



This Week's Stories

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Lodging News

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

Weekly Tourist-Oriented News & Comments from SXM

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Part of www.everythingstmaarten.com

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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 230,000 readers around the world...

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



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



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

This format has been further narrowed as of April, 2015, so it is now is easily readable on almost all 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:

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TOP STORIES

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

This is issue #989 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:

In This Week's SXM Weekly News:

-- Last Call: 13th Anniversary Membership Sale Ends April 30 (Story #28)

-- Re: Timeshare Owner Consumer Protection, A Vote of Confidence in Claret Connor

-- At Caravanserai / Alegria, Deathly Silence

-- 78-Room Dutch Side Hotel Taken Over by a US Company; But Which Hotel?

-- Check Out Our New "St. Maarten Timesharing" Page on Facebook

-- Talk Directly With Jeff Berger About SkyMed Medical Evacuation

-- Pick Up Some of Our Authentic SXM Euro Oval Stickers -- Great Souvenirs

-- Orient Beach Business Demolitions / Reconstruction Delayed Until June

-- Why You Should Never Put Any Valuables In Your Suitcase

-- Are Five New Hotels Coming? Cay Bay, Harbor, Alegria, Starz, Simpson Bay

-- How To Win a SXM Vacation from JMB

-- Should You Stay Longer in SXM -- Or Move There?

29 new 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, 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 Rental of The Week:

RENTAL 11/28/2015 12/12/2015 Week 48 and Week 49 Simpson Bay Resort and Marina Beautifully renovated in 2014, one bedroom unit on the top floor of the Beaumontia Building. Very easy access to the elevator. Great views of beautiful sunsets, the gorgeous ocean, pools, private yachts entering the marina, the airport and cruise boats coming and going from Philipsburg from the large balcony. Walking distance to the beach, pools, restaurants, bars, shops, groceries, casino and tennis courts. Unit has two murphy beds if needed. Fully equipped kitchen, dining area and living room. Great balcony! \$1400 per week, or \$2600 for both weeks Sharon 860-489-3186
dylangath255@msn.com

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

Totally Renovated New Unit Available; Steps from the Caribbean With All The Amenities You'd Expect

=== MUST SELL OR THIS UNIT IS TURNED BACK TO THE RESORT=====

SALE: 1/31/15 to 2/7/15 (week 5) Simpson Bay Resort Marina 207, Newly Renovated completely redone (during 2015) luxurious 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, and a clothing optional beach is about two miles away. Unit features all-new stove, refrigerator, microwave, cable TV, WiFi is on site, sleeps four, very convenient. 2016 occupancy. Reduced to BEST OFFER OVER \$2700. Please contact Jeff at jeff@jmbcommunications.com or call 508-747-8281

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 210+ 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](#)

1. Current SXM Weather - Where To Find Weekly Forecasts
2. 2015 Hurricane Names
3. Best and Worst Airlines
4. How Many Ships Are In?

5. SXM Airport Growth Graphics - Where To Download The PowerPoint
6. How To Get The Lowest-Cost Airfares, Hotels, Cruises, and Tour Packages Worldwide (Repeat)

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

7. Re: Timeshare Owner Consumer Protection: A Vote of Confidence in Claret Connor
8. At Caravanserai / Alegria, Deathly Silence
9. 78-Room Dutch Side Hotel Taken Over by a US Company; But Which Hotel?
10. Timeshare Rentals Now Available Through 12/31/2016
11. Check Out Our New "St. Maarten Timesharing" Page on Facebook
12. SXM Smaller Hotel of the Week, (New Series, Third Week)

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

13. Talk Directly With Jeff Berger About SkyMed Medical Evacuation

14. How a Cruise Passenger Saved \$46,000 on Vacation
15. Orient Beach Business Demolitions / Reconstruction Delayed Until June
16. Why You Should Never Put Any Valuables In Your Suitcase
17. Laptop Locks That Don't Work
18. The Sargasso Seaweed Story
19. Are Five New Hotels Coming? Cay Bay, Harbor, Alegria, Starz, Simpson Bay
20. Why There Are No Tolls on the Simpson Bay Causeway

