



VIRTUOSO<sup>®</sup>  
SPECIALISTS IN THE ART OF TRAVEL

## VIRTUOSO<sup>®</sup> HOTELS & RESORTS NAMES THE WORLD'S MOST EXCEPTIONAL PROPERTIES AND HOTELIERS

### *Best of the Best Award Winners Honored at Virtuoso Travel Week*

**LAS VEGAS (August 16, 2018)** – Global luxury travel network [Virtuoso<sup>®</sup>](#) revealed the winners of the widely coveted 2018 *Best of the Best* awards at last night's 30th annual Virtuoso Travel Week. The ceremony honored the year's top 10 hotels and hoteliers before an audience of 1,700 of luxury travel's leading figures at the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Hotels & Resorts Dinner. While the event recognized various aspects of hospitality, from best family program to sustainable tourism leadership, it was Ireland's Adare Manor that took home the night's most prestigious award: Hotel of the Year.

Virtuoso's voting public included its 1,000-plus travel agency members and their 17,500 professional travel advisors from 50 countries. Editors of *VIRTUOSO LIFE*, the network's multi-award-winning magazine, contributed their expert insights to name the initial nominees on which the advisors voted. *Best of the Best* award winners will be featured in the publication's September/October issue, reaching 200,000 global luxury travelers.

"This year's *Best of the Best* winners are a beautifully diverse group with worldwide appeal, showcasing hotels that are historic and contemporary, small and large, and boutique properties alongside well-known luxury brands," said Albert Herrera, senior vice president of Global Product Partnerships for Virtuoso. "These properties set a standard of the highest quality for the entire Virtuoso portfolio with their commitment to innovating constantly to improve the guest experience. We are proud to call these world's-finest properties our own and are inspired by their creativity in breaking new ground for the luxury hospitality industry."

With an extensive collection of more than 1,300 hotels, resorts, villas and private island retreats in over 100 countries, Virtuoso Hotels & Resorts is the industry's most respected hotel program. Founded in 1992 with only 20 hotels, it encompasses more five-star properties than any other program, with quality and diversity as its hallmarks.

The 2018 Virtuoso *Best of the Best* winners in each category are:

#### ***Hotel of the Year:***

An iconic hotel that epitomizes excellence in luxury hospitality and acts as a positive change in its community.

#### **Winner: Adare Manor, Limerick, Ireland**

Adare Manor reopened in November 2017 following an extensive 21-month restoration, refurbishment and expansion, marking a new beginning for this historic property. The warmth of the staff, the personalized service and the extraordinary experiences create a sense of belonging and home for guests.

### ***Best Achievement in Design:***

Outstanding architecture and design, whether newly constructed, a renovation, or a historic restoration.

#### **Winner: The Silo Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa**

The name of the Silo Hotel commemorates the building's former use as a grain silo. Today it has been reborn as a unique all-suite boutique property above MOCAA, an exciting new museum of contemporary African art. "The design and view from every suite is breathtaking. The location and access to MOCAA is a fantastic added value." – *Helena Andren, Travel Beyond, a Virtuoso Agency*

### ***Best Dining Experience:***

A hotel restaurant offering outstanding food, wine list, service, ambience, or even an exceptional view.

#### **Winner: Meadowood Napa Valley - The Restaurant, St. Helena, California, U.S.**

The Restaurant features modern American cuisine stemming from relationships with local artisans, growers and foragers. Its 2.5-acre garden produces unique seasonal crops using organic and sustainable techniques to enhance the relationship among the landscape, food system, and community. "The service was outstanding with attention to detail from the moment we arrived, with an excellent menu and a price point that didn't break the bank." – *Jay Johnson, Coastline Travel Advisors, a Virtuoso Agency*

### ***Best Bar:***

A lively, convivial, and entertaining social meeting spot where innovative drinks, lively mixologists and servers, as well as an enticing atmosphere, create a "see and be seen" buzz.

