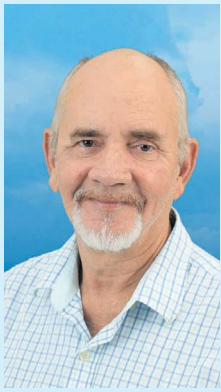


HOME, DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION



OCTOBER 30, 2024

A PUBLICATION OF THE DAILY HERALD



Worthwhile

Home is where the heart is, they say, but the feel of a house or office to a large extent depends on its functionality and appearance. The building where it is located no doubt remains important, but what usually makes a huge difference is the personal touch and attention to details, both inside and out.

In this *Home, Design & Construction Special*, readers will find information on available options, with the local experts exposing their products and services.

Sprucing up the residence or business certainly seems a worthwhile way to spend one's money and this supplement is intended to help do just that.

The Publisher

The Home, Design & Construction Special 2024 is a Special Publication of



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Buying a fixer-upper can be a savvy investment, offering the opportunity to get a property at a lower price, customize it to your tastes, and potentially increase its value. However, it can also be a challenging journey, full of unexpected twists and turns. If you're considering taking on a fixer-upper, here are some key tips to guide you through the process.

1: Assess the neighbourhood.

Before you even step inside the house, evaluate the neighbourhood. Look for properties in areas with rising property values, and access to amenities. A fixer-upper in a great location is often a better investment than a perfect house in a declining area. Research neighbourhood trends, talk to local real estate agents, and observe how the neighbourhood has changed over time.

2: Get a thorough home inspection.

A home inspection is a crucial step when buying a fixer-upper. Hire a professional inspector to identify structural issues, roof damage, plumbing problems, electrical concerns, and other costly repairs. Knowing the property's flaws upfront will help you determine if the project is manageable and give you leverage to negotiate the price. Be prepared to walk away if the inspection reveals major red flags, like foundation problems or severe water damage.

3: Estimate renovation costs carefully.

Before making an offer, get detailed estimates for the renovations you're planning. Consult with contractors to understand the costs associated with ma-

terials, labour, and potential surprises. Always budget for unexpected expenses – set aside at least 10-20% extra for unanticipated costs. This way, you're less likely to be caught off-guard by unexpected issues that can arise during the renovation.

4: Prioritize structural repairs first.

Focus on essential structural repairs first – these are the bones of the house. Address foundational issues, roof repairs, and plumbing or electrical updates before diving into cosmetic changes. Fixing major problems upfront prevents future headaches.

5: Create a realistic renovation timeline.

Renovating a fixer-upper is a time-consuming process, so set a realistic timeline for the work. Break down the project into manageable phases and create a timeline for each. Understand that unexpected delays are common, especially when dealing with older homes. Flexibility is key to managing both the renovation process and your expectations.

6: Consider the sweat equity option.

If you have the skills or are willing to learn, doing some of the work yourself can save a significant amount of money. "Sweat equity" can make a fixer-upper more affordable, but it's essential to know your limits. Leave technical tasks like plumbing, electrical, and structural work to licensed professionals to avoid costly mistakes. Focus your DIY efforts on painting, landscaping, and other cosmetic improvements.

7: Don't over-improve for the area.

While it's tempting to go all out on renovations, be mindful of the neighbour-

hood's ceiling price. Overimproving a home can make it difficult to recoup your investment if you go beyond what the area can support. Focus on renovations that add value, like kitchen and bathroom updates, modern fixtures, and curb appeal, but avoid luxury finishes that don't match the local market.

8: Research financing options.

Financing a fixer-upper can be different from buying a move-in-ready home. Be sure to shop around for the best financing option that suits your needs and budget.

9: Be prepared for emotional ups and downs.

Buying and renovating a fixer-upper can be an emotional rollercoaster. There will be days when the project feels overwhelming, and unexpected challenges can lead to stress. Having a clear plan, sticking to your budget, and celebrating small milestones can help keep you motivated. Remember, patience is crucial when taking on a major renovation.

10: Work with professionals you trust.

Building a reliable team is essential when renovating a fixer-upper. Work with a trustworthy real estate agent, a knowledgeable contractor, and other professionals who have experience with fixer-uppers. Ask for references, check their credentials, and read reviews before hiring. Good communication and a solid working relationship with your team can make a big difference in the renovation process.

11: Think long-term: Your end goal.

