

Remember Veterans Tomorrow === #968 --- November 10, 2014 -- 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

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

Weekly Tourist-Oriented News & Comments from SXM

Copyright ©, JMB Communications, 2014. See [Legal](#) for reprint requests, page bottom.

Part of www.everythingstmaarten.com

Add jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com to your address book to be sure you receive this newsletter every week.

Important Note:

You are receiving St. Maarten and St. Martin 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 210,000 readers around the world...

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



twitter

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



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

This format is easily readable on most mobile devices; scroll down for this week's news. You can also download a PDF 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?>

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

TOP STORIES

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

This is issue #968 of Jeff Berger's / JMB Communications' *St. Maarten and St. Martin (SXM) Weekly News*, published every Monday all year long (Tuesdays during some holiday weeks). You're receiving this because you subscribed or are a JMB Website Supporters member.

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

- ***Torrential Rains Cause Significant Flooding Across SXM - But No Tropical Storm Is To Blame***
- ***Search for Missing FedEx Aircraft Moves Into a New Phase***
- ***Court Orders Alegria & Caravanserai Timeshare Owners To "Talk"; What's Next***
- ***Seething Caravanserai Timeshare Owners Vent: Who They Blame & What They May Do***
- ***Butterfly Farm Scheduled To Reopen Today (Monday)***
- ***Westin Doesn't Like Through Traffic to Dawn Beach***
- ***We Tell You Where To Go Via Our 2015 "Awards of Excellence" Coming Earlier This Year***
- ***At Hard-Hit Orient Beach, Progress Moves Quickly***
- ***Across SXM, Evidence of Gonzalo's Visit Is Disappearing***
- ***Huge Holiday Jewelry Discounts Returning Exclusively For JMB Website Supporters Members***
- ... ***and much more***

20 new stories this week

Scroll down for our complete Table of Contents

Timeshare Rentals and Sales of the Week

Each week JMB randomly picks timeshare condominiums for rent and for sale in SXM from the huge selection at http://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 200+ St. Maarten and St. Martin-focused travel benefits, and your subscription also helps keep these weekly SXM newsletters coming.

SXM Timeshare Rentals of The Week:

RENTAL 12/12/2014 12/19/2014 week 50 Royal Palm Beach Diamond Resort Royal Palm Beach. Fri-Fri.Sleeps six. Newly Renovated, 2 Bedrooms-2 Bath,with King size bed in each bedroom, fully equipped kitchen and large living/dining area. There are three TV's and DVD. Balcony overlooking Simpson Bay. Resort has its own beach and features are: a health club, hair salon, bar, restaurant, pool and swim up pool,internet cafe and mini-market. Within walking distance of many fine restaurants and a supermarket. 5 minutes from airport. \$1,600 Joel 215-938-1888 Blkcl2000@aol.com

RENTAL 1/31/15 to 2/7/15 (week 5) Simpson Bay Resort Marina 207, a sleep-four studio overlooking both the Marina pool and Pelican

beach (a short walk to Marina Residences, next door). Many beaches, great restaurants, piano bar (The Red Piano), more nightlife, casinos, a Deli, and other shops and nearby. A clothing optional beach is about two miles away. Unit features stove, microwave, cable TV, WiFi is on site, sleeps four, very convenient. \$1099. This unit is also for sale at just \$2499! Timeshare tax (\$50) is renter's responsibility. Please contact Susan at (508) 747-8281 or email susan@jmbcommunications.com

SXM Timeshare Sales of The Week:

SALE: January 17 to January 24, 2015 (week 3) Sapphire Beach Club on Cupecoy Beach, sleep-four unit faces Cupecoy Beach and the Caribbean sea. Includes a Jacuzzi whirlpool hot tub on the balcony, king size bed, full a/c, cable TV, DVD player, refrigerator with ice maker, marble bath, beautiful furnishings throughout. Resort has shops, restaurants, min-mart, plus a large pool, whirlpool, and bar -- all on the ocean. Close to Atlantis Casino, many great restaurants including Temptation, plus Mullet Bay Beach, the Cupecoy clothing-optional beach, Baie Longue, and Baie Rouge on the French Side, and did I say incredible restaurants? Asking only \$4499 to buy (negotiable). We also have weeks four and five available to rent or buy at nearby resorts; will discount if you buy or rent two weeks or more. Photos available. Phone Jeff at (508) 747-8281 or email Susan susan@jmbcommunications.com

SALE: 1/24/2015 through 3/21/2015: Weeks 4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11 Simpson Bay Resort & Marina 2 Bedroom Villa: 211A - 211B (Master and Junior Suites) together accommodate 6 people. Master suite consists of King size bed/master bedroom, 2 Murphy beds/living room, full kitchen, dining/living room, spacious bathroom with separate double vanity area. Beautiful, large deck overlooks Simpson Bay. Junior suite – (lock out) 2 full beds, a small kitchen, dorm size refrigerator, microwave, toaster, coffee maker. The bathroom is spacious with a separate double vanity area. Decks overlook Simpson Bay & Pool. Sale price per week: \$19,000.00 Matthew O'Donnell 609-780-6845 mess113@yahoo.com

