From JMB / SXM Weekly News 11/26/18: Royal Palm / Flamingo Reopening Dates; Cyber Monday / Holiday; New Relo Seminar; Orient Beach; Roxxy/Le Sand; Grand Case; New Hospital; SXM Twin Towers; Toy Drive; IZI; Spiga; Pizza; SkyMed Customer stories; [34 News Stories

Can't see this newsletter? Go here for our SXM Weekly News PDF Archives.

Vol. 2, #117 --- Monday, November 26, 2018 News From St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM



This Week's Stories

Airfare, Airlines & Weather News

Everything SXM Home Page

Island News

Lodging News

Members SECRET Webite Login

Member News

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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From: www.jmbcommunications.com

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

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

IMPORTANT: "Jeff1620" is an unmonitored <u>send-only</u> email address. For Contact info, see <u>#Contact Us</u> 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 308,000 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



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

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

You can also download PDFs of recent editions here:

http://everythingsxm.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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TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE:

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

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-- Hurricane Season Ending With a Whimper

SXM Accommodations:

- --Royal Palm, Flamingo May Reopen in mid-2020
- --New Relocation Seminar Coming This Winter
- --Relocation Seminar Video in Editing

Island Headlines for Tourists:

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- -- Roads Being Fixed
- -- Zhaveri Jewelers Is Moving
- -- Roxxy, Le Sand To Share Kim Sha Neighborhood
- -- Grand Case in Great Shape; Marigot, Not So Much
- -- St. Maarten General Hospital Construction Set To Start
- -- Twin Towers Construction Underway Near Golf Course
- -- JMB Sponsors Toy Drive / Party in SXM
- -- When is Our Next Island Party?
- -- IZI: As Great as Ever
- -- Restaurant of the Week: Spiga
- -- Single Use Plastic Ban for Anguilla; SXM Next?
- -- Who Has the Best Pizza? We Asked Experts
- -- Who Wins When Dutch/French Sides Compete?

#######

- -- Protect Against Emergency Medical Evacuation w/ SkyMed: Customer Stories ########
- -- Watch for SkyMed Info at Bel Air Resort and Simpson Bay Resort
- -- Less Money, More Benefits, Ten Year Price Guarantee on SkyMed Ultimate

-- *****CYBER MONDAY / HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP SALE NOW UNDERWAY*****
JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program Membership Sale
Delivers 300+ SXM Discounts & Other Benefits

- -- Please Patronize JMB Sponsors #######
- -- Got SXM Questions? Here's Where The Answers Are
- -- SXM Business Owners: How To Increase Foot Traffic

Please see our complete Table of Contents below.

34 News Stories This Week

Scroll down for our complete Table of Contents

Timeshare Rental and Sale of the Week

Each week JMB randomly picks timeshare condominiums for rent and for sale in SXM from the huge selection at http://everythingsxm.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://everythingsxm.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 12/22/2018 1/5/2019 Week 51 52 Royal Islander La Plage St Maarten 5th Floor Superb view

<u>location sunsets</u> Well suited for couples Maximum Occupancy 4, featuring Living room with sleeper sofa Dining area with four seats Fully equipped kitchen Two TV sets (bedroom and living room) Spacious master bedroom with king-size bed Private patio or balcony Will Sell as well \$1500 a week 5198194733 <u>royalislanderowners@gmail.com</u>

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 1/20/2019 1/27/2019 Week 3 **Simpson Bay Resort and Marina** Poolside sleep 2 studio on the ground floor which has been newly renovated in the lower "B" building. Close to pool, beach, restaurants and shopping. \$1,800.00 Debbie 330-503-1410 dmorri3035@gmail.com

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

See them all at http://everythingsxm.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

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https://www.facebook.com/groups/mysxm

"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://everythingsxm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

Archives prior to April 12 2014 (old format):

http://everythingsxm.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 <u>GROWING LIST of 300+</u> 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. Hurricane Season Ending With a Whimper

The busy 2018 hurricane season, which ends this Friday, pretty much left SXM alone.

A couple of weeks ago, a tropical wave brought lots of rain here in a system which threatened to become tropical cyclone Patty — but it didn't happen.

Now, there seems to be little likelihood of anything happening this week -- and the season ends this Friday, November 30. The 2019 season begins June 1.

Despite the fact that hurricane season is ending, we will watch the tropics closely and keep you informed should anything significant be going on there or in US or Canadian ports of embarkation to SXM. Watch for reports in our Everything SXM Facebook Site.

