

From JMB / SXM Weekly News 3/4/19: SXM Airport; Insel & LIAT Troubles; Winair is Fine; \$220 SXM Round Trips; Planet Hollywood Resort; Westin Five-Star; Your SXM Condo; Diamond Resorts Bills; New Golf Course; JAX; Toppers; Vesna; Spiga; Music Festival [34 News Stories]

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**Vol. 2, #1192 --- Monday, March 4, 2019
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM**



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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 320,000 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://everythingxsm.com/sxm/free_newsletters/sxmweeklynews.shtml

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

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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 3/9/2019 3/16/2019 10 **Simpson Bay Resort and Marina** One bedroom unit (sleeps 4), connected to a studio (sleep 2) lock-off unit in the Upper "B" building. One bdrm unit has one king bed and two single murphy beds, full kitchen, dining and living area, two TV's (one in bedroom and one in living room), elevator at your door step, and a great water view. Studio has one king bed, full kitchen, TV, and access to apartment upstairs. Short walk to Casino and Peli Deli, plus all the restaurants in Simpson Bay. Asking \$1800, renter pays local tax (\$50) upon check out. \$1,800.00 Roger, 519-574-3328 karch1948@gmail.com

SXM Timeshare Sale of The Week:

SALE 2/22/2020 3/14/2020 Weeks 8, 9, 10 **Simpson Bay Resort and Marina** Marina Building beautifully renovated central air-conditioned Penthouse 2-bedroom unit; sleeps 6. Master bedroom suite and second bedroom both have king bed, cable TV, large closet and combination safe. Bedrooms have private bathrooms, double sinks and large showers. Unit has modern kitchen and appliances. Living room has cable TV with separate dining area. Unit includes large terrace, lounge chairs for sunbathing, hot tub and stunning view of Simpson Bay. The covered terrace area includes wet bar, dining table and chairs. Unit provides reserved parking space nearby for easy access. This is your rare opportunity to acquire 3 prime time consecutive weeks. Week 8/\$17,000; Week 9/\$17,000; Week 10/\$17,000 = \$51,000 Rita (646) 284-5217 rdk713@aol.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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- A. **Where to Get Member Info:** www.everythingsxm.com/secret
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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://everythingxm.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. Kingdom Transfers USD\$5-million to SXM Airport

The Kingdom of the Netherlands, which has been watching intently as various government dramas unfold on the Dutch side, has transferred \$5-million into an account of SXM Airport as a bridge to future loans.

The Kingdom offered the Dutch side \$100-million many weeks ago, and ever since the Dutch side government has been contemplating what to do. (Guys, you don't have an option: accept it and move on.) The Kingdom is figuratively tapping its feet in impatience....

The \$5-million will help SXM Airport pay short-term bills. It had exhausted its reserves paying for work to reopen, while waiting for insurance proceeds it apparently has still not received in full.

About Our JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program:

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Renewal JMB memberships: Low Prices!

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

Reinstatement JMB memberships: Low Prices!

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2. Insel Air Is Toast, While...

Insel Air, based in the southern Caribbean, which long had serious financial and maintenance issues in its aircraft, appears to have lost its battle to stay in business. You may remember seeing aging MD-80 aircraft owned by Insel Air sitting on the tarmac at SXM Airport in the past waiting for parts, including entire jet engines. One of its aircraft has been sitting at SXM airport for the last couple of months: it is the last aircraft owned by the airline and it is not airworthy.

Perhaps someone can make a restaurant out of it. Details are [here](#).

3. LIAT Says It Isn't Toast...

LIAT, an acronym for Leeward Islands Air Transport, meanwhile, is saying that it isn't toast, though some people wonder.

This [Trinidadian newspaper article](#) suggests that the airline might be in danger of collapse, though the airline denies that. For years, Liat has lived under the cloud of dubious schedule performance, with many saying in a not-always-kidding fashion that its acronym, LIAT, actually means "leave island any time."

Nonetheless, LIAT is of major importance to the nations of Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, St Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica which it serves. Hopefully the airline will be able to survive and provide on-time service at reasonable prices.

More is [here](#).

4. Winair "Takes You There" Dependably

Meanwhile, SXM based WINAIR, Windward Islands Airways International, operates 19-passenger STOL DHC 6-300 aircraft and some ATR-42 aircraft to Antigua, Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Dominica, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Nevis, Saba, San Juan, Santo Domingo, St. Barth, St. Eustatius, St. Kitts, St. Maarten, and Tortola. The small STOL "twin otter" aircraft are especially well suited to the short runways on some islands, served from the airline's SXM hub.