21. What To Do If You Become Critically Ill or Injured in SXM

22. What Kind of Car Should You Rent?

23. How To Win a SXM Vacation from JMB

24. Should You Stay Longer in SXM?
25. Should You Move to SXM & Work or Retire There?
26. "Below Deck," Bravo Yachting Series, To Return in Mediterranean Setting
27. Restaurant of the Week

28. Last Call: 13th Anniversary Membership Sale Ends April 30

29. Pick Up Some of Our Authentic SXM Euro Oval Stickers -- Great Souvenirs

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 12/31/14)

- A. Where to Get Member Info: www.everythingsxm.com/secret
- B. Password Recovery Info: Your username is the email address you have registered with JMB Website Supporters. If you forget your password, click "forgot password" in the orange login box near the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com.
- C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads: Links are on the Secret Website (see a, above.)

Section Five: Where To Find Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers)

(Revised 12/31/14)

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

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

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

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

Contact Us:

[Revised 2/24/15]

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

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

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

All JMB Newsletters Read *From JMB*

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

THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest.

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

1. Current SXM Weather - Where To Find Weekly Forecasts

Our own Weather page, at www.everythingsxm.com, shows you current satellite images in the Caribbean so you can see what's happening particularly during hurricane season each year. Just click "Weather" on our home page for details.

For daily weather forecasts for the week ahead, go here:

<http://www.weather.com/weather/tenday//Saint+Martin+Island+Guadeloupe+GPXX0005:1:GP>

This page gives you everything you need. Bear in mind that most of the time, showers are brief and are gone quickly... and are nothing to be concerned about.

2. 2015 Hurricane Names

Atlantic hurricane names for this year, 2015, are:

2015
Ana
Bill
Claudette
Danny
Erika
Fred
Grace
Henri
Ida

Joaquin
Kate
Larry
Mindy
Nicholas
Odette
Peter
Rose
Sam
Teresa
Victor

3. Best and Worst Airlines

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University rates airline performance in multiple categories on a regular basis and this year's ratings aren't pretty, as you may already be aware. Here is Bloomberg's story on the report: <http://tinyurl.com/ouv9n5k>

If you'd like to skim or read the entire 55-page report, it's here: <http://tinyurl.com/luwqwbm> as a downloadable PDF.

4. How Many Ships Are In?

If you're a stayover tourist thinking about a jewelry stop in Philipsburg, you may want to know how many ships are in town so you can get personalized service and light crowds. The schedule for the next couple of days is always here: <http://201.220.14.28/sxm/MainMenu.aspx?ShipScheduleType=2>

5. SXM Airport Growth Graphics - Where To Download The PowerPoint

Two weeks ago, we published an extensive article concerning the future of air travel to St. Maarten, particularly at Princess Juliana airport. The article discussed additional airlines which are expected to come to the island, additional US cities from which nonstop flights are expected to originate, changes in the airport's physical plant, and much more. If you missed the article, it will be posted by 8:00 p.m. Eastern this Thursday night on our PDF archives page, here:

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

Also posted there by 8:00 p.m. Thursday will be PDFs of all our other recent *SXM Weekly News* editions.

Since we wrote that article, the airport has released graphics showing some of the locations of some of its future facilities. You can download those graphics, if you are a JMB Website Supporters member, here: www.everythingSXM.com/secret/ also after 8 p.m. Thursday night. *SXM Weekly News* is free, but there is a huge bandwidth expense involved in offering downloads from our site, which is why we have elected only to offer downloads to our paid JMB Website Supporters members. See the article at the beginning of section 3, below, about our anniversary sale; it gives you hundreds of discounts across the island for short money, and will entitle you to future downloads as they become available. Sale ends April 30: get your own membership subscription today.

6. How To Get The Lowest-Cost Airfares, Hotels, Cruises, and Tour Packages Worldwide (Repeat)

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 once you've booked through them.

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Inns, Timeshares

7. Re: Timeshare Owner Consumer Protection: A Vote of Confidence in Claret Connor

Based upon feedback from former timeshare owners at Caravanserai Resort, now renamed Alegria by its new owners, many American and Canadian owners of SXM timeshares think the government there likes the revenue it receives from North Americans but that it intends to do nothing about creating consumer protection for them. And for those timeshare owners, that perception is a cold, hard reality. (See our separate story about Caravanserai below.)

Based upon what we know, however, that conclusion is dead wrong....