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

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

This Week's Stories

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

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



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

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

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

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

-- See Our Story on Recent Flooding Rains at the Beginning of Section Three --

1. Hurricane Season, In Its Home Stretch, Ends November 30
2. How To Get The Lowest Airfares

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

-- See Our Stories on The Latest Developments at Caravanserai / Alegria Resort in Section Three --

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

- **200 Discounts Across SXM Only \$59/year: Join Today To Keep These Newsletters Coming** (Story 3)
- **On Thanksgiving Go Nowhere Without Taking SkyMed Medical Evacuation Protection With You** (Story 4)

[Go Nowhere Without SkyMed MedEvac Protection -- About \\$1.25/day Protects You For a Full-Year](#)

5. Torrential Rains Cause Significant Flooding Across SXM - But No Tropical Storm Is To Blame <http://tinyurl.com/ltp6s3a>
6. Search for Missing FedEx Aircraft Moves Into a New Phase <http://tinyurl.com/kk2jcc5>
7. Court Orders Alegria & Caravanserai Timeshare Owners To "Talk"; What's Next
8. Caravanserai Timeshare Owners Vent About Victimization: Who They Blame & What They May Do
9. Verna Taverna Reopens for Dinner Friday Night, November 14
10. Butterfly Farm Scheduled To Reopen Today
11. Mullet Bay Beach Access Restricted <http://tinyurl.com/nqn76ne>
12. Westin Doesn't Like Through Traffic to Dawn Beach
13. 10000-kilo Marijuana Bust by Port of St. Maarten <http://tinyurl.com/mwyq5y3>
14. Where To Go: Our 2015 "Awards of Excellence" Coming Earlier to Guide Your Next SXM Vacation
15. At Hard-Hit Orient Beach, Progress Moves Quickly
16. Across SXM, Evidence of Gonzalo's Visit Is Disappearing
17. Sun Nails Moves Across The Street
18. How To Avoid Crime in SXM
19. Huge Holiday Jewelry Discounts Returning Exclusively For JMB Website Supporters Members
16. "Restaurant Of The Week" Returns: It's Toppers

Scroll down for indexes to sections IV and V, and scroll further to get a growing list of 200+ St. Maarten and St. Martin-focused travel discounts.

Rent Out or Sell Your SXM Timeshare

Meet Our Sponsors (Updated 9/7/13)

Section Four: For Members Only (Revised 12/17/13)

- A. About Low Airfares We Post On The *Secret Site*
- B. All the Answers for JWS members: Just Click the Link
- C. Members: Why Check Airfares Daily?
- D. Members: Password Recovery Info
- E. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads

Section Five: Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) (Revised 12/17/13)

How To Get a **GROWING LIST of 200+** Money-Saving St. Maarten- and St. Martin-Focused Travel Benefits

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

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

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

Contact Us:

[Revised 12/17/13]

All member discounts and benefits are explained in detail on the members-only *secret* website, <http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret> . If

you're a JMB Website Supporters member and have a question not answered there, please contact us at support@jmbcommunications.com.

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

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

All JMB Newsletters Read *From JMB*

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

THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest.

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

1. Hurricane Season, In Its Home Stretch, Ends November 30

The 2014 Atlantic hurricane season ends November 30, none too soon for residents of St. Maarten. Hurricane Gonzalo battered the island a few weeks ago, causing significant damage to Orient beach and other businesses and sinking or damaging dozens of boats.

Total damage from the storm on both sides of the island is believed to be somewhere in excess of \$25 million total.

Although hurricanes are possible late in November and beyond, the later it gets the less likely they are.

2. How To Get The Lowest Airfares (Repeat)

This is the single biggest piece of membership news we've had in the past 12 years: JMB Website Supporters now gives you access to a private, "members only" travel wholesale club that offers incredible prices not only on airfares but on packages not just to the Caribbean, but worldwide.

Retail travel sites — the ones whose names you know very well — are heavily regulated. But private travel clubs like this, which normally charge members prices for membership/admission, are regulated differently and consequently, can offer much better pricing.

The organization providing these travel benefits has been traveling under the radar for 25 years and is only now making its travel reservations prowess publicly known. It's SkyMed Travel Club and it is entirely separate from the SkyMed "takes you home" medical evacuation service we've been recommending to you since shortly after the millennium.

The SkyMed Travel Club offers exceptional pricing on everything and almost invariably beats everyone else's pricing. We have been testing it for the past few weeks and have found the pricing to be extraordinary — even on the wildly popular river cruises that are a tourism phenomenon throughout Europe and are quickly gaining popularity here in the US.

And normally, this organization charges you \$99 to join plus \$99 annual renewals. But for our JMB Website Supporters members, and during a brief introductory period for everyone else, the cost to join is zero as will be the cost for renewals. Exclusively through us, you get access to a world-class global ticketing mechanism without paying one cent to get in the door.

