Take Home Some Last Minute Christmas Gifts

St. Maarten is tiny in size but huge in marketing talent. Many of our local entrepreneurs have developed brands which would look sharp in any country. They have created some excellent merchandise for visitors to take home; either to give away as a unique yet affordable gift or keep as a souvenir to remember your SXM vacation.

Are Swim Trunks Optional? Nude Beach Etiquette

The trouble starts with the terminology. On the American side of the Atlantic Ocean a beach designated to be enjoyed unencumbered is called 'Clothing Optional'.

Waste No More: Trash Turned Into Treasure

On the first of December, a new company opened their doors with the intention of giving garbage around the island a second life, as art.

Take Topper's: it started as a popular restaurant, but the name stands now for refined flavored rum as well. An authentic St. Maarten rum is undoubtedly a great gift, provided that your luggage weight can tolerate a few extra kilos of bottles with Topper's Rhum.

If not, take at least a memory home from your visit to the distillery. There is a broad selection of original t-shirts and other Topper's branded items available in the distillery's boutique.

Full Article on Page 4

By Leslie Hickerson

Full Article on Page 6

Continued on Page 13

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Letter From the Editor
December 7, 2018

Thank you for reading the ST-MAARTEN.COM Weekly Edition. All of our previous issues are available on the ST-MAARTEN.COM website. Additionally, if you enjoyed our publication and would like to continue to read from home, wherever that may be, please use the QR code to the right to access our digital publication.

I hope you are as delighted with our holidays issues as I was working on them. Something about discussing gift giving ideas and seeing stores and businesses decorate for the season is thrilling.

Welcome to our newest advertisers, and thank you to all who have chosen to be a part of the Weekly Edition. I encourage you, our readers, to visit these incredible establishments as you will experience the best St. Maarten has to offer!

Wishing you a wonderful week ahead and Happy Holidays if you are leaving the island soon.

Hilary Grant
Editor
We assemble every single watch twice. Because perfection takes time.

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GLASHÜTTE 1/SA

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Are Swim Trunks Optional? Nude Beach Etiquette

Continued from Page 1

The trouble starts with the terminology. On the American side of the Atlantic Ocean a beach designated to be enjoyed unencumbered by any textiles is labeled 'Clothing Optional'. In Europe, things are handled simpler: if you are looking to enjoy sun and surf in your birthday suit, it is called a 'Nude Beach'. And if beachgoers don't drop their attire within minutes of arrival, they will be quickly chased away, and not with friendly words.

You see, on a clothing-optional beach, there is the dilemma of two very different kinds of nudity; the first kind is the obvious one where a person doesn't wear a bathing suit. The second form of nudity concerns someone staying dressed on this beach and attempting to mingle with nudists: here, it is the mind which is fully exposed, with barely suppressed desires obvious to the surroundings. Every naturist will assume that a person wearing clothes, walking among naked people, is there only for one reason: voyeurism.

Remember this: nobody cares. It doesn't matter what your age is, what your body type is and if you are shy or not. A clothing-optional beach lacks vanity. It is best suited for people who have overcome these concerns and are comfortable in their skin (pun intended). There are physically attractive sun worshippers on the beach, and it's okay to notice. But don't dare to approach someone with flirtatious intent without keeping the situation equal regarding attire or lack of it. To overcome the initial hesitation to strip down, consider picking a spot in the second row from the water. This way, exposure to gawkers, which frequently come from cruise ships, is limited.

On the cruise ships, excursions to Orient Beach come with a warning label: "You might experience beach nudity!" This sentence seems to be the best advertisement possible to sell these tours because hordes of eager passengers walk up and down the nude beach segment fully dressed including shoes, commenting on the perceived pandemonium they witness. The Spanish language crowd touring the scenery appears to be blissfully unaware that their words are understood by many. Spanish is not an exotic language on SXM, and someone needs to tell them.

Most naturists don't wear bathing suits for swimming for the same reasons that very few people take showers in their pajamas. Once used to swimming in the nude, the thought of wearing wet trunk-sized pants with happy germs breeding in a fertile environment appears absurd. It was the US Surgeon General C. Everett Koop who stated many years ago that the only scientifically legit health advice for beach-swimming would be to do it in the nude as a sanitary matter.