Everything we are hearing about Tourism Minister Claret Connor from his close friends and from others who now work with him or who have in the past says he is a man of genuine integrity. He knows the areas for which he is responsible, is very thorough, does his homework, can be relied upon to deliver on his promises, etc.

He must satisfy multiple constituencies including voters, the Parliament, consumers / tourists of course, and local businesses. He has many responsibilities and has been on the job only for a few months -- and government in SXM isn't built to deliver overnight results. But we do believe based on what we now know that he should be given the benefit of the doubt; our sense is that he really is trying to deliver.

As always we will keep you posted.

To comment on timesharing in the local SXM press, go here to send letters to the editor:

Today newspaper: todaymanagersxm25@gmail.com

Daily Herald newspaper: editorial@thedailyherald.com

Specify where in SXM you own timesharing; it does not necessarily have to be at Caravanserai.

If you are a Caravanserai timeshare owner, feel free also to share your information with other owners: <https://www.facebook.com/Caravanseraitimeshare> .

No matter where in SXM you own timesharing, our new St. Maarten Timesharing page on Facebook enables you to share thoughts about all SXM timeshares: <https://www.facebook.com/StMaartenTimesharing>

8. At Caravanserai / Alegria, Deathly Silence

We monitor comments on our various SXM-oriented Facebook pages religiously, and we've been receiving numerous comments directly from former Caravanserai timeshare owners. The latter already had transportation booked when the October news hit and stayed elsewhere on SXM this year. Many visited Caravanserai to see what was going on.

The answer: nothing. "Nobody was there," was the most typical comment.

We visited the resort twice weekly for several weeks during the winter and it was quite obvious that few people were around. Perhaps the new owner, Ray Sidhom, an American, expected this. Perhaps he didn't.

In any case, we'll watch what's going on and we'll keep you posted.

9. 78-Room Dutch Side Hotel Taken Over by a US Company; But Which Hotel?

We found out in the last few days that a Dutch side hotel with about 78 rooms has been taken over by a company from the US. We didn't think Caravanserai resort was that small, so we set out to find which Dutch side resorts have 78 rooms. The answer: a few have about that number.

All we know so far is that that resort has been taken over by a US company. We don't know the name of the company or what they intend to do with the resort; we simply know that it has been taken over by a US company.

As always, we'll keep you posted when we learn more.

10. Timeshare Rentals Now Available Through 12/31/2016

If you're planning travel to either side of the island through December of 2016, we now have timeshares available for rent through 12/31/2016. What we offer are timeshare and other condominiums available for rent through their owners. Since we don't charge them to advertise with us and they pay us no commission, you will pay their price charged directly to you, and those prices tend to be low.

We accept ads only from JMB Website Supporters members. See story #28 -- our 13th Anniversary Membership Sale is almost over.

11. Check Out Our New "St. Maarten Timesharing" Page on Facebook

It already has over 400 "Likes": it delivers a central place online where you can discuss anything and everything related to the world of St. Maarten timesharing. Look: <https://www.facebook.com/StMaartenTimesharing>

12. SXM Smaller Hotel of the Week, (New Series, Third Week)

Beyond the big hotels like Westin and Sonesta Maho, and timeshares like Simpson Bay and Oyster Bay, which we've covered here many times, SXM has numerous smaller hotels with lots to offer.

This is the third in a new series of brief articles on many of those hotels. Below, you'll see a list of all resorts covered so far, in reverse chronological order, most recent first. Watch for other articles in this series coming every week.

Although it has fewer than 30 rooms, L'Esplanade, high on a hill overlooking Grand Case Bay, is not lacking in class, style, or amenities. Its rooms are flat-out gorgeous, with all the amenities you expect. The views are beyond expectations. Its proximity to Grand Case makes obtaining top-class dinners quick and easy. Its proximity to Grand Case Beach and Orient Beach, each just five minutes away, makes access there easy, too. Service, upkeep, and a strong focus on customer satisfaction make this resort a real winner. As you'll see below, it also won our Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin 2015 Award of Excellence. (So did their Ti Spa, operated by Tricia Altenau, the best massage therapist on SXM.)

Watch for another small SXM hotel here next week.

