

From JMB / SXM Weekly News 12/24/18: AA; Terminal Tour; Belair Beach; Sapphire; SMGH; Lekkerbek Dive Site; Guayabera Beach Club; iZi; Vesna; Hideaway; No Mo' Kokomo; [35 stories]

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Vol. 2, #1182 --- Monday, December 24, 2018
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



This Week's Stories

Airfare, Airlines & Weather News

Everything SXM Home Page

Island News

Lodging News

Members SECRET Website 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

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IMPORTANT: "Jeff1620" is an unmonitored 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 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://everythingxm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

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

Get Your Own Free Weekly Copy of SXM Weekly News:

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

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:

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

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-- ***Less Money, More Benefits, Ten Year Price Guarantee on SkyMed Ultimate***

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-- *******HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP SALE EXTENDED ONE FINAL WEEK, MUST END 1/2*******

***JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program Membership Sale
Delivers 300+ SXM Discounts & Other Benefits***

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-- ***Please Patronize JMB Sponsors***
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- ***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.

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

To rent out or sell timeshares you own in SXM or anywhere else worldwide, for no ad charge or commission, join JMB Website Supporters. Visit http://everythingxsm.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 1/5/2019 1/12/2019 Week 1 **Atrium Beach Resort Large beachfront 2 bedroom lock-out** (a 1 bedroom unit plus a studio unit with a private connecting hallway) with a large wrap around balcony on the 3rd floor, 2 king beds, queen sleeper sofa, 3 TV's with cable, AC, full kitchen with granite countertops in 1 bedroom unit, partial kitchen in studio unit, free gated parking, 24 hour security, laundry facility and small gym on site. Beautiful beach with beach bar and grill, calm waters in Simpson Bay, kiddie pool and lounging deck. Many restaurants and a grocery store within walking distance. \$1100.00 which includes \$50 timeshare tax. Renter pays Atrium's utility and environmental fees of \$4.50 per person per day. Ilona 952-443-2867 hoggarth123@yahoo.com

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 3/9/2019 3/30/2019 13-Oct **The Villas at Simpson Bay Resort** Sleep 6, Floor 4, close to Marina building. Master suite can be used as sleep 4 with junior suite as lock off unit. Stay in one unit and rent out the other! Beautiful view of Simpson Bay with restaurants, jewelry store, casino, and grocery available on the resort and other restaurants available within walking distance. Balcony has full afternoon shade, perfect way to end your day on the beach. \$17,000 per week Deborah 412-952-7577 d_henle@msn.com

Non-St. Maarten Timeshare Rentals:

See them all at http://everythingxsm.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://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.everythingxsm.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. AA Delays Return of Late-Night Flight From MIA

A number of weeks ago, American Airlines had said that it would be resuming its late night flight from Miami to SXM on December 19. We published that information; we had no reason to think American would change its decision; the island's recovery has been spectacular, especially on the Dutch side, and most timeshares and hotels have already reopened or are close to doing so.

Nonetheless, American is now saying it won't reintroduce the flights until the end of this winter. The flights would have given people in far-flung cities the ability to get to SXM through same-day connections in Miami, arriving on the island late in the evening.

That same aircraft would be departing early in the morning, enabling many people to return home in one day of flying — even to the West Coast, via Miami connections.

Why AA chose to scuttle the flight — which would surely have sold out, even if they ran it only a few days a week — is beyond comprehension. Hopefully they will rethink this. SXM is fine....

=====EXTENDED ONE FINAL WEEK=====

HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP SALE

*******MUST END WED. 1/2/19*******

**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: 6 yrs only \$139 (our best offer); 3 yrs. \$79; one year \$33

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

Renewal JMB memberships: 7 yrs. \$139 (our best offer); 3 yrs. \$69; one year \$33

<http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

Reinstatement JMB memberships: 6 yrs. \$129 (our best offer); 3 yrs. \$73; one year \$35

<http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

2. Our Tour Inside The Reopened SXM Airport Terminal

Late last week, we had a great tour of the re-imagined first floor of SXM Airport, which has been redesigned to accommodate both incoming and outgoing flights — temporarily.