Consider what your long-

By Arun Jagtiani – Island Real Estate Team

TIPS FOR BUYING A FIXER-UPPER: TURNING POTENTIAL INTO PROFIT

term goal is with the property. Are you planning to flip it for a quick profit, turn it into a rental, or make it your forever home? Your strategy will influence how much you invest in renovations, the type of improvements you make, and the quality of finishes you choose. Knowing your end goal can help guide your decisions throughout the process.

12: Have a resale strategy.

Even if you're buying a fixer-upper for yourself,

it's wise to have a potential resale strategy in mind. Choose renovations that increase the home's value and appeal to future buyers. Think about neutral colour schemes, energy-efficient upgrades, and practical improvements that will make the home attractive if you decide to sell down the line.

Final thoughts

Buying a fixer-upper can be a rewarding endeavour if you go in with your eyes wide open and a clear plan.

With the right research, preparation, and patience, you can turn a neglected property into a beautiful, valuable home. Remember, the journey may be challenging, but the satisfaction of seeing a project come to life is well worth the effort!

If you are looking for a fixer-upper property on St. Maarten, contact Island Real Estate Team or visit their website at www.ireteam.com



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PETS & PLANTS: PROTECTING BOTH YOUR GREEN AND YOUR FURRY FRIENDS



Indoor plants and pets are both beloved in our homes, but they don't always co-exist peacefully. Pets are naturally curious, and your treasured plants can sometimes become unintended victims of exploration, playfulness and even snack cravings. Protecting your plants from curious paws, teeth and claws – and your beloved pets from potentially poisonous leaves – is achievable with a few strategic steps.

Here's how to create a pet-friendly plant environment that's harmonious, stylish, and healthy for both your leafy and furry companions.

• Choose pet-friendly plants
Start with plant selection. Some common houseplants, like pothos, philodendrons, desert roses and lilies, are toxic to pets, potentially causing anything from mild stomach upset to serious health issues if ingested. In-

stead, opt for non-toxic varieties such as spider plants, Boston ferns, parlour and bamboo palms, and calatheas, which are generally safe for cats and dogs. Not only will opting for pet-friendly greenery protect your pets, but it also gives you peace of mind if they occasionally nibble on a leaf or two.

• Elevate your greenery

One of the simplest ways to keep plants out of reach for your four-legged family members is by elevating them. Place plants on shelves, in hanging planters or on wall-mounted brackets. This makes them less accessible to curious cats and dogs, while also adding a stylish vertical element to your home. Consider installing floating shelves or repurposing old ladders to create a plant display that's both functional and visually appealing.

• Use barriers and planters with covers

If your pets are persistent plant explorers, physical barriers can work wonders. Use decorative mesh or wire covers over the soil to prevent digging, which many cats are prone to do. Some pots also come with mesh or wooden covers that can protect both the soil and the roots, deterring pets from exploring or tipping plants over. For larger plants, consider low fencing or metal grates that can serve as a design element while adding protection.

• Deter pets with scents

Pets, especially cats, dislike certain smells. Citrus peels, white vinegar, coffee

grounds, and certain essential oils (like lemon or lavender) can be used around plants to make them less tasty. You can sprinkle these natural deterrents around the base of the plant or use pet-safe sprays on the pots (not directly on the plant itself). Be cautious, though, and ensure any products you use are safe for pets.

• Designate a "Pet Plant"

If your pet insists on chewing greenery, you could consider giving them their own designated plant! Cat grass, for instance, is a safe and pet-friendly option that many cats enjoy nibbling on. By providing pets with their own plant, you can redirect their interest away from your treasured houseplants and towards a plant that's safe for them to explore.

• Train and distract

Training is a gradual but effective way to keep pets away from plants. Use commands or sounds, like a firm "no" or a clicker, to discourage your pet from approaching plants. Positive reinforcement when they listen can go a long way. Additionally, try providing interactive toys or scratching posts nearby to offer alternative distractions. A playful pet is often less interested in houseplants if they have other outlets for their energy.

• Stabilise and secure heavy pots

Some pets, especially larger breeds of dogs, may accidentally bump into or knock over plants. Secure larger pots by using sturdy and wide-bottomed containers that are

harder to tip over, or place weights in the base of the pot to make them harder to knock over. Floor plants should be positioned in less-trafficked areas or anchored to walls, ensuring they're safe from both curious pets.

• Keep soil clean and covered

Pets may be tempted by the scent of fresh soil. Regularly cleaning up fallen leaves or other organic material around plants will make them less interesting. For a stylish touch, cover the soil with decorative rocks or pebbles, which will deter digging, and add an aesthetic finish.

