

Virtuoso Traveler

EXPECT THE WORLD

DECEMBER 2018

2019 PREVIEW ISSUE

NORTHERN LIGHTS
IN **NORWAY**

PUERTO RICO RISING

ICELAND BY
EXPEDITION CRUISE

GAME ON IN **LIMA**

**GRAND CANYON
NATIONAL PARK**
TURNS 100

WINE TASTING IN
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

◆
Light the night:
Norway's
Senja Island.

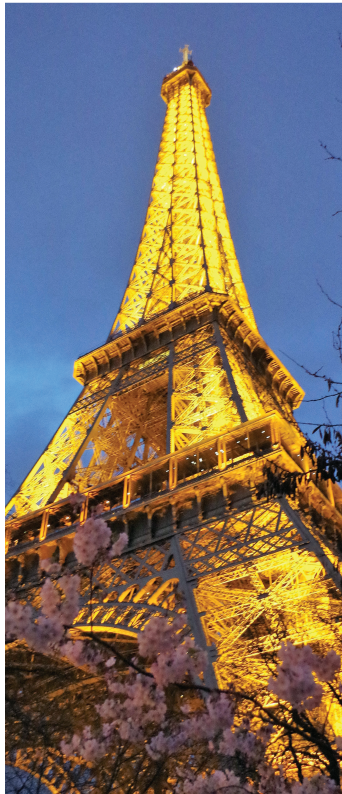
BRIGHT IDEAS

ILLUMINATING DESTINATIONS ◆ NEW SHIPS, TRIPS, AND HOTELS
TIMELY TRENDS ◆ 19 TRAVEL RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR



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on the world's best luxury river cruise line.



**DISCOVER THE “#1 RIVER CRUISE LINE”—AS VOTED BY READERS
IN THE TRAVEL + LEISURE 2018 WORLD'S BEST AWARDS.**



*It's never too early to plan
your next masterpiece.*

On the world's best and most awarded luxury river cruise line, you'll cruise along fabled rivers in spectacular fashion. In 2019, you have the opportunity to see guest-favorite destinations in a whole new light with new itineraries, several enhanced itineraries and a brand-new Super Ship in France. After an astounding transformation, *River Royale* will debut next spring in Bordeaux as **S.S. Bon Voyage** with a design scheme reflecting the wine and gastronomic expertise of the region.

DISCOVER ALL-INCLUSIVE LUXURY RIVER CRUISING AT ITS FINEST IN 2019.



NEW ITINERARIES

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15 Days • Amsterdam to Vienna
River Princess

AUTHENTIC DANUBE & PRAGUE

10 Days • Prague to Vienna
River Princess

BRILLIANT BORDEAUX

8 Days • Bordeaux to Bordeaux
S.S. Bon Voyage

MAGNIFICENT MOSELLE & RHINE

10 Days • Frankfurt to Cologne
River Queen

ME TO WE & THE SACRED GANGES

12 Days • New Delhi to Kolkata
Ganges Voyager II



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IMMERSIVE.

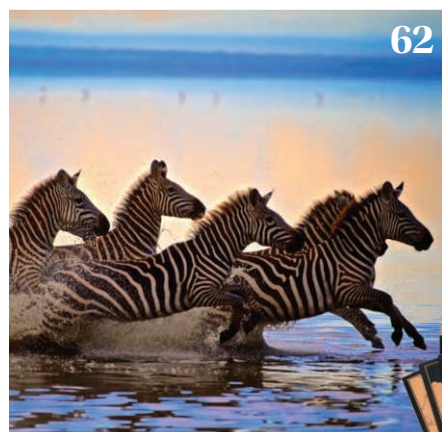



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PREFERRED CRUISE LINE

**CONTACT YOUR VIRTUOSO TRAVEL ADVISOR TO RECEIVE
EXCLUSIVE VIRTUOSO VOYAGES AMENITIES ON THE
GROUNDBREAKING NEW RIVER CRUISE—U BY UNIWORLD.**

Contents

DECEMBER 2018



62

28

DEAR DIARY

Track your travels with the Luckies of London Adventure Journal.



From top: Kicking back at Puerto Rico's Hotel El Convento and picturing a zeal of zebras in Tanzania.

ON THE COVER Add this to your 2019 wish list: Seeing the aurora borealis in Scandinavia. COVER PHOTO BY FRANCESCO BERGAMASCHI

50

WHERE TO TRAVEL IN 2019

Our annual list of go-to places for the new year.

62

BIG SHOTS

Travel advisors showcase inspiring moments around the world in these award-winning images from Virtuoso's annual competition.

11 COMPASS

- 12 Check-In
- 16 Bon Voyage
- 20 On Tour
- 22 Postcard
- 23 On the Fly
- 24 Dispatch
- 25 Art & Culture
- 26 Page-Turners
 - Tech
 - On the Calendar
- 27 Table Talk
- 28 Goods & Gadgets

30 TRAVEL TWO WAYS

The Arctic Circle: On land or at sea?

32 GOOD GOING

Folk Trails: Virtuoso's director of sustainability shares his idea of an ideal match: authentic cultural experiences amid spectacular natural settings.

34 TRAVELER'S TALE

Why I Travel: Linda and Dev Shukla pursue the next great meal and adventure.

38 LOCAL FLAVOR

Puebla on a Platter: "Mexico's kitchen" is a feast for the senses.

44 URBAN RENEWAL

Stepping Out: Santiago holds her own with pretty parks, impressive museums, diverse dining, and buzzy barrios made for strolling.

68 PERSPECTIVE

Altai Mountains, Russia: Siberia by skis.

What Is Virtuoso?

Virtuoso connects travelers to the world's top travel advisors, along with a coveted portfolio of 1,700 top hotels, cruise lines, tour operators, destination specialists, tourism boards, and more. It's a curated group of the best the travel industry has to offer.



HIGH TIME
Hot-air ballooning
over Egypt
(more on page 60).

WHY WORK WITH A TRAVEL ADVISOR?

Virtuoso travel advisors elevate every trip. A great advisor ...

- **Knows the World:** The best advisors travel the globe – scouting out hotels, deepening relationships with tour guides, and gleaning firsthand knowledge of destinations for you.
- **Makes You a VIP:** Expect customized itineraries and insider access all over the world. Virtuoso advisors are also able to secure special benefits you can't get on your own, including exclusive hotel amenities such as preferred rates and availability, room upgrades (if available), and extras like spa treatments and dining credits. Perks on "Virtuoso Voyages" sailings often include cocktail parties with an onboard host, special shore excursions, a private car and driver in port, or shipboard credits.
- **Knows Your Travel Style:** Virtuoso advisors understand what's most important to you, whether it's

taking private cooking classes or simply lounging by the pool.

- **Takes It from Ordinary to Extraordinary:** Virtuoso advisors can assist with everything from big-picture aspects (including knowing where to go – and when) to the details that matter (think booking hotel rooms with the best views).

- **Expands Your Horizons:** Your advisor will help you think creatively about where to go and what to do. Count on recommendations for hot new destinations, plus new ways to experience those places you've already visited.

- **Can Handle Anything:** When problems occur away from home, consider your advisor your personal help line and "fixer" who knows how to quickly turn things around for the better.

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Clockwise from top: Sailing Lake Balaton in Hungary; Prague Castle, Czech Republic; Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork, Poland; winetasting in Slovakia.

From romantic strolls to family fun, there's always something new to discover in the **Czech Republic**. Admire the many churches, castles, and châteaux that fill the landscape. Come face-to-face with the animals at the Prague Zoo, or visit Petrin Hill, which features a lookout tower (modeled after the Eiffel Tower), a mirror maze, and a rose garden.

Sightseeing takes on new meaning in **Hungary**. Watch the sunset over Lake Balaton or hike along the rugged Zemplén Mountains. Savor local cuisine and explore centuries-old wineries in the Tokaj-Hegyalja region. And enjoy a fresh perspective of Budapest's famous landmarks during a private boat ride on the Danube.

Natural beauty, authentic flavors, and a wealth of World Heritage sites make **Poland** a feast for the senses. Feel the thrill of bike riding through mountains and lush forests. Sample traditional pierogis and *golabki*. Or experience the spa-like ambience of Poland's natural resources, like distinctly fresh air and mineral-rich soil.

With its multicultural past, iconic architecture, and stunning views, **Slovakia** is a must-see while in central Europe. Wander cobblestone streets and secluded vineyards. Delve into the country's mining industry past. And ride a cable car 2,634 meters above sea level on Lomnický Peak.



A pocket-sized region compared to some, yet its appeal is unmatched around the world. Cities of cultural charm lie comfortably nestled in the rugged mountains and swirling seas, while cutting edge design, world-class gastronomy and spectacular views season an already flavorsome dish. Rich with history, legends and myth, welcome to an enchanting region of treasure and pleasure. Book now until January 31, 2019 and enjoy **Free Roundtrip Economy air or Business Class upgrade for just \$699 each way.**




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DATE	VOYAGE	DAYS	FROM/TO		SHIP	FARES FROM
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Aug 11	10	5924	Stockholm to Copenhagen	 H	<i>Silver Spirit</i>	\$7,300
Aug 21	7	5925	Copenhagen to Stockholm	 H	<i>Silver Spirit</i>	\$5,600

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COMPASS

NEWS ON NAVIGATING THE WORLD + THE PERKS AND PRIVILEGES OF USING A VIRTUOSO TRAVEL ADVISOR



Expect the royal treatment at Scotland's Gleneagles hotel and (inset) Saoirse Ronan stars as Mary Stuart in *Mary Queen of Scots*.

19 RESOLUTIONS FOR 2019

DIG INTO ROYALTY'S BIGGEST RIVALRY. It's a period drama made for cinematic reimagination: cousins Mary Stuart and Queen Elizabeth I, and their contentious, sixteenth-century relationship. The latest retelling, *Mary Queen of Scots*, stars Saoirse Ronan and Margot Robbie as the two royals, and in honor of the film's December release, Scotland's **Gleneagles** is tapping into its proximity to the real-life tale. During a three-day, Mary Stuart-themed experience, Iris Marhencke, Gleneagles' resident historical guide, leads visits to Linlithgow Palace, where Stuart was born in 1542, and Stirling Castle, where she lived before being sent to France at age 5. The royal adventures end back at the hotel's recently remodeled Century Bar, where guests can sip a **Mary Queen of Scots cocktail** (Bénédictine, whisky, and absinthe) and learn about Gleneagles' own storied past – the 232-room estate opened in 1924. “From its winding Highlands entrance to the art deco interiors, guests experience the property's history and heritage from every angle,” says Jennifer Wilson-Buttigieg, a NYC-based Virtuoso agency executive, “but the amenities keep you firmly grounded in the five-star standards of the present.” *Mary Queen of Scots experience from \$3,377, including three nights' accommodations, guided tours, one dinner, and a Mary Stuart book. Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and one afternoon tea for two.*

COMPASS IS REPORTED BY ELAINE GLUSAC, SUSAN HANSON, AND JEN LYONS

2



PICK UP A NEW HOBBY.

At these hotels, vacation can also kick off the pursuit of a novel passion.



Clockwise from left: Getting the shot at Vermejo Park Ranch, artist Haena Chen Biton, an inner journey at The St. Regis Mexico City, and mise en place at Mimo San Sebastián.

