Are Island Dogs Man's Best Friend?

‘They are so cute! What breed are those sweet pups?’ is a question we often hear. Well, the island has a loving name for them, which has a much better ring to it than calling them mutts: coconut retrievers. This question sparks a suitable starting point into the amazingly complex topic of island dogs.

It can be concerning to see stray dogs roaming the streets or taking a nap on the soft sand of our beaches. It triggers the memory of those gloomy dog commercials, and the instinct of wanting to help. The assumption is that these dogs are homeless; without food, shelter or a place to call home. But it is not that simple. Our island dogs fit into three classifications and often the lines between them are so blurred, that its indistinguishable which type that adorable canine might be.

The relaxed attitude of St. Maarten/St-Martin, which is partly due to the island’s European background, allows dogs to have more independence to do their thing. You will find that dogs which are accustomed to being off their leashes, will go about their business and reliably head home in time for dinner. These coconut retrievers tend to not be aggressive; they do not pick fights or bother people. They even look out for traffic when crossing the road, taking a slow and steady approach...

Source of National Pride: The Brown Pelican

Watching our national bird, the Brown Pelican, dive head first into our Caribbean waters from over 60 feet high is a magnificent sight. This exceptional creature’s throat pouch enlarges as they plunge into the water to trap their prey: fish. This also means they usually get a mouthful of water, about two and a half gallons to be exact. The Brown Pelican is featured on the St. Maarten flag, gliding above the courthouse...

Shopping in St. Maarten's Capital: Philipsburg

St. Maarten is a beloved destination to shop in the Caribbean. With an array of products, all at duty free prices and avoiding that pesky sales tax (yippee!) a day just doesn’t seem like enough time to see it all, so we suggest at least a couple of visits to Front Street while you are on island! With so many stores and so little time, here are a handful of establishments you must be sure to check out.

Jewelry and timepiece shopping are at...

Continued on Page 4

Continued on Page 8

Continued on Page 10
Letter From the Editor

May 11, 2018

Thanks for reading the ST-MAARTEN.COM Weekend Edition! We are honored that you have selected our newspaper to provide you with some entertainment.

We had a lot of fun writing the articles for this issue. As we travel around the island, we try to keep our finger on the pulse, to bring you articles that we hope provides answers to some burning questions.

If you're leaving the island this week, I encourage you to take the Weekend Edition with you! Snap a photo of our island's newest paper in one of your favorite spots. We would love to feature, on our social media platforms, a collection of photos of the different journeys that our newspaper has taken.

On behalf of the ST-MAARTEN.COM Weekend Edition Team, I would like to wish all the mothers who inspire inside and outside of the family a Happy Mother's Day.

Hilary Grant
Editor

Online Portal

For in-depth information about our island, consult ST-MAARTEN.COM - the official online portal. Please use the convenient QR codes with any smart phone to access individual pages directly.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Dutch Side
Ambulance: 912 or +1 721 542-2111
Hospital: 910 or +1 721 543-1111
Police: 911 or +1 721 542-2222
Fire Department: 919 or +1 721 545-4222

French Side
Ambulance: +590 (590) 52 00 52
Hospital: +590 (590) 52 26 29
Police: +590 (590) 87 88 33

 Entire Island
24 Hour Emergency Pharmacy:
+1 721 581-6243

ST-MAARTEN.COM Weekend Edition

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When these birds aren’t feeding, you can see them at the docks, fishing for their next meal in a pond or soaring over the ocean.

Our national bird’s nesting season is usually between June and August. The male will choose the area where the female will build the nest. It is his job to gather the grass, seaweed and leaves that she will use while putting together the impeccable home. This whole process takes approximately seven to ten days and will accommodate up to four eggs.

Brown Pelicans are known to be solid swimmers and rulers of the sky. They usually search for food during the daylight hours, and often feed in the light of a full moon. Brown Pelicans are extremely gregarious, especially when in an area free of annoying seagulls.

This species is a testament to how successful conservation efforts can be. Nearly extinct by the 1970’s due to the use of pesticides, many pelicans were killed by consumption of DDT, while the contamination led to eggs so thin that the weight of the parents would shatter it. By 1970, these creatures were on the endangered species list.

Due to the deaths of many aviary species, DDT (dichloro diphenyl trichloroethane) was banned which allowed the population of Brown Pelicans to recover. It took until 2009 for the birds to fully repopulate and be removed from the endangered list.

