

THE TRAVELLER'S GUIDE TO INSPIRED PURSUITS

JULY | AUGUST 2014

# VIRTUOSO LIFE

AUSTRALIA | NEW ZEALAND EDITION



**THE WISH LIST**

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TRAVEL DREAMS***



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**Black and white and read all over:** A zeal (yes, that's what it's called) of Burchell's zebras splash away from a watering hole in Namibia's Etosha National Park. **PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEN JUDGE.**

(DUNES) JEN JUDGE (CARIBBEAN) INTERSECTION PHOTO. (NEW ZEALAND) SHAY YACOBINSKI/SHUTTERSTOCK

# SURVEY SAYS

FOR EIGHT YEARS, WE'VE debuted the results of our annual Virtuoso Travel Dreams Survey in the July issue of *Virtuoso Life*. And in that time, tens of thousands of readers have shared with us their dream destinations, trips of a lifetime, family holidays, romantic getaways, island retreats, and other globe-trotting aspirations.

The editors consider the survey results a playbook for the types of articles we need to feature – or not – in the magazine. But over time, we've evolved from focusing solely on the travel destinations and experiences that top the lists to also considering the travellers themselves. We're fascinated by your travels. In this issue, we even take an illustrated look at five different travel personalities – the classic traveller, the go-getter, the trendsetter, the connoisseur, and the relaxationist – and what trips make them tick (page 28).

Every one of you has a story – many stories – to tell, and the travellers featured in our pages are proof of the



power, perks, and privileges of working with a Virtuoso travel advisor.

You'll find loads of inspiration throughout this issue. Enjoy!

*Elaine Srnka*

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR  
esrnka@virtuoso.com

## IN YOUR WORDS

*Survey respondents tell us some of the reasons they like working with a Virtuoso travel advisor.*

● **FOR A PUSH IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION:**

"Antarctica is the perfect example of why I'm loyal to my Virtuoso advisor – she knows me better than I know myself. The relationship we've developed has been one of the most important of my life. Truly, I wouldn't have been adventurous enough to visit many of the life-changing destinations I've seen without her expertise and planning." – *Brenda Massingill*

● **TO SAVE THE DAY:** "We travelled to the Galápagos Islands, then hiked the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu. It was a great trip. But when we got to the start of the Inca Trail, there was a glitch in our porter arrangement. I called my advisor long distance at about 9 PM on her cell phone; she had shared her number with me 'just in case.' She straightened out the whole mess by 5 AM the next day. Without her help, the trip would have been ruined." – *Kathy Redd*

● **TO MAKE A GREAT TRIP EVEN GREATER:**

"We were taking a boat over to Caneel Bay on Saint John, and the hotel representative went around saying something to each party that we couldn't hear because of the wind. She told us that we had been upgraded four room categories. In our excitement, we turned to the people next to us and said, 'Isn't it great that they're upgrading everyone?' It was like asking if someone's pregnant who's not – the others hadn't been upgraded. WHOOPS! Just one of the numerous times our advisor has done a great job for us." – *Cathryn Buchanan*

# VIRTUOSO LIFE

AUSTRALIA | NEW ZEALAND EDITION

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## INTERNATIONAL EVENTS *Back from Berlin*

The German capital welcomed Virtuoso travel advisors from around the world for Virtuoso's Symposium. The meeting brings together more than 500 travel agency and other industry executives for a week of business sessions, networking, and immersion in the host city. Berlin is especially buzzworthy this year, as it's the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.



Clockwise from left: Virtuoso Symposium attendees take in fireworks over the Brandenburg Gate outside Hotel Adlon Kempinski, a Champagne display inside the hotel, and several Australian Virtuoso advisors mingle with other travel industry executives.

## YOUR SHOT *Photos from Your Travels*

**WHO:** Tonya Crone  
**WHERE:** Great Guana Cay, The Bahamas

**UPCOMING HOLIDAYS:**  
"My two-year-old daughter was rushing off down the dock to look for fish. I loved the texture of the dock juxtaposed with the colour of the sea."

**CAMERA USED:** Canon EOS Digital Rebel Xti.



Send your best holiday pictures to [editors@virtuoso.com](mailto:editors@virtuoso.com) for a chance to be featured in *Virtuoso Life*.

## VIRTUOSO.COM

### *In Your Own Backyard*

Whether you're looking for a far-flung holiday or one closer to home, check out Virtuoso.com for reviews and recommendations from fellow Virtuoso travellers, such as this one:

#### **THE BYRON AT BYRON RESORT AND SPA**

**"Upscale rustic.** Staff nice/attentive. Not ON beach. Bordered by rain forest. Walk five minutes to beautiful, uncrowded, flat, powdery beach. Locals. Rooms feel like tree house/industrial. Not gorgeous hotel experience, but magical/special. 8.5 on scale. ... Food/bar/spa/poolside service great. Shuttle takes you to city to shop, walk, dine in town." – *Laurey*



**"Upscale rustic"** in Byron Bay.


## STAY CONNECTED

### *Digital Edition*

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{ DESTINATIONS, TRENDS, CULTURE, AND STYLE }

# Passport

PASSPORT IS REPORTED BY: ELAINE GLUSAC AND FRAN GOLDEN



## NOW SURFACING

Pristine coral reefs have long drawn divers to **Fiji's 25-villa Laucala Island**. Beginning 1 July, the 3,200-acre private-island resort offers a deeper immersion in the marine world with the introduction of its **DeepFlight Super Falcon**, a two-passenger, winged mini-submarine that can descend nearly 122 metres. Driven by a trained pilot, the 007-worthy watercraft whisks guests off to explore schools of coral trout and angelfish, predatory sharks, and the vertical Great White Wall's soft coral carpet – all without clearing a snorkel, or even getting wet.

## FASHION-FORWARD

Three of Europe's top shopping destinations offer exclusive discounts and services for Virtuoso travellers.

WHAT'S NEW

### A CUT ABOVE IN MADRID



The flagship of Spain's only department store, Madrid's **El Corte Inglés** – or “The English Cut,” as in a suit – carries top Spanish designers such as Loewe and Purificación García, as well as new lines BDBA and Roberto Verino. Emerging designer Juanjo Oliva helms the sharp in-house label Elogy.



DON'T MISS

Lunch at the ninth floor's expansive **Gourmet Experience**, which features impressive city views and redefines your image of mall food halls with upscale restaurants that include a **jamón** (ham) bar, an oyster bar, Asian fusion from hometown hero chef David Muñoz, and more.



IN THE BAG

Virtuoso travellers receive a **glass of wine and a tapa** in the Gourmet Experience, two hours with a personal shopper, and a ten percent rewards card, plus a concierge will complete their tax refund forms.



### GALLERY-HOP IN PARIS



Macaron specialist Pierre Hermé Paris recently opened at the lauded **Galeries Lafayette**, serving sweet tooth in three different locations. Unsure of the trends? Catch one of the **by-reservation Friday-afternoon fashion shows** or visit the Designer's Space showcase under the Lafayette Dome for rotating seasonal collections.



**La Bordeauxthèque** – the world's **largest Bordeaux cellar**, with more than 1,500 different wines ranging from five bucks to five figures a pop.



Virtuoso clients are greeted with a complimentary glass of Moët & Chandon Champagne and enjoy **access to personal shoppers** and private lounges, along with a ten percent discount card.



### THE ENGLISH VILLAGE LOOK



More than 130 shops fill Oxfordshire's outdoor **Bicester Village**, about an hour northwest of London. New boutiques include Stella McCartney, Chloé, Kenzo, and Marc Jacobs.



Use the boutique assistants service to collect and compile your packages while you dine at **Busaba Eathai**, a modern Thai restaurant from the creators of Hakkasan, or **Jamie Oliver's Fabulous Feasts** for casual “baps,” aka sandwiches.



A **ten percent discount**, plus one MileagePlus mile for every pound spent – exclusively for Virtuoso travellers.



## FOOD & SPIRITS

### CHILL OUT ➔

The latest ice-cube trend at bars: infusions. Mexico's 67-room **Rosewood San Miguel de Allende** has gone as far as introducing a new cube menu of frozen fresh juices and herbal blends such as hibiscus-lime that intensify drink flavours as they melt. In Manhattan, negronis at **Cole's Greenwich Village** (118 Greenwich Avenue) melt aromatically with the addition of lavender-infused ice. And at Chicago's **Lush Wine & Spirits** (1412 W. Chicago Avenue), a citrus, whiskey, and ginger beer cocktail sports a maple-flavoured jumbo ice cube with a whole strawberry concealed in its centre.



### NEW CRUSH ON NAPA ➔

Your Napa Valley short list just got longer: In St. Helena, the new **HALL Wines' visitor centre** replaces an outmoded 1885 winery, showcasing a museum-worthy art collection in sleek, glass-walled rooms and a culinary centre for food-paired tastings (707/967-2626; www.hallwines.com). Opening 4 July, **B Cellars winery** relocates from Calistoga to the prestigious Oakville AVA, with outdoor terraces, a bocce court, and a demonstration kitchen for interactive pairings (707/709-8787; www.bcellars.com). Over in the Stags Leap district, the new **Odette Estate winery** encompasses 36 acres of vineyards overseen by winemaker Jeff Owens, former assistant at nearby CADE (707/224-7533; www.odetteestate.com).



HALL Winery

## Bon Voyage

### VINTAGE EUROPE

This spring, **SeaDream Yacht Club** has lined up four 7- to 12-day wine-focused voyages in Europe for its two yacht-like 112-passenger ships. The sailings pair onboard wine tastings and classes with winemaker dinners and vineyard visits to **learn to harvest and blend wine**. Of special note: The Lisbon-to-San Juan transatlantic itinerary kicks off with a dinner with the owners of Portugal's oldest table-wine producer, José Maria da Fonseca, and offers a wine education course with presentations and **blind tastings** – can you tell the difference between Krug and Cristal, Dom Pérignon and Taittinger's Comtes de Champagne? The course culminates with a (voluntary) exam to receive a SeaDream Wine Diploma.



Wined and dined: (clockwise from left): Portugal's José Maria da Fonseca winery, a SeaDream sommelier, and your home for the journey, SeaDream II.



# SHIP REVIEW: THE *INSPIRE*

**Tauck's newest and most innovative riverboat.**

**NEW SHIP**

*Inspire* is the first of

two Inspiration Class riverboats launched by Tauck this year. *Virtuoso Life* writers John and Sandra Nowlan joined the vessel on its maiden voyage through the Netherlands and Belgium, starting in Amsterdam and visiting such ports as Rotterdam, Antwerp, and Brussels. With a maximum of just 130 passengers, the ships carry 30 percent fewer guests than other riverboats their size – which means bigger rooms (22 measure 28 square metres) and more public space.

The elegant lobby leads to a cheery lounge with a piano that serves as a gathering place for relaxation and lectures. Another bar and observation lounge at the rear of the third deck becomes a **white-linen speciality steak house** in the evening, a first for Tauck. The lower deck's Compass Rose dining room serves breakfast and lunch buffets and, for dinner, a surprising variety of choices that might include roasted shiitake mushroom soup, sautéed escalope of foie gras, braised leg of Dutch lamb, and excellent fish.

All riverboats have less-expensive, waterline-level cabins with a small window at the top of the wall. But the *Inspire* (and its twin, *Savor*, which debuted in June) **revolutionises some**



1.