The tent pavilions that had been in use outside the main airport terminal since the airport reopened a few weeks after Irma have now both been dismantled and removed.

Mold remediation on the second floor of the airport terminal is continuing, while work on the roof also is continuing. We expect to be touring both the second floor in the roof when it's appropriate to do so.

We also will be interviewing airport senior management shortly, to give our readers a better idea what to expect from the airport during the next year or so.

In the newly re-designed terminal's first floor, arriving passengers will be walking through familiar territory, going through new usual customs and immigration booths followed by a return to the familiar conveyor belt delivery system for arriving luggage — though that area is smaller than before Irma, for now. They will then exit through the Eastern end of the building.

Departing passengers will now be able to use an expanded array of some 32 airline check-in counters in the East End of the terminal. Their baggage will be transported, temporarily, not by conveyor belts but by hand trucks to the inspection area prior to being loaded on aircraft. Passenger gates are all located at the West end of the terminal on the first floor, some of the gates you may have used before. Jetways are not in use, and won't be back until the second floor reopens before high season 2019 – 2020.

We shot dozens of pictures inside and outside of the main terminal, which you will soon be able to see on our [Everything SXM Facebook Site](#).

Much more information is coming in future articles related to upcoming SXM airport services. Stay tuned to SXM Weekly News and by all means tell your friends they can subscribe at SXMWeeklyNews.com .

3. Weather, "USA" Airplane Hamper SXM Flights

More bad weather at US points of embarkation for flights to SXM last week delayed some flights. Flights were also briefly disrupted when a "United States of America" emblazoned U.S. Air Force business jet type aircraft landed at SXM Airport and stayed a while. By press time we had not been able to verify who was aboard the aircraft, but it was widely believed to be Ivanka Trump.

More on the jet is [here](#).

4. More that 100 Private Jets Invade SXM Airport

During the weekend before Christmas, more than 100 private aircraft were expected to land at SXM Airport. They were shoehorned into tarmac parking areas West, East, and Southeast of the terminal. We have pics we'll be posting shortly.

The FBO area (fixed-base operations), which handles the private jets, was overflowing with SUV limousines much of the weekend as jet passengers were ferried to the newly reopened La Samanna luxury resort on the French Side, St. Barths, Anguilla, or to their own or chartered megayachts, often by helicopters.

Christmas week is usually one of the busiest weeks of the year on the island, and this year is certainly no exception. Please also see story 22.

5. A Plea for Development at GC Airport

SXM has two airports — SXM Airport on the Dutch side, which handles all the large commercial jets arriving and departing from points worldwide. The other airport is the Aerodrome in Grand Case, which handles small commuter type aircraft arrivals and departures from some neighboring islands. It is soon to be enlarged slightly.

Now an aviation expert is pleading for development of Grand Case Airport; that story is [here](#).

6. Current SXM Weather / Weather (Updated)

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 SXM 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.

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 [here](#). Select "Atlantic" and you're good to go. You can print out the chart and use it repeatedly, or simply print a bunch of them and use one for each storm that may approach an area of interest -- like, SXM. Bear in mind that this hurricane season may well be frontloaded — so you might want to print a few of these now and *not* save doing that for later.

7. Get The 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.

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

8. Belair Beach Hotel Receives SXM Award of Excellence

In brief ceremonies at their weekly barbecue on Monday of last week, JMB Communications / Everything St. Maarten chief honcho Jeff Berger presented Belair Beach Resort chief honcho/director Patricia "Energy" Evans with our prestigious **Everything SXM Award of Excellence**, marking the first time that resort has ever received this award. The awards recognize managerial and strategic excellence in the direction of tourist-oriented businesses across the island. Fewer than 30 such awards are distributed each year.

When making the presentation, Berger told Belair timeshare owners, "You would not be here today if it were not for the unwavering perseverance of Ms. Evans. She was the executive in charge of getting Belair Beach Resort repaired, renovated, cleaned, and in part reimagined, enabling it to reopen for timeshare owners a matter of months following hurricane Irma when the resort was very seriously damaged."