#### **Winner: Brown's Hotel, A Rocco Forte Hotel – The Donovan Bar, London, U.K.**

The newly renovated Donovan Bar, named for noted photographer Sir Terrence Donovan, features his images on the walls, enhancing the sleek yet approachable design. The bar offers signature cocktails, an intimate atmosphere and a perfect Mayfair location. "Great mix of contemporary and traditional English with fantastic drinks and great service." – *Miriam Geiser, KK Travels Worldwide, a Virtuoso Agency*

### ***Sustainable Tourism Leadership:***

A property that exhibits a commitment to the pillars of sustainable tourism including environmentally friendly practices, protection of cultural and natural heritage, and social and economic benefits for local people.

#### **Winner: Six Senses Douro Valley – Lamego, Portugal**

Six Senses Douro Valley is located in the Douro ecosystem, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with 3,500 different botanical species. The property has pledged to improve the ecological and carbon footprint from its activities and continuously monitors its performance.

### ***Best Family Program:***

A family-friendly environment that offers programs for children of all ages, from creative activities to educational endeavors and active adventures.

#### **Winner: The Ranch at Rock Creek – Philipsburg, Montana**

Children from ages four to 12 will enjoy the Little Grizzlies Kids Club, where trained staff introduce them to the Frontier West in an exciting and safe way that educates and entertains. "The property has many diverse programs, but I selected Ranch Life Day. Adopt a horse! Wranglers teach kids about horse safety and care, before a group horseback ride and roping practice. Sounds like great fun and educational, too, as the kids explore the 'wild west' of the USA." – *Valerie Wilson, Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., a Virtuoso Agency*

### ***Best Wellness Program:***

An outstanding focus on mind/body balance, as evidenced by its excellence in nutrition or diet programs, fitness and wellness classes, spa experiences, and inspiring location.

#### **Winner: BodyHoliday Saint Lucia – Castries, St. Lucia**

BodyHoliday features wellness offerings in a gorgeous Caribbean setting, including healthy and delicious meals, spa treatments, and yoga and other outdoor fitness, while also providing luxury accommodations, expert staff and excellent service. “They take wellness the extra step ahead of the almost 150 wellness spas I have visited in my many years in the business. The facilities, located on a small beautiful beach, include many fitness activities each day including sailing, hiking, biking, spinning, boxing, golf and more. The experience was delightful!” – *Karen Benson, Travel Experts, a Virtuoso Agency*

### ***Best Virtuoso Newcomer:***

The most noteworthy addition to the Virtuoso network since August 2017.

#### **Winner: Hôtel de Crillon, A Rosewood Hotel – Paris, France**

The Hôtel de Crillon’s renovation resulted in a luxurious and welcoming interior including stunning suites, a bar attracting rave reviews, and a beautiful new pool. “Fabulous, flawless renovation of an iconic property; a staff that embraces and warmly welcomes their agency partners; best Concierge team in Paris! Amazing new bar that the Parisians also love.” – *Victoria Boomgarden, Direct Travel Luxe, a Virtuoso Agency*

### ***Best Virtuoso Hotel Ambassador:***

An executive (other than a general manager or managing director) who embodies the Virtuoso ethos of the power of human connection and strives for the mutual benefit of Virtuoso advisors and their brand, property, or group of properties.

#### **Winner: Andrea Filippi, Belmond**

### ***Hotelier of the Year:***

An experienced manager who demonstrates unparalleled leadership and vision, an unrelenting passion for the industry, an engaged commitment to Virtuoso travel advisors, and an astute appreciation for detail.

#### **Winner: Patrizio Cipollini, Four Seasons Hotel Firenze, Florence, Italy**

For more information on Virtuoso and its hotel and resort offerings in more than 100 countries, including booking a stay online at over 1,100 luxury properties, visit [www.virtuoso.com](http://www.virtuoso.com).

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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 17,500 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 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.) \$23.7 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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