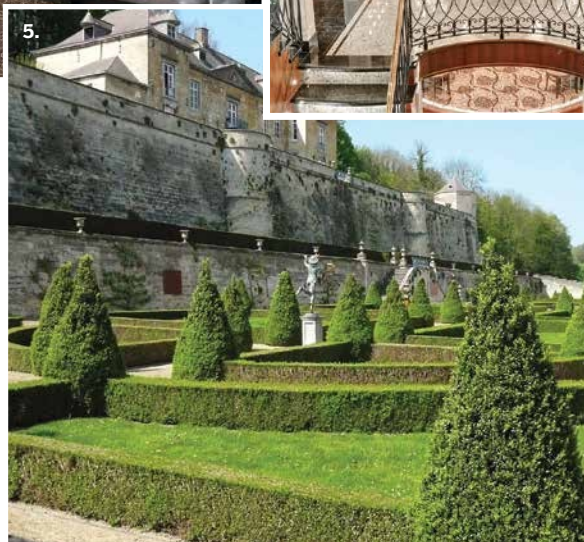
2.



3.



4.



5.

**of those bottom-deck rooms** by offering eight 23-square-metre Loft Cabins. A queen bed and large bathroom are enhanced by a walk-up sitting area facing an expansive wall of glass, where you can operate the drapes and middle window with the touch of a button. We loved sitting in the loft **watching the scenery and river swish by just centimetres below our eye line** – a design innovation we suspect other lines will be compelled to adopt.

On all its riverboats, Tauck has now evolved into an all-inclusive line, which means an open bar with excellent wines at lunch and dinner, excursions, and gratuities are covered. On one bus tour, Tauck even provided the

coins required for the pay restrooms!

Tauck staffs each of its ships with a cruise director and three full-time tour directors, and hires local guides for their specialised knowledge. On two occasions during our cruise, we enjoyed **private dining in historic settings**: a lunch in the caves of the

seventeenth-century

Château Neercanne, a UNESCO World Heritage site on the Belgian-Dutch border, and a dinner at the In Flanders Fields Museum at Ypres, scene of World War I's most devastating battles.

- 1. Tauck's new *Inspire*.
- 2. Arthur's restaurant.
- 3. A bottom-deck Loft Cabin.
- 4. The lobby.
- 5. Château Neercanne.

CABO SAN LUCAS

SAN JOSÉ DEL CABO

CABO PULMO

# Los CABO Sailing

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CABO DEL ESTE

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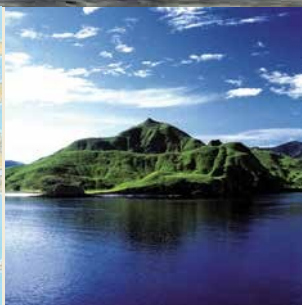
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THIS ISSUE: ROME

## ULTIMATE UPGRADE

*Inside our favourite splurge-worthy suites.*

In addition to three bedrooms, a full kitchen, and a private bartender for two hours daily, the 118-room Regina Hotel Baglioni's **Roman Penthouse** offers 360-degree views of Eternal City landmarks from the Colosseum to the Pantheon. The sprawling 560-square-metre suite features **several outdoor terraces**, including one with a heated Jacuzzi. Indoors, mirrors, marble, and hand-blown glass glamourise its classic design. Penthouse privileges extend beyond the confines; guests booking three or more nights receive a **private tour of the Sistine Chapel and Vatican Museums**.



Clockwise from top left: The Roman Penthouse's living room and terrace, and a World Tower bedroom at SLS Las Vegas.



## WHERE NEXT?

While other Vegas resorts channel Paris or Italy, the new **SLS Las Vegas Hotel & Casino** brings a bit of Beverly Hills glamour to the former Sahara casino this September. The sleek Philippe Starck-designed property on the north end of the Strip will be home to more than 1,613 guest rooms in three towers, fine-dining draws such as chef José Andrés' Bazaar Meat and sushi/robata restaurant Katsuya, and trendy retailer Fred Segal, set to spread out in a 929-square-metre shop.



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ISTANBUL

**IN YOUR WORDS:** "Great city-centre location along the Amstel. Very nice accommodation, excellent service, and exceptional dining at the Bord'Eau." – R.L.R.

Visit [www.virtuoso.com](http://www.virtuoso.com) for more hotel reviews from Virtuoso travellers.

# Skin Deep





Promising the clear complexion of Vermeer subjects, the 121-square-metre **Skins Institute** recently opened at Amsterdam's 111-room **De L'Europe**. In addition to detox facials and body treatments using organic products, the four-room spa features a fitness centre, steam bath, sauna, and, overlooking the Amstel River, a swimming pool.



De L'Europe's new river-view pool.

## KEYS TO THE CITY

Four hotels that know how to soup up suite amenities – with sports cars.

	THE DEALER	THE SUITE	HOT WHEELS
	<b>45 Park Lane.</b> London	The two-bedroom Penthouse Suite atop the Mayfair hotel, with a wraparound terrace overlooking London and Hyde Park.	<b>Drive a Rolls-Royce Wraith</b> down the Mall to Buckingham Palace or out to nearby country-house hotel Coworth Park for a polo lesson.
	<b>Four Seasons Resort Palm Beach</b>	Deluxe Oceanfront Two-Bedroom Suites, with two furnished balconies and plenty of space for entertaining friends.	Select from a range of cars, including <b>Lamborghinis, Audis, Porsches</b> , and more, for spins up the coast.
	<b>Terranea Resort,</b> Rancho Palos Verdes	One of two 167-square-metre Shearwater Suites, which overlook the ocean and feature pantries and full-size refrigerators perfect for families.	<b>Hop in a Lexus</b> for GPS-guided tours of the Palos Verdes Peninsula themed to romance, adventure, or shopping.
	<b>InterContinental Madrid</b>	Four classic Presidential Suites or the art deco-style Royal Suite.	Presidential Suite guests can <b>rev off in Porsche Boxsters</b> , while Royal Suite residents get a <b>Porsche 911</b> for day trips to the <i>campo</i> or down to Toledo.

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\*Fares are subject to increase 01OCT14. All fares are per person based on double occupancy for new bookings only and may be withdrawn at any time. Fare mentioned is based on Concierge Suite - E. Bonus Savings are based on published Full Brochure Fares; such fares may not have resulted in actual sales in all suite categories and do not include optional charges as detailed in the Guest Ticket Contract, which may be viewed, along with additional terms at [www.RSSC.com](http://www.RSSC.com). Free 1-Night Pre-Cruise Luxury Hotel Package applies to guests 1 and 2 only in Concierge Suites or higher, and is not available for new bookings made within 60 days of departure. Ships' Registry: Bahamas.

# Why I Travel

**Kica Saar knows life lessons come from memorable family holidays.**

INTERVIEWED BY DAVID HOCHMAN

**A**ustralia is grand, but the Saar family knows there's a big, gorgeous world out there. As a partner at a large international management consulting firm in Sydney, Tom Saar, 54, gets enough holiday time to explore the globe at leisure with his Brazilian-born wife, Kica, and their three young-adult children. Melbourne-based Virtuoso advisor Cher Roscoe makes their long-haul journeys worthwhile. Here, Kica, 53, shares lessons from a life well travelled.



**“ We travel to see how other people live,**

to learn about the history and culture of different countries, and to show our children how to be flexible – with routine, with what they eat, with the people they meet along the way. It's not just about incredible family experiences; we've become more sensitive global citizens.

**My sister was living in Nairobi** when the children were 4, 6, and 7 years old. I was determined to visit and take them on safari. Cher was amazing. She contacted various travel companies in Africa that said no way would they take children that young on safari, but she kept at it and worked closely with Abercrombie & Kent to create a private safari-tent setup in Botswana's Okavango Delta. We arrived in a tiny plane on a dirt runway with giraffes,

gazelles, and zebras running alongside as we landed. Baboons were in a canopy of trees outside our tent every night. Even though the kids were so young when they went, they still talk about it.

**For over 20 years,** we've taken the same two Tumi bags for the whole family. We all bring the same amount of undies, shirts, et cetera, so we do laundry at the same time. Also, my children have always packed their own backpacks, so they know what they've brought and how to take responsibility for the treasures they collect along the way.

**When it comes to trips of a lifetime,** the Galápagos Islands' beauty is unsurpassed. Rajasthan holds so much adventure, colour, and culture. Pompeii makes history come alive like no place else, and hiking New Zealand's

Milford and Abel Tasman Coast tracks teaches resilience. But the grand old pink hotel Le Sirenuse in Positano, Italy, was the most special place we've ever stayed.

**Cher has helped us through many, many travel emergencies.**

When we were in Phuket during the tsunami, she stayed in constant contact with us and worked her tail off to get us hotels and flights, and to keep us safe and in the right place. She's helped in funny situations, too, with flexibility and good humour, like when I've fallen asleep in airport lounges, missing connecting flights. I've called her at all hours, and without issue she's made everything right again.

**My son Adam is quite accident prone,** and we've been in many foreign hospitals. He once fell at

the airport in Chiang Mai, Thailand, as we boarded a flight to Vietnam. Blood was everywhere, pouring out of his forehead. While Adam got 13 stitches, Cher quickly rearranged our flights, and we were on our way to Vietnam in a few hours.

**Have an open mind,** laugh a lot, enjoy each other's company – those are the keys to having a good time no matter what the circumstances are.

**It's so important for children to appreciate the freedom they have,** while also learning about some countries' difficult history – such as Sri Lanka, for example. The more we teach our youth about war and strife and poverty, the more we can help prevent them in the future. As young adults, my daughter has done

community service in Cambodia and Borneo, and my son Adam is heading off to do some in Cambodia in December. I believe their interest in this is a direct result of our travel experiences as a family. ”



The Saar family in Kenya and (inset) Kica's favourite hotel, Le Sirenuse.



## WHERE NEXT:

“Brazil. I was born in Rio but haven't been back in 40 years. We're staying at Belmont Copacabana Palace, around the corner from where I grew up. It will be a very special trip, as my husband has never seen my childhood surroundings and influences.”



## Indulge your senses with the two night Spa qualia Indulgence package

Located in the heart of Australia's Great Barrier Reef, on the secluded northern-most tip of Hamilton Island, qualia is a unique expression of world-class luxury. Immerse yourself in a relaxed atmosphere, where everything has been meticulously considered to relax the mind and yet completely spoil the senses. Indulge at qualia with the two night Spa qualia Indulgence package, including one 90-minute Driftaway Ritual massage per person, a la carte breakfast daily, a gourmet dinner at qualia on one evening and more. With just a short direct flight from most major Australian cities, getting to qualia couldn't be easier. Book now to receive your exclusive Virtuoso amenity, a Colours of Sunset Cruise for two through the majestic Whitsunday Islands with canapés and selected alcoholic beverages (RRP \$135AUD per person).

**For reservations, please contact your Virtuoso travel specialist.**

**qualia**  
GREAT BARRIER REEF



# DREAM BIG



## *The Annual Travel Dreams Survey*

CHRIS CLOR/BLEND IMAGES LLC/GALLERY STOCK

**Thousands** of readers shared their travel aspirations with us in this year's survey, and while some favourite destinations and experiences continue their reign (Italy and Antarctica, Paris cuisine we're looking at you), once again **you provided some nice surprises** (Saint Petersburg, Russia, the Amalfi Coast, and Vancouver Island, welcome to the party). Read on for the results, then discover where those who share your travel personality are heading next. **BY JUSTIN PAUL**

VACATIONS ARE FOR RELAXING.

