

## Report on Irma's Aftermath in St. Maarten

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Irma was the most powerful hurricane ever to hit SXM. It has also set records for being "the strongest the longest" anywhere on this planet.

Because power is out across much of the island and communications remain poor, what we're offering you here is a general overview of island conditions.

**Casualties:** We know of eight fatalities so far. We believe that all of them are on the French Side. Grand Case and Marigot and the Orient area were all hit very hard. The Dutch Side was hit very hard as well, particularly near the Maho and Simpson Bay areas. The Dutch Side Government is saying it does not have word back yet but we infer that they expect some injuries to be reported.

**Airport:** The airport's roof was damaged as were jetways. It appears that the interior of the terminal had both wind and water damage inside. Dutch Marines are working to clear the runway of debris to enable emergency supplies to come in by air, but we've been told that two Dutch Navy ships are bringing in meals and water for 40,000 people.

When the airport opens, its top priority will be getting relief supplies in, stranded tourists out (whenever commercial traffic resumes), and residents back in. Resumption of tourism is undoubtedly weeks away; we won't guess how many.

### **Damage to Boats, Cars, & Airplanes:**

Many boats and cars were bounced around like dominoes in the 185mph sustained winds and 220mph gusts. Some planes left outdoors flipped over. Boats tore loose and crashed into other boats and a number of boats have sunk. The Celine Too, Neil Roebert's boat, which replaced the Celine lost in Hurricane Gonzalo, was demolished by Irma. Boats sank everywhere; the lagoon provided no relief from Irma's fury.

**Grand Case** was very badly hit with huge piles of rubble on the main boulevard. Roofs torn off buildings. Lolos demolished.

**Summit Resort** in Cupecoy was almost entirely destroyed. Some buildings completely disappeared and others lost their second floor or were reduced to rubble. Guests were evacuated beforehand, but GM Pat Evans, her son, and Mena, head of housekeeping and Evans' mom, were hunkered down in a first floor bathroom while Irma was removing the second floor. They and the rest of the Summit Staff are OK.

**Sonesta properties** all suffered considerable damage. At **Simpson Bay Resort**, Irma tore off many roofs. **Oyster Bay Beach Resort** and **Royal Islander** all suffered considerable damage. The **Dutch Side Hospital** also is in bad shape.

**Restaurants: Pizza Galley** and the **Boathouse** are said to be destroyed. The outer section of **SkipJacks** over the water is said to be gone, but the main building stayed. Both **Pineapple Pete** and **Toppers** suffered some damage.

The storm was as strong as some tornados, and registered as an earthquake because of its firepower.

On our **Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site**, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/6297726366/>, you will find continually updated details on these and other reports concerning Irma's aftermath, along with hundreds of pictures.

We hope to have more info on Irma's aftermath in the next regular issue of *SXM Weekly News* early next week.

**Hurricane Jose** is a Category 2 storm now and is expected to strengthen to Category 3 tomorrow. It may either hit the Northern Leeward islands or move to their North this weekend. See our Weather site on [everythingsexm.com](http://everythingsexm.com) (click Weather) for the latest detailed information.

**Make no mistake:** St. Maarten will return and it will be better than ever. In a few months you should expect to enjoy your favorite island. On our Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site we will post where to send donations of items or funds to help in the relief effort. We want to be sure donations go to the right place... watch for info soon.

We apologize but we cannot answer any individual questions about the island. We will continue to update our Facebook site with the latest available information.

**One Last Word:** We've been working 18-hour days to ensure that our members and readers get the most complete possible information about Irma's aftermath and the possible visit of Major Hurricane Jose. Our *SXM Weekly News* regular editions will continue to do that. *Your JMB Website Supporters membership keeps the lights on for us and enables us to give you everything you need and want about SXM even as we continue to offer you 300+ island discounts and other benefits you can use on your next trip this Winter and on many trips thereafter.* Our current sale offers extraordinarily economical memberships in our JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program. Please go to our [everythingxsm.com](http://everythingxsm.com) site, click the page curl in the top right corner, and join, renew, or reinstate your JMB membership today. Then we can keep bringing you all the news about your favorite island.

**P. P. S.:** No matter where you're going, *Anything Can Happen Anywhere* -- so please protect yourself with SkyMed medical evacuation membership. There's a major-league bonus in it for you which gives you a JMB membership (new or renewal) equal to your new SkyMed purchase or upgrade to a SkyMed Ultimate (annual and multiyear memberships only). See [www.getskymed.com](http://www.getskymed.com) or phone us at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only).

As always, we are grateful for your membership.

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