This is a new benefit for JMB members. During this introduction, everyone can join by going to www.SkyMedtravelclub.com, clicking the sign up link on the top right corner of the homepage, and providing the requested information. It's very important to complete the first sign up item (SkyMed Membership Number or Representative ID) by entering the code 391330 — entering that code is what ensures that you pay nothing to be a member of the SkyMed Travel Club. If you fail to enter that code, you will not gain free entry to the club's phenomenal pricing.

Do join — you will not be disappointed.

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

-- See Our Stories on The Latest Developments at Caravanserai / Alegria Resort in Section Three --

SECTION 3: Island

[Just \\$59/month Gets You Global SkyMed Medevac Protection: Go Nowhere Without It](#)

Still Just \$59 For a Full Year Get The Biggest, Best SXM Discount Package: JMB Gives You 200+ Discounts Across SXM

Get The Best SXM Discount Package: Get about 200 discounts across the island including sizable jewelry gift cards, half-off members-only lagoon sunset cruises, discounts at dozens of restaurants, plus many activities, art, shopping, and other discounts on both sides of the island.

Other discount programs come and go, but JMB Website Supporters grows and grows.

And it's just \$59 for one year (new memberships) but much less per year when you buy multiyear memberships. Low prices for renewals and reinstatements, too.

New memberships: Learn more here: http://everythingsexm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml . Your JMB membership keeps these newsletters coming every week and gives you tons of discounts across SXM.

Reinstate a former membership: <http://everythingsexm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

Renew your current JMB membership at the Membership Renewal Center on the members-only [Secret Website](#).

On Thanksgiving, Travel Nowhere Without Medical Evacuation Protection From SkyMed International -- ***Now On Sale!***

Having your own medical evacuation membership enables you to get home in a hurry when you or your spouse / partner become critically ill or injured away from home. Without membership, you must pay for the evacuation in cash, in advance -- if you can set it up -- and the cost can easily be \$45,000 or more, sometimes far more.

Only SkyMed guarantees to take you home should you become critically ill or injured throughout the SkyMed universe, which consists of the USA, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba, plus Belize and Costa Rica. Should you need protection anywhere in the world, you can get that, too. But the point is simply this: don't travel anywhere without making sure you have medical evacuation protection from SkyMed.

And now the best SkyMed plan is deeply discounted for our members.

There are a number of SkyMed plans available. Short-term plans are the least expensive in initial outlay, but you must be medically requalified every time you want a new short-term plan. By contrast, both SkyMed annual and Ultimate plans require only one medical qualification when you first apply.

When you renew SkyMed, your membership continues uninterrupted and is renewable indefinitely without further medical requalification regardless of your age or health. There are also never any increases in membership fees (premiums) related solely to your age or health: everyone pays the same low rates.

Six Big Reasons To Buy SkyMed Now: The first five -- we are giving away vacations to destinations worldwide to the next five people who buy new five-year SkyMed Ultimate memberships from us between now and December 15 (just expanded and extended.) You get a one week vacation (airfare not included) at your choice of many resorts worldwide and pay only the cost of maintenance *for one day*. That's a deal and a half. (Email us at jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com immediately after buying the new five-year Ultimate from us to tell us.) There's another reason to buy a new 5-year Ultimate: a 5-year free extension of your JMB membership. More on that is below.

The Sixth Reason: Buy any new SkyMed membership other than short term now and even pre-existing conditions are covered once the 90-day waiting period (for pre-existing conditions coverage) has passed. If you're going to SXM in February or after, that's gangbusters news for you right now.

Let's repeat one critical item: The cost of SkyMed never increases solely because of your advancing age, nor is SkyMed ever canceled solely for declining health -- in sharp contrast to other plans. SkyMed *Takes You Home*® -- what else matters?

Here's that steep discount. For five years of "Ultimate" SkyMed global protection, you'd prepay the five-year rate of \$699/year. But JMB

Website Supporters members get \$1000 off -- they pay just \$499/year when prepaid in full, or \$2495. (If you'd rather pay monthly, it's \$59, \$49, or \$39/month depending on what you need /want). Get yourself protected against the high cost of medical evacuation and you will simultaneously find yourself with great peace of mind.

Call SkyMed any weekday Mountain time at 1-800-475-9633 and ask for Nan or Jim. Tell them you're a JMB Website Supporters member to get the best rates. If you're not a member, join; it's just \$99 for four years or \$59 for one year. Sign up for JMB here: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml . The cost of the best SkyMed plans is deeply discounted for JMB members. SkyMed verifies your JMB membership.

For one-year or other duration memberships, buy online at www.skymed.com/jmbspecial (JMB members only) or www.skymed.com/jmbxsm (everyone else). Do it today, before you forget... It's great peace-of-mind when you travel.