# A VOYAGE

IS FOR THOSE WHO WANT

# TO BE MOVED.



*We had so much fun relaxing by the pool and spending time with each other.*

*We explored tropical beaches and enjoyed the friendly locals in every port.*



We invite you to discover some of the most fabled destinations on Earth with some of the best fares in history. Enjoy the luxury and beauty of a Europe, Tropical or Asia voyage. Book early to enjoy limited-time Book Now Fares in every category, and begin a new story aboard the World's Best.

- Book by 29 August 2014 for the best available Book Now fares
- Our fares always include: complimentary select fine wines, premium spirits, gratuities, specialty dining from chefs like Nobu Matsuhisa and so much more†
- Most voyages start or end with an overnight port

	Date	Days	Destination	Itinerary	Ship	Brochure Per Person Fares From	Book Now Per Person Fares From
2014	27 Sep	8	Western Europe	Hamburg to Lisbon	Crystal Symphony	<del>US\$7,580</del>	US\$3,315
	5 Nov	14	East Coast & Carib.	New York to Miami	Crystal Serenity	<del>US\$12,320</del>	US\$5,415
	30 Nov	11	Panama Canal	Costa Rica to Miami	Crystal Serenity	<del>US\$8,270</del>	US\$3,545
2015	21 Dec	15	Southeast Asia	Round-trip Singapore	Crystal Symphony	<del>US\$19,050</del>	US\$7,880*
	24 Feb	13	Southeast Asia	Round-trip Singapore	Crystal Symphony	<del>US\$14,090</del>	US\$5,605*

\*Price includes Crystal's NEW Air Allowance

**Contact your Virtuoso Travel Advisor to book your cruise aboard the World's Best and receive exclusive Virtuoso Voyager Club amenities.**



BEGIN A NEW STORY™



Book Now Cruise-Only Fares are per person in U.S. dollars, double occupancy, for category E2 on Crystal Symphony and category C3 on Crystal Serenity, include all promotional savings, apply to new bookings only made between 1/7/2014 and 29/8/2014 and include port, security and handling charges of US\$310-US\$705. All offers and book now fares may not be combinable with other promotions, apply to first two full-fare guests in stateroom or suite, are capacity-controlled, subject to availability and may be withdrawn or changed at any time without notice. Individual Virtuoso Voyager Club amenities are available on select sailings. Virtuoso Voyager Club events and amenities are subject to change without notice and may require a minimum number of participants. Amenities vary by departure date. Contact your Virtuoso Travel Advisor for more details. Guests must be booked into the Virtuoso Voyager Club Group to be eligible for Voyager Club amenities. †Crystal Cruises offers each guest the opportunity to dine at least once on a complimentary basis in Prego and at least once in Silk Road or the Sushi Bar. Additional reservations or visits are subject to a \$30 per person fee, subject to availability. Air Allowance credit/savings is per person based on full-fare, full-cruise Air/Sea or Cruise-Only bookings on select voyages only and does not apply to Crystal Getaway voyages. All fares, itineraries, programs, policies and shore excursions are subject to change. Restrictions apply. See crystalcruises.com for complete terms and conditions of all offers. ©2014 Crystal Cruises, Inc., Ships' registry: The Bahamas



TRAVEL DREAMS 2014

# DREAM DESTINATIONS



1

ANTARCTICA



2

ITALY

**YOU SAID:** "Italy is the only place I will go again and again."  
— Shirley Rosiak



5

USA



6

CROATIA



7

CUBA



8

BOTSWANA





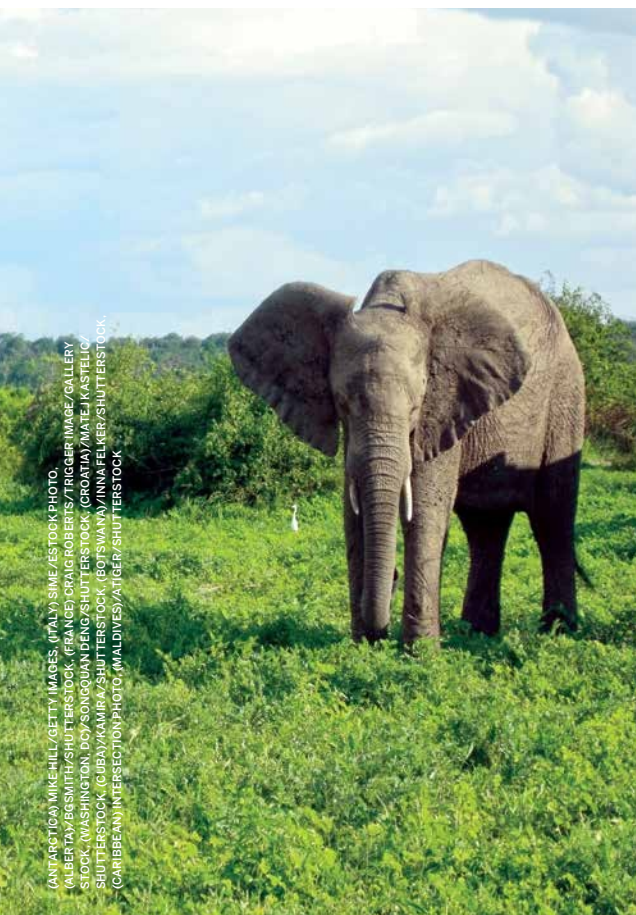
3

CANADA



4

FRANCE



(ANTARCTIC) MIKE HILL/GETTY IMAGES, (ITALY) SIMONE ZESTOCK/PHOTO, (ALBERTA) BGS/SHUTTERSTOCK, (FRANCE) CRAIG ROBERTS/TRIGGER IMAGE/GALLERY STOCK, (WASHINGTON) DOY SONGQUAN BENG/SHUTTERSTOCK, (CROATIA) MATEJ KASTELIC/SHUTTERSTOCK, (CUBA) KAMIRAZ/SHUTTERSTOCK, (BOTSWANA) INNA FELKER/SHUTTERSTOCK, (CARIBBEAN) INTERSECTION PHOTO, (MALDIVES) TIGER/SHUTTERSTOCK

**GO:** Don't have 15 days for a trip (or want to save some time to explore Patagonia while in the neighbourhood)? **Skip one crossing of the infamous Drake Passage with a charter flight** on Quark Expeditions' nine-day Antarctic adventure. After landing on the South Shetlands' King George Island, board the 117-passenger *Sea Adventurer* for five days of **Zodiac excursions among penguins and icebergs** – and optional sea kayak and snowshoe adventures.



9

CARIBBEAN



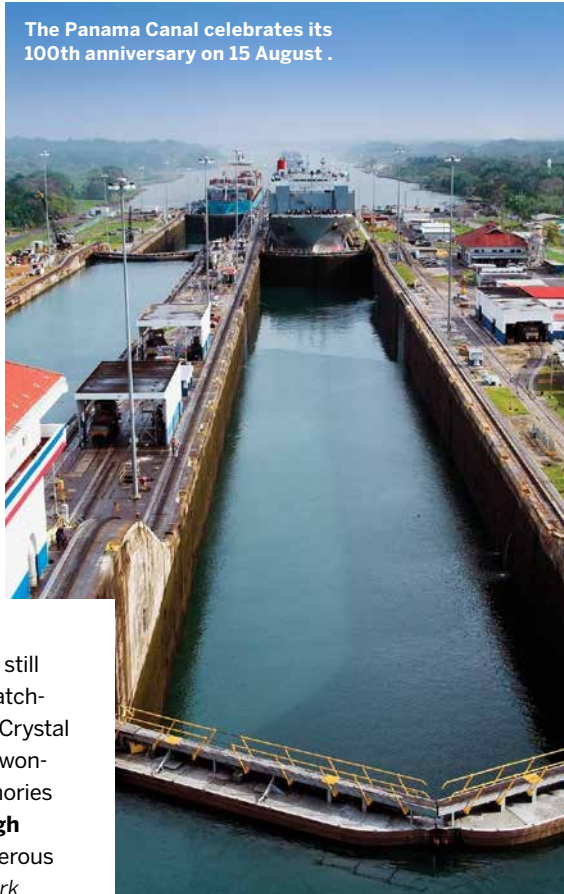
10

MALDIVES

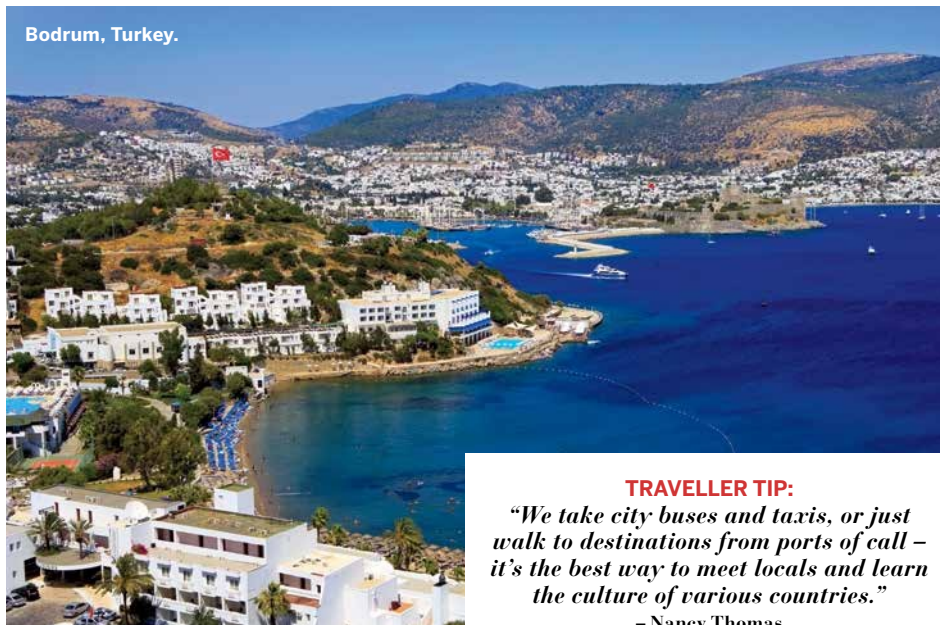


# TOP CRUISE ITINERARIES

1. MEDITERRANEAN
2. CARIBBEAN
3. ALASKA
4. AMAZON RIVER
5. ANTARCTICA
6. EUROPEAN RIVER/CANAL  
Turn to page 10 for a review of Tauck's new riverboat, *Inspire*.
7. FRENCH WINE COUNTRY
8. CANADA/NEW ENGLAND
9. IRRAWADDY RIVER
10. WORLD CRUISE



**YOU SAID:** "I've taken **four fabulous world cruises** with my mother, who's still very active in her 90s, and enjoyed watching her trip the light fantastic around Crystal Cruises' Palm Court with one of their wonderful Ambassador Hosts, relive memories of Canal Zone life as we **sailed through the Panama Canal**, and browse numerous pedestrian-friendly ports." – Anne Clark



**TRAVELLER TIP:**  
*"We take city buses and taxis, or just walk to destinations from ports of call – it's the best way to meet locals and learn the culture of various countries."*  
 – Nancy Thomas



## DREAM ISLANDS

1. MALDIVES
2. HAWAII
3. THE CARIBBEAN
4. GREEK ISLANDS
5. CAPRI

**So many islands, so little time:** When pressed to pick a favourite Caribbean escape, nearly a quarter of you couldn't. (Good reason to have an in-the-know travel advisor on hand.)



