

From JMB / SXM Weekly News 12/14/20: ::::Breaking News:::: French Tourist in Rare Shark Attack at Orient (story 23); Mario's at the Cliff; Esmeralda; Le Petit Hotel; Surging Condo Purchases - What You Must Know; Taloula Mango's; Parking & Shopping in Philipsburg [38 Top SXM News Stories for Tourists]

Can't see this newsletter? Go [HERE](#) for our SXM Weekly News PDF Archives.

Vol. 3, #1277 --- Monday, 12/14/20
News From St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM

WEAR YOUR MASK!
WE WANT YOU BACK SAFELY IN SXM!



This Week's Stories

Airfare, Airlines & Weather News

Everything SXM Home Page

Island News

Lodging News

Members SECRET Website Login

[Member News](#)

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

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

Copyright ©, JMB Communications, 2020. See [Legal](#) for reprint requests, page bottom.

From: www.jmbcommunications.com

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

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

IMPORTANT: "Jeff1620" is an unmonitored send-only email address.
For Contact info, see [#Contact Us](#)
at the end of this newsletter.

********Unsubscribe info is at the end of this newsletter.********

Important Note:

This is Jeff Berger's / JMB Communications' *St. Maarten & St. Martin / SXM Weekly News*, published every Monday (Tuesdays during most holiday weeks). *You are receiving St. Maarten & St. Martin "SXM" Weekly News because you subscribed to it and/or are a JMB Website Supporters member.*

Please do stay with us for all the latest tourist-oriented news from St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM all year long. Now read by about 346,000 people around the world...

Get Important SXM News as it Happens & Lots of Pictures Too from our Facebook and Twitter Pages:



Protect your vacation and business travel with SkyMed Emergency Medical Evacuation Membership



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

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

You can also download PDFs of recent editions here:

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

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

Get Your Own Free Weekly Copy of SXM Weekly News:

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

Enter your email address at the top and click SUBMIT. When you receive the confirming email, click the confirming link and you're in

TOP STORIES IN THIS ISSUE:

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

Top Stories in Today's SXM Weekly News:

Weather; Getting Here; Covid:

-- **Where to Find Current SXM Weather Info**
--> **Our Complete Guide to SXM Entry Requirements (Updated)**

SXM Accommodations:

- **Surge in Condo Purchases by North Americans: How SXM Is Responding to Demand**
- **Buying a Condo in SXM? Here's Important Info**
- **Esmeralda Resort Reopens Next Week**
- **Le Petit Hotel Reopens in Grand Case**
- **How To Rent Out Or Sell Your Timeshare Units**
- **Buying a Condo in SXM? Here's Important Info**

Other Island Headlines for Tourists:

- **French Tourist Killed in Freak Shark Attack off Orient Beach**
- **Going Home? Check Your State's Return Policies**
- **Parking & Shopping in Philipsburg**
- **Taloula Mango's Reopens**
- **For SXM Businesses, an Up and Down Season**
- **Restaurant of the Week: Mario's Bistro at The Cliff**
- **First Responders Now Get Platinum Benefits**
- **How to Put Incredible Caribbean Colors in Your Home**
- **"Plus One" JMB Membership Promotion Final Week is NOW**

 -- **Get SkyMed Medevac Protection BEFORE You Need It**
 #####

-- **Please Patronize JMB Sponsors**
 #####
 -- **SXM Business Owners: How To Increase Foot Traffic**

Please see our **complete Table of Contents** below.

38 News Stories This Week

Scroll down for our complete **Table of Contents**

Timeshare Rental and Sale of the Week

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

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

SXM Timeshare Rentals of The Week:

RENTAL 2/27/2021 3/13/2021 Week 9 and 10 The Villas at Simpson Bay Resort Enjoy the Heineken Regatta. Fourth floor Junior Suite has 2 full beds, full bath with double vanity, kitchenette with a mini refrigerator, microwave, toaster, coffee maker, and private balcony with spectacular views of the water and surrounding hills. Pools, beach bar, gym, restaurants, casino, and grocery store on the resort. Discount given if renting both weeks. Renter is responsible for the \$50 per week Timeshare tax. \$1000 per week Sharon (315) 682-6141 scoolic1@twcny.rr.com