If you'd like to visit neighboring islands, Winair flights are quick, smooth, and reasonably priced. We fly them often -- far better than long, rocky boat rides to the same destinations. St. Barths is about 15 minutes; St. Kitts or Nevis, about 20; Statia, 25; Saba, about 20. Quite enjoyable.

5. \$220 Round Trips from FLL; \$313 Round Trips from ATL

From March through May, jetBlue is offering \$220 roundtrips from Fort Lauderdale to SXM, a sharp contrast to current fares between Miami and SXM offered by American Airlines. Those AA fares are often in the neighborhood of \$500 round-trip, but JetBlue is expected to grab much of the non-connection traffic that formerly went to Miami by virtue of the sharp competitive difference its \$220 roundtrips bring to the market.

Meanwhile, roundtrips from Atlanta have recently been offered for a fare of \$313. Details are [here](#) -- these flights also involve jetBlue.

6. See Current SXM Weather / Weather

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.

Changing Your Email Address?

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

7. Planet Hollywood 450-Room Hotel Due By 2021

On Dutch SXM, many projects are announced after they already are done deals — supposedly. The Pearl of China project was such a deal, although like others, it will never be built as conceived if it is built at all. (Long story.)

Now, the Dutch side government says that it is about to unveil plans for the Planet Hollywood resort which are subject to a 60 day public review, which strikes us as being unusual, unexpected, surprising, positive, and useful.

It was particularly interesting to learn that the property will have about 1000 employees, 97% of whom are expected to be local. That brings to mind several questions, chief among which is *where will they park*, and *what if anything will the government require the developer to do to improve infrastructure to enable it to withstand a heavy influx of employees and visitors to that area*. That street -- Little Bay Road -- is a primary route into Philipsburg and two other major properties are on it — Divi Little Bay Beach Resort and Belair Beach Hotel. Our opinion: the construction permit must include infrastructure improvements paid for by the developer to prevent aggravated traffic issues.

As for the property itself, we'll have more details going forward. The review of the development plan is expected to take two months, with construction taking another 18 months, if all goes perfectly. That means that Planet Hollywood is not likely to open until sometime very late in 2020 or in 2021.

The property is expected to attract a younger, more affluent demographic to SXM — something that is badly needed. It should also be highly profitable for its developers, but again, they should expect significant contributions to improved infrastructure to accommodate the traffic they will create.

Here's more on [the plan](#).

8. Is Westin Quietly Moving Forward?

The Westin St. Maarten Resort, spa, and casino on Dawn beach was severely damaged almost exactly a year and a half ago by hurricane Irma. Its affiliated timeshare property, Dawn Beach Club, has been renovated and reopened, in part, an undertaking which will continue through this year.

Neither Westin nor Columbia Sussex, which owns this property, has chosen to make any comments about the future of the Westin — nothing about when it might reopen, physical changes that might occur on the property, or any possible change in branding. Their reasoning for withholding that information isn't clear.

Nonetheless, some Westin employees are talking. We can't verify any of what follows since Westin and Columbia Sussex remain mute, but the source of this information has been credible in the past so we've chosen to pass these comments concerning Westin on to our readers:

"They are accepting reservations through July right now . The newly opened buildings at DBC have Westin logo towels and Westin Heavenly logo mattresses in the rooms.

"The hotel has been completely gutted and work starts soon. first on the new DBC sales office inside the hotel. Hotel will open December 2019 as a 5 star hotel. The use of the name Westin or Marriott or Ritz [or-Ed.] whatever must be approved. That requires a visit and a passing grade on work being complete, or we will not hear until after all work is complete, Dec. 2019.

"Some of the hotel rooms near the pool have been renovated it's said. This is a Marriott franchise and that includes 12-14 names . Really doesn't matter what name they give this 5 star hotel. Insurance has fully paid out..."

If we receive any comments on this from Columbia Sussex, we will publish them in a future issue of *SXM Weekly News*.

9. Ready to Own an All-New SXM Beach Condo?

Spacious New Townhouses on Simpson Bay Beach:

If you've been thinking about moving to SXM but are turned off by large condo developments and have an urge to be on the beach in a place that is state-of-the-art strong, gorgeous, functional, and reasonably priced, we may just have found it for you on Simpson Bay beach, near its quiet northern end.