But let's explore the positive aspects of the term 'clothing optional'. It is meant to take the pressure off nude beach newbies, who need some additional time to get comfortable. When visiting our island's most famous beach, Baie Orientale, don't come as a gawker. Settle in by renting a chair, or just lay down on a towel. Beautiful Orient Beach is worth a visit, even though the once famous naturist resort Club O was destroyed by Hurricane Irma and is now a sad background. The popular Perch Bar was replaced by a simple structure called 'Perch Bar Light'. Secure free parking is right there on the former resort's property and across the bar. Cedric and his crew are renting beach chairs and umbrellas for $7 each. The road connecting Orient Village with the clothing option part of the beach is blocked at the time of this writing. Visitors need to take the Gallion Beach road to access for former Club O territory.
It's Always Summer at Endless Summer Swimwear

Escaping a cold winter likely means that your shopping options at home were limited to coats, hats and scarves instead of beach necessities for your tropical vacation. Luckily, Endless Summer Swimwear has everything you will need.

Located on the main drag in Simpson Bay, this swimsuit shop carries renowned brands that sunbathers flock to like Gottex, Roidal, Opera Swimfascination, La Blanca and Tara Grinna just to name a few.

Always ready to help you to pick out the perfect beachside fashion, their customer service is as extensive as their inventory. And do not fret- they carry all sizes and styles including tasteful two pieces, daring one pieces or vice versa if you are so inclined.

Endless Summer completes the beach ready shopping experience by completing the head to toe look. Pick out cover-ups for when you glide into lunch, and adorable accessories like beach bags, sandals adorned with crystals and of course, sun hats.

---

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Welfare Road - Simpson Bay
OPEN 11 AM TO LATE - CLOSED MONDAY
Continued from Page 1

On the first of December, a new company opened their doors with the intention of giving garbage around the island a second life, as art. Local artist Tess Verheij has been providing art classes for students in St. Maarten/St-Martin for six years through her foundation, The Art Craft Café. After Irma she combined efforts with another artist to host a post-hurricane exhibition. In the process of creating her pieces she began to think about the negative effects we have had on the ecosystem and what she could do to combat them.

“I started to realize that we must all think about what we are contributing to our environment. It’s easy to blame the government all the time, and of course they need to do something, as it’s their obligation. I think for us it’s our obligation as well to give back to nature what’s been given to us.”

“That’s what made me think about what I could give back to St. Maarten to make it a better place for my children. For them I am very concerned. I think people don’t realize what we are doing. We see all these horrible images but not a lot of people are acting on it.”

With this, the idea for the Waste Factory was born. In its current state, the factory is an open studio where people can come to donate their garbage and turn it into art or functional materials. Guests can choose their project from the Art Menu, which will change throughout the year. Looking to early in 2019, Verheij hopes to receive the permits to become a full café where people can go to ‘sip and up-cycle’. The café will offer drinks and snacks to patrons who will be able to create art projects with donated pieces of plastic, paper, aluminum, tin, glass and Styrofoam.

In addition to the open setting for guests to come and create projects (hours currently 10AM-5PM, Tuesday-Saturday) the Factory is also partnering with several organizations to host one-time events. These event dates and info can be found on their Facebook page.

The hope for this project is to show that everything we are sending into the garbage can be used again. Products that biodegrade can be made into compost. Other materials that will damage the environment can be used again and again for other purposes. Those people who currently do participate in clean-up events have to send everything to the overflowing dump. “Picking up after ourselves is a great effort but it needs to be finished. Otherwise our trash ends up washing into the salt pond or polluting the land,” says Verheij. The staff at the Factory are passionate about the project and making a difference for our island. Manager Nina Manley grew up on the island and has watched the effects we have had on the environment through the years.

“In my lifetime of 21 years (on SXM) I have watched a reef just die, or become polluted. Instead of seeing coral and fish and marine-life, now we see all of this garbage instead of the fish. We find dead coral and algae covering rocks instead of bright beautiful coral, it is devastating. This is what our entire economy is based on, if we don’t have a pretty island then no one will want to come and spend money here. That is where all of us make our living, we really need to re-evaluate and do ecotourism efforts.”

Ready to help? The Waste Factory is currently looking for volunteers and materials to use for projects. All the materials listed above can be used in either the Art Craft Café for student artwork or in the Waste Factory itself. Materials should be dropped off clean and rinsed at their location found at the end of Front Street. Volunteers can contact the staff through the Facebook page.
Be Treated Like Royalty at Majesty Jewelers

By Hilary Grant, GIA Graduate Gemologist

With so many reputable jewelers on Front Street it can be difficult to decide which one you should shop in. Of course, a reasonable answer is where you like the merchandise! But many stores have a story behind what they sell from their showcase: Majesty Jewelers is one such store.

