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#1043 --- Monday, 4/25/2016 -- 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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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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- SXM Airport Approach Named To World's Most Scenic Top Ten
- Is Global Entry / PreCheck Worth The Price?
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- About Our Upcoming Five Million Smiles Giveaway...

30 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 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 7/23/2016 8/6/2016 Week 30 & 31 Towers at Mullet Bay Spacious 1 bedroom unit on third floor. Two balconies overlooking lagoon and pool. Quiet and peaceful. Clean and very well-maintained unit with great maid service (Margaret is the best). \$500 per week Leslie 212 225 3120 latessitore@mac.com

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 6/18/2016 6/25/2016 25 Divi Little Bay Studio, Building B #209, 1st Floor, right on the beach in front of the best snorkeling on the island! King bed, also pull out sleeper (sleeps 4 total) Fridge, Stovetop, Convection Micro, Sm Appliances, Fully Equipped Kitchen, Whirlpool Tub & Shower, Air, Balcony w Table/Chairs, Flat Screen, Wi-Fi. One Mile Beach, Water Sports, Gated, plenty of parking, 3 Restaurants, 3 Pools, Spas, Activities, Family Friendly. Walking Distance to Phillipsburg, Fort Amsterdam access on the Property, Grocery, Deli. Buyer pays \$250 Transfer Fee to Divi. Tradable to other Divi's in Caribbean. 33 weeks remaining plus one bonus week. 2015 the resort price for this unit/week is selling for \$13,000.00 \$3,000.00 Judy jekooyers10@gmail.com

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](#)

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

- 6a. Got a Spare \$45,000? You May Need It (see the beginning of Section 3.)

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14Th Anniversary *Membership Sale* **Delivers 260 SXM Discounts & Benefits for Less!**

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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 260+ benefits... and more coming soon.

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: Wet

[Crown Weather](#) meteorologist Rob Lightbown had predicted that much of last week would be soggy in SXM and he was exactly right. The week started getting soggy on Tuesday, then had a slight respite, then very soggy weather returned later in the week.

To be sure, it wasn't a complete washout. There was some beach time. But there was also some soaking rain, which helped quell the Dutch Side dump fire and ease the long-term drought.

See next story.

2. 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.

3. "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. More changes are coming...

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

4. Still No Decision on Sapphire: What We Decided To Do, For Now

Last week the court decision on the lawsuit by the Sitbon family against Sapphire developers Jean and Philippe Verdier was delayed again by the judge, who said he's "busy" according to courtroom sources. So we've decided to stop publishing "no decision yet" reports; we'll next report when a decision is actually announced.

At stake is whether Sapphire Beach Club in Cupecoy will be changing ownership.

When a decision is announced, we'll post it on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) and here in a future *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 could be highly useful to you. You can pass it along to others by forwarding this entire edition of *SXM Weekly News*.

5. 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.

6. A Closer Looks at SXM Timeshare Resorts & Smaller Hotels

With the adverse publicity about Caravanserai / Alegria over the last 18 months, and the soap opera at Sapphire, you may wonder if there are any good SXM timeshare resorts. You may also wonder what smaller hotels might represent good places to stay for a few extra days on the island.

The newest page on our Everything St. Maarten website explores both [the best timeshare resorts and the best smaller hotels](#). See the new page [here](#).

SECTION 3: Island

6a. **Got a Spare \$45,000? You May Need It -- In Cash In Advance --**

To Pay for a Private Medical Evacuation Jet Home

When You Become Critically Ill or Injured While Traveling:

Here's Why:

If you're a SkyMed member, SkyMed Takes You Home for Free. One telephone call is all it takes.

If you're not a SkyMed member, you'll be required to find and pay for the medevac jet, fuel, flight crew, medical staffing, medical supplies, ambulances, fees, etc. --which could easily cost \$45,000 or more, often a lot more -- in cash, in advance, before anything begins to happen.

If you're a SkyMed member, SkyMed Takes You Home® in an ICU-equivalent medical evacuation jet for exactly \$0 -- home to doctors and hospitals you know and trust. 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>. Or call Jeff Berger at 508-747-8281 (normal business hours, Eastern time) or email him at jeff@getskymed.com for answers to any of your SkyMed questions. (Please use the subject SkyMed Inquiry.)

SkyMed Membership is as little as about \$1.25/day.

Major discounts on all SkyMed multiyear memberships are available to JMB Website Supporters members; here's our current low sale pricing on JMB memberships (JMB's current sale ends 4/30, see next story):

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/reinststate/index.shtml>

Last Call

Extended One Final Week, Absolutely Ends April 30:

**14Th Anniversary *JMB Membership Sale*
Delivers 260+ SXM Discounts & Benefits for Less!**

Great pricing for every type of membership:

What You Get:

Discounts on virtually everything you do in SXM. Dozens of restaurant discounts, car rentals, hotels, shopping, jewelry gift cards, catamaran cruises, **hundreds** of activities, art, liquor, low airfare guidelines, and lots more -- dozens of categories of discounts.

