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#1042 --- Monday, 4/18/2016 -- News From St. Maarten / St. Martin



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St. Maarten and St. Martin "SXM" Weekly News

*St. Maarten & St. Martin's Most Relied-Upon Source
for Tourist-Oriented News & Information*

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Weekly News is part of JMB's St. Maarten / St. Martin website: www.everythingsxm.com

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to be sure you receive this newsletter every week.

IMPORTANT: "Jeff1620" is a send-only email address.
For Contact info, see Contact Us
at the end of this newsletter.

Important Note:

This is Jeff Berger's / JMB Communications' **St. Maarten and St. Martin (SXM) Weekly News**, published every Monday (Tuesdays during some holiday weeks). **You are receiving St. Maarten and St. Martin "SXM" Weekly News because you subscribed to it and/or are a JMB Website Supporters member. Unsubscribe info is at the end of this newsletter. Stay with us for all the latest tourist-oriented news from St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM all year long. We now have over 260,000 readers around the world...**

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



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



Download PDFs of Recent Editions ---- Attention iPad, iPhone, Note, and Android Users

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

You can also download PDFs of recent editions here:

http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

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

Get Your Own Free Weekly Copy of SXM Weekly News:

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

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

TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE

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

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- When The Sapphire Resort Court Decision Is Due, & More for Sapphire T/S Owners
- Caravanserai Litigation Group Accepting New Members
- Still Awaiting Official Update on the Cause of the Fire at Alegria "C" Bar
- US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Bulletin About Zika In The US Could Just Spur More Summer Travel to SXM
- Final Week for Our 14th Anniversary Membership Sale - 260 Discounts, Low Prices
- "Five Million Smiles" SXM Vacation Giveaway Starts Monday April 25; Watch for The 4/25 SXM Weekly News
- Billionaires Still Hanging Around SXM
- Want a Neat Megayacht? Got a Spare \$250-million or So? Have We Got a Deal for You...

-- Spring / Summer Rum Factory Tours: Neat Stuff To Pour on Ice Cream or Anything Else

-- Why Do We Promote SkyMed?

-- No Need To Worry About Critical Illness Or Injury When You Travel With SkyMed...

-- Passport Processing Speed May Be Far Faster If You Have Global Entry

-- Dutch Side Carnival Underway Full-Blast, Events Next Two Weeks

-- Monitor Your Credit Card Purchases - And Tell Card Issuers About Your Travels

-- Restaurant of the Week: Spiga, Grand Case

28 news stories this week

Scroll down for our complete Table of Contents

Timeshare Rentals and Sales of the Week

Each week JMB randomly picks timeshare condominiums for rent and for sale in SXM from the huge selection at http://everythingsexm.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://everythingsexm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml for info. Membership now delivers a growing list of 260+ St. Maarten and St. Martin-focused travel benefits, and your subscription also helps keep these weekly SXM newsletters coming.

SXM Timeshare Rental of The Week:

RENTAL 12/17/2016 12/24/2016 Week 51 La Vista Beach Resort Beachfront Unit (Room T303). 2 Bedroom/2 bath (Sleeps 6), Watch the cruise ships arrive and depart from the large balcony overlooking the pool. Master with king bed, full kitchen, dining area, flat screen TVs, plus second pool and restaurant on site. \$1,300 Tom 816-387-4070 tomwanda@bbwi.net

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 2/10/2017 2/17/2017 Week 6 Royal Palm Resort Vacation in High Season. This extremely desirable week at the nicest resort in Simpson Bay. This gorgeous 2 bedroom with King beds, 2 bath unit has full kitchen, living room with queen sofa bed and is oceanfront. Watch boats and the beautiful Caribbean water while having breakfast or relaxing with an afternoon cocktail. The sunsets from this unit are spectacular. This is a fixed week unit. Unit comfortably sleeps 6 and has everything needed for your annual vacation. 3 TVs, DVD, panoramic slide-open living room window wall, and everything possibly needed. Numerous restaurants and clubs within walking distance. Week 5 also available. \$2,999.00 per week Fred 978-531-4110 senate1@comcast.net

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

See them all at http://everythingsexm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml

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

This Week's Stories

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

"Like" Our "Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin" Facebook Site:



