

From JMB / SXM Weekly News 12/7/20: Airport Reconstruction Ramps Up; Big Fare Sales; Mario's Bistro Reopens at Cliff; Toppers Rhum Reopens; Carousel Gelateria Reopens; La Samanna Reopening; SECRETS Reopening; RIMA To Return; Live Entertainment; ASTRA Opens; Entry Requirements; Hurricane Season [46 Top SXM News Stories for Tourists]

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Vol. 3, #1276 --- Monday, 12/7/20
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM

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

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

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Timeshare Rental and Sale of the Week

Each week JMB randomly picks timeshare condominiums for rent and for sale in SXM from the huge selection at http://everythingsexm.com/sxm/timeshare_rent_sale/index.shtml and features them here.

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

SXM Timeshare Rentals of The Week:

RENTAL 12/19/2020 12/26/2020 Week 51 **Simpson Bay Resort 2 bedroom apartment in the Allamanda Building** (can be used as two separate one bedroom units since it has a lockout feature). One bedroom unit on the first floor with king size bed and with Murphy bed in the LR and a separate lockout one bedroom unit on the second floor with king bed and sofa bed.- Each unit, upstairs and downstairs, has full kitchen and AC with TVs in each room. There are very few units at Simpson Bay Resort that have the lockout feature so it offers a great alternative to a traditional two

bedroom unit. Week 51 rental is \$2,000 and we have a Week 52 for \$2,200. For both 51 and 52 rate is \$4,000 (resort taxes are paid by renter). \$2,000 Joe 508-277-7702 orgdims@aol.com

RENTAL 1/10/2021 1/17/2021 Week 2 Simpson Bay Marina and Resort 2 units - Lower B Building 1 Bedroom sleep 4 with lockout studio sleeps 2. Other unit has a King size Bed, 2 Murphy beds in living room & full kitchen - refrigerator, stove, microwave, blender, toaster, coffee Pot and all other necessities & internet. Beautiful ocean views from balcony. Walking distance to numerous restaurants, the beaches, 5 pools, casino, spa, deli, 2 beach bars and a swim up bars, grocery store and coffee shop on site. Close to Philipsburg. Walk to over 20 restaurants, casino & 3 supermarkets. Rental car agency on site. Renter pays \$50 resort fee. Lockout has queen bed, full bath and fully equipped kitchen. Combine with week 3. See my other ad for 1 bedroom. Week 3. 2,195 Alan 603-520-0976 aklsp@metrocast.net

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

SXM Timeshare Sales of The Week:

SALE 1/23/2021 1/30/2021 Week 4 also see weeks 3,5,6 Simpson Bay Resort and Marina Bougainvillea building overlooking pool: 4th floor with elevator and fantastic views. 1 bedroom suite with king size bed sleeps 4 with 2 pullout Murphy beds; open plan full kitchen, dining area, living room. Two flat screen TVs; Deck looking west spacious views with spectacular sunsets. complete resort with several pools some with swim up bars, tennis courts, basketball, casino, several restaurants, shopping including groceries. Marina activities including boating and diving; beach with beach bar and more. \$8,000, multiple weeks purchases discounted Jim 508-362-2187 jbhegarty@comcast.net

SALE 3/13/2021 3/20/2021 Week 11 Simpson Bay Resort & Marina 2 bedroom 2 bath corner penthouse on the beach sleeps 6. Unit has full kitchen, dining area, livingroom, wall safes in the closets, flat screen TVs and 2 large terraces (one with a jacuzzi). From the Terraces view magnificent sunsets, yachts entering and leaving the lagoon. Unit and beach have free Wi-Fi. Resort offers a piano bar, several pools, restaurants, tennis courts, a convenience store, water sports, a spa and a casino. \$19,500 Hope 914-428-0346 HOPENEU@HOTMAIL.COM

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

Villa Rentals Now Offered On Our Site Too:

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

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

"Like" Our Facebook St. Maarten Timesharing Group

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

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

Archives prior to April 12 2014 (old format):

<http://everythingsexm.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.everythingsexm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml

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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.

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THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

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SECTION 1: Getting Here: Flights, Airlines, Airports, Cruises, Weather, and COVID-19

GETTING HERE:

0. Airport Reconstruction Finally Appears to Get in Gear; Airport Head Asked to Resign

We've been watching SXM Airport for signs of reconstruction activity for a long time. Our casual oversight has finally caught substantial activity there during the last couple of weeks.

Hurricane Irma walloped SXM in September 2017. Now, three years and three months later, all airport operations are being conducted from the first floor which (pre-Irma) had been originally used for passenger check-in and baggage pickup along with some other functions invisible to passengers. The terminal's second floor, which has been closed since Irma, is where arrivals and departures had been handled prior to the storm and that is the area where reconstruction appears now to be underway — along with portions of the first floor that still aren't seeing normal use.

Now that the work appears to be underway in earnest, we will get more information for you in the coming weeks about when exactly it will finish.

Meanwhile, late Friday afternoon, the *SXM Daily Herald* published an online article saying that board that runs the airport has asked the CEO of SXM Airport to resign and leave his position at the beginning of January. Authorities have not been happy with his performance in running the airport particularly as it relates to expeditious reconstruction. Here is [the Herald article](#).

1. Big Fare Sales Enticing Midwinter Travel

Airlines are continuing to cautiously plan increases in flights to SXM for the winter. They seem determined to do anything possible not only to meet demand for seats, but to ensure that all or most of the seats in their aircraft are filled with passengers.

As a result, sale pricing this year on flights to SXM from many cities is lower than it has been in many years. So if you are considering flying to SXM in the coming months, we urge you to track and buy your flights when you see fares that literally make your eyebrows go up: those are the fares you want.

You might also consider over the next few months keeping an eye on fares for a year from now. We think it's possible those fares — for late fall 2021 — may also be at similarly low levels not only because of hopefully the last vestiges of Covid but also because of the next hurricane season, which will likely be busy.

2. Unexpected Advice on Booking Trips to SXM

In the past, we have historically recommended that people reserve flights to SXM during the midweek, when fares have been lower and the airport less crowded. However, airlines continue to cancel weekday flights if those flights have inadequate passenger loads. Consequently, for this winter, we suggest you make reservations on the busiest days — Saturday and Sunday — if for no other reason than to help ensure that there is less of a chance that the airline will cancel those flights. Of course, mask-wearing throughout the course of your time in the airports and on the airplane(s) as well as social distancing is smart, life-saving behavior that is also mandated by airline policies.

We are writing this from SXM. Although some people who have not come here regard entry requirements as daunting, we can assure you that in practice they are elegantly simple and worked very well for us and the vast majority of other passengers.

Please see the newly re-edited entry requirements guide below, in this section, very important advice on getting to SXM.

WEATHER:

3. Hurricane Season Ends - But Eyes Stay Open

We wouldn't call the 2020 hurricane season the worst in history, since as we all recall there have been far more disastrous storms affecting SXM and the US during other recent years. However, the 2020 season was by far the busiest in Atlantic basin history.

Officially, hurricane seasons begin June 1 and ends on November 30, covering half of every year. But the official end of hurricane season doesn't mean that we've seen our last hurricanes this year or that future storms will wait until June to spin up. Waters are still warm and tropical cyclone formation will remain possible for at least the next few weeks: so forecasters including Crown Weather's Rob Lightbown, our go-to source for hurricane information, are continuing to keep a watchful eye on the Caribbean.

