When stepping onto the vessel for your water adventure, most likely you are expecting to see a man behind the wheel and in charge of the boat as it sails through the Caribbean waters. But, what is your reaction when you see it is a woman? Some may be astounded while others are indifferent. What prompts a woman to go into an otherwise male dominated industry? Here is the story of Leslie.

Having grown up in Missouri, she was fanatical about everything involving the ocean and would even pretend to be a mermaid in the lakes of Missouri. With a desire to learn more about the aquatic life, Leslie dove headfirst into becoming a certified scuba diver at the young age of twelve, which was the youngest age allowed at the time. Leslie was often accompanied by her parents, who are also divers. Her dream of becoming a mermaid had come to fruition, and so began Leslie’s travels to explore uncharted waters around the globe. Her journeys have taken her to destinations like the US coasts, Hawaii, Indonesia and of course, extensive time in the Caribbean.

But as a female diver, Leslie has seen that the sport of diving is not as diversified as one would hope. With about two-thirds of divers being male, she was already one of a handful of women that would dare dive into the depths of the ocean; let alone becoming a Dive Instructor in 2011...

Extraordinary Sea Creatures in Our Tropical Waters
By: Leslie Hickerson
St. Maarten has many wonderful attractions; you can hike to the natural pools, jet ski through the Simpson Bay Bridge, or hop on one of the many amazing island tours for a day in paradise.

But, no trip would be complete without a dip in our clear blue waters. With plenty of snorkeling and swimming options around the island you have a lot to choose from when diving in. Our waters and marine life are safe, your only limit is your comfort level in the ocean...

Zdenka Kiric: From Wire and Walls to Galleries
By: Chris Morvan
It’s 1995 in Philipsburg and a young blonde woman is sitting on a wall outside the Greenhouse restaurant at the far end of the boardwalk. She is making bicycles out of wire – just ordinary electrical wire. She’s an artist and she’s trying to make a living selling her unusual specialty to tourists.

Fast forward to 2018 and the same woman is sitting in her own art gallery, The Art Box, in Simpson Bay. This is Zdenka Kiric, Croatian by birth but long since absorbed into the fabric of this island’s art world...

Where is the Captain?
Letter From the Editor  

June 1, 2018

Thank you for reading the ST-MAARTEN.COM Weekend Edition! We appreciate you choosing our publication to learn where to dine, shop and party.

Well, believe it or not, June has arrived! As we have officially entered hurricane season, I urge you all to be prepared and have a plan. This means gathering your supplies early, ensure that you have safeguarded valuable documents, and have a strategy. If you have decided to visit our island despite the potentially inclement weather, thank you! We appreciate your patronage of St. Maarten/St-Martin.

In this issue, we have a variety of topics that will help to keep you entertained, and inspire you to try new places! Venture out of the comfort zone, and try a new activity, restaurant or perhaps select a new beach side drink.

We hope you have a magnificent time enjoying all that there is to experience in this issue!

Hilary Grant
Editor

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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

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Extraordinary Sea Creatures in Our Tropical Waters

By: Leslie Hickerson

As you explore, you will encounter some of the huge varieties of marine life that St. Maarten has to offer. Some of our most common species are:

Parrotfish
Identifiable by its large and defined scale pattern, Parrotfish are hardy so they are easily one of the most common species of fish in the surrounding waters. These fish get their name from the beak-like mouth they use for feeding on corals and invertebrates on the sea floor. There are several things unique to them but one of the most interesting facts is that everything they eat is processed and comes back out as sand. They keep the coral clean and produce the sand on our beaches!

Pufferfish
A species recognizable by most, the Pufferfish uses the defense mechanism of inflating its body to escape from predators by appearing too large to eat. There are several different species of these fish found in St. Maarten/St-Martin ranging from small Sharp Nose Puffers to full grown Porcupine Fish.

Angelfish
A favorite for many reef goers, they are beautiful and graceful fish that feed on corals and invertebrates like the Parrotfish. Around the island you can find French, Queen, and Gray Angelfish.

