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#1081 --- Monday, 1/16/2017
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin



[This Week's Stories](#)

[Airfare, Airlines & Weather News](#)

[Everything SXM Home Page](#)

[Island News](#)

[Lodging News](#)

[Members SECRET Website Login](#)

[Member News \(New\)](#)

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

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

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From: www.jmbcommunications.com

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

Add jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com to your address book
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 most 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. Now read by more than 285,000 people around the world...**

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



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

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

You can also download PDFs of recent editions here:

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

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

Get Your Own Free Weekly Copy of SXM Weekly News:

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

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TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE

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

In This Week's SXM Weekly News:

- **Simpson Bay Resort Completes \$35-Million Renovations, Opens La Patrona**
- **Wicked, Wicked Wavy Weather**
- **Further Positive Reports on Sapphire Resort**
- **Rough Surf Throws Tons of Beach Sand onto Beacon Hill Road; Backhoe Removes It**
- **Celine Sunset Lagoon Dinner Cruises, Tintamarre Trips, and Charters**
- **The Best Professional Massages on St. Maarten / St. Martin**
- **Something Very Special: A Closer Look at Mario Bistro (Look at These Specials)**
- **Beat The Price Increase on SkyMed Memberships & Renewals**
- **For Your Own Peace-of-Mind, Do Not Wait To Act on SkyMed**

-- [Enter Our Five Million Smiles 14-Vacation Giveaway](#)

-- [Where To Find the Best Prices for Gas](#)

28 news stories this week

[Scroll down for our complete Table of Contents](#)

Timeshare Rental and Sale 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, for no ad charge or commission, 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 membership subscription helps keep these weekly SXM newsletters coming.

SXM Timeshare Rental of The Week:

Not in PDF

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

Not in PDF

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 St. Maarten Timesharing Group

<https://www.facebook.com/StMaartenTimesharing/>

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 260+ Money-Saving SXM-focused travel discount benefits through JMB Website Supporters:

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

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

1. Wicked, Wicked Wavy Weather; Beacon Hill Road Blocked at Airport
2. "Today's SXM Weather" Now On Our Everything SXM Facebook Site
3. Where To Find Current SXM Weather Info (Four Key Sources)
4. 110% Guarantee Now On SkyMed Travel Club Hotel, Car Rental Rates

See *Section Four* for an article about the new Airport emigration kiosks.

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

5. Simpson Bay Resort Celebrates Completion of \$35-Million Renovations, Opens La Patrona
6. Further Positive Reports on Sapphire Resort

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: Member Discounts & Benefits [Go To This Section](#)

7. "Section Three" -- Member Discounts Benefits News & Updates
8. January Member Benefits Update: St. Maarten / St. Martin Activities

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

9. Get a Huge Selection of About 300 Discounts for Everything You Do in SXM -- Three Years, \$99; Five Years, \$129; One Year, \$59

10. Rough Surf Throws Tons of Beach Sand onto Beacon Hill Road; Backhoe Removes It
11. SXM Surf Pictures: Using "HDR" On Your Camera
12. As Gas Prices Rise, Where To Find The Cheapest Gas
13. Show The World: Where To Post Your Favorite SXM Pictures
14. Answer or Ask SXM Questions and Get Quick Answers
15. Best Beaches for Kids
16. Celine Sunset Lagoon Dinner Cruises, Tintamarre Trips, and Charters
17. The Best Professional Massages on St. Maarten / St. Martin
18. Something Very Special: A Closer Look at Mario Bistro (Look at These Specials)
19. A Look Back at "Old" Restaurants: Story #8
20. Restaurant of the Week
21. For Your Own Peace-of-Mind, Do Not Wait To Act on SkyMed
22. Enter Our Five Million Smiles 14-Vacation Giveaway
23. Beat The Price Increase on SkyMed Memberships & Renewals
24. No Age Limit to Join or Renew SkyMed
25. Q & A about SkyMed Medical Evacuation
26. Download The Complete List of All SkyMed Features & Benefits
27. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News
28. Airport Emigration Kiosks Activated; About US Customs Preclearance

Section Five: 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 Six: 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://everythingxsm.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 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. Wicked, Wicked Wavy Weather; Beacon Hill Road Blocked at Airport

Last weekend in *SXM Weekly News*, www.crownweather.com reported that a vigorous cold front moving eastward north of the islands may spawn a low pressure system north of the northeastern Caribbean, possibly resulting in rough seas, 15 foot waves in some areas, and windy conditions. Those rough seas and windy conditions were exactly what happened all week long across most of the island. In fact, this past Saturday, January 14, winds were forecast to be around 30 mph across the island.

Surf was so rough on the southwestern part of the island that it pushed tons of beach sand onto Beacon Hill Road, the road that passes Maho beach at the end of the airport runway. A backhoe was brought in to remove it and make the road passable.

Conditions were expected to return to normal by today, Monday.

