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Vol. 2, #1134 ---January 8, 2018
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin



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

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

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

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to be sure you receive this newsletter every week.

IMPORTANT: "Jeff1620" is a send-only email address.
For Contact info, see [#Contact Us](#)
at the end of this newsletter.

Important Note:

This is Jeff Berger's / JMB Communications' **St. Maarten & St. Martin / SXM Weekly News**, published every Monday (Tuesdays during most holiday weeks). **You are receiving St. Maarten & St. Martin "SXM" Weekly News because you subscribed to it and/or are a JMB Website Supporters member. Unsubscribe info is at the end of this newsletter. Stay with us for all the latest tourist-oriented news from St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM all year long. Now read by more than 300,000 people 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



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

You can also download PDFs of recent editions here:

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

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

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

TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE

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31 news stories this week

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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://everythingsexm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml and features them here.

To rent out or sell timeshares you own in SXM or anywhere else worldwide, for no ad charge or commission, join JMB Website Supporters. Visit http://everythingsexm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml for info. Membership now delivers a growing list of about 300 St. Maarten and St. Martin-focused travel benefits -- and your membership subscription helps keep these weekly SXM newsletters coming.

SXM Timeshare Rental of The Week:

RENTAL 8/18/2018 9/1/2018 Week 33, 34 Simpson Bay Resort and Marina Deluxe two bedroom (sleeps 6) beach front penthouse suite with fully equipped kitchen. Corner unit in the Flamboyant building overlooking the ocean. Newly renovated, two bedroom suites have two independent bedrooms with ceiling fans and air-conditioning and two additional murphy beds. Expansive living and dining area with full kitchen. Unit has two private bathrooms. Walk out the front door and you are directly on the beach. Marina pool and bar are only a few steps away as is on property resort dining. Minutes from Princess Juliana airport. Available weeks run back to back. \$1500 per week Frank 516 425 6714 f1leichtle@optonline.net

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 2/10/2018 2/17/2018 week 6 Royal Islander Club La Plage Located on Maho Beach, the Dutch side of St. Maarten. This is a high demand week, Saturday to Saturday stay. The unit is a 1 bedroom, ground floor unit facing beautiful gardens, the pool and beach. 1 king bedroom plus additional queen size sleeper sofa. The unit sleeps 4. Full kitchen and 1 bath. Decorated in island style. Walk to restaurants, shopping, casino and nightlife. Princess Juliana Airport is only minutes away. \$5,200.00 plus transfer fee. Diane 262-569-0806 dianecon1@aol.com

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

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

Villa Rentals Now Offered On Our Site Too:

St. Maarten / St. Martin Homes, Villas, Businesses, Commercial Properties, and Residential Properties for Sale (NEW): [Click to access our recommended real estate agents](#)

This Week's Stories

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"Like" Our ["Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin" Facebook Site:](#)



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/6297726366/>

"Like" Our Facebook St. Maarten Timesharing Group

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

Search the **SXM Weekly News** Archives:

Current Archives (Since 4/2014) in PDF Format:

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 group of about 300 SXM-focused island discounts and other SXM-related benefits through JMB Website Supporters membership:

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

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C. How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads: Links are on the Secret Website (see a, above.)

Section Six: Where To Find Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) (Revised 8/2017)

How To Get a **GROWING LIST of 300+** 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 growing list of 300+ additional major travel benefits.

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

All JMB Newsletters Read *From JMB*

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

THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest.

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

1. Winter Storm Grayson Bedevils SXM-Bound Flights

When winter storm Grayson hit the East Coast last Wednesday and Thursday, it did a major number on several big airports serving SXM.

Thousands of flights were canceled Thursday, a few thousand more were canceled on Friday, and flights were still being canceled as late as Saturday.

Passengers on one flight heading to SXM from JFK reported being delayed for two hours in the terminal, boarding, then sitting for an additional four hours on the tarmac before the flight was canceled.

As if that weren't bad enough, then came the news that the next available flight to which they could be rescheduled was a week away — on Thursday, January 11. Forecasts at that time indicated there was the possibility of another storm coming to the area on January 11, though forecasts now apparently differ.

Flying from cold-weather cities in the winter always carries with it the risk of weather-related delays and cancellations. But this year, the risk is greater simply because there are fewer flights to which passengers can reschedule.

As the year unfolds, flights are expected to become more frequent — just as the weather warms up and fewer people want to get out of the cold.

2. In Plane Emergencies, Evac In a Hurry

Three days ago, a WestJet aircraft which had landed at Toronto Pearson airport after a flight from Cancún was waiting near the terminal for clearance to pull to its gate when an empty Sun Wing aircraft being towed from its gate clipped the WestJet plane, causing a fire in its wing and necessitating immediate evacuation of the aircraft. That evacuation was slowed by some passengers attempting to grab their carry-on baggage and jump down the emergency chute with luggage. See the full story about the accident [here](#).

What's incredibly important is that the success or failure of an emergency aircraft evacuation depends on the crew getting passengers off the plane in about 90 seconds; that's essential since a working fire on an aircraft can quickly turn lethal to many passengers unless everyone moves out quickly, precisely as directed by the flight crew. Bottom line: follow crew instructions to the letter. Your carry-on baggage and other personal effects can be replaced, but you and your fellow passengers cannot.