In thanking Everything SXM for the award, Ms. Evans noted that the resort has yet to receive any proceeds from its hurricane insurance — a problem that has been widespread across the island. She noted that resort owners quickly invested their own money to get the resort completely restored and back online as quickly as humanly possible — under the direction of Ms. Evans, who formerly was General Manager of Summit Resort Hotel, completely destroyed by Irma. She was quickly hired in the wake of Irma and was put in charge of the recovery efforts and of the entire hotel.

Congratulations from Everything SXM and *SXM Weekly News* to Bel Air Beach for this high honor.

We will be distributing remaining awards over the next few weeks, and will publish the names of all the SXM businesses receiving the awards once distribution has been completed.

9. About Six Rooms Available at Sapphire, T/S Owner Says

A few weeks ago, we paid a quiet, anonymous visit to Sapphire Beach Resort in Cupecoy to find out what was going on there.

We were told at that time that 30 rooms had been completely restored and that elevators in buildings two and three were being installed so that remaining rooms could be expeditiously renovated and the resort returned to normal operations.

The observation we were given about 30 available rooms was misleading. In fact, based upon a recent stay by a timeshare owner, there are only about *six* rooms currently available for timeshare owner occupancy; the remaining 24 fully renovated rooms are being occupied by workers hired from other countries who are involved in the restorations.

The resort declined requests for formal comments.

The only elevator operating in the building is in building one, we were told, and the other two elevators had not yet arrived for installation as of last week when we spoke with a very recent Sapphire resort timeshare owner/occupant. We continue to hope that the resort chooses to be more open and candid with its timeshare owners about its schedule for completing renovations and reopening.

Lots of work continues to be underway at the resort, but progress is clearly hamstrung by the lack of the additional two elevators. It's nearly 16 months since Irma hit, and there are no valid excuses for this long a delay.

10. What Hotels / Timeshares Are Open? Our List...

If you're thinking about visiting SXM this winter — or next spring or summer (which is a great time of year to do so), check our listings in the files area of our everything SXM Facebook site. Those listings cover the status of all resorts and timeshares on SXM and are updated daily.

10a. Surprise Mystery Guests at Belair and Simpson Bay...

Normally there's a barbecue at Belair resort late every Monday and at Simpson Bay there's a similar event on most Tuesdays, though not on Christmas. If you're a guest at either property, go -- from now through the end of March.

You'll see someone there that you know; introduce yourself

11. 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 [everythingxsm.com](#). Check them out.

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

SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

12. 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

=====EXTENDED ONE FINAL WEEK=====

HOLIDAY MEMBERSHIP SALE

*******MUST END WED. 1/2/19*******

**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: 6 yrs only \$139 (our best offer); 3 yrs. \$79; one year \$33

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

Renewal JMB memberships: 7 yrs. \$139 (our best offer); 3 yrs. \$69; one year \$33

<http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

Reinstatement JMB memberships: 6 yrs. \$129 (our best offer); 3 yrs. \$73; one year \$35

<http://everythingxsm.com/sxm/reinstate/index.shtml>

13. SXM Moves Fwd on Dump Remediation, Final Irma Cleanups

Although most visible debris from hurricane Irma on the Dutch side has long since been removed, nonetheless there are still sunken boats in Simpson Bay lagoon and in Simpson Bay itself, where a relatively small metal boat is near shore only a few hundred yards north of the Simpson Bay drawbridge. A \$25 million grant from the World Bank will solve that issue and also help solve the issue of perennial dump fires at the Dutch side dump in Philipsburg. Here are the details from the [Daily Herald](#).

One of the most noticeable sunken boats in Simpson Bay lagoon is the former Pink Iguana floating bar, which Irma tore away from its moorings and sank in the lagoon, adjacent to the SXM Airport parking lot.

14. Emil Lee Confident SMGH Construction Can Proceed

We recently asked Dutch side health minister Emil Lee about the status of the St. Maarten General Hospital project, announced a few months ago. It will replace the aging St. Maarten Medical Center.

