



TRAVEL + LEISURE NAMES 76 VIRTUOSO® EXPERTS TO ITS 2009 “A-LIST” MAKING VIRTUOSO THE MOST RECOGNIZED TRAVEL NETWORK Industry’s Top Travel Agents Also Reveal 2010 Travel Trends

New York, NY (October 1, 2009) – In its October issue, available now on newsstands, *Travel + Leisure* magazine reveals the top travel agents in the world, and names 76 travel professionals associated with leading luxury travel network, **Virtuoso®**. Virtuoso’s experts account for nearly 60 percent of *Travel + Leisure’s* 2009 “A-List,” making it the most recognized travel network on the list. After evaluating hundreds of candidates for this highly selective guide to the world’s best travel specialists, *Travel + Leisure* editors selected 129 top travel agents. The eighth annual list organizes experts by area of specialization, whether it is destination or type of travel, and includes their years of experience, and consulting fees.

“We are proud of the 76 Virtuoso members and suppliers who have the honor of being named the best in their field by *Travel + Leisure’s* very knowledgeable editorial team,” said Matthew D. Upchurch, CEO of Virtuoso. “These travel professionals advise their clients on their most valuable asset – time away with loved ones and friends. They are representative of the more than 6,000 Virtuoso advisors whose efforts change people’s lives through travel. Those who travel with these ‘A-List’ experts do so with confidence and enjoy the collaboration and ‘Return on Life™’ that comes from working with a Virtuoso advisor.”

Travel + Leisure Editor-in-Chief Nancy Novogrod said, “Given the complications of life these days, along with the abundant opportunities to travel well at a good price, an experienced travel agent can make a huge difference. Our A-List Guide is a terrific resource for interesting travels--and stress reduction.”

T+L’s “A-List” agents also shared their insights on current travel habits and preferences. Highlights include:

- More families are taking multigenerational vacations to Africa, Southern Europe (Tuscany and Provence), and Greece, despite the economic turndown;
- *T+L* A-Listers cite the growing appeal of train travel around the world, in places such as Australia, Russia, and Kenya;
- Travel deals may not be this good again for a long time. Top five value destinations include: Chile, Argentina, Australia, South Africa, and Switzerland.

Whether it is a seat on a sold-out flight, booking the preferred corner room with a view, or mapping out a complicated itinerary, Virtuoso’s “A-List” agents – or one of the network’s 6,000 advisors – can make travelers’ most difficult requests possible. To view the full list of Virtuoso “A-List” experts and begin planning your next vacation under their professional guidance, visit www.virtuoso.com.

Virtuoso Experts on *Travel + Leisure’s* 2009 “A-List”:

Super-Agents

Priscilla Alexander* (Protravel International, New York City)

Diane Hilliard* (Hilliard & Olander Ltd., Stillwater, MN)

Mary Ann Ramsey* (Betty Maclean Travel, Naples, FL)

Anne Morgan Scully* (McCabe World Travel, McLean, VA)

Jim Strong* and **Nancy Strong** (Strong Travel, Dallas, TX)

Valerie Ann Wilson (Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., New York City)

United States and Canada

Alaska – **Margret Propper** (Brownell Travel, Birmingham, AL)
New York City – **Amy Glass** (Protravel International, New York City)
Western U.S. – **Deborah Trevino** (Hobson Travel, Naperville, IL)

Europe

England – **Ellen LeCompte** (Sterling Brownell Travel, Richmond, VA)
England – **Tammi R. Van Volkinburgh** (Private Travel Consulting Services, Raleigh, NC)
England – **Susie Worthy** (NoteWorthy Group, London, England)
Germany – **Elisabeth Landry** (Century Travel, Atlanta, GA)
Greece – **Kelly Shea** (Earle Travel Co., Indianapolis, IN)
Hungary – **Nathalie Nagy** (Protravel International, New York City)
Ireland – **Carol Cornell** (Covington Travel Inc., For Wayne, IN)
Italy – **Judy Nussbaum** (Unique Travel of Palm Beach, Delray Beach, FL)
Italy – **Sally Watkins** (Century Travel, Austin, TX)
Russia – **Greg Tepper** (Exeter International, Tampa FL)
Scandinavia – **Carol Arklind** (Travel Dynamics Group Inc., La Jolla, CA)
Scotland – **F. Peter Herff II** (Herff Travel Inc., San Antonio, TX)
Scotland – **Claire Schoeder** (Century Travel, Atlanta, GA)
Spain – **Virginia Irurita** (Made For Spain, Madrid, Spain)
Turkey – **Fred Poe** (Poe Travel Service, Little Rock, AR)

Latin America

Argentina – **Maita Barrenechea** (Mai 10, Buenos Aires, Argentina)
Brazil – **Robert Betenson** (Matueté Expeditions, São Paulo, Brazil)
Brazil – **Jerry Greenberg*** (Cassis Travel Services Inc., Los Angeles, CA)
Costa Rica – **Rachel Bockhoven** (Big Five Tours & Expeditions, Stuart, FL)
Ecuador – **Tatiana Johnston** (Big Five Tours & Expeditions, Stuart, FL)

Caribbean

Janet McLaughlin (Provident Travel Corporation, Cincinnati, OH)

Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific

Australia – **Cassandra Bookholder** (Camelback Odyssey Travel, Phoenix, AZ)

Asia

China – **Guy Rubin** (Imperial Tours, Beijing, China)
India/Sri Lanka – **Ellison Poe** (Poe Travel, Little Rock, AK)
India/Sri Lanka – **Ashish Sanghrajka** (Big Five Tours & Expedition, Stuart, FL)
Southeast Asia – **Sandee Litwin** (Litwin Travel, Los Angeles, CA)
Southeast Asia – **Darlene Ravin** (Andavo Independent Elite, Greenwood Village, CO)