L'Esplanade Hotel*, Grand Case, St. Martin, FWI, www.lesplanade.com (4/20/15)

Mary's Boon Beach Plantation, Simpson Bay, www.marysboon.com (4/13/15)

Baker's Suites*, Simpson Bay on Billy Folly Road near Kim Sha Beach, www.bakerssuites.com. (4/6/15)

*Prior winner, Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin Award of Excellence

SECTION 3: Island

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

Story 13:

Talk Directly With Jeff Berger About SkyMed Medical Evacuation.

Jeff has been recommending SkyMed for years and thousands of you have joined. SkyMed takes you home to the USA and Canada, home to doctors and hospitals you know and trust, when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. Home -- where your health insurance works and where your support system is there for you.

SkyMed offers short-term, annual, and multi-year plans. SkyMed protects you either in North America and the Caribbean or virtually everywhere around the world... your choice.

Without SkyMed, a medical evacuation home may cost you \$45,000 or more in cash in advance, an expense that is 100% avoidable when you're a SkyMed member. And SkyMed annual and multiyear memberships are guaranteed renewable when you pay your renewal fee on time -- renewable with no increase in fees due to advancing age or declining health. **Nothing else is SkyMed.**

Call Jeff any weekday from 10 a.m. Eastern to 5 p.m. at 508-747-8281. If there's no answer, leave a message. He'll answer any questions you may have and can sign you up by phone.

Note: SkyMed's top plan is their global SkyMed Ultimate, a five-year family plan with global coverage available to JMB members for a low prepaid fee or just \$59/month if you prefer to pay monthly (requires payments for at least two years). There are several plans available to meet any need.

Call today for answers to all your SkyMed questions.

14. How a Cruise Passenger Saved \$46,000 on Vacation

Google "how to save money on travel" and you will literally get about 433,000,000 results in .37 seconds. Whether it's "being flexible with your travel dates" or "going directly to the airline website," there's one super hot tip that can —when you least expect it—save you thousands of dollars.

Just ask Gilbert Molnar, who was happily resting from a busy day aboard a luxury cruise ship in the Mexican Caribbean one night with his wife when a crushing pain woke him up in the middle of the night. A quick call to the onboard 911 medics revived him and kept him stable long enough for the ship to dock in Cozumel, where he was immediately transferred via ambulance to the Cozumel Medical Center.

That's when the rest of the nightmare began to play out: the Medical Center wanted USD \$25,000 up front. His wife was able to come up with \$5000 on a credit card, but that wasn't enough. After calls to their daughter and son-in-law they were able to come up with an additional \$15,000—and the clinic settled for \$20,000. With a looming heart procedure costing even more money upfront, Gilbert's wife reached for the SkyMed membership card he had in his wallet.

"At that point my son-in-law contacted SkyMed and spoke to Jim, who told us he needed a doctor to accept me as a patient when I got to Vancouver. As soon as our doctor got in touch with Jim things really went into high gear," said Molnar.

"SkyMed made all the arrangements and before long my wife and I were on the flight from Cozumel back to Vancouver, BC, Canada, along with a doctor, a nurse, two pilots and a medical assistant. During a stop for fuel, my wife was freezing (we were wearing apparel for Mexico) and the doctor gave her his jacket, which was above and beyond our expectations."

When all was said and done, what could have ended up costing the Molnar's over USD \$46,000—not to mention the hassle of dealing with foreign doctors and hospital services—ended up costing them the price of their five-year SkyMed Ultimate membership.

A second Google search of "medical evacuation membership" will only bring up about 1,160 results in .31 seconds. Within those results are several different names offering memberships similar to the Molnar's... But there are differences, and these can be crucial to your well-being, including coverage of pre-existing conditions*, taking you back to the hospital of your choice (as opposed to the nearest adequate medical facility) and not raising premiums due to age. Memberships can be short or long term, for individuals or families, and services can be extended as close to home or as far away as needed.

These memberships offer options that extend far beyond traditional travel insurance, though they aren't in and of themselves health insurance policies. When you do travel, consider travel insurance and do consult with your individual provider as to what their coverage is—another plus to supplementing your traditional insurance with a medevac membership such as SkyMed is that you'll be returned to your "home health network" (your choice), helping you avoid costly "out of network" fees.

One more thing: if you're on Medicare or Medicaid, be aware they only cover you under certain circumstances and only with Medigap policies, and they won't fly you (or your family) home.

Get SkyMed BEFORE you need it: see www.skymed.com/jmbsxm .