Five-year Free JMB Membership Extension With New Five-Year Ultimate Purchase: Once you've joined SkyMed through us, email support@jmbcommunications.com and tell them you've bought a new SkyMed Ultimate five-year membership. Upon verification, we'll extend your current JMB Website Supporters membership for five full years. Offer open to U. S. and Canadian citizens only. You must join JMB first to be eligible for both the SkyMed JMB-members-only discount and this JMB membership extension. And you must join SkyMed only as described above and not by any other means to qualify for the JMB membership extension. Offer extended; ends December 15, 2014. The five-year JMB membership extension will be terminated if you cancel your SkyMed Ultimate membership before its five-year term expires. Vacation offer expires when we run out of vacations; limited quantity available. Join now...

5. Torrential Rains Cause Significant Flooding Across SXM - But No Tropical Storm Is To Blame

Torrential rains started falling in St. Maarten late last week. They abated a bit on Saturday afternoon, but by then the damage had been done: widespread flooding across the island blocked many roads and made it necessary for authorities to rescue some people who were marooned by the surprisingly heavy rainfall.

On the Dutch side, Mullet Bay beach was all but cut off, and there was significant flooding on hillside communities and in Cole Bay, Philipsburg, and elsewhere. Dutch side authorities late Saturday morning declared a curfew, ordering businesses to close and people to go home by noon. The airport continued to function as did the cruise port, and people driving to the airport to pick up arriving passengers were allowed to go through. The curfew was lifted at 6pm Saturday.

On the French Side, flooding near Grand Case blocked some roads. In Marigot, the ground floor of Le West Indies Mall, which is below street level, was flooded.

Fortunately, there were no reports of injuries.

No organized tropical system was involved in this – just a very large disorganized area of heavy rain and embedded thunderstorms. That can happen; this is the rainy season.

6. Search for Missing FedEx Aircraft Moves Into a New Phase

Much of the wreckage of a small twin engine aircraft leased by Federal Express that crashed in the ocean not far from the airport has yet to be recovered. One of the crew of two people was found fairly quickly; he had perished in the crash. The body of the other crewmember has not yet been recovered, based on information reaching us. That crewmember may very well still be strapped into his seat in the sunken fuselage of the aircraft.

Efforts will now be undertaken to deepen the search — here are details: <http://tinyurl.com/kk2jcc5>

7. Court Orders Alegria & Caravanserai Timeshare Owners To "Talk"; What's Next

Monique Hoffman, a St. Maarten attorney with heavy experience in timeshare litigation, went to court on behalf of a group of Caravanserai timeshare owners and was heard about a week ago. As a result of that hearing, the judge told representatives of Alegria, the new owners of Caravanserai, and attorney Hoffman to take the following two weeks to see if they could settle out-of-court. He told them that absent some kind of settlement, he would rule in the matter.

There are many ways to interpret this, though no one really knows what's behind the judge's instruction. Some people believe that the timeshare owners are entitled to get what they bought despite the fact that their resort was sold at auction.

We aren't going to guess about what's going on here. We will let you know what is ultimately decided. See next article.

8. Caravanserai Timeshare Owners Vent About Victimization: Who They Blame & What They May Do

We asked for and have received numerous comments concerning the Caravanserai mess from timeshare owners. To protect the identity of the owners, we're publishing their comments anonymously. We think you'll find these interesting:

First: Marty, who runs the Dream Bar on the resort grounds has set himself up as "the official spokesperson" of Caravanserai/Alegria. In a recent, rambling Facebook post, he said he had talked at length with the new owner, got his deal done to remain on the property and went to great lengths to tell us how much of "a great businessman he found the new owner to be". Marty states that the new owner bought the "land" from the bank and therefore has no responsibility towards any of the thousands of timeshare owners or their contracts. If that is what the new owner is thinking, then perhaps it should be pointed out to him that he can own the land but through our contracts and deeds the timeshare people own "the buildings." I'm not a lawyer but surely the issue can't be as black and white as what the new owner is proclaiming.

Second: I will offer my support to any litigation that is brought forth against the new owner of Alegria, but perhaps the thousands of timeshare owners should mount a social media campaign not only against the new owner but the island of St. Maarten as well. The digital age and the power of angry Caravanserai owners is something the new government should take very seriously. If they value their tourism industry at all, they had better move quickly to protect the people who have invested their time and money over the years...and that's the Timeshare owners of Caravanserai not someone who bought a distressed property from the Bank.

We purchased last year at Caravanserai ... for a lot of \$\$\$\$\$

We were paying it off in increments. We got an urgent call this spring to pay it off early and we would get a "free weeks stay" as an incentive. So we scrambled to pay it in full.

When we were there this July/August we had a meeting with them in which they tried to encourage us to sell our timeshare back to them to join a vacation club. We told them we wanted to hang onto it because with a family of 6 it was hard to get 2 weeks back to back in the summer (when the kids off school) in a unit big enough to accommodate everyone and friends if they brought them. They assured us at that time that our timeshare would be SAFE with the new owner, but that we might see a higher maintenance fee or an assessment. Also we talked to Minerva in the office behind the desk and she assured us of the same thing, plus she gave us a letter promising an extra sleep 8 week through 2015. This was all while the property was in foreclosure and had already been in auction. Plus they charged us timeshare taxes during that time. And their website listed that they had timeshare options.