RENTAL 3/27/2021 4/3/2021 Week 13 DIVI Little Bay Beach Resort 2 Bedrooms, 2 king beds with a queen pull-out in each bedroom plus a queen pull-out in living room, sleeps up to 10! 3 full baths, 1 jacuzzi tub, washer & dryer, 3 decks overlooking Little Bay, Resort has 3 pools, 1 is a multilevel pool with swim-up bar & 4 restaurants plus gym, spa, deli, market, watersports, and other stores. Close to Phillipsburg. Unit is second level but has access via a walkway

without steps. \$1,500 Paul 715-897-5634 pkapla@charter.net

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

SXM Timeshare Sales of The Week:

SALE 1/31/2021 2/7/2021 Week 5 The Villas at Simpson Bay Penthouse: Top floor of The Villas at Simpson Bay. Unit includes Master suite, Junior lockout (can be used or rented out separately) and large outside patio; all over look Simpson Bay! Master suite: full kitchen, (granite counters, stainless steel appliances), dining area, living room with 2 Murphy beds. Master bedroom:king size bed, spacious closet, safe, large bath with separate double vanity area. Junior lockout sleeps 4, full bath, double vanity, kitchenette with microwave, mini fridge, toaster, coffee maker. Each unit has own balcony. Renovations completed Fall 2020.Renovation fee has been paid. Outside patio: wet bar, TV, loungers, table and chairs, grill. Easy access to Simpson Bay pools, beaches,restaurants and walking distance to others. \$13,900 Tim (218)236-7840 Tims26827@gmail.com

SALE 3/20/2021 3/6/2021 Week 8 and 9 The Villas at Simpson Bay Resort and Marina 5th floor villa. Both A and B sides. Sleeps 6. "A" side has full kitchen, dining area, living room (TV) with 2 Murphy beds, king bed in master (TV), and full size, double vanity bathroom. "B" side, aka Junior lockout, has 2 full beds (TV), full bath/double vanity, small kitchen with mini fridge, toaster, microwave and coffee maker. Each has own balcony overlooking Simpson Bay, where you can enjoy the Regatta. \$21,750.00 per week Camille 540-207-0337 camijammer@aol.com

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

Villa Rentals Now Offered On Our Site Too:

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS -- This Week's Stories

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest. This week's Table of Contents follows these links:

"Like" Our "Everything St. Maarten / St. Martin / SXM" Facebook Group:



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

"Like" Our Facebook St. Maarten Timesharing Group

<https://www.facebook.com/StMaartenTimesharing/>

Search the SXM Weekly News Archives:

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

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

Archives prior to April 12 2014 (old format):

<http://everythingxsm.com/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi?flavor=archive;list=sxmweeklynews>

Check Out Our Linked-In "St. Maarten and St. Martin Travelers" Group (Free; Timeshare Focus):

www.linkedin.com

Get a growing group of about 300 SXM-focused island discounts and other SXM-related benefits through JMB Website Supporters membership:

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

Complete Table of Contents

Section One: Getting Here: Flights, Airlines, Airports, Cruises, Weather, COVID-19, Etc.

--Scroll Down To This Section--

Getting Here:

1. Do You Want That Flight on a Boeing 737 MAX?

See **COVID-19 / Entry Requirement Information, below**

Weather:

2. December Winds
3. Where to Find Current SXM Weather Info
4. Where to Download the NHC's Hurricane Tracking Chart

COVID-19 - General:

5. New Rapid Antigen Test Added to Approved Tests list by Dutch Side
6. Got Flights Around the Holidays? Re: EHAS, Don't Worry, Be Happy

COVID-19 - Guide to Entry Requirements

7. Guide to SXM Entry Requirements (REVISED 11/18/20)
8. What RT-PCR means; (It is Not "Real-Time")
9. Finding and Taking RT-PCR or Antigen Tests in Your Area
10. Applying Online for Admission to SXM: What & How, w/ Advice
11. *****Important***: Avoiding Common Mistakes That Cause Denials**
12. What to Take With You When You Go (An Important Checklist)
13. What to Expect When Arriving at SXM Airport
14. Reporting Your Condition to EHAS for 14 Days

Etc.:

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

Section Two: Accommodations (*Hotels, Resorts, Timeshares, Villas, Etc.*)

