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OCTOBER 22, 2024

THE FCCA SPECIAL 2024

Welcome to St Maarten



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OFFICIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE 30TH ANNUAL FCCA CRUISE CONFERENCE AND TRADESHOW

FROM ALEXANDER GUMBS, PORT ST. MAARTEN GROUP (PSG) CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO)

St. Maarten will be able to showcase what the destination has to offer at the 30th Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Cruise Conference & Tradeshow where approximately 800 cruise line, tourism destination representatives and port authority representatives will be in attendance.

St. Maarten's partnership with the FCCA is rock solid and this is cemented into our Presidential Strategic Partner Agreement. We work together to enhance the destination's cruise offerings.

As a destination, we have constantly listened to and enacted the cruise industry's suggestions to improve where improvement was needed. We continue to work diligently with the industry to reach higher milestones in the future through the great partnership that exists with the FCCA.

We are on a track of growth as international cruise industry figures show that cruise tourism is resilient and rebounding faster than other forms of travel and tourism.

Since the pandemic, our own cruise numbers have been growing annually and this is a great rebound. It shows the confidence that the cruise industry has in us as a destination; however, we cannot be complacent, but must continue to offer our guests new experiences.

At the Port St. Maarten Group, we continue to look at new opportunities and bringing forward new experiences.

Earlier this year, the destination was recognized as the #1 cruise port in the region. This accolade is for the people and the stakeholders of St. Maarten, and it is



because of the input from the FCCA, and stakeholders, along with the dedication of the hospitality service industry workers that cruise guests made us #1.

The key aspect of the 30th FCCA Cruise Conference & Tradeshow is about communication – and the four days of meetings, networking, sharing knowledge and gaining insights will allow all of us as destinations to achieve what cruise passengers are seeking when they go on a cruise across the region.

Destination St. Maarten is elated to be the destination of choice in hosting this conference along with the Government of St. Maarten.

Welcome to the conference delegates. May you have a wonderful stay and fruitful discussions.

FROM DR. LUC MERCELINA PRIME MINISTER OF ST. MAARTEN

On behalf of the Government and people of Sint Maarten, I extend a warm welcome to all attendees of the 30th annual Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Conference & Trade Show. It is a privilege to host this prestigious gathering as part of Port St. Maarten's 60th anniversary of cruise tourism. We are honoured to welcome industry leaders, innovators and key stakeholders to our shores.

Sint Maarten has a rich history as a premier destination for cruise tourism, and our ongoing partnership with the FCCA has been a cornerstone of our success. We take great pride in offering unforgettable experiences to the millions of visitors who choose to explore our vibrant culture, stunning landscapes, and unique blend of Dutch and French influences. Our port stands as a gateway to the Caribbean, and we are committed to continuous improvement and sustainability in the cruise sector to ensure future generations can enjoy this beautiful island.

This year's conference theme of collaboration resonates deeply with us. It mirrors our approach to maintaining strong, productive relationships with our partners in the cruise industry. Together, we have navigated the challenges posed by global economic shifts and the pandemic, emerging more resilient than ever. As we look ahead, Sint Maarten is eager to build on this mo-



mentum by embracing new opportunities in sustainable tourism, digital innovation, and enhancing our visitor experience.

Port St. Maarten has been instrumental in establishing the island as a hub for cruise tourism, and I congratulate its leadership and the entire team on reaching this milestone. Their dedication, coupled with the unwavering support of our government, ensures that we remain a leader in the region.

To the attendees of the FCCA Conference, I encourage you to take this opportunity to explore all that Sint Maarten has to offer. I am confident that the discussions, insights, and networking that take place over the coming days will pave the way for continued growth and prosperity for our island and the wider Caribbean.

Thank you, and welcome once again to Sint Maarten – The Friendly Island.

FROM GRISHA HEYLIGER-MARTEN MINISTER OF TOURISM, ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, TRANSPORT & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

As Minister of Tourism, Economic Affairs, Transport & Telecommunications (TEATT), it is my great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all participants of the 2024 FCCA Cruise Conference & Trade Show here in St. Maarten. This event offers an invaluable opportunity for us to come together as leaders, partners and innovators in the cruise and tourism industry.

This prestigious event brings together industry leaders, cruise executives, and stakeholders who are key contributors to the ongoing success and evolution of the Caribbean tourism sector.