Our weather center in our main site, everythingSXM.com, stays active 24/7/ 365. There, you can see current forecasts, watches, or warnings as well as satellite images and radar loops from throughout the Atlantic basin. In our [Everything](#)

[SXM Facebook Group](#), we will as always publish any significant storm information related to the Caribbean and to travel to or from SXM.

4. Gorgeous Weather Continues

The weather during the last couple of weeks has been quite gorgeous, with little significant precipitation, generally light winds, and daytime temperatures of around 86. Normally during December, the so-called December winds arrive heralding the change to winter conditions. Those conditions, of course, are slightly lower high temperatures (around 84 instead of 86) and declines in precipitation starting about now and culminating in mid-January.

Bottom line, it's way better than the snow, freezing temperatures, ice, and other winter normalities that people from North America will be encountering on a nearly daily basis if they aren't sunning their buns here in SXM....

5. Where to Find Current SXM Weather Info

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

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

- 1) [Crown Weather Services](#) whose very inexpensive subscription service is, we feel, the best in the business.
- 2) Our "Weather" page at www.everythingsxm.com -- it has current satellite images and radar loops and now all the latest NHC weather forecasts, outlooks, and advisories as well. There are now also active weather widgets on the site's home page.
- 3) Our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#), 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.
- 5) For a quick look at weather radar exactly where you are or where you're going, try the My Radar phone app or My Radar for Windows -- excellent programs.

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.

More stories are below.

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Now You Can Unsubscribe Your Old Email

**and Sign Up Your New One
for your SXM Weekly News subscription
Quickly and Easily
at our Site: www.sxmweeklynews.com**

6. Where to Download the NHC's Hurricane Tracking Chart

Blank hurricane tracking charts similar to those that have been used by the National Hurricane Center for many years are now available for download [here](#) (that's the NHC download site). Also noted above; republished in case you missed it.)

COVID-19: General

7. Why Dutch Side Requirements Matter to All Arriving Passengers

Even if your travels will take you to an overnight stay at a French side hotel, chances are very high that your flight will land at SXM Airport on the Dutch side, the island's only major international airport accommodating large airplanes flying in from overseas.

Since all major overseas flights land on the Dutch side, all passengers on those flights must meet Dutch side entry requirements, for which we published a guide below, in this section.

The French side now has its own entry requirements which differ from those on the Dutch side (the two sides haven't come to an agreement on a single set of requirements). We outline the new very simple French side requirements below — but again, regardless of which side is your final destination, you must follow Dutch side requirements if your plane will land at SXM Airport.

8. French Side Providing Free Required Antigen Testing for Its Stayover Visitors

Unless you're staying in a private home occupied by members of your own family, if you're staying over anywhere else on the French side you are required to submit to antigen testing during the first couple of days of your stay. All French side hotels, villas, guesthouses, etc. are required to sign an agreement with the government confirming their obligation to require free antigen testing of all of their guests.

When you arrive at your place of accommodation, your host should tell you where to go for testing and when, and what if any paperwork may be required. If you have had an antigen test within 48 hours of arrival in SXM, that should be sufficient for French side authorities — but if not, French side testing is absolutely required. Your accommodations provider will tell you where there are sites for testing and what their hours are — and again, there is no cost to travelers.

9. EHAS Staffing Being Enhanced - & Why It Matters

The Dutch side government has now recognized the need for additional staffing in its EHAS group, the government organization that is responsible for analyzing applications for preapproval to visit SXM. It is staffing up now with the objective of making the service faster and better.

Approvals and denials are executed by people who are doing their best. But not all submissions strictly follow requirements. For example, EHAS responds quickly to negative reports generated by laboratories in computerized PDF format without handwriting. It is looking for recognition that the tests were the types required, as well as all of the other information stated below — with no handwriting. Judgments of approval or denial can be difficult if the information is not crystal-clear in the application, so please thoroughly read this Guide and follow its instructions to the letter.

COVID-19: Guide to Entry Requirements - Please Read and Retain - REVISED 12/7/20

10. Guide to SXM Entry Requirements

Entry requirements for St. Maarten are changing effective November 25. On that date, SXM will begin to accept rapid antigen tests taken within 48 hours of departure in addition to RT – PCR tests taken within 120 hours of departure. Full information, updated to reflect this major change for the better, is in the Covid area of the FILES in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#). That file has been completely updated to reflect the newly revised testing requirements.

Antigen tests are the widely discussed "rapid" tests previously not accepted in SXM. Specific reliable tests will now be accepted, and they are spelled out in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#) article on Covid in the files area.

For current information on exactly what the entry requirements are in SXM, please see [this site](#). It's operated by the SXM government and it also includes individual forms you must fill out online in advance to get advance approval to enter the country, and where you also are required to upload your RT PCR or Antigen test negative results. If you don't do that, or if you send results in a form that is not acceptable to the island, you will not be allowed to board your flight.

11. What RT-PCR means; (It is Not "Real-Time")

"PCR" is an acronym for **polymerase chain reaction**, and "RT" refers to **reverse transcription** -- NOT "real time". The only types of test for Covid-19 currently acceptable to the government of SXM are both RT-PCR and the Antigen test, which has been added effective 11/25.

Although it is the case that RT-PCR testing is being turned around faster now than it has been, do not confuse it with real time tests which are not the same. When in doubt, see the above article and click the link for exact current government requirements.

12. Finding & Taking RT-PCR or Antigen Tests in Your Area

You must have a negative RT-PCR test taken less than 120 hours before your departure to SXM, or your Antigen test taken less than 48 hours before your trip. If you're on a connecting flight, this requirement relates to the departure of the final leg of your trip.

Where do you find a test in your area that will be able to deliver results to you within the required 120 or 48 hours? There are a number of ways to find out. You can ask friends who travel from your area; you can ask people on the site in your community where local people discuss local goings-on (that often works well); and you can also ask your primary care physician. Covid tests taken for travel purposes are not always paid for by insurance. You might ask your PCP to send an order in to a local laboratory for test for you — those will often be covered by insurance and results are very often posted at once when ready on the lab's or hospital's portal, you can download the results in PDF format.

The requirements from SXM specify what information must be in these reports — things like the name of the lab, lab location, date and time of test, type of test (RT-PCR or Antigen), your name, and the result of your test. Once you get the PDFs for you and all of the people traveling with you, print them out and keep them with all the trip documentation that you will be taking with you — you will need them.

More on the Application for Entry into SXM and how the PDF relates to that application is below.

13. Applying Online for Admission to SXM: What & How, w/ Advice

The government of SXM wants to keep out people who are sick with Covid — that's what all this is about. You must apply online for admission to SXM once you have negative results back of your PCR or Antigen test.

Go to the same website where you learned about entry requirements to apply for admission. It is absolutely required and if you are not preapproved for admission you will not be able to get on your plane to go to SXM. The application will take you only a few minutes to fill out. It asks for your name, email address, the usual questions about whether you have any Covid Symptoms or have been near anyone diagnosed with Covid recently, plus where you plan to stay on the island. It also asks you for the airline and flight number of your flight departing to SXM. (Remember the 120 hour or 48 hour requirement.) And then submit the application form from the website to EHAS by clicking a button. You will usually hear back in a few hours or overnight if you submit the form fairly late at night.

