Virtuoso Traveler

Welcome to VIRTUOSO TRAVELER, informing today's savvy travelers of insightful ways to explore the world in style. These trips are available only through a Virtuoso-accredited advisor.

We make a world of difference in the way you experience travel.

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EXPECT THE WORLD

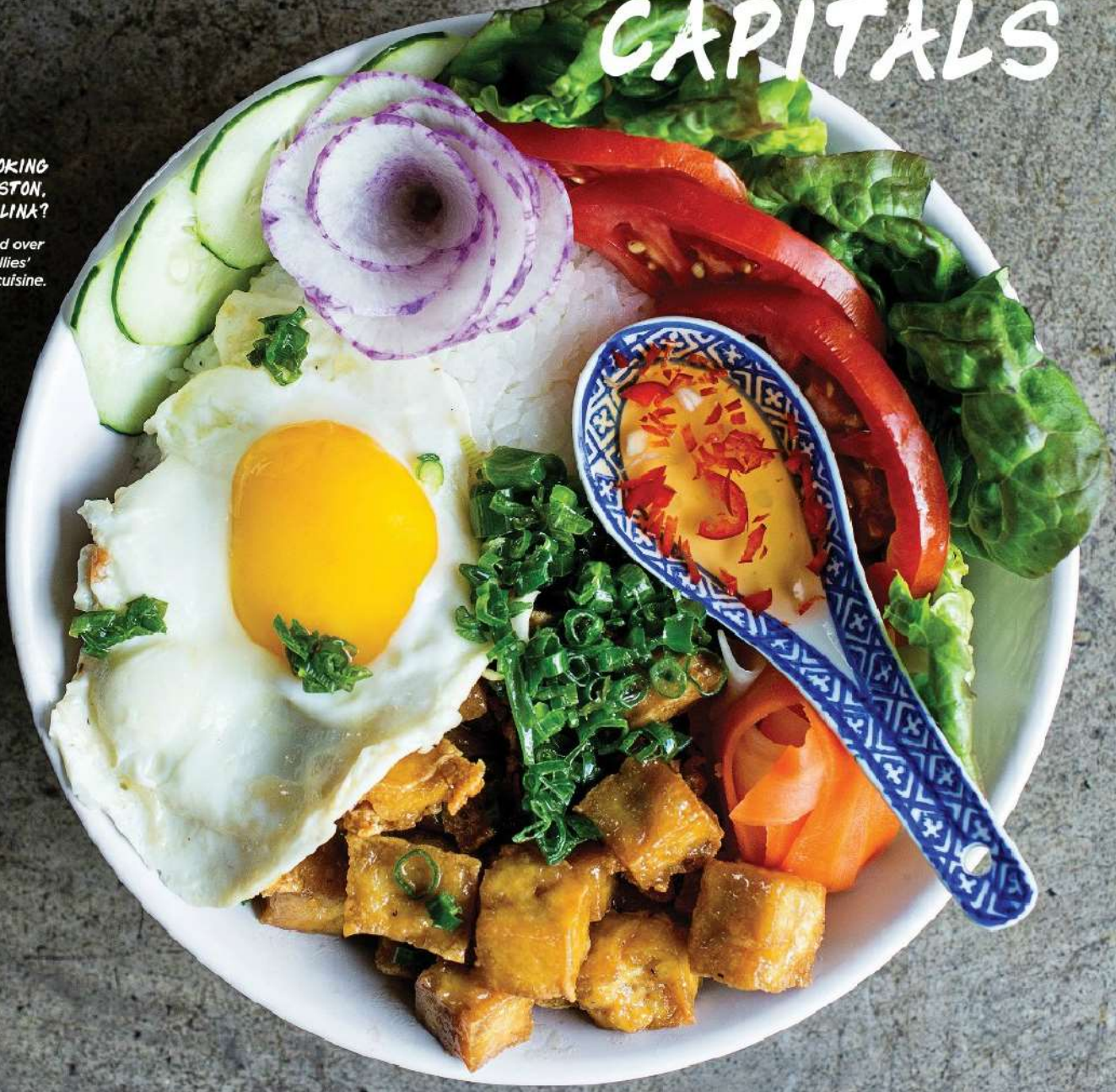
Virtuoso Traveler

OCTOBER | NOVEMBER 2017

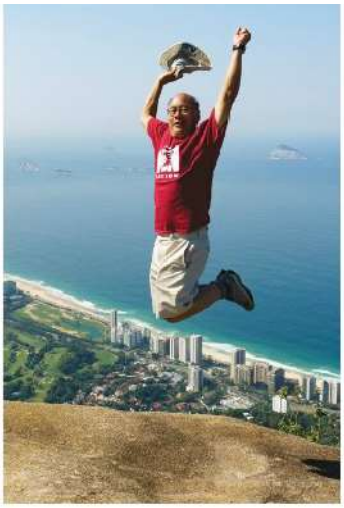
NEW CULINARY CAPITALS

WHAT'S COOKING IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA?

We're bowled over by Pink Bellies' Vietnamese cuisine.



CHARLESTON / AUCKLAND / JOSÉ IGNACIO, URUGUAY
TEL AVIV / PORTLAND, MAINE / TORONTO



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To make your adventure even more tailored to your tastes, we feature several themed cruises, such as our ***Connoisseur Collection*** itineraries, which include foodie-focused excursions during your voyage through France. It's an experience any French gourmand will love, with visits to local vineyards (and plenty of samples), tours to illustrious restaurants and several culinary surprises along the way.

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–Stephanie, Paris & Normandy

"Ship was absolutely gorgeous. Staff and Crew were wonderful – caring, helpful, professional, and efficient. Food and food service were beyond any expectations I had."

–Carol, Paris & Normandy

"Absolutely first class in every way – the excursions, our hosts, accommodation, food."

–David, Paris & Normandy

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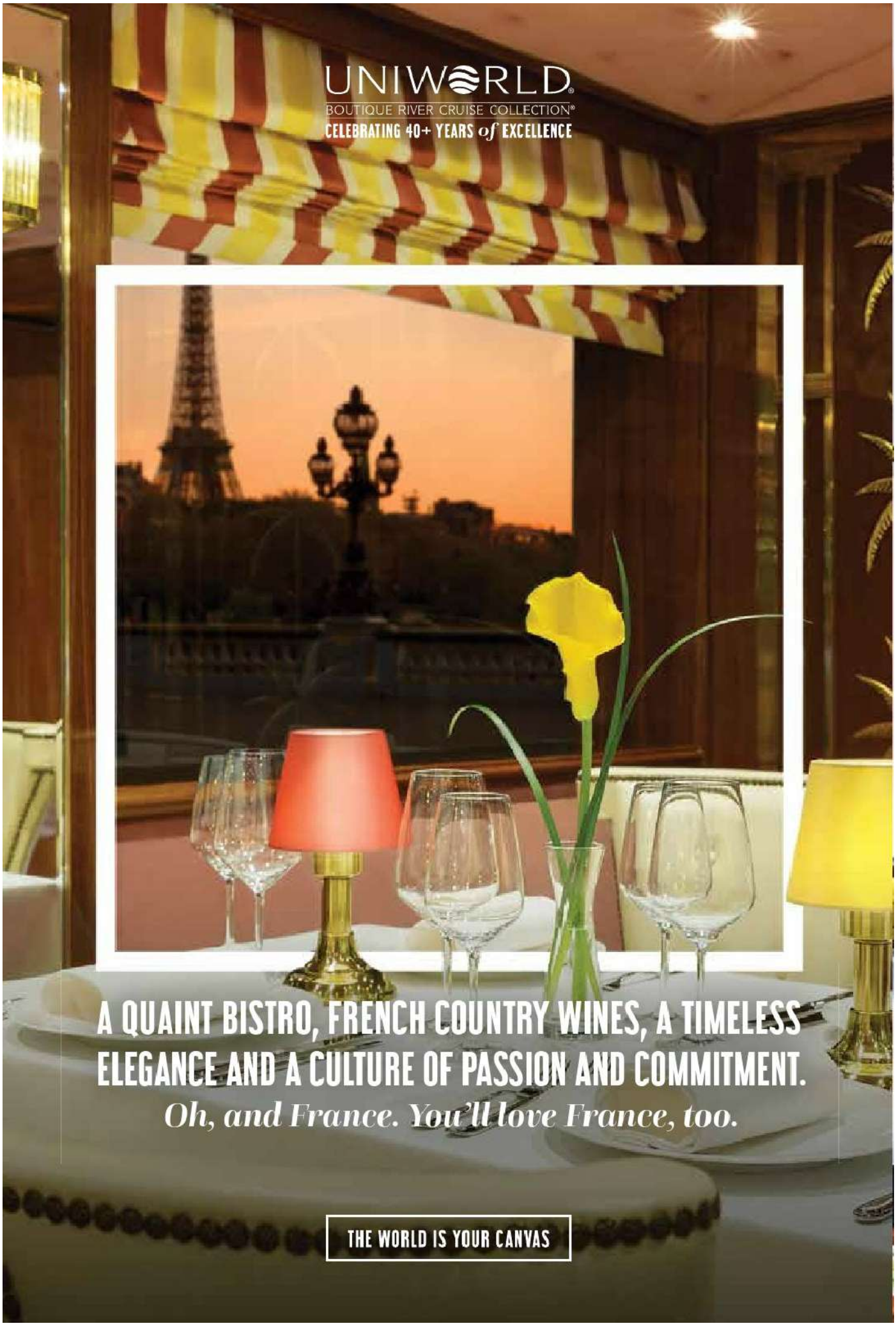
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On the ship, you'll enjoy a mix of five-star-caliber meals and homemade comfort foods, influenced by the savory style of world-renowned chef Bea Tollman—founder of our sister Red Carnation Hotel Collection. To travel is to eat well, and you'll do just that onboard.

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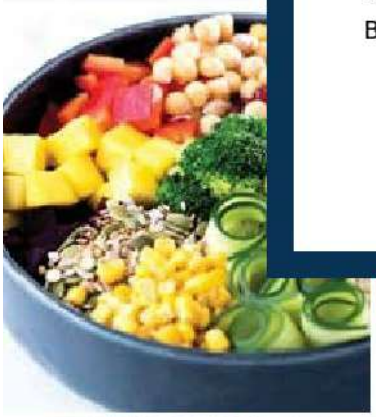

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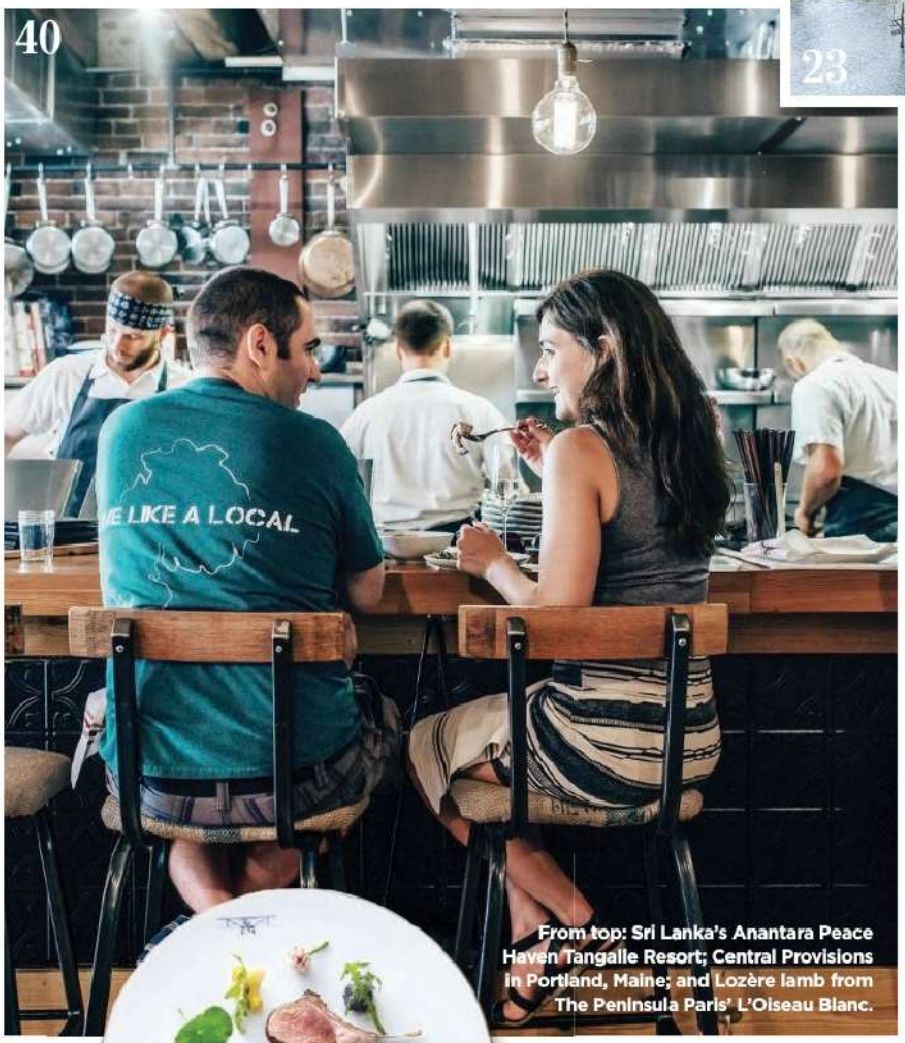

From top: Sri Lanka's Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort; Central Provisions in Portland, Maine; and Lozère lamb from The Peninsula Paris' L'Oiseau Blanc.

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NEW CULINARY CAPITALS

Our dish on great meals in unexpected cities, from Toronto to Tel Aviv.

ON THE COVER *A lemongrass tofu rice bowl from Pink Bellies, a Vietnamese restaurant stall at Charleston's Workshop food emporium.*
COVER PHOTO BY ANDREW CEBULKA

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(CENTRAL PROVISIONS) PETER FRANK EDWARDS/REDUX, (LAMB) PASCAL ANZIANI

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Virtuoso connects travelers to the world's top travel advisors, along with a coveted portfolio of nearly 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.

For starters: *Breakfast at Le Sirenuse hotel overlooking Italy's Amalfi Coast.*

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• 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.

• 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.

• 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).

