



ICELAND, BOTSWANA AND JAPAN: VIRTUOSO® LUXE REPORT DISCOVERS FAMILIES SEEK BONDING EXPERIENCES IN UNUSUAL DESTINATIONS

NEW YORK (May 9, 2018) – As the busy summer travel season approaches, global luxury travel network [Virtuoso®](#) reveals that families are roaming the world in search of experiences that create closer bonds and lasting memories. Hailed as an industry trend forecaster, the 2018 Virtuoso Luxe Report surveyed its affiliated travel advisors to discover the leading destinations and developments that impact how families are traveling this year. Multigenerational travel continues its run as the year’s top trend in the Luxe Report, and travel with one’s immediate family finished close behind. As well, connecting with family through travel is one of 2018’s must-have experiences.

Generation Z: The iGeneration is Coming On Strong

Consisting of young people born between the mid-1990s and mid-2010s (now approximately 3 to 23 years old), Generation Z is the largest age cohort in the U.S., with more than a quarter of the population (Forbes). The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation reports that Gen Z has a buying power of \$43 billion, and influences \$600 billion of family spending. The Virtuoso Luxe Report found that this tech-savvy group, while still quite young, has considerable influence over family travel decisions, according to 90 percent of advisors polled.

Top 5 Ways Gen Z Influences Family Travel

1. Crave active experiences
2. Involve themselves in planning trips
3. Influence other’s travel choices via word of mouth, social media and reviews
4. Seek unusual destinations
5. Look for visual destinations and experiences for social media

Virtuoso Analysis: Gen Zs seek authentic, unique experiences such as adventures they can have only in a particular destination. They have seen much of the world already, and therefore travel with a global mindset. As digital natives, their actions and decisions are influenced by peers on social media, as well as the visual appeal that destinations and activities hold for online sharing.

Top 10 Family Travel Trends

1. Beach resort stays
2. Active or adventure trips
3. Celebration travel
4. Mother/daughter or father/son trips
5. Touring (guided or private)
6. Ocean cruising
7. Cultural immersion
8. Educational trips
9. River cruises
10. Exclusive-use travel (private villa/island/jet/yacht)

Virtuoso Analysis: While sun-and-sand trips rise to first place from second in 2017, these are not the traditional fly-and-flop vacations. Families seek beach resorts with plenty of activities to keep the entire group engaged. Adventure travel is the second most popular trend, both for families and travelers in general, continuing the niche’s recent boom. With today’s fast pace of life, travel is a perfect way to gather loved ones together for a landmark celebration, or carve

out time for parent/child bonding. Cruising – both ocean and river – is emerging as an ideal family trip, thanks to its convenience, great value and activities for every age. Today’s families view travel as an important educational tool, immersing them in different cultures, bringing classroom lessons alive, and shaping global citizens.

Top 10 Hottest Family Destinations

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| 1. Italy | 6. Dominican Republic |
| 2. Mexico | 7. South Africa |
| 3. Orlando, FL | 8. England |
| 4. Hawaii | 9. Canada |
| 5. Costa Rica | 10. France |

Virtuoso Analysis: Italy’s appeal to families continues; it finishes as the top destination for the ninth consecutive year. While Europe still charms, with England and France also in the top 10, families are venturing to all corners of the globe. Warm-weather destinations such as Mexico, Hawaii and the Dominican Republic beckon those in search of relaxation. Orlando, with its theme parks and favorable climate, remains popular, moving up one spot from the 2017 list. Adventurous families are voyaging to destinations such as Costa Rica and South Africa. Canada, with its diversity of urban and nature experiences, offers something for every preference as well as great value for Americans.

Top 10 Unconventional Family Destinations

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| 1. Iceland | 6. Japan |
| 2. Galapagos Islands | 7. United Arab Emirates |
| 3. Cuba | 8. Egypt |
| 4. Antarctica | 9. Rwanda |
| 5. Botswana/Mongolia (tie) | 10. Croatia |

Virtuoso Analysis: Driven by Gen Z’s quest to experience new destinations, families are heading beyond the tried and true locales. The desire for authentic experiences figures into many of the unconventional spots, whether it be the unspoiled appeal of Iceland (also last year’s top pick) and Antarctica, the wildlife of the Galapagos Islands, or Cuba’s culture. As well-traveled families have already explored North America and Europe, they are focusing on African and Asian destinations. Botswana, Mongolia, United Arab Emirates and Egypt debut on the list this year.

Advisors from Virtuoso’s travel agencies in North America, Latin America, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, Africa and the Middle East were surveyed in the 2018 Luxe Report, providing insights into the year’s hottest trends. To find a family travel specialist to plan your next trip, visit 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 more than 45 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.

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