A NEW MEXICO PHOTO WORKSHOP

In remote northeastern New Mexico, Ted Turner's 45-room, 585,000-acre **Vermejo Park Ranch** is a pristine setting for a four-day photography intensive, led by professional photographer Sean Fitzgerald. Students spend their time on the land **capturing images** of bellowing bison, newborn wolf pups, ghost towns, starry night skies, and summer wildflowers brought by seasonal rains. *Photography workshops held in June, August, and September; from \$2,400, including accommodations, meals, and guides.*

ART LESSONS IN SOUTH FLORIDA

Channel your inner Bob Ross and brush some happy little palm trees onto a canvas – peaceful Sunday-morning **painting classes** are held on the Great Lawn at Florida's **Acqualina Resort & Spa**, on Sunny Isles Beach. Local abstract artist Haena Chen Biton uses a brief sound meditation to quiet participants' inner critic so they can approach the experience with a positive attitude. The 98-room resort will even ship your masterpiece home. *Doubles from \$800; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 spa credit. Painting class, \$35.*

A COOKING COURSE IN SPAIN

San Sebastián, Spain, is a pretty great place to take a cooking class – the city has one of the highest concentrations of Michelin-starred restaurants in the world. At Mimo San Sebastián, a culinary school housed in the 139-room **Hotel Maria Cristina**, aspiring chefs roast vegetables, shave truffles, and sous-vide lamb during a five-hour **Michelin Star Secrets** course. Bring your A game: Alain Ducasse and other powerhouse chefs have been known to swing by the kitchen. *Doubles from \$292; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit. Michelin Star Secrets class, \$213.*

MEXICO CITY MEDITATION

Find serenity at **The St. Regis Mexico City**, where a new mindfulness series at the 189-room hotel's Remède Spa helps guests practice meditation. Wellness seekers learn breathing techniques while wearing a futuristic **Muse headband**, which increases focus by translating brain waves into soothing, nature-inspired sounds. Add the meditation session to a spa treatment or book a 90-minute in-room relaxation ritual that combines aromatherapy, shiatsu massage, and meditation. *Doubles from \$419; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 hotel credit. In-room relaxation treatment, \$190.*

(PHOTO WORKSHOP) SEAN FITZGERALD

TORONTO

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VIRTUOSO

PREFERRED DESTINATION

3

Be Among the First Guests at These Hotels.

Three debut properties we can't wait to visit in 2019.

▼ Rosewood Hong Kong

EXPECTED OPENING: Early 2019

THE LOWDOWN: Despite its skyscraper digs – 413 rooms in a 65-story tower in Hong Kong's Victoria Dockside arts and culture district – this new Rosewood still promises plenty of green space and outdoor areas, plus a kids' club and eight restaurants and bars.

YOU'LL FIND US: Designing our own personal wellness programs at Asaya, Rosewood's innovative spa concept that integrates alternative therapies, lifestyle and nutrition coaching, fitness activities, and holistic treatments.

STAY: *Doubles from \$550; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 spa credit.*



Belmond Cadogan Hotel

EXPECTED OPENING: Early 2019

THE LOWDOWN: Five restored Queen Anne town houses will be home to 54 rooms in London's Chelsea neighborhood. Some of the city's best restaurants are within walking distance, but a new venue from chef Adam Handling is sure to draw crowds here.

YOU'LL FIND US: Geeking out in the Royal Suite, Oscar Wilde's former pied-à-terre, where he was arrested in 1895 after losing his famous libel case.

STAY: *Doubles from \$620; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily.*

The high life: An artist's rendering of a Rosewood Suite at Rosewood Hong Kong and (above) canyon views from an Earth Suite at The Lodge at Blue Sky.



▲ The Lodge at Blue Sky

EXPECTED OPENING: May 2019

THE LOWDOWN: Bring on the adventure at this 46-suite escape, set on 3,500 acres outside Park City, Utah. Almost everything here will revolve around outdoor pursuits, from fly-fishing and yoga in the summer to snowboarding and heli-skiing in the winter.

YOU'LL FIND US: Learning how whiskey gets made at High West, the on-site distillery.

STAY: *Doubles from \$700; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 resort credit.*

4

Get Back to the Caribbean.

It's been months of rebuilding in the Caribbean after 2017's devastating hurricane season, but a year later, the region is showing off its recovery well, with another wave of accommodations reopening this month. On Saint Bart's, the 61-room **Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France** welcomes two new restaurant concepts, a garden, and nearly 20 more rooms and suites (*doubles from \$835; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 spa credit*). On Anguilla, the 108-room **Belmond Cap Juluca** completed a renovation that added an infinity-edge pool, oceanfront spa, and beach bar dubbed The Cap Shack (*doubles from \$725; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 hotel credit*). And on Saint-Martin, the iconic pastel-chic digs at the 83-room **Belmond La Samanna** have been refreshed; the hotel's redesigned Beach Bar is just one of the many reasons to book it to the islands and toast the area's comeback (*doubles from \$545; Virtuoso travelers receive a welcome amenity, breakfast daily, and one complimentary lunch for two*).



VOTED BEST RIVER CRUISE LINE BY VIRTUOSO

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2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2018
Voted Best Cruise Line Overall by Virtuoso, 2017



Embrace AmaWaterways' Tantalizing Trio in 2019

Innovative **AmaWaterways** has added three new ships to its award-winning fleet, offering you more choices to explore Europe's rivers in 2019. Revel in the luxury of a suite measuring anywhere from 355-710 square feet while cruising the Danube River aboard the extraordinary **AmaMagna** - twice the width of traditional river ships, featuring four unique dining venues and a groundbreaking Water Sports Platform. Or enjoy breathtaking scenery from **AmaMora**, which adds more twin-balcony staterooms to the Rhine River for premium castle viewing. And indulge in Port wine and flamenco dancing while on board the **AmaDouro**, which expands AmaWaterways' popular Portugal itineraries through the Douro River Valley.



Experience the Rhine River on board AmaMora



AmaMagna Balcony Suite



AmaDouro cruising through Porto

5

Set Off on an Expedition Cruise.

These voyages on new, state-of-the-art ships will help you explore 2019 in style.

GREENLAND & ICELAND | HURTIGRUTEN

HIGHLIGHTS: Remote is an understatement to describe northeast Greenland's isolated Ittoqqortoormiit settlement, gateway to the country's **National Park**, the world's largest. More than 75 times greater than Yellowstone, the park promises exceptional hiking, kayaking, and wildlife sightings – expect more encounters with Arctic wolves and polar bears than other humans.

SHIP: Set to sail in early May, the 530-passenger **Road Amundsen** introduces environmentally sustainable technology to the polar regions. Its hybrid

electric-powered engine consumes less fuel, rides quieter, and emits less carbon dioxide than traditional engines, while an interactive science center and infinity pool upgrade the onboard experience.

DETAILS: Oslo (Longyearbyen) to Reykjavík, 12 days. *Departure: July 26, 2019; from \$7,288.*

BIJAGÓS ARCHIPELAGO, AFRICA | PONANT

HIGHLIGHTS: Sea turtles, saltwater hippos, green monkeys, and crocodiles take center stage in the Bijagós Islands, a **UNESCO**

Biosphere Reserve located off the coast of Guinea-Bissau. Zodiac excursions also let guests experience the archipelago's pale-sand beaches, mangrove swamps, and traditional villages, where they'll meet with the indigenous Bidyogo people.

SHIP: A three-level modular marina and a multisensory, underwater lounge are part of the over-the-top experience aboard **Le Dumont-d'Urville**, the fourth of six new Ponant Explorer yachts. Accommodating 184 passengers in beach-chic style, the

ship premieres in August.

DETAILS: Round-trip from Dakar, nine days. *Departure: October 8, 2019; from \$5,480.*

ANTARCTICA | QUARK EXPEDITIONS

HIGHLIGHTS: An **onboard penguinologist** is among the engaging personalities who share their expertise during four days of hiking and Zodiac touring around the Antarctic Peninsula and South Shetland Islands. More-active adventurers can join optional kayaking, camping, and paddleboarding outings.

SHIP: After its summer launch, the all-suite, all-balcony **World Explorer** will make its Antarctic debut in November, delivering 176 guests to "The Ice" with cool hybrid technology. A glass dome adds dramatic effect in the observation lounge, while a sauna-equipped spa and healthy dining choices keep the emphasis on wellness.

DETAILS: Round-trip from Ushuaia. *Departures: November 3 (11 days), and December 7 and 17 (12 days), 2019; from \$8,495.*



An artist's rendering of Hurtigruten's **Road Amundsen** in Norway's Lofoten Islands.



6

Think Ahead for the Holidays.

One of the best ways to manage holiday stress is to plan early. **Tauck** makes it easy with a new river cruise along the Danube. Two eight-day sailings in December call on some of Europe's most famous **Christmas markets**, with special family-focused shore activities such as a scavenger hunt in Bratislava's Old Town and waltzing lessons inside a Viennese palace. Bonus: The company hosts a traditional European holiday feast aboard your riverboat, its halls appropriately decked for the season. *Departures: December 22 and 23, 2019; from \$4,190.*



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Travel Waste-Free.

To help combat climate change, lifestyle alterations can be key – from biking more and switching out incandescent light bulbs to checking the sustainable practices of travel providers before heading out on vacation. Next year, eco-conscious travelers can join **Natural Habitat Adventures** on the world's first-ever waste-free trip, a seven-day **safari in Yellowstone Country**. Cozy, rustic cabins in a secluded, bush-style camp provide comfortable bases for daily game drives as you set out in search of bison, bighorn sheep, wolves, and other wildlife in “America’s Serengeti.” The goal (besides capturing stunning Instagram photos) is to **recycle, compost, upcycle, reuse, or refuse** – think eschewing straws and single-use plastics – all waste produced as part of Nat-Hab trip operations. Added bonus: The company – which is also the world’s first carbon-neutral travel provider – partners with and donates a portion of trip proceeds to the World Wildlife Fund. *Departure: July 6, 2019; from \$5,695.*



Skip the Museum Line.

Visitors to Bilbao’s Guggenheim Museum can stroll past general ticket holders en route to meeting up with one of the gallery’s curators for a **private tour**. It’s just one of the exclusive perks on **Blue Parallel’s** new Spanish Basque Country extension, which can be added to any curated Andalucía journey.

8

SLOW DOWN AND SMELL THE LUPINS.

Kiwis are known to love a good walk, kicking up their Merrell-clad heels along thousands of miles of trails. A new eight-day New Zealand tour with **Butterfield & Robinson** features some of the most celebrated hikes and coastal walks around the **South Island**, with plenty of downtime to relax and relish a fine sauvignon blanc. *Departures: Multiple dates, January 21 to October 17, 2019; from \$10,895.*



MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS

Trek an eight-mile stretch of the scenic Queen Charlotte Track.



FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK

Spend two days tramping through this UNESCO World Heritage site.



KAIKOURA

Take a dip with dolphins in the wild and delve into Maori culture in this historic whaling town.



(WOLF) JIM KRUGER/GETTY IMAGES; (MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS) DOUGLAS PEEBLES PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY; (KAIKOURA) TRAVELLER_BERNARD/GETTY IMAGES; (FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK) WNJAY_WOOTTHISAK/GETTY IMAGES



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TIP

"When you're planning a visit to Antarctica, make sure to opt for a **longer voyage** that includes South Georgia Island. You won't be sorry!"