OUR CYBER MONDAY / HOLIDAY SALE IS NOW UNDERWAY

Get 300+ SXM Discounts

& Many Other Island Benefits,

& (P. S.) Invitations to Members-Only Island Parties:

Get, Renew, or Reinstate YOUR JMB Membership

Today:

New JMB memberships: 1 year, \$33; 3 yrs., \$79; OUR BEST OFFER: 6 years just \$139

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

Renewal JMB memberships: 1 year, \$33; 3 yrs., \$69; OUR BEST OFFER: 7 years, \$139

http://everythingsxm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml

Reinstatement JMB memberships: 1 year, \$35; 3 yrs., \$73; OUR BEST OFFER: 6 yrs. \$129

http://everythingsxm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml

2. T-Day Week Private Planes Arrive (But Fewer)

Although there were some private planes and megayachts here in SXM during Thanksgiving week, the number was down from previous years. A number of private jets also went to Anguilla instead of SXM but the island is not really sure why.

Please also see story 25.

3. Who Owns That 767?

For the last week or so, there has been a Boeing 767 parked on the edge of the tarmac at Princess Juliana SXM Airport. Colored off-white to ivory with a black mask over its cockpit windows, the plane is nicknamed the Bandit and is owned by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich who has a home in St. Barths and whose supermegayacht, Eclipse, is frequently here during the winter months.

4. Best Places for Tropical Updates; Hurricane Tracking Chart

You'll find detailed observations and forecasts by visiting our main SXM website, <u>www.everythingsxm.com</u>, 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) <u>Crown Weather Services</u> 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 <u>Everything SXM Facebook Site</u>, 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.

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.

Download your own NHC Hurricane Chart:

Years ago, before we were all saturated with weather information from cable TV to local (redundant and repetitive) news and forecasts plus weather updates and bulletins on our smart phones, gas stations and television stations offered printed hurricane tracking charts so people at home could try to figure out for themselves whether they were about to get slammed by the latest hurricane.

We haven't seen hurricane tracking chart handouts for years, but if you want one they are easy to get.

The exact charts used by the National Hurricane Center (NHC) are available for download from the NHC <a href="https://example.com/here.com

5. Get The <u>Lowest Rates</u> 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.

6. Royal Palm, Flamingo May Reopen in mid-2020

Royal Palm Beach and Flamingo Beach Resort, both owned by Diamond Resorts of the US, have been doing next to nothing obvious about rebuilding and restoring their resorts to get them open on a timely basis for use during 2019 by timeshare owners. That's in sharp contrast to most other SXM timeshare resorts, already reopened, as we've listed in detail on our Everything SXM Facebook Site and here in SXM Weekly News.

Now, Diamond is finally communicating with their timeshare owners and saying that they hope to reopen both resorts somewhere between May and July 2020, almost 3 years after hurricane Irma hit the island in September, 2017.

In its current newsletter, Diamond told its timeshare owners the following:

September marked one year since Hurricane Irma impacted St. Maarten, devastating much of the island and our resorts. Since then, we've made good progress on the reconstruction of both Royal Palm Beach Resort and Flamingo Beach Resort, and are pleased to share an update on where we're at now.

Construction crews fully gutted every unit at both properties and have completed the demolition phase of the reconstruction process. They also have been busy replacing roofing at both resorts and are about 90 percent complete, with a scheduled goal of finishing the roofs by December 2018. Photos of the roof replacement progress are below.

We are also excited to share some initial renderings of potential accommodation layouts. We are in the process of building model units, which are expected to be available in February 2019, to test the layouts. It's important to note that design changes are still likely after we view the model accommodation, and continue to balance the project scope and budget.

We know this situation is not ideal and we understand it has negatively impacted vacations for many owners. Our Owner Services team is here to help you find alternative vacation options, such as Destination Xchange®. If you choose to join Destination Xchange, you can exchange your weeks for use at a variety of resorts worldwide. Membership and exchange fees apply, but upon enrolling in Destination Xchange, you will receive deposit credits for all ownership weeks affected by the resort closure.

To learn more about Destination Xchange, visit <u>DestinationXchange.com</u> or contact Owner Services at <u>1.800.463.7256 (toll free)</u> or <u>1.407.226.9500 (international access)</u>.

We thank you for your patience and understanding throughout the process. Please contact our Customer Service teams with any questions.

The Club Members: <u>1.877.374.2582</u> Deeded Week Owners: <u>1.800.463.7256</u>

JMB Comments:

Perhaps, as some have speculated, Diamond has kept their resorts closed in hopes that timeshare owners will walk away so Diamond Resorts could resell all their units as if they had built a new resort. That could make them millions of dollars.

We don't know what their reason is or was for this interminable delay, but it is a huge slap in the face to timeshare owners who have invested money in the property and on the island — and it is a practice that ought to be investigated by the parliament of Country St. Maarten to see if any laws have been broken.