*SkyMed covers pre-existing conditions after a short 90-day waiting period.

15. Orient Beach Business Demolitions / Reconstruction Delayed Until June

In a story published here last winter, we reported that all of the Orient beach businesses from Pedro's to KonTiki were scheduled to be demolished starting in April in a \$2+million project planned by the Reserve Naturelle, which is responsible for the overall administration of Orient beach.

In that article, we reported that following the demolition, new construction would be erected where parking is now located behind the current structures. This would enhance the size of the beach and protect the structures somewhat from rising seas and storms. A new parking area is to be erected behind the new road which will be built behind the current parking area.

All of this was originally supposed to start this month, but — no surprise — it didn't. We're told that now, construction is scheduled for June and should be finished in two months.

As we understand it, all of the structures from Pedro's to but apparently not including KonTiki are in the line of fire. Some people are saying that Pedro's is not included but that KonTiki is included; we are still checking to be sure what we've reported is accurate.

It appears that some businesses won't move into the new facilities; that's up to the owners. Club Orient is not affected by this construction and rebuilding. We'll keep you posted when anything happens.

16. Why You Should Never Put Any Valuables In Your Suitcase

Even if you put valuables in a suitcase secured by TSA approved locks, they can still be opened without disturbing either the lock or the integrity of the suitcase. That fact is ample reason never to put any valuables in any suitcase that will be out of your sight.

Look: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mf-DGKUNffl>

No cameras, no jewelry, no prescriptions, no valuables whatsoever should ever go in suitcases....

17. Laptop Locks That Don't Work

Many laptop locks don't offer real protection against theft.

Today, the most widely sold laptop locks display four numbers. You set a combination, lock the system as directed, then move the knobs so the combination isn't visible.

Several years ago, many locks with three numbers stopped working -- either locking so they couldn't be unlocked (except with a hacksaw) or they opened without the combination being entered.

Use a lock with four numbers and use a program like GadgetTrak to track the location of your device should it be stolen (see www.gadgettrak.com). That particular program takes pictures of the thief and automatically emails them to an email address you select ever half hour or so. More important, it reports the exact location of the computer, enabling police to recover your stolen equipment. (Also works for smart phones.)

18. The Sargasso Seaweed Story

The Sargasso Sea is a large area of floating seaweed well east of Florida and south of Bermuda. You'll see it here: http://www.daviddarling.info/encyclopedia/S/Sargasso_Sea.html It contains sargassum seaweed (sometimes called sargasso seaweed) and last summer and fall, thanks to anomalies in ocean currents, climate change, and possibly to Gonzalo, a number of tons of errant sargassum seaweed wound up on the eastern shores of islands across the northern Caribbean, including SXM.

For whatever reason, Dawn Beach seemed to have the worst time, but front-end loaders dutifully picked the stuff up each morning and hauled it away. The seaweed, for as long as it was left at the edge of the beach, helped beaches rebuild after Gonzalo. It has other benefits as well; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sargasso_Sea

There is some seaweed on some beaches now; the amount is not disruptive. We'll report on it as necessary going forward.

19. Are Five New Hotels Coming? Cay Bay, Harbor, Simpson Bay, Alegria, Starz

Could be...

First, Indigo Bay, slowed by the Great Recession, is going full speed ahead now, with much new construction all winter long. Their Master Plan originally called for a new boutique hotel not far north of the new restaurant that's now under construction. It wouldn't surprise us to see something getting going there in about two years. The location is Cay Bay. (We've sent a note to the developer about this.)

Second, we wrote in recent weeks about the resort hotel now approved for the Great Bay Harbor area. It will be done in about two years, authorities have said.

Third, the Seminole Tribe, when it was planning to buy Simpson Bay Resort, proposed building a casino and business condo complex at the location of the current casino / restaurant area in the "hole" of the Simpson Bay doughnut. It strikes us that that could well happen without the Seminoles. There is room, there is an absolute need (especially with a convention center), and we know the money is available. Our guess, something will happen between 2018-2020, though at this point it's only an educated guess.

Fourth, Caravanserai was bought by a US company and was renamed Alegria. Its winter business was apparently not so hot, but they may have been prepared for that. Something will happen here, although it may not wind up being exactly what the investor, Ray Sidhom, had in mind when he bought it. This will be interesting.