Plus great benefits like **free ads** to rent out or sell timeshares you own in SXM or anywhere else, right on our site, www.everythingsxm.com. And **low airfare guidelines** so you know when prices are good and when they aren't so good.

We offer convenient one-year and economical multiyear memberships, but our sale absolutely ends Saturday April 30. Join right now:

New memberships:

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

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

7. Another Look at Supermarket Prices

We said before that the best supermarket in SXM is Super U in Marigot. It's clean, has very good prices, fresh fruit and vegetables, and good service.

A study was done of price differences on the Dutch Side. It had interesting results: [look](#).

8. Dump Fire Aggravates Anti-Dump Public Sentiment

For many arriving cruise ship passengers, the first thing they notice when approaching Philipsburg is a huge brown mound just behind the buildings on Front Street: the Dutch Side Dump.

It is a huge, sometimes fiery and smoky, overloaded eyesore. Perhaps SXM could build an electric plant there turning trash to energy -- complete with electrostatic precipitators to virtually eliminate smoke and undesirable effluents. It would cut the exorbitant price of electricity on SXM (which currently burns pricey oil for power generation) and help shrink the dump. The most recent fire lasted several days and created enormous physical discomfort for thousands of residents and others downwind.

9. Airport Continues To Receive International Kudos

While it was administered by seasoned tourism industry pro Regina Labega, SXM Airport made tremendous strides in orienting its operations toward passenger comfort and safety. The kudos for the many initiatives she pioneered are still rolling in; [here's the latest](#). Good stuff and our warmest congratulations to Ms. Labega.

10. SXM Airport Approach Named To World's Most Scenic Top Ten

Here's that story directly from CNN:

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/04/20/travel/scenic-airport-landings-2016/index.html>

11. Is Global Entry / PreCheck Worth The Price?

On domestic flights PreCheck gets you through security and to your plane faster and more easily. When you return home on an international flight, Global Entry enables you to walk past hundreds of people waiting in line, have your fingers scanned at a kiosk where you quickly answer a few questions, take the printout with you and again walk past hundreds of people where you and your luggage move out quickly and easily. Because you're a "trusted traveler" you get through security much faster.

Global Entry includes PreCheck, but not vice versa. Tourists from the US to SXM need Global Entry. Google "Global Entry" and you can complete the applications for you and your spouse online.

In our view it's well worth the cost. See more here: <http://www.cbp.gov/travel/trusted-traveler-programs/global-entry>

12. Man Thrown in Prison for Bomb Threat at SXM Airport

Late last year, prosecutors said, he called in a bomb threat affecting SXM Airport. Police tracked him down, he was hauled into court, tried, convicted, and now he's in prison. Here is [the full story](#).

13. Are Conch Shells Weapons?

Despite the fact that no one is supposed to remove shells from SXM beaches, many people do it anyway. (Take only pictures, leave only footprints -- remember?) Usually they stuff them into checked luggage.

Lately, two people got conch shells on the island and put them in carry-on luggage, where they were seized and removed by security. In both instances, security officials reportedly said the big, heavy shells could be used as weapons -- probably an accurate assessment.

Thought you should know.

14. The Very Best Smoothies

Smoothies -- those delicious icy fruit / veggie concoctions -- are widely available on SXM. They're all good -- and healthful as well.

Our favorites though are from Vesna Taverna in Simpson Bay, open seven days for American breakfasts and lunches (with some Greek food as well) and open for American and French dinners Wednesday through Sunday (Friday is Greek night with lots of Greek specials),

Vesna's offers smoothies anytime. Big assortment of fresh fruits and vegetables. Give it a try ... the more unusual, the more fun, so be adventurous.

Vesna is this week's Restaurant of the Week. See story 28. When you go tell them you read about them in Jeff Berger's *SXM Weekly News*.

Vesna's gives discounts to JMB members so see the Secret Website and bring your JMB Website Supporters Membership Card. For more on all the benefits of membership, see the beginning of this Section or story # 28.

15. Eat Here & Get Art

SXM has more than its share of artists, drawn by the incredible panoply of colors from nature (year-round flowering plants) and that gorgeous tropical sea, and from man in a myriad of human countenances and clothing colors.

One of the artists who has been in residence here for many years is Italian-born Patty Meotti, some of whose work is on continuous display at Spiga Restaurant in Grand Case, a consistent winner of our Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence and last week's choice as our Restaurant of the Week. Go to <http://www.spiga-sxm.com/>, make an online reservation, and ask to sit in the back -- that's where Patty's art adorns the walls. You'll have an extraordinary meal and you might just fall in love with some beautiful Caribbean art from Patty: everything displayed is also on sale.