Owner Ashok Aswani, has resided in St. Maarten for decades, and has seen many iterations of Front Street shopping in his time here. He has carefully selected jewelry and timepieces for his locations, one on Front Street and one in the cruise port, that have proven time and time again to be favorites amongst his clientele. A popular jewlery brand to Hollywood stars, Kabana, once again graces the showcases at Majesty.

Kabana created dazzling jewelry pieces that are handcrafted with smooth, polished gems like Mother of Pearl, Australian Opal, Turquoise and Spiny Oyster. This entire line is fashioned by designers and artisans in the USA. One reason to purchase Kabana at Majesty Jewelers is their sizable Black Coral collection. Only a handful of companies are allowed by the US Federal Trade Commission to work with this precious gem, and Kabana is one of them. They source the finest specimens. Black coral’s pure, rich black color and exceptional luster are breathtaking. Majesty Jewelers carries the sterling silver and the gold collections.

If diamonds are more your cup of tea, then the world’s most perfectly cut diamond is right here on Front Street. Hearts On Fire, which has been shimmering on red carpets for years, is available at Majesty Jewelers. Earrings, rings, pendants, bracelets fill the showcases waiting to catch your eye. Hearts On Fire uses only high-quality diamonds that meet rigorous standards allowing only 1/10 of 1% of the world’s rough diamonds to become a Hearts On Fire diamond. The way that this diamond reflects and refracts light is unreal, and it reveals the beauty from within.

Majesty Jewelers is also home to Mark Henry Alexandrite jewelry. Prized for its natural ability to change colors based on its exposure to a variety of different lights, this phenomenal gem changes from green to red and dubbed, ‘emerald by day, ruby by night’. While there are several natural color change gemstones on the market, this has one of the most cherished changes.

If you are looking for wrist wear you can find luxurious brands of timepieces at Majesty Jewelers as well. Raymond Weil, Philip Stein, Shinola, Citizen and Fendi are some of the varieties you will find here. No matter what you are shopping for, the welcoming sales team and management make this jewelry store one of a kind.
Experience the Art of Sushi at Alina

Alina Sushi is a relatively new arrival to St. Maarten’s fine dining scene. Located at the Simpson Bay Yacht Club (right next to Jimbo’s), proprietor Chef Ken needed only a few months to attract a loyal following among the connoisseurs of Japanese cuisine.

Fine dining is defined here as using only the freshest ingredients with a simple yet artistic presentation of the food, not pretentious surroundings. There are outdoor tables, indoor seating and especially the chairs around the sushi counter, where guests are treated to a true show by Ken and his sous-chef.

Chef Ken brings decades of experience as a master of Japanese cuisine to the island. He had worked in many different countries and star-rated restaurants until he moved to the Caribbean, following a call of the highly-acclaimed Cuisinart Resort in Anguilla.

Our neighboring island to the north was Ken’s home for seven years, but Hurricane Irma forced him to change course. This is how Alina Sushi bravely opened in St. Maar-
ten only a few months after Irma at a time tourism to the region had stalled.

With a new restaurant concept focusing on the quality of Japanese food, not necessarily traditional but as a fusion with the ingredients to be found in the Caribbean, Alina bridges the line between a restaurant and a comfortable lounge.

Come here to chill after work, open the appetite with a few drinks and some tapas and stay on for some delicious nigiri and sushi. As a guest, you will appreciate that there is no pressure to ‘turn the table’ a few times per evening - you come to enjoy your stay at Alina Sushi as the night’s main event.

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Take Home Some Last Minute Christmas Gifts

Continued from Page 1

Cupecoy, offering gourmet quality food. Proprietor Nathalie Schoenher created a selection of elegant gift and souvenir items with the Rendez-Vous Lounge logo.

The Boon is a beach bar right on glorious Simpson Bay Beach. They offer a selection of attractive t-shirts and hats.

The Driftwood Boat Bar at the end of the airport runway at Maho Beach might be famous as the best spot to view arriving and starting airplanes, yet it is quality drinks and great comfort food which turned this bar into Maho’s favorite hangout. Get a t-shirt to prove that you have been there!