Diamond's actions are damaging to the economy of the island — as was the collapse of Caravanserai Resort and the cancellation of timeshare owner contracts there by subsequent owner Ray Sidhom, an American credit card processing magnate, in a matter that is still in the courts. The government at that time sat by and let that happen as well, to the detriment of the economy of the island and to the detriment of its reputation as a great place for tourists and timeshare owners. May Caravanserai timeshare owners, victimized by Sidhom, vowed never to return to SXM in direct response to the government's inaction. We do not need yet another debacle related to timeshare owners on this island.

7. New Relocation Seminar Coming This Winter

As many of you are aware, last week we held a seminar for JMB Website Supporters members and a few others concerning relocating to SXM; starting a business here; acquiring SXM income property; or buying a retirement property on the island. The seminar was attended by several dozen people and was recorded; for information on the recording, please see the next story.

The seminar covered both sides of the island and was led by Arun Jagtiani, the founder and owner of Island Real Estate Team which is currently on the Dutch side and is expanding now to the French side as well. It was so successful that Mr. Jagtiani and JMB Communications founder Jeff Berger have agreed to hold additional seminars on the island during the winter.

We will have more on those seminars in future editions of SXM Weekly News. If you are a JMB Website Supporters member, as always you will get first shot on seating at our seminars and future meet and greet events on the island.

Again, please see next story if this topic is of interest.

8. Relocation Seminar Video in Editing

The video we shot of last week's relocation seminar is currently being edited. As soon as that process has been completed, we will post it on our JMB Website Supporters members-only "Secret" website so members who are interested in the topic but were unable to attend can see it.

Each subsequent relocation seminar we produce will build on our experience in prior seminars. So, if one seminar was of interest to you, future seminars on the same topic should be of still greater interest because there will be incremental information offered.

We <u>may</u> enable nonmembers of JMB to see this initial seminar-launch video once editing and production are completed. That news will be in SXM Weekly News and also on our <u>Everything SXM Facebook Site</u>.

9. Places to Stay: Many Available, Take Your Pick

With several timeshare resorts back online — Belair, Sea Palace, Divi, Atrium Resort, Simpson Bay Resort, and Oyster Bay Beach now open too -- timeshare owners continue to post units available for rent on our timeshare rental site on everythingSXM.com and on our new companion Villas for Rent page, also on everythingsxm.com. Check them out: they have just been heavily revised.

Get your rental weeks now. Note: ads on those pages are from JMB Website Supporters members exclusively.

SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

10. JMB 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 continue to roll out a number of entirely new discounts and benefits.

We recently started adding new discounts and benefits. Please stay tuned; special messages will be sent to all JMB Website Supporters members as more new benefits are rolled out.

For more info on what you get with your JMB membership, go here.

SECTION 4: Island News, Info, & Features

OUR CYBER MONDAY / HOLIDAY SALE IS NOW UNDERWAY

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Reinstatement JMB memberships: 1 year, \$35; 3 yrs., \$73; OUR BEST OFFER: 6 yrs. \$129

http://everythingsxm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml

11. Orient Beach Moves into an Amazing New Phase

Although as we've reported here in recent weeks, Club Orient is closed, the clothing optional beach in front of it at the southern end of Orient beach is open and thriving.

For naturists, there is a lot of good news in the midst of the sad but temporary news about the closure of Club Orient. The good news is that, first, it's now easier to drive into the resort since the Collectivite (French Side government) has re-graded the dirt road into the southern part of Orient beach, which means it is now relatively smooth instead of a mass of moguls.

Second, as we've also previously reported, the beach now is much wider than it has been in more than 30 years — far more room to move around and relax.

Third, parking is free on the beach in a lot next to the new Perch Light bar and refreshment stand.

Fourth, although there is a significant number of people around, the beach is much bigger and capable of handling a lot more people than in the recent past, a good thing for naturist tourism on the island. (Now if only the cruise ship companies stop spreading patently false information about the French Side, beach vendors can get back in business and return Orient to its former glory.)

Of course, there is another prime choice for naturists on SXM, Cupecoy Beach opposite Porto Cupecoy and Blue Mall.

Got questions? Ask them on our Everything SXM Facebook Site.

12. Roads Being Fixed

There is also some good news coming from SXM about road conditions.

Usually, November and December are when both sides of the island intensely repair potholes for the coming tourist season. After months of complaints, the Dutch side is moving quickly to repair potholes which have been slightly more numerous than usual this year thanks to copious rain. The repairs seem to be moving quickly.

13. Big Traffic Light Problem Solved -- Permanently

For the last several years, the traffic light after the Prince Bernhard bridge where A-T Illedge Road meets W A Nisbeth road near the airplane bar has been malfunctioning. The intersection is a bit dangerous but the traffic light

has never been replaced or repaired.

In a nod toward solving the problem by possibly making it worse, the traffic light has now been altogether removed. Hopefully, they removed the lights to fix them.

Until there is a positive solution, please use caution when proceeding through this intersection.

