
By Leslie Hickerson

How do I get on one of those big ass boats? This question circles the minds of many people that see yachts hundreds of feet long scattered in the marinas around the island. There are two ways for you to spend some time on these mega yachts. The first way would involve a lot of cash that you don’t have big plans for; and I mean a LOT of cash. The second way is to find work as a crewmember aboard these luxurious floating resorts. If you aren’t lucky enough to earn/marry into/inherit the several million that it would cost to buy and maintain a mega yacht, working aboard one can be a lucrative way to travel the world.

A yacht, either sailing or motor, can have from one to more than seventy crewmembers on board. Depending on the boat’s size crewmembers (yachties) have their own crew cabins, galley and lounge area. These vessels travel all over the world, from the Mediterranean to the Caribbean, some even circumnavigating the globe. Those that work aboard will be able to experience more travel in one year than most people do in their whole lives. Don’t forget about the toys! Yachts often have jet-skis, underwater scooters, dive gear, surf gear, and small tenders that can be used by the crew when they don’t have guests on board. Last but not least- the salary! Those people that can dedicate their lives to yachts will be rewarded with extremely high salaries and (depending on the boat) tips after each trip. Entry-level yachties can expect to earn $2,500/month with zero experience.

The Reawakening of Nettle Bay

The narrow strip of land between the sea and the lagoon, connecting the Lowlands with Marigot is called Nettle Bay; which took the brunt of Irma and still requires many repairs.

Nature's Most Spectacular Creation

“Pressure makes diamonds.” You’ve undoubtedly heard this saying before. Well, there is way more to the creation of this precious gemstone than just pressure.

Full Article on Page 14 Full Article on Page 18 Continued on Page 6
Letter From the Editor
January 18, 2019

Only 27 shopping days until Valentine’s Day…but who’s counting? As we draw nearer to this holiday that tends to be stressful for many, we will hopefully guide you in our weekly publication through this romantic holiday like a pro.

The island continues to progress, both Dutch and French side, but we are excited that the much-anticipated Nettle Bay is back and operational. We will continue to bring you status updates at various destinations around the island.

As always, all our previous issues are available on the ST-MAARTEN.COM website. 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’d like to wish you all a wonderful week ahead, and safe travels home to those leaving St. Maarten/St-Martin this week. If you’re staying with us, go have some fun in the sun!

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.

What does the number on each advertisement stand for?
Please refer to the map on Pages 10/11. Regions of the island are marked with a number which corresponds to the number you see on ads.

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Hospital: 910 or +1 721 543-1111
Police: 911 or +1 721 542-2222
Fire Department: 919 or +1 721 545-4222

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Hospital: +590 (590) 52 26 29
Police: +590 (590) 87 88 33

Entire Island
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Keep Your Hands and Arms Inside on this Wild Ride

Your adventure awaits with St. Maarten Safari! Hop into a jeep or ATV for a wild, but safe, exploration of St. Maarten/St-Martin.

All jeeps are equipped with air conditioning, automatic transmission and are well maintained to ensure a safe journey. Or if you prefer the wind in your hair, book an ATV tour of the island which also are armed with automatic transmission.

See the sites of both the Dutch and French side while driving around the island. Shop in the well-appointed boutiques in Marigot, or dip your toe in the spectacularly warm Caribbean waters at the Dutch side favorite beach- Mullet Bay.

Looking for a little more of an adventure while in St. Maarten? Book a snorkel or fishing excursion; which will be in addition to your sightseeing in your off-road mode of transportation. Swim with tropical fish and see and discover a popular wreck site on the snorkel voyage, or test your fisherman skills and see if you can land a snapper or yellow tail. Game on!

Don’t forget your camera, sunscreen and driver’s license if you are going to be leading the expedition.