More: <https://www.facebook.com/MeottiPatty>

16. Roland Richardson Reminder

If you appreciate breathtaking Caribbean art, see www.rolandrichardson.com . Roland is the foremost exponent of Caribbean *en plein air* impressionism. His art has an unparalleled vibrancy of color that must be seen in person to be properly appreciated. Bringing home one of his paintings (or having it shipped if it's too large to carry) will put a piece of St. Martin in your home or office, there to be appreciated for generations.

See his site and visit his gallery/museum in Marigot. You'll quickly understand....

17. Tricia Altenau Reminder

Without a doubt, Tricia is the finest [massage therapist](#) I've ever had the great fortune to meet. Keep her information, make an appointment, and go; you won't be disappointed. Very special lady....

18. Das Cigars Reminder

DAS Cigars are premium hand-rolled cigars made on the island of St. Maarten and sold across the island. If you love cigars or want to gift great cigars to someone who does, DAS is absolutely *the* place you're looking for. Learn more at

<https://www.facebook.com/DasCigars/timeline> or see the owner's page on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/andi.siegers> and tell him you heard about DAS in Jeff Berger's *SXM Weekly News*.

19. Retail Costs of Emergency MedEvac & Medical Helicopter Flights Are Soaring

During a conference call Friday we learned that retail prices of emergency medical evacuations are soaring -- in many cases now the cost is \$40-, \$60-, \$80-, or in excess of \$100,000 per evacuation, always payable in cash in advance. Helicopter flight costs, which were in the teens only a few years ago, also are soaring. More reasons than ever to [get SkyMed](#)... See next story.

20. SkyMed Buyers Share Three Reasons They Bought SkyMed

Several thousand *SXM Weekly News* readers have now bought SkyMed. A cross-section of SkyMed members were asked recently why they bought, and almost all their responses had these three reasons in common:

1. First, they wanted the peace of mind of knowing they and their families were protected -- medically and financially -- should they become critically ill or injured while traveling. Because SkyMed Takes You Home® under these conditions, SkyMed takes you where your health insurance works so you needn't shell out a fortune for health care because you're outside your health insurance coverage area. That takes care of you medically. Financially, SkyMed pays 100% of the cost of the medical evacuation it arranges for you -- there are no deductibles, no claim forms, and no out-of-pocket costs. That can save you a fortune since as a SkyMed member SkyMed makes all the arrangements for you and you do not have to pay for the medical evacuation SkyMed arranges.
2. Second, it provides a great comfort zone for your entire family. In a medical emergency, you call 911, get to the hospital, and if you are critically ill or injured or think you may be critically ill or injured, call or have someone on the scene call SkyMed. That one phone call is all that's needed to get things rolling -- there's nothing else you need do except make sure the hospital cares for the patient. SkyMed keeps you informed every step of the way.
3. Third and last, SkyMed can save your life of the life of a covered member of your family. That speaks for itself and it happens more often than you may think.

See the following articles or email or phone Jeff Berger for more info or to sign up on the phone. You can reach him at jeff@getskymed.com or 508-747-8281. Please call him during regular office hours, EDT. Phone signups can often be effective within just two business days.

21. New Helicopter Sightseeing Benefit Goes Live Monday Night

For the first time, our SXM Discounts & Benefits program, JMB Website Supporters, will be offering discounts on SXM helicopter tours. We expect these discounts will go live on our site tonight, Monday, April 25, 2016.

The discounts will be through Corail Helicopters which flies out of the French Side Aerodrome in Grand Case.

Initially the program will offer a discount on their tour of the northern part of the island eastward to Dawn Beach. We're hopeful that we'll be able to add other discounts once the program is in full swing.

Also a helicopter ride from Corail will be one of the prizes we'll give away in our upcoming Five Million Smiles vacation giveaway. See story #29.

22. Two New Restaurant Benefits Coming This Week

This week we'll be emailing JMB members to tell them about our two newest restaurant discounts.

The two are for relatively new restaurants -- Capt. Frenchy's, on the beach in Grand Case; and Melange International Grill at Princess Port de Plaisance.

The young entrepreneur cum executive chef of Mélange, Nikhil Gurnani, is a graduate of the world's finest hospitality school, Les Roches International, Switzerland. From his profound passion for food and his international exposure, emerges Mélange with its unique grill on table concept.

Mélange offers a wide array of skewers, which are grilled to perfection, right at your table! It features a culinary ethnicity of skewers/ kebabs, in an international fusion, embracing Greek, Turkish, Moroccan, Indian, Lebanese, Persian and other global flavors, seasonally. The Grill menu offers a sumptuous variety of unlimited succulent meats, seafood and vegetarian skewer options accompanied with luscious salads, tantalizing appetizers, signature sides and their fresh-from-the-oven bread basket.