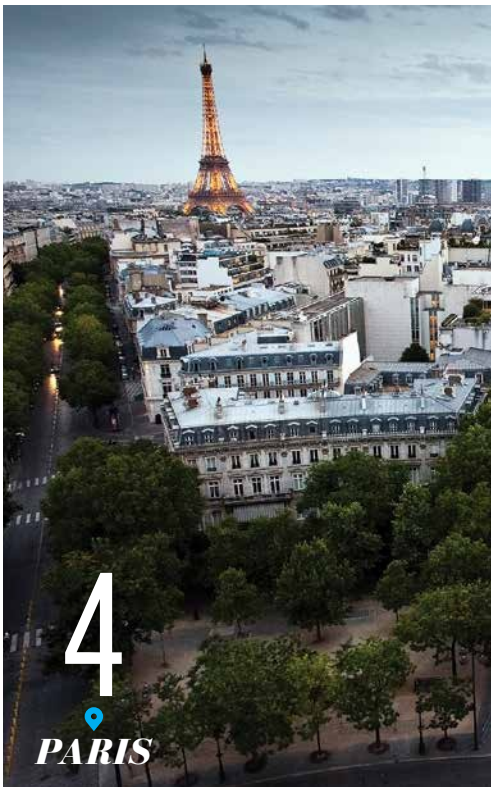
## FOOD FAVOURITES

1. PARIS  
**Wine bars** currently have some of the city's best (and best-value) bites.
2. ROME
3. FLORENCE  
**Our favourite new hotel on the Arno:** Leonardo Ferragamo's 34-room Portrait Firenze.
4. BARCELONA  
**YOU SAID:** "I met my sister in Barcelona while she was living in Spain, and we ate at our first Michelin-starred restaurant together. **Lasarte is an awesome experience!**"  
– Elizabeth Melancon
5. HONG KONG

# CITIES I WANT TO EXPLORE



1. NEW YORK
2. MARRAKECH
3. ROME  
Your dream suite awaits (page 14).
4. PARIS
5. ISTANBUL
6. SAINT PETERSBURG, RUSSIA
7. BUDAPEST
8. BUENOS AIRES
8. PRAGUE
9. BARCELONA
10. CAPE TOWN



Go to [www.virtuoso.com](http://www.virtuoso.com) for hotel reviews from fellow Virtuoso travellers, such as this one on Barcelona's Mandarin Oriental.

**YOU SAID:** "Ideally located, superior in ambience, and wonderfully accommodating staff. The food was outstanding, and they found time to acknowledge our anniversary in a very special way." – Bob



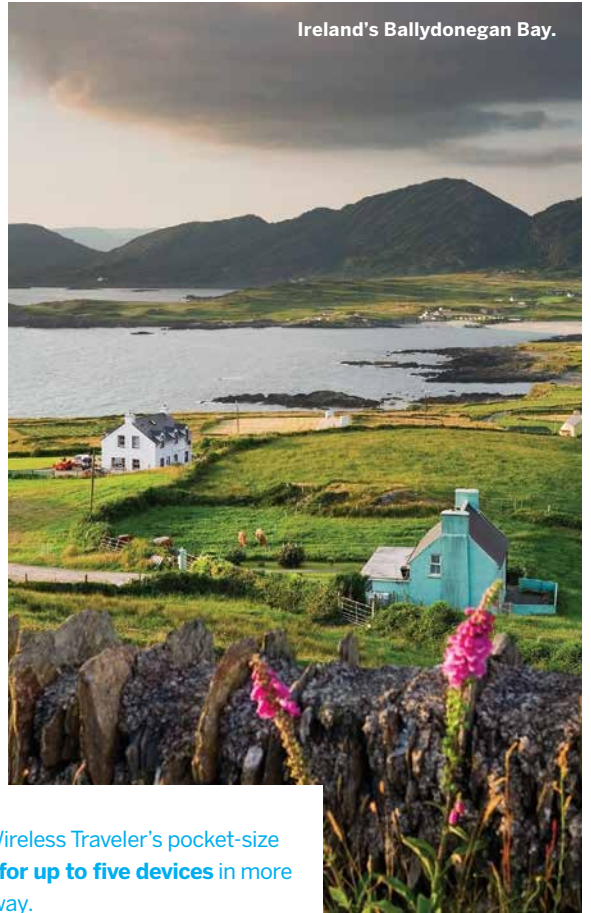
## TRAVEL DREAMS 2014

### FOR A GREAT FAMILY HOLIDAY

- 1. HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
  - 2. SOUTH AFRICAN SAFARI
  - 3. IRELAND'S CASTLES AND COUNTRYSIDE
- YOU SAID:** "Initially, I didn't think I was going to enjoy the Irish countryside as much as my wife and children, but it **turned out to be life changing** in many ways."  
*– Richard Ishmael*
- 4. ALASKAN CRUISE
  - 5. GALÁPAGOS GETAWAY



Aloha, Hawaii.



Ireland's Ballydonegan Bay.



▶▶▶ **Dad, drop the smartphone-cop act:** Wireless Traveler's pocket-size gizmo creates a **secure Wi-Fi hot spot for up to five devices** in more than 100 countries. Browse and text away.



Greek favourite, Santorini.

### JUST THE TWO OF US

- 1. PARIS IN APRIL
  - ▶▶▶ 2. GREEK ISLES
  - 3. OVERWATER BUNGALOW IN TAHITI
- YOU SAID:** "A perfect combination of romance and adventure: overwater bungalows in Moorea and Bora-Bora with fun-filled bike rides, Polynesian shows, massages, and **warm ocean swims in the clearest water I've ever encountered.**"  
*– Megan Silva*
- 4. MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE
  - 5. CARIBBEAN RESORT STAY

# EXPERIENCES OF A LIFETIME



## 2 AMALFI COAST

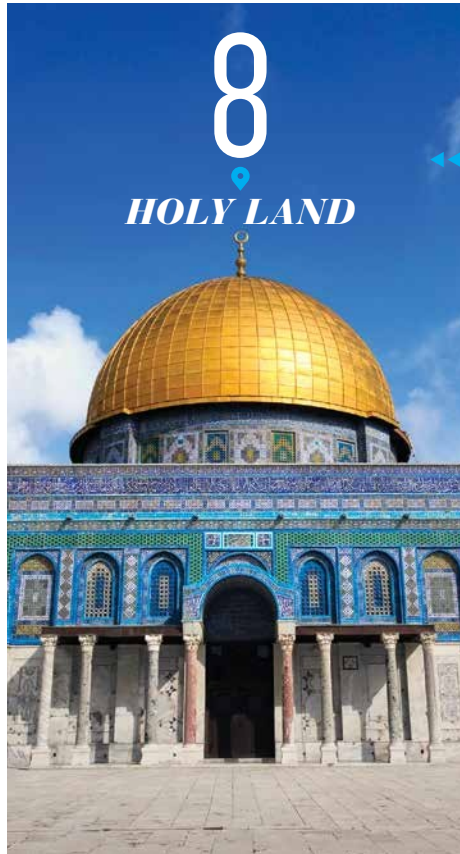
1. ANTARCTICA CRUISE
2. ITALY'S AMALFI COAST  
**It must be something in the limoncello: Amalfi Coast jumps 12 places this year.**  
**YOU SAID:** "My wife and I spent five nights on Italy's Amalfi Coast last year. **Relaxing on Positano's beach** and eating at the cafés were the highlights of our trip."  
*– James Henson*
3. CALL ON ALL SEVEN CONTINENTS
4. RENT A PRIVATE ISLAND IN THE CARIBBEAN
5. RENT A EUROPEAN VILLA
6. PHOTOGRAPH THE "BIG FIVE" ON AN AFRICAN SAFARI \*
7. GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS EXPEDITION
8. HOLY LAND
9. CHARTER A PRIVATE JET
10. WORLD CRUISE



**There are nearly as many options as spots on a cheetah.** One truly over-the-top itinerary: Travco's 20-day **private jet trip**. Company president Jerre Fuqua joins 18 passengers for the six-country journey from Nairobi to Cape Town on a **restored 1940s DC-3 Dakota aircraft**. *Departure: 31 August.*



## 6 SAFARI



## 8 HOLY LAND

8. HOLY LAND  
**YOU SAID:** "I waited 25 years to get to the Holy Land, and **the emotional connection was beyond my expectations**. My travel advisor set us up with a private guide who took us to all the spots on our list, but the places off the beaten trail turned out to be the most memorable, such as the military base where we spent the afternoon among tanks and tents, talking to the soldiers over a cup of coffee – **we connected with them on a humanitarian level.**"  
*– Leslie Eisner*
9. CHARTER A PRIVATE JET
10. WORLD CRUISE

(HAWAII) THOMAS BARWICK/GETTY IMAGES. (IRELAND) SIMÉ/ESTOCK PHOTO. (GREECE) INTERSECTION PHOTOS. (AMALFI) HILIXIA SZABO/GALLERY STOCK. (FLAG) VEER. (HOLY LAND) GABRIEL JAIME JIMENEZ/ESTOCK PHOTO. (CHEETAH) ESZTER AND DAVID/GALLERY STOCK



# THE CONNOISSEUR

*You like the best of the best. When you travel, you indulge the interests you're passionate about.*

Most likely to **select an aisle seat** – all other personality types prefer windows.

Twice as likely to be found **exploring Saint Petersburg, Russia**, than Berlin.

Perfect pairing: **Paris in April and French wine-country cruises** are neck and neck for your top holiday for two.

 **Family pasta-making lessons in Italy** and dinner dates in **Paris' five-star restaurants** appeal to you – the only travellers to rank each as a top-ten pursuit.

**ALL IN:** 100 percent of travellers wishing to **take their kids to the Swiss Alps** in the summer are Connoisseurs.

▶▶▶▶▶ **YOU SAID:** "My favourite trip was **spending a week in Paris** one April, seeing the museums, winetasting and enjoying spectacular food in small bistros, and strolling along the Seine's bridges." – *Marsha Dolan*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLARE MALLISON

# THE CLASSIC TRAVELLER

*You're loyal to the places you love. You want to be delighted but not surprised when you travel.*

Prefer to **ship luggage ahead** more than any other travellers.

Try **Luggage Forward**, which beats even FedEx and UPS rates on **worldwide door-to-door** (or door-to-cruise-ship, or -golf course pro shop ...) delivery and offers a guarantee (in addition to a refund) for on-time delivery.

Most likely to eye the **Venice Simplon-Orient-Express** for your trip of a lifetime.

In May, the iconic train **launched service to Brussels**. Options include two-day direct journeys from Venice to Brussels and five-day itineraries that feature two hotel nights in Budapest as well as two nights on the train.

**You love cruising,** your favourite travel experience by nearly two to one.

**ALL IN:** 100 percent of those looking to take over a **French villa with their family** are Classic Travellers...

... but when it's just the two of you, you're taking off for **Tuscany**.

▶▶▶▶▶ **YOU SAID:** "My wife and I spent almost two weeks in Tuscany, and our travel advisor recommended a fantastic hotel – a converted villa **surrounded by more than 800 acres of vineyards**. Truly exceptional." – Ernest Janssen



# THE GO-GETTER

You want to see it all, and your active and adventurous itineraries are packed from morning until night.

Most likely to **carry on luggage**.

What moves you: More than four times as likely to **travel for adventure** than for relaxation.

Defining trips of a lifetime include **travelling the Trans-Siberian Railway**.

Love bite – or was that a mosquito? **Cruising the Amazon** is one of your top-ten romantic trips.

All aboard: **Nomadic Expeditions'** 15-day rail journey from Beijing to Moscow joins the main Trans-Siberian Railway route in Ulan-Ude, Siberia, and includes guided sightseeing in both capitals, as well as a **cruise on Lake Baikal** and other activities en route. Departures: Multiple dates 11 July through 21 September.