Fortunately, there were no injuries among any passengers or crew, though a firefighter was injured as a result of the accident.

3. Holland America Returns to SXM

Holland America is the latest major cruise line to return to SXM.

The influential "Cruise Advisor" website published this comment on January 2: "As an update on some of the main islands affected, Royal Caribbean International's scheduled cruises to San Juan, St Maarten, and St Thomas are now running again as normal, including visits from Oasis of the Seas, Allure of the Seas and Harmony of the Seas. Carnival Cruise Line has now returned to all those destinations as well and has already resumed calls to San Juan at the end of November and St Thomas and St Maarten in early January. Likewise, Celebrity Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line, Disney Cruise Line, Holland America Line and Crystal Cruises, among others, have all of their Caribbean itineraries running as scheduled."

See their entire article [here](#).

4. Current SXM Weather Info

You'll find detailed observations and forecasts by visiting our main SXM website, www.everythingsxm.com, and clicking either of the weather observations at the top of the page.

The four sources of current weather info, beyond the two above, are:

- 1) [Crown Weather Services](#) whose very inexpensive subscription service is, we feel, the best in the business.
- 2) Our "Weather" page at www.everythingsxm.com -- it has current satellite images and radar loops and now all the latest NHC weather forecasts, outlooks, and advisories as well. There are now also active weather widgets on the site's home page.
- 3) Our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#), which publishes the latest advisories, watches, and warnings when SXM is threatened by any storms.
- 4) On or off the island, listen to Island 92 -- 91.9FM or see www.island92.com. They report island warnings at once and know exactly what's going on. You can listen on the web anytime through live streaming. They were knocked off the air by Irma but are now back.

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

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

5. This Is The Time To Get SkyMed Peace-of-Mind

SkyMed Takes You Home® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill or injured when traveling. Exclusively for Americans and Canadians, basic SkyMed coverage protects you throughout the USA,

Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, Bermuda, and all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba. Global coverage (via Global Emergency Transport Services, or GETS) is standard on all "Ultimate" memberships and an inexpensive option on basic memberships.

Without SkyMed, you will have to pay upwards of \$35,000 to \$50,000 or possibly much more **in cash, in advance**, to set up an emergency medical evacuation home if you know who to call and what to ask in a huge emergency. But with SkyMed, you make one toll-free call to SkyMed 24/7/365 and SkyMed makes all the arrangements related to the medical evacuation and pays for all its services. No deductibles, no claim forms, no reimbursements necessary.

It's like fire insurance -- get it before you need it. Call Jeff at his office (Eastern Time, regular office hours) 508-747-8281 or email him at jeff@jmbcommunications.com and he'll be happy to answer all your questions.

New Triple Bonus Now in Effect but it could end soon, so do get SkyMed while the bonus lasts. Here's more:

Buying a new annual or multiyear SkyMed medical evacuation membership from us, or upgrading an annual membership to a multiyear Ultimate through us?

An all new SkyMed **triple** bonus is available through www.getskymed.com or by calling Jeff when you buy a new SkyMed annual or longer membership from us -- or upgrade to a multiyear SkyMed membership from an annual membership you bought from us.

The new Triple SkyMed bonus is simple. Once you've bought or upgraded your SkyMed membership through us, you forward to us by email your SkyMed acceptance email. (Use the subject "SkyMed Bonus".) Once we verify it, we extend your JMB Website Supporters membership by the same number of years as you purchased coverage from SkyMed.

With the second part of the SkyMed bonus, we will also give you a certificate good for a \$25 discount on a future JMB Website Supporters membership renewal. The certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue. That's in addition to the years extension: That's quite a double bonus. (JMB renewals are always consecutive, never concurrent.)

The "Triple" Bonus? Yet another year of JMB membership on top of (in addition to) what you just read about.

See the other SkyMed stories in this issue for much more on SkyMed. Join now... this will not last very long.

6. **Guaranteed Lowest Rates** for Hotel Rooms & Car Rentals **Around The World**

SkyMed Travel offers you a 110% Lowest Rate Guarantee for both hotel and car rental reservations worldwide. You can't lose with this, so read this article, sign up free and make your travel reservations directly through *SkyMed Travel*.

What it Is - How to Join (free for Our Readers & JMB Members):

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

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

Normally, SkyMed Travel charges \$99 to join plus \$99 annual renewals. But for our JMB Website Supporters members and now for **Weekly News** readers, the cost to join is zero as will be the cost for renewals. Join the Club by going to <https://www.skymedtravel.com/register>, sign up, and provide the requested information. Complete the first sign up item (SkyMed Membership Number or Representative ID) by entering the code 391330 — doing that ensures that you pay nothing for your SkyMed Travel Club membership. No code, no free entry to the club's phenomenal pricing. **If you are a SkyMed Member, however, enter your SkyMed Membership Number here to get the absolute greatest possible discounts.**

You won't be disappointed.

[Changing Your Email Address?](#)

Now You Can Unsubscribe Your Old Email and Sign Up Your New One for your SXM Weekly News *subscription* Quickly and Easily at our Site: www.sxmweeklynews.com

SECTION 2: Accommodations: Hotels, Resorts, Timeshares, Villas Etc.

7. SXM Villa Rentals

Lots more have been added and hundreds of villas are now available. Fly with friends or extended family for outstanding rates. See [our Villa page](#) for info.

