

**SXM Weekly News-in-Brief, #1269, Monday, October 19, 2020**

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### **1. About This Issue & The Next Issue**

This week's issue of SXM Weekly News is a rare "News in Brief" issue bringing you only the most newsworthy stories in a quick, easy-to-read format. Our normal complete style of SXM Weekly News returns next week as usual, with tons more information than this in-brief format.

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### **2. Hurricane Season Heads-Up**

2020 will be remembered for many things, unfortunately, and the year's record-shattering hurricane season is certainly one of them. Bear in mind that this hurricane season is not over, with practically another month and a half still to go.

Ocean temperatures continue to be above normal, so bear in mind that it's possible for storms to form after hurricane season Nominally ends on November 30.

This is the tropical Outlook issued on Sunday:

**ABNT20 KNHC 180501**

**TWOAT**

**Tropical Weather Outlook**

**NWS National Hurricane Center Miami FL**

**200 AM EDT Sun Oct 18 2020**

**For the North Atlantic...Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico:**

**Showers and thunderstorms associated with a non-tropical low pressure system located about 500 miles east-southeast of Bermuda have not become significantly better organized over the past several hours. Gradual development is expected, and a subtropical depression or storm is very likely to form during the next day or two while the low meanders well to the southeast of Bermuda.**

**\* Formation chance through 48 hours...high...80 percent.**

**\* Formation chance through 5 days...high...90 percent.**

**A broad area of low pressure is expected to form in a few days over the southwestern Caribbean Sea. Some gradual development of this system will be possible through the middle of next week while it moves slowly northward or north-northwestward over the western Caribbean Sea.**

**\* Formation chance through 48 hours...low...near 0 percent.**

**\* Formation chance through 5 days...low...30 percent.**

**\$\$**

**Forecaster Pasch**

We always publish the latest watches, warnings, and Outlooks in our everything SXM Facebook group. Far more information will be found in the weather center on our main SXM website, everythingSXM.com, including current satellite images, radar loops, and far more.

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### **3. Luxury Hotel Proposed for Cay Bay/Indigo Bay**

A branded five-star hotel appears likely to becoming to the Cay Bay/Indigo Bay area, where there is already an upscale residential community. We first reported about this probability several months ago and now it is moving significantly closer to reality. Here is the full story, from the press release issued by the developers:

#### **5-Star hotel development proposed at Indigo Bay Development**

Tau Capital and Atree Developments Inc, both world-class real estate development firms, have partnered with Cay Bay Development N.V. (the master developer at Indigo Bay Development, CBD), to propose the development of a luxury Hotel resort and condos on Sint Maarten.

The proposed high-end hotel development at Indigo Bay Development is expected to feature certain luxury accommodalons and 5-star amenities, approximately including, but not limited to:

- ✓ 94 Hotel Rooms and suites
- ✓ 55 Lanai Suites
- ✓ 60 Two Bedroom Units
- ✓ 15 Three Bedroom Units.
- ✓ A Large luxury spa (10,000 sq. U.)
- ✓ Conference facility
- ✓ An All-day dining restaurant
- ✓ A Fine dining restaurant
- ✓ Beach bar
- ✓ Pool bar
- ✓ Fitness center
- ✓ Mullple pools
- ✓ Kids & Teen Club

Additionally, the proposed hotel development is expected to feature large water ponds and greenery areas in keeping with its eco-centric vision, as well as an extensive public parking area for public beach access to Indigo bay.

The timing for such a development could not have come at a more opportune time as country St Maarten is tasked with creating new and innovative strategies to counter the global economic crisis due to the pandemic.

In an economy whereby hospitality and tourism are at the center of its recovery, it is expected that the development of a high-end branded hotel in SXM would provide an enormous boost to this endeavor by enhancing several areas in **Tourism:**

- Enhancing the global attractiveness of St. Maarten as a prime tourist destination
- Increasing hotel accommodation by approximately 20%
- Increasing the number of annual visitors to SXM is expected to increase due to this development by 32000 based on hotel occupancy of 65% (double), and an average stay of five nights.
- Attracting high value tourist that may choose SXM as a vacation destination as opposed to accessing surrounding islands through our air and sea, ports of entry. Labor (employment and training opportunities)
- Providing Jobs during the planning and construction period for over several hundred technical personnel and local contractors alike
- Ensuring several hundred employment opportunities for locals to sustain resort operations once construction has been completed
- Providing internship opportunities for residents studying locally or internationally in the field of hospitality and hotel management. Page 1 of 4
- Creating downstream opportunities in the hospitality, maritime, transportation, etc. sectors. (e.g. tour operators, boat charters, local restaurants, and bars, etc.)

### **The Economy**

- Creating New Foreign Direct Investment and Foreign Exchange Earnings
- Providing Additional revenues for SXM through substantial long term and ongoing contributions to its Tax revenue per annum
- Contributing to a major boost of the GDP of SXM
- increase real estate sales over the next three years.

The total project development cost is estimated at US 220M. **The proposed World class hotel development once completed will be**

**managed by an Internationally recognized hotel brand**, which will lend itself to greater global recognition. The addition of an international brand affiliated with one of the main hotel companies in the world, can be expected to drive substantial additional business to the island down the line.

The projected marketed Average Daily Rate (ADR) for hotel rooms at the proposed new hotel development is expected to be substantially higher than the current average daily rates on St. Maarten.

The announcement in the international (travel) media of the planned development of a high-end branded hotel project at Indigo Bay Development would assist in highlighting St. Maarten to international travel industry professionals and suppliers.

Airlines, travel wholesalers and independent travel agencies will take further notice. As will, investment firms and hotel development companies, interested in possibly adding St. Maarten to their portfolio for future investment opportunities.