• 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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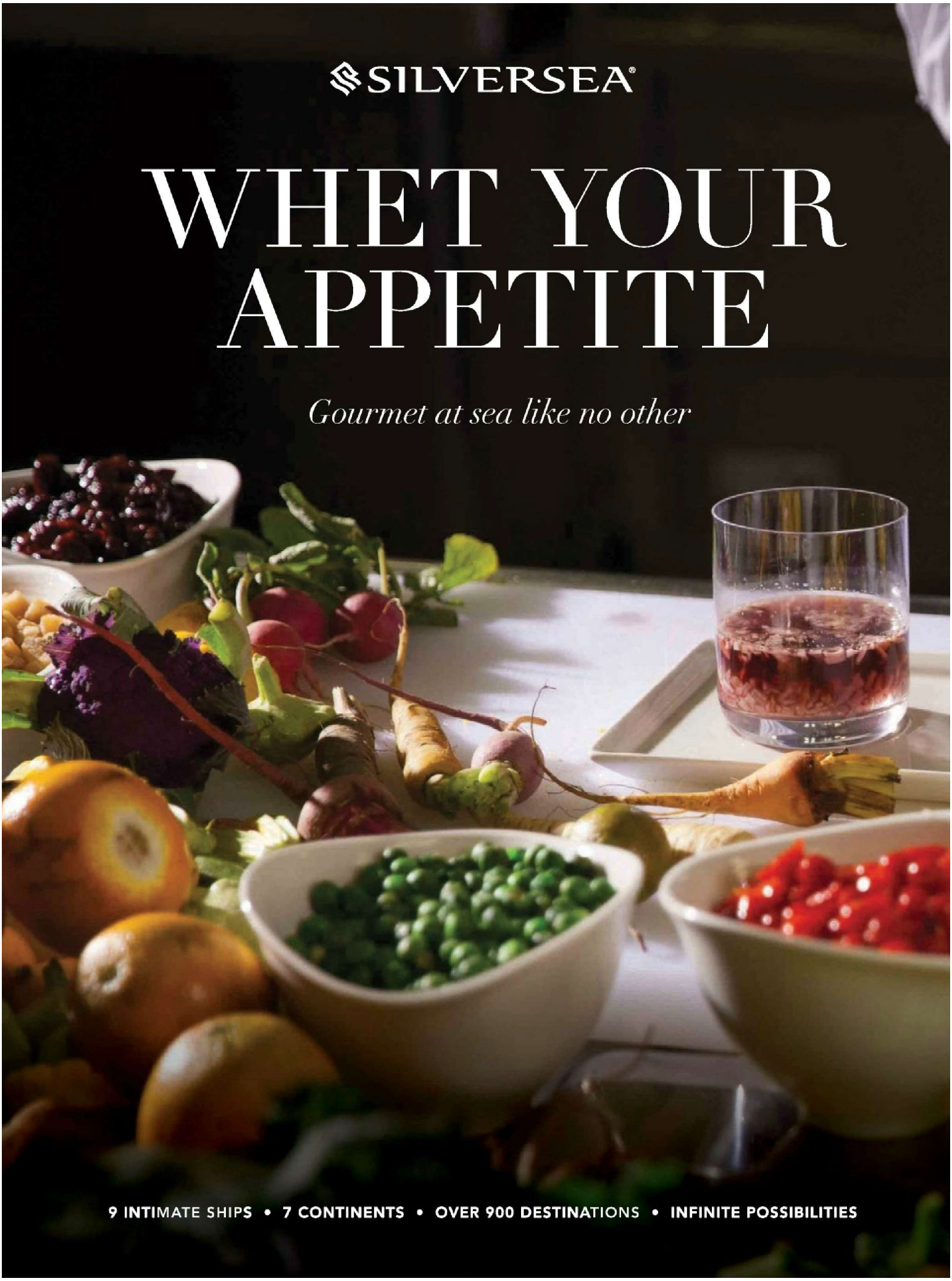
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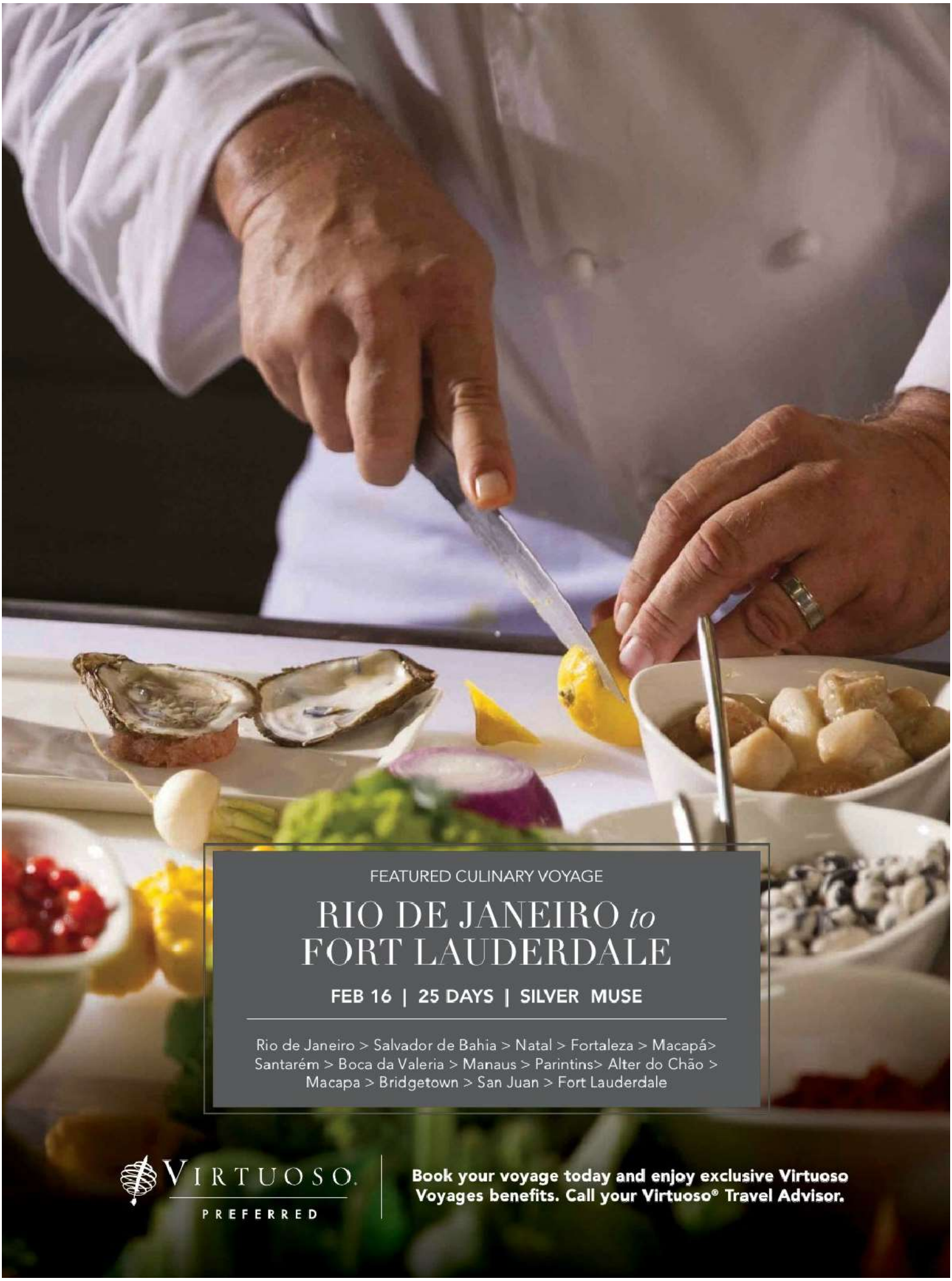

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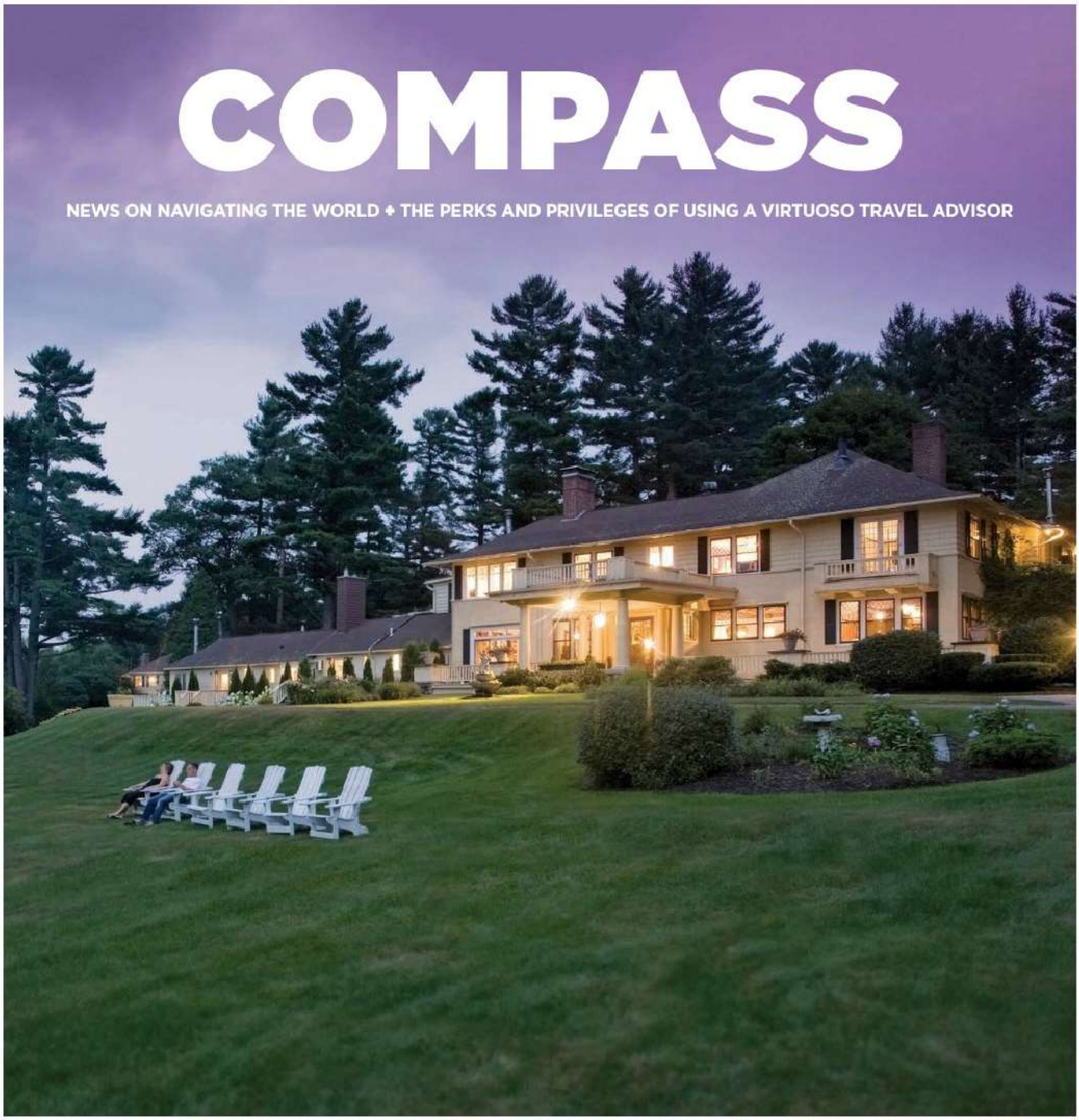
COMPASS

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



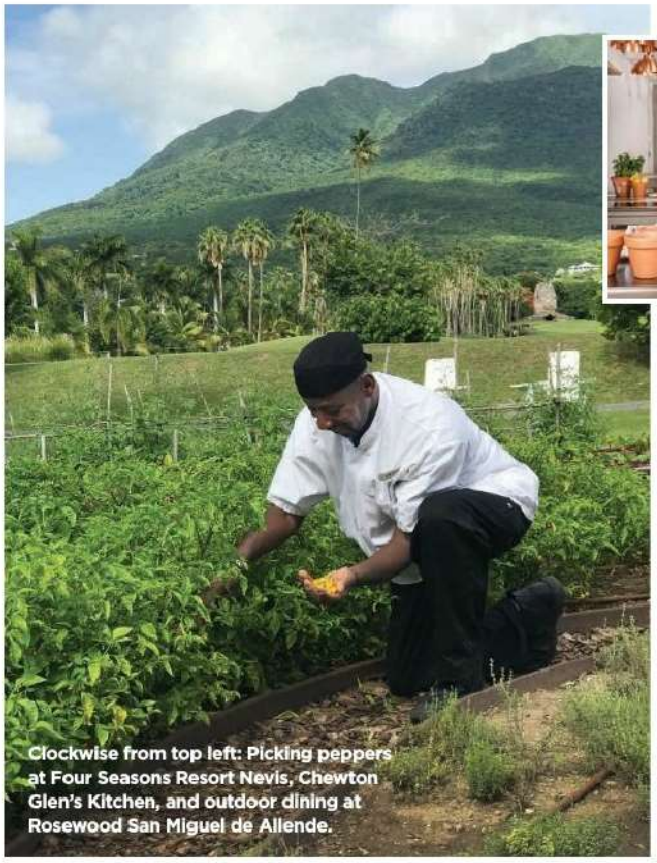
DINNER DATE Fall in New Hampshire promises eye-popping foliage, an endless supply of apple cider, and, at **The Manor on Golden Pond**, a new gourmet tradition. The 24-room inn's Supper Club, held year-round on the first Friday of the month, allows executive chef Jeff Woolley to showcase the seasonal bounty of the Lakes Region. Woolley sources the five-course meal's ingredients exclusively from surrounding farms and suppliers – in October and November, plan to feast on squash, pumpkin, slow-roasted lamb, and **apple-cider doughnuts**. Dinners, limited to 25 guests, are held in the inn's M Bistro when the weather gets chilly (alfresco during spring and summer), and feature pairings from a local winery or distillery. Afterward, curl up by your guest room's fireplace. *Doubles from $235; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $50 spa credit per person. Supper Club, $65.*

COMPASS IS REPORTED BY COSTAS CHRIST, SUSAN HANSON, AND JEN LYONS.

CHECK-IN

IN GOOD TASTE

Whether you've got an hour or an entire day, these hotels offer culinary-focused experiences designed to immerse you in your surroundings.



Clockwise from top left: Picking peppers at Four Seasons Resort Nevis, Chewton Glen's Kitchen, and outdoor dining at Rosewood San Miguel de Allende.