Today, the St. Maarten Nature Foundation monitors the population of Brown Pelicans, to protect the well-being of our national bird. As you look around the island, you will see that the Brown Pelican is a source of national pride and we must do all that we can to protect it!
Soualiga: Land of White Gold

The age of refrigeration started only ninety-five years ago; before this time, salt was the most important commodity used for food preservation. It was extremely valuable and over the millennia it was frequently used as currency instead of precious metals. Salt was as much the 'white gold' of past civilizations as crude oil is the 'black gold' of today. Even the word salary is based on the Latin noun 'sal', because the Romans payed their military personnel with...salt.

Soualiga or 'Land of Salt' is the name given to our island by the Arawak Indians, who settled in pre-Columbian times. They started using the shallow saltwater ponds to harvest salt crystals. These crystals form once the water evaporates in the tropical sun outside of the rainy season.

With the arrival of European settlers, the more industrial harvesting of salt began. Not only were the ponds essential, but also a relatively dry climate. Any rainfall would delay the raking of the dried up crust of salt.

The need for a dry climate resulted in an early environmental disaster: the destruction of almost all forests on the island. Tree foliage retains humidity, which results in evaporation and the forming of clouds. These clouds bring more rain. It is assumed that there was a permanent stream of freshwater going down the valley of what today is known as Loterie Farm. And only in this location has a secondary rainforest begun to grow back and create an unique microclimate, which now allows for the small freshwater stream to frequently reappear.

Salt harvest was back-breaking labor. Not only were the salt rakers exposed to the sun's heat, but also to the light reflection of the white crystals. There were no Ray-Bans to be purchased on Front Street in those days. Simple evaporation of the ponds was only one method of production. Another was sticking wooden stakes into the soft mud and to remove them once salt cakes had formed around them. The crystals were then scrapped off.

Originally, the salt was transported to Orient Bay, where sailing cargo ships anchored in the lee of Green Cay and picked up the bales. Later, Philipsburg became a port town. Salt production on the island finally stopped in 1967 and tourism replaced it within a decade. Today, a monument in Philipsburg reminds us of the incredible hardship the salt makers had to endure to make a modest living.
Do You Know St. Maarten?

Please enjoy the sixth edition of our crossword puzzle. You will notice that all of the questions are rooted in the Caribbean hemisphere and might take a bit of research to answer if you haven’t spend much time here. It also means: the answers are valid for St. Maarten/St-Martin, but could also be for neighboring islands.

For example, if we are asking for an island 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. This island is a melting pot of many cultures and languages; setting St. Maarten/St-Martin apart from other Caribbean islands. This is why we love it here.

ACROSS
1 What color is the piano at a bar?
3 Local name for illegal taxis
7 Beer of Dominican Republic
9 Table game in casino
13 Waterfront bistro in Cole Bay
14 Ocean to the North
16 Historic indigenous people
18 Language of Anguilla
20 Family name of rum captain
21 How Topper’s spells their liquor
23 What is Mary’s?
24 Highest SXM mountain
25 Nickname for Jamaica’s second largest city

DOWN
2 Not funny: what burns too often?
4 Pete likes this fruit
5 City after which a Shawarma restaurant is named
6 Sea to the South
8 Bar with wet currency
10 Hotel named after what country
11 To where is this local bank tacking?
12 Queen of The Netherlands
15 Location of annual ram contest
17 Continent to the East of SXM
19 Sandwich franchise in Simpson Bay
22 Burning Carnival king

Cheating? Find solution to the puzzle on Page 15
**Fruits and Vegetables Never Tasted So Good**

Starting your day off right with an enjoyable and healthy breakfast, or grabbing a nutritious lunch on the go, always feels good. But on an island with so much decadence, where can you find those lighter options? Top Carrot is a mainstay in the Simpson Bay Yacht Club, and offers light and sensible meals that will keep you energized while you face the day.

At first glance the Bohemian-style décor, laid back vibe and vegetarian centered cuisine of this restaurant is reminiscent of dining in Venice, California. Healthy lifestyle books, supplements and healing crystals make up their mini-boutique.

But by digging just a little bit deeper into what makes this preferred eatery unique, you will find out the fact that they use as many locally sourced fruits and vegetables as possible. The better-for-you options at this eatery are not just a lip service, it is a lifestyle.

Their food is top notch. Visit their juice bar for a quick juice or smoothie to take on the road, or dine in for a variety breakfast items like toasts and omelets. Top Carrot lunch is on point featuring sandwiches, salads and daily specials.