- Virtuoso traveler
Morton Katz

10



Commune with Nature.

Follow the lead of these two Virtuoso travelers, who visited South Georgia Island to stand among its spectacular king penguin colony.

IN THE MOMENT

"Our Zodiac landed at dawn on the shore of Saint Andrews Bay, where we were treated to the awe-some sight of some 100,000 king penguins and their downy chicks," says Morton Katz, a retired orthodontist and amateur photographer from Baltimore. "No single image can do justice to this **panorama of creatures**," he says of the photo he captured of his wife, Sally, with the orange-beaked birds.

THE TRIP

The couple's **two-week Antarctica voyage** with Lindblad Expeditions was the third they've taken on the *National Geographic Orion*. On

previous trips, they circumnavigated Ireland and cruised Indonesia and Australia's Kimberley region. Though the Katzes had sailed to the White Continent in the past, this second voyage, planned by Virtuoso travel advisor Louise Kemper of Baltimore, allowed them to step foot on **South Georgia Island**.

WHERE ELSE?

Other recent trips Kemper helped arrange include a custom 16-day private tour of **Morocco**, where Morton says he captured some of his best photography, and **Malta**. "That little island is an absolute gem of history, culture, art, good food, and wonderfully friendly people," Morton says.



Send your best travel shots to editors@virtuoso.com for a chance to be featured in *Virtuoso Traveler*.

11

SAY “BON APPÉTIT” – AND MEAN IT.

With an esteemed career that includes tenures at Paris’ Hôtel de Crillon and Cannes’ Hôtel Martinez,

French chef Jean-

François Rouquette recently elevated his Michelin-starred cuisine to yet another level: **Air France** flights to Paris from New York, Tokyo, and Shanghai. Each month through September 2019,

Rouquette, who currently serves as head chef for the Park Hyatt Paris-Vendôme, will sate La Première cabin guests with **two signature dishes**. On the menu for January and February flights out of New York: a choice of lamb noisettes, grains, and scented artichokes *vadouvan* or monkfish *à l’armoricaine* with saffron, fennel, and coconut-milk crispy rice. Decisions, decisions.



12 Preserve the Peace at 30K Feet.

Changes in cabin air pressure can be a real pain in the middle ear – especially for young children. Enter the new **EarPlanes2** from Cirrus Healthcare. Soft, reusable, and specifically **designed for smaller ears**, these allergy-free silicone plugs also soften loud noises, and an included tether helps keep them from getting lost. We’re betting that you, your kids, and your fellow passengers will all be pleased. \$10, cirrushealthcare.com.

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BARBADOS



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Canaves Oia's Sunday Suites perches above the Aegean, and (bottom left) the Honeymoon Suite's stylish shower. Bottom right: Santorini at dusk.



13

Before the Big Arrival, Be Sure to Squeeze In a Babymoon.

A Virtuoso advisor's path to pre-birth bliss on Santorini.

Santorini had long been on Erika Bandy's must-visit list, and the Sweden-based Virtuoso travel advisor often booked the Greek isle as a romantic getaway for honeymooners and other couples. So when she and her husband became pregnant with their first child, they knew just where to go for some pre-baby R&R. "It was the perfect opportunity to visit Santorini as a couple, before we became full-time parents," says Bandy. For trips like this, "it's important to choose a destination

where there aren't too many families around," she adds, "to create that special feeling that it's just the two of you." Here, her thoughts on a swoon-worthy stay.

ABOVE THE RIM

"Oia, a village built on the slope of a caldera, is definitely the place to be on Santorini. It isn't that large, so you can **explore it on foot** – although you need to go slowly when you're 32 weeks pregnant!"

SUITE SECRET

"I recommend staying at **Canaves Oia** for its amazing views of the caldera. It comprises several properties, all close together, and each has its own personality: The Canaves Oia Hotel's history and charm make it appealing to the more traditional traveler; the Suites attracts more of an 'It' crowd; and the Sunday Suites, with just eight rooms, is ideal for those who want to feel like the island is theirs alone. The Sunday's **Honeymoon Suite** is by far the most incredible I've ever seen. Its bathroom has a massive shower with dual heads and a secret door that leads to a private outdoor balcony with a Jacuzzi – simply magical."

HITTING THE WATER

"The highlight of our trip was a **daylong cruise**, arranged by the hotel's concierge, which lets you see Santorini from all sides and also explore some of the **smaller Cyclades islands**. A sunset cruise gives you a different picture, so if you can, do both."

THAT'S GREEK (FOOD) TO ME

"We dined at an amazing Oia restaurant called **Candouni**. Two brothers run the place, and they set up a table in the back where some friends played live music. It was the perfect Greek setting. I'm a **vegan** and was surprised by the array of options, all crafted with local ingredients. The tartare (with couscous, black-eyed peas, lentils, and red peppers) and *soutzoukakia* (Greek meatballs made with lentils and vegetables rather than beef) are a must. There's plenty for nonvegans as well; for example, the chef prepares fresh fish from the Aegean daily."

QUITE A SPREAD

"**Fava**, a hummus-like spread made with yellow split peas (not fava beans, despite the name), is a specialty throughout the island. I highly recommend trying the various ways it's prepared in Santorini's restaurants."

TIP: TRAVELING WHILE VEGAN

For vegans, it's essential to be **well prepared** before a trip, notes Bandy. She suggests packing multivitamins and favorite snacks, as well as researching a destination's culinary scene to avoid any confusion upon arrival. Equally important, however, is being **open minded**: "If you have the chance to try something specific to a destination that you'd probably never eat again, I'd recommend doing it," she says. "Basically, be flexible!"

(CANAVES OIA SUITE AND SHOWER) CHRISTOS DRAZOS, (SANTORINI) HANQUAN CHEN/GETTY IMAGES

14 Add More Drama to Your Life.

The Windy City takes center stage in 2019 as it celebrates the “Year of Chicago Theatre.”



Home to 250-plus venues ranging from storefront black boxes to renowned theater companies fronted by the likes of Laurie Metcalf and Michael Shannon, Chicago “is a special ecosystem,” says Deb Clapp, executive director of the League of Chicago Theatres. “It’s home to the boldest and bravest theater happening in this country.” Case in point: Chi-Town’s year-long focus on all forms of the performing arts in 2019 – the first initiative of its kind in the U.S. Look for special events and trip-worthy shows throughout the city, starting with these three plays, which are sure to earn a standing ovation.

- The award-winning thriller ***An Inspector Calls***, at Chicago Shakespeare’s new Yard theater on Navy Pier (February 19 to March 10).
- ***Small World***’s premiere at The Den Theatre (March 27 to May 5), where cast members get trapped in Disney World’s “It’s a Small World” ride.
- At the new Windy City Playhouse South, the open-run ***Southern Gothic***, in which audience members wander the set while the play, set at a 1961 cocktail party, unfolds.

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50 YEARS ON SAFARI



PAGE-TURNERS



15



Get Inspired.

Three of our favorite new memoirs to feed your sense of wanderlust.

David Moore had built a successful London marketing agency with coveted clients such as Disney



and Coca-Cola before retiring in 2017. His life took a whole new direction when he and his wife set off on a ten-month, globe-spanning

adventure that he chronicles in ***Turning Left Around the World***. Moore's witty anecdotes of planes, trains, and tuk-tuks are made all the more amusing by his conversational style and irresistible British charm. \$25, amazon.com.

Wildlife photographer Paul Souders has published his work in the pages

of *National Geographic* and other top magazines, yet one iconic image still eluded him: polar bears in their natural habitat. So at age 50, the recently married homebody came up with a plan. ***Arctic Solitaire: A Boat, a Bay, and the Quest for the Perfect Bear*** follows his humorous misadventures as he struggles to navigate a tiny boat more than a thousand miles across Hudson Bay, with dozens of color pictures – including his coveted white bear – to prove it. \$27, mountaineers.org.

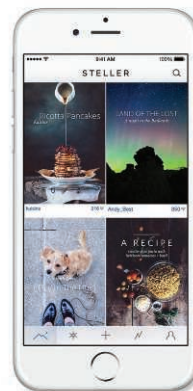
In his popular *Paris in Winter*, artist and writer David Coggins combined vivid watercolor-and-ink drawings with poetic vignettes



about his family's visits to the City of Light. His latest, ***Blue: A St. Barts Memoir***,

brings the same lyrical writing and fanciful images to the Caribbean isle, where the Coggins clan has shared the same mountain villa and simple pleasures every year for the past two decades. \$25, powerhousebooks.com.

TECH



16

TELL YOUR STORY.

The free **Steller app** makes it easy to digitally document your travel experiences – and entertain friends and family back home while you're still on the fly. Create **elegantly designed stories** using your own text, photos, and videos, then instantly share them on your social media channels, blog, email, and more. steller.co.

ON THE CALENDAR

17

Stay on Time – and Plot Future Trips.

Featuring 12 retro-inspired travel poster illustrations and adapted from the *New York Times* best-selling book, ***Atlas Obscura***'s 2019 wall calendar sparks interest in unexpected destinations. Chart your daily schedule and discover some of the world's most **unusual treasures**, from Kolmanskop, Namibia's diamond-boom ghost town, to Jamaica's Luminous Lagoon. \$15, workman.com.



(POLAR BEARS) PAUL SOUDERS

18

BREAK MORE BREAD.

Gluten lovers, rejoice: Freshly baked artisan breads are on the rise at new restaurants across the U.S. Loaf around at these three savory spots.

(PIZZA) JULIE SOEFER,
(BREAD) ROBERT PACKAR



◀ HOUSTON

At chef Ryan Pera's three neighboring establishments in the city's buzzy EaDo neighborhood – **Vinny's** pizzeria, cocktail bar **Miss Carousel**, and the American café **Indianola** – daily kneads include everything from pizza crusts to sourdoughs. "I love fostering something that's a living thing," he says. *1201 Saint Emanuel Street; agricolehospitality.com.*

SAN FRANCISCO

Following up on his three-Michelin-starred Saison, chef Joshua Skenes casts anew with **Angler**, a casual, seafood-centric spot



on San Fran's waterfront. One must: the low-meets-high Parker House rolls with seaweed-infused butter and aged caviar. *132 The Embarcadero; anglersf.com.*

▲ MIAMI

Beaker & Gray chef Brian Nasajon pays homage to American classics (try the Reuben or spicy fried-chicken sandwich) at **Mason Eatery**, featuring house-made bagels, challah, country bread, and croissants. "Nothing better exemplifies the love of creating food with your hands than bread," says the chef. *3470 N. Miami Avenue; masoneatery.com.*



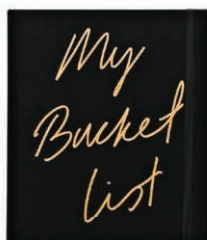
TOKYO
Timeless Temptations

Tokyo.Tokyo

19

WRITE ON.

A proven stress reliever, journaling is a positive habit to incorporate into your daily routine – and no matter your passion, there’s a journal to jot it all down.