Drake Residences is built using quad-lock® insulating concrete forms construction which delivers rugged durability as well as great soundproofing.

There beachfront location consists of a four-story beachfront tower and five spacious townhouses, all offering beachfront access.

Construction is state-of-the-art using strong, steel reinforced concrete which is fire resistant, ultra-energy-efficient, with high wind resistance, impact resistance, seismic resistance, and flood resistance as well.

Drake Residences also offers true luxury, with modern design; an Italian kitchen; a waterfall island; floating staircases; all in a spacious, private, turnkey location. Preconstruction prices begin at just \$850,000; construction is about to begin. This is the last buildable lot on Simpson Bay beach and at these prices, you can expect Drake Residences to be sold out quickly.

If you'd like detailed information directly from the developer (whom you may well already know), email Jeff at jmbweb@jmbcommunications.com. Include your email and phone number with the subject Drake Residences. We'll put you in direct contact with the developer himself so he can tell you all the details. This is the most attractive, incredibly durable beachfront property we've seen in SXM in many years, and it is brand-new construction. Photos have been posted on our [Everything SXM Facebook Site](#).

10. Diamond Resorts Timeshare Owners Receive More Bills

Based on anecdotal evidence from our [Everything SXM Facebook Site](#), Flamingo Beach and Royal Palm Beach timeshare owners appear to be hopping mad about invoices they're receiving to pay reserves and operating expenses for a resort that is closed and doing next to nothing to open in an expeditious manner.

Here are some comments from our [Everything SXM Facebook Site](#):

"Got an email stating that my Diamond Resort statement was ready. For a resort that is not open, getting hit with a reserve and operating expense fee, roughly half my annual dues. States that the operating expenses are for electricity, water, housekeeping, etc, but what am I paying for. A resort I cannot use. Anyone else getting a bill?"

"One explanation in the last year said insurance was paid with the reserve at Flamingo so I can understand the reserve charge. Why are we getting an operational charge if we are no operating. They are collecting from points owners the fixed owners have nothing to use."

"We have 2 deeded weeks at Royal Palm and haven't gotten an email or a bill. Frustrating as we can't deposit our weeks into Destination Exchange until maintenance fees are paid."

Some were conciliatory, but most seemed to wonder why the interminable delay in rebuilding / reopening, since many other resorts opened many months ago.

11. Get Lowest Rates for Hotel Rooms & Car Rentals Worldwide

[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.

12. Meet 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. If you're a guest at either property, go -- from now through the end of this month.

If you see someone there that you know; introduce yourself

13. Places to Stay: Many Available, Take Your Pick (Revised 2/19)

With most timeshare resorts back online — Belair, Sea Palace, Divi, Atrium Resort, La Vista, Simpson Bay Resort, Port de Plaisance, 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.

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

SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

14. JMB Member Discounts / Benefits -- New Update

We've recently updated the site to reflect ongoing changes on the island.

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

SECTION 4: Island News, Info, & Features

About Our JMB Website Supporters Island Discount Program:

**[Get 300+ SXM Discounts](#)
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[& \(P. S.\) Invitations to Members-Only Island Parties:](#)****

Get, Renew, or Reinstate YOUR JMB Membership Today:

New JMB memberships: Low Prices!

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

Renewal JMB memberships: Low Prices!

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

Reinstatement JMB memberships: Low Prices!

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

15. Dutch Side 911 Out of Order; Call 721-542-2222

The Dutch side 911 emergency service is out of order, and has been for several weeks. If you are visiting the island, you should put this emergency number for SXM Dutch side Emergencies on your phone — 721-542-2222, and keep it on your phone in case this lasts longer than expected or recurs.

16. Plastic Pollution Pervasive In The World's Oceans

Although this story is not specifically related to SXM, it refers to a global problem that appears to be worsening; please read [this alarming story](#).

Reportedly, in addition, there have been reports of trace amounts of plastics in many containers of sea salt used by home cooks....

17. Avoid This Intersection

When going to Philipsburg from Simpson Bay, you pass over the tiny Prince Bernhard bridge where Bush road intersects with A-T Illidge Road. A traffic signal at that intersection worked for years, then it stopped working for an extended period, then it died after Irma. When people started complaining about the nonworking traffic light, the government dutifully removed it, exacerbating the dangerousness of the intersection.

