



VIRTUOSO

VIRTUOSO NAMES THE NINE MUST-HAVE EXPERIENCES THAT SHOULD BE ON EVERY LUXURY TRAVELER'S LIST FOR 2026



NEW YORK (December 17, 2025) – [Virtuoso](#), the leading global network specializing in luxury and experiential travel, is unveiling the next level of epic experiences courtesy of its global [2026 Luxe Report](#), an annual forecast highlighting how, where and why savvy travelers will be exploring in the year ahead. Renowned as a trusted trend predictor, Virtuoso tapped into its elite force of travel advisors from around the world to share their top recommendations for every jetsetter's wish list.

Virtuoso's nine must-have experiences for 2026:

- 1. Seoul Searching:** While Japan still commands global attention, South Korea is emerging as a dynamic alternative, powered by the rhythm of K-pop, the emotional allure of its films and dramas and a creative culture continually reshaping beauty, fashion and contemporary art. Beyond the neon buzz, mist-shrouded temples provide moments of quiet reflection. Private tastings of world-class cuisine, and even simple street food and convenience-store favorites, become memorable culinary discoveries. It's where tradition meets trend, and every street, beat and bite pulses with possibility.
- 2. Ice, Ice Baby:** Push the "coolcation" to the extreme with an expedition that reaches both the Geographic and Magnetic North Poles. Navigating shifting ice and remote waters is a feat that few can claim, and the stark landscapes feel so surreal they could belong to another planet. Standing at the edge of the world, the vast silence and raw beauty stir a sense of wonder that remains long after the voyage home.
- 3. Dawn at the Vatican:** Step into the Vatican Museums at first light with the clavigero, the keeper of keys, and wander through hallowed galleries in near-perfect silence. For Francophiles, a secret-access tour of Paris's legendary opera house, the Palais Garnier, or a secluded rooftop overlooking the Arc de Triomphe, presents an equally intimate glimpse of artistry and architectural elegance. With Italy and France topping the list of solo-travel destinations for 2026, and guided tours ranking among their most requested experiences, this combination of personal enrichment and expert guidance aligns with how the solo set are exploring now.
- 4. An Opulent Odyssey:** Adventure travel jumped two spots to number three in the 2026 top five trends, and few expeditions capture the thrill of discovery like Morocco's Memory Road. This 1,200-kilometer journey

sweeps from the Atlantic coast to the edge of the Sahara, passing remote deserts, rugged mountains, lush oases and restored villages. Itineraries can be tailored to individual preferences and include a personal butler overseeing every detail. It's not a mirage – it's Morocco at its most magnificent.

5. **Divine Depths:** In Mexico's Yucatán, descend into a hidden limestone cavern where sapphire waters shimmer softly in the natural light. Sacred to the Maya and believed to be portals to the underworld, cenotes still echo with ancient mystery. Here, the gentle ripple of water and cool stone invite a profound calm, slowing time and quieting the mind. This is a rare chance to immerse in a living legend, where nature and myth converge to restore the body and spirit.
6. **High-End Harvest:** Farm-to-table ranked among the top five aspects of sustainable tourism for the first time in the 2026 Luxe Report. The rise signals growing interest in regenerative agritourism, a movement focused on slowing down and reconnecting with the land in ways that are restorative yet refined. Picture sunlit vineyards in Portugal where guests learn sustainable harvesting techniques or lavender fields in Tasmania offering botanical spa rituals and multi-course dinners crafted entirely from estate-grown ingredients. Beyond farm-to-table, these experiences champion biodiversity and local livelihoods while still delivering the elegance and comfort that the affluent expect.
7. **The Nile in Style:** Cruise the Nile aboard a private yacht, stopping to uncover colossal temples, explore monumental tombs and wander through vibrant riverside villages. The journey unfolds at a relaxed pace, where every moment is crafted for unparalleled comfort and exclusivity. Each stop invites a deeper exploration of Egypt's timeless marvels, allowing travelers to absorb its history in a manner that's uniquely personal and unmistakably luxurious.
8. **Real, Not Reel:** Today's luxury travelers are leaving behind staged social media moments in favor of genuine interactions that deepen understanding and appreciation of local communities. This could mean sharing one-on-one time with a *maiko* in Japan, joining a community-driven improvement project in Colombia or spending an afternoon with artisans safeguarding centuries-old craftsmanship in Iceland – the Luxe Report's top emerging destination for 2026. Witnessing firsthand how communities thrive through their traditions offers a depth of connection that no screen can capture.
9. **Whale-Timed Encounters:** Whale watching restores perspective and reminds fortunate observers of nature's immensity. Whether on a small-boat excursion in Monterey Bay, exploring Norway's fjords or scanning the rugged coastline of South Africa, these majestic ocean giants are more accessible than most imagine. Responsible practices are essential, prioritizing respectful distances, minimal disruption and protection of migratory paths. For many, the result is a transformational encounter that is deeply moving in its grandeur.

More than 2,400 travel advisors across 58 countries contributed to the Luxe Report, using their extensive knowledge to identify the top trends for 2026. Working with a professional advisor unlocks a host of benefits, including special access, customized amenities and collaborative planning, backed by expertise and worldwide connections. This year, Virtuoso has seen a sustained 76 percent increase in the number of people seeking out advisors through its website.

Virtuoso advisors can bring these nine must-have experiences to life or customize a trip to suit specific preferences. Find an advisor at www.virtuoso.com/travel/advisors.

About Virtuoso

Virtuoso is the leading global travel agency network specializing in luxury and experiential travel. This by-invitation-only organization comprises over 1,200 travel agency locations with more than 20,000 travel advisors in 58 countries throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. Drawing upon its preferred relationships with 2,500 of the world's best hotels and resorts, cruise lines, airlines, tour companies and premier destinations, the network provides its upscale clientele with exclusive amenities, rare experiences and privileged access. Annual sales of (U.S.) \$35 billion make Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit www.virtuoso.com.

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