To book visit: www.StMaartenSafari.com

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Romance Will Be in the Air with These Gift Ideas

Continued from Page 1

Despite it being the middle of January, shopping ‘season’ starts now for Valentine’s Day - February 14. Don’t know what to get your significant other? Here are some conventional and unconventional ideas for this celebrated day of love.

Jewelry
Of course! Think outside of the normal heart motif jewelry, or rubies (unless she absolutely loves them). Maybe a his and hers timepiece set, or a luscious tanzanite will spark an interest. You can never go wrong with diamonds, they are a girl’s best friend after all (and admittedly a favorite amongst men as well!)

The incredible jewelers listed in our publication offer a variety of trinkets that will astound you. Take your time and find what you love!

Adult Toys
This idea is for our eighteen and over readers - visit the Adult Toy Box! This well-appointed store is packed with goodies for him, for her and for both. Try something new or maybe find an old favorite - Valentine’s Day is the perfect time to spice things up!

Don’t be shy about going in - no judgement here. The Adult Toy Box is well-lit with informative and friendly staff that will help you to select the perfect adult toy.

Flowers
The US National Retail Federation cites that US consumers will spend around $2 billion dollars on fragrant flowers for Valentine’s Day. The number of roses that are produced yearly for the occasion? 250 million.

Despite it seeming like a cliché gift for the holiday, flowers always bring a smile to her face - and it doesn’t have to be roses! Explore some local varieties at Mooi Flowers, Plants and Gift Shop is located in the Simpson Bay Yacht Club. This business has small gifts as well as flowers, make sure to go in advance so that you can pre-order the exact arrangement you love.
Time to Relax at The Body Spa

Rejuvenate the mind, soul and body at The Body Spa in Sint Maarten. Melt away the stress and tension with a menu of various body treatments to partake in. From facials to massages, detox wraps to body scrubs; feeling refreshed is of the utmost importance to The Body Spa.

Located at the entrance to Pelican Key in St. Maarten, this beautifully appointed sanctuary for the body is diverse in their techniques. Perhaps you like a hot stone massage to soothe aching muscles, or prefer reflexology to give your body harmony. Treatments by skilled staff aren’t just limited to facials, wraps and massages: The Body Spa also offers waxing, manicures and pedicures, as well as makeup application and tinting.

And if you are a sauna lover, this establishment is ideal to sweat out the toxins while in SXM.

Regardless of the treatments you choose to do, you will feel relaxed and refreshed. Pamper yourself, you deserve it.

Sound like a dream? The reality is that all this luxury comes at a high price. The majority of the crew on board are required to share a cabin with bunk style beds with their co-workers. When it is time for charter you can plan on working over ten hours a day, you will be at the guest’s beck and call for their every need (no matter how small). Want to go home for your mother’s birthday or Christmas? Fat chance. In high season time off is reserved for those members of crew that have seniority if they are very lucky. Your plans can change at any second. Today the owner wants to spend New Year’s in the Bahamas and tomorrow they want to go to St. Barths. This industry is also extremely competitive. To work your way up the ladder on the larger boats you need to have several expensive certificates.

Still sound like a pretty good deal? If you are ready to give the yachting world a try there are a few things you need to do before you start applying for a job.

Certificates:
The most basic requirement for most yachts is that you have an STCW certificate. STCW (Safety Training for Crew and Watchmen) is an introduction to boat life. This internationally recognized course “gives the minimum standards of qualifications required by crew at various levels depending upon vessel size for both deck and engineer departments and also radio communications personnel,” according to the Maritime School of the West Indies (found on the French side of SXM). In the course you cover everything from survival at sea, basic firefighting, to CPR and First Aid.

Paperwork:
If you are looking for work you need to have an updated CV. No exceptions! There is nothing that turns an employer off more than someone applying for a job with an irrelevant résumé.

For yacht work it is customary to have a photo of yourself (dressed appropriately) at the top of your CV. If you are putting together your first CV for the industry ask for help or examples at your local crew agency.