To make sure you get the paperwork approved as quickly as possible, we suggest you get your test taken several hours below the 120 hour threshold ahead of the time of your departure to SXM (48 hours for Antigen test). That should give the laboratory plenty of time to get things to you so you can immediately file the application and get the information to EHAS, giving them as much time as possible. Their responsiveness is usually excellent. If two or more people are going, we strongly suggest that you send them each using a different email address — that way, when you are asked to report your temperature every day, you will know which person in your party is being asked to reply to a specific email from EHAS. Overall, though you may be put off by the thought of having to do this process, it's quick, simple, and easy — and as we said the responsiveness is outstanding. Just do it — not a big deal at all.

14. *****Important***: Avoiding Common Mistakes That Cause Denials (Updated 12/7/20)**

There is often a common thread influencing denials. But since it is a human process, in rare cases human error can occur.

First, we'll deal with the common threads.

When submitting your negative PCR or antigen test in PDF format, make sure it is done in PDF format — not a picture or JPEG. JPEG's can be very difficult to read and that could be the basis of a denial. All of the required information is, of course, required information. So, create a checklist from the information you see in this Guide and follow it religiously when submitting your data. In fact, it is wise to find out what format your report will be in before you take the test, to ensure that the report will contain all the information SXM requires. That's not as difficult as it may appear, since most laboratories now are accustomed to issuing negative reports containing all information required for travel. Just be sure in advance that your report does include everything SXM requires. We often see prospective tourists send us applications they have submitted that were denied --many contain handwriting which is not allowed according to the requirements. No handwriting means no handwriting.

Second, sometimes you don't receive a response within several hours of submitting your application. If that happens to you, double check your application very closely to make sure that it conforms to all applicable requirements. Then and only then, resubmit the application — and double check the email address to make sure it is spelled correctly since obviously, incorrect email addresses don't work. Check your passport number too as you wrote it in the online application -- if it's one digit different from your actual passport number, you aren't going to SXM,

Third, as we said, in rare cases human error can play a role in denials. As reported above, EHAS is staffing up further to help ensure its ability to provide quick, responsive, and accurate service to all applicants, something it is trying to do expeditiously.

Fourth, sometimes you and your spouse will take tests at the same time from the same people and receive the same negative results. One of you will submit an application which is approved and the other may be denied. If time allows, resubmit the declined application after making absolutely sure that it is accurate and complete and meets all requirements. However if time does not allow that PM Jeff Berger through Facebook messenger (not by email or phone) and give him all the information you sent to the government including that an identical application had been sent in and approved. There are no guarantees but we will try to help. If you don't have Facebook, get it — that's the only way we can handle these situations expeditiously. (We get just under 5000 emails a day and have filters for them but can't guarantee we would receive your email inquiry, which is why we are requiring you to respond to us by Facebook messenger. N. B.: We do NOT check it every two minutes, so don't expect an instant reply.)

15. What to Take With You When You Go (An Important Checklist)

Everything on this list is essential for you to get on your airplane and fly to St. Maarten. You may wish to print this and use it as a checklist before leaving for the airport:

- a) Your passport and boarding passes (per usual);
- b) printed negative test results on laboratory stationery (this is the PDF form at the lab should send you to inform you of the results of your test; the test results form must include the information specified as required by Sint Maarten EHAS)
- c) the travel Pre-Approval form emailed to you by Sint Maarten EHAS in response to your submission of the negative Covid test (assuming your application was preapproved);
- d) a thermometer, which you will need to take your temperature and that of your traveling companions during the first 14 days of your trip.

16. What to Expect When Arriving at SXM Airport

The second floor of SXM Airport, where the jetways go, is still not open, but the airport says the work on them is progressing. It's our intent to get with the people of the airport to obtain the latest information about the status of the jetways in the second floor as well as preclearance — and to find out when the airport will actually reopen as it was before hurricane Irma hit more than three years ago. For now, all services continue to be conducted on the first floor of the airport — both departures and arrivals.

Unless your arriving plane parks a very short walk from the current arriving passenger entry to the terminal, you'll exit your plane and walk directly to one of the shuttle buses that will take you to the terminal entry. Wear your mask, of course: there is no such thing as social distancing aboard the bus — but the trip is only about two minutes long and everyone is required to wear a mask anyway. People should maintain social distancing on their way through immigration and into the baggage claim area.

It is essential for you to have all of your documentation in hand when you go to immigration. We explain what that documentation is in the Covid section, above. Keep it handy because you will be asked for it. Your temperature also will be taken by a touch-free monitor and you will be asked the usual health questions to which you will be accustomed by the time you get to immigration.

Although it may or may not be mentioned to you as you go through immigration, you will be receiving email daily or thereabouts from Sint Maarten EHAS, requiring you to report your temp and to indicate whether you have any symptoms of Covid. You then click the appropriate button to send the documentation back to the island government. Filing these reports for 14 days is required by all visitors regardless of whether you receive the email from Sint Maarten EHAS. Consequently, it's important for you to save the emails you receive from the government and reply to them first thing every morning: you can use the first email you receive for subsequent replies even if you don't receive daily emails. The form you fill out online will nonetheless change to reflect the day of your vacation (day one, day two, day three, etc.) Your finish filling out and sending the form within about seven seconds — and a thermometer is shown in our list of things you must take to St. Maarten to record your temperature. EHAS expects you to take your temp and submit your info daily first thing -- before breakfast.

17. Reporting Your Condition to EHAS for 14 Days

Once you have arrived in St. Maarten, EHAS will email you a notice with a link to their site. You are required to click the link which takes you to a very brief online form which asks you to record your temperature and whether you have flu like symptoms that morning before having breakfast. You then click a button in the online form to send its results back to EHAS. The form specifies is what day of your vacation the report is for — day one, day two, etc. If you receive an email the following day, follow it just as you did the first day. *If you don't, however, go back to the email you received the first day and click that link again — it will take you to the form you can use for day two or subsequent days.*

You must take your temp each day, which is why we said to take a thermometer with you. The current requirement is

that you do this for 14 days. It takes less than 30 seconds each time and is simple, easy, and fast. During a global Pandemic, SXM is doing everything possible to ensure everyone's good health.

Etc.

18. Guaranteed Big-Time Savings on Hotels, Cruises, Car Rentals

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.

SkyMed Travel offers exceptional pricing on everything and almost invariably beats everyone else's pricing. We have found their pricing excellent across the board and their 15% 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 there to get the absolute greatest possible discounts.

You won't be disappointed.

Not a SkyMed member? Learn more about it at www.skymed.com/jmb, then call us with questions or to sign up. Call 508-747-8281 any weekday. Thanks...

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

19. Buying a Condo in SXM? Here's Important Info

Just before Thanksgiving 2018, working with Arun Jagtiani of Island Real Estate Team, we put together and conducted an SXM Relocation Seminar for dozens of attentive attendees at Emilio's Restaurant at the Emilio Wilson estate near Philipsburg.

Many of you have asked whether it would be possible for you to see video we made of our relocation seminar.

Although we do intend to put on future relocation seminars, the video of our November '18 seminar is available online to anyone interested in buying on SXM, whether for a vacation home, retirement home, income property, or anything else. Lots of outstanding info was communicated during this excellent seminar, and another is now in the early planning stages.

See the video [here](#).