Random Wind: This day charter catamaran offers the most unusual shopping environment: they installed a small onboard boutique, where you’ll find selected handicrafts. All profits from this venture go to local charities, and this should be a great incentive for you to enjoy a sail around the island while helping the community with your souvenir purchase.

Jimbo’s Rock & Blues Cafe serves a unique combination of Carib-Mexican and strictly Caribbean food. Jimbo himself turned his restaurant into a recognized local brand, and after dinner, there is plenty of opportunities to browse the small boutique at the entrance. You will find a fantastic selection of original designs from leisurewear to hand-made cocktail glasses.

Nowhere Special Rum Bar & Grill: They are just playing coy! Of course, they are special, with a great waterfront location, a busy bar with nightly entertainment and wonderful Caribbean food. Served by a team of cute ladies, buying a shirt will bring memories of fun nights in Simpson Bay back to you.

Karakter: This is Simpson Bay's hip beach bar, build around a timeworn school bus. They offer a fabulous selection of t-shirts with an attractive logo.

Rendez-Vous Lounge: this casual bistro is located right in the marina plaza at Porto.
The Unique St. Maarten/St-Martin Crossword Puzzle
Find out if you are a truly knowledgeable about our region and its culture, history and geography

Please enjoy another edition of our crossword puzzle. You will notice that all questions are rooted in the Caribbean hemisphere and might take a bit of research to answer if you haven’t spent much time here. It also means: the answers are valid for St. Maarten/St-Martin and the neighboring islands. For example, if we ask for an island directly to the North of our location, it can only be Anguilla. If you try to solve the puzzle as a visitor to our island and you get stuck: don’t be shy! Approach a local and ask. You might find they struggle to answer as well. Or strike up an interesting conversation and learn a bit about our very unique region.

Mistakes do happen, even though our puzzle is produced right here on the island. If you detect an error, drop us a line at info@stmaarten.com. But please be aware that some of the questions are a bit tricky on purpose. Good luck!

Puzzle Solution on Page 17

ACROSS
1 Lacking on a nude beach
3 Precious stone from East Africa (and sold in St. Maarten)
5 Beer from Mexico
7 Closer to the water than Front Street
10 Village in the island center
11 What is at the Orange Grove Shopping Center?
12 Location of the island treaty
16 A bar where the dollar is wet
17 Resort close to Philipsburg
18 The new boat of Celine Charters
21 What is the Boat Bar made of?
22 Where is Mt. Scenery?
23 What passport do St. Maarteners have?

DOWN
2 Unique local liquor
4 Nationality of St-Martin citizens
6 For Sushi lovers
8 What do Jamaicans eat with Ackee?
9 Car rental not from a Queen, but better
11 A room more precious than gold
13 Where is a Special bar in Simpson Bay?
14 What products are branded DAS?
15 Store selling Jewels by what emotion?
17 No wrinkles after injection in Simpson Bay
19 What is Tintamarre?
20 Resort on Kimsha Beach

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Many people take a tropical getaway to refresh and rejuvenate body and mind. But have you ever seen someone that comes back from their vacation and their face looks rejuvenated and rested? It is very likely that they indulged in some facial treatments; mostly, Botox. While this has been a taboo subject for years, more and more women (and men!) are visiting their doctor for facial tune ups. So where can you go on the Dutch side while in St. Maarten/St- Martin? The Aesthetic Clinic in Simpson Bay.

Tucked away in an unassuming building by the Simpson Bay Pharmacy is one of our island’s most treasured gems. The doctor (yes- doctor not spa professional) provides quick and painless treatments like Botox and fillers. Not sure what either of these or for? Botox is what is called a neurotoxin, a poison made by bacteria called Clostridium botulinum. It can cause a deadly reaction called botulism if you eat it in spoiled food because it blocks signals from your nerves and paralyzes your muscles.

Doctors found that Botox injections can help smooth wrinkles because it relaxes muscles in the face. It also helps people who have tics and spasms because of a nerve disease like cerebral palsy. It is safe to use in your face because the toxin isn’t digested in your stomach and the dose is much smaller amount than you’d ingest with spoiled food.

Botox is routinely injected into the frown lines between eyebrows; as well as forehead and crow’s feet. If you suffer from chronic migraines or tension headaches you know how debilitating that can be. Good news! WebMD.com summarizes a study correlating Botox and less frequent headaches: “in a study of adults who get chronic migraine headaches, shots of Botox cut down the total number of days they had them or even other types of headaches. They also had more ‘crystal-clear’ -- pain-free -- days each month, and they reported fewer days off work.”