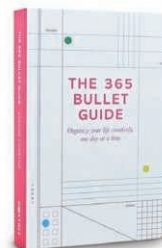


FOR THE DREAMER
MY BUCKET LIST FILL-IN JOURNAL,
BY AXEL & ASH

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FOR THE MEDITATOR
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FOR THE ORGANIZER
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FOR THE SCRAPBOOKER
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FOR THE ATHLETE
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FOR THE BIRD-WATCHER
JOHN JAMES AUDUBON BIRDER'S JOURNAL
Document field observations and check off found species alongside **vintage Audubon watercolors** from *The Birds of America*. \$17, pomegranate.com.



FOR THE GO-GETTER
KIKKI.K GOALS INSPIRATION JOURNAL
Record your monthly aspirations, then make them happen – with added motivation from **inspirational quotes**. \$34, us.asos.com.



FOR THE BIBLIOPHILE
MY READING JOURNAL: A DIARY FOR BOOK LOVERS, BY POTTER GIFT
Take notes as you read, then find your next great text in the back pages' **noteworthy book lists**. \$13, barnesandnoble.com.



FOR THE JET-SETTER
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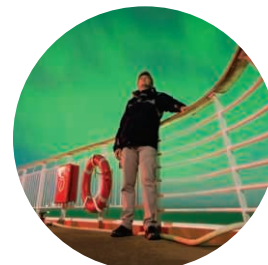
The Arctic Circle: On Land or at Sea?

A pair of adventurous opportunities to witness the northern lights. **By Susan Hanson**



ON LAND

Northern lights sightings occur approximately 200 nights a year in **Finnish Lapland**, and catching them while cozied up inside a glass igloo is certainly a bucket-list treat. Tour operator **50 Degrees North** leads explorers to the tiny lakeside village of Kittilä for six days of reindeer sledding, husky mushing, snowmobiling, and ice fishing, capped off with two nights under glass for the natural light show. *Departures: Multiple dates (Sunday departures only), December 2, 2018, through April 28, 2019; from \$2,975.*



AT SEA

The Norwegian coast wows, but the sky's the grand prize on **Hurtigruten's** 12-day astronomy-themed, round-trip-from-Bergen sailing. A team of astronomers joins the 822-passenger Trollfjord for aurora borealis lectures, and shore excursions include visits to **Tromsø's planetarium** and the Lofotr Viking Museum in the Lofoten Islands. On select cruises, including this itinerary, Hurtigruten guarantees a complimentary six- or seven-day return voyage if northern lights viewing doesn't occur. *Departure: March 28, 2019; from \$2,619.*

“DYNAMIC. ANGELIC. MERRY DANCERS.” Baltimore-based Virtuoso travel advisor Robin Wagner can go on about the magic of the **aurora borealis**. Seeing these luminous displays of colors and shapes – the result of charged particles from the sun entering the earth's atmosphere near its magnetic poles – is so exciting, Wagner says, “you get butterflies in your stomach. Since there's no guarantee you'll catch them, it kind of feels like winning nature's equivalent of the lottery. I've seen people shed tears, they're so overcome.”

Head to the Arctic Circle for your best chance to see the northern lights. A cruise through the fjords along Norway's coast promises a varied array of charming port towns, while a tour in Finnish Lapland lets travelers experience how Arctic communities exist in extreme temperatures. Either way, Wagner says, the trip will leave you with a profound sense of urgency to **protect the region and its wildlife**. “You realize how small we are,” she says, “and how beautiful this planet truly is.”

2019 TIP: Though the northern lights occur continuously above the Arctic Circle, you won't see them during summer's “White Nights”; the long, dark evenings between October and March typically offer peak viewing.

CHANCE MEETING



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Inspiring new ways



A bird in the hand: In Mongolia, a nomad shows off his falconry skills at the annual Golden Eagle Festival.

Folk Trails

Virtuoso's director of sustainability shares his idea of an ideal match: authentic cultural experiences amid spectacular natural settings. **By Costas Christ**

MY LIFELONG FASCINATION with exploring exotic lands and connecting with distant cultures had a surprising start. When I was 5, my family moved to central New Jersey, where we lived alongside one of the only Mongolian communities outside Asia – the result of a resettlement program for Mongolian refugees fleeing Stalin's Soviet empire. I attended school with Mongolian children, ate *buuz* (dumplings) in their homes, and watched elaborate

ceremonies led by ruby-robed monks at our neighborhood Buddhist temple. So you can imagine my excitement when, decades later, my Mongolian American childhood friend, Jalsa Urubshurow, founder of **Nomadic Expeditions**, invited me to join him on “the adventure we always dreamed about as kids.”

Our destination: his company's private *ger* (handcrafted yurt) camp, nestled amid the sweeping vistas of remote **Mongolia**, to witness the Golden Eagle Festival. Cofounded by Urubshurow, this

annual event celebrates the country's **centuries-old tradition of falconry**, which UNESCO has recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. By day, we watched colorfully dressed nomads on horseback engage in contests of falconry skill; at night, we retreated back to the comforts of camp, where village musicians sang ancestral songs as we feasted on authentic Mongolian meals. To this day, that sublime intersection of nature and culture is still one of my most memorable travel experiences.

For similar reasons, trips to **Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way** – nine counties along the country's stunning west coast – and the **Marquesas Islands** should top any adventurer's bucket list. In the former, during my stay at **Ashford Castle**, staff set me on a journey of discovery that included trekking along dramatic sea cliffs, exploring historic stone villages, visiting ancient sacred sites, and encountering some of the friendliest, most music-loving people I've come across in a lifetime of travel. From meandering through emerald-green meadows to **foot-stomping with fiddle players** in local pubs, it hardly gets more Irish than this.

In French Polynesia, one of my favorite places is the Marquesas – a place where “paradise” really is an apt description. For years, getting there involved booking passage on a cargo ship delivering supplies to the isolated archipelago, considered one of the last outposts of traditional Polynesian life. Although the latter remains true today, **Paul Gauguin Cruises** now makes the voyage much easier – and much more enjoyable. Experiences such as snorkeling among **kaleidoscopic coral reefs** and strolling unspoiled beaches pair perfectly with strumming the ukulele with the line's **local ambassadors** and touring archaeological ruins in the lush Taaoa Valley. Here's to these and other places that let us go wild *and* form lasting cultural connections.

GET CONNECTED Tour **Mongolia** on an eight-day Nomadic Expeditions' journey, highlighted by the 2019 Golden Eagle Festival. *Departure: October 2, 2019; from \$6,075 (including internal airfare).* • Explore the **Wild Atlantic Way**, fly-fish on Lough Corrib, and more while staying at Ireland's thirteenth-century Ashford Castle. *Doubles from \$340; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.* • Visit the **Marquesas**, Tuamotus, and Society Islands on a 15-day round-trip-from-Papeete voyage with Paul Gauguin Cruises. *Departures: Multiple dates, January 26, 2019, to November 21, 2020; from \$7,395.*



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DEC1803175



Dev and Linda Shukla
in Copenhagen.

Why I Travel

Linda and Dev Shukla pursue the next great meal and adventure.
Interviewed by David Hochman

LINDA AND DEV Shukla didn't think people of their generation – they're both 38 – used travel advisors. "It sounded old-fashioned to me," Linda says. Then the couple started planning a trip to Argentina for their tenth wedding anniversary. "We were totally stumped and needed an expert," she admits. The Seattle-based Shuklas both work at Microsoft and, for planning their big adventure, wanted the same all-inclusive service that they

love when taking cruises. After one 30-minute call with Margaret Nichols, a Virtuoso travel advisor in Kansas City, Kansas, Linda says, "We went from being overwhelmed with choices to feeling super excited and completely under control. I was like, why did we wait so long?"

DEV: We were both raised to be practical, but then we saw the movie *Up*. It's all about regret and what one couple didn't get to do together. We said, "That can't be us." That's our travel

origin story. It's what keeps us going and exploring.

LINDA: Argentina was on our list for a while, and we wasted no time enjoying it. The second we landed in Buenos Aires, Margaret had us on a walking tour to fight off jet lag. Brilliant idea. Look – it's Evita's mausoleum! And, oh, those gorgeous city parks. She told everyone it was our anniversary, so we got what felt like the best tables and the best room in the hotel. At a tango show, we were so close, the dancer used

one of our chairs in the performance.

DEV: Enjoy, absorb, eat, drink, relax, and be kind: That's our motto in travel. We like to go and learn, but we also love good food and wine. It doesn't have to be fine dining – street food is great. The most important thing is to savor the moment and be friendly and open. Interacting with people, whether it's servers or people at the next table, and hearing about their backgrounds – that's what we love about visiting new



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Clockwise from top: Gold leaf completely covers the top two floors of Kyoto's Kinkakuji Temple; Waiheke Island, New Zealand; and Iceland's Gullfoss waterfall.

places. We prefer spending money on experiences and great meals. In Tokyo, we had a comfortable bed in a great location. But because it wasn't the fanciest hotel, we could splurge at Narisawa, one of the world's best restaurants.

LINDA: Before our trip to New Zealand, Margaret

sent us a photograph of Otahuna Lodge in Christchurch. It showed a beautiful veranda facing a meadow with trees and a pond, and I was hoping we'd get to spend time in that exact spot. It turned out that was our private room. Because we were traveling off-peak, Margaret was able to upgrade us.

DEV: We heard the horror stories about cruising.

Forced interaction with strangers. The conga lines. But then we discovered what Norwegian calls "Freestyle Cruising," and we love it. It's like an open, resort feel. You eat when you want, sit where you want, and there's no pressure to join the herd. On

Interacting with people, whether it's servers or people at the next table, and hearing about their backgrounds – that's what we love about visiting new places.

Norwegian Epic, there's so much to do – Cirque du Soleil, Second City improv – it's like a small city at sea.

LINDA: We work in the tech industry. We love gadgets. But there's nothing like a handwritten journal for travel memories – it's so much more personal than a file on your computer. And when you're in China, where they block Facebook and Google, it's the best place to be reflective.

WHERE NEXT?

DEV: The must-visit list starts with Thailand, because there's a restaurant, Gaggan, that's ranked among the best in Asia. Plus, Chiang Mai looks spectacular. Reading Kevin Kwan's *Crazy Rich Asians* series makes us want to go to Singapore. After that: Portugal, Spain, Lake Como, Greece, and then India for my parents' 50th anniversary. **VI**

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Menu musts: Puebla's Temple of San Francisco Acatepec and (right) El Mural de los Poblanos restaurant.



Puebla on a Platter

"Mexico's kitchen" is a feast for the senses.

By Becca Hensley

WITH ITS INTRICATELY worked silver doors, opulent gilded churches, and brightly hued baroque buildings, Puebla looks good enough to eat. But the illusion matches reality: Mexico's fourth-largest metropolis, some 85 miles southeast of Mexico City, has long been celebrated by in-the-know epicures. Puebla "truly is Mexico's kitchen," says Fort Worth, Texas-based Virtuoso travel advisor Tiffany Figueiredo. "You'll be surprised and delighted by the depth of culinary offerings here – whether you're grabbing *tacos al pastor* and *chapulines* (roasted grasshoppers)

from a street cart or enjoying a mole tasting at a high-end restaurant." Mauricio Hanna, a Virtuoso advisor from Austin who frequently visits Puebla, loves its blend of past and present foodways. "The city's traditional recipes date back centuries," he says, "and many are now being reinterpreted by emerging chefs. It's time to share that bounty with the world." Ready for a taste? Follow our lead.