Finding a job:
Applying online is great way to look for work especially if you are not living in a boating region. The absolute best way to get a job is to immerse yourself in the industry. Get involved in your local yacht club and go to the yachting events in the area. Work at or around marinas if possible. If you are based on St. Maarten it is beneficial to visit both BWA Yachting and Shore Support. Stop by in professional attire with an up-to-date CV to inquire for work.

Yachting can be one of the most challenging and lucrative jobs in the world. If you do find work on a yacht and travel the world you’ll find that the crew works hard and plays harder. It is important to make sure you enjoy your time on board before you end up telling stories of what used to be.
The Greek St. Maarten

No, the image above does not show the famous runway of the Princess Juliana International Airport close to Maho Beach. We island residents might assume that we are the center of the known universe and that anything unusual in St. Maarten is also automatically unique to it. Sorry to burst our bubble of self-importance, but sometimes, somewhere in the world, there could be an attraction similar to ours.

A few months back, we were writing about the charming island of St. Martin's - off the coast of England which is also blessed with beautiful beaches. We learned with that article that our island's name was not unique.

Now we must admit that there is another airport, on another small island, which allows for the same jet-blast thrill as our very own Maho Beach.

Skiathos is a Greek island in the Aegean Sea and about the same size as Dutch Sint Maarten. It is known for its great nightlife and sixty beaches. Among plane spotters, it is almost as popular as the St. Maarten airport. And interestingly, European media have labeled Skiathos as the 'Greek St. Maarten'.

The island's airport receives about 425,000 passengers annually; which is a lot because the Greek islands only see tourist during their summer season. Right now, the temperature on this beautiful Greek island is just 7 degrees Celsius (45 F).

That's how we know that during the winter months, there still is no competition for St. Maarten.
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@st-maarten.com.

But please be aware that some of the questions are a bit tricky on purpose. Good luck!

Puzzle Solution on Page 17
Visit the Island’s Party and Dining Hot Spots

1. **RD Vous Lounge**
   - Casual Gourmet Bistro
   - Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner
   - 9 AM to 10 PM
   - Porto Curaçao at the Marina
   - For Reservations: +1 721 545-8769

2. **Taco Macho**
   - ‘Enjoy the best of Latin hospitality’
   - Mexican - Colombian Restaurant & Bar
   - Happy Hour: Beer $2 - Margarita $5
   - Located at the Allegria Resort - enter at security gate
   - Free parking! Call +1 721 545-5300 for reservation

3. **Snoopy’s**
   - Bar and Restaurant at the Bridge to Snoopy Island
   - Great food, great Happy Hour, live entertainment!
   - Welfare Road, Simpson Bay, St. Maarten
   - Call for Reservation +1 721 580-4202

4. **St. Maarten’s Best**
   - INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANT
   - Steak, Seafood, Pasta
   - +1 721 544-3500
   - SXMTOPPERS.COM

5. **The Boon**
   - ‘Right on pristine Simpson Bay Beach’
   - Casual Gourmet Bistro
   - Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner
   - (8 AM to 10 PM)
   - 117 Simpson Bay Road, Simpson Bay
   - Call +1 721 545-3070 for reservation

6. **Bistrot Caraïbes**
   - 81 Boulevard de Grand Case
   - For Reservations: +590 590 200 829 or +590 590 838-144

7. **mélange**
   - Steaks • Seafood • Grille
   - Open 5.30 PM to late
   - At the Princess Casino in Port de Plaisance
   - Call +1 721 526-4049 for reservation
   - www.MelangeSXM.com

8. **Plantation Restaurant & Bar & Lounge**
   - ORIENT VILLAGE
   - Opening Hours:
   - Tuesday - Sunday
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   - Lunch 12pm - 3pm
   - Dinner 6pm - 9.30pm
   - Mondays CLOSED!
   - 66 Corner Plaza, Airport Road, Simpson Bay
   - Delivery: +1 721 556 0978