Trumpetfish
These fish are very different and easy to spot due to their body style. They sport long pipe-like bodies which help them blend into the arms of corals while they hunt the eggs and juveniles of other fish species.

Grunt Fish
Schooling Grunt Fish stick together for protection, they can be found in groups near wrecks and reefs where they do their best to move as one. They get their name from the grunting noise they can make by grinding their teeth together, which they use when establishing dominance or territory.

Sea Turtles
The island is very lucky to be home to many sea turtles. There are Green, Hawksbill and Lager Head Turtles. They eat sea grass and sponges from the sea floor and use wrecks and the reef to rest underneath and sleep at night. If you want to catch a glimpse of them while snorkeling, you should take a tour over to Tintamarre Island, which is surrounded by sea grass which is a great feeding ground for them!

These are some of the most common fish you can come across in our shallow waters. The best way to get to St. Maarten’s nicest snorkeling spots is to jump on board of one of the many day tours of the island. They might take you to Little Bay or Creole Rock, both shallow reef sites known for fish sightings! If you want to try snorkeling off the beach, you can swim along the edges of Mullet Bay; where you can find marine life hiding in the rocky coral. Another option is to take the ferry over to Pinel Island for the day. Any beach you visit you will have luck spotting fish over reefs or rocks with hiding spots, but not in the open sand where they have no protection. When you grab your gear and head out into the water don’t forget some reef safe sunscreen and a flotation device like a pool noodle or life-jacket!
Let the Bartender Sing While Mixing Your Drink

You'll find Snoopy's right at the entrance to the impressive mega yacht marina Isle del Sol, which happens to be located on Snoopy Island. This is the latest waterfront dining and entertainment establishment to open in Simpson Bay, where you are invited to sit down on brightly colored tables and chairs either at the waterfront or a bit closer to the road. Only at Snoopy's can you see both the lagoon and Kimsha Beach.

You also could take a closer look at the stranded commercial vessel Miss Abigail, which has become a somewhat permanent feature and serves now as a monument to the power of Irma. Presently under construction, there will be a large outside deck over the waters of the lagoon.

Snoopy's is the new professional home of Hos, 'the singing bartender', as he has become known on the island. Together with his wife Nancy, they opened this comfortable bar and restaurant back in March.

During several nights of the week, well-known artists perform live, from rock music to Latin tunes. Friday is karaoke night, and this will be the most likely time to witness Hos perform as well; listen to him sing with his fantastic voice while he mixes your drink (Hint: don't order a beer, let him perform during the mixing of a complex cocktail!) Big screen TV's display all of your favorite sports action. Here might be the perfect spot to watch the FIFA World Cup starting June 14th.

Snoopy's opens at 1 PM on weekdays, 11 AM on weekends, and closes around 1 AM (or longer on weekends). Great for a late dinner: the kitchen is open until 11 PM!

The food menu features items well known to the American palate and also has an excellent selection of Caribbean flavored meals listed.
Do You Know St. Maarten?

Please enjoy the ninth 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
8 Airline servicing our island
10 Diving with a tank
13 Location of El Zafiro
15 What do they play at Q Lounge?
16 What is Chez Raymond?
17 What do they show at the Megaplex?
18 Regular breeze in the Caribbean
19 What was produced on Loerie Farm originally?
20 What wood describes the Boat Bar?
22 Currency before the EURO
23 Cruise line named after an event

DOWN
1 Where is AXA?
2 Two restaurants with this name
3 Popular at Jump Up Casino
4 Bar in Simpson Bay
5 German car brand sold in Cole Bay
6 Beer of Trinidad
7 Beach behind Topper's
9 Fancy watch
10 Single masted sailboat
11 What are Buccaneers?
12 Supermarket
14 Gas station brand on French side
17 What is isle de Sol?
21 Banking institution from Canada

Cheating? Find solution to the puzzle on Page 15
Zdenka Kiric: From Wire and Walls to Galleries

By: Chris Morvan

Continued from Page 1

By 2003, Zdenka had created a tableware collection dressed up with wire and beads. “My goal was to teach local single mothers to produce things, so I wanted to set up a cottage industry,” she continues. “At one point my work was in 22 stores around the Caribbean.”