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/6297726366/>

"Like" Our Facebook SXM Timesharing Group People for Timeshare Owner Consumer Protection in St. Maarten

http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_205834172765083

Search the **SXM Weekly News** Archives:

Current Archives (Since 4/2014) in PDF Format (New):

http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

Archives prior to April 12 2014 (old format):

<http://everythingxsm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?flavor=archive:list=sxmweeklynews>

Check Out Our Linked-In "St. Maarten and St. Martin Travelers" Group (Free; Timeshare Focus):

www.linkedin.com

Get a growing list of 210+ Money-Saving SXM-focused travel discount benefits through JMB Website Supporters:

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

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

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About 260 SXM Discounts & Benefits for Less

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10. "Five Million Smiles" SXM Vacation Giveaway Starts Monday April 25 -- Watch for The 4/25 *SXM Weekly News*
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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://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. Another Possible Airline Option to SXM: Copa Airlines

Surprisingly, Panamanian carrier Copa Airlines can get you from a number of US and Canadian cities to SXM via connections in Panama, which isn't as far away from SXM air-wise as you might think.

In Canada, Copa flies from Montreal and Toronto. In the US, Copa flies from Boston; Chicago; Ft. Lauderdale; Vegas, Los Angeles; Miami; New York (JFK); New Orleans; San Francisco; Tampa; and Washington (IAD).

Friends flew from Chicago to SXM on Copa with connections in Panama City last Christmas for less than flights directly from ORD to SXM. If you want to spend a day or two in Panama you might get a better deal. Worth checking. Our friend, a timeshare owner at Oyster Bay Beach Resort, was impressed by the airline.

More to come...

2. Hurricane Season Begins 6/2; CSU Predicts "Average" Season

The currently waning El Nino Pacific weather phenomenon may morph late this year into a La Nina and if that happens, meteorologists say, it could have a significant impact on the upcoming hurricane season.

We recently reported what meteorologist Rob Lightbown of Crown Weather Services has said about the upcoming season. Now the experts at Colorado State (William Gray and Co.) are saying the season should be average, though all observers will update their forecasts again in a few months.

See the entire Colorado State forecast here: <http://hurricane.atmos.colostate.edu/forecasts/>

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 entire Caribbean.

4. "FlyTravelGo" May Be The Web's Fastest, Easiest Travel Website

The 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.

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

5. When Is The Sapphire Resort Court Decision Due, & More for Sapphire T/S Owners

Although the court decision on the lawsuit by the Sitbon family against Sapphire developers Jean and Philippe Verdier is due tomorrow, Tuesday, April 19, it's anybody's guess whether the court will actually hand down a verdict or announce yet another in a long line of delays. At stake is whether Sapphire Beach Club in Cupecoy will be changing ownership.

As promised, we'll post results as soon as we have them on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) and here in the next *SXM Weekly News*.

If you're a Sapphire timeshare owner, check out Mindy Squeo's [Sapphire Timeshare Owners group on Facebook](#). It started 2016 with 11 members and now has over 100. It enables people to compare notes and contemplate strategies for working with / dealing with current Sapphire management. It just might be highly useful to you; pass it along to others who may be interested as well by forwarding this entire edition of *SXM Weekly News*.

6. Still Awaiting Official Update on the Cause of the Fire at Alegria "C" Bar

Although SXM news outlets have claimed the fire at the "C" Bar at Alegria Resort was caused by a Molotov cocktail, police are continuing to investigate what happened there and who or what caused the fire. The investigation began

as the April 3 fire was being extinguished. There were no reports of injuries, but police described the bar as "totally destroyed."

We asked police spokesperson Ricardo Henson whether a cause has as yet been determined, but by press time had received no response.

7. Attention Caravanserai Timeshare Owners: You Can Still Join The Litigation Group

Former Caravanserai resort timeshare owners: the door has reopened for you to join the group of other former Caravanserai timeshare owners that is litigating against Alegria, the entity that took over the resort and attempted to declare their timeshare contracts null and void.

If you "owned" timesharing at Caravanserai and didn't sign the form Alegria emailed you, you really ought to join this group.

And if you owned timesharing at Caravanserai and did sign that form, you ought to contact Lexwell attorneys in SXM directly. It seems to us that Alegria's mailing of that form may have been done without following due process. If so, it may have been illegal and therefore void.