As we gather in St. Maarten – a destination known for its natural beauty, rich culture, and exceptional hospitality – we are proud to be both the host and an active partner in this influential forum. Our island has long enjoyed a productive relationship with the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) and its members. This collaboration has played a critical role in the growth and sustainability of our cruise tourism industry.

Looking ahead, we are committed to strengthening these partnerships and exploring new opportunities for growth and innovation. St. Maarten is positioning it-



self as a dynamic destination, focused on delivering unique visitor experiences. Our goal is not just to meet the expectations of today's cruise passengers, but to exceed them – ensuring that St. Maarten remains a preferred destination for cruise lines and travellers alike.

To all the attendees, I wish you a productive and successful conference, filled with meaningful discussions, new connections, and innovative ideas that will shape the future of our industry. We look forward to working together as we continue to lead the Caribbean as a prime cruise destination.

Congratulations to the FCCA and Port St. Maarten for organizing what promises to be an outstanding event. Welcome to St. Maarten and may this year's conference inspire new opportunities and collaborations for all.

Cruisers Ahoy!

St. Maarten is proud to once again be "port of call" for the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Cruise Conference and Trade Show – in this case, its 30th edition. Between 800 and 900 participants are expected and we not only wish all of them fruitful discussions, but above all, a pleasant stay.

The country has allocated US \$850,000 to host this prestigious gathering, which can be considered of major importance for the entire island destination and its tourism economy. It also offers a great opportunity for local businesses to promote their products and services to visiting industry professionals.

The Daily Herald welcomes attendees of the event and thanks those involved in making it a reality. We salute you!



A Taste of our Island Destination

Here are some of the Top Picks of tourism-related businesses on the island – just some of the many that make our island destination special – encompassing both the Dutch and French sides. These picks are from The Daily Herald’s annual “Best Of” publication, released every January. The “Best Of” features a whopping 80 categories, covering everything from beach bars, to nail salons and party DJs, and is 100% determined by public vote.



Buccaneer Beach Bar

Best Beach Bar **Buccaneer Beach Bar**

Buccaneer Beach Bar is the place to be for the ultimate beach experience! Located in Pelican, it has once again been voted Best Beach Bar. Whether it's for a day of sun and fun, or an evening of live entertainment, Buccaneer Beach Bar has got you covered.

Buccaneer thanks voters for their unwavering support and for choosing them as the #1 Beach Bar on the island.

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This accolade is not just a reflection of the weekly food and drink specials, serene views, delicious food, or the inviting ambiance Buccaneer offers; it's a testament to the connections the staff has made with patrons, believing that every visitor is not just a customer, but a part of their ever-growing family.



Da Waterhole

Whether you're here to enjoy the sunset, relish signature cocktails, or just feel the sand under your feet, you have helped Buccaneer create a haven that's not just about relaxation but about creating memorable experiences. Open daily from 11:00am until 11:00pm,



Taloula Mango's / Blue Bitch Bar

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The FCCA to Sint Maarten

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YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR CIGARS @ SXM CIGARS & LOUNGE

If you're sailing through St. Maarten, don't miss the chance to experience a true paradise for cigar lovers at SXM Cigars & Lounge.

Imagine stepping into a haven where you're truly a kid in a candy store. With the duty-free and tax-free prices on top brands, you'll leave with a smile – and perhaps a few extra boxes!

Owned by the passionate Garry Jessani, the store is your ultimate destination for premium cigars. As a certified Habanos Specialist, Jessani takes pride in the extensive collection of authentic Cuban cigars – but that's just the beginning. Explore the vast selection of other cigars, including 14 exclusive house blends crafted in Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic, available only at SXM Cigars.

The outdoor lounge offers the perfect spot to savour your newly-found selection. Enjoy your cigar paired with a fine Scotch or Rum as you bask in the Caribbean breeze. Whether you're a seasoned cigar lover or just beginning your cigar journey, the knowledgeable staffers are here to guide you to your perfect choice.



SXM Cigar & Lounge is located in Maho and open daily from 10:00am to 7:00pm, except for Sundays and holidays. For more information, check out their socials on Facebook: Sxm cigars and Instagram @sxmcigar. You may also visit <http://www.sxm-cigars.com>, send an e-mail to info@sxmcigars.com or call +1 (721) 522-6782.