2. "Today's SXM Weather" Now On Our Everything SXM Facebook Site

We post current SXM/St. Maarten/St. Martin weather every morning on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#).

3. Where To Find Current SXM Weather Info (Four Key Sources)

Here they are:

- a) [Crown Weather Services](#) whose very inexpensive subscription service is, we feel, the best in the business.
- b) Our "Weather" page at www.everythingsxm.com -- it has current satellite images and radar loops.
- c) Our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#), which publishes the latest advisories, watches, and warnings when SXM is threatened by any storms.
- d) On or off the island, listen to Island 92 -- 91.9FM or see www.island92.com. They report island warnings at once and know exactly what's going on. You can listen on the web anytime through live streaming.

See significant National Hurricane Center Outlooks and Advisories as they relate both to SXM and to the US East and Gulf coasts on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#).

Get a quick, current satellite look at the Atlantic basin anytime: <http://www.goes.noaa.gov/GIFS/ATWV.JPG> .

N. B.: Never rely on any website if you're in the path of a storm; always heed warnings from local authorities.

4. 110% Guarantee Now On SkyMed Travel Club Hotel, Car Rental Rates

SkyMed is now introducing a 110% Lowest Rate Guarantee for both hotel and car rental reservations. You can't lose with that kind of guarantee, so read this article, sign up, and make all your travel reservations directly through SkyMed Travel!

Here's what it is and how to join:

We're now giving JMB Website Supporters members and *SXM Weekly News* readers access to a private, "members only" travel wholesale club that offers incredible prices not only on airfares but on travel reservations and packages worldwide.

The SkyMed Travel Club offers exceptional pricing on everything and almost invariably beats everyone else's pricing. We have found their pricing excellent across the board and their new 110% low rate guarantee on hotels and car rentals is a big deal.

Normally, this organization charges \$99 to join plus \$99 annual renewals. But for our JMB Website Supporters members and now for everyone else, the cost to join is zero as will be the cost for renewals. Join the Club by going to www.SkyMedtravelclub.com, click the sign up link on the top right corner of the homepage, and provide the requested information. Complete the first sign up item (SkyMed Membership Number or Representative ID) by entering the code 391330 — doing that ensures that you pay nothing for your SkyMed Travel Club membership. No code, no free entry to the club's phenomenal pricing.

You will not be disappointed.

Traveling?

Never go anywhere without SkyMed Medical Evacuation Protection. Visit www.getskymed.com today; call Jeff for answers to SkyMed questions at (508) 747-8281 or email him at jeff@getskymed.com with the subject "SkyMed".

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

5. Simpson Bay Resort Celebrates As \$35-Million Renovations Finish; Opens La Patrona

Richard Sutton and Julieta Sanchez Sutton, the couple behind Royal Resorts Group that owns Simpson Bay Resort, knew early during their ownership that the resort required major floor to ceiling and wall to wall renovations. Ripping out the walls, ceilings, and floors, redoing the plumbing and wiring, and completely rebuilding the hotel from basement to roof cost approximately \$35-million. Timeshare owners who stuck with the resort through its ups and downs over the last 20 years have been rewarded by what in reality is an entirely new resort with gorgeous rooms and all the amenities, plus top-quality customer oriented service.

Completion of the renovations was celebrated last Wednesday with a reception for press and government. Interval International presented its top award to the resort and Everything SXM presented it with its first ever Everything St. Maarten Award of Excellence.

In addition, the Cancun, Mexico-based Royal Resorts Group opened St. Maarten's first and only authentic Mexican restaurant, on the water in the Marina Plaza: La Patrona. It was the vision of Julieta Sanchez and is quite gorgeous with Mexican chefs who really know what they're doing. We strongly recommend the restaurant and will be publishing more about it in the coming weeks.

6. Further Positive Reports on Sapphire Resort

Reports from several Sapphire timeshare owners who have spent recent weeks at that resort confirmed early reports published here that the resort has come a long way in the last several months.

A small exercise area has opened; the mini-store has reopened; a small new jewelry store is coming; the resort is said to be immaculate; and appliances are being upgraded resort-wide. Moreover, visitors report that employee attitude has improved substantially and so has responsiveness.

Both Jan Borsje and Philippe Verdier are now getting kudos from timeshare owners, who have been told that more beach chairs are on order. Owners say that the supply of beach towels is more than adequate. Walls in some rooms are being opened to eliminate former mold problems that had developed, and a new chiller will be installed in the air-conditioning system to eliminate this problem altogether, Sapphire people are saying. Mold has been a huge problem at Sapphire because of former inattention, Jan Borsje told us last year.

All in all, great reports when they are needed the most. There has been no further report about the pending ownership change.

SECTION 3: Member

7. "Section Three" -- Member Discounts / Benefits News & Updates

This new section of *SXM Weekly News*, which appears weekly, will provide detailed information about current JMB Website Supporters discounts and benefits both for current members and for people thinking about joining JMB.