High-wire act: Brave enough to want to **zip-line with the kids in Costa Rica**.

**ALL IN:** Most travellers have a soft spot for Tuscany, but only Go-Getters want to **tackle it with the family by bike**.

▶▶▶▶▶ **YOU SAID:** "Riding the Trans-Siberian Express from Beijing to Moscow, I was grateful every day that I used my travel advisor. It was on her recommendation that **I built in time away from the train** in Mongolia to **sleep in a ger**, visit Siberia's Lake Baikal, and stop in Yekaterinburg on the way to Moscow." – Ron Hull



# THE RELAXATIONIST

*Ease into a lounge chair in style: Travel for you is about getting away from it all to relax and rejuvenate.*



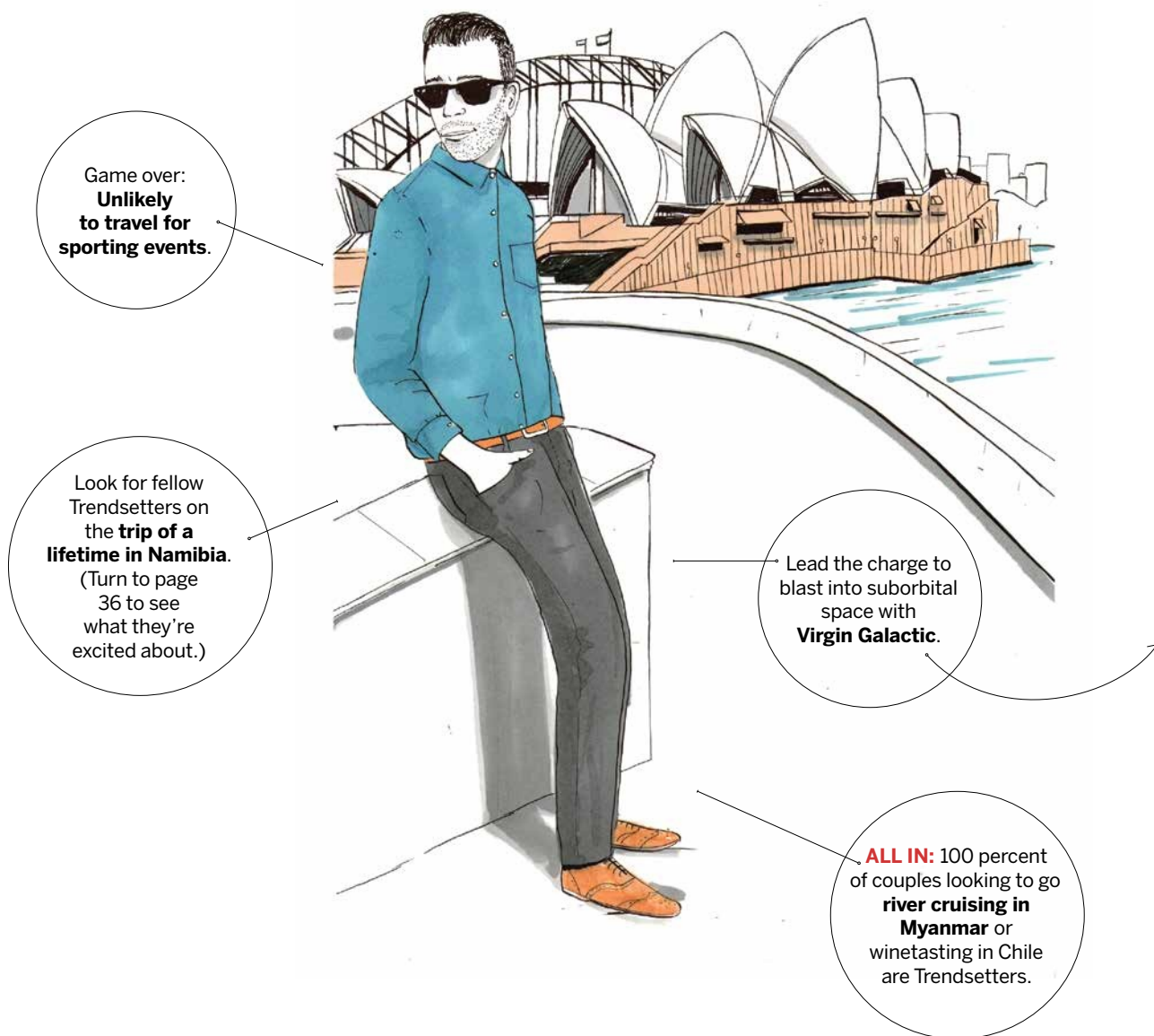
▶▶▶▶▶ **YOU SAID:** "Our favourite destination was cruising Tahiti on the *Paul Gauguin*, plus a few **nights in overwater bungalows** – we enjoyed it so much we've taken the same trip three times. The perfect place for relaxation and nature."

– Karen Payton



# THE TRENDSETTER

*It's all about what's new and what's next. You're a collector of experiences – the more passport stamps, the better.*



▶▶▶▶▶ **YOU SAID:** "Celebrating my 50th birthday in Namibia was the trip of a lifetime! My Virtuoso advisor helped each step of the way, meticulously planning every nuance, down to my favourite wine upon our arrival. Flawless hotels, and the guides couldn't have been better. I felt welcomed everywhere I went." – Andrew Manning

# CALLING ALL ASTRONAUTS

*Virgin Galactic is in rocket mode.*

SpaceShipTwo has a new hybrid rocket motor and will soon resume **powered test flights** with an eye to Richard Branson's inaugural passenger flight taking place near the end of the year. The six-passenger spacecraft has flown three powered flights, dropping from mother ship *White-Knight Two* and blasting to 21,640 metres.

While the flight program progresses, Virgin Galactic's team is testing the final passenger-seat prototypes and putting the finishing interior touches on its Spaceport America terminal outside Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. More than 700 future astronauts have reserved seats so far, ranging from celebrities such as **Leonardo DiCaprio** to Virtuoso CEO Matthew Upchurch and travel advisors Stephanie Anevich, Craig Curran, and Francis Contreras. *Virtuoso* has accredited space agents in Australia and New Zealand available for arranging Virgin Galactic flights. VI.



SpaceShipTwo glides home on a test flight.

A future Virgin Galactic astronaut trains for her spaceflight.



**Watch**  
**SpaceShipTwo's**  
**third rocket-**  
**powered test flight.**

(SPACESHIP TWO) MARK GREENBERG, (LEONARDO DICAPRIO) FREDERICK M. BROWN/STRINGER/GETTY IMAGES, (FUTURE ASTRONAUT) STEVE BOXALL/REX ASSOCIATED PRESS

SILVERSEA'S  
MEDITERRANEAN  
IN LUXURIOUS STYLE



EXPLORE THE JEWELS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN  
ABOARD OUR LUXURIOUS AND INTIMATE SHIPS

Easily navigating the tiny islands, we will transport you to the places you've dreamed of. And thanks to our Italian heritage we can show you these lands as only an insider can.

Do you prefer a longer voyage? Silversea offers an Extended Voyage Saving and has created many back-to-back voyages with seldom repeated ports. Select from Mediterranean voyages of 7-14 days until November 2014. Silver Privilege Fares from **us\$3,550** per person.



Fares are cruise-only, quoted in US dollars, per person including Taxes, Fees & Port Expenses, based on double occupancy, are correct at time of going to print and may rise as the sailing date approaches. Terms & Conditions apply.

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- Intimate ships from 296 to 540 guests
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- Complimentary wine, Champagne and spirits
- In-suite bar with your beverage choices
- Open-seating restaurant with menu selections by Relais & Châteaux
- A choice of speciality restaurants
- Included gratuities



### VIRTUOSO VOYAGER CLUB SAILINGS

#### TURKEY & GREECE – *SILVER SPIRIT*

29 August 2014, 7 days, Istanbul to Piraeus (Athens).

Fares from **us\$4,450pp**.

#### EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN – *SILVER WIND*

21 October 2014, 10 days, Rome (Civitavecchia) to Piraeus (Athens).

Fares from **us\$4,550pp**. ♥

#### FRENCH RIVIERA – *SILVER CLOUD*

26 September 2014, 7 days, Monte Carlo to Rome (Civitavecchia).

Fares from **us\$3,550pp**.

#### MEDITERRANEAN SOJOURN – *SILVER SPIRIT*

31 October 2014, 9 days, Rome (Civitavecchia) to Barcelona.

Fares from **us\$4,150pp**.

♥ Venetian Society guests enjoy a 5% additional benefit.



For more information or a copy of our 2014 Mediterranean brochure, please contact your Virtuoso Travel Advisor.

 **SILVERSEA**<sup>®</sup>



# JUST DESERTS

**NAMIBIA'S CONSERVATION BET PAYS OFF IN  
HIGH-FLYING ADVENTURE.** BY AARON GULLEY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEN JUDGE

Shifty business:  
Ascending Dune 45,  
one of Sossusvlei's  
most popular hikes.



## AT MIDDAY, THE NAMIB DESERT

crackles with heat and vibrates in blurry waves. A kettle of lappet-faced vultures swirls like a slow-moving dust devil far off to the west. I'm looking out from the bush landing strip at Kulala Wilderness Reserve, a small private conservation area that borders the almost 51,800-square-kilometre Namib-Naukluft National Park, where I've just set down to embark on a ten-day flying safari. But with this bleak backdrop, the only animals you'd imagine spying here are the bony carrion variety.

Namibia is an improbable place for a safari: Two great deserts, the Namib and the Kalahari, dominate a country that's 92 percent semiarid or drier. Yet the desert emptiness is a boon. With a small population scattered across a vast area, Namibia, unlike so much of Africa, has space for humans and game to coexist.

Land aside, its progressive approach to wildlife truly sets the destination apart. Namibia is the only nation in the world to write wildlife conservation into its constitution, drawn up at its 1990 independence. Since then, the amount of protected land has swelled from 13 percent to an astounding 46 percent. And as the percentage increases, game thrives. Though three decades of border wars prior to independence had decimated lions, elephants, and other alpha animals, game numbers are healthy today, including the "big five." The recovery has occurred alongside bold programs that allow legal, but highly regulated, trophy hunting of elephants, lions, and even rhinos. It's a controversial policy, but seemingly effective – Namibia is the only nation with increasing stocks of black rhinos and free-roaming lions,

**Above: Remnants of 700-year-old acacia trees at Deadvlei ("dead marsh") in Namib-Naukluft National Park.**

**Opposite, clockwise from top left: Sundowners in the Kulala Wilderness Reserve, an inquisitive oryx, fruit cups for midafternoon tea, and barchan dunes en route to Walvis Bay.**





DUNES TRANSFORM INTO GOLDEN THREE-POINT STARS AND COPPER BOOMERANGS. DRIED RIVERBEDS AND PANS STREAK OFF LIKE VAN GOGH'S BRUSHSTROKES ON A DESERT CANVAS.



and it has more cheetahs than any other country on the planet.

“This is, quite simply, Africa’s greatest wildlife recovery story,” says Keith Sproule of the World Wildlife Fund in Namibia. “Post-independence, the country made a commitment to its flora and fauna. Unlike mining, for instance, which is a limited resource, people can see the promise of preservation’s long-term rewards.”

Kulala might look barren and lifeless in the midday blaze, but as the sun lags toward the horizon, colour pours into the bleached landscape to reveal mustard grasslands, rusty dunes as soft as frosting, and inky volcanic outcrops. Herds of bandit-masked oryx amass, and loose knots of mountain zebras and ostriches appear on the stony slopes. Springbok flit and leap like skittish ballerinas. These hills, and the ones stretching some 1,500 kilometres over which we’ll fly in the coming days, are absolutely alive.