Fifth, Starz Casino, formerly Atlantis, has had a long-range plan to replace the existing structure with something complete new possibly including a highrise condo hotel. Francesco Corallo, owner, does have some other issues to deal with, so we're not sure when this might happen, or "if." More on Corallo is here: <http://curacaochronicle.com/politics/van-raak-i-may-no-longer-call-francesco-corallo-a-mob-boss/>

20. Why There Are No Tolls on the Simpson Bay Causeway

When the Causeway was opened, authorities said tolls would never have worked. Taxi drivers would have blocked access to the bridge, and others would have either avoided the bridge or evaded tolls. So a tax was added to every shipping container coming into port, raising the cost of everything -- and paying for the causeway.

21. What To Do If You Become Critically Ill or Injured in SXM

Your first thoughts might regard which hospital to go to -- French or Dutch. If only it were that simple....

The fact is that whichever hospital you go to, two things will be lacking: first, your health insurance is unlikely to cover any part of your care, and second, neither hospital compares favorably to most big-city hospitals in the US or Canada. Even worse, the doctors in SXM won't have (or get) your medical records expeditiously, which means they may have to guess what to do -- if, in fact, they can do it at all.

What you need to do is get home, if you are stable enough to be transported. If you're critically ill or injured, that may necessitate a medical evacuation jet which you must pay for in cash, in advance. that could easily be \$45,000 or more.

SkyMed takes you home where your insurance works, and where doctors and hospitals you know and trust are ready to care for you. It's time: see the beginning of this section and call Jeff Berger today for answers to any questions or simply to sign up. His contact info is in story #13.

22. What Kind of Car Should You Rent?

It's not an unimportant question.

If you're in SXM at the height of hurricane season and will be here for a couple of weeks or more, an SUV may be a bright idea. They can get through streets with some vegetation debris or some standing water in case a tropical storm swaggers through.

If you have kids, you want to be sure your vehicle has airbags and child seats (not all cars do).

Otherwise, be sure you rent something big enough to protect you in a crash (a "Smart" car isn't necessarily the smartest pick for your safety) and that delivers economical performance, since gas in SXM is still far pricier than it is in the USA or Canada.

23. How To Win a SXM Vacation from JMB

Our Three Vacation Giveaway has begun. To celebrate the 1,000th edition of SXM Weekly News, coming this summer, we're giving away three SXM vacations. Here's where:

[Summit Resort Hotel](#), Cupecoy Beach;
[L'Esplanade Boutique Hotel](#), Grand Case; and
[Club Fantastico Naturist Resort](#), Orient Beach

These vacations will be awarded only to *SXM Weekly News* readers who enter the giveaway. If you're a pass-along reader of *SXM Weekly News*, subscribe directly to become eligible. Only subscribers can enter and win these vacations. (*Weekly News* is free).

To subscribe, go to www.everythingsxm.com and select our 2014 Weekly News list among our "Free Newsletters." We will check all entries to be sure they are Weekly News subscribers; if not, the entry will be discarded.

Enter here: <http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/weeklynews1000/index.htm>

24. Should You Stay Longer in SXM?

For many people, the idea of staying longer in SXM is highly alluring. But various things interfere like job, home, family, etc.

Yet a steadily increasing number of people are actually doing it. Growing kids, the ability to work remotely, and affordability are big reasons.

If your timeshare maintenance fee or hotel bill is upwards of \$1200 / week, that does not exclude you from spending more time in SXM. Specifically, there are good rentals on the island that can be had for under \$2K/month (roughly \$500/week). Drive around the Dutch Side -- Beacon Hill and Cupecoy for example -- and you'll see real estate agents advertising both seasonal and monthly rentals.

So if your family or job situation allows it, you may just be able to pull it off like hundreds of others already have. It's far more doable than you may have imagined.

Want to move to SXM? See next story.

25. Should You Move to SXM & Work or Retire There?

Stay less than six months in SXM, and the Dutch-American Friendship Treaty makes things easy. Stay longer, and it gets a bit more complicated, but it's still doable.

Decide whether you want to move to SXM or simply buy a second home or apartment there, or rent for a season or longer. Then, ask who the best real estate agents are; some are local, others are transplanted Americans who can easily give you the lowdown from your own perspective.

