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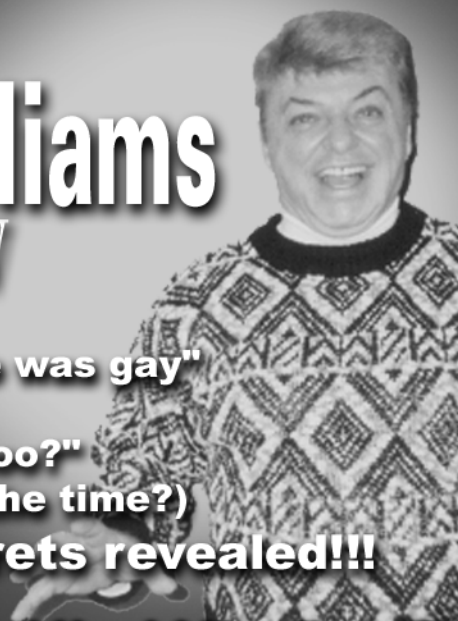
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Paris



The glass ceiling in Bellagio's lobby



Liberace Museum



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The Trevi Fountain at Caesars Palace



The Venetian



Liberace Museum



The Dancing Fountains at Bellagio



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Marsha & Rip with the babies at Siegfried & Roy's Secret Garden at the Mirage

Rip & Marsha's DESTINATION LAS VEGAS CELEBRATING THEIR 35TH ANNIVERSARY ~ NEVADA ~ PHOTOS by Ambush



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## UNDER THE GAYDAR

by Tony Leggio  
E-mail: [tonymgp@hotmail.com](mailto:tonymgp@hotmail.com)  
Photo by: Larry Graham, [GrahamStudioOne.COM](http://GrahamStudioOne.COM)

### Villa St. Martin

Imagine yourself on a Caribbean island with sugary white sand, so fine it feels like you are walking on air. The waves of the cool, light blue water laps gently along the pristine beach as a tender breeze sways the leaves of the palm trees that rock your hammock as you lazily relax reading some trashy summer novel. The gentle sounds of calypso music can be heard wafting in the background as you dive into the crystal water so salty that it feels like you are floating. Sounds like a dream. Well luckily for me, I recently got the opportunity to experience a piece of this Caribbean paradise when I took a trip to St. Martin.

My very good friend Christine BreauX invited me to a special birthday party she was having on the island of St. Martin. All I had to do was take care of airfare and all the other details were handled. Always up for an adventure, I readily agreed and it proved to be one of my best trips.

So before I go into details about my gay adventure on the island, I thought you might want to know a little more about the place. St. Martin is the smallest island in the world ever to have been partitioned between two different nations, St. Martin/St. Maarten has been shared by the French and the Dutch in a spirit of neighborly cooperation and mutual friendship for almost 350 years.

Each side has managed to retain much of the distinctiveness of its own national culture. The French St. Martin tend to emphasize comfort and elegance. The beaches are more secluded, and the restaurants offer the finest dining experiences anywhere in the Caribbean.

On the other hand, St. Maarten is a busy cruise port with a bustling commercial district, that has long been an active center for trade and tourism. More developed and at the same time more informal, it is very Dutch in flavor and still has strong ties with fellow compatriots in the other Netherlands Antilles. Located midway through the chain of islands in the Caribbean, just as the Antilles begin to curve to the south, St. Martin is sunny and warm year-round, averaging 82 degrees Fahrenheit in summer and just 2 degrees cooler in winter. The island is buffeted by cooling trade winds that keep things temperate all year long.

Our party of five arrived via American Airline at 2:30pm in the afternoon and we were off. Christine being the perfect hostess for our little island jaunt had arranged a rental car to traipse around in. Our hotel to my delight

turned out to be a four bedroom private villa nestled in the mountains overlooking a personal beach and several other Caribbean islands in the distance such as Antigua. Our villa sported its own pool which butted up against the cliff so we can swim right to the edge and look over at the beach below.

St. Martin is a gay man's ideal island for many reasons, the first and foremost is shopping. Holy mother of Macy's, the shopping on this island is off the chart with great deals you can get on everything. I found the best shopping at Philipsburg which is on the Dutch side and Mahu Bay on the French side. I got such a great deal on a Skagen watch that I bought two. I got a Coach man purse and a Dolce and Gabbana bag for a fraction of the cost. And the liquor prices were so low that it seemed unreal. Imagine a liter of Absolut for under ten dollars.

Now for the gay scene. There is only one gay bar on the island called Club Eros and it is only open on Saturday nights from 11pm to 4am. Talk about your window of opportunity. Never to be one to pass up opening a new window, I made it my duty to visit while I was on the island. Christine had hired us a private driver to chauffeur us around when we went out at night. I do not think it was as much for the luxury of having a driver for her guests, but the fact she did not want to have the rental car end up at the bottom of the mountain. The road to get to the villa was pretty treacherous, one wrong turn and you are off the cliff.

