



**VIRTUOSO**  
SPECIALISTS IN THE ART OF TRAVEL

## **VIRTUOSO® 2018 LUXE REPORT REVEALS GROWING INTEREST AMONG CONSUMERS FOR SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

**NEW YORK (April 12, 2018)** – As the world celebrates Earth Day on April 22, leading luxury and experiential travel network [Virtuoso®](#) shares how its affiliated travel advisors are seeing rising interest among clients in search of sustainable tourism vacations. Hailed as an industry trend forecaster, the 2018 Virtuoso Luxe Report surveyed its travel advisors on sustainability as a factor in consumer choice in travel.

While Virtuoso advisors report that clients do factor in sustainable tourism practices – defined as travel that is more environmentally friendly, supports the protection of cultural and natural heritage, and provides social and economic benefits to local people - when making travel decisions, they say it is Millennials who are leading the charge. Millennials are three times more likely than second-place Generation X to seek out and support travel companies that are committed to sustainable tourism. Baby Boomers follow next, with Generation Z close behind.

Baby Boomers are noteworthy in their support for sustainable tourism, given they represent a core demographic of the travel market. As a combined group, Millennials, Gen X, and Gen Z are the travel wave of the future, and Virtuoso advisors report that they represent over 80 percent of those clients today who are most likely to book travel that benefits local people and helps protect the planet. As Gen Z comes of age and their purchasing power increases, Virtuoso says they will likely mirror if not exceed the Millennials in their support of travel that enhances destinations and cultures.

“Sustainable tourism represents a transformative movement and our goal remains to support our travel partners in their best practices, from saving endangered species to supporting community development projects around the world. By sharing these inspirational stories and educating Virtuoso advisors and their clients on the positive impact that comes from traveling in a more mindful way, we are helping to advance travel as a force for good,” said Jessica Hall Upchurch, Virtuoso Sustainability Ambassador.

Virtuoso advisors also identified what factors of sustainable tourism most appealed to their clients including:

- Reducing plastic waste
- Eco-friendly practices
- Protecting wildlife
- Eating local foods/supporting local farmers
- Giving back to communities
- Animal welfare
- Respecting culture
- Staying at green hotels
- Conserving coral reefs
- Safeguarding historic sites

“The question is no longer whether travelers care about helping to make the world a better place as part of a vacation. They do, as Virtuoso’s Luxe Report also reveals. The real question is how we in the travel industry work together to prepare for a new generation of travelers who want to have a positive impact on the places they visit,” said Costas Christ, Virtuoso Global Sustainable Tourism Strategist.

Virtuoso advisors also expressed concern about some of the impacts they are witnessing in popular travel destinations, including climate change that has led to a die-off of coral along the Great Barrier Reef; rising sea levels that threaten coastal cities, such as New Orleans, and entire countries, including the Maldives; as well as the increased popularity of archeological sites such as Machu Picchu that attract millions of visitors every year.

As knowledge of sustainable tourism rises among travelers, Virtuoso is helping build this knowledge through its annual Sustainability Summit attended by industry leaders; promoting examples of best practices among travel companies; and educating member agencies, staff and consumers.

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 latest trends in travel.

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

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