There have been press reports about financial instability on the part of INSO, the Italian company that has received the contract to build the new hospital. Mr. Lee made the following statement to us concerning the future of the St. Maarten General Hospital project:

"The project has been well structured... Funding for the project is secure... It is because we are being careful we are performing proper due diligence regarding INSO. We want proper guarantees in place to ensure that the project is protected. All vetting was done previously, unfortunately things change... But we have a good project team on top of this. We are confident [we'll] manage this challenge."

15. Air Lekkerbek Airplane To Become Dive Site

Built from the fuselage of a retired commercial airliner, "Air Lekkerbek" stood near the Pondfill in Philipsburg for many years, providing bar and restaurant services for primarily local clientele.

The property was severely damaged by hurricane Irma and the owner had been told to fix it and/or remove it (long story) but didn't, according to the government, so the building was demolished and the fuselage hauled away a couple of weeks ago.

Now, we've heard that the fuselage -- currently at Bobby's Marina in Philipsburg -- will be placed a safe distance offshore where it will become an active dive site.

We'll keep you posted as this moves forward.

16. Demolition Resumes at Auberge de Mer

As we previously reported, a fight has been going on in Marigot concerning the fate of Auberge de Mer, a building containing a number of small businesses which has been declared unsafe and uninhabitable by the Collectivite. Businesses housed in the building went to court to fight removal — they said they needed more time to find new locations. The court ruled against the businesses and demolition has restarted. Here is [that story](#).

17. A Special New Restaurant Opens ON Simpson Bay

Guayabera Beach Club - ever heard of it? Probably not, but you certainly will based on our visit last Saturday.

Located on Old Simpson Bay Road — the road that follows the shoreline of Simpson Bay northward from the police station on the West side of airport road just north of the Dutch side drawbridge -- it's only about 200 yards North of the 90° turn in the road West of the police station. You will usually see a number of cars out front but there's easy on street parking.

Guayabera consists of a few small buildings on a small, private stretch of beach, including alfresco dining plus a single table in a tiny 200 year old Creole home that has survived countless hurricanes.

Much of the construction of Guayabera, which just opened last month, involves recycled materials -- right down to the chairs in the restaurant which were bought from a pizza restaurant destroyed by Irma, rebuilt and repainted to serve a new audience. The restaurant is open for breakfast and lunch every day except Monday, and open weekends in the evening. There are special nights for music featuring local artists, among them Connis Vanterpool.

Prices are low, portions are generous, and the Caribbean ambience is unmatched on the island. This is the real thing. The restaurant has its own beach on Simpson Bay with a few chairs. Bar, too.

Just go. You will not be disappointed. Tell them Jeff Berger sent you...

18. Hideaway Restaurant Expands Opening Hours

The popular Hideaway restaurant at La Vista is expanding its hours of operation. Here are the details:

"We have opened the Hideaway Restaurant and Bar in La Vista for DINNER Thursday Friday and Saturday nights. We also serve breakfast and lunch daily, and are closed on Mondays. On Wednesdays we always have a lunch special, a barbeque special.

"Wishing you and yours a wonderful holiday season."

Andrea Bartlett, La Vista Resort

19. Why Only iZi Is iZi: "This Place Is Perfection"

SXM has seen its share of near-legendary Italian restaurants, among them Laguna, Il Nettuno, and La Gondola — now all gone. *With one remarkable exception....*

The founder of La Gondola is alive and well and running his remarkable restaurant "iZi Ristorante Italiano" in Simpson Bay across the street from Pineapple Pete. To adapt to conditions after hurricane Irma, founder David Foini open for lunch, reduced his prices, but continued his fanatical devotion to top-quality dining in a fun ambience with

outstanding service.

Chef Stefano has been with him for years, orchestrating a team of culinary professionals who consistently execute David's unique recipes, delivering extraordinary quality.

Years ago, when David was operating La Gondola, at one point I had said here in *SXM Weekly News*, "this place is perfection." That certainly applies today at iZi.