8. SXM Timeshare Rentals

With several timeshare resorts coming back online soon — first Sapphire Beach Resort and Atrium Resort, with others soon to follow -- timeshare owners are now posting units available for rent on our timeshare rental site on everythingSXM.com. Check it out.

9. Update on Hotel / Timeshare Reopenings

Our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#) has two very special items of interest to *SXM Weekly News* readers:

In the site's Files area, there are dozens of carefully researched pieces on many items of importance to tourists. Two of the most important regard the current status of hotels and timeshares — what's opened, when some that are being renovated will be opened, and which will never reopen. See our site for all the details.

Likewise, if you're looking for information on the status of restaurants on both sides of the island, you'll find an article on that also in our files area. Both of these files are updated frequently, whenever we become aware of updated information.

Also see our "Restaurant of the Week" feature which resumes today; it's story #21.

SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

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

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

We now offer about 300 discounts (including some now being rolled out). We think you'll find many surprises here that will be of great interest and value. Please check this section in the coming months as we restart rolling out a number of entirely new discounts and benefits.

For more info on what you get with your JMB membership, [go here](#).

SECTION 4: Island News, Info, & Features

11. SkyMed "Double Bonus" Expanded & Extended

Under the SkyMed Double Bonus, we've been giving people who buy new SkyMed memberships through us -- duration one year or longer — and people who upgrade their current SkyMed memberships bought through us to longer memberships — a double bonus. To wit, we give them JMB Website Supporters membership extensions equal in length to what they had bought through us with SkyMed. In December, we also started giving \$25 gift certificates to these folks, good toward the purchase of a future JMB Website Supporters membership extension. That was our Double Bonus.

We originally were intending to end this promotion December 31 but instead we have expanded and extended it. Under the expansion, we now offer a triple bonus — including a new extra year of JMB membership in addition to what we already offered — again, for people who buy new SkyMed memberships through us with a duration of a year or more or who upgrade their current SkyMed memberships bought through us.

Bottom line, there has never been a better time to acquire SkyMed medical evacuation coverage through us. If you purchased a new SkyMed membership through us or upgraded your SkyMed membership through us in December, no worries: just send an email to Membership Services at support@JMBCommunications.com using the Subject "Triple Bonus" and ask them to give you an extra week (you must forward your December confirmation letter from SkyMed with your email).

Please contact Jeff to enroll today: 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only). Or email him at jeff.berger@skymed.com or jeff@jmbcommunications.com. Do it now.....

12. Flights Down from '17, Fares Up...

If you've been trying to make flight reservations for SXM, you've probably noticed that fares seem to be rather high.

It's not your imagination. Frankly, airline companies don't seem to care much about island nations attempting to return from severe hurricane damage, inadequate flight schedules when compared with demand, or the reasonableness of airfares. What they do care about is that all flights are full and that they make a profit. (Quite sensible.)

Compared to the end of 2016, prior to which there had been no major hurricanes, the end of 2017 was marked by a two thirds drop in airlift to SXM and an increase in the cost of airfares charged to passengers. Of course, streetwise passengers and road warriors often know how to get around these problems. But this year, due to the paucity of flights to the island, there just aren't many palatable options.

In some cases, there are overnight stays required to get to SXM. In others, long layovers. But thousands of passengers like you are determined to get out of the cold to SXM. It's time for you to be here.

13. Strong Euro Affects French Side Pricing

When the euro and the dollar were at or close to par in recent years, going to the Super U supermarket on the French side was an easy choice. Prices were reasonable there, the quality of the food was excellent and its freshness was uncontested, and it wasn't all that far away.

Now, Le Grand Marché near Philipsburg on the Dutch Side has become a new Carrefour supermarket, carrying the entire Carrefour product line as well as everything it carried before. Because of the strong euro, the Carrefour market in Philipsburg is much more competitive — and much more pleasant to visit, thanks for its heavy renovations -- than before.

Some French side restaurants that had processed dollar transactions on a par with the euro now have to modify dollar-denominated sales in a small way to make up for the weak dollar. Fortunately, the strong US economy appears to have left more people in a position to be able to afford this small increase.

14. Rainforest Adventures, Emilio's Get Rave Reviews

Irrespective of opinions about the politics or appropriateness of the Rainforest Adventures chairlift and zipline at the Emilio Wilson Estate on the Dutch side, two things are abundantly clear: first, the chairlift is getting rave reviews because of the amazing and unique hilltop perspective it gives of much of the southern part of the island. It is far easier and safer to go up the chairlift than to attempt to climb Paradise peak (Pic Paradis) on the French side.

And second, the all-new Emilio's restaurant on the estate is also a major hit. Renowned chef Dino Jagtiani, who has most likely won more awards in his career than all other SXM chefs combined, was stunned last September when hurricane Irma destroyed his multi-award-winning Temptation restaurant. But seasoned restaurateurs Su and Norman Wathey were developing Emilio's at the time — and the marriage soon occurred.

Definitely put Emilio's on your must-visit list when you visit the island. The buzz about it is tremendous.

15. Sushiitto Moves, Changes Name: Same Staff & Menus

Pierre Ferland, the Pete of Pineapple Pete's restaurant in Simpson Bay, for a number of years has been operating the Sushiitto restaurant at Princess port to Plaisance off the Union Road near the French side border. Sushiitto was essentially destroyed by hurricane Irma.