A tapas bar and restaurant on Grand Case beach, Capt. Frenchy's goes by this description: "The rich flavors of the Caribbean ingredients combined with a French touch accompanied by a welcoming charm of Saint Martin / Sint Maartens' hospitality." Very popular place; now it's your turn to try it.

Members, watch for our email about these new benefits coming this week.

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.](#)

23. Questions & Answers About SkyMed Medical Evacuation (Updated 4/23/16)

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 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?

A. 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. How fast are the evacuations?

A. That depends on a number of factors. First the patient must be medically stable and ready to fly. Even though emergency medical evacuations are aboard ICU-equivalent medevac jets, the patient's stable health during the trip is of paramount importance. He / she must be medically stable to take that trip. Although arrangements for the electronic transfer of medical records, reserving flight and medical crews and the jet itself, making hospital arrangements at the destination hospital, and setting up ambulances at both ends of trip must all be completed beforehand, nonetheless it generally takes only a matter of hours before you're in the plane on the way to hospitals and doctors you know and trust near home. Bottom line is that SkyMed does it as quickly as it can be done assuring the patient's health and safety during the medical evacuation and the flight home.

Q. Do they 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 Inquiry" 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.

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

Read it for yourself: it beats every would-be competitor hands-down. 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](#).

25. 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*.

26. 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.

27. More on Current Passport Renewal Processing Speed

After last week's story on faster-than-expected US passport renewals where Global Entry was involved, we received a number of JMB member / reader emails which made the news even better.

Bottom line, a number of people renewing this year without Global Entry also have received three-week turnaround. But the news may not be all that good...

The cause of this could be lower-than-expected current renewal rates, which could mean a tidal wave of renewals is

coming -- and that could really slow turnaround. So our advice remains the same: if your passport expires this year, renew it asap and assume turnaround will be in the neighborhood of the predicted six weeks.

Again, 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.)

We want to keep an eye on this for you.

28. Restaurant of the Week: Vesna Taverna, Simpson Bay

In 2016, Vesna Taverna in Simpson Bay was a recipient of our coveted Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence, reflecting high quality in everything the restaurant does. We only present a few dozen awards each year and we're very particular about who gets them...

Vesna is an experience -- a great one. Like all top restaurateurs, Vesna and Yannick are passionate about creating dishes that resonate with and create wonderful memories for their customers. In fact practically every Fall for their vacation they return to top schools in Paris for specific courses concentrating on items of focus on their menus. It shows in everything you see on your table.

Dinner is served from Wednesday through Sunday night. There's plenty of variety -- mussels and salmon from Nova Scotia, meats from the heartland, poultry, and a wide assortment of vegetarian entrees including pastas and salads. Saturday night is Greek night when in addition to their regular menu items, Vesna's serves lots of Greek specialties (Vesna herself is half Greek and half Macedonian and 100% genuine -- a wonderful personality to run a restaurant). Her husband and fellow chef Yannick is French; before starting Vesna's, he was chief honcho at one of the top restaurants in Grand Case. They really know their stuff.

Breakfast and lunch are served seven days a week and the menu is quite extensive -- lots of choices. At breakfast, Sally is there to offer traditional American breakfasts plus homemade croissants and homemade bagels with cream cheese and lox (smoked salmon) -- if you like. Or eggs. Or avocado. I had a breakfast burger on a bagel last winter.

Lunch has everything you'd expect including luscious burgers served on your choice of breads... even bagels if any are still left. We highly recommend Vesna Taverna.

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 4/25/16)
 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;
 Sale underway now but it ends Saturday April 30. Join today:

Great pricing for every type of membership -- these sale prices absolutely end this Saturday, April 30, 2016.

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>

29. About Our Upcoming "Five Million Smiles" SXM Vacation Giveaway

We're right now putting the finishing (interim) touches on our upcoming Five Million Smiles Vacation Giveaway. We plan to give away about a dozen SXM vacations to celebrate our site surpassing five million visits, which we expect will happen between March and May of 2017 -- but the contest is almost ready to go. We expect it to be our biggest giveaway ever -- and you can only enter through a link we'll post here in future issues of *SXM Weekly News*.

Watch for a special edition of *SXM Weekly News* coming later this week formally announcing the giveaway. Tell your SXM friends to [join our free SXM Weekly News mailing list](#) -- who knows, if they win it they might even send you a postcard.... You ***MUST*** be a *Weekly News* subscriber to win (we check all finalists).

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* about four weeks ago.

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.

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

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

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

Contact Us: [Revised 4/23/16]

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 .

To see the JMB Communications Privacy Policy, visit http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/privacy_policy/index.shtml

4/25/16 #1043 4/24 6 a.m. EDT 7.8

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