The restaurant just received its **2018 – 2019 Everything SXM Award of Excellence** from us, which was well deserved. Prices are very reasonable and the food is outstanding. [We are about to publish new food pictures from iZi on our *Everything SXM Facebook Site*.](#)

Fantastic Location for Parties / Special Occasions Including Weddings

If you're going to have a party on the island, this is the place — especially if you're interested in doing a tasting menu custom tailored to your group. David's wine knowledge surpasses that of many sommeliers, and he can pair fine wines to each course of your custom-tailored tasting, making it a remarkable experience overall for all of your guests. He also does more traditional parties related to island weddings and other functions; see him in person to work on a function for you.

We will also be publishing the menu of a recent tasting on our [Everything SXM Facebook Site](#), and give you a peek at the table arrangements....

20. Smiles Are a Vesna Taverna Secret Ingredient

Vesna Taverna, located in Simpson Bay about 150 yards north of the drawbridge, is open for breakfast and lunch every day and for dinner now Tuesday through Saturday. It serves traditional American breakfasts, great Smoothies, delicious lunches, and some Greek specialties. Saturday night is Greek night when Vivacious Vesna struts her stuff in the kitchen with a number of Greek specialties plus French specialties; Vesna is half Greek and half Macedonian and her husband Yannick is French, and the former general manager at Fish Pot in Grand Case.

The result of all this fusion is an extraordinary dining experience. Not only is it fun (and easy on your pocketbook), the food is also meticulously prepared and consistently delicious. But Vesna's top secret ingredient — as she runs dinners Tuesday through Saturday — is a sincere and caring smile. She's a great lady with an outstanding restaurant that you will not want to miss. Go early in your trip and you'll go back multiple times.

One other thing. You will share her smiles once you succumb to their taste-tempting homemade desserts, all made by Vesna herself. Just incredible stuff you can't help smiling about.

Reservations are a must for dinner. See much more at www.vesnataaverna.com.

21. Kokomo Closes, Replaced by Indigo Bay Restaurant

The Kokomo Restaurant at Indigo Bay had a well-known chef, a good menu and — quite frankly – ridiculously high prices. It appears that Irma ultimately did it in.

Now, at the same gorgeous location, Indigo Bay Restaurant has opened. Clearly it has the same location and word is spreading that it has much more reasonable menu prices. Hopefully it's good — a good restaurant at that location could be a gold mine, given reasonable pricing. We'll see...

22. Reservations Are a Must

Most SXM restaurants plan to be open Christmas day. The island is packed, and advance reservations are a must

on Christmas day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day -- and in fact every night throughout High Season.

Many of you are receiving this special edition of *SXM Weekly News* either on Sunday the 23rd or Monday the 24th, with the rest receiving it sometime on Christmas day. We wish you all the merriest of Christmases and the happiest and healthiest of New Year's.

23. "Below Deck" Yacht in SXM

The yacht used to tape the hit Bravo series "Below Deck" here in SXM in March, 2017, is back, we're told. We don't yet know whether taping will return to SXM or stay in Tahiti, where the show was shot this year for current airing in the wake of Irma. We'll keep you posted. Taping is usually underway in March.

-- Finally, Salsa Classes For Adults, from Experts

If you thought that the Soggy Dollar Bar (behind Vesna Taverna in Simpson Bay) was only for kids, you'd be wrong — adults also love it.

One of the reasons is that on Latin night, they have salsa dancing lessons from 7 to 9 PM for a cost of only \$10 per person — wicked cheap, as they say in Boston. **Every Tuesday Soggy Dollar celebrates Latin Night with a Live Band in addition to the 2 for 1 drink specials on Brugal and El Jimador with FREE entrance and Margarita for everyone!** Come that night to Vesna's for dinner at 5pm, then walk back next door to Soggy at 6:45 for the Salsa Lessons. No need to register in advance.

It's every Tuesday night... stay tuned.

24. Bradley, Belair's Bodacious Bartender...

We don't spend much time analyzing moves of bartenders, but one in particular — Bradley at Belair Beach Hotel — caught our eye a few weeks ago. He's very good at what he does, though he's not at work every night in their Gingerbread Café. If you like talented bartenders, he's your guy.

