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GLOBAL COMEBACK STORIES AND EMERGING LOCALES: VIRTUOSO® FORECASTS THE HOTTEST SPRING BREAK DESTINATIONS

NEW YORK (February 20, 2019) – Global luxury travel network [Virtuoso®](#) is revealing the around-the-world locations where upscale travelers plan to spend their spring breaks this year, including destinations showing renewed strength following down periods. Hailed as a leading trend forecaster, Virtuoso has examined its warehouse of \$49.5 billion in transactions to showcase the top destinations for March and April. With holidays occurring deeper into April this year, the prolonged spring travel period will allow visitors to enjoy warmer temps in many of these must-have destinations.

The Virtuoso Top 10:

The most popular destinations for spring travel based on future bookings.

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|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. United States | 6. Israel |
| 2. Italy | 7. Japan |
| 3. France | 8. Australia |
| 4. United Kingdom | 9. Spain |
| 5. New Zealand | 10. China |

The Top 10 analysis: Americans are staying closer to home this spring, seeking the sun in cities such as Los Angeles, Miami and Orlando. Eternally desirable Europe holds four spots on the list; Italy and France exhibit year-round popularity. U.S. travelers are benefitting from a favorable exchange rate against the euro and pound, and spring's shoulder season is ideal for enjoying the continent minus the summer crowds. New Zealand and Australia beckon families this time of year with their pleasant temperatures and abundance of active experiences. As the birthplace of major world religions, Israel holds great appeal as an educational family destination, with spring a peak season due to Easter and Passover celebrations. Travelers wanting to see Japan's famed cherry blossoms are heading there in increasing numbers, as the country is also the top emerging destination of 2019, according to the Virtuoso Luxe Report.

The Virtuoso Hot 10:

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

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|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Switzerland (+589%) | 6. Spain (+112%) |
| 2. Greece (+312%) | 7. Turks and Caicos (+90%) |
| 3. Morocco (+302%) | 8. New Zealand (+84%) |
| 4. Japan (+220%) | 9. Chile (+78%) |
| 5. United Arab Emirates (+197%) | 10. Puerto Rico (+70%) |

The Hot 10 analysis: Switzerland is riding a wave of mounting popularity among upscale Americans for its exquisite scenery, abundance of world-class hotels and outdoor activities. Greece continues the upward trajectory Virtuoso first noted for last summer, as the country started emerging from financial challenges. Also returning strongly: North Africa and Middle East destinations such as Morocco and the United Arab Emirates. Growth in bookings to the region, first observed last fall, continues from luxury travelers. Another comeback story is the Caribbean, represented on the list by Turks and Caicos and Puerto Rico. Chile is emerging as a culinary destination, and numerous grape harvest festivals attract wine fans during March and April.

Data is obtained from Virtuoso's U.S. travel agency members and displays future travel for March and April 2019.

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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 1,000 travel agency partners with 20,000 elite travel advisors in 50 countries throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. Drawing upon its preferred relationships with over 1,800 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.) \$26.4 billion in annual travel sales makes Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit www.virtuoso.com.

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