Some top picks include the lemon breeze, bush tea, make your own omelet and the turkey cranberry salad. And if the daily special sounds like something you would enjoy, we highly recommend trying it as these tend to run out fast.

So, next time you have decided to stay away from the buttery pastries and boozy breakfast beverages, keep Top Carrot in mind. We know you will not be disappointed!

**Pinel: Reopened and Redefined**

Have you heard? St. Maarten/St-Martin is abuzz that Pinel Island has reopened! If you have not heard of Pinel island before, here is everything that you need to know.

Pinel is a petite island with a European feel just to the north of our island, reachable via ferry in French Cul de Sac. There is a small hiking trail, an easy to moderate level, to the top of this tropical delight. But, what Pinel is really known for is a leisurely swim in the calm waters, or lunch at one of the restaurants.

Before Hurricane Irma ripped through Pinel, this quaint island had fairly lush scenery, with coconut trees and flowers as a backdrop to eateries along the beachfront. Karibuni and Yellow Beach, the restaurants, suffered extensive damage from the storm. But the great news is that they are now re-open and ready to welcome you.

Keep in mind when visiting that there are no cars on the island, and no ATM's! The ferry ride to Pinel is short, approximately five minutes. Get your camera ready, and experience the ‘new’ Pinel!
Located right across the street is Cariloha, known for their bedding made from bamboo that helps you to stay cool while you sleep. These lavish sheets are so soft that you will never want to get out of bed; which, when you are on vacation is a great thing! Their line also extends to apparel and other goods.

Do not forget to hydrate and refuel your body in-between your fun filled day of shopping. The Ocean Lounge at the Holland House Beach Hotel is a great location for lunch, with a small tapas-style menu served at the bar and full lunch menu served in the restaurant. Between the pleasant food, stylish atmosphere and the magnificent ocean view; you are sure to capture the essence of island life all while at Holland House.

Before you end the shopping day, stopping into one of the Shipwreck Shops is a must! Their stores are filled with trinkets and baubles that will serve as the perfect mementos from your escape to paradise. And if you like the sound of the steel drum music you hear wafting through the air, ask to purchase a CD!

Since we are a Caribbean island, the final stop of the day must be at the Guavaberry Emporium for a rum tasting. After you’ve sampled a few of their flavors, order a guavaberry piña colada in the iconic pink plastic glass and sip on it all the way back to your hotel. After a long day of shopping, you will most certainly be ready for happy hour while enjoying your purchases!
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Of course, not all dogs are this lucky. The second type of dog we have is the one who believes that it has a home. This often means there is an ‘owner’, in the loosest sense of the word, because they are utterly indifferent to the well-being of their animal. The dog might not be given enough food, certainly not provided medical care in a time of need, and undeniably given no attention to any other needs. To top it off, the dog will never, ever be allowed into the house. These pooches are typically on a chain, living the saddest life of wanting to jump, run and play but are restricted to ten feet in front of the home.

Finally, we have the true street dogs. They grow up wild and have no interest in searching for, or accepting human contact. They live their lives in packs, spending majority of the daylight hours in the bushes and roaming the streets at night.

Food isn’t as hard to come by as fresh water, so you might see them hang around villas with pools, sneaking in at night for much needed hydration.

These dogs tend to be nervous. Some run away at the sight of a human, few will allow you to come within a few feet, but certainly never close enough to be touched. They are not aggressive; but if you try to capture one to domesticate it, it will undoubtedly be unsuccessful. They are uncomfortable to be confined to a single property and will run away at the first chance they get to rejoin their pack.

St. Maarten/St-Martin has an active scene of volunteers assisting animals. The Animal Welfare Foundation is doing remarkable work, by trapping wild dogs and having them spayed or neutered. The procedures are performed for free by the island’s veterinarians. Even medical emergencies are handled without charge on injured stray canines!

The purpose of the Animal Foundation is not to remove dogs from the street and to domesticate them, but to ensure that their uncontrolled breeding stops. They have succeeded in limiting the growth of the population, but they need everyone’s support to continue their charitable work.

For further information, or to learn how you can volunteer your time, please contact:

St. Maarten Animal Welfare Foundation
Phone: +1 721 520-8887
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Offering many services including haircuts, shampoo and blow dry, and keratin treatments the experts at Miguel’s will have you looking your best. And if your tresses have taken a beating in the Caribbean sun, try a deep conditioning treatment. Your hair will thank you!