CANDY LAND

Take a tour through Puebla's **Museo Internacional del Barroco** (*Vía Atlxícáyotl 2501*), and you'll discover that baroque – a seventeenth- and eighteenth-century

artistic movement originating in Europe – was the stuff of elaborate dreams. Under the ruling Spaniards, the ornate, dramatic style found its way to Mexico and pervaded Puebla culture – from fashion to art, music to architecture. On the city's renowned **Calle de los Dulces** (Sweets Street), in the UNESCO World Heritage-listed city center, baroque manifests not just in the colorful historic buildings, but also in the fanciful snacks being sold. True to its name, Sweets Street is home to a bevy of family-owned bakeries and candy stores, brimming with beautifully curated, handmade goods. Choose from caramels, coconut confections, waxy

(TEMPLE OF SAN FRANCISCO ACATEPEC) SUSANNE KREMER/
(EL MURAL) ADAM WISEMAN

Idyllic Islands of the Dodecanese

Located in the southeastern part of the Aegean Sea, Greece's Dodecanese island group, comprised of twelve large islands and numerous smaller ones with distinct character and picturesque scenery, is a feast for all the senses.

The two most cosmopolitan islands, Rhodes and Kos, are covered in medieval treasures and archaeological gems, plus stunning natural wonders like the Seven Springs, the Valley of the Butterflies at Rodíni Park, and the 2,500-year-old Tree of Hippocrates, the mythological father of medicine.

The smaller islands include Kalymnos, the island of the sea sponge harvesters; Tilos, home to a habitat of rare species of birds; and unspoiled Nisyros, formed by volcanic eruptions. Other islands like Lipsi and Agathonissi are part of the Natura Network, while Karpathos and Symi boast unparalleled natural beauty. In addition, Patmos is known as the "Jerusalem of the Aegean," and Halki is the "island of peace and friendship."

The Dodecanese showcase their authentic flavor with vineyards, olive groves, and mouth-watering dishes made with juicy tangerines, mizithra cheese, and thyme honey. These islands are the epitome of rest and relaxation, where you can swim in crystal-clear waters, discover old lighthouses, and admire stunning views in every direction.



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Local Flavor



Clockwise from top: Puebla's colorful Callejón de los Sapos (Alley of the Toads), Casareyna's mole medley, and camotes for sale on Sweets Street.

skull candies, and **camotes**, Puebla's signature treats, made from sweet potatoes. And be sure to collect a cache of *tortitas de Santa Clara*, a frosted shortbread cookie found in nearly every shop.

TACOS WITH A TWIST

As eclectic as baroque itself, Puebla's populace hails from a range of cultures. Immigrants from the Middle East exhibit their legacy in various ways, not least in the culinary scene. Melding Mexican flavors with cooking techniques brought from Iraq, Turkey, and Lebanon in the nineteenth century, **tacos árabes** might seem unexpected

to tourists, though they're undisputedly the city's favorite fast food. Made with lime- and chipotle-seasoned pork that's roasted on a spit, the gyro-fashioned tacos are wrapped in pita-style bread, rather than tortillas, and can be found in family-owned restaurants across town. Start at one of the first venues to serve them, **Antigua Taquería La Oriental**, which opened in 1933 across from the Puebla Cathedral. Though no longer in its original location, the taqueria has outposts in a number of city spots, including a popular, centrally located address (2 *Oriente* 8) just off Puebla's main zocalo (plaza).

TIP

Beyond eating and drinking, "be sure to visit a **Talavera pottery** factory," says Virtuoso advisor Mauricio Hanna, speaking of the colorful ceramics brought to Puebla by the Spanish. The hand-thrown artisan pottery with Moorish motifs adorns homes and businesses throughout the city. Watch masters at work and take a workshop at **Uriarte Talavera** (4 *Poniente* 917) or **Talavera Celia** (5 *Oriente* 608), which also has an interactive museum at a nearby address (*Calle Fresno* 97).

CANTINA CAPERS

According to local lore, if you haven't been to **La Pasita** (5 *Oriente* 602), you don't really know Puebla – the city center's oldest cantina has been drawing imbibers for decades. Nearly 60 years ago, the owners invented a sweet, potent raisin liqueur, purportedly to help drum up business. Served in a shot-size tequila glass known as a *caballito*, the ever-popular drink, called **pasita** ("little raisin"), costs just a few dollars; you'll find it garnished with a cube of pungent cheese and a raisin. The bar also pours a variety of artisanal drinks, whimsically divided into three categories: beginner, intermediate, and professional. Don't leave without a sip of **rompope**, conceived by the (supposedly) teetotal nuns of Convent Santa Clara. Made from a varied recipe of ground almonds, eggs, rum, cinnamon, milk, and sugar, the drink ranks as a Pueblan favorite for holidays and celebrations.

THAT'S THE SAUCE

The Puebla area boasts some 365 churches; in them, convents once flourished, and cloistered nuns dedicated themselves to cooking to pass the time. According to popular belief, **mole** (as well as many of Puebla's other most esteemed recipes) originated in the nunneries, the result of sisters hoping to please their superiors. Prepared from a slew of ingredients as seemingly contradictory as chocolate, ancho chiles, peanuts, raisins, and sesame seeds, each

(ALLEY) DIEGO GRANDI/ALAMY, (CAMOTES) EYE UBIQUITOUS/ALAMY, (MOLE) ADAM WISEMAN

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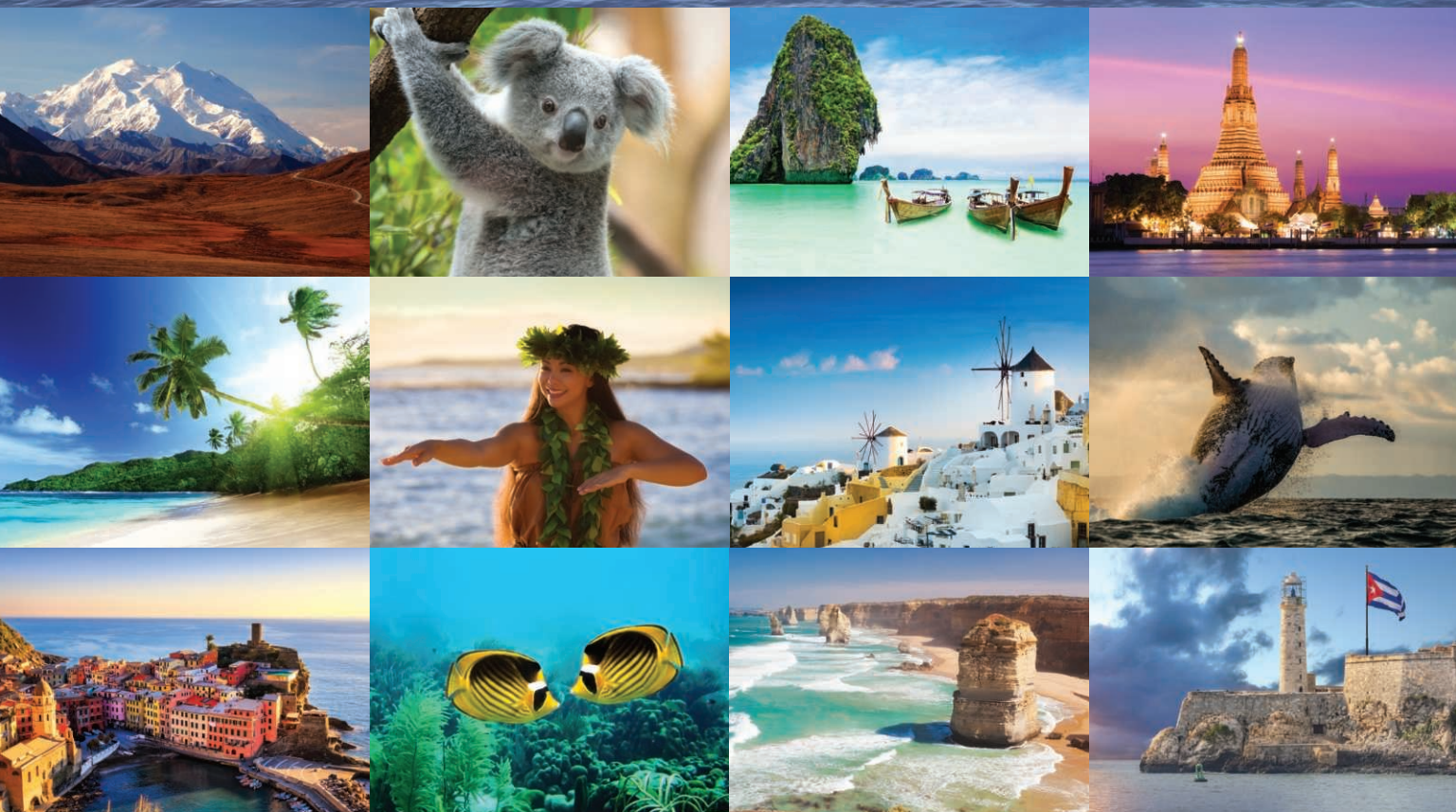
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Local Flavor

version of mole is a chef's treasured secret. Taste some of the city's finest at **El Mural de los Poblanos** (16 de Septiembre 506). Offering traditional mole atop turkey or chicken (plus many other dishes), the buzzy eatery also excels at variations such as *pipián verde*, a green mole made with pumpkin seeds. "I ate some of the best enchiladas I've ever had at El Mural," says Hanna. "If you can't choose a favorite mole, order the restaurant's mix-to-taste option with three flavors."

PATRIOTIC PLATE

Red, white, and green, **chiles en nogada** resembles the Mexican flag and reigns as the country's most nationalistic dish. Typically a seasonal offering, it begins to appear in restaurants in July, coinciding with the start of walnut season, and lasts until at least September 16, Mexican Independence Day. Comprising a poblano pepper filled with *picadillo* (minced meat, which often includes dried fruit), the dish is then smothered with creamy walnut sauce and topped with a sprinkle of pomegranate seeds and parsley. Sample a family recipe dating back generations at **Casareyna** (Privada 2 Oriente 1007), located in a historic building and widely considered one of the best places to eat in all of Mexico. You can also learn to cook *chiles en nogada* yourself at the **Rosewood Puebla** hotel, which offers a variety of set and bespoke culinary classes.



Puebla pride: *Chiles en nogada*.

PALATE PLEASERS

Our picks for a tasteful visit.



Delicious digs: Premier King accommodations at Rosewood Puebla and (inset) artisan pottery from Uriarte Talavera.