Move deliberately when fact-finding to be sure everything is crystal clear. Life in SXM isn't perfect, but with midwinter daytime highs of 82 and lows of 75 on a cool night, it's far better than "home" up north facing the frequent winter choice of which shovel to use to get the snow off the walk and your car unburied. And there's always the beach.

If you really want to do it, you may just be able to make it happen. Don't hesitate to start a discussion about it on our main SXM site on Facebook, where we have over 8,000 likes: <https://www.facebook.com/EverythingStMaarten>

26. "Below Deck," Bravo Yachting Series, To Return in Mediterranean Setting

When it was first cast and broadcast two summers ago, "Below Deck" was the inside story of how a megayacht crew functions behind the scenes while based in St. Maarten.

Many of those picked for the crew of "Ohana," the boat, were actual yacht crew. But that wasn't their boat or their captain. (Ohana actually wasn't the boat's real name, either.)

The next year the boat home ported elsewhere, and some of the crew changed.

This year, Below Decks will be set in the Mediterranean with some familiar faces; expect to see it on Bravo this summer.

More: <http://www.bravotv.com/the-daily-dish/bravo-announces-10-new-and-4-returning-series>

27. Restaurant of the Week: Taloula Mango

Veteran restaurateurs Norm and Su Wathey for years ran Kangaroo Court near Philipsburg's historic courthouse, but for the last several years they've presided over Taloula Mango's Caribbean Cafe, the center of life on the Great Bay Beach Promenade, usually referred to simply as the Boardwalk. They're a short walk east from the center of town.

Outstanding dining for lunch or dinner, with enough variety to suit all tastes and appetites. The Blue Bitch Bar is probably Philipsburg's liveliest, day and night, and entertainment is common during high season. Great Tapas, too.

Try it next time you're in town. Tell them we sent you... Great stuff, very reasonable prices. See more below. Most of the listed restaurants offer discounts to JMB Website Supporters members.

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 4/6/15)
Canoa, www.canoasxm.com (featured 3/23/15)
SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 4/21/14)
Cugini (featured 12/8/14)
Trattoria Pizza Pasta, Maho Plaza near Casino Royale (featured 3/10/14)
Daniel's By The Sea, www.dawnbeachsxm.com (featured 11/17/14)
Domino's Pizza <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dominos-Pizza-St-Maarten/95635717338> (featured 8/11/14)
Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 2/23/15)
Fusion, www.fusionrestaurant-sxm.com (featured 1/26/15)
The Hideaway, <http://www.lavistaresort.com/restaurant.html> (featured 4/28/14)
Stone Restaurant, www.thestonerestaurant.com (featured 9/2/14)
Le Pressoir, <http://www.lepressoir-sxm.com> (featured 3/16/15)
Temptation, <http://www.rareandtemptation.com/EN/temptation/>
Lal's Curry In A Hurry Indian Restaurant, Airport Road, Simpson Bay (featured 1/19/15)
Mr. Busby's Beach Bar <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 2/23/15)
Island Pizza, <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 6/28/14)
Pineapple Pete, www.pineapplepete.com (featured 2/2/15)
Papagayo, <http://www.cluborient.com/papagayo.php> (featured 5/5/14)
SPN Cafe (now Coconut Grove), <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 (featured 4/13/15)
Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 11/10/14)
Topper's <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 2/23/15)
Taloula Mango <http://www.taloulamango.com/> (featured 4/20/15)
Bylbos, Simpson Bay
Sushiitto Japanese Restaurant, Port de Plaisance <https://www.facebook.com/sushiitto.sxm> (featured 1/12/15)

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

28. Last Call: 13th Anniversary Membership Sale Ends April 30

This month is the 13th anniversary of JMB Website Supporters and the 22nd anniversary of the founding of Everything SXM. To celebrate, we're offering you 237+ discounts and other benefits at special low anniversary sale prices.

What you get: Discounts on everything you need for a great SXM vacation, including where to get the lowest airfares; high quality hotel stays at low cost; discounted car rentals; dozens of restaurant discounts; dozens of shopping discounts; activities discounts; jewelry gift cards, and lots more. The pages below provide much more info.

New memberships, renewals, and reinstatements are heavily discounted in this sale. Prices begin as low as \$49 for a new one-year membership **but** five years is just \$99 total. Renewals and reinstatements are sharply discounted now too.