Pierre was mulling over new concepts for his former Coconut Groove sports bar next door to Pineapple Pete and ultimately decided moving Sushiitto there makes a lot of sense.

We agree. Not only is it an easier commute between locations for Pierre, it's also more central to the commercial heart of the island, which is what Simpson Bay has become. The new restaurant, Wasabi Charlie, is now open and serving customers. Sushiitto is permanently closed; Wasabi Charlie opened December 15 in the old Coconut Groove location. It has the same great staff and same great food as Sushiitto. with a few minor changes. All the items that were on the menu before are there now, served by the same very highly capable staff. Visit soon....

16. What's SXM's Most Popular Radio Station?

For more than 10 years, we been working very closely with Island92 radio – talking about everythingSXM.com, SXM Weekly News, our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#), and about SkyMed, our major sponsor. As this relationship has developed, we've found Island92 to be, in our humble opinion, the most community-centric, tourist oriented, island-success-oriented radio station in SXM. It's an impressive, professional organization and we think it's the best radio station on the island.

What do you think? The question is now posted on our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#) by Dr. Soc, Jeffrey Sochrin, and we invite you to find the post on our site and add your comments.

17. How To Get to Orient Beach

Things have changed. If you haven't been to Orient beach since Irma, you don't know how to get there.

Formerly, the main entrance to the southern end of the beach, where the Club Orient naturist resort is, was the same road that led to Le Galion beach and to the Butterfly Farm. You simply turn left off that road to go to Club Orient and to drive north on the road behind and parallel to Orient Beach.

When Irma's storm surge and punishing waves destroyed all bars and restaurants on Orient beach, it temporarily eliminated that mode of entry.

Now, you must enter farther north, off the main road in the Alamanda area. When you reach the beach, you'll be reminded of where Bikini Beach, Waikiki, and others were. Now, all of them are gone, washed away by Irma. The road heading south comes to an abrupt stop before location where Kon Tiki and the newer beach buildings had been. All those buildings are gone, too.

You can park a distance away from Club Orient (well north of the site of the former Pedro's) and walk to the clothing optional part of the beach, if you like.

Perch Light

A new temporary Perch Light restaurant/bar is open at Club Orient — and there are chairs and umbrellas for rent there. There's also a port-a-potty — we think it's the only one on the entire beach.

Orient is much different than you may recall. Not only are all the structures gone, the beach is wider than it has been in about 30 years — far more beach than there had been.

Oddly enough, it's very welcoming -- but comparatively quiet.

18. How Restaurants are Doing Their Thing

Prior visitors to SXM will likely remember seeing trucks from Merchants Market across the island. For years, Merchants has been one of the island's busiest wholesale food distributorships. Merchants was severely damaged by Irma and has not yet reopened. The island, however, has many other wholesale providers and restaurants have turned to them for their provisions. Because of the extreme cut in airlift to the island, a good part of the restaurant food formerly flown in isn't arriving on a dependable schedule. So, a number of restaurants have had to modify their menus. The better restaurants — like Spiga, Mario's, iZi, Vesna, and several others — have adapted so well you will notice no difference in quality at all. It's a great tribute to their talent, their creativity, their resourcefulness, and their staffs.

19. Point / Counterpoint: Gorgeous, Ugly

The only constant in this world is change.

It has now been four months since SXM was slammed by category five hurricane Irma. We've written thousands of words about the storm and we've published hundreds of Irma pictures in our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#).

In recent weeks, we've published many pictures of both new and renovated restaurants, favorite dishes, many beaches, beautiful greenery returning to hillsides and pastures, a people with an upbeat attitude, and the surprisingly quick recovery of the island and the way it is welcoming back tourists.

Despite the recovery, there is still plenty of damage visible throughout most of the island. The beaches are gorgeous, the flowering plants are gorgeous, the iguanas are looking for handouts as usual, much of Front Street is back to welcoming tourists, Maho Beach has returned with plenty of sand, people are gawking at airplanes, and naturists have returned to Club Orient.

Today, though, tourists often come with things island people need. In many cases, you have donated substantial monies to charities directly benefiting people who lost everything they owned. You can still help -- as indeed you have since a few days after Irma hit.

Please go to our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#) where you will find a number of charities listed in our Files area. Those charities are continuing to help people on the island directly and they can still use your donations.

20. Check SXM's Jewelers for Valentine's Offers

In addition to spending money when you return to the island, you can help the island economy now by purchasing gifts for Valentine's Day and for other special family occasions from the island's many jewelry stores.

In the past, we've mentioned many of them to you — Little Europe, Zhaveri, Caribbean Gems, DK Gems, and Oro Diamante. Check out their websites for exquisite gifts for Valentine's Day and other special occasions.

You'll help them of course, but you'll also be helping the island since much of what you spend is quickly re-invested on SXM.

21. "Restaurant of the Week" Column Returns

One of the most widely read columns here in *SXM Weekly News* for years has been our Restaurant of the Week selections. That column returns in this issue, right here — and our first Restaurant of the Week selection for the 2018 season is Vesna Taverna.

Vesna was very lucky — although the buildings near it were seriously damaged by Irma, Vesna suffered comparatively little damage, and it reopened for breakfast and lunch only a few weeks after Irma hit. A few weeks after that, it reopened for dinner and is currently open seven nights per week -- serving its full regular menu. As we've written, many SXM restaurants have had to modify their offerings somewhat since Irma. Since Vesna sources its ingredients from a number of providers, it has been affected less than many other restaurants by changes in the supply chain.