COME AND ENJOY THE SUGAR MILL CAFE

MS. LALIE'S COMMERCIAL CENTER, BUSH ROAD, SINT MAARTEN

+1 (721) 580-2003

DISCOVER ISLAND CHARM @ THE SUGAR MILL CAFÉ

Looking for the perfect spot to relax, indulge and experience local flavour while on St. Maarten? Look no further than The Sugar Mill Café. Nestled in the heart of Miss Lalie's Commercial Center on Bush Road, the charming café offers a warm island welcome and a delicious escape for visitors and locals alike.

The Sugar Mill Café boasts an authentic Caribbean experience through its menu. The freshly brewed coffees, exotic teas, and locally sourced breakfast delights are designed to satisfy your cravings, whether you're in the mood for something sweet or savoury. The tempting pastries and light meals are prepared with care, bringing the vibrant flavours of the island straight to your table.

Conveniently located, The Sugar Mill Café is the ideal stop for cruise tourists. After a day of exploring, why not take a moment to unwind in the relaxed atmosphere? With air conditioning, free Wi-Fi and fast, friendly service, it's the perfect place to refresh before or after island adventures. Whether you're savouring a rich cup of coffee, enjoying a light snack,

or simply soaking in the local culture, you'll experience island hospitality at its best at The Sugar Mill Café.

The Sugar Mill Café is located in Miss Lalie's Commercial Center on Bush Road #26 and is open Tuesday to Friday from 7:00am to 7:00pm; Saturday from 8:00am to 8:00pm; and Sunday from 8:00am to 6:00pm. To stay connected, follow the café on Instagram @thesugarmillcafe and on Facebook & The Sugar Mill Cafe.

TOP TECH AT GREAT PRICES: OFFICE WORLD



Office World has been part of the economic landscape and community of St. Maarten for some 35 years. As a part of the duty-free shopping experience that Philipsburg is known for, Office World offers quality brands and friendly service and takes pride in being a primary go-to shopping destination for both residents and tourists.

Conveniently located on Pondfill Road, Office World specialises in a wide range of computers, electronics, and office furniture. Visitors to the island can find great deals on smartphones, iPads, tablets, headphones, earbuds, wireless speakers and more, from top brands including Apple, Samsung, Dell, Lenovo, and HP.

Travellers interested in languages can also explore the selection of bilingual dictionaries which include French, Dutch and Spanish.

Curious? An extensive catalogue can be viewed online so that visitors can plan their

shopping trip. The friendly and knowledgeable team can also be contacted by email in advance, and will be happy to respond to any enquiries.

Office World is an authorised dealer of a wide selection of brand-name equipment, and has earned a great reputation among the island's professionals and students as a premier shopping destination for its large selection of products, which also include high-quality furniture, ergonomic chairs, filing cabinets, and office- and school-supplies.

This is complemented by free island-wide delivery for bulky items, as well as seamless delivery to neighbouring islands.

Open from 8:30am to 5:45pm Monday through Saturday, Office World is located on Pondfill Road #53, Philipsburg. For more information, browse the extensive online catalogue at www.officeworldsxm.com; send an email to mail@officeworldsxm.com or call the office at 1 (721) 542-4050/58.

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INDIAN MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION (IMA) – ELEVATING THE TOURIST EXPERIENCE ON ST. MAARTEN

The Indian Merchants Association (IMA) proudly represents a dynamic network of local businesses on the Dutch side of the island of St. Maarten, serving both cruise tourists and stayover guests. With a wide range of offerings – from jewellers and souvenir stores to restaurants, coffee shops, hotels and tour operators – the IMA ensures visitors experience the authentic charm of the island while enjoying high-quality services and products.

IMA members include the owners of jewellery stores, restaurants, coffee shops, souvenir shops, minimarts, large supermarkets, hotels and tour operations. Together, they cater to the diverse needs of visitors, providing memorable experiences that reflect the vibrant culture and beauty of St. Maarten. Whether visitors are browsing for unique keepsakes, enjoying local cuisine, or taking guided tours to explore the island, IMA businesses ensure a warm and welcoming experience.