STAY

Culinary pursuits at the 78-room **Rosewood Puebla** include chef-led market strolls and Mexican wine and tequila tastings. At the hotel's four culinary venues, Veracruz-born chef Jonathan Alvarado Jiménez sources locally, offering Mexican recipes with an international touch learned during his tenures at Mexico City's Pujol and abroad. Nightcaps come in the form of **premium mezcals** at Bar Los Lavaderos and meticulously made margaritas paired with views of Puebla and its surrounding volcanoes at the Rooftop Bar. *Doubles from \$250; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a 50-minute massage for up to two guests per room.*

EXPLORE

Artisans of Leisure's ten-day culinary-themed tour serves up the finest flavors from three of Mexico's premier gastronomic centers. On the menu: Visit a **chocolate workshop** and mezcal distillery in Oaxaca, learn to perfect mole poblano and *chiles en nogada* in Puebla, and study the secrets behind indigenous cuisine dating to the pre-Hispanic era in Mexico City. *Departures: Any day through December 31, 2019; from \$9,860.*

Your travel advisor can work with one of Virtuoso's on-site tour connections, **Journey Mexico**, to craft a private Puebla journey tailored to your interests. Recommended insider experiences range from cooking classes at Meson Sacristía de la Compañía and **ceramic hand-painting workshops** at Uriarte Talavera to expert-led looks at Museo Internacional del Barroco and the nearby Great Pyramid of Cholula. **VI**

(CHILES EN NOGADA) ADAM WISEMAN, (POTTERY) RSDPHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY

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Walk this way: There's plenty afoot in Santiago, Chile.

Stepping Out

No longer in the shadow of her South American sisters, Santiago holds her own with pretty parks, impressive museums, diverse dining, and buzzy barrios made for strolling.

By Anita Carmin

ASK MOST TRAVELERS to name a South American city, and chances are, they'll choose Buenos Aires or Rio de Janeiro. True, those metropolises have long reigned as the continent's superstars, but Chile's capital is now grabbing her fair share of the spotlight, as I learned during a recent visit. "Santiago today is a flamboyant city with a sparkling atmosphere and new buildings and restaurants," says Andrés Garrido, a local architect and guide with Bespoke Journeys by Sportstour, a Virtuoso on-site connection in the country. As we stroll through Parque Bicentenario, an expansive beautification project and urban playground along the banks of the Mapocho River, Garrido offers up myriad examples of **Santiago's renaissance and social transformation** in the nearly three decades following the end of Chile's military dictatorship, led by General Augusto Pinochet.

It quickly becomes clear that Garrido's "action-packed city" is no longer the plain-Jane sister, merely a short cruise stop or a layover for other South American treasures – it's a place that demands a longer stay and a closer look. And while it's important to see the biggies (La Moneda Palace, the Chilean Museum of Pre-Columbian Art, and the Costanera Center, South America's tallest skyscraper, among them), Santiago-based Virtuoso travel advisor Rosario Fernandez encourages visitors to go beyond the city center and walk the streets of her **three favorite barrios** to get a true sense of how her hometown shines. "In any destination," she stresses, "it's important to do what the locals do."



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Apr 30	10	Europe	Vienna Roundtrip	<i>Crystal Mozart</i>	\$4,470

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Urban Renewal

LASTARRIA HIPSTER HAVEN

A buzzing residential barrio with cobblestoned streets, belle époque-style architecture, and a trendy vibe, Lastarria attracts creative types and is a popular area for expats. “Head straight to **José Victorino Lastarria**, a short street with lots of quality restaurants, coffee shops, and bars,” says Fernandez. “Nearby, one of my favorite places to eat is **José Ramón 277** (*José Ramón Gutiérrez 277*), which serves excellent Chilean sandwiches and craft beers.” It’s the ideal spot to grab a bite before hitting **Cine Arte El Biógrafo** (*José Victorino Lastarria 181*), a cinema that shows indie and art-house films.

Both Fernandez and Garrido also suggest a visit to the **Centre Gabriela Mistral** (*Libertador Bernardo O’Higgins 227*). Named for the first Latin American

to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, the cultural and performing-arts center offers rotating free-admission art exhibits. And should you find yourself in Lastarria from Thursday through Sunday, be sure to visit the antiques and used-book fair in the Plaza Mulato Gil de Castro, Fernandez says.

Happy hour finds residents at “the hidden café.” Located on a dead-end street, **Café Escondido** (*Rosal 346*) is the preferred spot to nosh on cheese empanadas and sip pisco sours alfresco while people-watching.

BELLAVISTA BRING ON THE NIGHT

A bohemian barrio of colorful houses and arresting graffiti (some of it commissioned by home and business owners), Bellavista sits below Santiago’s blindingly

white Virgin Mary statue perched atop San Cristóbal Hill. A favorite of artists and intellectuals, the neighborhood is home to quirky **La Chascona** (*Fernando Márquez de la Plata 0192*), the former house of beloved Nobel Prize-winning poet Pablo Neruda, built as a secret hideaway for his mistress, Matilde Urrutia.

“Bellavista is definitely the place to go out when you’re in Santiago,” says Fernandez. “It’s full of bars and restaurants, but also full of culture. For a fun Friday night with friends, I frequently visit **Jardín Mallinkrodt** (*Mallinkrodt 170*), an inviting open space with food trucks that change every few weeks.” Theater lovers should check out **Teatro Mori Bellavista** (*Constitución 183*). “It always has very good plays with exceptional actors,” Fernandez explains. “It’s the cultural cornerstone of this barrio.”

TIP “The newly refurbished rooms at **The Ritz-Carlton, Santiago** are spectacular. All have Chilean touches in their decor, including handcrafted items inspired by local culture. The hotel’s Estró restaurant has an **extensive wine cellar** and an outdoor terrace for summer dining.” – *Rosario Fernandez, Virtuoso travel advisor, Santiago*



Clockwise from left: La Chascona, former hideaway of poet Pablo Neruda; street art in Bellavista; and reason to relax at The Ritz-Carlton, Santiago.

(LA CHASCONA) YADID LEVY/OFFSET; (STREET ART) JORDAN BANKS/SIME/ESTOCK PHOTO

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Location: Grand Velas Los Cabos



From top: Room 09's Buscando a Nemo and W Santiago's Whiskey Blue nightclub.

Things really start to heat up at 11 PM and don't stop until 4 AM, when the bars close. Among the city's trendiest watering holes: rooftop **Room 09** (within *Restaurante 040*; *Antonia López de Bello 40*), Chile's first speakeasy. "It has a very cool ambience and great drinks," says Fernandez, her preference being the *Buscando a Nemo* ("Finding Nemo"), a vodka-based cocktail served with fresh berries in a fish-shaped glass.

On weekends, Bellavista's **Pío Nono market** (*Calle Pío Nono*) is a good place to shop for **lapis lazuli**, the vivid-blue gemstone found mainly in Chile and Afghanistan.

BARRIO ITALIA LA DOLCE VITA

"Santiago is a city full of nooks and crannies," Garrido notes. Nowhere is this more obvious than in eclectic, off-the-beaten-track Barrio Italia, where many small alleys branch off the main drag, **Avenida Italia**. Each offers tiny boutique stores selling everything from vintage typewriters and designer housewares to colorful, Chilean-made shoes. Located in an old restored house, **Café de la Candelaria** (*Avenida Italia 1449*) is Fernandez's pick for weekend brunch. Come dinnertime, she points meat lovers to **El Camino** (*Avenida Italia 1034*), "a Texas-style restaurant serving the best steaks in the city." For live jazz and blues, visit **The Jazz Corner** (*Santa Isabel 451*), owned by well-known Chilean jazz *trompetista* Cristián Cuturrufo.

CAPITAL IDEAS

How to spend more time in Santiago.

SAIL

Begin or end a voyage with an extended visit to Santiago. **Viking Ocean Cruises** explores South America and the **Chilean fjords** on 18-day sailings between Santiago (Valparaíso) and Buenos Aires (or the reverse) aboard the new 930-passenger *Viking Jupiter*. *Departures: December 4 and 21, 2019; from \$7,299.*

STAY

Located in the tony El Golf neighborhood, within walking distance of chic boutiques and restaurants, **The Ritz-Carlton, Santiago's** 205 rooms include a swanky Presidential Suite on the 14th floor. Also highly suggested: the rooftop spa, with an indoor swimming pool that sparkles beneath a glass cupola. The hotel's bar features an exclusive **pisco menu**, while Estró restaurant focuses on farm-to-table Chilean cuisine. *Doubles from \$349; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily, a \$100 dining credit, and a bottle of local wine.*

Floor-to-ceiling windows frame craggy Andes peaks in El Golf's 196-room **W Santiago**. Come

evening, **Whiskey Blue** nightclub attracts soigné, see-and-be-seen locals, as does NoSo, serving signature Burgundian dishes from restaurateur Jean-Paul Bondoux. *Doubles from \$295; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

The classy Las Condes neighborhood is home to the 310-room **Hotel Santiago**, which, following an extensive renovation, will debut as the **Mandarin Oriental, Santiago** in January 2019. Chill out in the **renovated spa** overlooking the hotel's pool, waterfall, and newly redesigned gardens. *Doubles from \$231; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily, a \$100 dining credit, and a special VIP amenity.*

EXPLORE

Your travel advisor can work with **Bespoke Journeys by Sportstour** to craft customized itineraries in Santiago and throughout Chile. Must-do capital excursions include **architectural tours**, dinner in a local's home in the Lastarria neighborhood, and shopping for antiques in Barrio Italia. **VT**





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WHERE TO TRAVEL IN 2019

OUR ANNUAL LIST OF GO-TO PLACES FOR THE NEW YEAR.

BY SUSAN HANSON

Pack your bags for Europe's Green Capital, the "Australian Galápagos," and Puerto Rico 2.0. They all made the cut for our list of where to point your compass in the year ahead. We tapped Virtuoso's in-the-know travel advisors to get their top picks for next year's hot spots, big calendar happenings, and where your visit can lend a helping hand. They came back with an inspiring mix of cultural centers, rarely touristed lands, and a few surprises (the "anti-Dubai," anyone?), plus some familiar places to see in fresh ways. Here's to a year of happy trails.





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THE GRAND CANYON

THE NATIONAL PARK HITS THE CENTURY MARK.

WHY GO NOW

President Theodore Roosevelt, upon declaring the Grand Canyon a U.S. national monument in 1908, implored his fellow citizens to “do nothing to mar its grandeur, sublimity and loveliness.” Fortunately, they heeded his advice, officially granting national park protection to the **2-billion-year-old gorge** on February 26, 1919. Virtuoso travel advisor Caroline Wood of Bozeman, Montana, calls the UNESCO-designated site “one of the most beautiful, magical places on the planet,” and with **Native American Heritage Days**, centennial celebrations, and other special events on tap throughout next year, it’s highly recommended that travelers plan well in advance. **WHAT YOU’LL LOVE:** Wood says there’s so much to explore around this 277-mile-long expanse that “most people barely scratch the surface.” To truly delve into the destination, she suggests a **multiday rafting trip**, which lets travelers “leave the world behind and easily access waterfalls and the turquoise waters of the Little Colorado River and Havasu Creek.”

WHEN YOU GO

EXPLORE: Local experts, tribal members, and historical “characters” add a centennial touch to 2019 Grand Canyon tours from **Austin Adventures**. One to consider: a five-day, **family-focused trip** that includes a visit to the Native American village of Supai and a gift-filled day pack for each child under 12. *Departure: Multiple dates, March 14 to September 1, 2019; from \$2,898, including park permit and land fees.*

PUERTO RICO

GET BACK ON ISLAND TIME.