• Avoid toxic plant treatments

If you're using fertilisers, pesticides or plant sprays, be cautious about pet safety. Organic and non-toxic options are best, as pets may lick leaves or dig in treated soil. Some stores offer non-toxic plant care solutions that will protect both your plants and your furry friends.

• Utilise pet-repelling mats and spikes

Mats and spikes, often used in gardens, can also be repurposed indoors. Pet-repelling mats have a texture that pets find uncomfortable but are usually harmless. These mats or small and blunt spikes can be placed on the floor around plants or even on surfaces to prevent cats from jumping onto plant shelves.



CRAFTING EXCELLENCE IN ST. MAARTEN'S MARBLE INDUSTRY @ MD MARBLE DESIGN

Nestled within the vibrant community of St. Maarten lies a beacon of craftsmanship and sophistication – MD Marble Design. Renowned as a premier marble specialist, this establishment epitomizes the fusion of artistry and functionality,

offering a diverse range of marble products and bespoke services tailored to elevate any space.

Marble, with its timeless elegance and enduring appeal, has long been revered as a symbol of luxury and refinement. MD Marble

Design harnesses the inherent beauty of this exquisite material, transforming it into masterpieces that adorn both residential and commercial environments with unparalleled grace.

At the heart of MD Marble Design's success lies its commitment to excellence in every facet of its operations. From sourcing the finest raw materials to employing skilled artisans and utilizing cutting-edge technology, the company spares no effort

in ensuring that each creation surpasses expectations in terms of quality and craftsmanship.

MD Marble Design showcases the enduring allure of marble and the timeless appeal of exceptional craftsmanship. With its unwavering commitment to quality, sustainability, and customer satisfaction, the company has established itself as a leader in the marble industry in St. Maarten and beyond.

MD Marble Design is located at Orange Grove Road #4-5. For more information, call +590 690 69 70 46 or send an email to info@mdmarbledesign.com



MD MARBLEDESIGN



Tel. +590 690 697 046



Orange Grove Road
Building #4 and #5
Cole Bay.



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REVAMP YOUR HOME WITH MOBALPA

Discover the difference that comes with a home designed for you



Transform your living space with Mobalpa Saint-Martin, where cutting-edge design meets exceptional craftsmanship for kitchens, bathrooms, and storage. Known for its dedication to quality and creativity, Mobalpa has been a pioneer in shaping spaces that effortlessly combine functionality with style.

At Mobalpa, every home transformation becomes a personalised journey. The team of skilled designers and friendly consultants will work closely with you to bring your vision to life, offering expert guidance and insight at each stage.



From initial planning to final installation, Mobalpa ensures a smooth experience, combining attention to detail with a passion for combining beauty and practicality.

Mobalpa's creations are more than just visually appealing; they are built for longevity. Each detail, from ergonomic kitchen layouts to elegant bath-

room collections, reflects Mobalpa's commitment to superior craftsmanship and durability. At Mobalpa, traditional artistry is seamlessly blended with modern technology, ensuring every element contributes to your living experience.

What truly sets Mobalpa apart is its commitment to customisation. Every aspect of your space, from material selection to layout design, is tailored by experts to meet your unique needs, creating a space that mirrors your personality, personal style and lifestyle.

Innovation is what drives Mobalpa forward. With smart home integration and ingenious storage solutions, Mobalpa continually redefines the possibilities of interior design. Since March, the store has introduced new products to their already-extensive range, including space-saving storage solutions and smart technology to streamline daily activities.

Sustainability is a key factor for Mobalpa. By actively utilising eco-friendly practices, Mobalpa ensures that its products will not only enhance your home, but also support a healthier planet.

Among our flagship designs, the open kitchen with a central island remains a customer favourite, celebrated for its blend of functionality and sociability. Ideal for families and hosts-with-the-most, this layout optimises space while fostering connection. Clean lines and modern materials create a look that is both practical and stunning – a key reason for its popularity.

For smaller budgets, Mobalpa offers modular kitchen options that combine quality and affordability. These customisable kitchens feature durable, economical materials like laminate while maintaining a sleek design – for any budget. Our bathroom collections also focus on compact, multi-functional furniture, maximising space and budget, without compromising on style.