In addition, it will be the introduction point for new benefits beyond the 260+ already available to all JMB members. We think you'll find many surprises here that will be of great interest and value. We expect to be close to 300 later this month.

Please see below for this month's story.

8. January Member Benefits Update: SXM Activities

Here are our SXM Activities Discounts, in alphabetical order. Remember also that we give discounts on all activities from AquaMania — which adds hundreds more discounts exclusively for our members. All discounts require your current, valid JMB Website Supporters Membership Card, a photo ID, and any voucher noted on the Secret Site.

Aqua Mania at the Simpson Bay Resort (formerly Pelican) Marina, booking agent for Tango, Lambada, The Edge, and more, offers JMB Website Supporters members 10% off all regularly scheduled trips.

Butterfly Farm is a unique adventure for everyone in your family -- weekend photographers love it as much as kids. JMB members get a significant discount.

Celine Too Motor Yacht / Catamaran (Capt. Neil Roebert) Members-only Discount for Tintamarre Day Sails and Lagoon Pub Crawls Aboard the Celine Too-- A discount is offered off all of Celine Too's trips; for the sunset lagoon cruise, the discount is a full 50%. Yacht charters are also available and they get a percentage discount as well.

Charter Yachting Discounts - Caicos Sailing: "Caicos Sailing Charter Yachting," based in Tortola, offers either 10% off all cruises/charters or 8 days for the price of 7.

Charter Yachting - Select Yacht Charters, a provider of luxury yacht charters in SXM and around the world, offers JMB Website Supporters members a free bottle of Dom Perignon champagne for all bookings of one week or more.

Charters - Seaside Charters offers boat charters to SXM beaches and neighboring islands. You can see all their charters at www.everythingsxm.com/secret/discounts/seasidecharterdescription.pdf.

Classic Schooner Passaat offers JMB members discounts on its cruises: Sunset, \$30 p.p. (usually USD\$35); Dinner cruise, \$71 p.p. (usually USD \$79); and Day sails, \$80 p.p. (usually USD\$89).

Clothing-Optional Boat Charters - Captain Alan -- with five boats, five captains, and many excursions -- some clothing optional -- Capt. Alan offers \$ off off all trips to JMB Website Supporters members.

Deep See Fishing, Rudy's Deep Sea Fishing Discounts Rudy Sierens, of Rudy's Deep Sea Fishing, Dutch Side, is one of the most experienced captains working from SXM. You can see his website [here](#). Forget the rates listed on his site: yours are significantly lower.

Diving - Octopus Diving in Grand Case does much more than diving; see their website, www.octopusdiving.com . Octopus offers JMB members a discount off all activities.

Garfield Fun Charters \$5 Per Family Member Discount: Garfield Fun Charters offers a number of enjoyable SXM sailing adventures; see www.garfieldfuncharters.com for details.

Go-Karting Coconut Trees, on the road between Marigot and Grand Case, offers all JMB Website Supporters members a 20% discount off all Go-Karting.

Jet-Ski -- Happy Hour Charters offers JMB Website Supporters members a percentage off JetSki rentals and many, many other tours.

Party Bus - "Da Party Bus" - The St. Maarten Party Bus is a somewhat wacky but deliriously fun adventure from the Baker family, owners of Baker's Suites Boutique Hotel, Simpson Bay, and Tropicana Car Rental, Simpson bay. See their website for all that [Da Party Bus](#) has to offer. Our members get a significant discount off regular rates.

Power Boat - Sea Angels is a charter business using a very fast 36-foot power boat able to travel to all local islands in comfort and speed. Day charter rates start from €800 for the day. Significant discount for JMB members.

Random Wind 54-foot traditional sailboat offers JMB Website Supporters members \$ off the Paradise Day Sail *per person* when you book directly.

Yacht Excursions - Turtle Tours Yacht Excursion Discounts: Plying the turquoise waters of the lagoon, sailing around the island, or going to close-by islands with Turtle Tours is a pleasure. Join one of their packaged excursions, or create your own. Your JMB Website Supporters membership entitles you to 15% off any Turtle Tours excursion on any full day rental/outing that comes to Turtle Tours directly, meaning not through an activities desk etc.

Zoo - St. Maarten Park / Zoo 25% discount on admission for up to two people.

More discounts are coming. Stay tuned.

For details on all the above, see the Discounts Master Index in the Secret Site. (Members only; username & password required). To use these discounts your current, valid JMB Membership Card is required. Again, see all the details on the members-only Secret Site.

Still not a member? See next article. A new set of benefits will be explored in February.

SECTION 4: Island

9.

[Get a Huge Selection of About 300 Discounts for Everything You Do in SXM --](#)

[Three Years, \\$99; Five Years, \\$129; One Year, \\$59](#)

[Click these Links:](#)

[New JMB memberships](#)

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

Renewal JMB memberships

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

JMB Membership Reinstatements

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

Hear Jeff Live On Island 92 Radio (91.9 FM or www.island92.com)

Every Monday at About 9:45 a.m. Island Time,
8:45 a.m. EST

10. Rough Surf Throws Tons of Beach Sand onto Beacon Hill Road; Backhoe Removes It

As we mentioned elsewhere (see story #1), last week's rough surf pushed tons of beach sand onto Beacon Hill Road, the road that ties Beacon Hill to civilization and along which thousands of people watch airplanes land at adjacent SXM Airport. The sand required a backhoe for removal, not an unusual occurrence.