If the bank was in any way running this operation, or overseeing it, then they were approving timeshares or our reservations would not have been honored. Any communication coming from someone running the resort with the bank's approval which in any way gave validity to timeshare ownership (ie. by collecting a maintenance fee, honoring an RCI reservation, collecting a timeshare tax, etc) was written validation of permission to have timeshares in my opinion. Plus if any of these funds were going toward paying the bank, and they accepted them knowing they came from timeshare sales/fees/taxes, then either they were accepting them as valid, or they were knowingly accepting fraudulently obtained funds...

We are so upset about this. Not just about the money....we have been going to St. Maarten every years since 1995 and this is the first time we have felt betrayed by the island we love. And to go every year from now on and see the sign for Alegria as we land will spoil the feeling of joy we usually feel when we arrive. It will be a repeated punch in the gut to all of us who have been so loyal to this island.

This is a major injustice to us who have timeshares there. I had a week in February and also paid them for two extra days. I had not paid my maintenance for 2015 but did pay for the two days and Alegria will not even honor that.

I love St. Maarten, it has become our second home for a week but after 2015 (we already had air purchased so we are staying somewhere else for the 9 days) we will not go back to SXM! It is a shame the owners are not being taken care of and SXM is getting a bad reputation now. I, for one, had friends planning on going there and have since made plans for somewhere else. I hope the government will do something soon and give us back some of our initial investment.

My wife and I first visited St. Maarten on cruise ships and we liked the island so much we decided to purchase our first timeshare. Based on a friend's recommendation we stopped at Caravanserai in January 2008 and decided to invest in a 3 bedroom unit as our dream getaway to share with our family and pass on to our children. When we purchased they were just pouring the concrete for the first floor. We were very

excited. We also decided [to buy] based [on Caravanserai's] affiliation with RCI as we are familiar with them. We have been able to stay there three times and despite all the small challenges we loved being there.

Right now our hearts are breaking because the current owners are heartless by taking away what we have spent our lives working so hard for. It also deeply hurts that the people of "The Friendly Island" would allow this to happen. This not only destroys my faith in St. Maarten, but timeshares in general and especially RCI.

Without RCI membership the resort is worthless. My wife and I have cancelled visits for 2015 to the island and have also told our friends. I plan to call, depending on the outcome, an international boycott with translation warning the dangers of doing business in St Maarten.

We purchased in 2010 and paid \$20K for our unit. We have been delighted to return at least annually to our beloved St. Maarten and have numerous fond memories which we will always treasure. If this matter is not brought to a quick and amicable resolution I will assure you that we will never return to St. Maarten and we will do all we can from here in Canada to discourage friends, family, and other tourists from ever going to St. Maarten. Sincerely, this is criminal and unacceptable. We blame Alegria for mishandling our first interface. We blame the Bank of Nova Scotia, they definitely knew Caravanserai was an operating timeshare operation. We blame the government of St. Maarten for not acting immediately. We also believe that the Timeshare Association has a great amount of leverage that could utilize on our behalf.

I am extremely disappointed with the new owners who are not being honest. I called the resort before signing and they assured me I would have the same week and room if I sent the \$675 maintenance fee to them. I did sign their agreement but am reluctant to send any further money to them. How am I supposed to know what they will do with the room or the resort? If I was there I could check and see. I figured my options were sign and pay or join the lawsuit and pay. I will not pay any more money for anything on St. Maarten, shame after vacationing there all these years.

...there should at least be a small buy back for the units we paid for. After all, we have deeded contacts, which means we were part owners of that building.

... Anyone that believes Alegria is doing them a favor by letting them pay their maintenance fee to stay there is a fool because that is just their way of using timeshare owners to get income until renovations are complete and their hotel reservations gain popularity...then they will cut all ties with us in a heartbeat.

Owned two weeks at C and am more upset at the failure of the government for failing to enact laws protecting us from this bank driven "foreclosure/auction" loophole in what we thought was a long term contract.

Mary's Boon owners experienced the same loss in Dec., 2013. Mark Cleveland [Mary's Boon co-owner] was much nicer about his explanation and started a Vacation Club to keep us coming. Nobody wanted to take him or the bank to court. We owned two weeks there also.

My total Investment (is) \$36,200. Maintenance Fees have totaled \$2300 per year for the last several years as Manek has tried to milk us for all he could get. Since the new building was quasi-complete, I have stayed there one time in the one bedroom and have never been able to utilize the penthouse. The elevator never worked correctly and having hot water was a random event.