- Nevisians give their hot sauce an island twist by sweetening it with a little pawpaw (papaya). Local condiment pro Llewellyn Clarke joins **Four Seasons Resort Nevis**' executive chef Samuel Faggetti to teach amateur cooks how to make the 246-room resort's Paw Paw Pepper Sauce during a lesson in the Neve restaurant. You'll leave with your own **souvenir bottle**. *Doubles from $585; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 spa or golf credit. Hot sauce class, $100.* \

- New this year at Mexico's 67-room **Rosewood San Miguel de Allende**: Los Pirules, a colorful outdoor space with two kitchens, communal seating, a garden, and a fire pit. Guests can sign up for private **chef-led courses** that begin with a trip to the local market and end with a celebratory feast, complete with a tequila toast. *Doubles from $410; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 spa credit. Private cooking class, $150.* \\

- Spanish marine biologist Anna Bozzano is the only person authorized by the Port of Barcelona to lead visitors through the **Barceloneta fish market**. That's good news for those staying at the 275-room **Majestic Hotel & Spa**, who can join Bozzano to witness the market's frenzied auction, then taste the day's catches over dinner at the hotel. *Doubles from $290; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 dining credit. Fish market experience from $760 for two.* \\\

- With sustainability in mind, Thailand's **Six Senses Samui** converts its organic waste into nutrient-rich soil that helps fertilize the 66-room resort's new **Farm on the Hill**. Guests can volunteer to feed goats, collect eggs, and gather fresh produce. Afterward, settle in for a Thai barbecue, served under the farm's sala. *Doubles from $435; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a complimentary 50-minute massage for two. Private farm dinner from $120.* \\\\

- Celebrity chef James Martin – he hosted the BBC's *Saturday Kitchen* series – returned to **Chewton Glen** in Hampshire, England, this year to oversee The Kitchen, the 70-room hotel's new **cooking school**. Sign up for an afternoon course in gluten-free baking or cheesemaking, or get serious about your culinary chops during a full-day, hands-on program. *Doubles from $421; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 hotel credit. Full-day cooking courses from $227.* \\\\\

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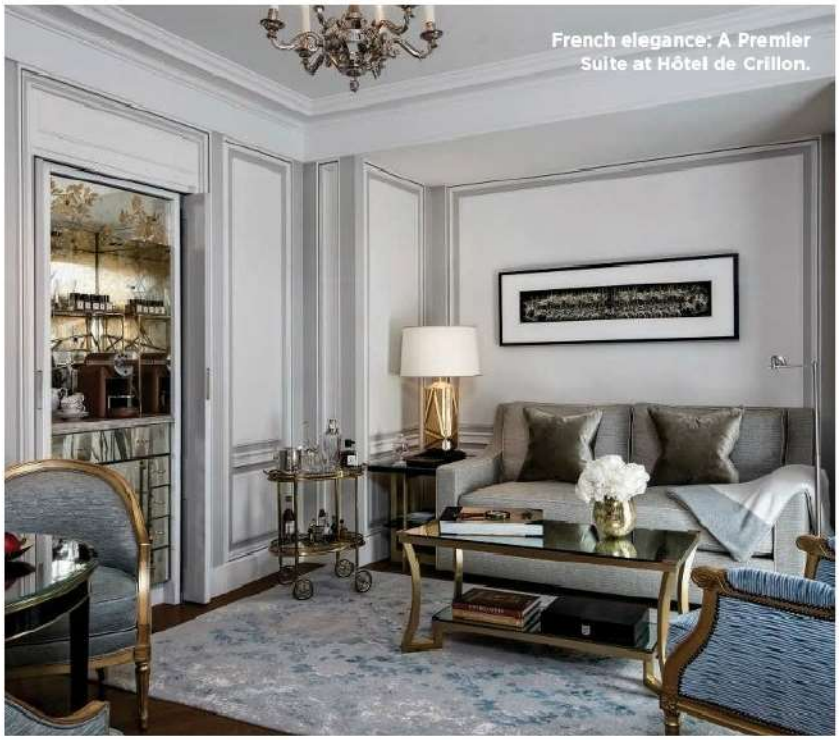
CHECK-IN

PARIS BECKONS

The City of Light shines a bit brighter these days, thanks to the return of the iconic **Hôtel de Crillon, a Rosewood Hotel** in the place de la Concorde. After a four-year, multimillion-dollar renovation, the 124-room hotel reopened its neoclassical doors in July. Master craftspeople and French artisans took meticulous care to preserve the palatial 1758 building, while giving it new life via revamped guest rooms; sophisticated, art-driven public spaces; an **indoor pool** with a glass ceiling; and the new Les Ambassadeurs lounge. *Doubles from $1,410; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 dining credit.*



French elegance: A Premier Suite at Hôtel de Crillon.

DOWN ON THE RANCH

As travelers continue to look for more ways to calm their minds and bodies on vacation, wellness pioneer Canyon Ranch is keeping its healthy-living options fresh. Massachusetts' 126-room **Canyon Ranch Lenox** recently completed an overhaul on its Bellefontaine dining room, giving it a clean, modern look to complement the resort's cuisine. And out West at the 158-room **Canyon Ranch Tucson**, new sound healing programs utilize crystal singing bowls and voice vibrations to relieve old emotional and energetic blockages. Serenity now. *All-inclusive doubles from $1,600; Virtuoso travelers receive complimentary Wi-Fi and a $155 wellness credit.*

5 REASONS TO LOVE:
INN AT PERRY CABIN BY BELMOND

COME SAIL AWAY

When Washington, D.C.-based Virtuoso travel advisor Leslie Canter wants to escape the city, here's why she heads to this 78-room inn on **Maryland's Eastern Shore.**

❶ **THE VIEWS.** "The inn is great for couples and families. Adirondack chairs facing Chesapeake Bay offer subtle encouragement to wind down."

❷ **SAILING.** "Guests can sign up for lessons at the on-site academy. Another fun option: Take a sailboat transfer from Edgewater, Maryland, to the hotel, enjoying canapés and Champagne on board while avoiding the traffic on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge."

❸ **MANY WAYS TO RELAX.** "The perfect afternoon: a seasonal scrub and massage at the Linden Spa, followed by an hour at the infinity pool and then winetasting with the inn's resident expert."

❹ **CUISINE.** "At Stars restaurant, grab a table overlooking the harbor to watch the sun sink below the bay while dining on line-caught rockfish and other locally sourced seafood."

❺ **THE SURROUNDINGS.** "I recommend a one-bedroom Water View Luxury Suite. There's a living area with a fireplace, and the spacious deck invites you to relax and truly feel away from it all."

STAY: *Doubles from $400; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 hotel credit.*

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BON VOYAGE

HOPS TO IT

As with wine grapes, the terroir in which hops are grown dramatically influences their flavor, and thus the taste of beers brewed with them. Those hops used in the earliest European beers are designated as "noble hops," and today just four varieties bear this elevated title – all of which are grown in Germany and the Czech Republic. Enthusiasts can compare the region's famous lagers and pilsners while joining pub crawls, brewery tours, and a **beer-pairing dinner** during a ten-day journey with **Avalon Waterways** that includes an eight-day Danube River cruise through Germany, Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary, along with a two-night stay in Prague. *Departures: April 4 (aboard the 166-passenger* Passion*) and November 2 (164-passenger* Expression*), 2018; from $2,168.*

ONE FOR THE BOOKS

Culinarians can now turn their home into the hands-on demonstration kitchen found aboard **Regent Seven Seas Cruises**' flagship, *Seven Seas Explorer*, thanks to ***Culinary Arts Kitchen Recipes***. The beautifully photographed cookbook features more than 100 recipes from the ship's classes, ranging from modern Nordic to Spanish tapas and high tea inspired by *Downton Abbey*.

TABLE TALK

A growing wave of creative culinary options is keeping things fresh and fun on the high seas. Set sail for these three new dining venues.

❶ GOURMET BURGERS @ QSINE

Cruisers aboard **Celebrity Cruises**' *Celebrity Constellation* can now order inventive gourmet burgers at this pop-up venue set in the ship's new Qsine restaurant. As part of its recent refurbishment, *Constellation* also added a Rooftop Terrace for the cruise line's A Taste of Film event. **WHAT TO ORDER:** The WTF Burger, with aged white cheddar, crispy onion straws, and black pepper bacon.

❷ RUDI'S SEL DE MER

Created by chef Rudi Sodamin, Sel de Mer, the intimate French brasserie found aboard *Koningsdam*, has been such a hit that **Holland America Line** recently launched it as a pop-up in the Pinnacle Grill aboard five of its ships, including the newly updated *Westerdam*. (Sel will debut on *Zuiderdam* in November.) **WHAT TO ORDER:** Fruits de mer, salt-crusted baked branzino.

❸ RAW JUICE AND SMOOTHIE BAR

Oceania Cruises' guests are feeling the squeeze at the only raw juice and vegan smoothie bar at sea. Located on the pool decks of *Marina* and *Riviera*, it serves fresh, cold-pressed beverages every morning as part of Oceania's expanded vegan offerings fleetwide. **WHAT TO ORDER:** Cacao Joy smoothie, Sweet Green juice.

Westerdam's revamp also added the new Gallery Bar and Lido Market, along with the first **Rijksmuseum at Sea** and Lincoln Center Stage.

(*RIVIERA*) OCEANIA CRUISES, (RED SMOOTHIE) DANILSNEGMB/GETTY IMAGES, (GREEN SMOOTHIE) KARANDAEV/GETTY IMAGES

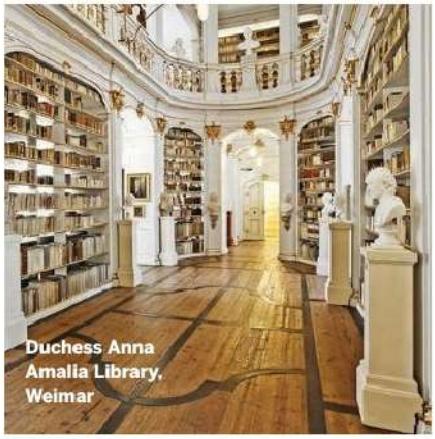
Explore Thuringia: The Beating Heart of Germany

Germany beckons travelers with a delightful blend of medieval towns, cosmopolitan cities, and a treasure trove of cultural, artistic, and architectural attractions.

In the heart of Germany, discover a world of history in enchanting **Thuringia**. Centrally located to both Berlin and Munich, the tiny state spans unspoiled countryside and beautifully preserved Old Towns filled with legendary castles, formidable fortresses, beautiful churches, and rich traditions.

Encounter the Middle Ages in **Erfurt**, the idyllic riverside capital of Thuringia. Visit the oldest synagogue in Central Europe. Its 11th-century stone walls house the rare **Erfurt Treasure** and a collection of medieval Jewish manuscripts. Over the Gera River, the 600-year-old **Merchants' Bridge** is the landmark of Erfurt known for the longest series of inhabited buildings of any bridge in Europe. Its cluster of half-timbered shops display handmade wares and handblown glassware. Explore 8th-century **St. Mary's Cathedral**, where Martin Luther took holy orders in 1507, and spend the night where he once lived and worked, in the unique cloistral atmosphere of the 700-year-old **Augustinian Monastery**.

At the edge of the Thuringian Forest find charming **Weimar**, historic epicenter of the German Enlightenment and home of creative trailblazers such as Goethe, Schiller, Bach, Nietzsche, Kandinsky, and the list goes on. Explore Rococo Hall at the **Duchess Anna Amalia Library**, home of the world's largest Faust collection by Goethe of its kind. Weimar is also where Walter Gropius founded the influential Bauhaus Movement in 1919, and you can witness distinctive examples of Bauhaus architecture by visiting **Theaterplatz**, **Haus Am Horn**, and **Bauhaus University**.

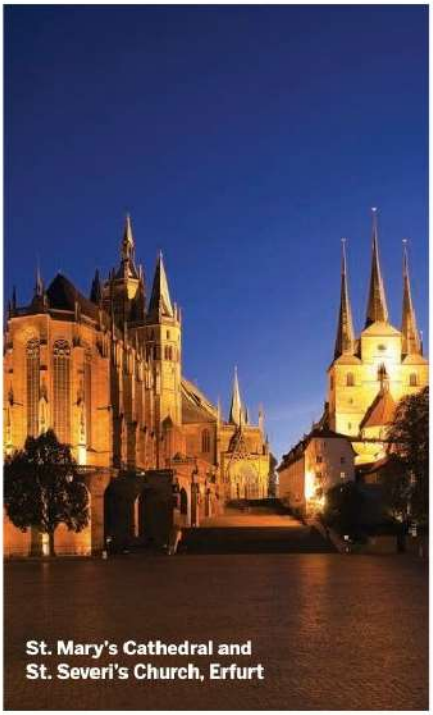

Duchess Anna Amalia Library, Weimar

Beef Roulade with Potato Dumplings

On the eastern side of Thuringia, discover **Eisenach**, renowned birthplace of German Lutheranism. Visit UNESCO World Heritage site, **Wartburg Castle**, looming majestically above the town. The 16th-century fortress provided refuge for Martin Luther after he was excommunicated, and you can stand in the very room where he translated the New Testament into German.

In addition to Thuringia's historic landmarks, no visit is complete without sampling its culinary riches as well. Savor spicy sausage known as **Thüringer Bratwurst**, its secret recipe dating back to 1613. And enjoy **traditional potato dumplings** served with roasted meat and red cabbage. Cakes play an integral role in Thuringian fare, served for breakfast, coffee breaks and even midnight snacks. For centuries, the currant-studded **Butter Stollen** cake, stuffed with candied fruit, has been a traditional Christmas favorite.

Experience the culinary, historic, and cultural gems of Thuringia, and enjoy first-class service, when you connect with your Virtuoso® travel advisor to plan your trip.


St. Mary's Cathedral and St. Severi's Church, Erfurt

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ON TOUR

Whisky a-Go-Go

Dating to the fifteenth century, Scotland's "water of life" always tastes best in its birthplace. Here, three ways to sip wee drams in style.

❶ Your travel advisor can work with one of Virtuoso's local tour providers, **Adams & Butler**, to create a tailor-made eight-day trip that travels along Speyside's Malt Whisky Trail. *Departures: Any day through December 31, 2018; from £6,040 (approx. $8,100).*

Tasting Notes: A journey through the Highlands along the "Road to the Isles" ends with a ferry ride to the Isle of Skye for a tour of the Talisker Distillery to taste its fiery single malts.

Other Flavors: Scotland and castles go together like 18-year-old Macallan and chocolate soufflé. Glamis Castle, legendary setting for Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and the iconic, oft-photographed Eilean Donan are just two of the many famous fortresses visited.