One of the core values of IMA is a dedication to ethical business practices. Every member-business upholds principles of transparency, fair pricing, and exceptional customer service, ensuring visitors



receive genuine value during their stay. "We believe in creating lasting relationships with our customers by prioritizing trust and excellence in everything we do," says Sunny, a spokesperson for the IMA. "Our commitment is to provide an unforgettable experience for tourists, one that reflects the true spirit of St. Maarten."

Whether visiting St. Maarten for a few hours or a few days, the Indian Merchants Association welcomes all tourists to explore the island's diverse offerings with the assurance of ethical practices and excellent customer care.

IMA businesses operate from 9:30am to 5:30pm, making them accessible to both cruise passengers, with limited time on the island, and stayover guests, who have the luxury of exploring at a more leisurely pace. Visitors can easily find IMA-affiliated businesses across St. Maarten, each ready to showcase the island's best in hospital-

ity, craftsmanship, and culinary delights. For more information on the Indian Merchants Association and the many businesses it represents, visitors can stay updated by following the IMA on Facebook (@IMASXM).



**Congratulations
to Sint Maarten for hosting
The Florida-Caribbean
Cruise Association's 30th
conference and cruise show!**



IMA

Indian Merchants Association
St. Maarten Est. 1973

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Best Local Food

The Captain's Rib Shack

Accolades go to The Captain's Rib Shack scoring first place in the category "Best Local Food" in The Daily Herald's "Best Of" 2023 survey. Situated on the busy main road in Simpson Bay within walking distance of many hotels, time-shares and marine docks, Captain D's has grown over the last few years.



The Captain's Rib Shack

1st

The unpretentious setting is a drawcard for those who like to eat local. The menu covers great Caribbean cuisine. You will find the tastiest ribs marinated in a special dry

rub, then smoked; jerk chicken wings (not too spicy); seafood platters; delicious sides – like macaroni pie, potatoes, coconut rice 'n peas, and a spicy bami – are much in demand. Luscious oyster soup and barbecued pigtails are on the menu over the weekend.

All you can eat Thursday special is ribs; and there are ribs and shrimp Thursday/ Friday specials. Entertainment includes a local band playing Caribbean tunes and over the weekend, local DJs come out! Service with a smile is key here!



Yvette's

2nd



Chesterfields

3rd

Best Beer Brand

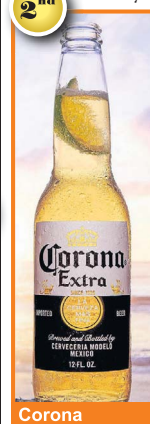
Heineken

Heineken has emerged as the epitome of beer enjoyment, celebrated as the island's favourite – the iconic green one. Its enduring popularity is a testament to the unwavering trust and preference from the esteemed consumers who consistently choose Heineken as their favourite beer brand. The brand, born in 1864 in Amsterdam, has expanded its reach to be enjoyed in 192 countries, showcasing its global appeal.



1st

Heineken embodies accessibility and reliability, with the beer readily available everywhere you go. Crafted with only four key ingredients, Heineken's golden hue and enchanting flavour are a result of its simple yet magical recipe, offering a refreshing option that strikes the perfect balance for those seeking a beer that is not overly potent. As a Dutch brand, Heineken seamlessly integrates into the fabric of the Dutch Caribbean island. Its compelling presence, marked by accessibility, balanced taste, and rich heritage, makes it the



Corona

2nd

island's preferred beer brand, reinforcing its status as the ultimate choice of participants of The Daily Herald's "Best Of" survey for Best Beer Brand for 2023.



Carib

3rd

Best Store to Purchase Jewellery

Joe's Jewelry

Established in 1980, Joe's Jewelry International stands as one of the pioneering family-owned jewellers in St. Maarten. With a rich history and a devoted clientele, Joe's Jewelry takes pride in providing a personalized shopping experience and a remarkable array of duty-free offerings.

The store features a diverse collection including designer pieces, 14 KT Gold, fine jewellery, Swiss and Japanese timepieces, certified loose and lab grown diamonds, and exotic precious gems. Brands such as De Beers, Gucci, Rado, Girard-Perregaux, Movado, Tissot, Michele, Frederique Constant, Baume & Mercier, SEIKO, SWAROVSKI, Fossil, Hugo Boss, and Swatch adorn the shelves, ensuring a wide selection to choose from.