Mobalpa is located in Bellevue and is open Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 6:00pm (with a lunch break from 12:30 to 2:00pm) and on Saturday from 9:00am to 12 noon. To contact Mobalpa, call +590 590 51 26 79 for more information.





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The Kitchen Family: Complete turnkey service, from design to installation

~ New state-of-the-art display models from November ~



You can entrust The Kitchen Family team with the complete furnishing of your interior – from kitchen and living room, to bedroom, dressing room and bathroom. What’s more, the company can coordinate colour schemes, as well as outdoor kitchens and outdoor furniture on request.

You can equip and furnish your entire interior without having to approach several people, minimising frustration and bringing peace of mind, along with a sense of simplicity and cohesive style to your home.

The Kitchen Family offers a complete turnkey service, from design to installation, including appliances. However, quotations are line-rate, so you are free to take only what you need. This empowers clients with a wide range of choice.

The range of products and services at The Kitchen Family ena-

bles the team to cater to a wide variety of customer types, renters or owners, both on the Dutch and French sides. This includes private individuals and families working and living on the island, young retirees moving here, investors, and commercial clients with properties for rent. Tailored advice is provided, depending on clients’ budgets, needs, and styles. Staffers are able to accommodate in English and French, as well as some Spanish.

The Daily Herald asked the team for one example of how they can help their clients’ design to be more functional. “We work with them to optimize storage and space (corner units), because we’re constantly on the lookout for new technology from our manufacturers. Sometimes, some people only want drawers, but they have to use them sparingly because they’re not very practical for organizing their kitchen,” they explained.

Keeping this in mind, there are many reasons to see the planning of your

kitchen as what it is – a part of your life planning. It is not only about finding the balance between design and functionality, but your kitchen can in fact be something like a new family member – full of flair, character and personality.

“That sounds complicated, but we make it pleasantly simple with the full quality and style-variety of a major kitchen brand and, of course, with the experience of your kitchen specialist. Our team of multidisciplinary specialists makes it a point to be attentive to your needs and wishes, to optimise the aesthetics and functionality of your home!”

So, what should customers keep in mind, or how should they prepare to best work with the team at The Kitchen Family? First, the kitchens are made-to-measure and come from Italy. There’s nothing in stock, as each kitchen is unique. With that in mind, customers need to take into account a length of time of between 2½ and 3 months from kitchen approval to installation.

In general, it’s always best to make an appointment with a designer via The Kitchen Family website. To facilitate the meeting, it’s best to come with measurements and photos of the room you’d like to work on. However, if this isn’t possible, a designer will come to the site to set up the project. In any case, a professional will always check the measure-

ments before confirming the order. Sample photos can also be shown by the client, to help the team determine their needs.

Finally, customers can rest assured that estimates are free.

Whether it’s your kitchen, living room, bathroom, or dressing room, The Kitchen Family’s designs will fit your style just right!

Established since August 2017, The Kitchen Family Caraipe benefits from a strong partnership with the GITEM-EURONICS group, a true local leader in household appliances for more than 20 years, bringing its expertise in household appliances. This partnership has enabled us to produce hundreds of projects per year on St. Martin and St. Barths.

The company shines throughout the Caribbean, and stems from the



German group Baumann that was created in 1917! Our factories produce 650 kitchens per day, making us one of the European leaders!

You are unique; your interior should be too! Visit The Kitchen Family today to design/upgrade your living spaces. The design office in Bellevue (above Gitem) is open from 9:00am to 12:30pm, and 2:00pm to 5:00pm. Two showrooms in Hope Es-

tate – CONFORAMA and PRO&CIE – are open from 9:30am to 12:30pm and 2:00pm to 5:30pm. As of November 15, you are invited to come and discover the new state-of-the-art display models at the PRO&CIE showroom. Visit www.the-kitchen-family.com; call 0590 87 36 37.





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FRENCH CRAFTSMANSHIP AND PERSONAL EXPERTISE @ LAPEYRE

LAPEYRE, a name synonymous with quality home furnishings in France for nearly a century, is your trusted partner for creating a stylish and functional living space. Since 1931, LAPEYRE has helped homeowners transform their kitchens, bathrooms and interiors with a thoughtful selection of expertly crafted products that bring French craftsmanship and flair to every home. Whether you're revamping your kitchen, designing a compact bathroom, or adding charm with new doors and flooring, LAPEYRE's extensive collection offers all the essentials to elevate your space.