❷ Highlights of **Kensington Tours'** nine-day, dram-filled personalized journey include visits to medieval St Andrews on Fife's east coast and the resort town of Aviemore in the Highlands' Cairngorms National Park. *Departures: Any day April 1 through June 30, 2018; from $5,445.*

Tasting Notes: A visit to the Speyside Cooperage reveals the important role that oak casks play in whisky making. Taste the effects during tours of Glenlivet, Dalwhinnie, and other classic distilleries.

Other Flavors: Given that Scotland is also the birthplace of golf, a few rounds on some of its famed links courses are a must. Practice your

bump-and-run at St Andrews, Carnoustie, and Kingsbarns.

❸ Rail through Speyside and the Highlands aboard the mahogany-lined **Belmond Royal Scotsman** during a five-day whisky-themed train journey round-trip from Edinburgh. *Departures: Multiple dates, April 12 through October 14, 2018; from £4,093 (approx. $5,380).*

Tasting Notes: On board, choose from a selection of more than 60 single malts. An ambassador from the Scotch Malt Whisky Society also hosts a tasting in the train's observation car, while private tours of the Glen Ord and Strathisla distilleries include nosings straight from the cask.

Other Flavors: The Rothiemurchus estate near Aviemore boasts some of the country's last remaining ancient pine forest. Fly-fishing, clay pigeon-shooting, and other country pursuits are also on hand.

GET SOCIAL

Breaking bread with locals just got easier, thanks to the social-eating app **VizEat**. Through a new partnership, your Virtuoso advisor can mix the immersive culinary experience into a customized vacation that can feature a hands-on cooking class, a market tour, and **dinner in a host's home**.

VINE TIME

"The **Napa and Sonoma valleys** are 50 shades of green – on steroids!" muses Virtuoso travel advisor Limor Decter of New York City. "The scenery evokes Tuscany, the sun shines almost year-round, and the region's restaurants and wineries, set in a number of charming towns, highlight the best of the local bounty." A few noteworthy stops: Saint Helena's **Meadowood Napa Valley** resort and the **Farmhouse Inn** near Healdsburg, which Decter says "evoke a home-away-from-home feel, with Michelin-starred farm-to-table restaurants." Your travel advisor can work with one of Virtuoso's on-site tour providers, **American Excursionist**, to craft a customized five-day gourmet getaway that includes both venues, along with plentiful private tastings and tours at exclusive vineyards and artisanal food producers. *Departures: Any day through March 16, 2018; from $15,250 (per couple).*

(TALISKER) PETER CHADWICK/ALAMY; (VIZEAT) SERVANE ROY BERTON

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GOODS & GADGETS

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❶ WINE ON WHEELS

Bring your new favorite vintages home with the TSA-approved **VinGarde Valise Grand 04**, which holds 12 bottles in a sturdy polycarbonate travel case. Spinning wheels and multiple padding shapes ensure safe and easy transport of everything from Champagne to Bordeaux. *$300, wineenthusiast.com.*

❷ CONVENIENT CUTLERY

Designed with stainless-steel handles and bamboo tips, Japanese outdoor purveyor Snow Peak's collapsible **Wabuki chopsticks** come with a durable carrying case, so you'll always be ready for sushi or a bowl of ramen. *$40, snowpeak.com.*

❸ PICNIC TIME

Dine alfresco with the **Pendleton roll-up blanket**, available in four of the company's iconic wool plaids. It's backed with wipe-clean nylon and boasts a handle for easy carrying. *$139, pendleton-usa.com.*

❹ CARRY ON

Be prepared to enjoy the local wine with the **Boomerang corkscrew** – a built-in foil cutter instead of a blade makes it airport-security-friendly. *$11, amazon.com.*

❺ TRAVEL PERKS

For perfect portable espresso, the **Handpresso Outdoor Set** features a pump with a pressure gauge, an insulated thermos, and four cups for sharing with travel companions. *$130, backcountry.com.*

❻ TAKE A GOOD SIP

S'well's insulated water bottles keep drinks cold for 24 hours or hot for 12. While they're available in a bevy of colors and designs, we love the city-inspired Destination Collection. Bonus: Proceeds help provide clean, safe drinking water around the world. *$25, swellbottle.com.*

ON THE FLY

Wine at 30K Feet

When it comes to serving quality vintages, the sky's the limit for today's top airlines.

Emirates pours it on and (inset) Master of Wine Jeannie Cho Lee.

SINGAPORE AIRLINES Asia's first Master of Wine, Jeannie Cho Lee is among the superior palates who put together Singapore's in-air wine menu. **ONES TO SIP:** Château Peyrabon Haut-Médoc 2010, Krug NV Brut Grande Cuvée (first class).

EMIRATES The airline builds long-term relationships with winemakers for an impressive selection of vintages not freely available on the market. **ONES TO SIP:** Château Pavie Saint-Émilion Grand Cru 2011, Dom Pérignon 2006 (first class).

QANTAS AIRWAYS Qantas shows local vintners the love with a list of more than 250 of Australia's finest bottles. **ONES TO SIP:** Leeuwin Estate Art Series Cabernet Sauvignon 2012, Wirra Wirra RSW Shiraz 2010 (first class).

GUM'S THE WORD

Travelers who experience ear pain caused by cabin pressure find flavorful relief with **Air France**, which now offers a choice of pistachio-macaron or crème brûlée **all-natural chewing gum** on select long-haul flights and in Paris lounges.

PLAY TAG Navigate your way to Dam Square and other sites around Amsterdam with **KLM Royal Dutch Airlines**' new **smart audio luggage tags**, which use GPS technology to provide visitors with verbal tips about locations throughout the city.

POSTCARD

TAKING IT ALL IN

A Chicago-area family gains a grand perspective while traveling in Ireland.

IN THE MOMENT

"We had waited a few days for good weather before setting out on a spectacular hike along the **Cliffs of Moher**," says Virtuoso traveler Laura Christensen of Wheaton, Illinois. "When we stopped to take in this breathtaking view, it gave me such joy to watch my youngest daughter and niece [pictured]. The rugged beauty, fresh scent of grass, warm sunshine, and ocean breezes made them feel so alive – like the world was theirs to explore and cherish."

THE TRIP

Christensen and her husband, along with their young-adult son, daughter, and niece, spent eight days on the Emerald Isle last summer pursuing their various passions – which meant plenty of golf for the guys, and day trips to iconic sites for the girls, before **reuniting at local pubs** for dinner.

WHERE NEXT?

The family is still basking in the afterglow of a recent Iceland self-drive adventure planned by Naperville, Illinois-based Virtuoso travel advisor Kathy Moran. "We made a wish list of the places we wanted to see, and Kathy pulled it all together into an incredible trip of a lifetime," says Christensen. On the horizon: The landscape architect and her husband have vacations planned to see **Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater house** in Pennsylvania and the Netherlands' **Keukenhof gardens.**

TIP

"Choose some **'home base' towns** and spend a few nights there. That reduces drive times to the places you want to visit and lets you relax a little. It also allows you to plan around the weather, which is especially important in rainy Ireland."

– Virtuoso traveler Laura Christensen

On top of the world: Contemplating the views from Ireland's Cliffs of Moher.

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

GOOD READS

Chef Ned Bell's crab tacos.

BOOK FARE

New food-focused tomes to dig into now.

- In 2014, chef Ned Bell took a break from his post at Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver to pedal across Canada in an effort to raise awareness about seafood sustainability. The founder of the nonprofit Chefs for Oceans – and, since 2016, executive chef of Vancouver Aquarium's Ocean Wise program – continues to follow his passion as the author of ***Lure: Sustainable Seafood Recipes from the West Coast***. Bell's challenge to readers: Make ocean-friendly choices once a week for a year. *$30, amazon.com.*

- Claude Monet is famed for his canvases of haystacks and water lilies, but not so much for his soufflés and tarte tatin. In ***The Monet Cookbook: Recipes from Giverny***, Florence Gentner combines reproductions of Monet's paintings with 60 recipes from his personal journals for a culinary work that leaves a lasting impression. *$35, longitudebooks.com.*

- James Beard called the original *Roadfood*, published in 1977, "a book that you should carry with you, no matter where you are going in these United States." In the updated anniversary edition, ***Roadfood: An Eater's Guide to More Than 1,000 of the Best Local Hot Spots and Hidden Gems Across America***, Jane and Michael Stern add some 200 new steak houses, lobster shacks, and other mouthwatering stops on the ultimate foodie road trip. *$23, penguinrandomhouse.com.*

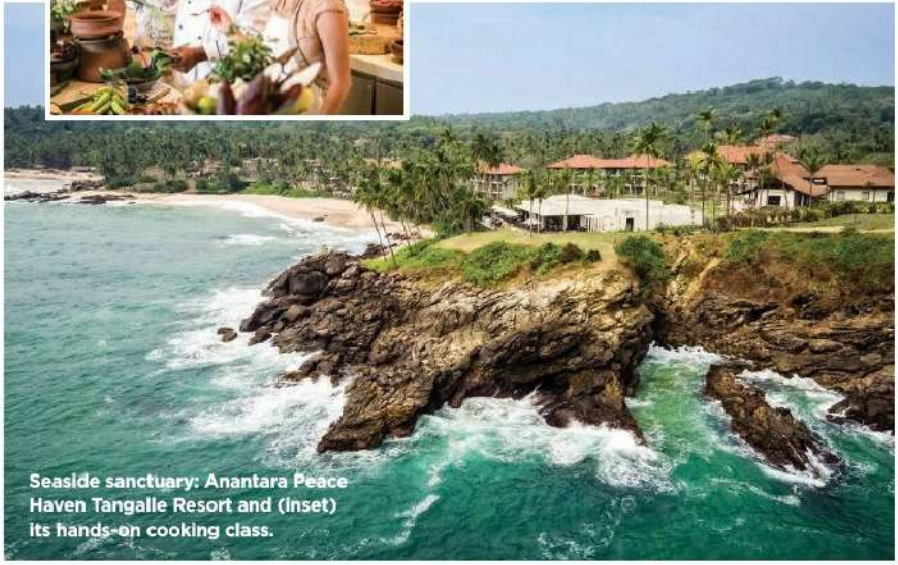
GOOD GOING

SAVORING SRI LANKA

The United Nations has declared 2017 as the Year of Sustainable Tourism. Here's how one resort is working to preserve traditional foodways on the "Spice Island."

Among the many good reasons to set your travel compass for Sri Lanka is the little-known fact that this beautiful island nation was one of the first countries to make sustainable tourism a national priority. Slightly larger than West Virginia, it's home to an astonishing *eight* UNESCO World Heritage sites. And the tiny country doubles as a **top wildlife destination**: One of the largest elephant migrations in Asia, dubbed "The Gathering," occurs here, while just offshore is perhaps the single best place on the planet to see the world's largest mammal – the blue whale – up close. Cultural authenticity also reigns supreme, including the annual Hindu festival of Kataragama, attended by thousands of colorfully dressed devotees. Stunning beaches, misty mountain tea estates (think classic Ceylon), and traditional Ayurvedic wellness retreats add to the island's allure, as does a renewed focus on its rich culinary heritage.

With the recent opening of **Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort** on the south coast, Sri Lanka is fast emerging as a foodie hot spot. Peek into the kitchens at many of Asia's finest resorts, and chances are you'll find Sri Lankan chefs creating the culinary magic. On their home turf (the country was known for centuries as the Spice Island), they're proud to show off and preserve their native cuisine. At Anantara, guests can take private cooking classes to learn how to make local dishes such as *wambatu moju* (an extremely tasty combination of eggplant, onions, green chilies, and lime) and Sri Lankan-style grilled red snapper (with a dry rub of garlic, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, and other locally grown spices), followed by candlelit meals to enjoy the fruits of their labor coupled with a chilled bottle of wine.



Seaside sanctuary: Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort and (inset) its hands-on cooking class.

(TURTLE ICON) BAKUNETSU KAITO/THE NOUN PROJECT

Along with other worthy causes it funds, Anantara's Dollars for Deeds program helps **protect threatened sea turtles** that visit the resort's beach and surrounding coastline.

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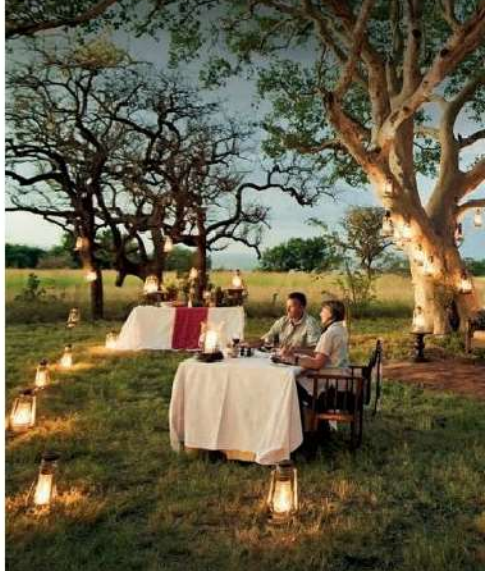

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ART & CULTURE

The view from The Peninsula Paris' L'Oiseau Blanc restaurant and (inset) the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, home to Italian eatery Loulou.

NEW DELIGHTS IN THE CITY OF LIGHT

A local shares his top Paris picks.

"Paris has been seducing us for generations," says Virtuoso travel advisor Sharon Elsen of Menlo Park, California. "It draws us back again and again, enveloping us in its magic." Elsen, who met her husband in the romantic French capital, is certainly bewitched. She finds enchantment "in every aspect of the city: its architecture, parks, bridges, boulevards, art and culture – and of course, its cuisine."

Virtuoso Traveler recently stopped by The Peninsula Paris to get head concierge Nicolas Avril's take on what's trending in the City of Light. Avril visits a new venue each week so he can guide guests to the most of-the-moment must-dos. Here, his current recommendations.