--Scroll Down To This Section--

16. Surge in Condo Purchases by North Americans: How SXM Is Responding to Demand
17. Buying a Condo in SXM? Here's Important Info
18. Esmeralda Resort Reopens Next Week
19. Le Petit Hotel Reopens in Grand Case
20. New Rentals for 2020, 2021 Available at Everythingsxm.com
21. How To Rent Out Or Sell Your Timeshare Units

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

Section Three: JMB Member Discounts & Benefits

--Scroll Down To This Section--

22. News About JMB Member Discounts / Benefits Updates

Section Four: Island News, Info, & Features

--Scroll Down To This Section--

23. :::::Breaking News::::: French Tourist Killed in Rare Shark Attack off Orient Beach
24. Going Home? Check Your State's Return Policies
25. Parking & Shopping in Philipsburg
26. Taloula Mango's Reopens
27. For SXM Businesses, an Up and Down Season
28. Mario's Bistro -- Restaurant of the Week
29. SXM Entertainment Calendar Now In Our Everything SXM FB Site
30. Help Us Celebrate 7 Million Visits To our SXM Site...
31. First Responders Now Get Platinum Benefits

#####

32. SkyMed FAQ / More Information

#####

33. Getting SXM Questions Answered Quickly
34. Want to See Back Issues of SXM Weekly News? Here's How
35. Are You Military, First Responder, or a Nurse?
36. Less Money, More Benefits, Ten Year Price Guarantee on SkyMed Ultimate
37. Please Patronize our Sponsors

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

Section Five: For Members Only (Revised 8/2017)

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 password" in the orange login box near the masthead at www.everythingsxm.com.

C. **How To Submit Rental or Sale Ads:** Links are on the Secret Website (see a, above.)

Section Six: Where To Find Background Information for Travelers (For New Readers) (Revised 8/2017)

How To Get a **GROWING LIST of 300+** Money-Saving St. Maarten- and St. Martin-Focused Travel Benefits

Visit <http://www.everythingsxm.com/secret>, the *secret* site for JMB Website Supporters members only, for low fares to SXM from cities across the USA, Canada, and Western Europe, plus a growing list of 300+ additional major travel benefits.

Not a member yet? See http://everythingxm.com/sxm/about_sxm/paypal.shtml. Cost: \$59 for one year, or \$99 total for three full years. Other durations available. Join us today...

All JMB Newsletters Read *From JMB*

This newsletter and mail from JMB Website Supporters to members read *From JMB* in the subject area so you won't misinterpret them as spam.

THIS WEEK'S STORIES:

Stories are numbered; scroll down for stories of interest.

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

GETTING HERE:

1. Do You Want That Flight on a Boeing 737 MAX?

It was Boeing's pride and joy: the 737 Max was Boeing's hottest selling "new" aircraft in years until design defects killed 346 people in two separate crashes overseas more than a year and 1/2 ago, prompting a global grounding of the aircraft.

With its defects allegedly fixed, the aircraft is now slowly returning to service. Some airlines serving SXM will be flying them though it's difficult to know at this point when the aircraft might return to service in flights to SXM. Aggravating that situation is the fact that Boeing intends to change the name of the plane, eliminating the reference to Max.

Here is a good [article](#) explaining how you can find out whether the plane your airline has scheduled for your flight is a Max. On one airline at least, you have no worries — that airline is JetBlue, which has no Boeing aircraft in its fleet at this time.

WEATHER:

2. December Winds

Last couple of weeks have seen unusually good weather for this time of year. December weather offers plenty of sun but also still a fair number of showers as the rainy season starts to wind down. The last couple of weeks, however, have

been generally gorgeous — almost like February weather but with much warmer sea water temperatures.

December is also typically known for the December winds which can bring quite breezy conditions to the island. As of midweek last week, the December winds weren't a big deal, but they could pick up at any time and usually do. It's a sign of the changing seasons here in SXM.

3. 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.

Changing Your Email Address?

***Now You Can Unsubscribe Your Old Email
and Sign Up Your New One
for your SXM Weekly News subscription
Quickly and Easily
at our Site: www.sxmweeklynews.com***

4. 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

5. New Rapid Antigen Test Added to Approved Tests by Dutch Side

The expanded list of acceptable rapid antigen tests now includes the Abbott (CGIA Panbio COVID-19 Ag rapid test), Becton Dickinson (CGIA BD Veritor COVID-19 test), Roche (SD Biosensor F test) and Abbott BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card.