25. Bad Day at Market Garden Market

Charles Southworth, an on-air personality at Island92 radio, bought store-packaged coconut cake at Market Garden market in Simpson Bay recently (next to Burger King) and when he opened it, discovered the inside had lots of green mold. He complained, and from what we are told received an argument from the market.

Others, in comments made on Facebook when Mr. Southworth posted his experience, noted prior unpleasant interactions with the same market. On Monday morning, Island 92 talk personality Dr. Soc was also critical of the market for its response — or lack thereof. We're not going to tell anyone where to shop; that's your decision.

All we'll say is that we don't shop in places that don't take care of their customers....

26. Restaurant of the Week: SkipJack's

As you'll see in the list below, SkipJack's seafood restaurant is being rebuilt following long permitting delays on the Dutch Side. It may reopen as quickly as January of 2019 -- we'll keep you posted.

This restaurant, one of SXM's biggest and most popular, serves hundreds of diners every night with meticulously fresh local and imported seafood -- including both Saba lobsters (plenty always on hand) and even some lobsters flown down from Maine.

Although we've been here many times, we've not yet had the same thing twice, thanks to their huge menu. And yes, they have pasta for vegetarians and beef, too.

We and they are hopeful of a reopening some time in January, probably later in the month. As always we'll keep you posted.

Here are recently featured SXM restaurants:

SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 12/24/18) SkipJack's main dining deck overlooking the lagoon was wrecked by Irma and is being rebuilt. They should be open early in 2019.

Avantika Thai www.avantikasxm.com (featured 12/17/18) Avantika is wonderful; SXM's best Thai.

Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 12/10/18) Reopened as Cafe Spiga, new menu; redesigned. New bar, new bar snacks, same great staff, service, and wonderful food. Everything is great, appetizers are out of this world.

Mario Bistro www.mariobistrot.com/en/ 12/3/18 Mario's Bistro reopened a few weeks after Irma hit and looks forward to your return. Phenomenal dining.

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.

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.

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 Sushitto) (6/18/18) is the new name of Sushitto, 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.

Enigma C3 luxury Catamaran, www.sailstmaarten.com (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, <http://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, 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.

St. Maarten Yacht Club, at the Dutch Side Drawbridge Reopened.

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

Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (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 [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#). Our thanks to our Admin there, Contessa Aiello, who edited the restaurant entries on that site.

27. SkyMed One Week Only Holiday Sale

Buy a new SkyMed multiyear five-year membership from us from now through January 2, 2019, at getskymed.com or by phoning us at 508-747-8281 (at about \$1.35/day price guaranteed for 10 years when we take your application by phone) and we'll give you a 10 year new or renewal JMB Website Supporters membership *on us*.

Of course we'll be happy to answer your questions and we'll tell you about everything SkyMed offers. Totally up to you what type of coverage you select. Much more info about SkyMed is in the next story.

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

28. Protect Against Emergency Medical Evacuation w/ SkyMed: Customer Stories

Emergency medical evacuations are payable in cash in advance and often cost upwards of \$45,000 -- unless you have a SkyMed membership. 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:

Mary Beth and her partner Don 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.

A woman from Virginia 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 the 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.

All this is why we always recommend SkyMed. 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 in about 10 minutes. 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.

More Info on SkyMed...

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 in January 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

29. 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 everythingxsm.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.

30. 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.

31. 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:

[IZI](#)

[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

32. 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](#).

33. 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.**

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www.websitesthatworkusa.com

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a unit of JMB Communications.

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

SXM Weekly News, our everythingSXM.com 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. Summer 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 throughout this year and into 2019. Contact us today for more information.

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://everythingsexm.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://everythingsexm.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.everythingsexm.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.everythingsexm.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.everythingsexm.com/secret .Your username and password are required.

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

See www.everythingsexm.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.*

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<http://www.everythingsexm.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.everythingsexm.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 (Updated 5/25/18)

12/24/18 #V2-1182 0600 pm EST 12/23/18 9.3

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