. For years it has been the site of numerous holdups and thefts from cars, locked or not. Just stay away from the peak.

22. Have You Met Mervin The Wild Monkey Yet?

On this trip we've seen dozens and dozens of iguanas (we've told you before where to find them), probably half a dozen mongoose, mostly in Oyster Pond, and three wild vervet monkeys -- one in the Orient Beach area across the street from the Cadisco gas station and two ambling across the road near the downhill entrance to Oyster Bay Beach Resort in Dawn Beach. The latter two were both near the electrical junction box on Oyster Pond Road near Emerald Merritt Road and they may have been the same large monkey, who we've named Mervin....

Don't believe there are wild monkeys in SXM? There are estimates of up to 2000 of them. They like private homes with fruit trees and nuts. (Iguanas like private homes with vegetable gardens.)

See the video of a wild monkey we shot years ago in SXM: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qU1e0z6ndzQ>

23. Iguana Soup

A few years ago, we saw a car hit an iguana in SXM in Sandy Ground. The driver stopped and picked up the injured animal. Good, we thought; he'll bring it to a vet and....

When we told two locals about that both laughed... and both said "iguana soup."

Far from being just a Jimmy Buffett classic, iguana soup is a culinary tradition in the Caribbean, though we don't recall seeing it on any SXM menus. We've not tasted it but we've been told it's very appealing.

We heard the same about ox tail soup but we have no plan to try that, either.

24. Last Call for Entering Our Ten Vacation Giveaway

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 Sushitto
Dinner for two at [Pineapple Pete](#)
Dinner for two at [Daniel's by the Sea](#)
Dinner for two at Lal's Curry In a Hurry
Dinner for two at [Toppers](#)
Dinner for two at [Toppers By The Sea](#)
Dinner for two at [Vesna Taverna](#)
Dinner for two at [Fusion Restaurant](#), Simpson Bay
Dinner for two at [iZi Ristorante Italiano](#), Simpson Bay
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. You ***MUST*** be a subscriber to **SXM Weekly News** to be eligible to win any prizes. If you receive Weekly News from another subscriber and not directly, you ARE NOT eligible to win anything.

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.

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

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

25. Traveling This Summer? Important News About 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.

26. 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.

27. Questions & Answers About SkyMed Medical Evacuation (Updated 3/6/16)

Here are constantly updated questions and answers about SkyMed, the folks who fly you home in 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 low 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, when 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 in the US or Canada 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. *Just remember that you must medically requalify every time you need a new short-term membership, which is why most of our members buy and renew annual or multiyear Ultimate SkyMed memberships instead of short-term.*

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 that we approve, 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 renewal 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 annual 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 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.

28. 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?

29. 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.)

30. 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*.

31. 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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