## STAR ATTRACTION

Some foreign lands feel as comfortable as your childhood home, even if you’ve never been there. They light up the soul.

Namibia was like that for me on my first visit a decade ago. I came for a safari, and I fell for the vast, surreal desert empty. Now I’m back to see how the country is coping with the uptick in tourism.

“In Namibia, you can have a game experience every bit as good as you get in the Masai Mara; it’s just in a totally unique setting,” explains Jim Holden, president of

African Travel, Inc., which works with Virtuoso advisors to craft custom safaris such as mine.

“This is a place with big skies, stunning sunsets, and a sense of space and scale that is inconceivable to most people.”

The first few days at Little Kulala Lodge underscore his point. One morning, Stewart Matsopo, my round-faced, 31-year-old guide, rouses me hours



**Only In Namibia**  
(clockwise from left):  
Little Kulala Lodge, loading up for Walvis Bay, a young Himba woman in the northern Hartmann Valley, approaching the jeep in Damaraland, and Save the Rhino Trust game guards, shortly after sighting two rhinos on the plains west of Desert Rhino Camp.

before dawn – not for a game drive, but to see the sand dunes at Sossusvlei in the scarlet sunrise light. We speed from the lodge into Namib-Naukluft Park, racing right by wildlife and every sort of gazelle, which materialise in the silent gloaming. In Namibia, you often look past the animals to the views.

Stewart recommends a hike that’s popular with tourists, but I’ve got my eye

on “Big Daddy,” one of the world’s highest dunes. Walking up the 381-metre knife edge of sand is like stomping through soft marshmallow topping. From the peak, I charge down a 50-degree slope, and the shifting sand lets out a deep, guttural whooshing noise with every long stride – *whoorum ... whoorum* – all the way down to Deadvlei, a stand of acacias at the bottom



that died when the dunes closed off their watershed. With no moisture for decomposition and a lime-rich white mud anchoring them, the trees have stood like skeletons of frozen dancers for some 700 years. It's similar to most of Namibia's landscapes, so lost in time that you might as well be visiting in the Pleistocene.

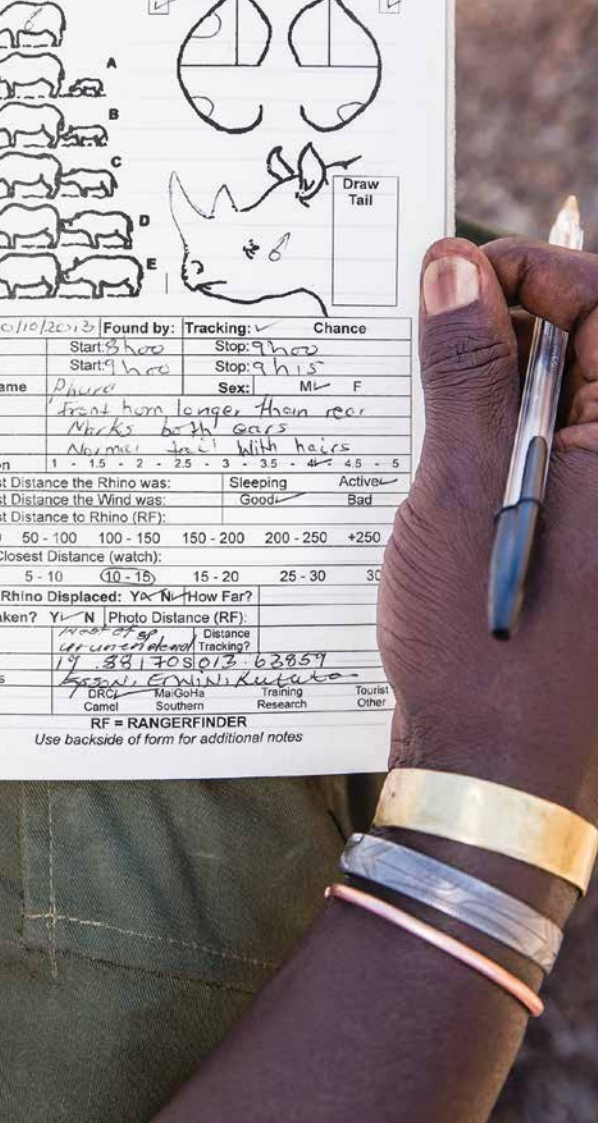
Stewart is a font of desert knowledge with

a big, gravelly laugh: "Ahh, ahhh, ahhhh." He gets excited about the Namib's nuances, such as the smelly shepherd's tree, which uses its stench to repel animals from eating its leaves. He stops the Land Rover to pick up a darkling beetle so we can see it up close and then pulls over again to show us tracks of the brown hyena, which he describes as "one solitary

dude." Then, "Ahh, ahhh, ahhhh."

On the drive back from the dunes, Kulala Lodge rises from the ochre plain like something out of *Star Wars*, with arcing thatched roofs, a spare bar and lounge done in cool white leathers, and an aquamarine pool that's not the mirage it appears, after all. Each bungalow has a second-story stargazing patio where you can sleep

beneath a thick duvet and a moonless sky so flush with stars you don't need a flashlight. "It's said that if you count every grain of sand on earth, there are still more stars in the universe," Stewart had told me earlier. Alpha and Beta Centauri, our two closest neighbours, gesture toward the Southern Cross coming over the horizon. Shooting stars flash like car headlights in traffic light-years away.



On this soundless, black night, it seems that tourism has changed Namibia precious little. And the truth is, I'd come back to Namibia a hundred times – wildlife or not – just to see this night sky.

### THE GREAT WIDE OPEN

Cessnas are the taxis of the Namibian bush, and though you could drive our itinerary with enough time, soaring over wild moonscapes is as important to the experience as the animals themselves. From the sky, dunes transform into golden three-point stars and copper boomerangs. Dried riverbeds and pans streak off like Van Gogh's brushstrokes on a desert canvas. Our route veers north at the Atlantic over the rusted-out shipwreck bones of the Skeleton Coast, where seal and sea lion colonies turn whole stretches of beach black, and dilapidated metal shacks left over from the 1800s diamond-mining heyday crop up from time to time.

A few quick hops later, we arrive at Desert Rhino Camp, a low-key tented enclave amid stony hills and scraggly winter-thorn trees. On the evening game drive, we track a bull elephant to a shady drainage and watch from a careful distance until he decides to beeline for us. When the animal is less than a few metres away and still stamping forward, the driver guns the engine and we lurch away. The bull continues on his way, likely to a watering hole a few kilometres west or possibly hundreds of kilometres down to the lush coast.

Though Namibia has plenty of fenced reserves, in much of the country, including here in Damaraland, game roams free.

Unlike in other countries, Namibians have accepted predators as a part of life. That makes for an authentic viewing experience, but it also means elephants sometimes smash through villages and root up crops. Cheetahs prey on livestock. Not far from here, lions have reduced one village's herd of 70 cattle to just 19 over the course of 18 months.

Namibians navigate these realities in part with joint-venture conservancies among local communities, the government, and outside investors. Lodges such as Desert Rhino Camp and Serra Cafema guarantee villagers a set number of jobs and profit sharing for committing land to conservation.

"There's not so much difference between conservationists and many poachers," explains Garth Owen-Smith, a Namibian environmentalist and one of the country's leading voices on the issue. Both love to live in the bush, crave some risk, and make very little money. While a rhino horn sells for US\$250,000 on the black market, the villagers paid to kill them often make less than five percent of that. "No one wants to be a poacher. People do it out of necessity," he says. "So we

**Left: Documenting rhinos in Damaraland, and safari guide Stewart Matsopo preparing a sunset spread. Opposite: Matsopo leads a game drive in the Tsaris Mountains.**



**NAMIBIA IS THE ONLY NATION WITH INCREASING STOCKS OF BLACK RHINOS AND FREE-ROAMING LIONS, AND IT HAS MORE CHEETAHS THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY ON THE PLANET.**



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For reservations, contact your Virtuoso travel advisor.

*\*As ranked by readers of SKI magazine, 2008-2014.*



DEER VALLEY | BEVERLY HILLS | KAPALUA BAY | LAGUNA BEACH | PALMETTO BLUFF

*Montage*  
DEER VALLEY

must give the people living with these animals more incentive to protect them than they can get from killing them.”

The collaboration pays off for us one morning as we search for black rhinos. Before sunup, four game guards from Save the Rhino Trust Namibia collect our small group in a convoy of Land Rovers to crawl out over the dusty roads. By the time we strike on prints three hours later, the heat is coming up. Three guards set off tracking in the bush. The baked plain feels about as conducive to large

mammals as the streets of Sydney, and as the morning drags on I grow skeptical that rhinos live here – much less that we might see one. Then six hours after we set out from camp, the radio crackles: “An animal is in sight. Bring the group.”

We meet up with a tracker over a rocky crest and already know the ground rules: No talking, no quick movements, no bright-coloured clothing. Surprising a 1,360-kilogram creature that can run up to 56 kilometres an hour – bad idea. About a 110 metres away, the rhino stands

perfectly still. He likely can't see us, but he can smell us and hear the *clack-a-clack* of our shoes on stones. Soon he gets comfortable with our presence and plops down on a hut-size euphorbia bush to nap. Some 20 minutes later, we slip quietly back to the vehicles, where the lead tracker fills out a form for the log detailing every sighting of around 70 known rhinos in the area (ours was a 36-year-old bull named Kangombe). It's an important part of why Namibia's rhinos have thrived, even

as poachers continue to wipe out three a day in neighbouring South Africa. If locals are invested in every animal, the likelihood of illegal hunting diminishes. And so far, it seems to be working.

### TAPPED IN

Two Cessna hops from the rhino camp, Serra Cafema nestles along the Kunene River's meandering border with Angola. Namibia's northernmost safari camp is a green and refreshing relief from the south, though its landing strip is a fairly long





SOON THE RHINO GETS COMFORTABLE WITH OUR PRESENCE AND PLOPS DOWN ON A HUT-SIZE EUPHORBIA BUSH TO NAP.

drive away in the desiccated Hartmann Valley.

At the end of the bumpy dirt runway, a new outhouse stands with shiny tile, running water, and a pristine porcelain commode inside. The juxtaposition is strange and disconcerting, almost like stepping a century into the future. “Some Himba walk 70 kilometres to come here and get water,” the pilot says. I shake my head at the thought of these nomads – especially the Himba women, who wear little clothing but smear their bodies and hair in mud and ochre to protect against the sun – primping in front of the smudgeless mirror.

An hour’s drive down sandy tracks and tumble-down dunes, we arrive at Serra Cafema, where every bungalow has a huge veranda for sitting and listening to the splash-splash of the Kunene through the reeds and the shrill song of weavers in their upside-down nests. Tomorrow we’ll take a boat upriver and float within three metres of a crocodile named Colgate, whose teeth are as big as clenched fists. We’ll visit a Himba family to learn about their itinerant lifestyle and climb inside their temporary acacia and wattle huts, which are smaller than my camping tent back home. And we’ll sneak across the

Kunene to climb a black volcanic promontory and watch the sunrise from Angola as oryx, springbok, and ostriches clamber down steep red dunes to the river’s watery reprieve.

“There’s no better place in the world than Namibia right now for informed travellers who want to see wildlife, but also care about supporting a country that’s making good decisions about conservation,” says Chris Weaver, the World Wildlife Fund’s managing director for Namibia.