If you are a former Caravanserai timeshare owner and would like more information about what is being offered by TOCA, the association of litigating timeshare owners, and about costs of participation, contact tocagroup@gmail.com. Make sure you provide all the info they might need about your Caravanserai timeshare ownership.

Their communications will answer most of your questions. Feel free to share this with Caravanserai timeshare owners.

SECTION 3: Island

In Case of Emergency, Get Home Fast

in a Private Medical Evacuation Jet

When You Become Critically Ill or Injured While Traveling:

Get SkyMed ***Before*** You Need It:

If you're a SkyMed member, SkyMed Takes You Home for \$0 when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. One telephone call is all it takes.

If you're not a SkyMed member, you must find and pay for a medevac jet, its fuel, staffing, medical supplies, an ICU-certified medical attendant, ambulances, fees, etc. --which could easily cost \$45,000 or more -- in cash, in advance, before anything can happen.

SkyMed Takes You Home® in an ICU-equivalent medical evacuation jet for exactly \$0 -- home to doctors and hospitals you know and trust -- after you make one quick phone call to them. When you need SkyMed in a hurry, it's only a phone call away IF you're a SkyMed member. So... get your SkyMed membership now, **before** you need it. See more at <http://www.getskymed.com>.

Membership is as little as about \$1.25/day. See stories 16-19 in this issue for more.

Major discounts on all SkyMed multiyear memberships are available to JMB Website Supporters members; see below for low pricing on JMB memberships:

New JMB memberships:

One year, \$44 (our reg. \$59); four years, \$89 (not normally offered)

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

Renewal JMB memberships:

One year, \$35; three years, \$59 (our reg. \$69); seven years, \$109 (our reg. \$139)

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

JMB Membership Reinstatements:

One year, \$35; five years, \$99; seven years, \$129.

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

Our 14th Anniversary JMB Membership Sale Ends This Friday 4/22: 260+ SXM Discounts at Sale Prices

Special 14th Anniversary Sale pricing for new JMB Website Supporters memberships, renewals, and membership reinstatements is in effect right now but ends this Friday 4/22.

Great pricing for every type of membership:

New memberships:

One year, \$44 (our reg. \$59); four years, \$89 (not normally offered)

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

Renewal memberships:

One year, \$35; three years, \$59 (our reg. \$69); seven years, \$109 (our reg. \$139)

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

Membership Reinstatements:

One year, \$35; five years, \$99; seven years, \$129.

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

8. US CDC Zika Bulletin Could Just Spur More Summer Travel to SXM

Compared to US beaches during the peak Summer travel season, SXM beaches are very quiet through the Summer. And Zika, the virus that is now confirmed to cause severe and often fatal birth defects in children whose mother was bitten by a Zika-infected aedes aegypti mosquito, is spread mostly by those infected mosquitoes. The more crowded the US beach you visit this Summer, the more possible it appears to be that the disease will spread -- if the CDC is correct. The CDC has issued a shocking map about the spread of Zika in the US this Summer:

<http://tinyurl.com/zruum9l>

Crowded beaches here at home in the US could enhance the probability of any one individual catching Zika, if the CDC is accurate about the spread of infected aedes aegypti mosquitoes northward. Zika, the CDC has said, may well appear in upwards of 34 states this Summer. It might be that you'll be better off vacationing in SXM -- ask your doctor. Beaches there during Summer are only lightly populated compared to high season crowds.

9. Beaches Open - Little If Any Seaweed

Not seeing or hearing any reports of any significant seaweed on the island. Where there is any, government- and privately funded equipment removes it daily -- no problem.

10. "Five Million Smiles" SXM Vacation Giveaway Starts 4/25

Later this month, to celebrate everythingxsm.com surpassing five million visits next year, we'll launch our Five Million Smiles Vacation Giveaway, a name suggested by Spiga chef / owner Ciro Russo. We expect it to be our biggest giveaway ever -- and you can only enter through a link we'll post only here in future issues of *SXM Weekly News*.