Ranked No. 1 on TripAdvisor, with over 3,000 five-star reviews, Joe's Jewelry is celebrated for its warm hospitality, offering visitors a complimentary serving of cham-



Joe's Jewelry

1st

pagne and a welcoming smile. The experienced staffers are dedicated to making the selection process seamless and enjoyable, understanding the significance of each jewellery piece as a symbol of love, appreciation, and cherished moments.

Best Electronics Store

Boolchand's

Established over 60 years ago in St. Maarten, Boolchand's is a trusted name in electronics, watches, and jewellery. With stores on Front Street and in the Harbour area, the store has been a reliable choice for generations.

The stores stock a wide range of products, including jewellery, watches, consumer electronics, digital cameras and laptops, with an impressive selection of accessories available. The knowledgeable staffers provide expert advice and help customers find the right product at a great price – and the store stands behind its products with extended warranties.

Boolchand's is known for its top-notch customer service, offering a personalized experience that makes customers feel valued. If you're in search of electronics, watches,

and jewellery with friendly and professional customer service, Boolchand's should be your first choice. With two convenient locations, it's easy to find what you need at this long-time favourite store.



Boolchand's

1st



Ballerina Jewelers

2nd



Zhaveri Jewelers

3rd



Klass Electronics

2nd



Blue Point

3rd

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SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM **Private Platinum Member and Cruise Executive Reception**
(Bamboo House - Jungle Adventure Theme / Dress Code: Resort Casual)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Private Day - Cruise Executives & St. Maarten Government
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM Conference Registration (Maho Beach Resort Lobby)
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM Light Snack Break @ Registration (Maho Beach Resort Lobby)
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM **Best Practices - Getting the Most from the FCCA Conference**
RSVP- Limited Seating (Royal Pavilion @ Ocean Point Resort)
3:30 PM - 6:30 PM **One-on-One Meetings** (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
3:30 PM - 6:30 PM Coffee Break (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
7:00 PM - 8:30 PM **Private St. Maarten Presidents Dinner** - Table Sponsors Only
8:00 PM - 10:00 PM **Welcome Reception & Dinner**
(Port St. Maarten - Carnival Masquerade Theme / Dress Code: Festive Flair)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

8:30 AM - 11:00 AM Coffee Break at Opening (Maho Room @ Ocean Point Resort)
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM **Opening Ceremony** (Maho Room @ Ocean Point Resort)
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM Conference Registration (Maho Beach Resort Lobby)
10:15 AM - 11:15 AM **Presidential Panel** (Maho Room @ Ocean Point Resort)
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM **President/CEO & Ministers Forum** (Royal Pavilion @ Ocean Point Resort)
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM Lunch
1:00 PM - 1:30 PM BREA Press Release (Royal Pavilion @ Ocean Point Resort)
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM Coffee Break (Inside Maho Room @ Ocean Point Resort)
1:30 PM - 2:30 PM **Workshop** (Maho Room @ Ocean Point Resort)
3:00 PM - 4:00 PM **Finding Your Niche - Destination and Port Operations**
RSVP- Limited Seating (Royal Pavilion @ Ocean Point Resort)
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM **One-on-One Meetings** (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM Coffee Break (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM **A Taste of St. Maarten Reception & Dinner**
(Porto Cupecoy St. Maarten - Yellow Sage Theme / Dress Code: White Casual Chic)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Conference Registration (Maho Beach Resort Lobby)
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Coffee Break (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM **One-on-One Meetings** (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM Platinum Member Lunch
12:00 PM - 2:00 PM Lunch
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM Coffee Break (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
2:00 PM - 3:30 PM **One-on-One Meetings** (Meeting Rooms @ Ocean Point Resort)
3:30 PM - 4:30 PM **The Power of Social Media**
RSVP- Limited Seating (Royal Pavilion @ Ocean Point Resort)
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM Coffee Break (Inside Maho Room @ Ocean Point Resort)
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM **Workshop** (Maho Room @ Ocean Point Resort)
7:30 PM - 9:00 PM **Closing Reception & Dinner**
(Morgan Resort - Aquatic Theme / Dress Code: Shades of Blue)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM **Post Conference Tour** (Spirit of St. Maarten Luxury VIP Snorkel Tour)
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM **Exclusive Platinum Member Tour with Lunch** (St. Barth's Getaway)