Vesna Taverna is located roughly 125 yards north of the Simpson Bay drawbridge on the lagoon side of Airport Road. Stop by during the day or contact them to make reservations. See vesnataverna.com and tell Vesna we suggested you visit. Wonderful restaurant, great people, casual surroundings, and a fun place to visit: prepare to become hooked.

Here is a rundown of the status of all restaurants described in the last year or so in our *Weekly News* restaurant column. Dates below are when each restaurant was last covered here.

Celine Too Motor Yacht, www.sailstmaarten.com (featured 8/7/17). Sunk by Irma. Neil has bought a new sailing yacht as big as Celine Too was and is readying it to enter service soon. Neil is known for amazing cooking on board his boats.

Big Fish Restaurant www.bigfishsxm.com/ (featured 5/1/17). Big Fish has closed. We do not have any word on whether Mike and Teresa will be reopening.

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 3/6/17) David is back and the restaurant has reopened. Now open for lunch as well.

Busby's Chicken Rotisserie (featured 6/5/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.

Isola Ristorante Italiano (featured 5/29/17) Marco Ferrante's Isola Ristorante Italiano next to Hollywood casino in the middle of Simpson Bay Resort was one of the first restaurants to reopen soon after Irma struck, and it has been open ever since. It is now also fully enclosed and fully air conditioned - no street noise. Neat place.

Avantika Thai www.avantikasxm.com (featured 2/6/17) Avantika is open. SXM's best Thai.

Canoa, www.canoasxm.com (featured 4/10/17) Canoa has established a gofundme campaign to help it rebuild. We have no information on timing, but our guess is probably late 2018, or later.

Mario Bistro www.mariobistrot.com/en/ 3/13/17 Mario's Bistro reopened a few weeks after Irma hit and looks forward to your return. Phenomenal dining.

SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 7/17/17) Skipjack's main dining deck overlooking the lagoon was wrecked by Irma and is being rebuilt. They should be open late 2018.

Trattoria Pizza Pasta, Maho Plaza near Casino Royale (featured 9/12/16). The Maho area was hit very badly by Irma and Pizza Pasta has closed and is not expected to reopen, not at that location anyway. Selena has moved to St. Kitts where her mom, Ilde, and dad, Dario, operate their Ciao restaurant.

Daniel's By The Sea, www.dawnbeachsxm.com (featured 8/14/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.

La Patrona, Simpson Bay Resort (featured 1/30/17; added 1/17) La Patrona is open and has been for quite some time.

Domino's Pizza <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dominos-Pizza-St-Maarten/95635717338> (featured 9/16) Open.

Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 5/21/17) Recently reopened; new menu; redesigned; also now serving lunch.

New name too: Cafe Spiga. New bar, new bar snacks, same great staff, service, and wonderful food.
The Boathouse, <https://www.facebook.com/CDayDay777> 10/3/16 Just got insurance settlement, not yet reopened.
The Hideaway, <http://www.lavistaresort.com/restaurant.html> (featured 10/31/16) No word on reopening.
Stone Restaurant, www.thestonerestaurant.com (featured 9/2/14) Stone is permanently closed.
Melange International Grill (featured 2/20/17) Reopened.
Le Pressoir, <http://www.lepressoir-sxm.com> (featured 7/6/15) Believed permanently closed and likely for sale. We'll post quickly if we hear anything else.
Temptation, <http://www.temptation-sxm.com/> (featured 7/5/17) Permanently closed. Dino has now relocated to Emilio's at the Emilio Wilson Estate, which will be featured here soon.
Lal's Curry In A Hurry Indian Restaurant, Airport Road, Simpson Bay (featured 7/10/17) Open now for lunch and dinner.
Mr. Busby's Beach Bar <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 6/26/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.
Island Pizza, <http://www.dawnbeachsxm.com> (featured 6/19/17) Wrecked by Irma. The owners are awaiting insurance resolution.
Pineapple Pete, www.pineapplepete.com (featured 7/31/17) Reopened.
Papagayo, <http://www.cluborient.com/papagayo.php> (featured 10/17/16) Club Orient was wrecked by Irma; rebuilding is planned. ETA not yet known.
Dany & John's Cupecoy Beach Bar (on Cupecoy beach; follow the car path the turn near Shore Pointe to get there). (featured 4/17/2017) Reopened. Their sign blew away in Irma -- to Virgin Gorda's airport 192 miles away.
FIG, Maho complex at Le Terasse Had closed permanently before Irma hit.
St. Maarten Yacht Club, at the Dutch Side Drawbridge Reopened.
Jimbo's, www.jimboscafe.com (featured 6/12/17) Rebuilding, hopes to reopen soon.
Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 1/8/18). Reopened. Now open seven days / nights, B/L/D.
Topper's <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 2/27/17) Reopened quickly.
Taloula Mango <http://www.taloulamango.com/> (featured 4/20/15) Reopened.
Bylbos, Simpson Bay Not yet known.
Sushiitto Japanese Restaurant, Port de Plaisance <https://www.facebook.com/sushiitto.sxm> (featured 2/13/17)
Closed permanently; see next item. Pierre ("Pete") Ferland has opened a new Japanese Restaurant next to Pineapple Pete...
Wasabi Charlie Japanese Restaurant (formerly Sushiitto) is the new name of Sushiitto, now relocated next door to Pineapple Pete in Simpson bay. Essentially the same menu, same staff, same great service.
Emilio's at Emilio Wilson Estate will be featured soon. It's the new property run by renowned chef Dino Jagtiani, whose Temptation Restaurant was wrecked by Irma.