That’s true, but safaris here are more expansive and important than that. You’ll never forget stepping from the shade of an unlikely

washroom into the biggest, most remote place you’re ever likely to be, virtually unchanged from centuries ago. Few places on the planet can convey such serene emptiness. In this desert sanctuary, it’s still possible to feel as unbound as an oryx milling on the open plain.

**Kangombe, a black rhino who has been monitored for more than two decades.**

# GAME ON

## YOUR PLAYBOOK FOR NAMIBIAN WILDLIFE.



**WHEN TO GO:** With mostly temperate, desert conditions throughout the country, Namibia is pleasant year-round. The rainiest season is from December through March, though precipitation is largely localised and comes in short-lived afternoon storms. April and May are vibrant, green, and crisp, and June through August brings glorious daytime temperatures and freezing nights. Though **September through November** can be dry and dusty, it's often the best time to see game, as the animals gravitate to watering holes.

**STAY:** One of the most striking jumping-off points for the dunes at Namib-Naukluft Park is the **andBeyond Sossusvlei Desert Lodge**, whose timber-and-slate main building, complete with a swimming pool, sits up above a vast plain speckled with zebras and ostriches. Ten private, split-level glass-and-stone villas fan out on either side, and a resident astronomer helps guests decipher the night sky at the on-site observatory.

**GO:** Namibia's safari circuit typically includes Sossusvlei, Damaraland, and Etosha National Park, and most operators customise trips with add-ons to farther-flung destinations. Like many in the country, African Travel, Inc. draws on **a network of refined camps** for trips such as this ten-day flying safari. Not all of Namibia's camps are joint ventures with local communities; to ensure your dollars provide the most benefit, ask your travel advisor to inquire about staying in those that are whenever possible.

Big Five Tours & Expeditions' 12-day itinerary pumps up the exclusivity factor with a stay at the andBeyond Sossusvlei Desert Lodge as well as two nights at Okonjima, home of The AfriCat Foundation's cheetah sanctuary, where activities include radio-tracking tours of collared cats and **up-close encounters with the cheetahs** at feeding time.

Travellers on Cox & Kings' 11-day escorted group safari not only hike Sossusvlei's dunes and **track rhinos in Damaraland** and prides of lions at Etosha, but they also spend two nights in the German resort town of Swakopmund, home to excellent restaurants and beaches.

The highlight of Micato Safaris' custom 12-day trip is **the newly formed Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area** in the country's northeastern corner, where river life, including hippos, elephants, and an abundance of birds, makes a great counterpoint to the desert west.

Though Abercrombie & Kent offers a more typical, weeklong loop through Namibia, its 19-day **private jet tour of the African continent** might just be the most elite way to visit the country. Swakopmund and the Sossusvlei dunes are just two attractions on a best-of-Africa journey that also features Ethiopia's rock-hewn churches, mountain gorillas in Uganda, the Serengeti's great herds, elephants and hippos in Botswana, Victoria Falls, and more. **VI.**



Lions spook Burchell's zebras away from their watering hole in Etosha National Park.





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When we say that Tauck's European river cruises are inclusive, we mean just that. Every river cruise expense is included in one upfront price... from gratuities to ship staff and the four director-level Tauck staff on every cruise... to unlimited complimentary beverages aboard ship including wine, beer and premium spirits... to all private shore excursions for Tauck guests only, with more exclusive experiences ashore than any company on Europe's waterways.

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*Personalised, inclusive European river cruising from Tauck. Because how you see the world matters.*

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Stay 3 nights in a suite and receive an additional USD \$100 credit.

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SANTA MONICA

# INSIDERS' Sydney Insiders

**THREE TASTEMAKING SYDNEYSIDERS –**  
AN ART ADVISOR, A BOUTIQUE OWNER,  
AND A HOTELIER – DISH ON THEIR  
TRAVEL DREAMS AND THEIR HOMETOWN HAUNTS.

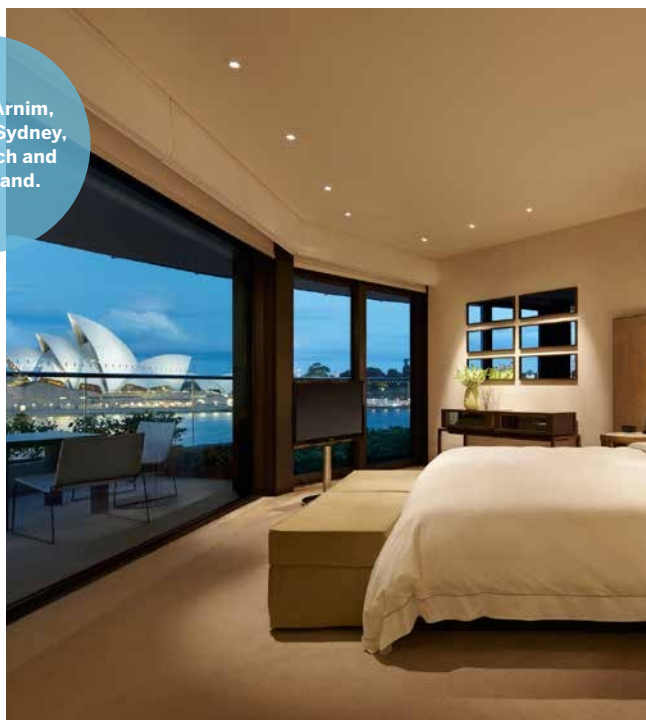
**BY EMMA SLOLEY**



## MARC VON ARNIM

General manager of the iconic Park Hyatt Sydney, with its dress-circle position right on the harbour, von Arnim recently relocated back to his prestigious Sydney post after several years in Asia.

Marc von Arnim, Park Hyatt Sydney, Manly Beach and New Zealand.



**EXCITING SYDNEY**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD:**

Inner-city Surry Hills is one of the city's most vibrant neighbourhoods. It's buzzing with wine bars, restaurants, gourmet food stores, and some of the best dining spots in Sydney.

**FAVOURITE ASPECT OF THE PARK HYATT SYDNEY:**

The location. I still remember the first time I walked into the hotel and saw the view of the Opera House ... even after all these years it continues to amaze me. Also, the Sydney Suite, located on the top floor, is a standout: It

offers the perfect mix of design and view.

**BEACH OR HARBOUR?**

Beach, especially Manly Beach.

**FAVOURITE INTERNATIONAL DESTINATION:**

My favourite place in the world is Italy. I love the countryside and exploring the little villages.

**FAVOURITE CLOSE-TO-HOME GETAWAY:**

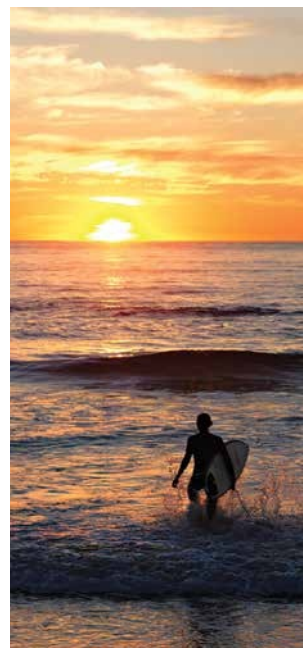
New Zealand. Just simply amazing scenery and some of the best boutique hotels in the world.

**MUST-PACK ESSENTIALS:**

My Beats by Dre headphones and an iPad loaded with my favourite music and movies.

**DESTINATION AT THE TOP OF YOUR LIST?**

I would love to go to Turkey.



(MANLY BEACH) EVA GALAMBOS; (BONDI BEACH) JASON LOUCAS; (NEW ZEALAND) SHAY YACOBINSKI/SHUTTERSTOCK; (BYRON BAY) SUSAN HARRIS/SHUTTERSTOCK

**HOMEGROWN FASHION**

**TALENTS TO WATCH:**

Christopher Esber, Elissa McGowan, Verner, and Strateas Carlucci.

**FAVOURITE PLACE TO BUY**

**FLOWERS:**

Grandiflora is unquestionably the best florist in Sydney.

**BEACH OR HARBOUR?**

Beach, definitely. I'm born and bred Bondi Beach, and my parents still live in the same house. My mum especially is a bit of an institution, walking her dogs and my French mastiff Rosie.

**FAVOURITE INTERNATIONAL**

**DESTINATION:**

France has become my home from home so it is at the top of my list. It's so familiar yet so different to my Australian upbringing, and I take great pleasure in that.

**FAVOURITE CLOSE-TO-HOME**

**GETAWAY:**

I have been visiting Byron Bay regularly for 25 years and have so many wonderful friends who live there. While there I feel like I slow down to a snail's pace and completely unwind. I need it and I love it!

**MUST-PACK ESSENTIALS:**

Crème de la Mer, the most luxurious skin care in the world. I love the extra-thick cream to wear like a mask on all my plane trips. Let's face it: When travelling so much, we all need to moisturise, moisturise, moisturise.

**DESTINATION AT THE TOP OF**

**YOUR LIST:**

China. Although originally

White Russian, both my mother and grandmother were born in mainland China, and they spent many years living in Hong Kong before moving to Australia when my mother was a teenager. Apart from the family connection, I have always had a fascination with China and have studied Chinese history and the Cultural Revolution.

Eva Galambos, the grassy knoll at North Bondi Beach, and Byron Bay.



EVA GALAMBOS

The stylish and influential founder of Parlour X, the trailblazing boutique that introduced Sydneysiders to cult designers such as Isabel Marant and Balenciaga.





## JUSTIN MILLER

This Sotheby's chairman turned private art advisor is known for his charismatic man-about-town style.

Justin Miller, Opera House Concourse and Mitchell Falls, the Kimberley.



**FAVOURITE WAY TO END**

**THE DAY IN SYDNEY:**

Stroll to **The Opera Bar** in the concourse approaching the **Opera House** for a sunset drink. Alternatively, wend through the Royal Botanic Garden in the late afternoon, take in the spectacular harbour vistas, and then head to Potts Point.

**HARBOUR OR BEACH?**

That's a little like asking if it's better to drink Burgundy or Champagne in France. Both are pretty fabulous. On balance, I would go for

beach in this country. For the energetic, head to **Bondi** and take a brisk stroll along the cliffs to **Tamarama**. For a slower-paced adventure, I like a leisurely ferry ride across the harbour to **Manly Beach** to enjoy lunch at Hugos restaurant.

**FAVOURITE INTERNATIONAL DESTINATIONS:**

Northern Italy and Southern California.

**FAVOURITE CLOSE-TO-HOME DESTINATION:**

**Palm Beach**. It's just an hour [away] but always so

special, overlooking the pristine Pittwater from the Boathouse.

**MUST-PACK ESSENTIALS:**

Good old-fashioned **foam earplugs** for the flight, and my very loud luggage. After a long haul I just hate looking at endless black bags as they are disgorged

onto the carousel ... and you certainly can't miss my lime-green number.

**DESTINATION AT THE TOP OF YOUR LIST:**

The pristine and ancient **Kimberley** region in northwestern Australia. It is so vast and its colours are so vibrant. VI

(JUSTIN MILLER) JASON LOUCAS (OPERA HOUSE CONCOURSE) VISUN KHANKASEM / SHUTTERSTOCK, (KIMBERLEY) JANELLE LUGGESHUTTERSTOCK



## UNLEASH YOUR WILD SIDE IN PATAGONIA

Remote and rugged, Patagonia is one of the last vestiges of untouched wilderness left on earth. **Australis** invites you to go wild in this untamed region on your choice of three-day voyages aboard our expedition ships. Cruise along the chiseled coast of Tierra del Fuego National Park while travelling round-trip from Punta Arenas, navigating Parry Fjords in Zodiacs, and exploring uninhabited Magdalena Island with its immense colony of Magellanic penguins. Or choose the round-trip Ushuaia route and be one of the rare few who have witnessed infamous Cape Horn.