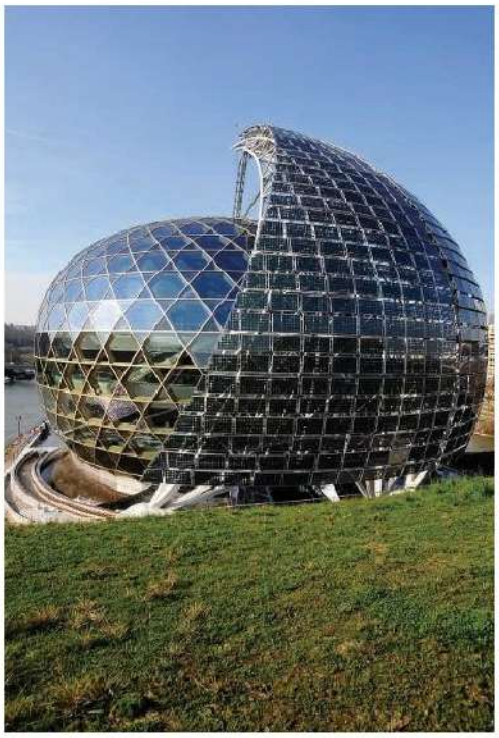
"IT" NEIGHBORHOOD: One of Paris' most multiethnic areas, the **tenth arrondissement** is "vibrant, very bohemian. It's where all the new restaurants and hip boutiques are." For a perfect Parisian afternoon, take a leisurely stroll along the Canal Saint-Martin with its iron footbridges and tree-lined quays.

WHAT'S COOKING: The city's hottest restaurants practice bistronomy, which Avril describes as a combination of the classic bistro experience and fine gastronomy. These **gastro-bistros** serve "really, really amazing food at affordable prices." The fusion of traditional French fare with Asian and other influences is also big. "This mix, particularly Japanese and French cuisine like that served at **Abri** (*92 rue du Faubourg-Poissonnière*), is just, 'wow'!"

MORE MUST-RESERVE TABLES:

- Avril predicts that, by summer 2018, South American cuisine will be all the rage in Paris. Get ahead of the trend at **Manko Paris** (*15 avenue Montaigne*), a chic restaurant/bar serving Peruvian fusion fare with a side of live cabaret: "To go there is like going on a journey," he says.
- For some of the best Italian in the city, try **Loulou** (*107 rue de Rivoli*), the new bilevel eatery inside the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Its stylish terrace faces the Louvre gardens.
- Travelers looking for traditional French haute cuisine should make their way to Michelin-starred **Lasserre** (*17 avenue Franklin Delano Roosevelt*). Expect an elegant, three-hour-long affair; in pleasant weather, a retractable roof adds to the allure.

Virtuoso advisor Sharon Elsen adds The Peninsula's **L'Oiseau Blanc** to the list of must-try restaurants: "This stunning rooftop venue presides over the Paris skyline with a view of the Eiffel Tower."



(LA SEINE MUSICALE) FREDERIC STEVENS/GETTY IMAGES, (MANKO PARIS) ALBAN COUTURIER

Clockwise from left: La Seine Musicale, Manko Paris' ceviche criollo, and Jazz Club Etoile.

MUSIC IN THE AIR: Paris' moniker may just change to the "City of Music," thanks to the new **Seine Musicale**. Situated on an island in the middle of the river, the futuristic building – resembling a ship with a movable solar "sail" to maximize the sun's rays – features a 6,000-seat performance hall, as well as a more intimate, acoustically superb auditorium, home to the Insula Orchestra.

The city's love affair with jazz takes an avant-garde twist at **Aux Trois Mailletz** (*56 rue Galande*), an underground jazz club-cum-revue in the Latin Quarter where, Avril says, "the atmosphere is completely crazy, really fun!" For a more classic experience, the legendary **Jazz Club Etoile** (*81 boulevard Gouvion Saint-Cyr*) just reopened after a complete redesign.

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BARBADOS

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How Can I Stay Chill in the Heat of Holiday Travel?

Missed connections, long lines, longer faces: Traveling during the holidays can get anyone hot under the collar. With the season fast approaching, Virtuoso travel advisors share ways to keep your cool.

Holiday ice-skating at San Diego's Hotel del Coronado.

GET CRUISING, BUT BOOK EARLY

"The busiest time to cruise is understandably during the holidays, so have your advisor make your reservations **as early as possible** to ensure the best available staterooms and promotions. The most popular destination is the Caribbean; if you have the time and budget, consider a **more unusual region** such as Asia, South America, or Australia and New Zealand."

– Steven Glenn Gulko, travel advisor, North Miami Beach, Florida

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

"Do yourself a favor and arrive to the airport early! Security lines are very unpredictable. I highly recommend signing up for **Global Entry**, which includes TSA PreCheck – children ages 12 and under are covered for domestic flights with a parent's PreCheck, but all older kids and adults in your party need to do this for it to be an asset. Also, learn to **travel with less** (read: just a carry-on); it saves the time and stress of waiting in the baggage area."

– Lois Housel, travel advisor, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

STAY CONNECTED

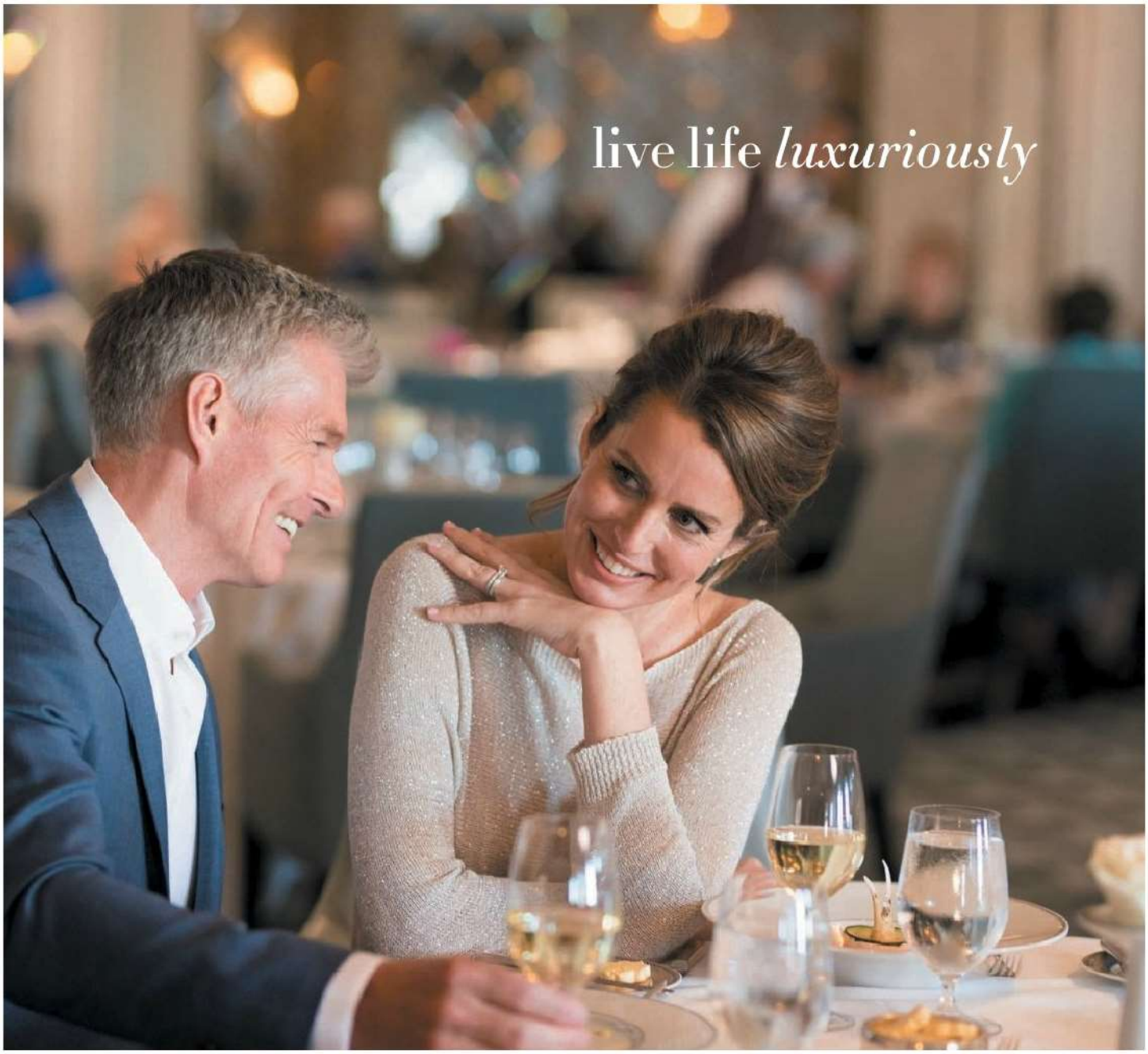
"If flying nonstop isn't an option, choose an **early-morning flight** that gives you enough time to make your connection – three hours minimum. If possible, avoid connecting through airports in New York City and Newark, which have some of the highest percentage of delays and cancellations during the holiday months. Some of the **best airports to connect through** are Charlotte, Phoenix, Seattle-Tacoma, and Honolulu."

– Patrice Thomas, travel advisor, Dania Beach, Florida

HAND OVER THE HEAVY LIFTING

"Let your hotel handle the holiday festivities so you don't have to. At **Four Seasons Hotel New York**, you can attend the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade before a traditional dinner in The Garden restaurant; football fans can cheer on their teams at Ty Bar. In San Diego, **Hotel del Coronado** hosts holiday-themed dinners, sets up a two-story Christmas tree in its lobby, and installs an outdoor ice rink for the season."

– Nathan Cripps, travel advisor, Bellevue, Washington



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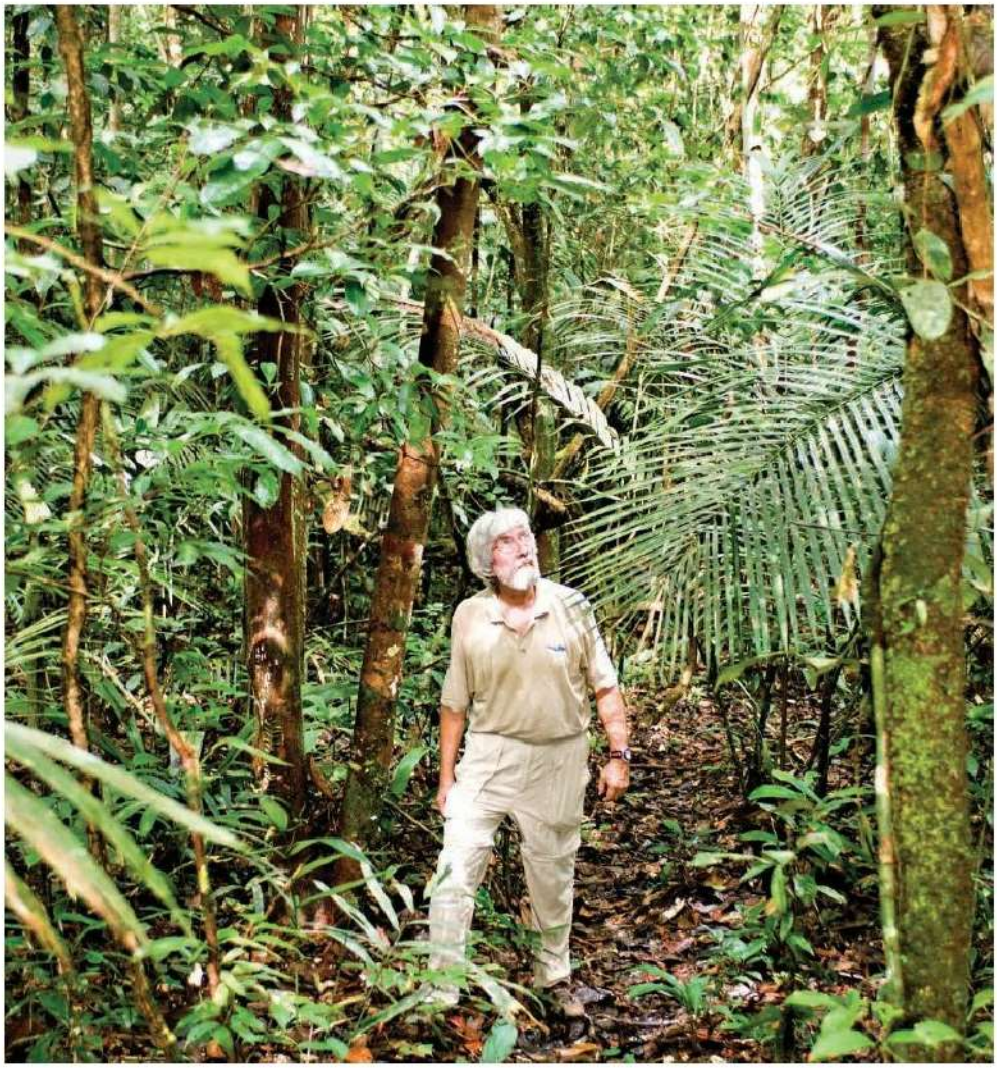

Jean-Michel Cousteau

EXPLORER, CONSERVATIONIST

Jean-Michel Cousteau first saw the Amazon in 1982, entering its Brazilian delta on *Calypso* with his famous father and family, and cruising to Iquitos, Peru, where they left the ship and traced the river to its source on the slopes of Mount Mismi. Next year, Cousteau will return to join select four-, five-, and eight-day **Aqua Expeditions** sailings from Iquitos to lead talks and excursions, offer videography tips, and screen documentaries on some of the same stretches he filmed with his own children in *Return to the Amazon*, decades after his first trip.

THE BIGGEST IMPRESSION FROM YOUR INITIAL AMAZON EXPEDITION: I'm an ocean guy, and I was amazed to see dolphins and turtles all the way to Iquitos. I scuba dived when the water was clear enough, and of course there were all kinds of freshwater fish and some very, very big snakes. These creatures could see me, but they never had any intention of touching me. I felt much more comfortable than when above water or walking in the jungle.

VERY, VERY BIG SNAKES, *PSHH*. WHAT ABOUT PIRANHAS? Those little fish just swim away. Being underwater was a great privilege. I hope we will be able to snorkel in a few places.

WHY SHOULD TRAVELERS CRUISE THE AMAZON? To connect with the environment and understand what's going on. The Amazon represents 20 percent of the planet's fresh water flowing into the ocean – we need to protect this water system to protect ourselves.

THOUGHTS ON RETURNING: It's great to visit a place I have been many times and share with passengers the information that we were able to collect and see how things have changed – to share what's different, what we are learning, and how we can behave to make sure that from cultural and environmental points of view, we preserve diversity, which is synonymous with stability.

RIVER WILDLIFE THAT MOST FILLS YOU WITH JOY: I love the pink river dolphin – it's unique to the Amazon. They have the ability to swim in rain forests during and after the rains. Other dolphins would get trapped, but pink dolphins can disconnect their bone structures to swim around a tree. It takes a bit of luck to see them – they're not waiting for you to show up – but I know they're there.