You will find hundreds more restaurants from both the Dutch Side and French Side listed in the Files area of our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#). Our thanks to our Admin there, Contessa Aiello, who edited the restaurant entries on that site.

22. IZI Opens for Lunch (Reminder)

We want to remind *SXM Weekly News* readers that iZi Ristorante Italiano, David Foini's venerable restaurant of the heart of Simpson Bay, is now also open for lunch, with delicious and economical selections. Definitely check out iZi at dinner and lunch.

23. Spiga Opens for Lunch (Too) as Cafe Spiga

This bears repeating as well: Spiga, for years in our opinion the top restaurant of any kind in Grand Case, has changed.

For any successful restaurant to change is always a scary exercise — except there. It seems like every year, during low season, Spiga changes: it somehow gets better despite the fact that it was pretty much perfect to begin with.

Although the menu has evolved and is a bit simpler (and more pleasing to your pocketbook), it's qualitatively as amazing as always, with an incredible spectrum of flavors and textures that rules the French Side of the island with now unquestioned culinary leadership.

There is a new bar with Spiga's own bar snacks, too; a nice touch which leads to more interaction among patrons.

Spiga is now also serving lunches. There are new salads, new pasta dishes, and more. On your next visit to SXM, be sure to visit Spiga early during your trip. You'll definitely want to return.

24. Shivers in USA, Canada Bring SXM Some Smiles

Last week's record-setting cold in much of the USA and Canada made hundreds of millions of people shiver, but it certainly brought some needed smiles to people living and working on SXM. "Our beaches are crystal clear, the water is warm, the beds are as comfortable as always, the rooms are spotless, and we're ready to welcome you back to a hot vacation on our island," one long-time restaurateur said to us reflecting the opinion of many others. They're all hoping that the recent bone-numbing cold will be an added incentive to people in North America to come back to SXM now, not later, and enjoy everything the island has to offer. Please see articles 7 and 8 for island rentals.

25. Our Thanks To You...in a Tangible Way

Many hundreds of you in November and December have written to us online and in letters to thank us for our extensive coverage of Irma here, on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#) (where we had more than 50,000 interactions with you following the storm), and for our help in answering thousands of phone calls from JMB members in the six weeks immediately after Irma struck.

From Jeff: *I've been a journalist / marketing writer since finishing college, working in radio, TV, newspapers, and magazines. **But your "thanks" messages mean far more to me than the cardboard box of awards we keep somewhere in the cellar.** It's great to know how you rely on us to keep you connected, and that you like what we're doing for you. We truly love doing it as much as you enjoy reading it.*

How You Can Help Us Make SXM Weekly News Even More Useful to Its Readers.

As seasoned journalists, we take great pride in *Weekly News*. We keep our eyes and ears open all week long and on every Friday, decide what's going into *Weekly News*. We write on Friday and Saturday morning, then send *Weekly News* on its way.

Here's how can you help us make **SXM Weekly News** even better -- three key ways:

1) When on the island, keep your eyes and ears open and let us know what you see that's of significant interest to our tourist audience. We might already have it ... then again we might not. (In some cases, what you give us will already have been covered in *Weekly News* -- but when you have a story idea, email it to jeff1620@jmbcommunications.com with the subject "Weekly News Idea." We welcome every idea.)

2) Spread the word about *Weekly News*. Let others know they can subscribe "free" anytime on our site, sxmweeklynews.com.

3) The crucial word is **free**. Quite frankly, we need your help -- now more than ever, thanks to Irma -- to be able to continue to research, write, and distribute **Weekly News** every week. It takes a lot of time to research and write **Weekly News**, and "bandwidth costs" for emailing 300,000+ copies weekly (and sometimes more often) does not come cheap.

There are several ways you can help; we'd be grateful no matter which you do:

- Contribute. Any contribution amount is very much appreciated. If you want to use PayPal, send it to jeff@jmbcommunications.com . Or send a check (payable to JMB Communications) to us at JMB, P. O. Box 1812, Plymouth, MA 02362-1812.
- Join, renew, or reinstate your membership in JMB Website Supporters. This is the best option since it gives you over 300 benefits and island discounts that are good as long as your membership is active. (See the story at the end of this email please.) Many businesses have already reopened on SXM, and more open every week. Boat owners whose tour boats sank have bought new boats and are readying them right now. SXM is welcoming more tourists every single day. To re-join just click the page curl on everythingsexm.com -- all the info is there. You can also call the office and leave the info there; our numbers are 508-830-3456 (main) or 508-747-8281.