Please check this link to [BrightPath SXM](#), a company that can help provide very deep and expeditious help in completing residency requirements for people buying a second home, income property, or a new business in SXM, or relocating there. They're located in the Puerta del Sol building opposite Avantika, Simpson Bay, Dutch side. Ask for Vivian Chamas and let her know you heard about BrightPath through Jeff Berger's *SXM Weekly News*.

20. 2020 - 2021 Rentals Available Now at EverythingSXM.com

SXM timeshare owners who are members of JMB Website Supporters are posting 2021 timeshare rentals on our main SXM website, EverythingSXM.com. Much more information about available rentals is on our timeshare rentals and sales page on that site. It is certainly not too early to start making reservations for 2021.

21. How To Rent Out Or Sell Your Timeshare Units

If you own timeshare weeks that you would like to rent out or sell on our main everythingSXM.com website, you can do it once you become a member of our JMB Website Supporters island discount program. For all the details, go to our main site, everythingSXM.com and click on timeshare rentals in the navigation bar. You'll find the details about posting there. For information about joining JMB Website Supporters, click the page curl on all pages of everythingSXM.com. As a member, you will have access to a growing pallet of about 300 discounts and other benefits including the ability to post up to 10 ads per year in our rental pages at everythingxsm.com.

The ability to post timeshare rentals on our site is limited to JMB Website Supporters members only, and is not available to any others at any price.

SECTION 3: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

22. NEWS About JMB Member Discounts / Benefits Updates

Once the island reopens to tourism, we will be working to further increase the already huge number of restaurants, jewelry stores, hotels, and other businesses offering discounts or other incentives to members of our JMB Website Supporters SXM Island Discount Program. As these additions are made, they will be reported in *SXM Weekly News* and will also be noted in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#).

JMB Website Supporters currently offers roughly 300 discounts and other benefits to its thousands of members.

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

SECTION 4: Island News, Info, & Features

SKYMED Takes You Home® - Get it BEFORE You Need it for as little as \$1.35/day (annual plans) guaranteed renewable regardless of advancing age or declining health. Without SkyMed, you'll need to pay the current price of an evacuation in cash, in advance -- and that could easily be \$35,000 to \$50,000. Why risk that? See these important links:

You'll find an overview of all key **SkyMed Features & Services** [here](#).

You'll find **Frequently Asked Questions** [here](#).

My SkyMed website is <http://www.skymed.com/jmb> and you can phone me daytimes 8am to 8pm EST at 508-747-8281 (SkyMed calls only please).

--Jeff Berger

23. La Samanna Officially Reopens February 15

Belmond La Samanna, SXM's only ultraluxury resort hotel, reopens for business on February 15, reversing an earlier decision it had made to stay closed for the 2020 – 2021 season after the French side had reversed its earlier decision not to allow American tourists to visit the island.

The full story about the La Samanna reopening is [here](#).

24. SECRETS Resort Reschedules Reopening to January 29

The new SECRETS resort in Anse Marcel had opened early in March of this year and closed after only about two weeks of operation due to the Covid pandemic and the shutdown of the Dutch side of the island that month, declared on Friday the 13th. The resort had opened despite the fact that it was not completely ready for normal occupancy. During the few days it was open, some guests said it was turning away prepaid guests and was not offering the full spectrum of restaurants, activities, and features its guests had paid for in advance.

While there was happiness with the responsiveness of the staff, they were many complaints over the fact that the resort had not notified guests in advance of the limited facilities SECRETS was actually offering.

Some people coming down for wedding celebrations were not told in advance that it would be impossible for the resort to hold the weddings.

The resort not long ago had rescheduled its reopening to December 11 and now is changing it again to January 29, when there is a chance that more people will be on the island. Whether they have spent their down time since last March actually finishing the hotel — we don't know. We'd like to go on a media tour of the property but we don't expect that to happen either. Nonetheless, we will keep you posted. When we visited the site a couple of weeks ago it was still one big construction zone.

25. "Towers at Mullet Bay" Not Paying Employees: Is The Resort Imploding?

The Towers at Mullet Bay timeshare resort has been unavailable to its timeshare owners since September, 2017, when it was seriously damaged by hurricane Irma.

Multiple resorts nearby were totally destroyed by Irma, including Ocean Club and Summit Resort Hotel. But many other nearby structures, though receiving serious damages, have since recovered and returned to business.

That's not the case with Towers at Mullet Bay which apparently wanted to reopen but was stopped from doing so because of matters related to financial issues and resulting apparent governmental prohibitions against reopening. The Resort has not been forthcoming about its situation to its timeshare owners or to the public.

Regardless of the cause of its current situation, what matters most, in our opinion, is the fact that timeshare owners have been left hanging. They have invested tens of thousands of dollars each in the timeshare resort and have had no opportunity to take advantage of their investment for more than three years.

There has been no genuine timeshare owner consumer protection legislation in SXM although it has been "under consideration" in the island's parliament for a number of years. One might expect that had timeshare owner consumer protection legislation been enacted when it was first proposed prior to hurricane Irma, there would've been some degree of protection for timeshare owners at Towers at Mullet Bay and for Ocean Club timeshare owners who have never been given any real explanation of their situation in the wake of the total destruction of that resort by Irma.

It has been more than three years since Irma hit the island and from the perspective of Towers at Mullet Bay timeshare owners, that is three years too much — with no word about the status of their investments or when they'll be able to use the timeshare units they have already paid for.

There is no consumer protection for them or any other SXM timeshare owners and we would hope that changes soon. For the sake of the industry, it truly must.

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

26. In SXM, Restaurant Dining is a Whole Different Thing

Temporarily, the restaurant industry worldwide is marching to a different drummer thanks to Covid, and it will continue to do so at least through the end of next summer, by which time many people will have been vaccinated against Covid 19.

Here in SXM, restaurant dining is a whole different thing — with rigidly enforced social distancing inside virtually all restaurants and an increase in the number of people who are dining on outdoor patios where tropical breezes help blow away concerns, at least to an extent.

Mask wearing is mandated everywhere except in restaurants while you're actually dining. In our own personal opinion,

the steps taken here are quite advanced and they seem to be well observed by the restaurants we have visited, all of which have had compliance inspections.

The main point: the restaurateurs are doing here exactly what they should be doing and along with it providing the same fantastic world-class dining to which you've been accustomed for many years from SXM.

27. Mario's Bistro Opens at The Cliff, Cupecoy Beach

Mario's Bistro has now completed its move from its former location at Porto Cupecoy to the first floor of the Cliff luxury condominiums on Cupecoy beach. The restaurant is open most days for both lunch and dinner.

There is a new lounge serving Tapas and some other selections plus Mario's full restaurant menu is being served in the restaurant itself, on the veranda overlooking Cupecoy beach and the Caribbean.

Don't miss this gorgeous new setting — and of course Mario's sensational, award-winning cuisine: Mario's is one of SXM's top three restaurants of any kind for good reason.

28. "Astra" Opens; Anish Chugani's New Steak & Seafood Emporium

SXM culinary entrepreneur Anish Chugani's new steak and seafood emporium, Astra, has now opened at the former Snoopy's location in Simpson Bay, next to where Skipjacks had previously been located. The beautiful restaurant, completely redesigned inside and out from floor-to-ceiling, has gorgeous views of Isle de Sol yacht harbor and Simpson Bay lagoon — but more important it has a full line of seafood and steaks that is certain to attract many fans of fine dining.