Our 10 vacation giveaway, held last month, celebrated [our site](#) surpassing 4.5-million visitors. The 10 vacation prize winners were:

- [Club Orient](#) Winner Tami M., Indiana
- [Mary's Boon Beach Resort](#); Winner Jerry P., Wisconsin
- [Oyster Bay Beach Resort](#); Winner David E., Utah
- [La Vista or La Vista Beach](#) Winner Roy M, New York
- [Summit Resort](#) Winner James S., Pennsylvania
- [Baker's Suites](#) Winner Joe D, Georgia
- [Club Fantastico](#) Winner Sandy S., Arizona, traded to the winner of Club Orient; [First Prize Winner](#)
- [Le Petit Hotel](#) Winner Marco F., St. Martin
- [Simpson Bay Resort](#) Winner Lara R., St. Martin, [Grand Prize Winner](#)
- El Zafiro Boutique Hotel Simpson Bay Winner Donna G., Pennsylvania

Details on all the prizes won by the First and Grand Prize Winners were published in *SXM Weekly News* three weeks ago.

11. "Shoulder" Season Arrives, Bringing Good News / Bad News to SXM

The bad news: the biggest crowds of the year are gone, making business not as brisk as it was earlier, although the island still has a good number of tourists on April school vacations and their own adult trips. The bad news: some businesses are still hurting from last low season, which was one of the worst in years for a number of business owners.

Reservations at the most popular restaurants are still essential. Call ahead a few days before to make yours. See our Restaurant of the Week feature, below, for many restaurant websites.

12. St. Maarten / St. Martin Wildlife: A Close, Professional Look

SXM wildlife author Mark Yokoyama was recently featured in *Travel & Leisure*, the American Express magazine. This is their story plus info on Mark's book on SXM wildlife:

<http://www.travelandleisure.com/blogs/documenting-st-martins-wildlife-one-species-at-a-time>

13. Billionaires Still Hanging Around SXM

Two Russian billionaires' super megayachts continue to hang around in SXM.

Andrey Melnichenko's megayacht "A," which you've seen several times recently in our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#), is the one that looks something like a giant white submarine. It has now been in SXM waters for about five weeks. Melnichenko may well have it for sale (see next story in this issue) since he has we think just recently taken delivery of a new and rather incredible one-of-a-kind sailing yacht:

http://www.superyachtfan.com/superyacht_a.html

Meanwhile Roman Abramovich owns the second largest super megayacht in the world, Eclipse, which has been around SXM since just before Christmas. Abramovich has homes in Russia, London (he owns a British soccer team), as well as several more homes in the US and a big estate in St Barths. Eclipse was the largest but a bigger one "eclipsed" it a couple of years ago. That yacht is named Azzam: <http://www.cnn.com/id/100623853>. Eclipse is

breathhtaking, especially close up. More on Abramovich is here: <http://www.forbes.com/profile/roman-abramovich/>. More on Eclipse is here: http://www.superyachtfan.com/superyacht_eclipse.html. The actual value / cost of Eclipse is controversial... we've heard estimates of its cost as high as \$1.8-billion.

14. Want a Neat Megayacht? Got a Spare \$250-million or So? Have We Got a Deal for You

Andrey Melnichenko's "A" megayacht is said to have cost about \$200-million, though some estimates place its current worth as high as \$400-million. If you have \$250-million laying around and like boats, who knows, maybe he'd take the offer since he has a stunning new sailing yacht that either has been delivered or is about to be; see prior story.

15. Spring/Summer Rum Factory Tours: Neat Stuff To Pour on Ice Cream or Whatever

Visit Topper's Restaurant and you may bump into Topper or Melanie Daboul. Melanie is chief honcho at Topper's Rhum (that's the French spelling) and she can put you in touch with folks who will give you a tour, including samples. Boy are those samples tasty. Great rum, and great people.

By the way Toppers and Toppers By the Sea have won our Everything SXM Award of Excellence for the last several years. Great food. See the Restaurant of the Week feature later in this issue for their web address and for other recommended restaurants.

Dozens of SXM restaurants give discounts to our JMB Website Supporters members. Not a member yet? You're spending too much \$ across the island: join today during our 14th Anniversary Membership Sale:

New memberships:

One year, \$44 (our reg. \$59); four years, \$89 (not normally offered)

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

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One year, \$35; three years, \$59 (our reg. \$69); seven years, \$109 (our reg. \$139)

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Membership Reinstatements:

One year, \$35; five years, \$99; seven years, \$129.

