



## **VIRTUOSO® SURVEY UNCOVERS LATEST TRENDS IN ADVENTURE TRAVEL**

### **DEMAND FOR ACTIVE EXPERIENCES SOARS, PARTICULARLY FROM VENTURING COUPLES**

**NEW YORK (August 29, 2016)** – A new survey by international luxury travel network [Virtuoso®](#) has revealed the hottest destinations, activities and trends in the rapidly expanding world of adventure travel. An overwhelming 95 percent of Virtuoso travel specialists say they have seen active, adventure and specialty travel sales rise within the past 12 months. As well, adventure travel's future is looking bright indeed: 95 percent say they see demand for this style of travel increasing in the next two to three years. All survey respondents are advisors and preferred partners taking part in the Virtuoso Active and Specialty Travel (VAST) program.

The top adventure destinations gaining in popularity are:

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Iceland                              | 6. Cuba              |
| 2. Galapagos/Ecuador                    | 7. Antarctica        |
| 3. Costa Rica and Chile/Patagonia (tie) | 8. Arctic/North Pole |
| 4. New Zealand                          | 9. South Africa      |
| 5. Peru                                 | 10. Australia        |

Adventure travelers are broadening their horizons beyond well-known European cities to seek new frontiers off the beaten path. Latin America is especially popular, as active travelers can experience their desired combination of nature and culture there. Remote, unspoiled destinations such as Antarctica and the Arctic are also sought after by upscale adventurers.

The top activities preferred by active and specialty travelers are:

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Hiking/trekking                | 6. Safaris/wildlife viewing |
| 2. Biking                         | 7. Walking                  |
| 3. Kayaking                       | 8. Photography              |
| 4. Small-ship expedition cruising | 9. Scuba diving             |
| 5. Food and wine                  | 10. Arts and culture        |

Travelers crave authentic experiences, choosing to immerse themselves in destinations to learn, not merely sightsee. Today's health-conscious travelers want to maintain their lifestyle away from home. As well, a trip where they can indulge personal passions, whether athletic, artistic or gourmet, is a priority.

The survey also revealed that all ages enjoy experiential travel:

- The largest number – 41 percent – of adventure travelers are between 50 and 65
- 24 percent are between 35 and 50
- 21 percent are 65 and over
- 14 percent are under 35

Couples, including honeymooners, are the most common type of adventure traveler. They are followed by immediate families, friends traveling together, solo travelers and multigenerational family members.

Several factors are driving adventure travel’s popularity, as cited by respondents: communing with nature, checking experiences off a bucket list, spending quality time together on family and multigenerational trips, and the ability of today’s older travelers to be more active due to improved longevity and health.

Respondents also provided their top tips for adventure travel:

1. Challenge yourself by stepping out of your comfort zone and being open to new activities.
2. Familiarize yourself with the culture of the destination by meeting interesting locals.
3. Look at the world in a new way: gain a fresh perspective and possibly even change an opinion.
4. Travel now, because some of these destinations are changing fast and may not be in this state in just a few years.
5. Don’t try to do too much. Keep travel distances manageable and build in rest days and free time.

The survey, conducted between February and April 2016, received input from 125 advisors and partners participating in the [Virtuoso Active and Specialty Travel](#) (VAST) program. The industry’s best established and longest-running adventure travel program, VAST is a community of travel advisors and partners who want to expand their knowledge, networking and sales in this booming niche.

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**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](http://www.virtuoso.com).

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