Even the *Daily Herald* wrote about it in a recent editorial.

Until this is fixed, we strongly suggest all tourists avoid this intersection, particularly coming down A-T Illidge Road from the vicinity of SUNNY Foods going toward Philipsburg. People on W. A. Nisbeth Road, which goes along the Pondfill, never slow down when approaching this intersection making a horrific accident all the more likely. Even four-way stop signs would be preferable to nothing which is what is currently at the intersection.

Just as the *Daily Herald* said, this needs to be fixed. The government does have the money to do something this simple and ought to get it done. It donated \$100,000 to help the SXM Festival (see related story, below); it can certainly replace this traffic light.

18. SXM Music Festival Beginning

Officially called the SXM Festival, the SXM Music Festival begins at Happy Bay beach on the French side of the island on March 13 (next week) and concludes March 17. This is the third edition of the music Festival, which was not held last year thanks to hurricane Irma.

Dutch side tourism minister Stuart Johnson set of the festival, "SXM Festival brings the genre of electronic music here, which opens up a new market of supporters to the destination. This Festival shows that confidence in the island is back. I hope the Festival grows by leaps and bounds and that its 10 year plan becomes a 15 to 25 year plan of growth for St. Maarten."

In addition to Happy Bay, the festival will also be held at Loterie farm and on the Dutch side at venues Lotus, Refuge, and Karakter on Simpson Bay beach.

More on SXM Festival is [here](#).

19. Nine-hole Golf Course Coming to Loterie Farm

When Loterie Farm introduced its zipline a number of years ago, it further differentiated the property and offered a unique attraction that gained instant popularity.

A few months after Irma hit SXM, a new zipline was introduced at Rainforest Adventures near Philipsburg. It is the steepest zipline in the world, and it knocked the zipline at Loterie farm for a loop, from a business perspective. This month, a third zipline is expected to open from Point Blanche, near the prison, terminating at the A. C. Wathey cruise and cargo facilities.

Consequently, Loterie farm has elected to construct a new nine hole golf course on its expansive property, as they had previously announced and as we had reported here in *SXM Weekly News*. The course is expected to be completed and opened some time this summer. We'll publish its formal opening.

20. Jax Steakhouse & Piano Bar Opens

The Sonesta Maho Hotel is reopening as you read this, as previously reported, and the Maho Plaza area continues to come alive at the same time.

Now, the [Jax Steakhouse and Piano Bar](#) has opened. According to chief honcho Jay Time, the steakhouse is the only restaurant on the island to use Certified Angus Beef (CAB) exclusively. He notes that it is pricier than average beef, but superior in taste and texture.

Although Jax is nominally a steakhouse, it also serves seafood and more for its current grand-opening menu. It has one seating, after which it morphs into a piano bar. For much more, look [here](#).

The steakhouse is at the site of the former Bajatzu restaurant in Maho. One huge difference between Bajatzu and JAX — besides the menu — is that JAX is completely non-smoking inside, with smoking limited to outside tables. That's a huge change for the better.

We will have more on JAX coming soon.

21. Toppers Serving Lobsters Nightly

In the incredibly busy high season that is continuing on SXM, some people look for a special night at Toppers restaurant in Simpson Bay where lobsters are featured.

The fact is that Toppers has its own private fishermen catching lobsters off Saba every day and delivering them fresh to the restaurant, also every day, barring rough seas. Rather than have one special day when it serves lobsters, Toppers serves them every day at excellent pricing.

So if you have a hankering for meaty Caribbean lobsters, Toppers is an excellent place to get them. For dessert, don't miss their outstanding rum cake — made exclusively, of course, with Toppers Rhum.

22. Breakfast Bagel Towers, Baguette Paninis at Vesna's

We've recently been talking here about breakfasts at two excellent Simpson Bay restaurants — Guayabera beach Club on Old Simpson Bay Road, and Vesna Taverna, on Airport Road just north of the Simpson Bay drawbridge. . We'll also soon be talking about breakfasts at La Patrona restaurant at Simpson Bay resort.

Today, however, we want to focus on the breakfast bagel towers from Vesna Taverna, on which we've been hooked for the last three weeks.