If Anish Chugani's name is familiar to you, it's probably because he created Avantika Thai restaurant nearby, along with the new Movida rotisserie dinner restaurant. The latter, opened only weeks ago, takes the drudgery out of rotisserie dining and puts the pleasure in with delicious sides, full service, and lots more.

We will soon be posting some opening night pictures of Astra in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#) and will do a review of the restaurant once we have visited it formally in the next couple of weeks.

29. RIMA Plans a Triumphant Return to SXM This Winter

Rima — for many years located at the Pondfill in the buildings now occupied by Blue Point -- was the king of all beachwear and souvenir emporiums across the island, selling to countless tourists, cruise ship passengers, locals, and through its wholesale operations to countless retailers both on SXM and on all of the neighboring Caribbean islands.

The business grew exponentially through the years and its owners, the Santwani family, ultimately moved its headquarters back to India, closer to where all of its manufacturing operations are. Since then, Rima has become a global enterprise doing business in many countries — not just the Caribbean.

Here in St. Maarten, the fort has been held down by "Kenny" who is the only authorized distributor of Rima products serving the Caribbean. Although he has been operating a small but densely populated store with tons of Rima merchandise on the south side of Front Street West of the courthouse, *he told SXM Weekly News last week that a new Rima store is coming back to Philipsburg and will be opening on Front Street.*

In fact, big bright yellow Rima Flags — similar to those that adorned the big yellow Rima building on the Pondfill when it was in operation — have already appeared on top of the building that will house the new three-story Rima facility, which is expected to formally open sometime late this winter.

The new Rima retail store will take over the entire first floor of the new building and offer a spectrum of Rima merchandise and other souvenirs and many other products of use and interest to tourists.

We've already shot pictures of the new building with the yellow flags on top and will post them soon in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#). The new store will be next door to the Ray's Jewelry west of the courthouse.

We will soon be able to publish images of the new building as it will appear once painting has been completed — look for those images in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#).

In the meantime, for the largest authentic collection of Rima merchandise on SXM, visit the Kenny's store across the street from the Coliseum casino in downtown Philipsburg West of the center of town, where you will also see the memorable Rima logo. Quantities of a high percentage of the Rima products you know and love are on sale for the same reasonable low prices you're accustomed to at Kenny's.

It's the absolute best place on the island for one-stop shopping for beachwear and an endless spectrum of SXM island clothing for yourself, your family, and friends who can't currently visit the island.

We'll have much more on this as time goes on and the opening of the new Rima store comes closer.

30. Topper's New Rhum Distillery & Gelateria Opens for Business

Toppers Rhum Distillery completed its move to new, larger, and rather more sumptuous facilities at the Carousel in Simpson Bay last month, and opened for business there on December 1.

The rum distillery is open for tours, for rum purchases, for souvenirs (there are lots of great souvenirs), and for Gelato and rum cake — yes, the Gelateria that has been at the carousel since its founding is still there and the Gelato continues to be made by Diego, long-time master Gelato maker.

Toppers Restaurant and Bar has been waiting to move to the site of the former carousel but before that could happen, the carousel itself had to be moved out of the building. That has now been completed; the carousel has been moved to the SXM Airport where it will soon be assembled inside where it can greet incoming passengers. We know of no other airport passenger terminal that will be greeting its passengers with a working carousel -- a donation worth \$300,000 from the Toppers family. The good news: you'll just have to return to St. Maarten to see the carousel again.

Toppers Restaurant and Bar, complete with Karaoke, will be moving over the next few weeks to the carousel. The restaurant will be staying open at its current location until the move has been completed. We will let you know when the old location closes and the new location opens for business, just a few weeks from now.

We will also post information and pictures — many pictures, in fact, in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#).

31. For Live Entertainment: Hole In The Wall, Maho Plaza

SXM has a single genuine point of focus for nightly live entertainment — that's the Hole in the Wall on Maho Plaza, Dutch side, recently enlarged so it can be enjoyed by more people with proper social distancing. The entertainment leverages the talents of local acts — and there is a lot of local talent on SXM.

Here is the current list of nightly entertainers, though it is subject to change as the weeks pass. Chief honcho Edward BN posts frequently about his entertainment in our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#), so here is the most recent list of weekly entertainers:

The official lineup at The Hole in the Wall .. St. Maarten's Hot spot for local talent ...the Place to be for live music every night! The island's best talent all in one place ..

- Fire in the Hole Mondays with Gianfranco and Youmay
- Off the Wall Tuesdays with Cedric and Lee
- Watering Hole Wednesdays with Ronny Santana and Lee
- ??Just Another Hole in the Wall ?? with Alfredo and Yonny
- Hole-Y Friday with Ronny Santana and Bobby Jagger
- Hole Lotta Love Saturdays with Ronny and Cedric
- Hole in One Sundays with Alfredo and Yonny.

32. IZI Ristorante Italiano Offering Great \$10 Lunches

Remember iZi Ristorante Italiano in Simpson Bay across from Pineapple Pete? It has long been one of SXM's most popular Italian restaurants — and now, for many reasons, it is even better than you may remember.

First, the restaurant now offers delicious \$10 lunches daily during the week (Tuesday through Saturday; closed Mondays). There is a different selection each day so come back every day figure out what your favorite is.

Second, the restaurant's menu includes frequent specials using top-quality imported Italian ingredients so you get the most genuine flavors and textures prepared according to authentic Italian recipes.

In the coming weeks, you will also see some new things coming to iZi as chef Antonio, newly arrived from Naples, shares his talents to the culinary genius-in-chief David Foini, winner of many awards for excellence over the many years he has been an icon on the culinary scene in SXM.

Do not miss iZi — certainly one of SXM's top three restaurants.

33. Much French Side Repaving Now Completed

From what we can see, there has been more repaving on the French side this late fall than in perhaps the last five years combined. Main roads across the East and West portions of the French side and the northern area near Anse Marcel, Marigot, and Grand Case all have seen repaving.

Most important to food fans, after years of neglect, Boulevard de Grand Case has been almost completely repaved, with just some minor work remaining and its far southern and far northern ends. It's good that these public works are being completed just as the French side reopens its doors to overnight stays in its hotels, guesthouses, and villas by American citizens, who dominate tourism here.

There's also evidence that there will be some kind of smoothing of the bumps in the dirt access road that runs much of the length of Orient beach, parallel with the beach. Much milled asphalt from the construction projects has been dumped along those rutted roads and it's reasonable to expect that they will be graded soon. Or at least we hope so.

As always, we'll keep you posted.

34. Restaurant of the Week: Avantika

Regardless of whether you like Thai food served near your home — or if you've never even tried it — you have to give Avantika a shot while you're here on the island.

In beautiful surroundings with outdoor seating available, Avantika brings great creativity to traditional Thai dining. Avantika for years has been the flagship restaurant in the fleet of dining spots owned by culinary entrepreneur Anish Chugani, who also owns the recently opened Movida rotisserie restaurant and the just-opened Astra seafood and steak restaurant nearby.

Located across the street from long-time home of Toppers Restaurant on the second floor of the Puerta Del Sol building, Avantika offers a huge selection of options which you can combine upon ordering. We usually gravitate toward the cashew chicken rice, loaded with grilled vegetables, a delicious sauce (you tell them what you want -- hot or mild), and of course lots of fresh jasmine rice. Meat lovers will be happy here too as will those who enjoy seafood.