- Join SkyMed. It's the best medevac protection you can buy, in our view; you've likely read about in *Weekly News* and you know you should have it; it covers traveling Americans and Canadians in the USA, Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, Bermuda, and in every nation of the Caribbean including Cuba. If you want global protection, that's available too. (It won't cover you in places like North Korea, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia....) See getskymed.com for much more, or call Jeff directly at 508-747-8281. He can answer all your questions and get you going.
- Even get some of our exclusive copyrighted SXM Euro Oval stickers. They're two for \$10 or five for \$15. You can order them via PayPal (include your shipping address) or by check (US checks only drawn on US banks). Our address is below. The PayPal pay-to email address is jeff@jmbcommunications.com as you saw above. We may suspend these later for the winter... so order now.
- Check Out Our Extensive Website Design / Content Creation / Website Hosting Services. See websitesthatworkusa.com or our broader jmbcommunications.com, with even more services. Hosting info is at jmbwebhosting.com.

Our Tangible Thank-You for Helping Us:

For a limited period only (ends 1/31/18) -- we'll give you a full extra year on top of whatever JMB membership you buy (new, renewal, or reinstatement). Buy via check, through our online site (click the page curl on everythingxsm.com for links), or by phone at either of the numbers above.

To get the extra year, when ordering you must simply put "Extra Year Too" in the "Notes/Comments" area on PayPal [our online links take you to PayPal]; put it in the "Memo" area of your check; or say it in your message when you call our office to order. *This "Thank You" includes military memberships / military renewals as well but does not apply to any transactions you've already initiated.* (If you have one in progress, do another and you'll get the extra year with your new transaction.)

Thank you. We appreciate your membership...we thank you for being a JMB Website Supporters member...but most of all we simply appreciate *you for your membership and your ongoing support.*

26. SkyMed Available for US/Canadian ExPats Living on SXM

SkyMed coverage is incredibly important for US and Canadian ex-pats living on St. Maarten, other Caribbean islands, or even Mexico. Your US or Canadian health insurance does not work in any of those places. So, in case of a critical illness or injury, you must get back to your province in Canada or to the US for treatment to be covered by your health insurance.

SkyMed Takes You Home®. Here are details:

First, what is SkyMed? Scottsdale Arizona based SkyMed International takes its members home when they become critically ill or injured while traveling. Basic "Takes You Home" memberships cover you in the USA, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba. Global memberships (provided by SkyMed affiliate GETS) cover you in the rest of the world with a few exceptions — like Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, North Korea and possibly a few others. As you understand, that list may change as world events unfold.

The Double SkyMed bonus -- just extended and expanded -- is simple. Once you've bought or upgraded your SkyMed membership through us, you forward to us by email your SkyMed acceptance email. Once we verify it, we extend your JMB Website Supporters membership by the same number of years as you purchased coverage from SkyMed. Now, with the double SkyMed bonus, we will *also* give you a certificate good for a \$25 discount on a future JMB Website Supporters membership renewal. The certificate is valid for two years from the date of issue. That's in addition to the years extension: That's quite a double bonus. And it has now been expanded and extended: see story #11.

The double bonus offer comes only with SkyMed memberships purchased from us now...

How Does SkyMed Work?

SkyMed medical evacuations take you home to doctors and hospitals you know and trust — where your health insurance works. You call SkyMed, and SkyMed makes all the arrangements. There are no deductibles, no claim forms, and no reimbursements since SkyMed pays for all the arrangements it makes.

Without SkyMed, if you or a covered loved one needs a medical evacuation, you must make the arrangements yourself in the middle of an emergency and you must pay for everything upfront in cash — ambulances, aircraft, flight crew, jet fuel, medical personnel, etc. With SkyMed, by contrast, SkyMed makes all the arrangements and you pay \$0 for the evacuation. SkyMed *Takes You Home*® — what else matters?

Attention ExPats: As a US/Canadian ex-pat living on SXM at least six months per year, you understand the need to get home where your US or Canadian health insurance works if you become critically ill or injured while living on SXM. That's exactly what SkyMed ex-pat coverage does; it covers the ambulance from the local hospital to the airport, the medical evacuation flight home, and the ambulance at the arrival airport that takes you to the hospital, to which SkyMed has transferred your record; waiting there is a bed for you; and a team that has your medical records and is prepared to start working with you.

For more information, see www.getskymed.com or contact Jeff any business day (including this week) Eastern time at 508-747-8281 (fastest) or email him at jeff.berger@skymed.com. Include your return telephone number and time zone. He'll be happy to answer your questions and can even take an application by phone.

27. Traveling Anywhere Soon? SkyMed Takes You Home®

More Info: No matter where you go, take SkyMed medical evacuation protection with you: SkyMed Takes You Home(R) to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill or injured when traveling. Without SkyMed, that medevac trip home could easily cost you upwards of \$45,000 payable in cash, in advance. Why risk that?

Get SkyMed protection now, before you need it. See www.getskymed.com. Got questions? Phone SkyMed Ambassador Jeff Berger at 508-747-8281 weekdays during regular office hours, Eastern time. Email Jeff at jeff.berger@skymed.com or jeff@jmbcommunications.com.

You'll find an overview of all key SkyMed Features & Benefits here:
<http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxmweeklynews/SkyMedServices.pdf>

And you'll find Frequently Asked Questions here:
<http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxmweeklynews/2015SkyMedFAQ.pdf>

SkyMed Bonus: See info on the all-new SkyMed Triple Bonus in story # 11 in this issue.

SkyMed Takes You Home® when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. What else matters? Global coverage is available. Call Jeff for details & answers to questions. .

28. Now: Just \$59/month* for SkyMed's Best Medevac Protection

How about SkyMed for \$59 a month for your family?