Cousteau joins sailings on the 32-passenger Aria Amazon *February 9 through 16 and October 5 through 12, 2018; from $3,645. He'll cruise the Mekong River with Aqua on select 2018 departures as well.*

(COUSTEAU) CARRIE VONDERHAAR/OCEAN FUTURES SOCIETY

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Mar 18	19	Iconic Pacific Isles	Papeete to Valparaíso	*Crystal Symphony*	$7,450
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Life's a picnic at the Explora Valle Sagrado adventure lodge in Peru.

Perfect Pairings

Trips that mix active adventures with culinary pursuits offer two vacations in one.

By Larry Olmsted

In ancient Greece, nearly every day of the Olympics concluded with a massive celebratory feast. These days, cycle pub tours are cropping up across the globe, gourmet "sports catering" fuels athletic teams, and pasta-powered carbo-loading dinners are de rigueur when preparing for a marathon.

This fusion of foodie and fitness interests has spilled over to the travel industry, and the synergy between activity and appetite is now one of the hottest vacation trends. Active trips don't necessarily require marathon runs, however, and culinary experiences go way beyond eating (think hands-on cooking classes, winetastings, and tours with artisanal producers). Combining the two passions is a natural fit: Action fuels hunger, burning calories reduces guilt, and many of the world's premier food destinations are also perfect settings for outdoor recreation.

"Good meals and gastronomic pursuits are very important to many of my clients," says Chad Clark, a Virtuoso travel advisor based in Phoenix. "But they don't want to have to diet to enjoy their vacation," he adds. "And they don't like just lying around on a beach – they also crave adventure, whether it's hiking, biking, sea-kayaking, or skiing." Ultimately, says Clark, "they don't skimp on food and wine, but enjoy both more after being active."

The top tour operators have taken note, augmenting their adrenaline-fueled itineraries to include more of a foodie focus, from tours of mussel farms to dinners at Michelin-starred restaurants. Clark has another tip for on-the-go gourmands: Seek out luxury adventure lodges that include both physical and epicurean offerings in your stay. "One of my most memorable travel moments occurred at Saffire Freycinet in Tasmania," Clark notes, "where I donned waders to harvest my own oysters and then dined on them at a table set up in the water while sipping Champagne."

Whether your passion involves a backpack or a beer flight, pâté or a paddle, today's active culinary vacations supply something for every taste.

EXPLORA

BIKING

If you're a food-loving cyclist you have it easy, as three of the best destinations for riding – Tuscany, Burgundy, and the Napa and Sonoma valleys – are also culinary paradises. Tour providers are now extending their two-wheeled offerings to other standout foodie spots, such as Argentina, Japan, South Africa, and Spain's Basque Country. The diversity of epicurean experiences is expanding as well: **Butterfield & Robinson**, for example, recently added itineraries that mix plenty of pedaling with **guided market tours**, cooking classes, and visits with local cheesemakers and winemakers. Among **Backroads**' new active gourmet adventures, Michelin-starred meals are a highlight, but travelers also enjoy other extras, from visiting a working dairy farm in Chile for a tasting of *manjar*, the country's version of *dulce de leche*, to **meeting working lobstermen** – and sampling their catch – in Maine. Backroads is also the first U.S. company with dedicated cycling trips in Cuba, where you can savor the best of the country's bounty, including locally made rum and fresh-caught fish.

WALKING & HIKING

Foot-powered trips are the fastest-growing segment of active travel and provide a range of options for every ability and fitness level. Top locations include New Zealand, France, Ireland, and Italy's Dolomites. As with cycling, Backroads and Butterfield & Robinson have long offered global walking tours, but now they're increasingly incorporating food as a major component. On Butterfield's new Holland walking adventure, guests sample traditional Dutch *pannekoeken* (savory pancakes), experience a **tasting of *jenever*** (the juniper-flavored progenitor of gin), and dine at a two-Michelin-starred restaurant and a vaunted Relais & Châteaux eatery. Backroads recently extended its **Michelin dinner program** to many of its walking and hiking itineraries as well.

MULTISPORT & BEYOND

Austin Adventures has one of the most varied slates of active trips, including hiking, biking, rafting, kayaking, and combinations of these, as well as **yoga** and even "functional fitness" vacations for more-serious workout fans. Its new culinary-themed journeys blend exclusive vineyard tours, gourmet cooking classes, and wine-pairing demonstrations with adventures from Italy to Indonesia. **Abercrombie & Kent** takes a slightly different tack, making food and drink the star and then adding activities such as hiking, cycling, paddling, and **sailing** in destinations from California's wine country to Croatia.

ADVENTURE LODGES

From remote luxury fly-fishing lodges to five-star dude ranches, a number of all-inclusive resorts offer a dual focus on outdoor diversions and cuisine. Two of Clark's top picks: British Columbia's **Clayoquot Wilderness Resort** and **Explora**'s adventure lodges in South America. "All of Clayoquot's food is locally sourced and paired with excellent British Columbia wines," he notes. "You can even catch and learn to cook your own fish – and you'll find all the physical activity (think stand-up paddleboarding and **archery**) you could want." Set in remote destinations such as Peru's Sacred Valley and Chile's Atacama Desert, Explora's properties provide a vast array of expertly guided hiking, biking, and **horseback riding experiences**, along with a deep focus on local foods and wines.

(SALMON) CLAYOQUOT WILDERNESS RESORT; (MAINE) ROBERT HOUSER/BACKROADS

Clockwise from left: Out for a spin with Austin Adventures in Italy's Dolomites; Clayoquot Wilderness Resort's seared salmon with black trumpet mushrooms, butter clams, and saffron seaweed broth; and Backroads' Maine event.

ON THE MENU

Six ways to please the palate – and get the blood pumping.

BIKING
Dining highlights of **Backroads'** new six-day Cuba bike tour include a field-to-fork feast at a family farm and a meal of traditional Cuban dishes with the chef at Havana's Al Carbón restaurant. You'll also partake in a **rum tasting** and learn to dance salsa with local experts. *Departures: Multiple dates, January 14 through June 3, 2018; from $4,998.*

WALKING
Travelers can sample fresh oysters in Yerseke and learn how to **make Gouda cheese** in its namesake town on **Butterfield & Robinson**'s new six-day Holland walking trip. Other Dutch treats: visits to The Hague and Keukenhof Gardens, home to some 7 million flowers. *Departures: April 16 and September 9, 2018; from $4,995.*

MULTISPORT
Abercrombie & Kent's customizable seven-day self-drive tour through California wine country provides opportunities to bike through vineyards, explore Carmel-by-the-Sea on a culinary excursion, and sail along the Santa Barbara coastline. Also on tap are visits to several wineries not open to the public and an **olive oil tasting** in Los Olivos. *Departures: Any day through December 31, 2018; from $9,995.*

Hikes between mountain huts and a bike ride along the Adige River call for fortifying with farm-fresh food and fine **Italian wines** on **Austin Adventures'** six-day trip through South Tyrol and the Dolomites. Leisurely strolls amid twelfth-century monasteries and Merano's award-winning gardens round out the itinerary. *Departures: Multiple dates, May 13 through September 23, 2018; from $3,398.*

ADVENTURE LODGES
A 45-minute seaplane ride from Vancouver, B.C., **Clayoquot Wilderness Resort** features 25 luxury tents and six categories of activities, ranging from marine (surfing, kayaking, paddleboarding) to aerial (heli-fly-fishing, cloud camping). On its menu: sustainable seafood, house-made caramels, and **gastro-adventures** such as dining on Clayoquot Sound chowder by a private lake. *Doubles from $7,500 per couple for three-night, all-inclusive stays (four- and seven-night packages also available); Virtuoso travelers receive free Wi-Fi and a $100 spa credit.*

Explora Atacama is set in Chile's Atacama Desert, a breathtaking red rock landscape of slot canyons and salt flats. Guests choose from dozens of daily guided hikes, bike tours, and horseback rides, while meals showcase local specialties such as quinoa, empanadas, and ***pastel de choclo***, Chile's corn-based take on shepherd's pie – all complemented with Chilean wines. *Doubles from $2,125 per person for three-night, all-inclusive stays (four-, five-, and six-night packages also available); Virtuoso travelers receive a room upgrade (if available) and a $100 resort credit.* **VT**

From top: Countryside dining in Cuba with Backroads; British Columbia's Clayoquot Wilderness Resort provides a perfect base camp for heli-hiking and other outdoor adventures; and horsing around at Explora Atacama in Chile.

(CUBA) LIZ HALE/BACKROADS; (HELI-HIKING) CLAYOQUOT WILDERNESS RESORT; (HORSEBACK RIDING) EXPLORA

From the land to the ocean

With mesmerizing Kapalua Bay as its backdrop, Cane & Canoe offers its guests a window into the Hawaiian soul—both past and present, with rich, woven Hawaiian textures and vibrant floral touches. The menu is modern Hawaiian–reflecting the islands' multicultural heritage. With a breathtaking oceanfront location, fresh seafood naturally plays a central role. Ingredients are locally sourced and the wine program, overseen by highly-educated sommeliers, is one of the finest in the islands.

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Sea of Grapes

Even as a wave of modern winemakers brings change to Burgundy, the French region's rolling vineyards and joie de vivre remain timeless. **By Susan Hanson**

"***It always gives me great joy when*** people choose to explore Burgundy," says Annick Devillard, a London-based Virtuoso travel advisor who originally hails from the famed wine region in eastern France. "So many travelers pass through it by car or TGV [high-speed rail service] on their way to the Alps or the Riviera, and don't spend meaningful time in this lovely part of the country."

Those who do linger discover a land of legendary beauty and bounty, the holy grail of the pinot noir grape. They also find colorful characters such as Dominique Derain, a biodynamic winemaker whom I met on a recent wine tour of the region. Derain helped revolutionize the local industry 30 years ago by returning to its proverbial roots.

"I started very young in my grandfather's vineyard in Mercurey," says Derain during a tasting at **Domaine Derain** (*46 rue des Perrières, Saint-Aubin*). "They made wine for pleasure then, not for business." After a decade working at different domaines that were more interested in high yields than high-quality vintages, Derain took over his intimate estate in the quiet village of Saint-Aubin southwest of Beaune, the wine capital of Burgundy. His minimalist approach – replacing fertilizers with herbal mixtures and reverting to hand harvesting – earned jeers at first, but has since influenced a new crop of organic vignerons, many of whom view Derain as their own eccentric *grand-père*.

"The vineyard is hard work," he says, eyes sparkling over a glass of Derain Saint-

Vineyard views in the village of Pommard, Côte de Beaune.

ROD MCLEAN/ALAMY

(FLAVIGNY-SUR-OZERAIN) HERVE LENAIN/ALAMY; (LUDIVINE GRIVEAU) JEFF PACHOUD/GETTY IMAGES; (HOSPICES DE BEAUNE) JUMPING ROCKS/UIG/GETTY IMAGES

Clockwise from top: Flavigny-sur-Ozerain, a classic village in the Côte d'Or region; Ludivine Griveau, the first female winemaker of the Hospices de Beaune; and a glimpse of the Hospices' near-600-year-old glazed-tile rooftops.

TIP

"The vineyards of Burgundy's **Côte Chalonnaise and Mâconnais areas** produce superb wines, such as Mercurey and Saint-Véran, at an excellent value."
– Annick Devillard, Virtuoso travel advisor, London

Aubin en Vesvau 2015. "But if you can't find pleasure in it, there is no point."

Another Burgundian mixing things up is Ludivine Griveau, managing director at the **Hospices de Beaune**, aka Hôtel-Dieu (*rue de l'Hôtel-Dieu, Beaune*) – and the first female winemaker in the prestigious estate's near-600-year history. A viticulturist who made her reputation rebuilding the Reine Pédauque brand, Griveau encountered her own share of resistance after taking over the Hospices role in 2015, but then she's always been a rule breaker.

"The first rule is that there is no rule," she proclaims during a private tasting in the estate's ancient, barrel-lined cellar.

Hospices de Beaune has long played an integral role in its namesake town and surrounding region. Founded in 1443 as a "palace for the poor," it offered free medical care and comfort to the sick and disadvantaged. Grateful families donated vines to support the Hospices' mission, which it served until the early 1970s, when a modern hospital was built nearby. Now the property is a museum, and its annual wine auction, organized by Christie's, is the highlight of the Burgundy wine season.

TIP

"Those in search of rural pursuits may enjoy the tranquility of a Burgundy canal or river cruise that takes you to southern towns such as **Tournon-sur-Rhône and Cluny**, which are rich in culture and history."
– Annick Devillard

Clockwise from left: Hand-harvesting chardonnay grapes at Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Château du Clos de Vougeot, and the twelfth-century Fontenay Abbey.

Griveau manages 23 wineries and nearly 150 acres of vineyards, producing primarily premier and grand crus. Recognizing her place in history, she took the time to get to know each of her winemakers, securing their trust before introducing a new pressing process. It also didn't hurt that her first auction, in 2015, fetched more than $12 million – its highest sales ever.

Yet the more things change, the more they stay the same. That adage certainly holds true in Burgundy, its sloping hillsides awash in sunshine and abundant with grapes. Winemaking was first introduced here by the Romans in 52 BC, when Julius Caesar's army conquered the Gauls at Alesia. The countryside is dotted by medieval villages that lie between the vineyards and the monasteries that once tended them.

While other wine regions recognize individual châteaus or winemakers, Burgundy focuses solely on terroir, boasting the most appellations in France. Its rich, chalky soil is so unique to the country's Côte d'Or ("golden slope") department, it earned UNESCO status in 2015. Just two types of grapes are grown, chardonnay and the coveted pinot noir, with the most grand crus produced in the Côte de Nuits subregion. There, oenophiles pilgrimage to **Domaine de la Romanée-Conti** (*1 place de l'Église, Vosne-Romanée*), among the most esteemed estates in the world.

Nearby, you'll find **Château du Clos de Vougeot** (*rue de la Montagne, Vougeot*), another national treasure. Originally the vineyard of the twelfth-century Cîteaux Abbey, it displays the original vat house, presses, and cellar. Clos de Vougeot is lovingly maintained by the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin, an organization of 12,000 "knights" devoted to preserving Burgundy's wine culture.