For starters we enjoyed their delicious coconut shrimp and vegetarian spring rolls — totally delicious.

Our waiter, Oscar, was thorough, quick, and attentive — and even brought more hot sauce after my wife quickly devoured her initial supply. Make reservations and go: we've never seen anyone disappointed here. The bar is also thoroughly stocked and well managed. Do go. (Elevator available; walk by Movida to the back of the facility on the right. Avantika is on the second floor.)

Next week: **Mario's Bistro**, revisited at its new location at the Cliff.

Here are recently featured SXM restaurants:

Avantika Thai www.avantikasxm.com (featured 12/7/20) Avantika is wonderful; SXM's best Thai.

Mama Pizza, Porto Cupecoy (featured 11/28/20) Excellent pizza, and sizeable portions / reasonable prices on numerous other Italian specialties. On the plaza at Porto Cupecoy, Cupecoy Beach.

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.izirestaurant.com (featured 11/23/20). Open for lunch and dinner except Mon., when they're closed. Great food from one of SXM's very best restaurants. Fun atmosphere, too.

Mario's at the Cliff, formerly **Mario's Bistro** www.mariobistrot.com/en/ 9/14/20 **Mario's** is one of the most

spectacular culinary experiences you'll ever have. Go. Phenomenal dining at very reasonable prices. Formerly on the plaza at Porto Cupecoy, Cupecoy Beach, they are relocating effective in late October to the Cliff. Open every day but Monday, they will serve both lunch and dinner six days a week. Traditional and highly creative Continental dinners, with Tapas and other selections at lunch. Do not miss it. Reservations are required.

Emilio's: outside Philipsburg (featured 8/10/20) offers fine dining in an historic, classic ambiance. **Not to be missed.**

<https://emilios-sxm.com/menus/dinner-menu/>

Isola next to Hollywood Casino at Simpson Bay Resort, (featured 7/27/20). Italian. Excellent food, many choices (pizza too), busy, good specials. Lively; busy; entertainment some nights. Many folks from Simpson Bay Resort dine here as well as many locals and lots of casino high-rollers. www.isolaristorante.com

Sale & Pepe (featured 7/20/20) Cool location among breathtaking megayachts, cool decor, knowledgeable staff, and extensive menu, good service, and delicious food. Chef Davide Zagami stays mostly in the kitchen ensuring things go just right. <https://www.facebook.com/saleandpepemarina/>

La Rosa Restaurant, Maho Plaza, 7/13/20: Loved the relaxing vibe, attentive service, GREAT food, reasonable prices, and BIG portions. www.larosarestaurant.com/index.html

Vesna Taverna, www.vesnataverna.com (featured 6/22/20). Now open every day for B/L; dinner is offered Tuesday through Saturday. Outstanding dining and very reasonable pricing.

White Swan Chinese Restaurant (featured 3/16/20) SXM's very best, delicious, authentic food, attentive service, generous portions, and reasonable prices. We loved it...

SkipJack's SXM, <http://www.skipjacks-sxm.com/> (featured 2/3/20) SkipJack's triumphantly reopened with an entirely new dining deck late in January, 2019. Great place - go! Great staff and superb food in a picture postcard lagoon setting.

Spiga, www.spiga-sxm.com (featured 11/18/19) New bar, great staff, service, and phenomenal food. Everything is great, appetizers are out of this world. Not to be missed.

Pineapple Pete, www.pineapplepete.com (featured 7/8/19) Known for great lobster Thermidor and lots, lots more. Generous portions, reasonable prices. Huge variety. Games for kids.

Wasabi Charlie Japanese Restaurant (formerly Sushiitto) (7/8/19) is the new name of Sushiitto, now relocated next door to Pineapple Pete in Simpson bay. Essentially the same menu, same staff, same great food/service.

Mandarin Pan Asian, Port de Plaisance (featured 6/10/19) Excellent Pan-Asian dining including Japanese, Thai, and Chinese. Nice setting near the casino at Port de Plaisance.

Emilio's at Emilio Wilson Estate (featured 4/21/19) is as stupendous as it ever was, with spectacular dining in an equally spectacular restored building on the Emilio Wilson Estate. Ask to see the wine cellar and the museum. Open for lunch and dinner: not to be missed.

Freedom Fighters ITAL SHACK Rasta Restaurant, www.sxmfreedomfighters.com/restaurant 4/15/19. Just go....

IZI Ristorante Italiano, www.iziristoranteitaliano.com (featured 3/11/19). Open for lunch and dinner except Monday, when they're closed. Great food from one of SXM's very best restaurants. Fun atmosphere, too.

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's Smooth 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?

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.

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.lavista resort.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.

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) Closed permanently.

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 Group](#). Our thanks to our Admin there, Contessa Aiello, who edited the restaurant entries on that site.

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 Group](#). Our thanks to our Admin there, Contessa Aiello, who edited the restaurant entries on that site.

35. SXM Entertainment Calendar Now In Our SXM FB Site

We have long published the island92 SXM entertainment calendar in our main site, everythingSXM.com effective in November, however, we transitioned it to our Jeff Berger's Everything SXM Facebook group. It offers you a look at venues for live music across the Dutch side with some on Anguilla.

The list is compiled by Island92 and we simply run it. We don't have the bandwidth to create such a list ourselves, but we do invite owners of local venues who are not listed in the entertainment calendar to contact Jeffrey Sochrin at Island92 concerning advertising opportunities in the calendar and on the station, which has an enormous listenership both on the island and among SXM tourists from around the world. Readers can also listen live to Island92 at www.island92.com. The entertainment calendar is also frequently broadcast on their two radio stations.

36. Help Us Celebrate 7 Million Visits to our SXM Site...

During our "Paradise SXM" Event, we'll be giving away several SXM vacations, including weeks at **Simpson Bay Resort, Belair Beach Hotel, Adonis Cupecoy hotel, Azure Hotel and Art Studio on Simpson Bay beach, and El Zafiro hotel and restaurant on Simpson Bay beach.**

The giveaway celebrates JMB SXM Media surpassing 7,000,000 visits. Most of the weeks we give away will be handed out to randomly picked entries late in March. All are subject to seasonal limitations and availability.

In addition to vacations, we expect to give away dinners for two, gifts at jewelry stores, day sails, a car rental, and possibly some major gifts on one or two neighboring islands - all to be announced.

Here is more on our Paradise SXM vacation giveaway. To enter the giveaway, go to our home page at everythingxsm.com. That's the only place & the only way you can find the link to enter our giveaway. All winners ***MUST*** be subscribers to SXM Weekly News (required); it's free. We will verify that all winners are subscribers. If you're a pass-along or PDF reader, subscribe now at xsmweeklynews.com.

Paradise SXM will be one of our biggest Giveaways ever. Several people will be winning vacations from us. Why not you?

37. First Responders Now Get Platinum-Status JMB Discounts

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.

And now we're adding police, firefighters, EMTs, and nurses to our just-renamed Military / First Responder Memberships in recognition of their sacrifices for the rest of us every single day. We just need you to send us documentary proof (ID) that you're one of America's very best. To sign up or upgrade your JMB membership to Military / First Responders, visit everythingxsm.com and click the page curl to sign up for your JMB military membership (the page still says Military). We'll also need a DD214 (or other police / fire / nursing ID) with your SS# obliterated for security. We'll be delighted to welcome you all to our new best-of-all JMB Website Supporters Platinum Memberships.