And gentlemen, don’t you worry. Miguel’s also offers haircuts and treatments for men; they agree that everyone needs a little pampering.

They also specialize in glamorous looks for weddings, from bridal makeup to contemporary up-do’s. To book an appointment, contact +1 721 522-8543.

Clients of Miguel's Salon or the adjacent Aquarius Spa will have access to the secure parking deck of the Atrium Beach Resort and Spa. Please call in advance for arrangements.
Should You Trust the Review?

The human experience revolves around connecting with one another and sharing experiences. When in a new country, or just feel like trying something different, we rely on the opinions of others as to where to go and what to do. Websites and phone applications have been created to simplify this process, and put reviews about a variety of businesses in one easily accessible location (we will not mention names, but the most common one uses an owl as its logo).

It has become a tourism industry staple that every business, whether it is a restaurant or an activity, to ask their guests to write a review. The review websites post everything submitted and use a complex algorithm to determine the establishments ranking within the given category and region. They require basic login information for an account, but not much else. There is no vetting process for who can write reviews; which means that for all intents and purposes, these sites want everyone to be able to participate.

There is a saying, 'those with nothing nice to say, say it the loudest'. So, it is imperative to know that the business cannot remove reviews that are negative! With these review websites, however, there are known tricks that can cause an otherwise great business to suffer. So, how can you ensure you’re not basing your decision on a bogus review?

Do your due diligence and check out the reviewer. How many reviews have they written? Click on the reviewer’s photo and see the other assessments they have posted. Sometimes those are really telling as to whether you can trust their analysis or not!

Most importantly, if it is one review out of dozens that is negative, then it might be worth it to check out the establishment yourself and come to your own conclusion. One stranger’s opinion may not necessarily be the same as yours. And no one knows your tastes and preferences better than you!

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She never recuperated from the heartbreak, and young women from the school teacher’s town did not want to fall victim to the same sad story. So, they believed by writing their and their lover’s names on a lock and locking them onto the bridge where the star-crossed lovers used to meet, they would not fall prey to a similar broken love tale.

The most notable location during the last decade in the world to lock your love eternal is on the Pont des Arts bridge in Paris.

Regardless, St. Maarten welcomes the locks in the designated spot: the red hearts on the causeway bridge. If you want your love to last; purchase a lock, write your names on it and lock it onto the heart. Pick your favorite spot, say a few words and latch it onto the metal frame. Best case scenario, the tale is true! Worst case the folklore doesn’t lock you into a forever love and you are only out a few dollars for the lock!

Nothing says eternal love like placing a lock symbolizing your commitment to each other somewhere during your travels. St. Maarten has embraced this fad, having placed colossal red, metal hearts on the causeway bridge. History is rich with stories of love locks being placed around the world in countries like France, Germany, Scotland, Brazil, United States, and even Australia. But when did this craze start?

It is believed that the journey started some 100 years ago in Serbia. A school teacher fell in love with an officer, but when he went off to war, he gave his heart to another, leaving her shattered and alone.

Many countries, France included, have balked at the idea of having these locks around the city as they want to spare the architectural heritage. Italy cites that it is illegal to place a padlock, and has removed many. Want to try to put a new one up in Venice? The fine is up to 3,000 Euros; which doesn’t seem quite worth it.

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It is believed that the journey started some 100 years ago in Serbia. A school teacher fell in love with an officer, but when he went off to war, he gave his heart to another, leaving her shattered and alone.

Many countries, France included, have balked at the idea of having these locks around the city as they want to spare the architectural heritage. Italy cites that it is illegal to place a padlock, and has removed many. Want to try to put a new one up in Venice? The fine is up to 3,000 Euros; which doesn’t seem quite worth it.

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First there was a big hurricane, the strongest ever measured. Our island was shaken up severely.

Who could blame the bartenders for naming their concoctions 'Category Five Plus'? Now we have a few too many Cat 5 drinks around and this is why we need a contest to decide which one is the public favorite.

The Category 5+ Hurricane Irma is now part of our history. We made it through and we don't mind if vicious Irma is remembered as a drink that causes a serious hangover.

Here is how it works:
Go on a bar crawl and visit the participating bars and restaurants from all around the island and order each different version of Category Five Plus. (Please make sure that you have a designated driver for the occasion!) Happy drinking!

To view a list of contestants and to vote, visit ST-MAARTEN.COM by using the QR code to the right:

Crossword Puzzle Solution
Take home our jewelry, have it appraised, then pay us!

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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