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

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

[Click to access our recommended real estate agent, Arun Jagtiani, featured on HGTV.](#)

16. Why Do We Promote SkyMed?

We first heard about SkyMed about 14 years ago through what's now Simpson Bay Resort. SkyMed "Takes You Home"® on an ICU-equivalent medical evacuation jet when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. That's a free trip home exclusively for SkyMed members which gives them huge peace-of-mind.

We thought it was a great thing to have so we started recommending it. A family medical issue in SXM that at first looked like a stroke (it wasn't) hammered home just how important SkyMed is so we bought a membership, too, more than 14 years ago. We've recommended it ever since and thousands of travelers have bought it from us, dozens of whom have needed to use the service from points in North America, SXM, and elsewhere.

Got SkyMed questions? Email jeff@getskymed.com or call us at 508-747-8281 during normal business hours. If you want us to call you to answer your SkyMed questions, 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, see www.getskymed.com.

17. No Need To Worry About Critical Illness Or Injury When You Travel With SkyMed...

Got a spare \$45,000? The rising price of oil is exerting upward pressure on gasoline, home heating oil, jet fuel, airfares, and more, including medical evacuations. With a SkyMed membership, *they* pay for your medical evacuation -- you pay \$0 for the medevac. No deductibles, no claim forms, no fine print, and no hassles. Read below -- this product should be a key part of every trip out the front door of your home. Never chance traveling without it...

18. Questions & Answers About SkyMed Medical Evacuation (Heavily Updated 4/2016)

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 say in their fine print that they 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 -- which is why we recommend annual or multiyear memberships. *Why risk the hurdle of medical requalification?*)

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 important. You'll find them on our downloadable SkyMed Benefits PDF 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 in full, immediately. *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.* Those memberships cover all pre-existing conditions in full after only 90 days. More on that is below.

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), out of your home country (USA or Canada) 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 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 SkyMed approves, they'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. There is no maximum. 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 key 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, not policies) 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. **Ex-Pat and "Silver" memberships also are offered.**

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. **Multiyear memberships give you more benefits than annual memberships but cost less when paid at inception. They're quite a bargain.**

Q. Is there a best time to buy?

A. Yes -- exactly like fire insurance, buy it before you need it! Why gamble? The peace of mind alone is worth every

penny.

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.

Got Other Questions?

If you have questions about SkyMed not answered above, email jeff@getskymed.com and Jeff will get back to you or phone him at 508-747-8281. 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?

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.

19. Download The Complete List of All SkyMed Features & Benefits

Read it for yourself: it beats every would-be competitor hands-down. Just look:

<http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxmweeklynews/SkyMedServices.pdf>

This is an Adobe Acrobat PDF Document. Your system most likely already has a PDF Reader (free) but if not you can get one here: [download Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).

20. Interact With Fellow SXM Visitors on Our Everything SXM Facebook Site

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*.

21. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

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

Updated weekly.

22. Passport Processing Speed May Be Far Faster If You Have Global Entry

The volume of passport renewals this year is high since passports started to be required for Caribbean travel in 2007 and they're expiring now.

As *USN&WR* said March 31, "Why the sudden uptick? In 2007, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative was put

into effect, mandating that American citizens entering the U.S. by air from Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean carry a passport, triggering a backlog in renewals for millions of applicants – a scenario that could easily occur again. Flash forward to today, and many travelers are also concerned about whether they'll need to show an alternate form of acceptable identification for domestic flights to comply with the REAL ID Act, which will be put into effect on Jan. 22, 2018, and will impose more stringent ID requirements. And besides the chance to dodge a delayed – or cumbersome – process later on, there's also the matter of entry requirements imposed by international countries."

Bottom line, many people are renewing simultaneously. That sounds like it could lead to a renewal glut and slow service but we think that may not be happening -- not yet anyway. We are DHS "Global Entry" members and we sent our passport renewal applications in at the end of March with normal (not expedited) service, expecting them back in mid-May. Instead, they were received last week, much ahead of our expectations.

Let us know your experience by emailing us at jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com with the subject "Passport Turnaround". (Do not reply to this *Weekly News* email; it's from an unmonitored address.) Right now our impression is that the system is working well.