11. SXM Surf Pictures: Using "HDR" On Your Camera

During last week's high surf event on SXM, thousands of people took thousands of pictures of angry surf. To see some, visit our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#). Many cameras now include HDR capability — check your camera manual. HDR can help you achieve more dramatic, breathtaking pictures.

12. As Gas Prices Rise, Where To Find The Cheapest Gas

With the dollar and euro currently at par, prices for everyday items now tend to be less expensive on the French side than on the Dutch — particularly for groceries which, oddly enough, all enter the island through the same Dutch side port.

Gasoline has been less expensive on the French side for some time. Stations readily accepting dollars at par with euros include Cadisco just north of the French side drawbridge and near Orient beach. Those stations seem to have about the cheapest gas on the island.

13. Show The World: Where To Post Your Favorite SXM Pictures

Do it right here, where there are already hundreds. It's our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin Facebook Site](#).

14. Answer or Ask SXM Questions and Get Quick Answers

No matter how obscure they are, ask away on our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin Facebook Site](#). With over 7600 members online, your answer will come quickly....

15. Best Beaches for Kids

Beaches, of course, abound in SXM. Four that are especially good for kids are Mullet Bay beach, perhaps the busiest family beach on the island; Friars Bay beach, just north of Marigot; and Le Galion Beach, near the Butterfly Farm, and Orient Beach.

- Mullet bay beach can have rough surf but it is very attractive to young people with boogie boards and to surfers. Mullet bay may be used topless.
 - Friars bay beach, on the French side north of Marigot, also frequently used topless, sees many young children. The drop off at the beach may be a bit steep.
 - Perhaps the best beach for young children is Le Galion, near the butterfly farm and orient beach. It has no significant drop off, is mostly families, and is definitely child friendly and very scenic.
 - Orient Beach is "textile" except at its southern end, where it's clothing optional. Kids are seen on the whole beach.
-

16. Celine Sunset Lagoon Dinner Cruises, Tintamarre Trips, and Charters

Celine Too -- the 62' motor yacht / catamaran owned by long-time SXM captain Neil Roebert -- is new, but Neil's experience delivering great trips for tourists goes back 20 years, when he sailed to SXM from his native South Africa in his original 32' Celine catamaran. (Yes, he really did do that.)

Today, he offers lagoon dinner cruises in cooperation with his son, Johann Roebert, whose Stone Restaurant on Simpson Bay Lagoon is the locale of the dinners.

His day-long Tintamarre trips include a great lunch aboard the yacht, a light breakfast, open bar, a stop at Happy Bay for an on-board mud bath, and lots more. Day charters are available to neighboring islands.

JMB Website Supporters members get discounts on all these trips, even the charters, along with nearly 300 other discounts and benefits including a number now being added for the imminent high season. Don't spend anything more than you have to on your upcoming SXM vacation; learn more about JMB Website Supporters now in article 9.

17. The Best Professional Massages on St. Maarten / St. Martin

During a trip to SXM not long after the millennium, I had major back pain following earlier disk issues. "You need Tricia," a friend told me. I contacted Tricia Altenau and had only the fourth massage of my life in SXM that week, at her then location in Grand Case.

Originally from Cincinnati, she has been in SXM for more than 20 years practicing her craft. I was in pain when I arrived and told Tricia what was happening. Quiet, relaxing music played softly in the background as she started working. When she had finished, my back was relaxed - and pain free. I've made sure to see her a few times on each subsequent trip and she always does an incredibly effective job.

Other clients report the same results: <http://www.aiamassage.com/testimonials.htm>. Check her site for services and more. She operates the Ti Spa at L'Esplanade Hotel, near Grand Case. She is absolutely the best -- an amazing lady.

18. Something Very Special: A Closer Look at Mario Bistro (Look at These

Specials)

We have our favorite SXM restaurants. Certainly one of those at the very top of our list is Mario Bistro, located in a beautiful new setting at Porto Cupecoy on the Dutch Side.

Mario's *is* what most great restaurants aspire to be. Its setting and service are top-notch; its creativity is flat-out astonishing; and its execution is about as flawless as any restaurant can be.

As a small example, here are the specials from Mario's a week ago when we last visited. Specials offered today are likely different. Ours were amazing. Make reservations well in advance and just go. Mario Tardif's Mario Bistro is one of the best you'll ever discover:

Special Appetizers:

Warm wahoo sashimi, seared with boiling sesame oil, some wasabi green peas and soya sauce reduction, sitting on top a crab maki roll tempura with wakame seaweed and pickled ginger chips. (I ordered it. Just wow.)