To make your experience more comfortable, partake in a numbing treatment prior to injections, lessening the feeling at the injection site. And the great news is there is no downtime- with results starting to show in two to three days.

Fillers are what you would inject from the nose down, most commonly used is Restalyne. This can smooth out smile lines or plump up your lips.

The Aesthetic Clinic also staffs a skin therapist, Krista, who is like a magician for your skin. She will work with you to build a personalized skin care regime. Offerings includ skin tag removal, acne treatments and edema therapy.
All I Want for Christmas is Tanzanite

By Hilary Grant, GIA Graduate Gemologist

Tanzanite was one of the most exhilarating gem discoveries of the 20th century. This newcomer to the world of colored gemstones materialized in Tanzania in 1962 and is one of three birthstones for December (the others are Turquoise and Zircon).

In 1967, prospectors located the primary source for this December birthstone: the Merelani Hills. This part of northern Tanzania is currently the only place on earth where tanzanite is found and mined. Grass-covered hillsides, scrub brush, rocky soil and a sporadic tree form the scenery.

In the major mechanized operations there, thousands of workers recover tanzanite from mines dug over 100 meters (over 300 feet) deep into the earth. North of the mines tower the snow-covered slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro.

It was eventually named Tanzanite by Tiffany & Co. (the main distributor and advertiser of it at the time) in honor of its country of origin. The tanzanite birthstone is often described as “velvety,” mostly because of its deep and saturated color, which ranges from a pure rich blue to violet, with the blue shade considered most valuable. Vivid colors and eye clean clarity made this gemstone an overnight sensation.

Tanzanite is best set in earrings or pendants. While not recommended for daily wear in a ring due to Tanzanite being a softer gemstone, this special occasion jewel will captivate. The Caribbean is a terrific location to purchase Tanzanite jewelry. With a larger selection, and higher quality Tanzanite than you would find in a mall jewelry store in the United States, you will really get the most bang for your buck.
St. Maarten Crossword Puzzle - Solution

We publish the solution to our crossword puzzle in the same issue as the puzzle itself.

This is for a good reason: Many of our readers are vacationers who won’t have a chance to wait for the next issue of St-Maarten.com Weekly Edition.

Bistrot Caraibes Proves Grand Case is Still the Culinary Capital of the Caribbean

Seeing this Grand Case mainstay packed with island visitors and locals is thrilling. The lobster tank out front, where you can select the lobster you wish to nosh on for dinner, is packed with lobsters. The scent of butter, garlic and pure deliciousness wafts from the kitchen out to the tables.

Brothers Thibault and Arnaur greet you at the door with a warm and friendly smile, making you feel right at home in this chic French restaurant.

The menu boasts dishes that will please the palate: from beef tenderloin to fresh fish, escargot to French onion soup, and desserts that make our mouths water to describe!

Some favorites include the escargot (don’t forget to use the yummy baguette to soak up all of that buttery goodness), roasted sea scallops, lobster thermidor and the beef tenderloin. And, in our opinion, a French meal is not complete without profiteroles and an espresso.

Their wine list is extensive, and they also have a full bar if cocktails is more to your liking. And the house rum is tasty- definitely enjoy a post-meal complimentary shot of it; the rum is so good you’ll want to purchase a bottle to take home.

One thing is certain; dining at Bistrot Caraibes has the vibe of dining at a sophisticated, upscale French restaurant without any of the pretentiousness.
THE PALMS RESTAURANT
CARIBBEAN & INTERNATIONAL CUISINE

TripAdvisor Review

Great place. Amazing, beautiful and kind people who I am now proud to call friends. Great service. They clearly take great pride in their restaurant, food and drinks. They do a great job and I highly recommend. I stopped multiple times while walking in St. Maarten, sometimes for food and sometimes just to have a drink at the bar.

@ThePalmsRestaurantSXM

www.ThePalmsSXM.com

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That's Right! We are so confident of the unsurpassed quality and value of our jewelry that we shall let you go home with it, have it appraised, and send us payment after and only after you are completely satisfied. If for any reason you are not satisfied, simply ship it back to our office in New York or Los Angeles.

If you don’t know jewelry... know your jeweler!

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