WHY GO NOW

The sign says it all: Residents of the town of Humacao have replaced their once infamous “SOS” message, which went viral after 2017’s Hurricane Maria, with a hopeful **“Bienvenidos!”** As the U.S. territory continues to welcome visitors back, tourism is proving a vital force in spurring its recovery, says Stephen Adair, a Dallas-based Virtuoso advisor. Adair, who spent his teens living in the Cayman Islands, calls Puerto Rico one of his favorite vacation spots and encourages travelers to visit soon because, quite simply, **“they need our support.”**

Inexpensive airfares to the capital of San Juan, more cruise-ship calls than ever, and refurbishments at hotels such as Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve add even more impetus to go in 2019. **WHAT YOU’LL LOVE:** Old San Juan quickly got its groove back, and Adair notes that its cobblestoned streets and leafy plazas are as lively as ever – and (bonus) slightly less crowded. The Santurce Farmers’ Market turns the Condado neighborhood into a giant block party on the weekends. Beyond-the-capital pursuits range from treks in **El Yunque** – the only tropical rain forest in the U.S. – to a paddle through Vieques Island’s bioluminescent Mosquito Bay.

STAR POWER: Astronomy geeks will want to visit **Arecibo Observatory**, home to the world’s second-largest single-dish radio telescope, which takes up 20 acres; the refurbished visitor center offers VIP tours.

WHEN YOU GO

STAY: After a \$60 million renovation, **The St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort, Puerto Rico** reopens in December with a totally new look. A white-and-blue color scheme and custom furnishings now adorn 139 light-filled guest rooms in the hotel, which also transformed its spa and poolside restaurant. One amenity that hasn’t changed: its two-mile stretch of **private white-sand beach**.

Contact your advisor for pricing; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

CRUISE: Following its December debut, the 2,900-passenger *Celebrity Edge* stops in Puerto Rico during an eight-day Caribbean island hop round-trip from Fort Lauderdale. The first of **Celebrity Cruises’ Edge**-class ships features a fresh, **outward-facing design** that connects its guests with the Caribbean like never before. “The *Edge* is truly a work of art, and, along with San Juan, it’s one of my favorite things for 2019,” says Adair. *Departures: February 10 and 24, 2019; from \$1,399.*





MATERA

ITALY'S "SUBTERRANEAN CITY" IS ON THE RISE.

WHY GO NOW

In southern Italy's Basilicata region, one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities is about to become the newest **European Capital of Culture**. Calgary, Canada-based Virtuoso advisor Andrew De Angelis, who grew up in Italy, says that "although many artisans have left the larger cities, in Matera those traditions are still alive. It's the genuine Italy travelers crave." Look for tiny *botteghe* ("workshops") displaying ceramics and colorfully painted *cucù*, animal-shaped whistles made of the local terra-cotta. **WHAT YOU'LL LOVE:** UNESCO calls Matera's *sassi* "the most outstanding, intact example of a troglodyte settlement in the Mediterranean." In these **ancient neighborhoods** set in the oldest part of the city, more than a thousand houses, churches, shops, and *botteghe* are built into natural limestone caves around the Murgia plateau, first occupied in the Paleolithic era. De Angelis loves walking Matera's narrow streets at night, when the city's cave dwellings take on an ethereal quality.

WHEN YOU GO

EXPLORE: Your advisor can work with **Arno Travel**, one of Virtuoso's on-site tour providers in the country, to design a bespoke journey through Basilicata and nearby Puglia that includes time in Matera. Hike the city's church-topped Mount Errone; tour the *sassi* and the Crypt of the Original Sin, filled with **Biblical frescoes** dating to the eighth century; and visit ceramic workshops with a private guide.



LIMA

A GREGARIOUS HOST FOR THE PAN AMERICAN GAMES.

WHY GO NOW

A former pass-through for travelers on their way to Cuzco and Machu Picchu, Lima is “a city transformed,” says Virtuoso advisor Natasha Rhodes, from Calgary. Peru’s capital is set to host athletes from 41 nations for the **2019 Pan Am Games**, July 26 through August 11; with concurrent Fiestas Patrias (national holiday celebrations) slated for July 28 and 29, advanced planning, Rhodes says, is essential. **WHAT YOU’LL LOVE:** Lima has become the epicenter of South America’s food scene, boasting bustling markets and a number of the **world’s top tables**, including Central and Maido (numbers 6 and 7 on 2018’s World’s 50 Best Restaurants list). A stroll along its *malecón* offers lush parks, Pacific views, and great people-watching. Just off the coast lie the Palomino Islands, where you can swim with sea lions and snap selfies with Humboldt penguins and Peruvian boobies.

WHEN YOU GO

EXPLORE: Your travel advisor can work with one of Virtuoso’s on-site tour providers in Peru, **Metropolitan Touring**, to include the Pan Am Games in a tailor-made visit to Lima and beyond. While in the capital, consider a foodie-led market stroll in the San Isidro district, a visit to historic **Plaza Mayor** (the city’s birthplace and central square), and a private pisco sour tasting.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

LESS-EXPLORED LANDS DOWN UNDER YIELD HEARTY REDS AND HOPPING WILDLIFE.

WHY GO NOW

Oenophiles are catching on to **Adelaide**, the newest member of the elite Great Wine Capitals of the World network. The cosmopolitan city is a gateway to 18 different wine regions, which produce some 80 percent of Australia’s premium wines. Yet for all its cellar doors and stellar cuisine, this is *not* Sydney or Melbourne. “Adelaide is a much smaller and more intimate city than its ‘big sisters,’” says Janet McLaughlin. The Virtuoso advisor, who hails from Cincinnati, Ohio, also recommends South Australia for active adventurers and wildlife lovers, comparing biodiverse **Kangaroo Island** to the Galápagos. With tourism on an upward trajectory, however, she emphasizes visiting as soon as possible. **WHAT YOU’LL LOVE:** For McLaughlin, the **Barossa Valley** is a no-brainer: “Within an hour-and-a-half drive, you’ll hit 200 wineries.” One of the coolest is d’Arenberg Cube, a cellar-cum-wine school, restaurant, and interactive museum in McLaren Vale modeled after a Rubik’s Cube. Visitors find namesake roos and **Remarkable Rocks** on Kangaroo Island, while bushwalks reveal stunning gorges and sacred Aboriginal artwork in Ikara-Flinders Ranges National Park. **IN THE MARKET:** McLaughlin loves browsing the **Barossa Farmers’ Market** for its artisan products and cultural immersion: “This is a true community market, so you really feel like a local.”



(LIMA) ROUSSEL PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY.
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA) HEMIS/ALAMY

WHEN YOU GO

STAY: Guests of Kangaroo Island's 21-suite **Southern Ocean Lodge** can join a **naturalist guide** to commune with the sea-lion colony at Seal Bay. It's one of many signature experiences offered during an all-inclusive stay at the lodge, which occupies a clifftop perch along the

island's rugged southwest coast. *Doubles from \$890 per person; Virtuoso travelers receive a \$50 spa credit and a \$50 activity credit.*

CRUISE: **Princess Cruises'** five-day voyage between Melbourne and Adelaide (or the reverse) offers the chance to visit Kangaroo Island's

sea lions, go **cage-diving with sharks** in Port Lincoln, and meet fairy penguins on Phillip Island. Things get cosmic in the evenings with Science Channel-designed stargazing on the top deck of the 2,600-passenger *Golden Princess*. *Departures: October 27 and November 19, 2019; from \$639.*

OSLO

NORWAY'S CAPITAL PROVES THAT BEING GREEN IS GOLDEN.

WHY GO NOW

Oslo is a role model for how cities can exist in harmony with their environment. More than 20 percent of the metropolis is dedicated to **parks and green spaces**, for example, and Virtuoso advisor Leighton Schembri of Sydney, Australia, is particularly impressed by its public transportation system: "The city bikes make it so easy to get around," he says. Schembri visited during a recent cruise and found the thousand-year-old city, chosen as 2019's **European Green Capital**, to be "so alive, the streets all lined with flowers." **WHAT YOU'LL LOVE:** An **Oslo Pass** (around \$50) offers 24 hours of unlimited public transport, including ferries to the Oslofjord islands, each of which has its own character. Flash it for free admission to the Viking Ship and Munch museums, plus many more. Slottsparken, which surrounds the Royal Palace, makes for a romantic stroll or picnic by a duck-filled pond. You'll also find a lively vibe around Grünerløkka, Oslo's hipster hood, known for its street art. **HIGH NOTE:** Walk up the **Oslo Opera House's** angled, pedestrian-friendly roof to admire its views of Oslofjord and the surrounding forests.



WHEN YOU GO

STAY: **Hotel Continental Oslo** tops off a remodel of all its 153 rooms this December with a new two-story Continental Suite; highlights include a private fitness area and views over Oslofjord from one of its two terraces. The hotel's lobby bar and reception sport a new look, and, beginning in early 2019, a DJ will spin in **Bar Boman**.

Doubles from \$400; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.

CRUISE: Schembri urges travelers to be on deck as the new 2,666-passenger *Nieuw Statendam* arrives in Norway's capital: "Cruising into Oslo is one of the most amazing, awe-inspiring

travel experiences I've ever had," he says. A 14-day, round-trip-from-Amsterdam sailing aboard **Holland America Line's** latest and greatest vessel allows ample time for exploring the fjord-lined coast and lip-syncing to live bands in the ship's lively **Rolling Stone Rock Room**. *Departure: July 21, 2019; from \$3,099.*



TETIAROA

AN ISLAND NAMED DESIRE

Pristine and untouched, the atoll of Tetiaroa is renowned for its beauty and most famous for its legendary owner, Marlon Brando. The Brando is the only development on the island, combining luxury and environmental sustainability in one of the finest eco-friendly resorts in the world. Step barefoot into your imagination and experience a private and pristine South Pacific paradise.

6 day/5 night all-inclusive luxury land packages start at \$9,500 per person. Based on one-bedroom pool villa stay for two, inclusive of VIP welcome, inter-island air, dayroom in Tahiti, and airport lounge access.

Contact your Virtuoso Travel Advisor to book.





OMAN

TRADITIONAL ADVENTURES IN A STUNNING SULTANATE BY THE SEA.

WHY GO NOW

Though it's just a two-hour drive from the glitz of the United Arab Emirates' largest city, this Persian Gulf country has been dubbed "the anti-Dubai" by the *Washington Post*. "**Oman's raw beauty** is a 'wow' experience in itself," says Kate Corey, a Virtuoso advisor from Chicago. "You trade Dubai's skyscrapers

for breathtaking mountains and serene, emerald-green waters. Instead of Bentleys and Ferraris, you pause for **camel crossings**." The former frankincense powerhouse takes pride in its past with a clear eye toward the future, including a model universal health-care system. **WHAT YOU'LL LOVE:** In the country's capital of Muscat, Muttrah Souq and the

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque, which can accommodate 20,000 worshippers, are must-dos. Hike to traditional villages in Wadi Tiwi, or scale 9,872-foot Jebel Shams for a peek into Wadi Ghul, the "Grand Canyon of Arabia." Oman's centuries-old forts and castles include the UNESCO-designated Bahla Fort; in the south, Salalah offers access to two additional World Heritage sites: the ancient city of Al-Baleed and the nearby **Land of Frankincense**, with its fragrant trees and the remains of a caravan oasis. **ADDED PERK:** Omani coffee, or *qahwa*, is more than just a strong, aromatic brew made with cardamom and served with dates. The drink is central to a **culture of hospitality**, where visitors are frequently invited into local homes.