Buy a new membership here: http://everythingasm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

Reinstate your former JMB membership here: <http://everythingasm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

Renew your current JMB membership at the Membership Renewal Center on the members-only "secret" website. Login through the orange login box below the masthead on each page of our site, www.everythingsxm.com.

Our SXM discounts are worth lots of money; why spend more than you have to? Sign up today. Below is a small sample of the 237+ companies across SXM offering discounts to JMB members:

[AIA Massage](#), Tricia Altenau, Ti Spa, L'Esplanade Hotel, Grand Case
[Baker's Suites](#), Simpson Bay
[Mr. Busby's Beach Bar](#), Dawn Beach
[Canoa Restaurant](#), Dawn Beach
[Caribbean Gems](#), Philipsburg
[Celine Too Motor Yacht](#), Simpson Bay
Cugini Italian Restaurant, Simpson Bay (no website; they are located between Fedex and the Carousel)
[Daniel's By The Sea Restaurant](#), Dawn Beach
[Island Pizza](#), Dawn Beach
[iZi Ristorante Italiano](#), Simpson Bay
[Le Pressoir](#) French Restaurant, Grand Case
Orange Grove Pharmacy, Cole Bay
[Pineapple Pete Restaurant / Coconut Grove Bar & Restaurant](#), Simpson Bay
[Spiga](#) Italian Restaurant, Grand Case
[Summit Resort Hotel](#), Cupecoy Beach
Super Dollar Store, (no website, located on L. B. Scott Rd., Mary's Fancy, Dutch Side)
[Sushiitto](#), Port de Plaisance Casino, Cole Bay
[The St. Maarten Party Bus](#) (There's only one Party Bus)
Trattoria Pizza Pasta, Maho Beach
[Toppers and Toppers By The Sea](#), Simpson Bay
[Tropical-Tropicana Car Rental](#), SXM
[Vesna Taverna](#), Simpson Bay
[Zhaveri Jewelers](#), Philipsburg

Doesn't Your Business or Practice Deserve a Website That Works?

www.websitesthatworkusa.com

Marketing-Centric / Client-Focused, and created by JMB!

"Websites that Work," part of JMB Communications, offers substantial discounts to JMB Website Supporters members.

Many helpful website-creation-related articles are on our site, which was recently revised. Check it out.

29. Pick Up Some of Our Authentic SXM Euro Oval Stickers -- Great Souvenirs

For years, we've printed and distributed our own SXM Euro Oval stickers -- green lettering on a white background with twin palm trees in the background. They measure 5 3/4" x 3 3/4". You've likely seen them across SXM.

They're back and you can now order your own... We're currently offering them to our *SXM Weekly News* readers at economical pricing. They are one for \$5 or three for \$10. We use them on our cars and on smooth hard-sided luggage, which makes the luggage very easy to spot on carousels. They're printed on durable vinyl to last long. And they have a varnish coating to help protect against fading.

You can pay us through PayPal (have the payment go to jeff@jmbcommunications.com) but please specify what you're ordering and where they're to be shipped. Include your phone number. Buy some for friends too... If you want more than three, just place multiple orders.

Or pay by check payable to JMB Communications but again please specify what you're ordering and where they're to be shipped. Include your phone number. Buy some for friends too... Mail your check to SXM Weekly News Ovals, c/o JMB Communications, P. O. Box 1812, Plymouth, MA 02362-1812.

N. B.: Orders are shipped only to the USA and Canada. Allow four weeks for delivery. Questions about the ovals? Address them to jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com with the subject SXM Ovals.

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?

2015 St. Maarten / St. Martin Timeshare Weeks For Rent or Sale are posted at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml Listings are now updated every few weekdays. Ads are free (no commission) but are accepted from JMB Website Supporters members only.

Meet Our Sponsors (updated 9/27/13) Returns Next Issue

SECTION 4: For Members Only (Constantly Updated)

- A. Where to Get Member Info: www.everythingsxm.com/secret
- B. Password Recovery Info: Your username is the email address you have registered with JMB Website Supporters. If you forget your password, click "forgot password" in the orange login box near the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com.
- C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads: See www.everythingsxm.com/secret .

SECTION 5: Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) Updated 12/31/14

Please see our site, www.everythingsxm.com.

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.

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 *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.

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

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