6. Got Flights Around the Holidays? Re: EHAS, Don't Worry, Be Happy

A number of travelers who typically come to SXM either during or immediately after the December holidays have expressed concern about whether the EHAS operations will be affected by the holidays. They were concerned that EHAS might shut down for a period of time during the holidays.

EHAS is the organization that processes applications to visit SXM that are filed online. (See complete information about all entry requirements in our **Guide to Entry Requirements** in the Files area of our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#).)

Upon looking at this for our readers, we found there's no reason to worry: SXM Airport never closes and the EHAS operation is considered part of the airport. Though there may be fewer people working late at night than during the day, EHAS operations will not be shut down in connection with the upcoming holidays, we are told. So, go ahead and submit your request for approval as usual — as quickly as you can after you receive your negative results.

For more information, see our Guide.

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

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. *****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 containing 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. EHAS has been 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 so we 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.

12. 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.

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. 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

16. Surge in Condo Purchases by North Americans: How SXM Is Responding to Demand

We are working on a major story concerning the Caribbean-wide surge in condo purchases by North Americans. That surge is being felt strongly here in SXM and is reflected by many condo construction projects now underway or, in some cases now coming online.

We expect this story will appear in this space next week. If you are considering purchasing a condo in SXM or if the thought is just circulating in your head for the first time, don't miss the article — and suggest to your friends who are similarly interested in buying a place here in SXM that they subscribe to [SXM Weekly News](#) so they will not miss it.

17. 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*.

18. Esmeralda Resort Reopens Next Week

Esmeralda Resort on the French side within walking distance of Orient beach, which had closed months ago because of Covid, finally reopens this week, giving travelers their first opportunity in some time to stay at a major resort complex on Orient.

Much more information on Esmeralda is [here](#). Jeff Berger also wrote about St. Maarten and St. Martin for the Fodor's *Essential Caribbean* directory; he covered not only SXM but also Anguilla, Statia, and St. Barth. *Essential Caribbean* directory is available at most bookstores and on Amazon.

19. Le Petit Hotel Reopens in Grand Case

Le Petite hotel on the beach in Grand Case puts you within easy walking distance of all the restaurants of the village of Grand Case — and Le Petit Hotel has now reopened.

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 everythingSXM.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

Anything Can Happen Anywhere...

SKYMED Takes You Home® when you become critically ill or injured while traveling. 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).

Feel free also to contact me via Facebook Messenger.

--Jeff Berger

.....Breaking News.....

23. Woman Killed in Freak Shark Attack off Orient Beach

Three women vacationing on French St. Martin decided to spend Thursday on Orient beach near Bikini beach / La Playa / Orient Village. One of the women was a very strong swimmer who according to some people had previously trained for the Olympics.

The group decided to swim far offshore, though two of the women returned to shore close to 230 on Thursday afternoon. The other swimmer, reportedly a 38 year-old French tourist, remained about 100 m from shore, over 300 feet out. There, she was apparently grabbed by one or both legs and pulled away by a shark. Her screams were heard on shore and an ambulance and gendarmes were called. At the same time, people from a Watersports company rushed into their boat and sped out to help her.

The attack was fatal. An autopsy was scheduled to be performed on Friday to determine the exact cause of death, suspected to be severe lacerations to the woman's legs and possibly drowning. The autopsy was scheduled to include experts who would be able to determine the species and size of the shark involved in the attack. This is the initial report from the autopsy, issued late Friday:

"Initial findings from the autopsy performed on the victim revealed it was likely a shark attack. Extremely rare fact even if the presence of several species of sharks is proven in our waters. Pending the additional analyzes of the autopsy and the implementation of a joint preventive action with the State services, the Nature Reserve and the police, the Collectivity has decided, in agreement with the prefecture, to extend the territorial decree prohibiting swimming and nautical activities requiring entry into the water until Wednesday, December 16, 2020."

Beachgoer James Downing told *SXM Weekly News*, "The women were sitting about 6 chairs away. I did not see it happen, and the two people with me and I were shocked we didn't notice. [The women] were speaking French. "We first were made aware when a guy came running down the beach saying get out of the water shark attack. It was surreal like a damn movie. We watched them bring the body to shore and the medical team helped get the body onto a stretcher to take away. The Gendarmes arrived and were talking to the girls she was with obviously all upset. Some think it was a Tiger Shark but all guesses."