Not to be overshadowed, the hillsides of Côte de Beaune are home to such premier cru-classified villages as Meursault and Pommard. Linking the subregion with the neighboring Côte de Nuits is the renowned **Route des Grands Crus** ("road of great wines"), which runs through Beaune, making it an ideal base for exploring Burgundy's vineyards. Other area attractions are just a leisurely drive away: the must-see **Fontenay Abbey** (*Marmagne*), founded in 1118

MAKE TRACKS FOR BURGUNDY: The four-hour train ride from Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport to Beaune passes by all the more quickly over tasty treats such as a smoked-salmon pasta salad and a glass of Pierre Fontaine Chablis. Book a **Premier Class** ticket through **Rail Europe** and receive a voucher to dine in the train's bar car during the TGV leg of the journey, or choose a fresh baguette from the cart rolling past your comfy seat. Flash your ticket stub for entry to the **SNCF Salons Grand Voyageur lounge** at Lyon Part-Dieu, where you can access the station's free Wi-Fi and recharge your phone while waiting for the regional connection to Beaune. (Already in Paris' city center? Premier Class riders can relax in the lounge at Paris-Gare de Lyon station before a two-hour ride via Gare de Dijon-Ville.) Your Virtuoso travel advisor can make all the arrangements.

(CHARDONNAY GRAPES) IAN SHAW/ALAMY. (CHÂTEAU DU CLOS DE VOUGEOT) MATTEO COLOMBO/GETTY IMAGES. (FONTENAY ABBEY) HERVÉ LENAIN/ALAMY

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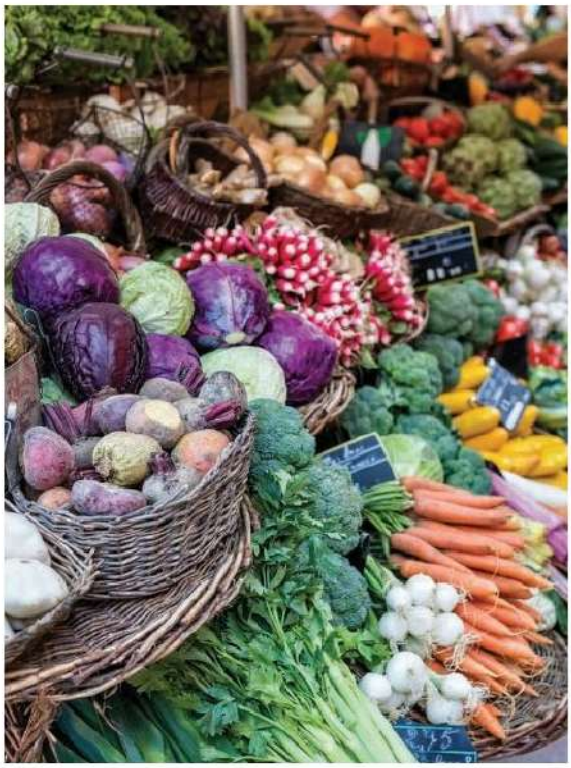

Fresh perspective: Beaune's farmers' market.

and one of the world's most perfectly preserved monasteries; tiny Flavigny-sur-Ozerain, setting for the film *Chocolat* and home to the beloved **Anis de Flavigny confectionery** (*4 rue de l'Abbaye de Flavigny*), France's oldest brand; and Chablis in the far north, famous for its crisp chardonnays developed over a millennium by the monks of the Obédiencerie monastery, now **Domaine Laroche** (*22 rue Louis Bro*).

Within Beaune's town limits, countless restaurants and cellars line the cobbled streets, and literally miles of underground caves run beneath its ancient walls. For example, the great wine house **Caves Patriarche** (*5-7 rue du Collège/r Paul Chanson*) sits atop its own three-mile labyrinth. Visitors can learn about the region's oenological heritage at the **Burgundy Wine Museum** (*rue Paradis*) and taste its culinary patrimony on Saturday mornings, when the entire town center transforms into a thriving farmers' market selling local produce, fresh-baked breads, mounds of olives, and artisanal cheeses.

The Hospices de Beaune presides over it all as it has for centuries. Pouring another bottle for our group, Ludivine Griveau speaks to Burgundy's influence on the world of winemaking: an authority that stems as much from its deep cultural roots as those in the fertile soil.

"It is the beauty of the land," she says, "that makes the beauty of the wine."

BEAUNE VIVANT

Burgundy's wine capital promises a premier cru adventure.

CRUISE

Visit the **Hospices de Beaune**, sip cocktails at Château de Seigneurs in Tournon-sur-Rhône, and join a cooking demonstration at Lyon's esteemed Institut Paul Bocuse on an eight-day food-themed river cruise through Burgundy and Provence aboard **Uniworld**'s 159-passenger *Catherine*. *Departures: Multiple dates, March 15 through August 19, 2018; from $2,899.*

Burgundy's tranquil canals serve as scenic thoroughfares for the 12-passenger *Adrienne*, which stops for walking tours of Dijon and Beaune, a winetasting in Chassagne-Montrachet, and dinner at three-Michelin-starred **Maison Lameloise** in Chagny during a seven-day sailing from **French Country Waterways**. *Departures: Multiple dates, April 1 through October 28, 2018; from $6,095.*

TOUR

An eight-day private journey with **Artisans of Leisure** takes wine lovers from Paris to the lush countrysides of **Champagne and Burgundy**, including in-depth tours of Dijon and Beaune, with tastings at some of the country's most exclusive cellars. *Departures: Any day through December 31, 2018; from $13,950.*

Wine expert Jean-Pierre Renard gives tips at a private cellar in Morey-Saint-Denis, Côte de Beaune vineyards make the perfect setting for barrel tastings, and chef Guillaume Royer prepares a Michelin-starred repast at twelfth-century Bussière Abbey during a six-day **bicycle tour** around Burgundy's vineyards and villages with **Butterfield & Robinson**. *Departures: Multiple dates, May 13 through September 23, 2018; from $4,995.*

Kensington Tours' customized nine-day private exploration of Burgundy and Bordeaux includes tastings at Château de Meursault and Château de Pommard, more crus in the **Pierre Laforest wine cave**, and visits to UNESCO-designated Saint-Émilion and fabled Médoc. *Departures: Any day through September 30, 2018; from $7,902.* **VT**

(MARKET) IVOHA/ALAMY, (WINE) ASK IMAGES/ALAMY

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Such a catch: Fried catfish sandwiches are just one of the must-eats at Rodney Scott's BBQ in Charleston.

NEW Culinary Capitals

Charleston 41
Auckland 42
José Ignacio 43
Portland, Maine 44
Tel Aviv 45
Toronto 46

(FRIED CATFISH SANDWICH AND WORKSHOP) ANDREW CEBULKA

Deep with dining choices and steeped in gastronomic tradition, Paris, Lima, New York, and Tokyo remain marquee destinations for foodie travelers. But as pioneering chefs spread the "eat local" gospel across the globe, great meals can now be found in less expected locales, including the following six cities, whose culinary stars are rising.

BY ELAINE GLUSAC

CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Where Southern cooking meets the world.

Charleston's emergence as a food capital has occurred at a leisurely but steady pace. Founded in 2006, the Charleston Wine + Food festival, an event the influential food writer John T. Edge called "a laboratory for what Southern food is becoming," helped train the spotlight on a generation of chefs – including Sean Brock of **McCrady's** (*2 Unity Alley*) and Mike Lata of **The Ordinary** (*544 King Street*) – who are taking Lowcountry staples such as blue crab and Hoppin' John in fresh and surprising directions.

"The scene is like Brooklyn in the South," says Suzy Xiu, a New York City-based Virtuoso travel advisor and culinary traveler. "There are a lot of sleek places and modern design rather than the old traditional restaurants you might expect."

Farm-fresh produce and just-caught fish are never far from tables in a city of just 134,000 residents. Those local ingredients shine at the recently opened **Sorghum & Salt** (*186 Coming Street*) in dishes such as collard green tagliatelle with shrimp sausage. Join the queue for 'cue at the new **Rodney Scott's BBQ** (*1011 King Street*), from the legendary pitmaster. Enjoy a progressive lunch at **Workshop** (*1503 King Street*), an "exploratory food court" with stalls from Vietnamese food truck Pink Bellies (featured on our cover) and Tex-Mex specialist Juan Luis. Xiu also suggests a nightcap while watching classic black-and-white movies projected on the wall at **The Belmont** (*511 King Street*).

→TUCK IN

In the city's historic center, the 435-room **Belmond Charleston Place** is itself a culinary destination, with five bars and restaurants led by its signature **Charleston Grill**. There, chef Michelle Weaver caters to varied tastes with a four-part menu ranging from ocean trout with caponata, blood orange, and olives to a Lowcountry "muddle" of shrimp, crab, bass, and grits. *Doubles from $299; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 dining credit.*

Clockwise from top left: Digging in at Workshop, barbecue guru Rodney Scott, fresh fare from Sorghum & Salt, and The Ordinary's seafood tower.

(RODNEY SCOTT AND SEAFOOD TOWER) PETER FRANK EDWARDS/REDUX

Clockwise from left: Pasture's maître d' Laura Verner mixes things up; the tables are set for sustainable seafood at Fish; and Mudbrick's confit duck leg with red cabbage, duck liver, and gingerbread spice doughnuts.

AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

The "City of Sails" dishes the real thing as Kiwis discover their local larder.

Auckland doesn't just have to compete for attention with the beauty of New Zealand's countryside, globally broadcast by *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy. It also gets unfairly lumped in with Australia's big cities, and some old stereotypes have tarnished its culinary reputation.

"New Zealand food used to be known as 'cooking from your English grandma's kitchen' – not great or tasty," says Lynda Turley, a Virtuoso advisor based in Saratoga, California. "But the scene has dramatically changed, and this striking destination known for its adventure travel and natural attractions has now become a mecca for foodies and oenophiles."

That gastronomic awakening has taken place beyond the popular sauvignon blancs of the Marlborough region. The reinvented Kiwi cuisine – forged by a crew of chefs determined to cook from New Zealand's volcanic soil and seafood-rich surrounding waters – is evident throughout the country, but most concentrated in Auckland. New in town is **Pasture** (*235 Parnell Road*), where chef Ed Verner pickles vegetables, ages butter, and cooks over an open flame for just 20 diners at a time, while his wife, maître d' Laura Verner, expertly pairs wines and creative cocktails. From legendary chef Gareth Stewart, **Fish** (*Prince's Wharf*) is Turley's pick for sustainable seafood. And don't miss the 40-minute ferry ride to Waiheke Island for tastings at its many vineyards: Turley recommends **Mudbrick** (*126 Church Bay Road*), with its "romantic winery restaurant" and casual Archive Bar and Bistro, a recent addition to the estate.

→TUCK IN

A cruise ship is a natural way to call on the City of Sails, which is frequently included on Australia and New Zealand itineraries. **Viking Ocean Cruises**' 15-day, two-country voyage aboard the 930-passenger *Viking Spirit* visits several Aussie culinary highlights, including Sydney and Melbourne, finishing up in Auckland (be sure to have your travel advisor book Viking's three-hour **tasting tour excursion**). Adding a two-night post-cruise extension in the city allows for plenty of unrushed grazing. *Departure: December 16, 2018; from $6,799. Extension from $699.*

(PASTURE) AARON MCLEAN, (FISH) ALEX WALLACE

Clockwise from top left: Bodega Garzón's vineyards, Estancia Vik's traditional *parrilla*, and beachside chilling at La Susana.

JOSÉ IGNACIO, URUGUAY

South America's beach getaway with a voracious appetite.

The willowy models strolling the strands of Punta del Este, Uruguay's coastal hub, are hardly billboards for good eating. But continue another 20 miles east to José Ignacio, and you'll find a series of beachfront restaurants where tables stuck in the sand encourage daylong noshing.

"José Ignacio is to Uruguayans as the Hamptons are to New Yorkers," says Caroline Wallace, a Virtuoso advisor from Richmond, Virginia, who's visited the town six times in the past five years. "It's known as a chic retreat from the city, with a barefoot elegance and killer restaurants where time doesn't matter. You go for a late lunch and stay through sunset cocktails."

It's also just 20 miles away from the inland village of Garzón, where **Bodega Garzón** (*Route 9, kilometer 175*), from global vintner Alejandro Bulgheroni, recently added a 170,000-square-foot winery and an eatery overseen by the celebrated Argentine chef Francis Mallmann. Sample the winery's bold tannat, Uruguay's rich, signature red, then head into the village for a meal at Mallmann's flagship, **El Garzón** (*Costa José Ignacio, 20401*). "It's amazing and *the* place to dine," says Wallace.

While on the shore, order the grilled catch of the day at casually hip **Parador La Huella** (*Playa Brava*), the town's best-known beach camp-cum-restaurant. Nearby, watch the sunset at **La Susana** (*20402 José Ignacio, Maldonado Department*) over whitefish ceviche and a Moroccan mojito made with green tea.

→ TUCK IN

Estancia Vik José Ignacio offers 4,000 acres on which to roam and ride horseback. Each of its 12 suites is decorated by a Uruguayan artist, and the boutique retreat features its own **traditional *parrilla***, or barbecue restaurant. *Doubles from $400; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and one lunch or dinner.*

PORTLAND, MAINE

New England's locavore nexus.

The largest city in "Vacationland" combines access to the bounty of the sea with an urban flair for experimentation. Those lobster boats and fishing trawlers stationed in downtown's Casco Bay harbor are more than Instagram stars – they're working vessels, supplying fresh seafood to local chefs and the warren of portside restaurants along cobblestoned streets.

"Portland is quintessential New England: historic buildings, a seaside setting, and outstanding seafood," says Myrna Arroyo, a Virtuoso advisor and certified sommelier based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, who visits Portland every summer. "It's been revitalized, but it's not a resort; *it's real*."

Her first stop is always **Eventide Oyster Co.** *(86 Middle Street)*, a contemporary oyster bar with dozens of bivalve varieties, as well as venturesome dishes such as lobster stew with coconut and green curry. The bar overlooking the open kitchen at **Central Provisions** *(414 Fore Street)*, from owners Chris and Paige Gould, offers the best views of bluefin tuna crudo and linguiça and clams in the works. Away from the downtown waterfront in the West End neighborhood, newcomer **Little Giant** *(211 Danforth Street)* applies local ingredients to European dishes.

Breweries add another tasty draw, from Portland's long-standing **Shipyard Brewing Company** *(86 Newbury Street)* to small-batch master **Rising Tide Brewing Company** *(103 Fox Street)*, which makes Daymark, an American pale ale, with local rye.