14. Zhaveri Jewelers Is Moving

For many years, Zhaveri Jewelers has been located just east of the courthouse on the beach side of Front Street opposite Little Switzerland in Philipsburg.

As you read this, it is completing a relocation to a new spot west of the courthouse with four times as much space.

Once they complete the move and the place is completely ready for you to visit, we'll give you all the details. Zhaveri was the first jewelry store we ever visited on SXM in the late 1980s. We think it merits your consideration — great people, great service, and most important of all, a great spectrum of products.

15. Roxxy, Le Sand To Share Kim Sha Neighborhood

For a number of months, it has appeared that the Dutch side is attempting to turn Kimsha beach into competition with Orient beach on the French side.

The Roxxy nightclub/beach bar is under construction now on Kimsha beach, and we have heard from multiple sources that Le Sand, formerly in Sandy ground south of Marigot, which was destroyed by Irma, is going to be relocating also to Kimsha beach.

Please see article 25 about competition between the French and Dutch sides.

16. Grand Case in Great Shape; Marigot, Not So Much

Contrary to persistent but totally false rumors, Grand Case is actually in very good shape.

The roads there are as good as they ever were (not great, but not bad either) and many restaurants have reopened and are doing well. Hotels in the area also have reopened or are about to. The top restaurant in town, Spiga, has been open for many months, and many of your favorites are on the menu.

Marigot, however, thanks (we think) to excessively slow rebuilding permitting by the Collectivite seems to be recovering much more slowly.

The most popular store of any kind on the waterfront was Serafina, which was destroyed by hurricane Irma. It is moving to Marina Royale, where there will be a bakery/café and a separate emporium coming soon. Marigot looks rather dismal, thanks in large measure to those Draconian permitting requirements which have delayed business owners who simply want to get back to work.

17. St. Maarten General Hospital Construction Set To Start

The new St. Maarten General Hospital will be built on property currently occupied by the St. Maarten Medical Center. The Medical Center has had an image problem for several years, but it has done a lot to improve itself. Moving into a

much more modern facility with advanced technology and capabilities should help it further improve. It's also moving to enhance its staff.

We expect to be bringing you more information about features of the new hospital once construction begins. We also will be reporting on the groundbreaking, which is expected in the next several weeks.

18. Twin Towers Construction Underway Near Golf Course

Construction is now underway on twin 21 story towers near Cupecoy beach at the edge of the St. Maarten golf course in Mullet Bay. Two large holes can be seen in the ground when driving by the area. During recent heavy rains, water was in both, not unexpected because of the proximity of the project to the ocean.

Part of this project will be luxury condos which are offered by our real estate partner, Island Real Estate team at ireteam.com.

19. JMB Sponsors Toy Drive / Party in SXM

JMB Communications, through its <u>Everything SXM Facebook Site</u> and its JMB Website Supporters island discount program, sponsored a toy drive last week at Snoopy's Restaurant in Simpson Bay.

The toy drive was attended by nearly 100 people who brought toys for island children, while contributions from many more who could not attend will enable the purchase of more toys. The total number is expected to exceed 250 toys for island children.

Special credit goes to Vicki Whitley and to Bruce Spring, who have been spearheading the program, said JMB founder Jeff Berger. Special recognition was also given to Snoopy's and to both owners Nancy and Horsford Shillingford for their willingness to have the toy drive held at their recently opened restaurant in Simpson Bay next to SkipJacks. The toys will be distributed later in December with the help of the All About a Smile organization and Jeff Jhangiani of DK Gems in Philipsburg.

Hats off to everyone involved.

20. When Is Our Next Island Party?

We held two island parties last week — our relocation seminar/party and our toy drive — but it's not too early for us to be planning future events for winter.

We're already planning another adults-only event at the Toppers Rhum Distillery in the Simpson Bay industrial area, plus additional parties at French and Dutch side restaurants during the winter, plus at least one additional relocation seminar/party on the island during winter.

If you own a restaurant on the French or Dutch side and are interested in partnering with us to introduce people to your place of business and welcome our JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program members, contact us at jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com with the subject JMB member parties.

21. IZI: As Great as Ever

As has been the case with many SXM businesses, David Foini's IZI Ristorante Italiano -- long one of SXM's very best -- had to adjust after Irma's visit.

Reopening weeks after the storm, IZI faced a market with few tourists, lots of battered families, thousands of people doing construction, and of course PTSD for survivors. He opened for lunch with high quality food at astonishingly low prices, and also cut his evening pricing to focus on the needs of the market. The result is absolutely delightful dining from every perspective.

At the same time, with many groups of tourists returning and looking for something very special, he has been doing many "tasting menu" special events for those groups, reconnecting to the days of his elegant, renowned La Gondola Restaurant at Atlantis Casino. Groups seeking extraordinary dining experiences should contact David directly and set up a daytime "tasting" -- your group will not be disappointed. You can reach him at IZI Ristorante Italiano, 721-544-3079.