If the island government allows this entity to nullify our rights, they will be continuing to show contempt for those of us that help support their economy. *It is really stupid to kill the golden goose.*

Jeff Comments: We had many more comments. This is literally the tip of the iceberg. Thousands of timeshare owners are seething over this....

If you are a Caravanserai Timeshare owner, go here to talk to many others: <https://www.facebook.com/Caravanseraitimeshare>

9. Verna Taverna Reopens for Dinner Friday Night, November 14

Although it has been open throughout low season both for breakfast and lunch, Vesna Taverna in Simpson Bay, just north of the Simpson

Bay drawbridge, has been closed for dinner while its owners, Vesna and Yannick, have been polishing their craft in Paris.

Widely known for its American, Greek, and French food, Vesna Taverna has rapidly become one of our favorite St. Maarten restaurants. We just wanted to pass along word from Vesna that the restaurant reopens for the season for dinner this coming Friday night, November 14. See our Restaurant of the Week article, below.

10. Butterfly Farm Scheduled To Reopen Today

Among other good news coming out of the island this weekend is the fact that the butterfly farm is about to reopen — today, in fact (Monday). Hurricane Gonzalo laid waste to the mesh that covers the farm, enabling visitors to mingle with many hundreds of butterflies during their visit. It's lush, beautiful, and highly rewarding. Definitely go. They're on the road to the southern end of Orient Beach, near Le Galion.

11. Mullet Bay Beach Access Restricted

The good news is that beachgoer access to Mullet Bay beach is unimpeded.

The bad news is that if you're a vendor attempting to bring needed items to the businesses at Mullet Bay beach, transporting that material is now a highly problematic enterprise. The owner of the Mullet Bay property is impeding access, and some political figures fear that the owner may want to impede access to the beach itself for beachgoers.

That would be a really bad idea.

Public access to beaches is problematic, and in fact the same thing is happening to people who want to go to Dawn beach through the Westin hotel. See next story.

For more on Mullet Bay, go here: <http://tinyurl.com/nqn76ne>

12. Westin Doesn't Like Through Traffic to Dawn Beach

The Westin resort on Dawn beach doesn't like non-guests of the hotel filtering through its building to get to the beach. This is despite the fact that all beaches in St. Maarten are public, and that the public is entitled to go on them.

Apparently a woman with a beach chair and other accoutrements went through the hotel and onto the beach, one of the nicest on the island. Guards allegedly came and told her that she couldn't stay there.

If that's the case, the island needs to get involved and box the Westin's ears. We can understand beach enterprises offering to rent umbrellas and chairs to people, and offering drinks and food, but at the same time it can't tell citizens or visitors to get off the beach simply because they aren't paying guests at the hotel.

Hopefully the Westin will soon realize it does not own the beach.

13. 10000-kilo Marijuana Bust by Port of St. Maarten

Customs officials operating at the port of St. Maarten took a close look at a container from Jamaica and found 1000 kg of marijuana in it. It was the biggest marijuana bust we recall seeing in some time, though other boats with bigger payloads have also been intercepted hereabouts. Drugs are also intercepted periodically. More: <http://tinyurl.com/mwyq5y3>

14. Where To Go: Our 2015 "Awards of Excellence" Coming Earlier to Guide Your Next SXM Vacation

Last March, we distributed our 2014 Awards of Excellence which recognized many top tourist oriented establishments on St. Maarten / St. Martin based upon our extensive observation.

This year, we've already made our selections for 2015 and it's our intention to distribute those awards next month, so we can tell you who they are — and where you should go — before the heart of the season. As soon as the awards have been presented, we'll publish the information right here in *SXM Weekly News*.

15. At Hard-Hit Orient Beach, Progress Moves Quickly

Using our highly useful everything St. Maarten site on Facebook this week, we were able to share a picture of reconstruction at Andy & Cheryl's beach bar on Orient beach, where there had not been very much visible evidence of reconstruction activity earlier.

We will be back on the island later this week and one of the first things we plan to do is return to Orient beach so we can report on rebuilding. Orient beach was among the hardest hit places when hurricane Gonzalo passed a few weeks ago. Overall, we know that progress there is moving very quickly — perhaps more quickly than anyone originally expected. We expect our visit to the beach to show many of its beachfront establishments in good shape.

As always, we'll keep you posted.

16. Across SXM, Evidence of Gonzalo's Visit Is Disappearing

With the exception of a number of boats that were damaged during hurricane Gonzalo and have not yet been taken out of the water, St. Maarten and St. Martin continues to recover quickly from the storm and evidence of its passing continues to diminish. As noted in the previous article, Jeff returns to the island this week and will have a full report in next Monday's *SXM Weekly News*.

17. Sun Nails Moves Across The Street

We mentioned Sun Nails before: they are the very efficient, and quite inexpensive nail care establishment that was in the plaza behind IZI Ristorante Italiano in Simpson Bay opposite Pineapple Pete. Sun Nails has now relocated across the street to a new blue building, where they are expected to open sometime during the next week or so.