Eventually she discontinued her trademark style and started working with precious metals and gemstones, although she still produces the odd piece for people who find it fascinating. But nowadays the “Zdenka West Indies” jewelry that adorns the showcases in the gallery is a little more mainstream: chunky necklaces and so on, less quirky but still distinctive and full of character.

The Simpson Bay location is relatively recent, with Luis’s descendant Irma having trashed Zdenka’s Philipsburg site.

“This was originally going to be a branch,” she says. “I had the shop in Bobby’s Marina and it was great. I was there eight years. Then Irma hit and the shop was badly damaged so I closed it and opened up here.”

The desire for creativity and originality still drives this artist. “There is so much stuff around that you can get on Amazon,” she laments. “At The Art Box we don’t have that.”

Zdenka is working through this difficult period, just as most local businesses are, with 30% of the turnover they used to enjoy, but she intends to start up again in Philipsburg once the tourist trade has recovered.

“In the old place we sold 70% my art and 30% arts and crafts,” she explains. “What I wanted to do here in Simpson Bay was set up a gallery featuring fine art by local artists. I’m doing monthly exhibitions by different people. On 31st May it will be Francis Eck.”

There are other projects in the pipeline too, such as an idea to work with schools, getting students to make furniture out of trash, with the schools competing with each other and the possibility of raising money by auctioning the pieces that emerge.

This reflects Zdenka’s own youth. She had her first jewelry collection at the age of 12 and her parents used to sell her clay creations in the offices where they worked. It was a small income stream, but worth having in a country where the socialist system made it difficult to make money.

St. Maarten may be very different from 1980s Croatia, but it is in Zdenka’s nature to encourage others to make the most of their talents.

“It all depends on what happens business-wise,” she points out. “It’s getting better and better but it’s still extremely challenging.

As it is, Zdenka has got her hands full, running a gallery that features the work of several other artists while making her jewelry and, with her husband, a doctor, bringing up her daughter, who is three-and-a-half.
Chez Raymond on Baie Rouge Beach

A sweeping 1.6 km (1 mile) crescent of beach on the North-Western coast is Baie Rouge, named after the red cliffs on its Eastern end. Some large estates are lining the bay, but they are set back from the waterline and frequently covered with foliage. The beach is never crowded and offers a great deal of privacy to the ones searching for it; yet it is home to one of the island’s most iconic beach bars: Chez Raymond.

Unpretentious and authentic, this beach bar relies on offering great cocktails made with fresh fruits, typical island dishes such as bbq ribs and... magnificent scenery. The view spans all the way to the shores of Anguilla. Even though located in the island’s posh Terres Basses neighborhood, proprietor Raymond managed to maintain the bar’s identity as a genuinely Caribbean hangout. Chez Raymond is ideally suited to deliver anything one might wish for on a lazy beach day.

Raymond himself is well known as a gifted trumpet player. There are frequent live music events on the wooden stage set up next to the bar. While he was busy preparing ribs on the grill, we asked him how the bar fared after the hurricane: "Not too bad. Our basic concrete structure was undamaged, and we just had to clean up."

And how is business? "We might not have a lot of visitors on the island right now, but our regulars are coming, so we are doing well enough."

Baie Rouge and Chez Raymond are especially popular on weekends, and finding a parking spot might not be easy. If you are an island visitor, give it a try during weekdays as well. Secure your car in the public area by not leaving any valuables in it. Walk down some concrete stairs to the beach. Turn left and walk a few minutes if you prefer privacy. Umbrellas and chairs are available at Chez Raymond. Further down the beach, there are no more services, but plenty of privacy and clothing becomes more optional. The surf can kick up on Baie Rouge if the wind comes from the NE.
Q Lounge: Where Pool Billiard Meets Entertainment

If you take your pool billiard game serious, a visit to the Q Lounge in Simpson Bay is a must! And even if you are not entirely fanatical about pool, still show up: because the Q Lounge has become a favorite late night hang-out and bar.