22. Restaurant of the Week: Spiga

In its original iteration, Spiga was simply Spiga. After Irma struck, it became Café Spiga, with a more focused but still spectacular creative Italian menu.

Spiga has been a great favorite of ours ever since it opened more than 10 years ago. Founded by Lara Bergamasco Russo and Ciro Russo, Spiga has always been beautiful inside and out.

Thanks to the restless design spirit of its founders, the restaurant has been subject to frequent redesigns. Now, people who are waiting for seats need no longer wait on the stairs or outside — there's a completely new bar in the main Dining Room, where you can sit and relax with pleasing libations and snacks and meet other fans of fine dining while your table is being prepared.

Come in early during your trip. You don't want to save Spiga for last, since you'll kick yourself for not spending more time there during your vacation. It's a great restaurant — one of our favorites — and most likely will become a favorite of yours as well. The food is phenomenal, the service exemplary, and the ambience is unique. Plan to go early during your next trip.

P. S.: Save room for dessert. In fact, you might want to ask for the dessert menu first, so you can be sure your selection is available when you are. See www.spiga-sxm.com for more.

Coming soon: Pineapple Pete, Domino's.

Here are recently featured SXM restaurants:

Isola next to Hollywood Casino in Simpson Bay Resort, **11/19/18.** 100% redesigned, inside and out, floor to ceiling and everything inside. Just go.

Mario Bistro www.mariobistrot.com/en/ 8/26/18 Mario's Bistro reopened a few weeks after Irma hit and looks forward to your return. Phenomenal dining.

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 11/12/18, David is back and the restaurant has reopened. Great food from one of SXM's very best restaurants. Fun atmosphere, too. Now open for lunch and dinner.

SkipJack's SXM, http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/ (featured 7/2/18) Skipjack's main dining deck overlooking the lagoon was wrecked by Irma and is being rebuilt. They should be open late 2018 or early 2019.

La Patrona, Simpson Bay Resort (featured 6/25/17; added 1/17) La Patrona is SXM's only truly authentic Mexican restaurant. Highly recommended.

Wasabi Charlie Japanese Restaurant (formerly Sushiitto) (6/18/18) is the new name of Sushiitto, now relocated next door to Pineapple Pete in Simpson bay. Essentially the same menu, same staff, same great food/service.

Emilio's at Emilio Wilson Estate (featured June 4 2018) is the new property run by renowned chef Dino Jagtiani, whose Temptation Restaurant was wrecked by Irma.

Avantika Thai www.avantikasxm.com (featured 5/14/18) Avantika is open. SXM's best Thai.

Spiga, <u>www.spiga-sxm.com</u> (featured 4/9/18) Reopened as Cafe Spiga, new menu; redesigned. New bar, new bar snacks, same great staff, service, and wonderful food. **Closed for the season until October.**

Enigma C3 luxury Catamaran, <u>www.sailstmaarten.com</u> (featured 8/7/17). Neil's new boat is as big as Celine Too was and it has now entered service. Neil is known for amazing cooking on board his boats.

Domino's Pizza https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dominos-Pizza-St-Maarten/95635717338 (featured 9/16) Open. **The Hideaway**, https://www.lavistaresort.com/restaurant.html (featured 10/31/16) Open; contact the restaurant for details and reservations. Updated 3/2/18.

Melange International Grill (featured 2/20/17) Reopened.

Le Pressoir, http://www.lepressoir-sxm.com (featured 7/6/15) Reopening late 2018.

Pineapple Pete, <u>www.pineapplepete.com</u> (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. **St. Maarten Yacht Club, at the Dutch Side Drawbridge** Reopened.

Jimbo's, www.iimboscafe.com (featured 6/12/17) Recently reopened.

Vesna Taverna, <u>www.vesnataverna.com</u> (featured 1/22/18). Reopened. Now open Wed through Sunday B/L; dinner reopens in October (annual closing for Dinner).

Topper's http://www.sxmtoppers.com/ (featured 2/27/17) Reopened quickly.

Taloula Mango http://www.taloulamango.com/ (featured 4/20/15) Reopened.

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

23. Single Use Plastic Ban for Anguilla; SXM Next?

Given the agonizing problems SXM has encountered with the Dutch side dump, where there have been fairly regular fires, the island appears to finally be coming to grips with its waste issues. Not only is it attempting to develop solutions for the dump fires, it also is working to reduce a key contributor to the problem — excessive waste, a big part of which comes from single-use plastic.

Neighboring island Anguilla, which arguably has a far less significant problem, is taking the bull by the horns and getting rid of single-use plastics fairly quickly. That story is here.