Steamed mussels cooked in tomato sauce with garlic butter, Parmesan cheese and some fine herbs.

Salmon gravelax toastadas, coming with a dill Greek yoghurt, daikon salad, topped with horseradish lemon cream and roasted sesame seeds.

Foie gras terrine, served with a fig chutney on the side and toasted bread.

Ilene ordered an appetizer from the menu which offered crab prepared four different ways, one of which was a crab cake and another crab bisque. She raved about all four.

Special Main courses:

Pan seared grouper fillet, served with roasted baby new potatoes, sautéed green beans and roasted almonds. Surrounded with a lemon garlic capers butter sauce.

Grill swordfish fillet with roasted garlic mashed potatoes, grill artichoke and roasted red bell pepper, black olives tapenade and crispy Serrano ham chips. It was the best swordfish preparation I've seen in many, many years.

Duo of sautéed jumbo shrimps and half lobster tail poached in a Maine lobster butter with creamy crab risotto, baby bok choy and green peas mousseline. Lobster sauce to go with it.

Grill pork ribeye steak with oyster mushrooms and vegetables fricassée, truffle mashed potatoes, caramelized pearl onions and merlot sauce.

Ilene ordered pistachio-encrusted Mahi-Mahi from the menu. I will have it next time, she loved it and it looked simply superb.

You don't get anything like this at ordinary restaurants.

19. A Look Back at "Old" Restaurants: Story #8

Over the years, St. Maarten/St. Martin has been home to many restaurants of varying descriptions. This series briefly describes a number of restaurants from both sides of the island that have passed into history but have not left our memory.

Ric's Place at first was on the waterside of Front Street not far from the historic courthouse. SXM's original Tex-Mex sports bar, it was run by Ric and Kathy Hetzel. Its walls were emblazoned with banners from pro and college sports teams. Breakfast, lunch, dinner; great burgers. Ric was irascible but everybody loved him no matter what. His place was "the" place to be on Superbowl Sunday or during any big sporting event. Legendary burgers. Ric passed away several years ago and Kathy is living in the states now, with her new husband and near her grandchildren. Nothing else has ever replaced Ric's Place....

Check next week for another article about a former SXM restaurant.

Featured so far in this series:

- 1- West Indian Tavern
- 2- Sam's Place

- 3- Turtle Pier
- 4- Scavenger's
- 5- Surf Club South
- 6- Laguna
- 7- Le Perroquet
- 8- Ric's Place
- 9- Watch for our next "look back" in another week.

Got suggestions? Email them to susan@jmbcommunications.com with the subject "Look Back."

20. Restaurant of the Week: Big Fish

Blessed since last year with new ownership and an accomplished, award-winning chef, Big Fish stands out among SXM's top restaurants not only for seafood, but for whatever you happen to be craving.

Whether you prefer beef, fish, vegetarian selections, or any combination of their dozens and dozens of selections, you can't go wrong. Head Chef Wendell Laurence, formerly of IZI, knows his stuff and his staff makes sure everything goes out of the kitchen exactly according to your order.

Delicious, creative salads and luscious desserts, too.

Two very special features here -- first, the ambiance is bright, cheerful, and upbeat. Two big screen TVs in the inside dining room help assure that you won't miss any important games. The outdoor dining room, protected from the weather, gives you delightful alfresco dining with a bit of nature as you enjoy that luscious Big Fish food.

And second, Big Fish is the best place in this area for sushi -- sashimi, nigiri sushi, and maki rolls. Delicious all around.

Big Fish is a key member of The Culinary Village at Dawn Beach -- lots of great restaurants including also Daniel's by the Sea, Mr. Busby's Beach Bar, Island Pizza, Rotisserie Chicken, and Canoa.

The article we published a few weeks ago about SXM's top Seafood Restaurants is now on its own page on our website — see a complete list of [top seafood restaurants here](#).

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 the beginning of this section.

Big Fish Restaurant www.bigfishsxm.com/ (featured 1/16/17)
IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 11/28/16)
Busby's Chicken Rotisserie (featured 12/5/16)
Canoa, www.canoasxm.com (featured 3/22/16)
Mario Bistro 9/5/16
SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 12/19/16)
Trattoria Pizza Pasta, Maho Plaza near Casino Royale (featured 9/12/16)
Daniel's By The Sea, www.dawnbeachsxm.com (featured 12/5/16)
Domino's Pizza <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dominos-Pizza-St-Maarten/95635717338> (featured 9/16)
Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 11/21/16)
The Boathouse, <https://www.facebook.com/CDayDay777> 10/3/16
The Hideaway, <http://www.lavistaresort.com/restaurant.html> (featured 10/31/16)
Stone Restaurant, www.thestonerestaurant.com (featured 9/2/14)
Le Pressoir, <http://www.lepressoir-sxm.com> (featured 7/6/15)
Temptation, <http://www.temptation-sxm.com/> (featured 10/10/16)
Lal's Curry In A Hurry Indian Restaurant, Airport Road, Simpson Bay (featured 5/9/16)
Mr. Busby's Beach Bar <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 7/25/16)
Island Pizza, <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 7/25/16)
Pineapple Pete, www.pineapplepete.com (featured 9/19/16)
Papagayo, <http://www.cluborient.com/papagayo.php> (featured 10/17/16)
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 1/9/17)
Topper's <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 6/6/16)
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 7/18/16)

More stories follow.