9. **Karakter**
   - Open from 9AM for breakfast, lunch & dinner
   - www.Karakterbeach.com +1 (721) 522 98 03

10. **Little MOBAY**
    - ‘Authentic Jamaican Cuisine’
    - Open from 7 AM until 1 AM
    - Maho Village next to supermarket
    - Call +1 721 545-0279 for reservation

11. **Watze’s Pretzels**
    - N. Debrot Straat 4
    - (Across Post Office)
    - Philipsburg, Sint Maarten
    - CALL +1 721 542-3100
Top Five Ways to Survive Valentine's Day

Valentine’s Day can be quite traumatic for those who aren’t in a committed relationship, or would rather be committed than in a relationship. Between the commercials on TV, pink and red decorations everywhere you look, and the perpetual nudge that this ‘lover’s holiday’ isn’t single friendly is enough to push you over the edge. But trust us, there are ways to get through this complicated twenty-four hours.

So, now is the time to start preparing for D-day. Here are our top ways to love being single this Valentine’s Day:

1- Order a fancy bottle of wine at dinner if you’re out, or buy one to enjoy at home or your hotel if you’d rather stay in. The bonus is that you don’t have to share a single drop with anyone- more bang for your buck and much more enjoyable for you!

2- Get out! We have so many bars and nightlife hot-spots that there is no need to stay in. Get dolled up, have a cocktail and who knows- maybe you’ll meet someone you’d like to enjoy the rest of the evening with.

3- Buy yourself the flowers you want. There is no rule that says someone must buy them for you.

4- Download Tinder or another ‘dating’ app. There are bound to be other singles looking to mingle on this Hallmark holiday.

5- Binge watch a TV show you’ve been dying to see, specifically ones that make you realize that you’re better off single- so skip the rom com’s.
The Reawakening of Nettle Bay

Continued from Page 1

The narrow strip of land between the sea and the lagoon, connecting the Lowlands with Marigot is called Nettle Bay. There was a time that this area had the potential to be the French answer to Simpson Bay and great developments were expected. With a long line of condo-hotels, this is the location of the most extensive inventory of accommodations on French St-Martin; well, it was. Regrettably, Baie Nettle took the brunt of Irma and it will be another two years until all damage is repaired.

Yet, there are signs of a reawakening of the neighborhood.

A lot of the initial push for keeping businesses open in Baie Nettle must be contributed to the relentless energy of Baki Arbia, owner of the Hotel Mercure. Not only was he able to offer services of the hotel relatively soon after Irma, he pushed for positive changes, one of which is the amazing Wall of Art.

Well-known French artists have been invited to turn this simple wall into individual pieces of art.

Now, the road along the Hotel Mercure is one big art gallery - and most certainly justifies a stop to appreciate the painting one by one.

A more mundane positive change was the quick opening of a Cadisco Supermarket, replacing the shop which had been lost. Across the street, Mezza Luna which is well respected for gourmet quality Italian dining, is doing brisk business out of a temporary structure while the main restaurant on the beach is in the process of reconstruction.

A welcome addition to Nettle Bay dining is the new L’ Escapade restaurant. Fantastic French home cooking, some of the best pizza to be found on our island and all at fair prices. There is an outdoor terrace and indoor seating.

The Wall of Art in combination with several excellent restaurants put Nettle Bay back on the map as a must-see attraction of St-Martin.
Adventures in Sex and Dating in St. Maarten
A Regular Column by Leslie Hickerson

Ever do something and wake up with that bad feeling in the pit of your stomach? Sometimes you can’t even really remember what it was that you regret doing, but you just know there will be someone that will help you re-live it any second now. That is what happened to Gary and Tina.

Working on a mega yacht means that when charter stops all bets are off and the party is fierce. Tina hadn’t been working on the boat very long when the owner came on board for several weeks in a row. The crew worked twelve hours a day for five weeks. No nights off, no sleeping in in the mornings.