Both sides of SXM should coordinate their activities to eliminate single-use plastic bags, plastic straws, foam containers and cups and anything else that clogs landfills. That should include soda cans and glass and plastic bottles, which could use a deposit system similar to that of the US. The plastic collars sometimes used in drink six-packs are causing massive problems with marine life and they, too, ought to be outlawed on the island.

24. Who Has the Best Pizza? We Asked Experts

Let's start this by stating what to most people will be totally obvious: SXM has a lot of great Italian restaurants, some of which include pizzerias. It also has more than its share of pizzerias, many of them fine indeed.

We've been to a number of these places over the years and especially during the last month. Two of our long-time favorites are La Patrona at Simpson Bay resort, which offers pizza until about 4 PM for eat-in or take out. Although it's a Mexican restaurant serving authentic Mexican cuisine, don't hold that against it — its pizza is exceptionally good.

Another great choice is Marco Ferrante's Isola Ristorante Italiano next to Hollywood casino, also at Simpson Bay Resort. As we reported here recently, Isola employs Alessandro, the former pizza Guru from Cugini restaurant, owned and operated by Sam Runza until his untimely passing a few years ago. Alessandro makes outstanding pizzas and calzones.

Of course, there's also the standard choice of many people, John Caputo's Domino's. They are fast and delicious and very reasonably priced.

If you talk to restaurateurs on the island and ask them where they go for pizza you will find that many of them will tell you Pizza and Co. in Simpson Bay diagonally across the street from Vesna Taverna. The place is a hole in the wall with chairs that are practically on the street, not our top choice for dining room ambience. IZI Ristorante Italiano's David Foini says you must eat the pizza there and can do so from a table inside; he says the pizza just doesn't taste the same if you take it somewhere and reheat it. Others also echo the choice of Pizza and Co. which we still have not tried, but expect to soon.

25. Who Wins When Dutch/French Sides Compete?

SXM is one island. It has one major international Airport accepting flights from many points of embarkation around the world.

This island has never, ever paid serious attention to marketing itself, a fact we've hammered home here repeatedly. It is vastly outspent in marketing and advertising by other Caribbean islands and, in fact, it constantly laments its lack of Tourism but does nothing to solve the problem.

It's probably the case that most of the information you see or read regarding SXM comes from us, not the island government. If you live in or near a large city in the East or Midwest US, you've probably seen ads for Aruba, Mexico, Barbados, and the Bahamas — but the chance of you having seen any television ads for St. Maarten is about the same as winning that \$1.6 billion lottery.

If you have a good product, as SXM certainly does, you sell it by promoting it. People need to know what you offer and how they can get it before they can decide to buy it. SXM doesn't give itself an opportunity to be considered because it has historically turned away from any real promotion.

It sometimes says it doesn't have the money. That's wrong. It doesn't have the will to spend money on promotion as a priority. If it did, it would get a company that knows what it's doing and successfully promote itself. The island doesn't make promotion a priority and that's just foolish.

What the island seems to do is compete with itself in countless ways. The Dutch side is developing Kimsha beach to compete with Orient beach, which was hit hard by Irma. See related stories in this issue. What it should be doing is working hand in glove with the French side to promote the entire island — one life, one love, one island, just like the T-shirts say. The island talks the talk about cooperation but it has never walked the walk. Until it does, it will fall far short of its potential for tourism as a remarkably remunerative top business.

Who wins when both sides of the island compete against each other? Other islands, that's who — certainly not SXM.

26. Protect Against Emergency Medical Evacuation w/ SkyMed; a few Customer Stories

Emergency medical evacuations are <u>payable in cash in advance</u> and often cost upwards of \$45,000 -- <u>unless you have a SkyMed membership</u>. SkyMed Takes You Home® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust, and where your health insurance actually works. It's available to Americans and Canadians and to ExPats of both countries, taking them home from throughout the USA, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba. Global coverage is available covering every country around the world except those on the U. S. State Department watch list. SkyMed makes all medical evacuation arrangements and pays for them directly...you just pay for your SkyMed membership.

Here are examples of **SkyMed** in action:

<u>Mary Beth and her partner Don</u> were vacationing in SXM when Don fell and broke his hip -- only about a month after they had bought SkyMed. SkyMed flew them home on a medevac jet for the hospital care he needed. Flight cost to the patient: \$0. Savings: over \$35,000.

An MD from Florida who always visits SXM was on a cruise vacation to the Greek Islands with his wife when he broke his femur aboard the ship. He was rushed to the hospital in Corfu but called SkyMed *which arranged and paid for* an emergency medevac flight to Athens for urgent surgery. A few days later SkyMed evacuated him again, with an excellent male nurse, all the way home to Florida, where an ambulance took him home for recovery. Required flight cost to the patient: \$0. Savings: huge.

A Summer trip ended in disaster when a child visiting her grandmother in Grand Case was bitten in the head by the grandmother's bulldog, imperiling the girl's eyesight. She was flown to Miami in a medical evacuation jet for emergency eye surgery that saved her sight. Flight cost to the patient: \$0.