These big sandwiches, which start with delicious homemade bagels from Vesna's kitchen, feature salmon smoked in-house, cream cheese, lettuce, egg if you want, and more. Although it's a challenge to wrap your mouth around such a big sandwich, it's well worth the effort because it truly is delicious and, of course, healthful.

Beyond its great breakfast bagel towers, Vesna's also offers paninis on its fresh and delicious French baguettes — and they, too, are quite delicious.

Although Vesna's has become known for its dinners served nightly except Sunday and Monday, its breakfasts are equally fantastic — try them soon. Again, Vesna's is located on the lagoon side of Airport Road just north of the Simpson Bay drawbridge. As always, it's essential to call for dinner reservations at Vesna's, one of the busiest restaurants on the island. See more [here](#).

23. Cell Phone Problem? Check SXM Electronics

JMB Communications began as a high-technology public relations firm 27 years ago, so we know a bit about technology. So when the power button disappeared from our android cell phone recently, we knew exactly what part was involved (it was more than a button) and what it took to replace it.

We asked local friends where to go to get the repair done correctly, expeditiously, and inexpensively on SXM. They overwhelmingly recommended SXM Electronics, in the same group of stores as McDonald's just North of the Simpson Bay drawbridge on Airport Road.

They were right. Within minutes, they determined what happened to our original part, found a solution to fix it, and executed that repair. Five minutes later, they called to tell us the job was done in the phone was ready for pickup — for just \$25. The speed of service, the efficacy of the solution, and the price all were better than we had expected. We would strongly recommend them for anyone who needs cell phone repairs on SXM island.

24. Restaurant of the Week: Spiga

Last week, we spoke about Mario's Bistro here, and characterized it as one of the best restaurants on SXM. Those accolades were very well deserved.

Now we move on to another of the island's very best restaurants. Although we featured them last December, they absolutely deserve to be mentioned here again. Their service, food quality, extraordinary preparation, creativity, and thoroughgoing dedication to constant improvement have made Spiga clearly one of SXM's very best restaurants, as it has been for years.

Spiga does change a bit during every low season, so we're sure there will be some surprises ahead. But thanks to the great dedication of Lara and Ciro Russo, owners, Spiga never fails to satisfy. It is a most outstanding restaurant: for much more, check out their website (see below). *Visit early during your next SXM trip* — you will absolutely want to return before your trip is over. It's that extraordinary.

Here are recently featured SXM restaurants:

Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 3/4/19) New menu; redesigned. New bar, great staff, service, and wonderful food. Everything is great, appetizers are out of this world. Not to be missed.

Mario Bistro www.mariobistrot.com/en/ 2/25/19 Mario's Bistro is one of the most spectacular culinary experiences you'll ever have. Go. Phenomenal dining.

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 2/18/19). Open for lunch and dinner except Monday, when they're closed. Great food from one of SXM's very best restaurants. Fun atmosphere, too.

Mama Pizza & Pasta, featured 2/11/19, Porto Cupecoy.

Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 2/4/19). Now open every day for through B/L; dinner is offered Tuesday through Sunday.

Topper's <http://www.sxmtoppers.com/> (featured 1/28/19) One of SXM's oldest and busiest restaurants, Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and late dining. Open morning until late night. Sports on TV. Karaoke some nights.

Dany & John's Cupecoy Beach Bar (on Cupecoy beach); follow the road toward Shore Pointe and turn near Shore Pointe to get there. (Featured 1/20/2019) Parking, drinks, chairs and umbrellas, lolo-type food, and an all-over tan. What could possibly be better?

Wasabi Charlie Japanese Restaurant (formerly Sushitto) (1/7/19) 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.

La Patrona, Simpson Bay Resort (featured 12/30/18) La Patrona is SXM's only truly authentic Mexican restaurant. Highly recommended: great food, great service, not to be missed.

SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 12/24/18) SkipJack's triumphantly reopened with an entirely new dining deck late in January, 2019. Great place - go!

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

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.

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.

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.

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

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

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.

25. Restaurants Very Busy; Reservations Essential

SXM continues to be busier than it has been in several years. Regardless of what your practice was in the past, this year it makes sense to make reservations to be sure you're not disappointed. If you're making them for a specific holiday or special occasion make sure you make them several days in advance at least. And if it turns out that you can't go, please make sure to cancel your reservation — that's only fair to the restaurant, enabling them to sell seats they reserved for you to someone else.