Sun Nails is one of about 200 businesses across St. Maarten that now provide discounts to our 21,000 members. For much more information on JMB membership — which is still only \$59 for the first year -- go to www.everythingsxm.com and click the page curl at the top of the page.

18. How To Avoid Crime in SXM

For reasons that only sociologists, criminologists, and perhaps some psychiatrists and psychologists know, crime usually seems to increase somewhat during the fourth quarter of every year, when tourism is at the low point of low season.

The good news is that by about the middle of this month, tourism begins to increase and is very good both during Thanksgiving and Christmas, and of course later. But you should always keep your guard up to avoid crime.

This page has some good advice: http://everythingxm.com/sxm/sxm_news/crime-in-st-maarten-st-martin.shtml

19. Huge Holiday Jewelry Discounts Returning Exclusively For JMB Website Supporters Members

Last year, two of our JMB Website Supporters partner businesses — Caribbean Gems and Zhaveri Jewelers — offered stunning discounts on equally stunning jewelry exclusively to our JMB Website Supporters members for the holidays, for Valentine's Day, and beyond. We know they're going to do the same thing starting very, very soon.

Every JMB membership offers our members the opportunity to save thousands of dollars in aggregate on purchases not only of airfare, accommodations, car rentals, and meals, but also serious money off great jewelry, gifts, and much more. If you are not yet a JMB member, you're spending far too much during your St. Maarten / St. Martin vacation. Please join us today.

20. Restaurant Of The Week: Vesna Taverna

It was only about a year and a half ago that we first visited Vesna Taverna in Simpson Bay. Some time before, we had befriended Vesna on Facebook and she recognized us immediately. All we were looking for was coffee, but Vesna also had bagels so we took a couple of coffees and a few bagels. That simple, small amount of food was so good we returned the next day for breakfast and have been going there for all three meals often ever since.

At night, toward the end of each week, Vesna opens for dinner. The food is a unique combination of French, American, and Greek — and both Friday night and Saturday night are very special nights at Vesna for variety of reasons you'll learn more about when you check their website: <http://www.vesnataverna.com/>

Bottom line, the food in our opinion is fantastic; the prices are very reasonable; and Vesna, as we have said before, is a hoot. We've given this advice before and many of you have visited the restaurant and we know how much you love it. If you're one of our few readers who has not yet visited Vesna, make it a point to go on your next trip and tell them you came because you read about it in Jeff Berger's newsletter.

And of course, if you are a JMB Website Supporters member you should look at our secret website where you can take advantage of the discount offered exclusively for our members by Vesna. Make sure you take your JMB membership card, which was e-mailed to you last winter: it is required to obtain any benefits on the island. If you're not a member, do it; see www.everythingsxm.com and click the page curl on the home page to get info on signing up.

Recently featured Restaurants of the Week:

SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 4/21/14)

Trattoria Pizza Pasta, Maho Plaza near Casino Royale (featured 3/10/14)

Daniel's By The Sea, www.dawnbeachsxm.com (featured 8/4/14)

Domino's Pizza <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dominos-Pizza-St-Maarten/95635717338> (featured 8/11/14)

Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 7/14/14)

Fusion, www.fusionrestaurant-sxm.com (featured 4/7/14)

The Hideaway, <http://www.lavistaresort.com/restaurant.html> (featured 4/28/14)

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 6/23/14)

Stone Restaurant, www.thestonerestaurant.com (featured 9/2/14)

Le Pressoir, <http://www.lepressoir-sxm.com> (featured 2/24/14)

Temptation, <http://www.rareandtemptation.com/EN/temptation/>

Lal's Curry In A Hurry Indian Restaurant, Airport Road, Simpson Bay (featured 1/6/14)

Mr. Busby's Beach Bar <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 6/28/14)

Island Pizza, <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 6/28/14)

Pineapple Pete, www.pineapplepete.com (featured 2/3/14)

Papagayo, <http://www.cluborient.com/papagayo.php> (featured 5/5/14)

SPN Cafe, <http://www.pineapplepete.com/sport.html> (featured 8/18/14)

Dany & John's Cupecoy Beach Bar (on Cupecoy beach; follow the car path from the far side of Ocean Club to get there).

FIG, Cupecoy opposite Rainbow Beach Club

St. Maarten Yacht Club, at the Dutch Side Drawbridge

Jimbo's, www.jimboscafe.com

Canoa, www.canoasxm.com (featured 3/31/14)

Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 11/10/14)

Topper's <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 11/2/14)

Taloula Mango <http://www.taloulamango.com/>

Soprano's Restaurant, Maho Plaza, <http://www.sopranospianobar.com/stmaarten/restaurant/> (featured 3/3/14)

Bylbos, Simpson Bay

Sushiito Japanese Restaurant, Port de Plaisance (featured 3/17/14)

We'll write about another SXM restaurant here next week as we continue our weekly SXM restaurant coverage.

Rent Out or Sell Your Timeshare (both SXM and Worldwide) -- Page Updated Every Other Weekday

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?