<u>A woman from Virginia</u> shopped at an island grocer and headed back to her car carrying two bags of groceries. She tripped and fell on a curb and knew at once she had fractured her hip. After being stabilized locally, she was flown

home on a medical evacuation jet from SkyMed where she had the surgery she needed. Flight cost to the patient: \$0.

Two men were riding their horses on a hill in Cay Bay when a car backfiring spooked one of the horses, which threw its rider. The other rider got off his horse to check his companion when the car again backfired, spooking the horse again which led it to kick its dismounted driver in the head, luckily causing "only" a severely dislocated jaw. The local hospital had no ability to solve that problem so the victim was airlifted by SkyMed back to Pennsylvania for surgery. Flight cost to the patient: \$0.

A member of the clergy fell down cement stairs and broke her leg. She too was airlifted home by SkyMed for surgery. Flight cost to the patient: \$0.

Not all trips end well: anything can happen when you travel. Being a member of SkyMed was

common thread in all these cases. SkyMed takes its members home, usually in a private, ICU-equivalent medical

evacuation jet -- home to doctors and hospitals the patient knows and trusts -- and home where their health insurance works. That's just one of up to 18 benefits received by SkyMed members for not much more than \$1.30/day for annual or multiyear memberships.

<u>All this is why we always recommend SkyMed</u>. Call Jeff Berger weekdays at 508-747-8281 and leave your name, phone number, and time zone. Jeff will call back at a mutually convenient time and answer all your questions. He can also sign you up by phone <u>in about 10 minutes</u>. You're eligible to apply regardless of your age or health if you are a U.S. or Canadian citizen or an American or Canadian ExPat living in SXM or certain other countries.

Nobody is immune: anything can happen anywhere. Do it today. To learn more, visit www.getskymed.com. JMB members get big discounts off SkyMed's regular pricing: see the story about JMB Website Supporters in this section.

Please see the next story for more specifics.

27. A Few More SkyMed Details... Get it Before You Need It

Traveling Next Winter? Beat SkyMed's 90-day exclusion for pre-existing conditions by joining SkyMed now.

On its guaranteed renewable annual and multiyear memberships, SkyMed has a 90-day waiting period for coverage of pre-existing conditions -- everything else is covered in full as soon as your SkyMed membership has been approved, per SkyMed's member services agreement.

If you're traveling late in Feb. or later, you can beat that one-time 90-day pre-existing conditions exclusion by joining today. That way the 90-day exclusion period will be over by the time you travel -- so you're covered in full, including pre-existing conditions, at that time.

SkyMed Takes You Home® when you become critically ill or injured when traveling. There is no age limit to apply, and once you're enrolled you can renew without further medical checks regardless of your attained age or your health at the time of renewal. Without SkyMed, if you need an Emergency Medical Evacuation, you must pay for it in cash, in advance. No cash, no evacuation. And the cost without SkyMed can be astronomical. Why risk that?

By contrast, if you're a SkyMed member, you call SkyMed directly and they make all the arrangements for all the services they provide. SkyMed Takes You Home -- what else matters?

And there is *no age limit to apply*. Call us at 508-747-8281 and ask for Jeff; he'll answer your questions and can take your application by phone, usually in under 10 minutes.

It's available to Americans, Canadians, and ExPats from both countries. Short-term and annual coverage includes the USA (all 50 states), Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean including Cuba. Global coverage is available on annual memberships for a \$99 additional yearly fee, but global coverage is standard on multiyear SkyMed Ultimate memberships, which are both SkyMed's best and its least expensive medevac memberships.

You'll find an overview of all key SkyMed Features & Benefits here: http://www.everythingsxm.com/sxmweekly.../SkyMedServices.pdf Got questions? Call us daytimes (EDT) at 508-747-8281. Again, we can answer your questions and take your application by phone in about 10 minutes. We can set up evening phone appointments too. It's like fire insurance -- get it before you need it.

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. SkyMed is the Principal Sponsor of JMB SXM programs.

See the rundown of all SkyMed Features & Benefits

28. Are You Military?

If you're U. S. Military with a DD214, you're able to get a Platinum-Status Military JMB Membership for \$16.99/year, the lowest we ever charge anyone. You get instant Platinum Status which is permanent as long as you're a JMB member plus 300+ SXM discounts and other benefits. All you do is pay for four years to start and renew in four-year increments (\$67.96). Nobody else pays so little -- our small way of expressing how grateful we all are for your service.

Visit everythingsxm.com and click the page curl to sign up for your JMB military membership. We'll also need a DD214 with your SS# obliterated for security. We'll be delighted to welcome you.

29. Less Money, More Benefits, Ten Year Price Guarantee on SkyMed Ultimate

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.