→ TUCK IN

At the 61-room beachfront **Inn by the Sea** on Cape Elizabeth, seven miles south of Portland, chef Andrew Chadwick specializes in **sustainable and underutilized seafood** in dishes such as roast hake; his hit lobster tacos also come with the assurance that lobsters are plentiful in these parts. Twelve new two-bedroom cottage suites include living rooms, fireplaces, and full kitchens. *Doubles from $199; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 spa credit.*

(CENTRAL PROVISIONS AND EVENTIDE) PETER FRANK EDWARDS/REDUX; (LITTLE GIANT) BRIAN LITTLE; (CAMDEN MARKET) COSMO CONDINA MEDIA EAST/ALAMY

Clockwise from top left: Edible flowers embellish Central Provisions' North Atlantic sea bream, arctic char crudo served with a smile at Eventide Oyster Co., chef Andrew Chadwick's local oysters with American caviar, Little Giant's dining room, and a beer flight from Rising Tide Brewing.

TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

From souks to the sea, bright flavors brand Israeli cuisine.

Israel's second-largest city, Tel Aviv serves as the country's tech center. Compared to historic Jerusalem, "Tel Aviv is the new Israel," says Virtuoso advisor Fallon Hirschhorn of New York City. "It's super laid-back, casual, warm, and friendly – an amazing hub for Middle Easterners."

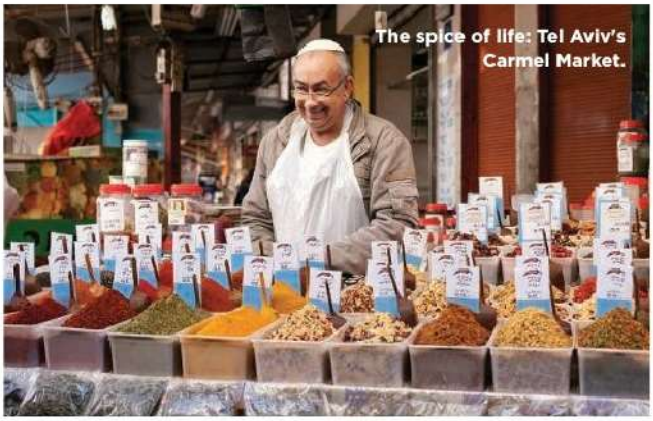
That tone transfers to the tables where shared plates are common and flavors span the Mediterranean and Middle East. "You'll find a food scene with restaurants dishing out 18-seat tasting menus and 20- to 25-year old chefs being discovered on Instagram," Hirschhorn adds.

The success of London-based Israeli-British chef, restaurateur, and cookbook author Yotam Ottolenghi in popularizing Israeli cuisine globally has paved the way for other vegetable-and-spice champions. Local celebrity chef Eyal Shani, often called the "king of cauliflower" for his whole-head preparation, has announced plans to bring his street-food-focused, pita-centric **Miznon** (*30 King George Street*) to New York City. Open just two nights a week, his **HaSalon** (*8 Ma'avar Yabok*) is considered his lab for new ideas. Another chef to watch is Omer Miller, who recently expanded his burger joint **Susu and Sons** (*6 Herzl Street*) and opened **Calypso** (*Frishman Beach*), a seaside seafood spot.

"On the other end of the spectrum, visit the stalls at **Carmel Market** (*HaCarmel Street*), which is a melting pot for the region's flavors," says Hirschhorn. "You can buy anything from spices to candy there to bring home."

→TUCK IN

Three nights in Tel Aviv provide ample time to explore the city's cuisine during a private, nine-day culinary-themed tour of Israel with **Artisans of Leisure**. Highlights include a visit to the traditional Levinsky Market and a **hands-on cooking class** in the home of a local chef. *Departures: Any day through December 31, 2018; from $12,570.*



The spice of life: Tel Aviv's Carmel Market.

TORONTO, CANADA

Melting-pot meals in one of the globe's most multicultural cities.

From top: Chef Steve Gonzalez's OG Duck Chaufa; Copetin Restaurant & Bar; beef brisket with crab mayo, steamed buns, fresh greens, and papaya slaw from Momofuku Daishō; and Bosk restaurant.

Toronto likes to call itself "Canada's downtown," a reference to its urban density and cultural multiplicity. Roughly half of the city's residents were born outside Canada, and, from Chinatown denizens to newly arrived Syrians, they speak some 140 languages and dialects. Around the city lies the agricultural bounty of Ontario, including its heritage wheat fields and Niagara wine region. All of this contributes to a great ethnic stew of good eats and drinks.

"Toronto is the New York of Canada, the country's largest city, so there's lots of diversity reflected in its food," says advisor Suzy Xiu.

For starters, she suggests cocktails at **The Cloak Bar** (*488 Wellington Street W.*), a speakeasy-like hideaway in the downtown Entertainment District with a drinks menu that includes punch bowls for up to eight. Then move on to **Baro** (*485 King Street W.*), a new venue with a long list of tequilas and chef Steve Gonzalez's *arroz chaufa* (Peruvian fried rice). The just-opened **Copetin Restaurant & Bar** (*107 King Street E.*) showcases the talents of Claudio Aprile, a judge on *MasterChef Canada*, in dishes such as tea-smoked squab. Also new, family-owned **Soufi's** (*676 Queen Street W.*) bills itself as Toronto's first Syrian café, specializing in flatbreads called *manaeesh*. One of Canada's top toques, Lynn Crawford, former executive chef at Four Seasons hotels in New York and Toronto, and star of *Pitchin' In*, models locavore cooking at **Ruby Watchco** (*730 Queen Street E.*).

→ TUCK IN

Next door to David Chang's New York export **Momofuku Daishō** (*190 University Avenue*), the 202-room **Shangri-La Hotel, Toronto** features the modern-art-filled Lobby Lounge, with a tea library offering 68 varieties, and **Bosk** restaurant, specializing in modern Canadian cuisine. Work off calories in the 20,000-square-foot spa and fitness floor with an indoor pool. *Doubles from $460; Virtuoso travelers receive breakfast daily and a $100 dining credit.* **VT**

(BEEF BRISKET) MOMOFUKU, (BOSK RESTAURANT) KEVIN KAMINSKI

Japan. Endless Discovery.

There's no place like home.

Shirakawa-go's Gassho-zukuri village is registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. And for good reason. This remote village in central Japan is home to the extremely rare Gassho-style houses characterized by their steeply pitched roofs and massive wooden beams. The houses are able to endure the heavy snowfalls of winter, while the upper reaches are ideal for cultivating silkworms. Come see the houses for yourself. "A style all their own" is putting it mildly.

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Picture These Trips

Highlights from Virtuoso's annual travel advisor and traveler photo competitions.

IMPROMPTU MARKET
Hell-Ville, Madagascar
Dorothy Thompson, traveler

CATCHING AIR
Cape Town, South Africa
Dennis Shak, traveler

"We drove to Bloubergstrand Beach to catch a glimpse of Table Mountain in the distance, and, to our delight, this paraglider buzzed by just as the sun was setting."

BEHIND THE WINDOWS
Algiers, Algeria
Rodrigo Garza, Virtuoso advisor

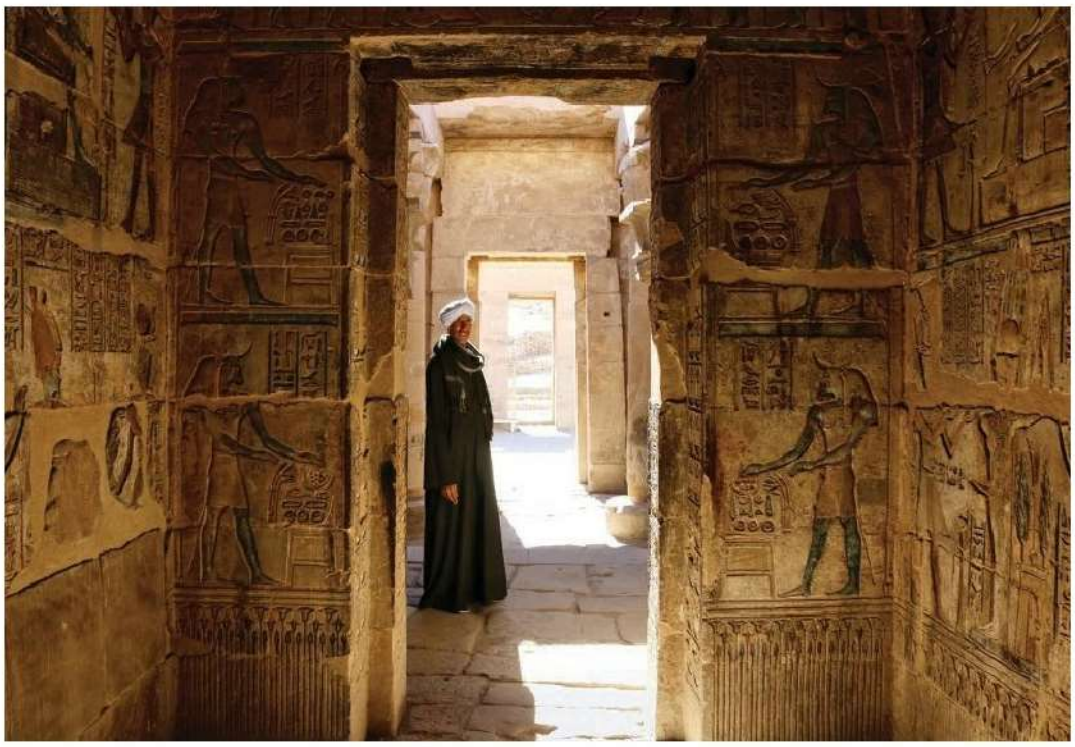
PASSING TIME
Havana, Cuba
Lance Raab, traveler

"While walking through La Habana Vieja [Old Havana], I spotted this man sitting on his stoop smoking a cigar. I asked in Spanish for permission to photograph him, and he nodded. As I lowered my body to take the picture, his dogs came out from the house. I captured this image with one dog staring right at me, and the other looking at the man."

HAPPY GUIDE
Varanasi, India
Jen McDonald, Virtuoso advisor

BUCKET LIST
Aman Sveti Stefan, Montenegro
Maria Paradisis, Virtuoso advisor

Photo Op



TEMPLE GUARD
Deir el-Medina, Egypt
John Oberacker,
Virtuoso advisor

"While on a Nile River cruise, I captured this image on a shore excursion to Deir el-Medina, near the Valley of the Kings. The guards were so welcoming and friendly – they just wanted to make sure their national treasures were well looked after."

SAFE HAVEN
Tulamben, Bali
Todd C. Hummel,
Virtuoso advisor

ANTICIPATION
Serengeti National Park, Tanzania
Tarquin Millington-Drake,
Virtuoso advisor

SUNRISE
Saint Andrews Bay, South Georgia
Morton Katz, traveler

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Photo Op

GOOD LUCK BELLS
Chiang Mai, Thailand
Areli Guzman, Virtuoso advisor

"While on our honeymoon in Thailand, my husband and I visited Doi Suthep, a temple and Buddhist monastery built in 1383. Our guide told us that ringing these bells brings good luck – right at the same time this peaceful monk passed by. I have this photo on a canvas hanging in my office now, and I believe it will always bring us good luck."

SPONTANEOUS MOMENT
Rwanda
Rosario M. Lanusse, traveler

A HEAD SHOT
Jerash, Jordan
Katie Schmit, Virtuoso advisor

TAKE A RIDE
The Maldives
Clarita Volovitz, Virtuoso advisor

ICE CASTLE
Antarctica
Janice McNeill, traveler

RHINE REFLECTION
Rhine Gorge, Germany
Dale Davis, traveler

STARRY NIGHT
Queenstown, New Zealand
Sarah Bender, Virtuoso advisor **VT**

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• FRESH TRACKS IN THE SWISS ALPS

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Connect with your Virtuoso travel advisor for rates. Available until March 11, 2018. Virtuoso exclusive amenities include a room upgrade, if available; breakfast daily; a $100 spa credit; and more.

• WILDERNESS AND WINELANDS

Micato Safaris pays tribute to South Africa's versatility during a bountiful adventure that begins at Sir Richard Branson's thrilling African creation, Ulusaba Safari Lodge in the Sabi Sands. Experience Sir Richard's Mont Rochelle, in the heart of the cheery and pacifying Winelands, too. A multitude of culinary choices await throughout.

Virtuoso rates from $14,050 per person. Book by December 31, 2017. Includes luxury accommodations, all meals and flights within Africa, game drives, and more.

• EUROPE AT YOUR OWN PACE

With **Celebrity Cruises®**, the gems of the western Mediterranean, from Rome to Nice to Cartagena, are revealed in a warm and welcoming manner – while you experience the pinnacle of modern luxury. On board, you'll find a staggering lineup of engaging activities.

Virtuoso Veranda fares from $2,349 per person. Taxes, fees, and port expenses of $113.48 per person are additional and subject to change. *Celebrity Reflection®* departs May 7, 2018; book by December 31, 2017. Virtuoso guests receive one specialty dinner for two (Veranda and above) and a $75 shopping credit (Suite guests).

• OFF-THE-BEATEN-PATH ALASKA

This fortnight foray to the Great Land with **Princess Cruises** includes a land tour that takes you along the rugged coastline and deep into the heart of Alaska, including stops in Fairbanks, Denali, Anchorage, Glacier Bay National Park, and more.

Virtuoso fares from $4,116 per person. *Island Princess* departs August 22, 2018; book by November 16, 2017. Virtuoso exclusive benefit is a $50 shipboard credit. Ask about the 3 For Free promotion for an upgrade, gratuities, or specialty dining.

• BORDEAUX, VINEYARDS AND CHÂTEAUX

Oenophiles won't want to miss out on this spectacular introduction to Bordeaux with **Uniworld Boutique River Cruises Collection**. In addition to savoring the ease of all-inclusive river cruising, you'll bike through beautiful Médoc vineyards, explore Saint-Émilion's twelfth-century monolithic church, taste regional delicacies, and meet local winemakers.

Virtuoso fares from $3,999 per person. *River Royale* departs March 18, 2018. Virtuoso exclusive amenity is a $200 shipboard credit per person.

WINE DOWN

A fresh look at our favorite places. Here, harvest time in southwest Germany.

ROTENBERG, BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG, GERMANY

"While northern Germany is beer country, wine production prevails in the southwest, and winetasting there is always accompanied by good food. Plan a visit to a ***Besenwirtschaft*** – a vineyard-operated tavern that opens in the fall to showcase local wine and cuisine."
– Emanuel Schreibmaier, Virtuoso travel advisor, Doral, Florida

GO: Your travel advisor can work with **Unique Germany by Compass Tours Incoming**, one of Virtuoso's on-site tour providers, to arrange guided winetastings in the region.

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