French side officials immediately shut down all French side beaches for 48 hours, not allowing any watersports or swimming. It was not known if the Dutch side was going to do the same. Watersports / swimming regulations on the French side would be enforced by the Gendarmerie.

Shark attacks here are extraordinarily rare, with fatal attacks unheard-of. It is not known if either side of the island is going to be undertaking efforts to monitor the presence of sharks from the air, as is done in some beach areas in the US. However, on Friday morning, we watched Gendarmes in a patrol boat near the scene of the attack as they worked with a crew doing drone surveillance of the area. We were posting that photography Saturday.

It is also not known whether the woman was wearing a shiny bathing suit or flashy silver jewelry which may have attracted the shark, thinking she was prey.

Over the years, many people, especially French side residents, have been known to swim the channel between Orient beach and Green Cay, despite the fact that the water off Green Cay is deep and some people say it has been known to harbor bull sharks.

Tiger sharks are wide-ranging, as are many other sharks. Last week, one was recorded washed up dead on Plum Bay. It did not have any obvious injuries, indicating its death may have been natural and not caused by an interaction with any boat. That shark had been tagged two years ago off Jamaica. That incident was unrelated to Thursday's shark attack off Orient beach.

Surprisingly, prior to the announcement confirming this as a shark attack, a spokesperson for the SXM Nature Foundation said she did not believe the attack was by a shark, though most others disagreed.

Others have suggested that feeding habits of local sharks may have been impacted due to illegal shark fishing; sharks are protected in the area. Authorities are looking into fishing. Climate change is not part of this investigation.

We will have more on this as the analyses are further explored and the investigation continues.

24. Going Home? Check Your State's Return Policies

It's essential for visitors returning home to the US to know their home state's policies and procedures for passengers returning from overseas flights well before they head to the airport.

We suggest at least a couple of weeks before your return date that you visit your state's main web portal to see exactly what its requirements are regarding Covid. Some states may require a negative test be taken X number of hours before your return flight; others may require some degree of quarantine, and others may require nothing.

If a Covid test is required prior to your return home, you may ask about testing locations on SXM that you can use — to do that, go to our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#). Please do not ask questions there about your state's requirements — our group is SXM centric and will not accept such posts. Your state's web portal is certainly the best source of current, accurate information about requirements related to returning international passengers.

25. Parking & Shopping in Philipsburg

Until recently, going to Philipsburg to do shopping for souvenirs, jewelry, or simply to visit the boardwalk was problematic: the main parking lot at the center of town was loaded with local cars and was otherwise closed to tourists. Philipsburg was looking for business but tourists coming to town had no place convenient near the town center to park.

We are told that this problem is now being solved and that the parking lot should now be open to the public. It is behind the straw market which is behind the courthouse in the center of town and the fees are very inexpensive. The only other paid parking is near Bobby's Marina at the far Eastern end of town; from there you can walk to the boardwalk and then follow various paths through the stores to Front Street. The parking near Bobby's Marina is convenient for businesses on the Eastern end of Front Street (low street numbers), while the central parking is convenient for the center and Western end of town (higher street numbers).

26. Taloula Mango's Reopens

Philipsburg boardwalk restaurant Taloula Mango's (also known as Blue Bitch Bar) reopened last Friday. It had closed in March when the Covid pandemic hit.

TM is celebrating its reopening with a signature series of events it calls "Back to the Boardwalk" that seek to "reignite life and passion for Philipsburg." The first event Friday night featured music and entertainment by DJ Petty and Control Band.

Philipsburg has been hard-hit by the COVID-19 crisis, being primarily dependent on cruise tourism. Boardwalk Boulevard, which saw as many as 10,000 cruise passengers on a busy pre-COVID-19 day, is now relegated to maybe 100 daily passers-by. Many cruise lines are only tentatively estimated to resume operations by March/April 2021.

Is there Parking on their roof? Yes

Hours: Every day from 11 - 4, Fridays 11 -11

Taloula Mango's will be doing a weekly "Back to the Boardwalk" series in Fridays from 5-11. "Back to the Boardwalk" will be a series of events on Friday nights that seek to "reignite life and passion for Philipsburg."

"It's sad to see the Boardwalk this way; bars and restaurants are closed, some permanently. Nevertheless, I have confidence in town," said co-owner Norman Wathey, adding that his restaurant's reopening is a sign that Philipsburg businesses are resilient despite the economic downturn.