When the boss finally left, the crew celebrated in proper style by a huge night out. Champagne cocktails, jaeger shots, and red bull to keep going.

Gary worked on the boat as well, and even though they hadn’t been building towards anything, the night off brought out the need to release some tension.

The couple ended up on the bow “Titanic Style” but with less clothes and more penetration. In the morning they interacted politely and thought all could be forgotten. Which might be true... but they had forgotten the boat was equipped with security cameras all around.

Here’s to hoping no one finds the footage of their Jack and Rose re-enactment.
Quench Your Thirst: Caribbean Style

Because all standard American and European products are offered in our supermarkets, it’s easy to overlook some great Caribbean brands. If you are stocking up the fridge in your vacation accommodations, try our recommendations so that your refreshment choices include flavors of the region.

Who remembers how Ginger Ale tasted before it became the boringly sugary mainstream beverage it is now? Try Old Jamaican Ginger Beer, which brings the zest of ginger back. And as there is no ‘ale’ in Ginger Ale, there also is no ‘beer’ in Ginger Beer.

Another great addition to everyone's beach cooler is Ting - the Jamaican soda, based on grapefruit. Ting is especially popular as a long drink mixed with vodka.

Even though Coconut Water is not produced in the Caribbean, we felt that this flavor should be part of your selection. Drink it iced-cold for rehydration or use it to mix long drinks.

And if you want an authentic experience, get the coconut water straight from the coconut. Hack it open with a machete, stick a (paper!) straw in it and enjoy this beverage that is rich with potassium.

Heavenly Water is St. Maarten's bottled drinking water supplier. Recently, they started offering their own line of beverages with wide variety of tropical flavors.

Get out of your soda rut and experience a different type of beverage while on St. Maarten/St-Martin. No matter which you choose to try, your taste buds will thank you for stepping out of the ‘norm’.

Most bars and restaurants on island have all of these Caribbean soft drinks available for purchase. Enjoy!
“Pressure makes diamonds.” You’ve undoubtedly heard this saying before. Well it is partially correct, but there is way more to the creation of this precious gemstone than just pressure.

Between this and the widely popular idea that diamonds grow in mountains, there is much misconception about this crystallized form of carbon. Time to set the story straight.

Diamond’s crystal structure is what is called ‘isometric’, meaning the carbon atoms are bonded the same way in all directions.

Another mineral, graphite, is used in writing instruments- pencils. Graphite is also only carbon, but how it forms and its crystal structure are very different from diamond. Graphite is so soft that you can write with it, or break the tip of your pencil. Diamond is the hardest substance on earth. Only diamond can scratch diamond, and only diamond can cut diamond.

Diamond forms close to 100 miles (160km) underneath the earth’s surface. At this depth, high pressure and high temperature exist which is crucial to the formation of diamonds.

Most diamonds formed close to two billion years ago. The pressure needed to form diamond is 50,000 times the pressure of the earth’s surface, and the temperature must be between 2,500F and 2,900F (1,371C and 1,593C).

As hot magma from close to the core makes it way to the earth’s surface, it picks up diamonds along the way. As the magma encounters water, lower pressure and other variables the magma begins to slow in its movement. Finally- the magma pushes through the earth’s crust and explodes as solid rock.

Although diamonds formed billions of years ago, the process that brought them to the surface only takes three to ten hours on average. It had to be a quick process for diamonds to survive.

What a spectacular sight that must have been, but no one today was around to witness this gift from Mother Nature. The last eruption happened over a million years ago. So the diamonds we are currently mining and have mined for the last several hundred years have been waiting for you for a very long time.

Could diamonds be forming today? Absolutely. But volcanoes won’t bring them to the surface- the magma is liquid and not solid rock.

The diamonds would be destroyed in this process. The chances of us seeing a diamond eruption in our lifetime is not good, you have better odds playing the lottery.
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