38. SkyMed Q&A / FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

SkyMed® FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Answers to Common Questions

This document contains general SkyMed information in answer to common questions. SkyMed's services are defined by its Member Services Agreements – plain English documents that tell you what you get and how it works (see much more info below). As always, SkyMed offers a 30-day "Free Look period," so if for any reason you're not satisfied with your unused SkyMed protection before 30 days have expired, SkyMed will refund your money.

Q1. Does it cover my trip to...?

1. Basic short-term and annual “SkyMed *Takes You Home*®” protection applies throughout the USA (all 50 states), Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean. Global Emergency Travel Services (G.E.T.S., a subsidiary of SkyMed) protection is available outside the USA, CANADA, MEXICO, BAHAMAS, BERMUDA, and the CARIBBEAN (the rest of the world), however neither SkyMed nor G.E.T.S. covers trips to nations on the U. S. State Department’s then-current “Do Not Travel” list – North Korea, Iran, and Venezuela currently, for example, and several others. Before planning a trip, check that list if you have any question about whether protection is provided for your destination – or call SkyMed directly during normal office hours (Mountain Standard Time) at 480 946 5188 or 1-800-475-9633.

Q2. Who is protected?

1. “Single” protection is available for individual travelers. “Family” protection includes your spouse or domestic partner and your young children up to 18 or 24 if they are full time students.

Q3. Do I need to call SkyMed before traveling outside my home country?

1. If you’re traveling during the normal high season for travel to your destination, no. If you’re traveling to your destination during its low season, do call SkyMed Member Services at the 800 number in the first question and let them know.

Q4. What if I’m going to a country not listed above in question 1?

1. Then you’ll need (G.E.T.S) protection. If you have one of our Ultimate multiyear memberships, (G.E.T.S.) protection is included. On Annual (one-year) memberships, “G.E.T.S.” protection is an inexpensive option.

Q5. What’s the difference between “short term” and “Annual” or multi-year protection?

1. Short-Term protection is intended for brief trips, say a week or two. Like Annual protection, it “Takes You Home®” to doctors and hospitals you know and trust when you suffer a serious or critical illness or injury while traveling. Preexisting medical conditions are covered from day one with the short-term plan. It’s inexpensive, only \$15/day for family protection. Remember, though, that Annual and Multi-year Ultimate memberships cost much less – only about \$1.35/day for family plans. Plus, they’re guaranteed renewable without regard to advancing age or declining health. If you get a short-term plan, once it has expired, it is done, and you must reapply and requalify for another when you next travel. With Annual and multiyear Ultimate memberships, all you need do is renew before the renewal deadline – no need to reapply unless your membership has lapsed and the grace period has ended.

Q6. Is there an age limit for applications?

1. There is no age limit to apply. There’s no age limit on renewals, either.

Q7. Can you cancel my protection at a certain age or if I get really sick?

1. Annual and multi-year Ultimate memberships are guaranteed renewable, as noted above. They will not be cancelled simply because you’re a certain age or because your health has changed.

Q8. Will you raise the price of my membership at a certain age or if I get sick?

1. Once you’re a SkyMed member, at renewal time you’ll pay the same low renewal fees that everyone else with your type of membership pays. If you join at age 75 or older and purchase the X-Pat plan because you live in Mexico, the Bahamas, Bermuda, or the Caribbean, the X-Pat plan is more expensive than the standard traditional (Annual or multiyear Ultimate) plan.

Q9. What exactly does SkyMed cover? Is it health insurance?

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

This is the same list you’ll find on the back of our current membership applications. SkyMed provides up to 18 benefits related to medical evacuation if you suffer a serious or critical illness or injury while traveling. It is not health insurance – in the “SkyMed universe,” SkyMed *Takes You Home*® to doctors and hospitals you know and trust, where your health insurance works.

Q10. What about pre-existing conditions? Are they covered?

1. Yes: for short-term memberships, medevac protection (including items listed in the answer to Q9, above) is included for critical illnesses or injuries related to pre-existing and non-pre-existing conditions. For Annual and multiyear Ultimate memberships, pre-existing conditions are covered after a brief 90-day waiting period.

Q11. I want guaranteed renewable protection because of my age, but I'm going on a trip sooner than 90 days. What can we do about that?

1. Get our inexpensive short-term membership to cover your near-term trip, including medical evacuations for serious or critical illnesses or injuries due to pre-existing conditions. At the same time, apply for an Annual or Ultimate membership, to kick in once your near-term trip ends.

Q12. I'm not traveling for a while. When should I apply?

1. Get SkyMed before you need it – just like fire insurance. Since you don't know when you'll need it – and since health can change in a heartbeat thanks to falls, accidents, or other issues – it's always better to do it sooner rather than later. Beyond that, if you have pre-existing conditions and get SkyMed Annual or multiyear Ultimate medevac protection now, that 90-day exclusion period for pre-existing conditions protection may well be finished by the time you travel.

Q13. What kind of questions do you ask in your application? Do you send somebody to do a medical exam?

1. There's no medical exam. Our application is simple, asking about hospitalizations in the last six months, your current medical conditions, and your prescriptions – and on the prescriptions, all we need is their name, not dosage info. If you have a complex medical history, SkyMed may ask for a "HQ" (health questionnaire) to be completed by your doctor and submitted to SkyMed by fax. You should also have your passport number handy; we record it so it's there in case you need help outside your home country.

Q14. How long does it take before I hear whether I'm accepted?

1. Generally just a few business days, but it's always best to do your application early to ensure sufficient time for processing.

Q15. I have more questions. Where do I find the answers?

1. SkyMed Ambassador Jeff Berger, located in Massachusetts, will be happy to answer your questions. Call his private line at 508-747-8281.

Q16. Can I sign up online?

1. For fastest results, we always suggest you contact us directly. We've done thousands of applications and can whisk you through the process in minimal time and with minimal bother. To get additional information first and see some customer stories, check our site, www.skymed.com/jmb. But to sign up, always call 508-747-8281. The process normally takes about 10 minutes, if that.

Q17. Who can get SkyMed?

1. SkyMed is available to residents of the USA and Canada, and to X-Pats living in the countries listed in Q1. X-Pat protection is necessary if you live outside the US or Canada for six months or more, in aggregate, in any 12-month period. Always notify SkyMed if you move.

Q18. I have a rather deep medical history. Will SkyMed still accept me?

1. Although SkyMed accepts the vast majority of applications, others do get health questionnaires (see Q13) and occasionally some do not qualify. There is no cost to apply if your membership application cannot be accepted. A history of a heart attack or cancer several years ago or other maladies does not automatically signal any issues for SkyMed. Apply – there is nothing to lose (again, no charge if you're not accepted). And as we noted in Q6 there is no age limit to apply and no age limit to renew.

SkyMed World Headquarters business office operations:

We are following the White House Coronavirus Task Force '15 Days to Slow the Spread' guidelines released March 16th, 2020.

We have team members fully functional and working from home. We are all connected on line and have access to all programs

necessary for efficient operations. We have a seamless business operation whether employees are working in the office or from home.

We are on duty 24 SEVEN for our members.

SkyMed Travel reservation # 1-800-568-8994 is open during regular business hours 8am to 5pm (MST). Messages can be left off hours.