The brand's product range spans across every room, with furniture for kitchens, bathrooms, dressing rooms, and living areas, as well as staircases, solid wood flooring, and laminate and vinyl options. For the outdoors, LAPEYRE also offers high-quality gates, windows, and fencing, bringing together everything you need to build or enhance a home. This comprehensive selection is what truly

sets LAPEYRE apart, making it possible for the friendly staff to help you outfit every part of your space with style and substance.

The experts at LAPEYRE are proud to offer something unique in the home furnishings sector – a truly personalised and local service. The team of experienced professionals don't just offer advice from a distance; they also offer in-home consultations, bringing their design insights and expertise directly to you. This level of attention ensures every recommendation suits your specific space, style and needs, enabling LAPEYRE to create solutions tailored to your home. Additionally, many of the products are made in France in LAPEYRE factories, combining French craftsmanship with a commitment to quality.

For those with smaller spaces, LAPEYRE provides innovative bathroom furniture that maximises every inch of your room without compromising on quality or style. The small bathroom models are available in a variety of designs, and allow you to

choose between visible storage solutions or sleek concealed units, giving you options that are both practical and attractive. With compact shower trays, cabinets, and drawers, LAPEYRE offers a variety of space-saving products that prove style is possible even in small spaces.

LAPEYRE's customer base is as varied as their product selection, and the team is delighted to work with individuals and professionals alike. From first-time homeowners and retirees renovating their homes to industry professionals in architecture, the hotel sector, and real estate, the brand's extensive experience across all these sectors ensures that the staff understands and can meet the distinct needs of any project. They also support rental property owners and larger commercial projects, delivering tailored solutions that meet both individual and large-scale requirements with equal care.

Over the decades, LAPEYRE has become an expert in delivering quality home furnishings across France and its overseas

territories. With its newest showroom, LAPEYRE St. Martin, which opened in 2018, the brand continues its mission to bring beautiful, practical, and long-lasting home solutions to customers near and far.

The team is proud to serve both French and English-speaking clients and encourages customers to come meet them in-store to explore ideas, seek inspiration, or simply ask for advice. Whether you come with a specific project in mind or are looking for fresh inspiration, the specialists are there to provide free consultations, complimentary estimates, and tailored advice.

LAPEYRE St. Martin is located on 7 Lotissement Green Valley, near the Grand Case Airport and is open from 1:30 to 5:00pm on Mondays, 9:00am to 5:00pm Tuesdays through Fridays, and 9:00am to 12:30pm on Saturdays. For more information, call +590 590 77 35 01 or send an email to vente.saint-martin@lapeyre.fr.





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In the heart of Sucker Garden, Central Mix Concrete is setting a benchmark in the construction materials industry, delivering top-tier quality, durability, and sustainability. Known for its unwavering commitment to high standards, Central Mix Concrete supplies PSI-rated materials ranging from 2500 PSI to 7000 PSI, catering to the diverse needs of residential, commercial, and infrastructural projects across the island. From custom foundation requirements to specialized high-performance structures, Central Mix Concrete has become a cornerstone in the region's building landscape.

ents' needs personally, helping them achieve lasting results that fit each unique project." The focus on PSI strength and material variety enables the company to tailor solutions, whether it's a foundational slab for a new school, a residential development, or an innovative public structure.

Founded in 2006, Central Mix Concrete has evolved into a trusted provider of concrete solutions, recognized throughout St. Maarten and the surrounding islands. The company's success is built on more than just concrete; it's the product of a deep-rooted dedication to reliability, quality, and community. With an extensive range of aggregates, from fine white sand to coarse grey gravel, Central Mix Concrete offers contractors and clients the flexibility to choose materials that perfectly suit each project's specifications. The variety of options and high standards exemplify the company's focus on ensuring that every material aligns with the latest industry requirements, providing robust solutions for even the most demanding builds.

Sustainability stands at the heart of Central Mix Concrete's operations. Recognizing the importance of protecting natural resources, Central Mix Concrete integrates recycled water into its production processes. This initiative not only conserves local water resources but also significantly reduces waste, making it possible for the company to minimize its environmental footprint. As the company continues to expand its sustainable practices, Central Mix Concrete is proud to lead the way in eco-conscious construction materials in the region.

With plans to enhance its sustainable offerings further, Central Mix Concrete is positioned to set new industry standards for years to come. Whether it's developing advanced materials, exploring green innovations, or serving the unique demands of St. Maarten's construction landscape, Central Mix Concrete remains dedicated to supporting the community with the best that modern concrete technology has to offer.