As a player, you will appreciate top-notch tables which are not of the beer-stained, coin-operated variety you'll find in other places. You rent a table by time and not per game - which is a comfortable arrangement for committed players who don't appreciate others to line up behind for their turn.

There are regular tournaments, providing a perfect platform to gauge your skills against the local community of pool aficionados.

Frequently, the Q Lounge is busy into the morning hours with their famous 'after parties' kicking in after the nightclubs close.

Proprietor Kennedy Artsen has broadened the appeal of what could be just a simple pool hall into a platform to present eclectic art: from the occasional vernissage of talented photographers and painters to poetry nights and open-mike nights for stand-up comedians - there is always something unique going on at Q Lounge.

The Q Lounge is located in the heart of Simpson Bay above McDonald's and across the street from Red Diamond. During the summer months, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the lounge opens at 10 PM and stays open until 2 AM; and Thursday all the way through Sunday, they open at 7 PM and close around 3 AM... and longer if the party is still on!

Honoring the Legend: Bob Marley

When you think of iconic music legends, especially when relaxing in a hammock in the Caribbean, it is usually Bob Marley that comes to mind. No matter the emotion, whether it is stress, enthusiasm or pain; there is usually Bob Marley lyrics that fits the sentiment. His music inspired social change whilst forgetting life troubles.

Bob Marley was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1994 and received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001. Quoted as saying, “we should all come together to create music and love”, the spirit of this mastermind has been captured in a special way.

Raymond Weil has developed a limited edition timepiece, the Bob Marley Tango 300, which was created in association with the House of Marley. This timepiece is a tribute to the life and music of one of the most important and significant artists of all time.

It is a 41mm diameter stainless steel case with a black PVD plated bezel, which holds a quartz chronograph mechanism. Accented with green hands on the sub-dials, a yellow coated second’s hand, and red on the beveled minute track ring; this timepiece pays homage to the Ethiopian national flag in its color palette. This gorgeous timepiece is water resistant to 300 meters.

This is a limited edition timepiece and only sold in the Caribbean! Available at Majesty Jewelers located on Front Street.

"Love the life you live. Live the life you love." -Bob Marley
**Visit the Island's Party and Dining Hot Spots**

**ST MARTEN.COM Weekend Edition Issue 9, 2018**

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Once settled in St. Maarten, Leslie joined the Ocean Explorers Dive Center team, where husband and wife duo Luciana De Lima and Jeferson Techera were not just divers themselves, but both boat Captains. While females in the diving industry are in the minority, it is an even smaller demographic of female boat Captains. When furthering their marine careers, women have faced firsthand that men who were often less experienced or had lower qualifications would embark on a more ambitious career path than their female counterparts.

With the encouragement and support of Luciana and Jeferson to attain her license, Leslie accepted the challenge head on, and joined the elite group of accredited female boat Captains. But, she wanted more. As most female Captains do, they want to be known as just ‘Captain’, without the gender attached to it.

Anna Ivanovna Shchetinina, a Russian merchant sailor in the 1930’s, is credited with being the first woman to sail an ocean vessel. Fast forward to 2015, where the first ever American female became a Captain for Celebrity Cruises. It seems outrageous that it was only three years ago that women were starting to break through the glass ceiling in this industry.

According to US data on ship and boat operators, 93.8 percent of ship and boat captains or operators are male with the average salary for a man being double that of a female colleague in the same position.

Often, when welcoming a group of explorers onto the boat, a female boat captain is overlooked as an assistant. Being called ‘honey’, ‘sweetie’ and a variety of comparable nicknames can be condescending to a woman in that position, as most people would not consider calling a male Captain any of those names! It is probably best not to make assumptions.

So, enjoy the sea filled with turtles, lobsters, fish and post-irma reef; which is surprisingly quite healthy. And as you are getting ready to embark on your aquatic exploration, keep in mind that your Captain or Dive Instructor may in fact be of the female persuasion.