Africa and the Middle East

Africa – **Dana Welch** (Travel Society, Denver, CO)
Africa – **Joel Zack** (Heritage Tours Private Travel, New York City)
East Africa – **Jeanie Fundora** (Cox & Kings U.S.A., Tampa, FL)
Egypt – **Malaka Hilton** (Admiral Travel, Sarasota, FL)
Morocco – **Laurette de Moro** (Worldview Travel, Santa Ana, CA)
Morocco – **Michael Diamond** (Heritage Tours Private Travel, New York City)
Southern Africa – **Robert Malmberg** (Malmberg Travel Companies, Boston, MA)
Southern Africa – **Judy Udwin** (Century Travel, Atlanta, GA)
Southern Africa – **Phoebe Weinberg** (Greatways Travel, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI)
United Arab Emirates – **Lindsey Wallace** (Linara Travel, Eagle, ID)

Cruises

Cruises – **Betsy Patton** (Betty Maclean Travel, Inc., Naples, FL)
Cruises – **Anne Halsey Smith** (Gayle Gillies Travel/Worldview Travel, Rancho Santa Fe, CA)
Cruises – **Liz Sutton*** (Alabama World Travel, Montgomery, AL)
Cruises – **Ruth Turpin** (Cruises Etc. Travel, Fort Worth, TX)
Residential Cruises – **Claudia Gordon** (Betty Maclean Travel, Inc., Naples, FL)
World Cruises – **Lois Moran** (Betty Maclean Travel, Inc., Naples, FL)

Family

Family/Active – **Fontaine Denna Gatti** (Travelong of Summit, Summit, NJ)
Family/Active – **Kay Merrill** (Are We There Yet? Family Adventures, Larkspur, CA)
Family/Hotels & Resorts – **Kimberly Wilson Wetty*** (Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., New York City)
Family/Safaris – **Paul Largay** (Largay Travel, Waterbury, CT)

Business Travel, Hotels, and Spas

Business Travel – **Jennifer Wilson-Buttigieg** (Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., New York City)
Hotels – **Manny Beauregard** (Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., Atlanta, GA)
Hotels – **Bob Watson** (Protravel International, Rye Brook, NY)
Spas – **Karen Benson** (Camelback Odyssey Travel, Phoenix, AZ)
Spas – **Maureen “Mo” Smith** (Well On The Way, Hilton Head Island, SC)

Special Interest

Adventure – **Betty Jo Currie** (Explorations, Atlanta, GA)
Culture & Education – **Margery Hunter** (Rudi Steele Travel, Dallas, TX)
Culture & Education – **Paul Niskanen*** (Cruise Masters/Concierge Travel Advisors, Portland, OR)
Diving – **Gene Lashley** (Century Travel, Atlanta, GA)
Fly-Fishing – **Betsy Donley*** (Camelback Odyssey Travel, Phoenix, AZ)
Food/Wine – **Lynda Turley Garrett** (Alpine Travel, Saratoga, CA)
Food/Wine – **Katie McCormack Krinkie** (McCabe World Travel, McLean, VA)
Gay/Lesbian – **David Rubin** (DavidTravel, Corona del Mar, CA)
Golf – **Susan Dischner** (Four Seasons Travel, Savannah, GA)
Hiking/Walking – **Doris White** (Travel Dynamics, La Jolla, CA)
Honeymoons – **Peter Lloyd** (Century Travel, Atlanta, GA)
Hunting/Fishing – **Mollie Fitzgerald** (Frontiers International Travel, Wexford, PA)
Photography – **Janie Bullard** (Distinctive Journeys, Powder Springs, GA)
Skiing/Snowboarding – **Marrilee Foukal McLean** (Alabama World Travel, Montgomery, AL)
Yachts/Villas – **Sara Ryan Duffy** (SRD International, Los Angeles, CA)

*Member of T+L’s Travel Agent Advisory Board (TAAB). *Travel + Leisure’s* Travel Agent Advisory Board (TAAB) of 17 travel agents collectively employ 3,000 travel advisors representing all aspects of the travel industry. The group, which convenes regularly to discuss and share new research, trends, and market conditions, provides T+L’s marketing partners with intelligence and insights to enhance their businesses.

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About Virtuoso

Virtuoso® is the industry’s leading luxury travel network. This by-invitation-only organization comprises over 300 agencies with more than 6,000 elite travel specialists in 22 countries in North and South America, the Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand, as well as over 1,000 of the world’s best travel providers and premier destinations. The network’s member agencies generate over \$5.1 billion annually in travel sales, making the group the most powerful in the luxury travel segment. Their relationships with the finest travel companies provide the network’s affluent clientele with exclusive amenities, rare experiences and privileged access. Virtuoso is the exclusive network of travel services and benefits provided by MasterCard® for participating World Elite MasterCard® programs. For more information, please visit www.virtuoso.com.

About *Travel + Leisure*

Travel + Leisure and its website www.travelandleisure.com propel readers to travel now, travel smarter, and travel often. With an eye for the authentic, the innovative, and the irresistible, T+L fuses expert reporting on style, culture, food, and design with stunning photography to transport its readers to the places—and the experiences—that matter most. The long-standing authority in its field, *Travel + Leisure* has the largest, most affluent audience of any travel magazine and is an indispensable read for today's global citizen. *Travel + Leisure* has a network of international editions, including *Travel + Leisure Mexico*, *Travel + Leisure Australia/New Zealand*, *Travel + Leisure Turkey*, *Travel + Leisure China*, *Travel + Leisure South Asia*, and *Travel + Leisure Southeast Asia*.

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