The CBD and the principals of the proposed hotel development seek to assure that the interest of the citizenry and of the environment are paramount to their endeavor and in doing so are cognizant of the misinformation being circulated widely about said development and would like to provide information to address same.

One such instance has been the reported height of said development whereby many may confuse 'height' (above the ground) with 'elevation' (above the sea level). That being stated, the proposed hotel is designed not to directly obstruct any views whereby, the maximum roof height of the multi-story buildings are between 20.5m and 27.5 meters above sea level.

Further to this, CBD has requested approval for certain variances to Planning Permit PP-05088 'Cay Bay Development'. These requests were based on the commitment by CBD and its principals to invest not just in the infrastructure of the luxury hotel but also in its surroundings.

To that end, the requested approval will finally provide the necessary assistance required to address the needs of the surrounding coastlines, beach facilities and marine life that were severely eroded and affected post hurricane Irma.

In terms of special consideration per the variances request submitted, CBD and the principals of the proposed hotel development have indicated

- that some 6 acres of the overall hotel site of about 18 acres is projected as a green zone, including the retention ponds that were originally constructed at Indigo Bay Development by CBD.
- Additionally, the proposed hotel development includes public parking facilities substantially in excess of required public parking and access as stipulated under the planning permit.

Towards beach development and amended setbacks in certain areas; the principals of the proposed hotel development have indicated:

- that they are willing to look at compensation by way of the creation of the dedicated green zone with beach access and parking mentioned above,
- via a beach restoration/protection program and/or the installation of reef balls in the bay. Page 2 of 4 The intention of the beach restoration initiative is geared towards having an environment which compliments the hotel and its many amenities. The aforementioned beach (Indigo Bay) will be a public beach as per the “beach policy” and the many upgrades outlined above are intended to ensure it is safe, aesthetic, and enjoyable for all.

The new inhabitable buildings of the hotel development, with the exception of a small wedge of one 2 story building, comprising less than 200 square meters, does not infringe upon said “beach policy” nor will it.

On October 2nd, 2020, in accordance with the National Ordinance on Spatial Development Planning (AB 2013, GT no 144) and the Planning Permit PP-05088 ‘Cay Bay Estates’, Article 5.4, the minister of VROMI announced placement of the master plan Indigo Bay Hotel & Condo by developer Cay Bay Development NV (CBD) on public review for thirty (30) days.

As such, the principals of the proposed hotel development at Indigo Bay Development remain committed to full transparency in its undertakings and adherence to all relevant policies and laws of SXM. --- END OF PRESS RELEASE --- ATTACHMENTS: Renderings Indigo Bay Hotel & Condo Master plan (2) --- attached as separate files as well. Page 3 of 4 Contact Information Should you have any questions and/or require additional information; please feel free to contact: Cay Bay Development N.V. [caybaydevelopment@gmail.com](mailto:caybaydevelopment@gmail.com)

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#### **4. About That Covid Insurance Rumor**

Contrary to a rumor circulating among tourists, there is currently no requirement for Covid insurance to visit SXM. Such a requirement does exist in Aruba and SXM is a matter of due diligence is looking into that requirement.

A top government official recently address this issue during a press conference. See her comments verbatim here:

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### **5. Many Restaurants Open**

One of the questions most frequently asked by tourists considering a near-term return to SXM is whether any restaurants are open.

Although some restaurants are closed during part of the fall as their usual fall closing, most restaurants remain open and we reported on many of them in recent weeks here in SXM Weekly News and also in our everything SXM Facebook group. You can search our archives of SXM Weekly News (which we will be completing an update of this week) or simply go to our everything SXM Facebook group and using the search window to find information on any particular restaurant of interest to you. If you don't find information on the restaurant you seek, feel free to post a question about it for a quick answer.##Tourism is expected to improve a bit starting around Thanksgiving and most restaurants that are still closed are expected to reopen next month, which is almost here.

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### **6. Sonesta Maho Reopens Late This Month**

The Sonesta ocean point ultra-luxury resort reopened a few weeks ago. The sprawling Sonesta Maho resort announced several weeks ago that it would be reopening late this month, so that reopening still appears to be imminent. If there is any change we will reported both here and in our everything SXM Facebook group.

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### **7. Boeing 737 Max Closing in on 2021 Flight Preapproval**

The Boeing 737 Max Airliner, grounded since March of last year after two crashes killed 346 people thanks to Boeing design defects, is expected to return to service sometime next year. It apparently it is close to being approved by the US FAA pending certain additional updates. After that, all grounded airliners must be upgraded and recertified and pilots must be retrained in flying the repaired airliners.

Boeing is expected to change the name of the aircraft next year as well. We will report on what the final name is so that passengers can decide for themselves if they want to fly in it — though by the time it is carrying revenue to passengers, the 737 Max will likely be the safest plane in the skies.

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#### **8. One Remarkable Holiday Gift Idea from Tijon Parfumerie**

Tijon Parfumerie in Grand Case, although currently closed due to the Pandemic, will be open for the holiday season by appointment from November 16 – December 4. To make an appointment simply email [john@tijon.com](mailto:john@tijon.com).

For those wishing to create their own perfume but unable to schedule an appointment, Tijon now offers a Virtual Lab whereby you can create a custom perfume online with a money back guarantee. For more info go to: <https://www.tijon.com/virtual-lab/>

To-date over 14,000 people have created their own perfume at Tijon, an activity that is in the Tripadvisor Hall of Fame for having averaged 5 Stars for over 5 years.

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#### **9. Traveling Before Long? Get SkyMed *Before* You Need It**

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