"Where is the Captain?"

Continued from Page 1
Cotton in its Natural State

You might have seen some white fluffy material ‘caught’ in shrubbery around the island, and thought to yourself, “that must be Irma debris”. This isn’t trash cast on the side of the road, it is cotton! In the late 1700's, cotton was one of the main goods produced on our island.

This mainstay in St. Maarten was responsible for much of the economic development that occurred during the 18th and 19th centuries. Cotton eventually had a gradual downslide due to the abolition of slavery in 1848, although not proclaimed until the 1860's. Cotton production on island stopped shortly thereafter.

No one told the cotton plants though, as they still grow wildly on the hills! This fibrous ball fluff, grows in what is called a ‘boll’, which is a protective encasement to shield the seeds. Naturally, the boll increases the scattering of seeds.

So, next time you see the white wisps shifting in the wind, take a photo of this historic plant.
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Don't Ask for the Wi-Fi Password!

Unplugging from the world while on vacation is part of the appeal of escaping to a tropical island. Smartphones have made it difficult to do this, as we are readily available to receive calls, texts and emails twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

So, this begs the question, once we put our phones in airplane mode on our travels to the island, why do we need to be so reachable while vacationing? Do we really need the Wi-Fi password at every restaurant, bar and shopping boutique? It’s time to put our phones away and enjoy the human experience of interacting with each other. Not sure where to start? Here are some conversation starters to get the dialogue flowing.

Plan a Bar Crawl
With so many bars and so little time, you must plan a trip around St. Maarten/St-Martin and have a cocktail at at different hot-spots along the way. We recommend to plan the route you’ll take, along with the cocktails to try at each one. And maybe you will frequent all of the locales that are participating in our Category 5+ Contest. That will surely be an entertaining activity!

Highlight of the Day
What was your favorite moment of the day? Perhaps you went on a catamaran trip to Anguilla, or maybe you shopped ‘til you dropped. No matter the activity, it is fun to hear what everyone has enjoyed while on island. And if you are chatting with someone new, maybe this will give you insight as to what activity you want to add to your ‘must do’ list before your vacation ends!

Favorite Beach
With dozens of beaches on St. Maarten/St-Martin the discussion of your favorite beach is bound to be a fun one! Maybe it’s the sand, color of the water, or even the beach shack serving up your favorite lunch or beach drink that makes it your preference.

Ribs: Slow cooked or BBQ’d?
With two separate schools of thought on this topic, perhaps you’ll learn of a new hot-spot to eat some tasty ribs!

Evening Entertainment
Fire up a lively conversation on what the group wants to do after enjoying happy hour. Maybe you want to try your luck at the casino, hit one of the nightclubs, visit an adult entertainment venue or wander over to your favorite bar and bartender to get a little tipsy! Our advertisers offer a plethora of options when it comes to entertainment, every night can be something different!

In an age of technology, the art of conversation has been reduced to text messages and Whatsapp voice notes. But do not fall victim to this! Strike up a conversation and get to know the people at the dinner table with you, or sitting next to you at the bar.

The next time you are at dinner, make a playful rule that the first person to take their phone out must pick up the bill. This might be enticing enough to make sure it stays tucked away in your pocket.

Update your social media platforms when you are back in your hotel for the night, and be in the moment while you are partaking all that St. Maarten/St-Martin has to offer.

Enjoy paradise and repeat after us: “I do not need Wi-Fi”!

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TripAdvisor Review

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Almost nine months ago we had the largest hurricane to ever hit the Atlantic basin, Hurricane Irma. Our island was forever changed.

Who could blame the bartenders for naming their concoctions 'Category Five Plus'? Now we have too many Cat 5 drinks on the island and 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 Irma being memorialized as a drink causing a horrific 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:

THE BOON BEACH BAR
Simpson Bay
BUFFALO WINGS
Simpson Bay/Cole Bay
DRIFTWOOD BOAT BAR
Maho Beach

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Cole Bay
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Pelican
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