WHEN YOU GO

STAY: Corey calls **Six Senses**

Ziggy Bay one of her "secret ingredients" for mixing up a Middle Eastern journey. Designed in the spirit of an Omani village, the 82-room resort provides a true sense of place, with bedouin-style meals and a **sunset dhow cruise** along the Musandam fjords. Make a lofty arrival via paraglider from the top of Ziggy Mountain. *Doubles from \$1,150; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a 60-minute signature spa treatment for two. Sunset cruises from \$78. Paragliding experience, \$156.*

CRUISE: Wander Muttrah Souq before watching a movie on the outdoor screen aboard the 2,501-passenger *Jewel of the Seas*. **Royal Caribbean International's** eight-day Oman and UAE cruise ventures round-trip from Dubai and includes the line's maiden call on **Sir Bani Yas Island**, home of 10,000 free-roaming creatures at the Arabian Wildlife Park. *Departures: December 16 and 30, 2019; from \$584.*



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EGYPT

A BLAST FROM THE PAST.

WHY GO NOW

"Egypt is back," says Long Beach, California-based Virtuoso advisor John Oberacker, referring to the country's resurgence after regional safety concerns kept many travelers from visiting in recent years. Adding to the excitement: the September 2018 discovery of a **2,000-year-old sphinx** at Kom Ombo near Aswan, where, just two months earlier, two sandstone reliefs of King Ptolemy V were unearthed. Following his own visit, Oberacker counsels that the lower fares and thinner crowds currently found in Egypt won't last, as travel continues to rebound: "The long lines *will* return." **WHAT YOU'LL LOVE:** The 4,300-year-old Tomb of Mehu near Giza opened to the public for the first time this fall, revealing some of Egypt's finest wall paintings. Oberacker also highly recommends a **hot-air balloon flight** over the Valley of the Kings. "It's a moving experience," he says.

WHEN YOU GO

EXPLORE: Egyptologist guides and a professional photo instructor join **Lindblad Expeditions** for a 13-day adventure that hits all the hot spots, from Giza's Sphinx to Karnak's temple complex and the Nubian monuments of Abu Simbel. In-country flights via chartered aircraft are included, as is a **six-night Nile cruise** aboard the 42-passenger *Oberoi Philae*. *Departures: Multiple dates, January 20 to December 8, 2019; from \$8,480.*

LAOS

EXPERIENCE THE BEAUTY OF THIS RARELY VISITED BUDDHIST NATION.

WHY GO NOW

Southeast Asia's only landlocked country hasn't received as much attention as its more famous neighbors – and that's a good thing. Laos' relative isolation has kept it **unspoiled and inexpensive**, says Phoenix-based Virtuoso advisor Gena Stoll, who adds that its people "are some of the kindest and most welcoming I've ever come across." Make plans to visit soon, she stresses, as they'll be greeting quite a few more visitors in the near future, with some estimates predicting an increase of more than 50 percent by 2020. **WHAT YOU'LL LOVE:** Some of Stoll's favorite memories are touring Luang Prabang's morning market, bicycling along the Mekong River, and visiting a rice farm. Additional draws include the hill-tribe villages of Luang Namtha, rare **Irrawaddy dolphins** in the Si Phan Don archipelago, and the Khmer ruins of Wat Phu, forebear of Angkor Wat.

WHEN YOU GO

EXPLORE: Experience Laos in living color on a number of fully customizable tours from **Remote Lands**. One to consider: a six-day journey across the country's northern region that features **jungle treks** in Pakbeng, a visit to the ancient capital of Vientiane, and a Mekong riverboat cruise to experience the golden temples of Luang Prabang. *Departures: Any day through December 31, 2019; from \$4,300. VT*



(EGYPT) SCULPIES/GETTY IMAGES; (LAOS) PRETO_PEROLA/GETTY IMAGES



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Big Shots

Travel advisors showcase inspiring moments around the world in these award-winning images from Virtuoso's annual competition.



"Out of Africa"

Lake Manyara, Tanzania

Tony Zhao

"On safari early one morning, these zebras were drinking from the lake. Suddenly, they started to run as the sun rose, and the reflection across the water was beautiful."

"Suspended in Time"
Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia
Jacqueline Xerri



"Days Gone By"
Havana, Cuba
Nancy Kimbrough

"We were lucky enough to meet and photograph two lovely prima ballerinas from the Cuban National Ballet. We spent an incredible morning in a beautiful, pre-Castro house and got to know these talented ladies."

"Downward-Facing Wolf"
Bardu, Norway
Tarquin Millington-Drake



"Spools of Silk Thread"
Inle Lake, Myanmar
David Ourisman

"Any tour of Inle Lake should include a visit by longboat to the small villages at its edges. Each practices its own craft; in one village, we visited a shop that specializes in silk thread weavings. These vibrantly colored spools caught my eye and my imagination."

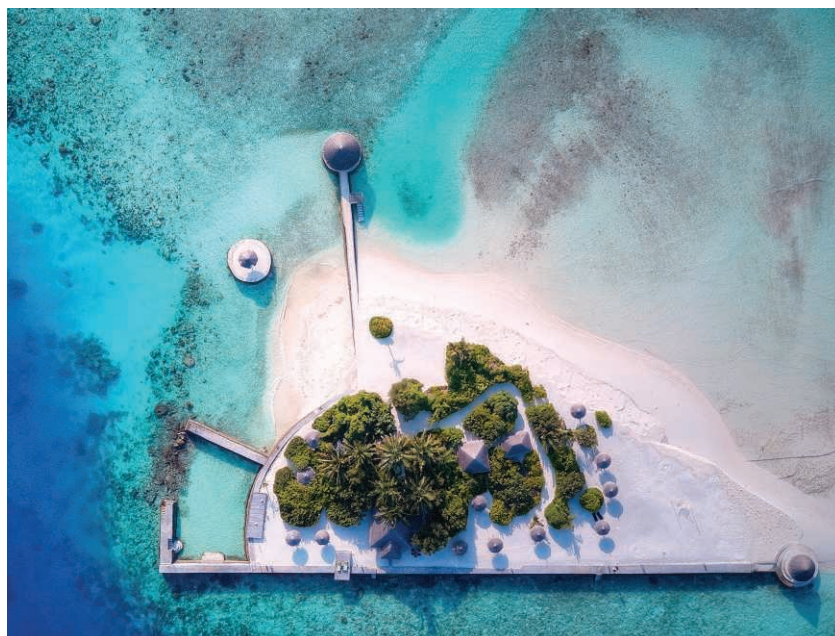


"Turkey by Hot-Air Balloon"
Cappadocia, Turkey
Abby Michaud



"98 Percent"
Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda
Michael Distler

"Gorillas share approximately 98 percent of our DNA, and there's a soulful connection in their eyes. Following a several-hour trek to the Sabyinyo group of mountain gorillas, I took this photo on the border of a bamboo forest."



"The Only Way to See the Maldives"
Maldives
Chinmoy Lad

"The major attraction of the Maldives is the marine life below the surface, but the second most popular is seeing these tiny islands from the air. Most only get a glimpse of this view during a seaplane ride, but when you have a drone, anything is possible ..."

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“Church under the Milky Way”
Lake Tekapo, New Zealand
Bo Liang

“I took this photo at midnight, after waiting two hours for the clouds to disappear. The splendid scene of the Milky Way appeared just like this.”



“On the Inside Looking Out”
Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Deborah Trevino

“I love the Milwaukee Art Museum’s architecture and design by Santiago Calatrava. When it’s open, the cantilevered roof lets in light and lakefront views.”



“Mindfulness”
Bagan, Myanmar
Thomas Roost



“Cold Morning”
Lofoten Islands, Norway
Christy Campbell 

VIRTUOSO TRAVELER EXCLUSIVE OFFERS



• AT HOME IN PARIS

Tucked away on the exclusive Left Bank, with the refined and welcoming ambience of a dear friend's residence, **Esprit Saint Germain** welcomes guests as if they were family to the exquisite 28 rooms and guest lounges behind its eighteenth-century facade. Discover the nearby treasures of Paris, from Notre-Dame Cathedral and Saint-Sulpice to the Louvre and the Musée d'Orsay, from the Jardin du Luxembourg to myriad art and antique galleries. Then, after a long day of sightseeing and shopping, retire to the cozy lounge for a complimentary cocktail next to the roaring fireplace. Families particularly enjoy the connecting rooms, a highly sought-after amenity in the city and rare for a hotel of this size.

Virtuoso rates from **EUR 1,260** per room for four nights. Available until March 31, 2019. Virtuoso exclusive experience includes choice of red or white wine upon arrival, with assorted French delicacies; fresh fruit and flowers daily; complimentary in-room minibar; breakfast daily; a room upgrade, if available; early check-in and late checkout, if available; and more.



• A HUSH-HUSH HIDEAWAY

The Palms Turks & Caicos is a secret you're sure to savor – and a dreamy spot you'll wish to return to time and again. Mum's the word, though, about just how much you fell in love with beautiful Grace Bay Beach, as well as the resort's ocean-view suites with hand-tufted bedding, the serpentine infinity pool, and the incredible spa with East- and West-inspired rituals for body and mind. Try the exclusive Zareeba treatment, an indigenous herbal steam cleansing and meditative ritual using precious local queen conch shells. Dine on dishes designed and overseen by an exemplary executive chef who works magic with land and sea favorites – think coconut-marinated conch ceviche and 21-day aged steaks. (Ask about the private dining options in the magnificent outdoor dining room.) Relax into the rhythms of the Caribbean and soak up every bit of pampering this flawless beach resort offers.

Connect with your Virtuoso travel advisor for rates. Available through 2019. Virtuoso exclusive amenities include a \$100 resort credit; breakfast daily; a room upgrade (excludes upgrades from Junior Suites), if available; early check-in and late checkout, if available; and more.



• CARIBBEAN CHIC

Presiding over the beloved Long Bay Beach, **The Shore Club Turks and Caicos** is an alluring blend of relaxation and adventure just minutes from Providenciales' town center. Families find respite here in opulent suites, with butler service on penthouse bookings. Romantics are wooed by spacious rooms with large soaking tubs and rainfall showers, and balconies framing expansive ocean views. Spread out in a villa, with three to six bedrooms, a pool, a dedicated housekeeper, and a personal concierge. Venture out to the serene Dune spa, four swimming pools, and three restaurants. Enjoy afternoon tea in the tropical garden, then dine by candlelight at SUI-REN, a take on Peruvian and Japanese cuisine that is the first restaurant featuring this fusion in the islands. Days are as full as you wish, with tennis, a lap pool, a Kids Club, complimentary bikes, and nonmotorized water-sports equipment.

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FOLLOW THE LEADER

A fresh look at our favorite places. Here, peak adventure in a remote corner of the world.

ALTAI MOUNTAINS, RUSSIA

Be There: Intrepid travelers can journey through the Altai Mountains on a bespoke 11-day trip to Russia, Mongolia, and China with **Remote Lands**. Other highlights on the off-the-beaten-path adventure include **Silk Road stops** and yurt overnights in the Gobi. *Departures: Any day through 2019; from \$15,800.*

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