



VIRTUOSO®
SPECIALISTS IN THE ART OF TRAVEL

VIRTUOSO® REVEALS WHERE UPSCALE TRAVELERS ARE VENTURING THIS FALL AND HOLIDAY SEASON

NEW YORK (August 8, 2016) – International luxury travel network [Virtuoso®](#) is answering the question on everyone's minds: what are the hottest upscale destinations for this year's holiday season? Acknowledged as a prominent trend predictor in the industry, Virtuoso has sourced data from its warehouse of more than \$35 billion in transactions to disclose the top destinations for the coming fall and holiday period. Luxury travelers are remaining true to European favorites, while turning their attention to warmer climes as the weather shifts at home. They also are seeking out more exotic locales worldwide, including a boom for African countries.

The Virtuoso Top 10:

The most popular fall and holiday travel destinations based on future bookings.

1. Italy
2. France
3. United Kingdom
4. South Africa
5. Spain
6. Mexico
7. China
8. Australia
9. New Zealand
10. Israel

The Top 10 analysis: Europe's unrivaled popularity for summer travel continues into the fall. Travelers are enjoying lower average daily rates (ADRs) at Virtuoso partner hotels in major European cities as summer ends. In particular, Paris is down two percent (\$1,087), Rome is six percent lower (\$949), London is down seven percent (\$704) and Barcelona comes in 15 percent lower than summer rates (\$596). London and Barcelona in particular represent great value to travelers this fall and holiday season, as they are respectively 21 and 43 percent below the average ADR for Virtuoso partner properties in Europe, which is \$853. Also noteworthy: Mexico's appeal as a warm-weather getaway for Americans and Canadians holds fast despite Zika cautions. Australia and New Zealand are always favored destinations once the Northern Hemisphere cools. In spite of continued Middle East unrest, Israel's popularity is undiminished. It is a sought-out destination not only for its religious significance, but also for its history, food, culture and adventure experiences.

The Virtuoso Hot 10:

The countries that have seen the largest percentage of growth in year-over-year bookings.

1. Kenya (+59%)
2. Iceland (+56%)
3. Saint Martin (+39%)
4. China (+35%)
5. Ecuador (+34%)
6. Japan (+32%)
7. South Africa (+28%)
8. Tanzania (+27%)
9. Croatia (+25%)
10. Jamaica (+23%)

The Hot 10 analysis: Africa continues to surge in popularity, a continuation of the trend Virtuoso noted for summer travel. With sales up 28 percent year over year, Africa is the only continent to post such an increase. Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, all strong safari destinations, will benefit from a projected 17 percent increase. According to Virtuoso’s travel advisors, safaris are particularly appealing for multigenerational family trips with plenty to see and enjoy for travelers of all ages. Iceland has been a growing favorite in recent years, and its prominent showing on the Hot 10 proves that its popularity is extending into the fall. China has been trending upwards with luxury travelers over the past few years. While travel there is steady year round, the last quarter of the year is the most popular time for visitors, aided by ADRs that are five percent below average. Select Caribbean and South American destinations continue to see growth, with Saint Martin, Ecuador and Jamaica experiencing double-digit increases over last year.

Data is drawn from Virtuoso’s United States and Canadian-based travel agency members and reflects future travel for September through December 2016. The Top and Hot 10 lists represent international travel only, so neither the U.S. nor Canada is mentioned. The findings were announced during the annual Virtuoso Travel Week event taking place in Las Vegas.

###

About Virtuoso

Virtuoso® is the leading international travel agency network specializing in luxury and experiential travel. This by-invitation-only organization comprises over 390 agency members with more than 11,400 elite travel advisors in 40 countries throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. Drawing upon its preferred relationships with 1,700 of the world’s best hotels and resorts, cruise lines, airlines, tour companies and premier destinations, the network provides its upscale clientele with exclusive amenities, rare experiences and privileged access. More than (U.S.) \$15.5 billion in annual travel sales makes Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit www.virtuoso.com.

Media Contacts:

Misty Ewing Belles
Managing Director, Global Public Relations
Virtuoso
202.553.8817
mewing@virtuoso.com

Lauren Wintemberg
Account Manager
Alice Marshall Public Relations
212.861.4031
lauren@alicemarshall.com