26. Ensure Best SkyMed Deal - Jeff Berger / GetSkyMed.com

Our SkyMed website is www.getskymed.com: please be sure you bookmark **getSkyMed.com** and not any other site. *When you're ready to sign up for SkyMed, be sure to call us and let us take your application by phone.* It takes under 10 minutes, and we submit it electronically. We know what SkyMed is looking for and we can make sure you submit it efficiently and effectively; that way we also get credit for the purchase, which in a small way helps fund this

newsletter and everything else we do for you.

SkyMed calls only can be received at 508-747-8281 during regular office hours, Eastern time.. Thank you.

27. Traveling in June or Later? Beat SkyMed's 90-day Exclusion on Pre-Existing Conditions Coverage by Buying Now

SkyMed Takes You Home® when you become critically ill or injured when traveling. Without it, an emergency medical evacuation by air ambulance will cost you from \$35,000 to \$50,000 or more, sometimes much more, payable in cash in advance. Worse, you must get it before you need it - just like fire insurance.

Buy a new SkyMed multiyear five-year membership from us now 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](#).

By buying annual protection now at only about \$1.35/day, pre-existing conditions will be covered in full after a brief 90-day waiting period. SkyMed covers you in the USA, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean. Global coverage is available as well. For answers to your questions, call us today at 508-747-8281.

See next story for much more on SkyMed. Offer ends soon.

Our SkyMed website is www.getskymed.com: please be sure you bookmark **getSkyMed.com** and not any other site. *When you're ready to sign up for SkyMed, be sure to call us and let us take your application by phone.* It takes under 10 minutes, and we submit it electronically. We know what SkyMed is looking for and we can make sure you submit it efficiently and effectively; that way we also get credit for the purchase, which in a small way helps fund this newsletter and everything else we do for you. SkyMed calls only can be received at 508-747-8281 during regular office hours, Eastern time.. Thank you.

28. *****Customer Stories***** Protect Against Pricey Emergency Medical Evacuations w/ SkyMed:

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.

Our SkyMed website is www.getskymed.com: please be sure you bookmark **getSkyMed.com** and not any other site. *When you're ready to sign up for SkyMed, be sure to call us and let us take your application by phone.* It takes under 10 minutes, and we submit it electronically. We know what SkyMed is looking for and we can make sure you submit it efficiently and effectively; that way we also get credit for the purchase, which in a small way helps fund this newsletter and everything else we do for you. SkyMed calls only can be received at 508-747-8281 during regular office hours, Eastern time.. Thank you.

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 everythingsexm.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.

Our SkyMed website is www.getskymed.com: please be sure you bookmark **getSkyMed.com** and not any other site. *When you're ready to sign up for SkyMed, be sure to call us and let us take your application by phone.* It takes under 10 minutes, and we submit it electronically. We know what SkyMed is looking for and we can make sure you submit it efficiently and effectively; that way we also get credit for the purchase, which in a small way helps fund this newsletter and everything else we do for you. SkyMed calls only can be received at 508-747-8281 during regular office hours, Eastern time.. Thank you.

31. Please Patronize JMB Sponsors (Updated 2/19)

CAR RENTALS:

[Leisure Car Rental](#)

[Tropical-Tropicana Car Rental](#)

Starlite Car Rental (Belair Resort)

Sax Car Rental

CIGARS HAND-MANUFACTURED ON SXM:

[Das Cigars](#)

CUBAN CIGARS:

[Cigar Mack](#)

[SXM Cigars](#)

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

Artistic Jewelers

[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*.

Candie Billant does condo and villa rentals and sales. You will be seeing her posts on our **[Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#)**.

Relocation / "Papers" Consulting Companies

Bright Path is already posting on our **[Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Site](#)**

Updated 3/5/19

32. Use Our Weekly News Archives

Our *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](#). Updating soon.

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

Check out our [Everything SXM Facebook Site](#) and our main SXM website, everythingxsm.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.

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. (Our site is based in the U. S. and is focused on the needs of tourists traveling to SXM.) If you own an SXM business and want to look into and take advantage of this unique marketing opportunity, please email susank@jmbcommunications.com with the subject "JMB Sponsorships". We'll get complete information to you quickly. Winter 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 2020. Contact us today for more information.

Updated 2/19.

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.*

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

<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)

3/4/19 #V2-1192 0500 am AST 9.5

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