Resources to help you:

Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) www.cdc.gov/travel

Canadian government updates www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html

National Institutes of Health (NIH) www.nih.gov

US Customs & Border Protection (CBP) www.cbp.gov

US State Department emergency assistance coronavirusemergencyUSC@state.gov

World Health Organization (WHO) www.who.int

SkyMed Travel reservations www.skymedtravel.com or email info@skymedtravel.com

SkyMed Member Services 1-480-946-5188 or 1-800-475-9633 or memberservices@skymed.com

Please do not hesitate to call or email us with your questions or concerns. We are here to help as much as we can.

Regular member

services are being conducted everyday.

Our thoughts and prayers are with everyone in the SkyMed Member family wherever you are in this time of uncertainty.

Eleanore Klein, President

SkyMed Group of Companies

From JMB:

How to Contact Us or Sign Up

Jeff is a SkyMed Ambassador. Reach him directly at 508-747-8281 during regular office hours, Eastern time. You can

also find him in Facebook Messenger through www.facebook.com/groups/mysxm or you can email him at

jeff@jmbcommunications.com with the Subject **SkyMed**. He has an alternate Skype number too, 508-591-3483.

It is always best to sign up by phone directly with Jeff at the numbers above – it's fast & easy.

From:

JMB Communications

Membership Services

support@jmbcommunications.com

39. Getting SXM Questions Answered Quickly

Join our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#) and you'll find about 25,000 SXM tourists who love SXM as much as you do.

Our site is the best place around to ask questions and get answers about SXM -- around the clock. Check it out.

40. Want to See Back Issues of SXM Weekly News? Here's How

Our *SXM Weekly News* PDF archives enable you to download any issue of Weekly News published since Spring 2014, including our amazing *2018 April Fools' Day parody* and many Special Editions.

Check it out [here](#). It has just been thoroughly updated. Each week's newsletter is usually added within a few days after mailing of that issue to its subscribers completes (Monday).

[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 skymed.com/jmb. SkyMed is the Principal Sponsor of JMB SXM programs.

See the [rundown of all SkyMed Features & Benefits](#)

41. Are You Military, First Responder, or Nurse?

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.

And now we're adding police, firefighters, EMTs, and nurses to our just-renamed Military / First Responder Memberships in recognition of their sacrifices for the rest of us every single day. We just need you to send us documentary proof (ID) that you're one of America's very best. To sign up or upgrade your JMB membership to Military / First Responders, visit everythingxsm.com and click the page curl to sign up for your JMB military membership (the page still says Military). We'll also need a DD214 (or other police / fire / nursing ID) with your SS# obliterated for security. We'll be delighted to welcome you all to our new best-of-all JMB Website Supporters Platinum Memberships.

42. 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 www.skymed.com/jmb, our new site, going live shortly.

43. Please Patronize JMB Sponsors (Updated 12/7/20)

AMUSEMENTS

[Island Pedals Beer Cycle](#) (Philipsburg)

BOAT TOURS

[Celine Charters](#) (Enigma)

Luxury Private Catamaran Charters:

www.sxmstmartincatamarancharters.net

BREWERIES & DISTILLERIES

SXM Beer Brewery

Toppers Rhum & Vodka Distillery

CAR RENTALS:

[Leisure Car Rental](#)

[Sax Car Rental](#)

[Tropical-Tropicana Car Rental](#)

Exclusive Car Rental

CUBAN CIGARS:

[Cigar Mack](#)

[SXM Cigars](#)

DOLLAR STORES

[All in One Place](#)

EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS:

[SkyMed International](#) (Covers the entire USA, Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, the Bahamas, and all the nations of the Caribbean. Global protection available. Sold only to Americans, Canadians, and X-Pats living in these countries.)

JEWELERS:

[Zhaveri Jewelers](#) in Philipsburg.

[Caribbean Gems](#)

Oro Diamante

[Majesty Jewelers](#)

[Ray's Jewelers](#)

[Alpha Jewels](#)

[JN Jewelers \(Maho under Jax, open late\)](#) NEW!

Jewels & Beyond (Maho) NEW!

[Shoppers Haven](#)

LIVE MUSIC

Hole in the Wall, Maho Plaza, Dutch side

MAPS

[Kasprowski Publishers](#)

PARFUMERIE / PERFUME

Tijon Parfumerie, Grand Case, www.tijon.com

REAL ESTATE COMPANIES: (See also VILLA RENTAL COMPANIES, below)

[Island Real Estate Team](#) is widely regarded as SXM's top real estate organization. A long-time 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 Group*.

Century 21 St. Maarten (new)

Sunshine Properties (new)

RESORTS:

Belair Beach Hotel

Simpson Bay Resort

Azure Hotel & Art Studio

Baker's Suites

RESTAURANTS & BARS

[IZI](#)

[SPIGA](#)

[VESNA TAVERNA](#)

ISOLA

Frenchy Ludo's

Mandarin Asian Bistro (Port de Plaisance)

Melange (Port de Plaisance)

Pelican Bistro

Soggy Dollar Bar

Sale and Pepe

Topper's Restaurant

LA PATRONA (Simpson Bay Resort)

MARIO'S BISTRO (Porto Cupecoy)

Pineapple Pete Restaurant

Wasabi Charlie Japanese Restaurant

Emilio's

Taloula's Blue Bitch Bar

Nowhere Special

ROXXY Bar / Restaurant (NEW)

LA ROSA (NEW)

NONNA ROSA (NEW)

LAZY LIZARD (NEW)

STAR WARS / YODA GUY MUSEUM

[Nick Malley, Front Street](#)

SWIMWEAR:

Endless Summer Swimwear, Philipsburg & Simpson Bay

VILLA RENTALS / 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 Group*. 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 Group*.

Candie Billant does condo and villa rentals and sales. You will find her at [blueparadiserealty.com](#).

[GoBeach Vacations](#)

[Sunshine Properties](#)

[Monte Verde / Belle Vue](#)

Villa Acropole:

[www.acropole-stmartin.com](#)

Relocation / "Papers" Consulting Companies

Bright Path is already posting in our [Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM Facebook Group](#)

Updated 12/7/20

**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.

44. 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 Group](#) — 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 **JMB SXM Media 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". Or PM us on FB for an even faster response. We'll get complete information to you quickly. (Or again, just PM Jeff Berger on Facebook Messenger.)

Tourism has started to return 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 beyond the shutdown. 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://everythingSXM.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml .

Want to rent or buy a week?

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

SECTION 5: For Members Only

A. **Where to Get Member Info:** www.everythingsxm.com/secret

B. **Password Recovery Info:** Your username is the email address you have registered with JMB Website Supporters. If you forget your password, click "forgot / change password" in the orange login box near the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com. To change your password, click that same link.

C. **How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads or Update the Price in an Ad:** See www.everythingsxm.com/secret .Your username and password are required.

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

See www.everythingsxm.com.

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

To unsubscribe, go here: www.sxmweeklynews.com. You **CAN NOT** unsubscribe either by replying to this email or, if you are an AOL user, by clicking the *spam* button on AOL.

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

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

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

LEGAL:

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

Contact Us (Revised 5/25/18)

All member discounts and benefits are explained in detail on the members-only *secret* website, <http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret> . If you're a JMB Website Supporters member and have a question not answered there, contact 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)

12/7/20 #V3-1276 6am AST 12/6/20 | [Terms of use](#) |

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