2014 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 other weekday. Ads are free (no commission) but are accepted from JMB Website Supporters members only.

Meet Our Sponsors (updated 9/27/13)

Emergency Medical Evacuation Protection:

SkyMed Takes You Home® if you become critically ill or injured while traveling more than 100 miles from home in the USA, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, the Caribbean, plus Belize and Costa Rica. Learn more at www.skymed.com/jmbxsm . Highest recommendation by JMB.

Travel Arrangements & Accommodations:

For The Best Prices On Individual and Group Tours to St. Maarten & St. Martin, as well as stays at B&Bs, condos, hotels, and villas, visit our sponsor: [Sandy Molloy at SXM Travel Specialists](http://www.stmartin-stmaartentravelspecialists.com) --- <http://www.stmartin-stmaartentravelspecialists.com> 704-567-6661

Rent [St. Maarten Villas](http://www.rentstmaartenvillas.com) is the website of Villalady Bobby Valins, showcasing her villas in Burgeaux Bay and in Grand Case. See her site at www.rentstmaartenvillas.com.

[Villas in Paradise](http://www.villasinparadise.com) is your one-stop source for great St. Maarten Villa Accommodations. See many choices at www.villasinparadise.com or call Marilyn Pulito directly at 508-533-1388.

[Emerald Cove Villas](http://www.emeraldcovevillas.com) provides a one-of-a-kind vacation experience in Oyster Pond. See their website at www.emeraldcovevillas.com . Learn why *Emerald Cove* is the name.

Caribbean Days provides luxury villa accommodations throughout the Caribbean. See www.caribbeandays.com .

[Villa Journeys](http://www.villajourneys.com) offers JMB readers villa accommodations (and much more) not only throughout the Caribbean, but across the USA and in Europe. See www.villajourneys.com

[Oyster Bay View Villa](http://www.oysterbayview.com), overlooking Oyster Pond and Captain Oliver's Marina, delivers great accommodations near Dawn Beach, a quick ride to Orient Beach and the dozens of fine restaurants at Grand Case. See their site at www.oysterbayview.com

[Club Fantastico](http://www.clubfantastico.net), www.clubfantastico.net, overlooking Orient Beach, gives you fine villa-like accommodations in a totally clothing optional ambiance, inside and out. It's the perfect place for a *no tan lines* vacation.

[Summit Resort Hotel](http://www.thesummitresort.com), atop a cliff in Cupecoy, is a favorite. See why; check out www.thesummitresort.com

Shopping: (Updated 9/7/2013)

DK Gems on Front Street (*opposite and not far west of the historic Court House*) offers extraordinary eye-popping gems in a rainbow of exquisite settings. Not to be missed on your next trip. See www.dkgemsint.com .

Zhaveri Jewelers on Front Street opposite Little Switzerland (near the historic Courthouse) offers an incredible inventory of the finest gems in the Caribbean. Offering the island's largest selection of elegant jewelry for men, women, and kids. Visit www.zhaveri.com .

Fine Food, Pastries, Wines/Liquors, Yacht Provisioning:

Le Grand Marche has several Dutch Side locations to conveniently serve you -- at the roundabout near the Bush road, next to Port de Plaisance off the Union Road near the French border, or their *Gourmet Marche* store in Simpson Bay. For all the details see www.legrandmarche.net .

SECTION 4: For Members Only (Constantly Updated)

Please see www.everythingsxm.com/secret .

SECTION 5: Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) Updated 12/17/13

Returns soon.

CONTACT US

JMB Website Supporters members wishing to contact us should visit the secret site, www.everythingsxm.com/secret , for detailed JMB Website Supporters information. JMB members can email us at support[at]jmbcommunications.com. If you have misplaced your password, you can get a new one by clicking the orange "forgot password" link below the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com assuming your membership is in good standing.

About Email Address Changes / How To Unsubscribe (Updated 9/7/13)

To unsubscribe, click the Unsubscribe link here: <http://www.everythingsxm.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://www.everythingsxm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi> , select *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 and to receive Low Airfare Bulletins. 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?>

LEGAL:

Entire contents copyright (c), JMB Communications, 2014. World rights reserved. Excerpting, quotation, and republication, in any form, print, electronic, or archival, is expressly prohibited without written advance permission. You can forward this newsletter in its entirety only to your friends. For reprint permission, email us. JMB vigorously defends its copyrights. *Everything St. Maarten* and *Everything St. Martin* are service marks of JMB Communications. *JMB Communications* is a trademark of JMB Communications, P. O. Box 1812, Plymouth, Massachusetts 02362-1812 USA. Join our free St. Maarten / St. Martin newsletter mailing list at <http://www.everythingsxm.com> . You cannot join by emailing us.

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

To see the JMB Communications privacy policy, visit http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/privacy_policy/index.shtml

11/10/14 11/8/14 10:00PES #968 7.7

| [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of use](#) |

Copyright ©, JMB Communications, 2014. World rights reserved.