"At Central Mix Concrete, our goal is to supply products that meet the industry's highest standards while remaining environmentally conscious," explains Djuric Richardson, Operations Manager at Central Mix Concrete. "We believe in the importance of quality and durability, but we also take pride in getting to know our cli-

For more information about Central Mix Concrete and its range of quality PSI products and aggregates, visit www.centralmixconcrete.com, call +1 (721) 542-7520 or visit the facebook page @CMCSXM1.

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BEAUTIFY YOUR TROPICAL OASIS WITH PALMEX - THE ULTIMATE THATCH ROOFING SOLUTION!

Sprucing up your private residence or rental villa; giving a special tropical touch to a resort; or beautifying a beach bar? Palmex has the perfect thatched roofing solution for you! It's eco-friendly, maintenance-free, weather-proof, aesthetically identical to traditional thatch roofing, and has a life-span of 50 years.

Palmex SXM already serves satisfied customers in Anguilla, Saba, and St. Barths, and is available to work with any island north of Guadeloupe.

Palmex is the world's leading producer and distributor of synthetic palm leaves used to build and renovate traditional thatch roofing. To meet the needs of home-

owners and exceed the expectations of commercial investors, the Palmex team designed and developed an artificial thatch roofing product that is durable and environmentally friendly, while not giving up any of the classic aesthetic.

For over 20 years, Palmex has been the most unique and essential roofing system for people in search of quality products that out-perform every time, ensuring efficient and reliable long-term protection. Palmex is sure to add value to your property, whether commercial or private.

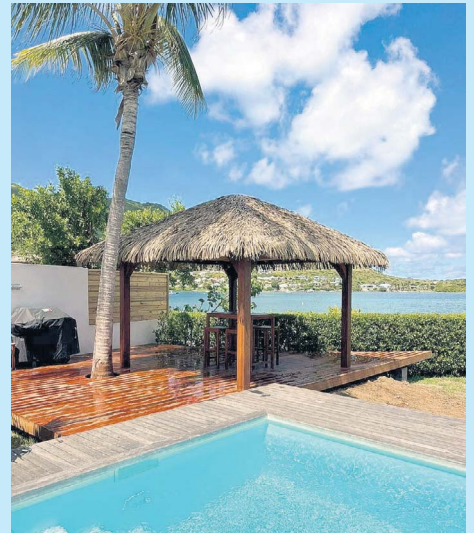
Palmex thatch roofing is weatherproof, eco-friendly, maintenance free, and UV resistant, not to mention it keeps you cool and doesn't make noise when it rains. The industrial-strength materials are long-lasting and easy to install. The roofing system has been tested in certified laboratories to withstand high winds of up to 260 km/h, with successful results. It is also guaranteed to be 100% waterproof.

With a 20-year warranty and a 50-year lifespan, you'll never have to worry about repairing or replacing your roof again! Palmex roofing

solutions provide you with functional and versatile materials that adapt to fit any architectural style or roofing type, whether it is for a beach pavilion, umbrellas, outdoor cooking areas, bars, restaurants or gazebos and swimming pool cabanas.

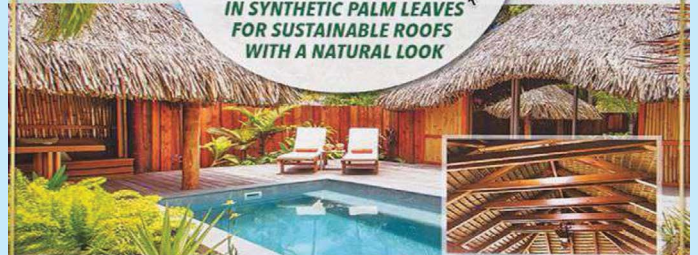
The environmental aspect of Palmex product is essentially due to its exceptionally long lifespan that has a direct effect on reducing massive over-harvesting of natural resources. It does not require any toxic treatments against insect, mildew or fire. Palmex is proud of its zero-waste production as all removed pieces are fully recycled. Highly resistant, Palmex won't contaminate the ocean with torn off parts due to high winds. Compressed packaging reduces transport volume and therefore gas emissions. All this and much more has been analysed by experts, and Palmex received an eco-friendly certification.

Locally, Palmex roof covering is sold and installed by Palmex SXM, operated by Laurent Muguet. For more information, contact Palmex SXM by phone: 0690 71 66 90 or email: palmexsxm@gmail.com



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