21. For Your Own Peace-of-Mind, Do Not Wait To Act on SkyMed

I've had three phone calls in recent months from people -- SXM tourists like you -- who needed help in a hurry which was impossible to get -- here's why.

One called days after a stroke (it wasn't his first); another suffered a heart attack a few days before calling from the Rocky Mountain west; and the third called right after a totally unexpected cancer diagnosis.

If you're healthy now, that's great -- but tomorrow is another day. All three people were hoping to return to SXM after treatment but they wanted SkyMed medical evacuation membership protection just in case. *In all three cases the sudden, recent change in their health made it impossible for them to be approved at that time, though they could reapply a year later.* SkyMed always asks "Any hospitalizations in the last six months?"

Do NOT take chances by waiting. GET SKYMED BEFORE YOU NEED IT ...so you'll have it when you DO need it. See www.getskymed.com. *In our opinion, it's the best medical evacuation membership product on the market.* --Jeff

More stories follow.

Get SkyMed Now, *Before* You Need it.
Got Questions About
SkyMed Emergency Medical Evacuation?

Phone or Email Jeff: (508) 747-8281
jeff@getskymed.com

SkyMed Takes You Home® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill or injured while traveling, saving you upwards of \$45,000 or more payable in cash in advance if you aren't a member -- to set up an emergency medical evacuation yourself. Get SkyMed BEFORE you need it. Call any weekday during normal business hours, Eastern Time. Please leave a message or email us if you get a voicemail response.

22. Enter Our Five Million Smiles Vacation Giveaway; Now Includes 14 Vacations

Both of our two Grand Prizes are weeks at two of the island's most fabulous villas — the names of both of them are below. *All vacations are subject to availability, seasonal limitations, and island taxes / fees at the discretion of the resort owners.* Here are all our prizes:

- Eight days and seven nights at [Belle Vue](#), an incredible villa overlooking Orient Bay on the French Side that will accommodate up to eight people (bring your family / best friends -- or not). We're grateful to the owner and to IREvacations.com (and SXM's top real estate agent Arun Jagtiani) for supplying this incredible vacation.

- Eight days and seven nights at [Villa Onyi](#) at Point Blanche. Featured on HGTV this is one of the island's most breathtaking villas, inside and out.
- Eight days and seven nights in the [Guest House at Colony Manor Goldendaze](#), brand new and gorgeous on quiet Simpson Bay Beach.
- Eight days and seven nights at the beautiful [Villa Son Risa](#) in Pelican Key (Cleaning charge applies; avail. May-Sept. 2017.)
- Eight days and seven nights at [Mercure Beach Hotel and Marina](#), Simpson Bay Lagoon, French Side (new)
- Eight days and seven nights at [Holland House Beach Hotel](#), Philipsburg, on Great Bay Beach (new)
- Eight days and seven nights in a garden studio (from 4/15/17 to 12/15/17) at [Mary's Boon Beach Resort](#)
- Eight days and seven nights at [El Zafiro](#) beachside resort on Simpson Bay Beach (new)
- Eight days and seven nights at [La Vista Resort or La Vista Beach](#);
- Eight days and seven nights at [Baker's Suites](#) in Simpson Bay, near Kim Sha Beach
- Eight days and seven nights in a brand-new two bedroom suite at [Simpson Bay Resort](#);
- Eight days and seven nights at [The Summit Resort](#);
- Four days, three nights, plus open bar and breakfast at naturist [Club Fantastico](#)
- Four days, three nights in boutique hotel style suites in the main building at [Oyster Bay Beach Resort](#).
- A one-week car rental from Leisure Car Rental, one of our car rental partners (Grand Prize)
- A one-week car rental from Tropicana Car Rental, our first car rental partner (Grand Prize)

There are also many other prizes including:

- A Helicopter ride for the grand prize winner (from Corail Helicopters, Grand Case Airport)
- Jewelry prizes:
 - Caribbean Gems (to come)
 - [Oro Diamante](#) Two \$100 Gift Cards good toward any purchase, one for each Grand Prize Winner
 - Little Europe Jewelers (to come)
 - Zhaveri Jewelers (to come)
- From Tijon Parfumerie in Grand Case, a bottle of Ti Amour, their new gold perfume collection with 23K gold inside, which normally sells for 129 € per bottle.
- Full-day cruise for two to Tintamarre aboard the 62' Celine Too Motoryacht
- Cruise for two on the legendary Celine Too Pub Crawl
- Tour of the Etna Ice Cream Factory -- and a few pints to take with you
- Tour of Toppers' Rhum Distillery (including free samples, if you're old enough)
- A painting by renowned SXM artist Patty Meotti which has been posted in our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#). More on Patty is [here](#).
- A \$100 Gift Card good toward any purchase at Le Grand Marche
- A \$50 Gift Card for Aaron Meit's / No Rest Agencies' Julio's Smoke & Booze, a leading wholesaler of snacks and island souvenirs located in the Dutch Side Industrial Park, Simpson Bay
- We'll detail these soon.