So John was our driver, and he spirited me to Club Eros at exactly 11pm. That window was tiny so I did not want to miss anything. The club is located on the French side of the island in the township of Marigot. Eros is not a large club, but it is very welcoming with a European flavor and inviting atmosphere. The bartender, Loic was a total dream with the nicest bedroom eyes. He filled me in on the gay scene around the island. Since September is off season, I actually got to meet more of the gay locals at the club than tourists.

The owner is named Nanou and she is a fiery redhead, who was celebrating her birthday the night I was there. Champagne went around for everyone and music was pumping thanks to Nanou's son Roland, who is the resident DJ. Met some really cool people, definitely a stop you need to make.

There is a gay beach on the island called Cupecoy. It is just one of the 37 beaches and it has a naturist area for

those who like to go sans swimsuit. There are also lots of nice trails to wander around on the beach just in case you meet that special someone.

And the restaurants on the island are some of the best dining experiences. My favorite restaurant was a wonderful little tourist place called The Greenhouse located in Philipsburg. The food, the view of the bay and the service made it a great choice. Also Marion who runs the place made it worth the trip. She even gave me her secret recipe to a Raging Bull smoothie. A wonderfully refreshing drink made from red bull, orange juice, pineapple, bananas and strawberries.

Other highlights of my trip was the snorkeling, jet skiing and a wonderful trip to one of the largest butterfly farms in the world. St. Martin is the ideal location if you want a vacation that combines adventure in the sun with relaxing days on the beach or poolside at the villa. Add St. Martin to your list of places you need to go before you die. I definitely will be back. For more information on St. Martin, go to [www.st-maarten.com](http://www.st-maarten.com).

See my photos on page 41.

### Deliciously Fun Reading

Speaking of deliciously fun summer reading, I wanted to share my review of one of the most amazing books I read while in St. Martin. **Tab Hunter Confidential: The Making of a Movie Star** was the perfect beach book. It is also a must read for anyone who has a love for old Hollywood. Tab Hunter details his personal and career highs and lows in eloquent detail that keeps the reader captivated. You do not need to be gay to enjoy this book, but as a gay man I found myself enthralled in Tab's life going from pin-up boy in the 50's to the campy John Water's films of the 80's. As a reader, I enjoyed his sensitivity and honesty in this book so much so that I felt his pains and enjoyed his triumphs. And being a great follower of scandals in Hollywood, this book was filled with them. From his affair with Anthony Perkins and Rudolf Nuryev to his insights into the Hollywood machine, Hunter delivers the reader a dose of what it was like to be gay in Hollywood during the 1950's and beyond.

Hunter also has some incredible anecdotes about gay life that I found touching. One of my favorite parts of the book is his description of working with Tallulah Bankhead in Tennessee Williams play **The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore**. The book is an easy read and moves quickly at a great pace. I highly recommend this mesmerizing novel. For more information on Tab Hunter's life, go to [www.tabhunter.com](http://www.tabhunter.com). Or to buy the book go to FAB bookstore at 600 Frenchmen Street for your copy. Remember support your local gay business, FAB's phone number is

504.947.3700.

### 20th NO/AIDS Walk

The 20th Anniversary of the NO/AIDS Walk went off extremely well. Congratulations to all those involved in making it happen and who volunteered at the event. The Friday before the walk started with a cocktail reception in honor of Jack Mackenroth from the hit series **Project Runway** and **Living Positive By Design**. The reception was held at the exquisite home of Dr. Milton W. Seiler, Jr. and Marshall W. Lee. It was a beautiful evening filled with wonderful food and great conversation.

Jack Mackenroth, who is HIV positive, has launched a national HIV and AIDS education campaign entitled **Living Positive By Design** in partnership with Merck & Co., Inc. Through this campaign, he hopes to help combat the stigma associated with HIV and highlight the importance for people living with HIV to have a positive outlook on life while effectively managing the disease. Jack is hosting **Living Positive By Design** events in collaboration with local physicians and AIDS service organizations. New Orleans was honored to have him in attendance at our walk and he spoke briefly about his experiences living with HIV for more than 20 years. He also had a booth set-up where he signed autographs and took pictures with many of his fans.

After the reception on Friday night, I ended up running into Jack again at Oz, along with his wonderful team from Cohn and Wolfe. We had a great time hanging out and enjoying the wonderful Oz boys dancing on the bar. I found Jack to be very personable, entertaining and gracious.

Sunday's walk was greeted with amazing weather. There were lots of teams, great food vendors and Absolut drinks. My krew of Satyricon, under the leadership of our current queen, Wedon, organized a team. The Boy Scout in me always like being prepared so I brought along my red ryder wagon which doubled as a rolling bar containing mimosas, bloody marys and screwdrivers. All the essentials for a morning stroll through Uptown.

The walk and the party afterwards was a fantastic way to kick off my Sunday, as well as get a chance to see some of the architecture of the grand homes Uptown along the route. The Walk is also a great way to meet people from all walks of our community. What I love about the walk is the diversity among the participants, gay, straight, young, old, and every ethnicity. All these people come out in support of those afflicted with this terrible disease and to honor the memory of those who have passed from it. Another special note of gratitude should go out to two people Toby Lefort (\$24,055) and Brian Sands (\$9,430) who raised the most

[continued on 26]

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