30. Please Patronize JMB Sponsors (Updated)

CAR RENTALS:

Leisure Car Rental

Tropical-Tropicana Car Rental

Starlite Car Rental (Belair Resort; just joined)

Sax Car Rental

CIGARS HAND-MANUFACTURED ON SXM:

Das Cigars

CUBAN CIGARS:

Cigar Mack

SXM Cigars (New)

EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS::

SkyMed International (Scottsdale, Az.)

JEWELERS:

Zhaveri Jewelers in Philipsburg.

Little Europe Jewelers in Philipsburg.

Caribbean Gems

Oro Diamante

Ray's Jewelers

Art of Time (new)

Artistic Jewelers (new)

Alpha Jewels

REAL ESTATE COMPANIES:

Island Real Estate Team is widely regarded as SXM's top real estate organization. A JMB Sponsor, they offer both residential and commercial real estate in every price range. Call the number that follows and ask to speak with the agent who handles what you seek: 1 721 520 7284. Please let the agent know that you were referred by Jeff Berger's *Everything SXM Facebook Site*.

RESORTS:

Simpson Bay Resort

Baker's Suites

Azure Hotel & Art Studio

RESTAURANTS:

Z

SPIGA

VESNA TAVERNA

Melange (new; Port de Plaisance)

LA PATRONA (Simpson Bay Resort)

MARIO'S BISTRO (Porto Cupecoy)

VILLA RENTAL COMPANIES:

If you're interested in making a villa reservation (doing it with close friends can be fun and more economical than you'd imagine), contact our top recommended Villa rental/sale partners at **Island Real Estate Team**. Call the number that follows and ask to speak with the agent who handles villa rentals: 1 721 520 7284. Please let the agent know that you're interested in a rental and you were referred by Jeff Berger's *Everything SXM Facebook Site*. Hundreds of villas are now online.

Jennifer's Vacation Villas has also joined us as a villa rental partner. Jennifer's Vacation Villas is a licensed management, real estate and villa rental company specializing in the rental of private villas and condos on both French and Dutch St. Maarten. Its proprietor, Jennifer, is a New Yorker who has been residing in St. Maarten for 40 years and whose goal is to provide guests with personal attention and to ensure that their vacations are memorable. Jennifer's Vacation Villas also does Weddings, Private Events, and any additional services including massages, boat trips, and private catering. Their aim is to make your vacation stay as comfortable, accommodating, and easy going as possible. Call 1 (721) 544-3107 | +1 (631) 546-7345. When you contact them, please tell them you were referred by Jeff Berger's Everything SXM Facebook Site.

Heavily Updated 10/1/18

31. Use Our Weekly News Archives

Our recently updated *SXM Weekly News* PDF archives enable you to download any issue of Weekly News published in the last four years, including our amazing *2018 April Fools' Day parody* and our SXM Airport Special Edition, which has a great deal of useful future information on what's going to happen at the airport.

Check it out here.

32. Got SXM Questions? Here's Where The Answers Are

Check out our Everything SXM Facebook Site and our main SXM website, everythingsxm.com.

Your Business

Deserves a Marketing-Centric, Customer-Focused

Website That Works.

That's what we do:

www.websitesthatworkusa.com

In business since the web began --

a unit of JMB Communications.

33. SXM Business Owners: How To Increase Foot & Web Traffic

SXM Weekly News, our <u>everythingSXM.com</u> website and its Hurricane Center, and our everything SXM Facebook site — along with our many Vacation Giveaways and hundreds of benefits of JMB Website Supporters membership — are all made possible through our partnerships with our JMB Website Supporters members and our Sponsors.

Our Sponsorships enable SXM businesses to present their products or services to a huge, responsive audience of tourists from around the world, but primarily the USA and Canada. If you own an SXM business and want to look into and take advantage of this unique marketing opportunity, please email susan@jmbcommunications.com with the subject "JMB Sponsorships". We'll get complete information to you quickly. December is here and with it, plenty of opportunity to bring more tourists into your business not only in the short term, but especially as tourist business increases into 2019. Contact us today for more information.

34. Watch for SkyMed Info at Bel Air Resort & Simpson Bay Resort

If you're going to Managers' Cocktail Parties at either of these resorts, watch for info on SkyMed, graciously brought to you by the management of both resorts. You might just see someone familiar there....

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://everythingsxm.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://everythingsxm.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. www.sxmweeklynews.com; unsubscribe your old email address and subscribe your new one. www.sxmweeklynews.com; unsubscribe your old email address and subscribe your new one. www.sxmweeklynews.com; unsubscribe your old email address for continued Secret Site access.

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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 5/25/18)

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 <code>support@imbcommunications.com</code>

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 (Updated 5/25/18)

11/26/18 #V2-1178 1000 pm EDT 11/25/18 9.3

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