Many dinners for two are also offered for the Grand Prize winners, including this heavily updated group:

- Dinner for two at award-winning Chef Dino Jagtiani's [Temptation Restaurant](#);
- Dinner for two at the exquisite new [Mario Bistro](#) in Cupecoy;
- Dinner for two at [Spiga Restaurant in Grand Case](#);
- Dinner for two at [Big Fish Restaurant](#), Oyster Pond
- Dinner for two at [SkipJack's restaurant](#), Simpson Bay (limit, \$90)
- Dinner for two at [Daniel's By The Sea](#) on Dawn Beach;
- Dinner for two at [iZi Ristorante Italiano](#), Simpson Bay.
- Dinner for two at [Infinity Restaurant at Oyster Bay Beach Resort](#);
- Sunday Brunch for Two at [Oyster Bay Breach Resort](#)
- Breakfast Buffet Any Day for two at [Toppers Restaurant](#) in Simpson Bay
- \$50 Gift Certificate for [Avantika Restaurant](#);
- Dinner for two at [Toppers Restaurant](#);
- Dinner for two at [Pineapple Pete Restaurant](#)
- Dinner for two at [Sushiitto Restaurant](#)
- Dinner for two at [Trattoria Pizza Pasta](#)
- Dinner for two at [Vesna Taverna](#) in Simpson Bay
- Dinner for two at [Lal's Curry In a Hurry Indian Restaurant](#);
- Dinner for two at [Cheri's Cafe](#) (limit \$50);
- Dinner for two at [The Boathouse](#);
- Lunch for two at Patrick Turner's [Tropical Wave](#) on Le Galion Beach;
- All Dinners are subject to reasonable limitations.

You can enter now if (and only if) you're a direct (not pass-along) subscriber to **SXM Weekly News**... Click the link to enter now: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/getting_here/entry-form-for-our-seven-vacation-

[giveaway.shtml](#)

Entries from pass-along readers will not be accepted; Subscribe directly now by clicking "Free Newsletters" at www.everythingsxm.com. *Only direct subscribers are eligible to win -- and subscriptions are free.*

More stories follow.

Traveling Anywhere?

Never go anywhere without SkyMed Emergency Medical Evacuation Protection. Visit www.getskymed.com today; call Jeff for answers to SkyMed questions at (508) 747-8281 or email him at jeff@getskymed.com with the Subject "SkyMed".

23. Beat The Price Increase on SkyMed Memberships & Renewals

Because of rising costs in recent years for medical evacuation services and the rising price of crude oil, SkyMed will be increasing the price for its most popular offering, the SkyMed five year Ultimate, from \$2495 for our JMB members to \$2995 in phases starting this April.

However you can avoid the price increase in three different ways:

If you're not currently a SkyMed member, join through the five-year Ultimate now and select "automatic renewals." That option gets you the current price of \$2495 total for five years of family coverage and it sets up your future renewals also at that same discounted \$2495 price;

If you're a three-year or annual SkyMed member, upgrade now to the five-year Ultimate and select "automatic renewals." That option gets you the current price of \$2495 total for five years of family coverage and it sets up your future renewals also at that same discounted \$2495 price;

If you're a five-year SkyMed Ultimate member, contact the SkyMed office shown on your SkyMed Membership Card and tell them you want to select "automatic renewals." That option sets up your future renewals at the discounted \$2495 price total for five years of family coverage.

But do it now. The price increase will be phased in starting this April.

24. No Age Limit to Join or Renew SkyMed

What's the upper age limit to join SkyMed? There isn't any: apply today regardless of age.

What's the upper age limit to renew your existing SkyMed membership? *There isn't any.* Just pay your SkyMed renewal on time and your membership will continue regardless of your health or age at the time of your renewal. There is no membership cutoff for advancing age or declining health, unlike so-called competitive programs. *And the price of your renewal membership will not increase due to declining health or advancing age.*

SkyMed Takes You Home® -- what else matters?

25. Q & A about SkyMed Medical Evacuation

Updated 1/16/17

What SkyMed Does: SkyMed *Takes You Home*® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. *SkyMed is your free ticket home* aboard an ICU-equivalent emergency medical evacuation jet with an ICU-certified medical attendant on board to help make sure everything goes as it should.