23. Dutch Side Carnival Underway Full-Blast, Events Next Two Weeks

See details here: <https://www.facebook.com/sxmcar Carnival/?fref=ts>

24. How To Readily & Easily Personalize & Identify Your Luggage

Particularly if you have a black suitcase (as most people do), help make sure it isn't taken by accident by someone other than you by wrapping it in a very strong, unique-looking ribbon; add bows to the handle; If it's smooth and hard-sided add our SXM Euro-Oval stickers if you have them; used oversized luggage ID tags offered by Samsonite or others; and of course put your identity inside and out. (Use your phone number on luggage, not your home address; business addresses are preferable, for security-related reasons).

25. Incredible Visibility Greet Late-Week Vacationers

Crystal clear weather and flat seas late last week made it possible to see many neighboring islands, even St. Kitts and Nevis which are 25 minutes Winair flying-time away. Clarity that extensive does not often happen.

26. Monitor Your Credit Card Purchases -- And Tell Card Issuers About Your Travels

There have been a few fraudulent credit card transactions in SXM lately. We urge all travelers to monitor your accounts frequently to ensure all is as it should be.

27. Restaurant of the Week: Spiga, Grand Case

In 2016, for the fourth consecutive year, Spiga received our coveted Everything SXM Award of Excellence. Moreover, they consistently earn very high marks from folks using TripAdvisor.

Chef Ciro Russo and Lara Russo never stop trying to get better. As we've said before, Spiga is not your father's or mother's Italian Restaurant. Spiga is one of SXM's best restaurants *of any kind*, with great ambiance, extraordinary food, and seasoned, very capable, attentive service.

Whether you crave beef or other meats (their filet mignon is one of the best anywhere), seafood, homemade pasta, poultry, super-fresh fish, or vegetarian entrees, definitely, *definitely* try Spiga on your next trip. Like so many others you'll be planning a second trip to Spiga before you complete your first, it's that good. A long-time favorite.

Most of the listed restaurants offer discounts to JMB Website Supporters members; see the Secret Site for details or scroll below the restaurant list.

We'll cover another restaurant here next week.

Sill not a JMB member? You're spending way too much for practically everything you buy in SXM. Get hundreds of discounts and other benefits: see below the restaurants list. See the end of this article for JMB Website Supporters membership info / signup links.

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 3/22/16)
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 4/18/16)
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)

Join JMB Website Supporters today for hundreds of discounts across SXM:

Great pricing for every type of membership:

New memberships:

One year, \$44 (our reg. \$59); four years, \$89 (not normally offered)

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

Renewal memberships:

One year, \$35; three years, \$59 (our reg. \$69); seven years, \$109 (our reg. \$139)

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

Membership Reinstatements:

One year, \$35; five years, \$99; seven years, \$129.

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

28. Non-Tropical Weather System Threatens SXM Mon-Thurs

We've said many times that Rob Lightbown of Crown Weather www.crownweather.com offers an incomparable (and very inexpensive) forecasting service for businesses and individuals who need to know in a hurry, in advance, of

serious weather that may affect them. Please see their site and subscribe like we have for the latest.

This bulletin was just issued and it relates strongly to weather this week in SXM:

"Caribbean Significant Weather Outlook: An ocean storm currently located north of Bermuda will produce wind gusts of 30 to 50 mph, high surf with seas of 12 to 18 feet and occasional rainfall to the island of Bermuda throughout this weekend into early week before that storm system exits to the east.

"This ocean storm is also forecast to have some impact on the northeastern Caribbean from Monday through at least Thursday as it will pull a frontal boundary across the northeastern Caribbean. This will lead to widespread shower and thunderstorm activity to occur across parts of Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the northern Lesser Antilles starting late Sunday night or Monday morning and continuing through much of next week before the frontal boundary lifts northeastward by Thursday or Friday.

"Latest indications are that rainfall totals from Monday through Thursday could range from 2 to 4 inches across Hispaniola and Puerto Rico to 4 to 8 inches of rain possible across the Virgin Islands and the northern Lesser Antilles from Anguilla through Antigua to Guadeloupe."

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 .Your username and password are required.

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 *2016 St. Maarten Weekly News* list, and follow the unsubscribe instructions. Then, subscribe your new email address. JMB Website Supporters members no longer need to notify Membership Services of the new email address for continued Secret Site access. We'll be notified automatically.

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

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