27. For SXM Businesses, an Up and Down Season

If you talk to restaurateurs and jewelers in SXM, you get some interesting feedback on the state of their businesses.

Jewelers that depended upon cruise ship passengers for most of their business have universally fallen on hard times since there are no cruise ship passengers.

Jewelers that have long appealed to stayover visitors are doing better, particularly by using direct response and social media. Stayover tourists are keeping close tabs on what is going on on their favorite island through sites such as our [Everything SXM Facebook Group](#), and savvy SXM businesses are leveraging the power of such social media groups to stay in constant contact with their customers.

So, for jewelers, their status depends on how they do business and what they are doing to stay in touch with their customers.

For restaurateurs, it's a daily battle. It is impossible to predict what business will be like night to night. Some nights are quite busy, leveraging the presence of stayover tourists to a satisfying degree. Other nights see only a few people. That variability makes both ordering and staffing highly challenging.

On the average, though, it seems that most good restaurants are doing okay, although many are clearly nervous since things aren't likely to change for the better for several months.

Your favorite stores and restaurants in SXM can use your help right now....

28. Restaurant of the Week: Mario's Bistro

In traveling through life, have you ever noticed how some restaurants seem to have beautiful surroundings but only ordinary food? And some other restaurants have spectacular food -- but their ambience is mediocre at best.

Mario's Bistro at its new location at the Cliff in Cupecoy gives you the best of both worlds: an extraordinary dining experience inside an equally extraordinary new location.

Originally situated next to the canal in downtown Marigot, Mario's moved before the hurricane to decidedly fancier digs at Porto Cupecoy. He has now made what may well be his final and best move to the Cliff, arguably the most posh high-rise condo residence on the island.

Push the button at the gate to enter, park inside, and walk down the main corridor to the restaurant. Sit at the bar for a few drinks if you like, or relax in the lounge while you enjoy Tapas before going to your table in the main restaurant. You'll have gorgeous ocean views and a pleasant tropical breeze as you look over the gardens below their patio setting.

But as we've said for years, the proof of the pudding — and everything else — is in the eating, and that is where Mario's absolutely excels. Mario's offers a suite of appetizers focused on a spectrum of tastes. Your biggest problem with the appetizers is deciding which one you want the most (you will certainly be attracted to more than one).

Dinners are flat out superb. We usually gravitate toward seafood but their choices also include beef, poultry, and some vegetarian selections. Presentation may just be the best on the island — so bring your camera.

If you read no other recommendation than the next sentence, heed it well: leave plenty of room for dessert. They are flat out spectacular — great creativity, superb taste, and of course everything is meticulously fresh.

As we have long said, Mario's Bistro at the Cliff in Cupecoy is one of SXM's top three restaurants. Go early in your trip: you will without doubt want to return later. Mario's Bistro has our highest recommendation and has long been a recipient of our Everything SXM Culinary Award of Excellence.

Next week: **Vesna Taverna**.

Here are recently featured SXM restaurants:

Mario's Bistro at the Cliff, formerly Mario's Bistro www.mariobistrot.com/en/ 12/11/20 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 now at the Cliff. Open every day but Monday, they 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 required.

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.

Emilio's: outside Philipsburg (featured 8/10/20) offers fine dining in an historic, classic ambience. **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 Sushiiito) (7/8/19) is the new name of Sushiiito, 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.lavistasort.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.

29. 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.

30. 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?

31. 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.

32. 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

33. 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.

34. 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](#)

35. 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 everything.sxm.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.

36. 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.

37. 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.

38. 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:

Entire contents copyright (c), JMB Communications, 2019. World rights reserved. Excerpting, quotation, and republication, in any form, print, electronic, or archival, is expressly prohibited without written advance permission. You can forward this newsletter in its entirety only to your friends. For reprint permission, email us. JMB vigorously defends its copyrights. *Everything St. Maarten*, *Everything SXM*, and *Everything St. Martin* are service marks of JMB Communications. *JMB Communications* is a trademark of JMB Communications, P. O. Box 1812, Plymouth, Massachusetts 02362-1812 USA. Join our free St. Maarten / St. Martin newsletter mailing list at <http://www.everythingsxm.com> . You cannot join by emailing us.

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)

12/14/20 #V3-1277 6am AST 12/12/20 | [Terms of use](#) |

Copyright ©, JMB Communications, 2020. World rights reserved.

###