SkyMed medical evacuation programs protect your pocketbook and your health when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. That's because SkyMed Takes You Home® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you become critically ill while traveling. They protect your pocketbook by making it unnecessary for you to pay for a medical evacuation in cash in advance --- the only way to get this level of protection without being a SkyMed member.

Those out-of-pocket costs are huge: upwards of \$45,000 in many cases, and often far more.

*Now, you can get a five year SkyMed Ultimate membership and pay for it monthly at just \$59 per month for your family, which makes it easily affordable to practically anyone (even retirees and AUC students).

Of course, if you prefer, you can prepay for five years at the sharply reduced rate of \$2495 for JMB Website Supporters members. When you apply, you can get a 10 year price guarantee as well simply by

noting on the application that you want an automatic renewal. That's the equivalent of paying \$499 per year for 10 years— an extraordinary price guarantee in times that are tumultuous politically worldwide.

You can also pay the \$59 a month for a month or two then convert to the prepaid Ultimate membership to grab those prepayment savings. For info, call Jeff Berger at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only). He can answer all your questions and even help you get signed up. *Please also see the next story.*

Learn more at www.getskymed.com.

29. Get Our SXM Euro Ovals: Order Now

Printed with green ink on durable bright white stock, varnished for long life, our copyrighted SXM euro ovals have been adorning cars on SXM and around the world for more than 15 years.

You can now get two for \$10 or five for \$15 (ten for \$30) mailed first class to your home in the US or Canada. You can pay for them by PayPal. If you pay by PayPal, make sure US dollar funds are sent to Jeff@JMBcommunications.com and in the comments section be sure to tell us what you're buying — two for \$10 or five for \$15, SXM euro ovals, and include your current, correct mailing address.

If you pay by check, we accept US dollar checks only drawn on US banks — sorry, no Canadian checks. You can mail them to SXM euro ovals, care of JMB Communications, PO Box 1812, Plymouth, MA 02362-1812. Make the check payable to JMB Communications.

We have a decent supply but we suggest you order quickly. No shipping charge. Offer may expire soon for the winter.

We periodically publish pictures of these on our [Everything St. Maarten Facebook Site](#).

More stories follow.

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www.websitesthatworkusa.com

In business since the web began --

a unit of JMB Communications.

30. Still Time: Enter Our SXM Summertime Vacation Giveaway

Our Summertime SXM vacation giveaway is underway and you can now enter. *SXM Weekly News* readers (NOT pass-along readers) can enter up to 10 times per subscribed email address. The drawing has been deferred now

until at least May, 2018.

Here is our current prize list. Since this giveaway promotes non high-season visits to SXM, most of these vacations are yours from mid April to mid December, 2018, though for obvious reasons those dates are subject to change. All vacations are subject to availability.

- an 8-day, 7-night vacation at La Vista Resort, May through December 2018.
- a 5 night stay (based upon availability April 10-Dec 18, 2018) in an ocean front room at the Westin St Maarten Dawn Beach Resort, Spa, and Casino.
- a 4-day, 3-night stay at the beautiful Oyster Bay Beach Resort.
- Dinner for Two at Davide Foini's legendary IZI Ristorante Italiano in Simpson Bay (One winner)
- Dinner for Two at Marco Ferrante's Isola Ristorante Italiano next to Hollywood Casino at Simpson Bay Resort. (One winner)
- Dinner for Two at Spiga, the highly acclaimed Italian Restaurant in Grand Case. (One winner.)

Enter here: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/getting_here/entry-form-for-our-seven-vacation-giveaway.shtml

Dates for all vacations subject to change thanks to Irma....

31. Where to Find Past Issues of SXM Weekly News

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

Get The Current Low Price
on SkyMed's Best 5-Year Ultimate Membership
and keep the current low price on your first 5-yr. renewal.
That's a 10-year price guarantee.
More benefits... **same price.**

Ask Jeff for details -- call him at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only, reg. hours Eastern time.) More info? See getskymed.com.

St. Maarten / St. Martin Homes, Villas, Businesses, Commercial Properties, and Residential Properties for Sale (NEW):

[Click to access our recommended real estate agent, Arun Jagtiani, featured on HGTV.](#)

Rent Out or Sell Your Timeshare (both SXM and Worldwide) -- Frequently Updated

JMB members can run up to 10 free ads on our website per 12-month period to rent out or sell St. Maarten / St. Martin timeshare weeks they own -- or any timeshares, anywhere worldwide. If you're not a member, learn more about membership here: http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml .

Want to rent or buy a week?

2017 St. Maarten / St. Martin Timeshare Weeks For Rent or Sale are posted at http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml Listings are now updated every few weekdays. Ads are free (no commission) but are accepted from JMB Website Supporters members only.

SECTION 5: For Members Only

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

SECTION 6: Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) Updated 7/2017

See www.everythingsxm.com.

About Email Address Changes / How To Unsubscribe (Updated 4/17/17)

To unsubscribe, go here: www.sxmweeklynews.com. 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 www.sxmweeklynews.com; unsubscribe your old email address and subscribe your new one. *JMB Website Supporters members should notify Membership Services of the new email address for continued Secret Site access.*

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

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

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

Contact Us (Revised 8/21/17)

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, contact 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 respond individually.

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

Privacy Policy http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxm/privacy_policy/index.shtml

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