Here at the “End of the Earth,” you can scale a rocky promontory (weather permitting) and pay homage to the intrepid explorers who lost their lives at this formidable spot. Hike Pia Glacier, trek through virgin Magellanic forest, and visit one of the region’s largest Yamana aboriginal settlements at Wulaia Bay. Australis’ expert expedition team joins you on board for fascinating talks on Patagonia’s history, geography, flora, and fauna, while the crew tends to your every need. Virtuoso guests who spend US\$50 (approx. AU\$53/NZ\$57) in the gift shop receive an extra US\$30 (approx. AU\$32/NZ\$34) credit.

Available September 2014 until April 2015. Fares **from US\$1,189** (approx. AU\$1,264/NZ\$1,364).



## CALIFORNIA DREAMIN’ WITH EXTRA RESORT CREDIT

You’re sure to have the sweetest of dreams at select Fairmont hotels and resorts in California. Spend three nights in a suite at **Fairmont San Francisco**, **Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa** or **Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows** and you’ll receive an additional US\$100 (approx. AU\$106/\$115) credit, courtesy of Virtuoso. That’s on top of your standard Virtuoso amenities, which already include US\$100 credits at each of these properties.

Enjoy a spa services credit in Sonoma, letting you indulge in the resort’s world-famous mineral waters while experiencing Wine Country living at its finest. Choose one of the newly renovated suites at the oceanfront Fairmont Miramar in Santa Monica and use your food and beverage credit to dine on locally sourced, organic fare at the acclaimed FIG restaurant. After a day of seeing renowned sights in San Francisco, use your dining credit to enjoy exceptional Pacific Rim cuisine at the hotel’s tropical Tonga Room.

Stay until 31 December 2014. Book by 15 September 2014. Contact your Virtuoso travel advisor for rates. Virtuoso guests also receive a room upgrade upon arrival (at time of booking for Miramar), if available; breakfast daily for two (continental at San Francisco); and early check-in and late checkout, if available.



## CHINA SEA HOLIDAY SPECTACULAR

Holidays are for relaxing, but a voyage with **Crystal Cruises** is for those who want to be moved. And if you book the 15-day China Sea Holiday Spectacular voyage, prepared to be moved in Hong Kong, where you’ll enjoy a privileged view from Victoria Harbour of a stunning fireworks display over the city’s renowned skyline. Can you imagine a better way to ring in the New Year? As you cruise roundtrip from Singapore, you’ll spend two nights each in Hong Kong and Ho Chi Minh City, along with full days in Sihanoukville and Nha Trang, letting you explore each of these fascinating locations in-depth.

During your time on board, you’ll enjoy Crystal’s award-winning six-star service, along with complimentary fine wines and premium spirits, pre-paid gratuities, delicious cuisine starring fresh ingredients from the new onboard herb garden, and specialty dining from the likes of celebrity chef Nobu Matsuhisa.

Virtuoso fares **from US\$7,880** (approx. AU\$8,376/NZ\$9,037) per person, including US\$600 (approx. AU\$638/NZ\$688) air allowance credit. Crystal Symphony departs 21 December 2014. Book by 29 August 2014. Virtuoso guests enjoy Voyager Club benefits, including complimentary shore event in Hong Kong, shipboard credit or custom credit; services of an onboard host; and welcome cocktail reception.



## CHOOSE YOUR AMENITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Cruise the Eastern Mediterranean with **Silversea** and enjoy your choice of Virtuoso Voyager Club amenities. You can spend a day in Sorrento with a private car and driver, exploring at your leisure. The Amalfi Coast is hailed as one of the most spectacular drives in the world, and you can stop to catch your breath at one beautiful spot after another. (Exploring the romantic town of Positano is a must.)

Alternatively, you can join a private tour from Ashdod to witness the many sacred sites of Jerusalem. Pass through the Jaffa Gate on your way into the Old City, visiting such fabled sites as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the golden-topped Dome of the Rock; a senior archeologist leads you on a tour of the Western Wall's Tunnels. Enjoy lunch at the Israel Museum; afterward, the museum curator leads you on a private tour to the Shrine of the Book where the Dead Sea Scrolls are housed. Aboard *Silver Wind*, you'll discover an elegantly relaxed lifestyle while sailing 10 days between Rome (Civitavecchia) and Athens (Piraeus). Also visit Messina, Crete, Limassol, Santorini, and Haifa for the chance to visit Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee.

Departs 21 October 2014. Oceanview fares **from US\$4,550** (approx. AU\$4,836/NZ\$5,218).



## A COOL WAY TO SPEND THE HOLIDAYS

Sure, you've seen a parade before—but have you ever seen one with thousands of Magellanic penguins? Embark on a holiday adventure cruise around Antarctica with **Seabourn** and Virtuoso Voyager Club will treat you to a full day at the Otway Bay Penguin Reserve outside Punta Arenas. Each year after months at sea, these adorable creatures return to Otway Bay to find mates and fill lucky observers with glee. Watch them waddle about in their tuxedoed best before you sit down to an exclusive tasting menu at one of the region's finest restaurants. The six-star *Seabourn Quest* carries you from Valparaiso to Buenos Aires on a 24-day voyage around Antarctica and Patagonia.

Spend five full days exploring the "White Continent," joining daily Zodiac landings (weather permitting) and digital photography workshops so you can capture all the majesty and wonder. Another overnight in Grytviken on South Georgia Island allows for the chance to explore its abandoned whaling station and visit the grave of polar explorer Ernest Shackleton. Other calls include Puerto Montt, Castro, Ushuaia, and Montevideo for an optional cellar tasting at Bouza Winery.

Departs 20 December 2014. Veranda Suite fares **from AU\$16,999** (approx. NZ\$18,337) per person.



## GET CREDIT FOR EXPLORING THE GALÁPAGOS

Intrepid adventurers like you deserve recognition—which is why **Lindblad Expeditions** is offering Virtuoso travellers a US\$50 (approx. AU\$53/NZ\$57) shipboard credit per cabin on its nine-night Galápagos expedition voyages. Explore the archipelago that Charles Darwin described as "a little world within itself," where magical encounters with animals—either curious or sublimely indifferent to humans—happen like nowhere else on earth. Each island is different, and the undersea world offers you a remarkable opportunity to snorkel amid shimmering fish, sea turtles, penguins and playful sea lions.

Travelling with Lindblad aboard *National Geographic Endeavour* or *National Geographic Islander*, you'll experience the Galápagos in a different, more in-depth way than any other company can offer. Walk among giant bird colonies and observe rare giant tortoises in the wild. Visit the Charles Darwin Research station and hike over lava flows as you uncover the marine iguana haven. You can go kayaking or observe the underwater wonders in a glass bottom boat (*Endeavour* only). A National Geographic photographer joins every voyage, as do world-renowned scientists, naturalists, and other experts.

Available every Friday and Saturday year-round. **From AU\$5,490** (approx. NZ\$5,922).





## CAVE IN ON A CAPPADOCIA ADVENTURE

Give into your desire for the world's most distinctive travel experiences at **Museum Hotel**, the first luxury hotel in Turkey's Cappadocia region. Words fail to describe this magical place, sculpted from Cappadocia's surreal landscape, ancient ruins such as the Uchisar Castle, and other historical features. Arrive to find a traditional flavours plate and special house wine waiting in your painstakingly preserved cave, one of just 30 totally unique rooms that transport you to another place and time.

Use your US\$100 (approx. AU\$106/NZ\$115) food and beverage credit for an unforgettable repast at Lil'a, the only Relais & Chateaux restaurant in Turkey. Rare dishes and local favourites are made with just-picked produce from the ecological garden; collect your own ingredients for a cookery lesson with the award-winning head chef. Practice at the golf driving range—the first at a UNESCO Heritage Site—and pamper yourself with a soothing massage using local herbs and oils. Let the hotel arrange a hot-air balloon ride, sunset cocktails in a hidden valley, or other memorable experience.

*Available through 31 December 2014. From EUR 300 (approx. AU\$434/NZ\$468) per night. Virtuoso guests also receive a room upgrade upon arrival, if available; and early check-in and late checkout.*



## ENJOY A PRIVATE PEEK AT THE BLUE DANUBE

Glide past fairytale castles and medieval villages on a Danube River cruise with **Tauck** and enjoy all private shore excursions along the way—that's a US\$1,469 (approx. AU\$1,561/NZ\$1,685) value! Spend two nights in Prague, sitting down to an exclusive dinner in the sixteenth-century Lobkowitz Palace and delighting in a private tour of Prague Castle and its Strahov Monastery's baroque libraries. Then embark your luxury river cruiser for a seven-night voyage along one of Europe's most historic waterways.

You'll tour Vienna's Schönbrunn Palace or the lavish royal apartments at the Hofburg before attending an Imperial evening with gala dinner and music at a Viennese palace—another Tauck exclusive. Spend a day in Mozart's Salzburg or medieval Cesky Krumlov, and sample fine Rieslings during a wine tasting in Dürnstein. Discuss current and historic events in Slovakia with a resident expert, and relax with nightly cultural performances aboard your riverboat. Your adventure ends with two nights in Budapest for the chance to explore its UNESCO-designated Castle Hill and dine at the grand Akademia Club. Much is included—gourmet regional cuisine, free-flowing wine, and premium spirits, even gratuities.

*Available until 23 October 2014. From US\$4,790 (approx. AU\$5,091/NZ\$5,493).*



## ROLLIN' ON THE RIVER IN SINGAPORE

Visitors to Singapore find many of the city-state's landmarks along its namesake river—including **The Fullerton Hotel Singapore**. Stay two nights or longer at this historic, stylishly chic hotel and receive two tickets for a leisurely boat ride. Watch the nightly light show from its rooftop bar.

*Available through 15 September 2014. From SGD430 (approx. AU\$366/NZ\$395) per night. Virtuoso guests also receive a room upgrade at booking, if available; buffet breakfast daily for two; Straits Club access; and more.*



## STAY AND PLAY ON SINGAPORE'S MARINA BAY

A visionary waterfront complex with open green spaces, upscale shopping and entertainment, Marina Bay is Singapore's newest playground. Book two nights or longer at **The Fullerton Bay Hotel** and enjoy a river boat ride for two, then use your SGD88 (approx. AU\$75/NZ\$81) credit (per room, per stay) at the new Clifford Pier restaurant.

*Available through 15 September 2014. From SGD550 (approx. AU\$468/NZ\$505) per night. Virtuoso guests also receive a room upgrade at booking, if available; buffet breakfast daily for two; and more.*

# EAST AFRICAN *FINERY*

***Kenyan-made  
showpieces with  
local colour.***

In Anna Trzebinski's studio, not far from Nairobi's Giraffe Centre **nature preserve**, women from area tribes bead, stitch, and embellish her indigenous-inspired designs. Trzebinski's creations (suede jackets, handbags, scarves, belts, sandals, and jewellery) further her mission to create sustainable employment for Kenyan women – and make for quintessentially African treasures. Case in point: this pashmina-and-silk scarf, embellished with **flamingo feathers** from the shores of Lake Nakuru in the Rift Valley. [sales@annatrzebinski.com](mailto:sales@annatrzebinski.com); [www.annatrzebinski.biz](http://www.annatrzebinski.biz). VI



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