How SkyMed Works: Like clockwork, you're taken from the hospital by ambulance to a waiting aircraft at SkyMed's expense; SkyMed makes all the arrangements and pays all costs for the medical evacuation jet and for the ambulance at the destination which takes you to a waiting team at your destination hospital, which already has your medical records and is ready to start helping you. There are no co-pays and no deductibles for SkyMed services, ever.

Anything can happen — but you can trust SkyMed to take you home when you need it most.

What's It Cost? *Without* SkyMed, you'll need \$45,000 or more payable in cash in advance to pay for an emergency medical evacuation — if you can make the dozens of calls necessary to set it up in an emergency. SkyMed does all that for you, for a small membership fee; you simply make one phone call 24/7/365 to get things going.

Why Buy Now? We're offering SkyMed now at very special pricing *for JMB Website Supporters members only — but if you're a nonmember and care to join SkyMed now through us*, we'll enroll you in JMB Website Supporters at the same time. This offer is available only by phone; call Jeff directly at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed questions only) and he will be happy to answer your questions, tell you about the different types of programs available, and their respective costs. He'll also be happy to fill out your application for an annual or multiyear SkyMed membership by phone and at the same time you can set up a JMB Website Supporters membership (required to get the biggest multiyear SKYMED discounts).

See www.getskymed.com or phone Jeff any weekday at 508-747-8281 or email him at jeff@getskymed.com (use the subject "SkyMed inquiry") to learn more and get your questions answered.

Types of SkyMed Memberships:

First, short term memberships are for brief trips in North America, the Caribbean, the Bahamas, Bermuda, and Mexico -- over 30 countries total. Short-term memberships are very inexpensive, about \$9 per day per person, maximum of about \$15 per day. *The disadvantage is that they only cover you for the short term you are traveling: when they expire, your protection disappears. When you're ready to travel again, you must reapply for a new short-term membership. Although the process is quick, you still must be medically approved and at some point, that may well be impossible (see story 19). Bear in mind that many of us travel more than once or twice a year, even if it's only a few hundred miles from home to visit friends or relatives, which is why we recommend annual or multiyear SkyMed memberships instead of short-term memberships. You do not want your protection to end just when you may need it most.*

Second, both annual and multiyear SkyMed memberships are essentially permanent coverage. *Once you've been approved and as long as you continue to pay your membership fee on time, your membership cannot be discontinued as a result of advancing age or declining health* — two critically important advantages that ensure you have coverage when you may need it most.

Third, Ultimate memberships cover multiple years and provide protection worldwide. The only exceptions are places like Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, North Korea — places you won't visit anyway. (Ask before going anywhere dangerous/unusual.) Ultimate memberships also offer the greatest breadth of coverage. You can see a complete list of all the features and benefits of these coverages [here](#).

Fourth, if you're an American or Canadian ex-pat living in St. Maarten / St. Martin or elsewhere outside your country for six months or more per year, you can still get SKYMED protection in the form of an **ex-pat** membership. Email us (see next paragraph) and we can tell you how it works and answer your questions.

In addition to everything else, Jeff Berger has been a SkyMed rep for over 15 years. He'll be happy to answer questions; phone him weekdays at 508-747-8281 or email him at Jeff@GetSkyMed.com. He generally returns calls and messages within 24 hours. To see [online frequently asked questions, go here](#). You can also see his SkyMed site at www.GetSkyMed.com.

JMB members get serious discounts on all multiyear SkyMed memberships. If you're not already a JMB member, join today and take advantage of those discounts.

For more on JMB memberships, see below,

New JMB memberships

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

Renewal JMB memberships

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

JMB Membership Reinstatements

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

More stories are below.

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.](#)

26. 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](#).

27. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

Look here for our PDF archives: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml. All issues for the past few years are now online.

28. Airport Emigration Kiosks Activated; About US Customs Preclearance

From Princess Juliana SXM Airport: "The Princess Juliana International Airport (SXM Airport), in conjunction with the Police Force of Sint Maarten (KPSM) has successfully implemented an Automated Border Control (ABC) clearance e-Gates solution at the emigration zone of the airport. In fulfillment of the organizations' Public Private Partnership, the introduction of e-Gates is just one of many initiatives to be implemented and geared towards improving the traveler experience and enhancing passenger processing and security at the SXM Airport. "Our main goal is to introduce an integrated Passenger Experience program that seamlessly streamlines the identification, verification, validation, and enrollment processes in such a way that it positively enhances passenger flow, while maintaining the highest level of security for travelers," said KPSM Chief Commissioner of Police, Carl John."

Bottom line, this enables you to use your boarding pass and passport to pass through emigration at the airport without seeing an emigration agent, though one will be nearby. You will be able to get to the newly expanded Security area faster than before.

Also ... The possibility of having US Customs & Border Patrol "precleanance" for flights to the US is being examined, as we reported previously. This could enable planes from SXM to the US to land at regular gates, without any need for further US customs / immigration processing. We are working on an interview with airport officials on this and other topics and, as always, we'll keep you posted.

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?

2017 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.

SECTION 5: For Members Only

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 6: 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

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