



VIRTUOSO

UNDER ONE SKY: VIRTUOSO HIGHLIGHTS POWER OF PURPOSEFUL TRAVEL AND CELEBRATES LEADERS DRIVING POSITIVE IMPACT

LAS VEGAS (August 12, 2025) – [Virtuoso](#), the leading global network specializing in luxury and experiential travel, hosted its Under One Sky lunch Monday, August 11, during the 37th annual Virtuoso Travel Week, taking place this week in Las Vegas. Under One Sky brought together the network’s top advisors and preferred partners who share a passion and commitment to creating a more sustainable future for travel and tourism. Building on the organization’s more than 15 years of supporting responsible tourism and those who make it foundational to their practices, Virtuoso honored top leaders, while also providing inspiring network updates in the positive impact space.

During the lunch, Virtuoso Chairman & CEO Matthew D. Upchurch and Vice Chair & Sustainability Strategist Jessica Hall Upchurch awarded both a travel agency member and an individual advisor with Sustainable Leadership Awards, while three additional award categories based on Virtuoso’s pillars of sustainability – Protecting the Planet, Celebrating & Honoring Cultures and Supporting Local Economies – were voted on live during the Under One Sky lunch and presented to the winning partners. A new category – Sustainable Destination – was introduced this year to recognize an exemplary tourism board.

“I’m excited about our progress and our acceleration in supporting positive impact in the travel industry over the past 15 years,” said Hall Upchurch. “We started with just *some* of us trying to tell the story of those who were making a difference. With the support of our Sustainability Council, we’ve grown from *some* to *many* – a growing and engaged community of advisors and partners leveraging data and tracking our impact. For example, at our first sustainable-travel focused summit earlier this year, we used AI devices to harvest the wisdom of some of our most dedicated advisors and partners into practical tools to help our community.”

Additional award information follows.

Protecting the Planet: Recognizes a distinguished Virtuoso partner leading the way in conservation, restoration and sustainable innovation — protecting the planet through impactful efforts in their local community or across the globe.

Winner: The Royal at Atlantis – *Atlantis Blue Project Foundation*

Celebrating 20 years of marine conservation, this foundation has funded coral reef restoration, rescued and released over 7,500 sea turtles, and planted thousands of mangrove seedlings. It also supports education and research across The Bahamas, with funding tied directly to guest experiences.

Supporting Local Economies: Applauds a Virtuoso partner using travel as a tool for empowerment, entrepreneurship and equity — making a meaningful financial impact that uplifts local and global communities and strengthens livelihoods.

Winner: Intrepid Travel – *Indigenous Tourism in Emerging Destinations*

Intrepid is expanding Indigenous-led experiences globally, with a focus on reconciliation, employment and entrepreneurship. Their work includes cultural awareness training, partnerships with First Nations communities and a growing portfolio of Indigenous experiences — from Australia to Peru.

Celebrating Culture: Honors a Virtuoso partner preserving heritage, uplifting communities and expanding cultural understanding — transforming lives through the sharing of knowledge, beliefs, arts and traditions that endure across generations.

Winner: Journey Mexico – *Reviving the Chinampas of Xochimilco*

Journey Mexico adopted and restored a traditional Aztec farming system in Mexico City, partnering with the Xochimilco Farming School to train future farmers in agroecology, financial literacy and regenerative agriculture — preserving a UNESCO-recognized cultural and ecological legacy.

Sustainable Destination: Awarded for the first time this year, this honor celebrates tourism boards embedding sustainability into the very identity of their destination — creating frameworks, programs and partnerships that drive meaningful impact for local communities and environments and set a new standard for responsible travel.

Winner: Jordan Tourism Board – *Meaningful Travel Map of Jordan*

This initiative connects travelers with social enterprises that support vulnerable communities, such as women’s weaving cooperatives and youth training programs. It spreads tourism benefits to underserved areas and helps reshape perceptions of Jordan through authentic, people-centered experiences.

Member Sustainable Leadership Award: Acknowledges a Virtuoso member agency that advocates for sustainability and vocally supports sustainable tourism in their words, actions and marketing.

Winner: Winkaffe Global Travel

Independent Affiliate of Avenue Two Travel

Winkaffe Global Travel integrates sustainability into every journey by prioritizing locally led, low-impact experiences and donating 10% of trip profits to nonprofits in client destinations. They are a 1% for the Planet member, Green America Gold Certified and emphasize authentic cultural exchange, habitat conservation and community support in all itineraries.

Advisor Sustainable Leadership Award: Celebrates the outstanding sustainability work of an individual Virtuoso travel advisor, showcasing their inspirational story that promotes and demonstrates the positive impact of sustainable travel.

Winner: Kristin Winkaffe

Winkaffe Global Travel, Independent Affiliate of Avenue Two Travel

Kristin leads sustainability efforts at multiple levels — from internal advisor training and supplier vetting to industry-wide initiatives as executive director of Travel for Better. She donates 10% of profits, offsets all client trips and is a published thought leader advocating for tourism as a force for global development.

Javier Arredondo, Virtuoso's vice president, sustainability, also presented impactful insights into the network's latest sustainability developments and offerings, such as:

- The Virtuoso Sustainability Community, which was formed two years ago after feedback from members, showed the desire for a space to come together and build momentum around guiding clients toward more sustainable travel choices.
- The *Virtuoso Impact Report: Sustainable Travel*, a systematic approach to cataloging sustainability efforts across the Virtuoso network, saw a 22 percent increase in partner participation and twice the member engagement this year. As a living, breathing report, the *Virtuoso Impact Report: Sustainable Travel* provides insights based on the three pillars of sustainability and informs what's next. For example, 77 percent of advisors reported their clients are more interested in booking sustainable travel than five years ago; supporting local economies is emerging as the top pillar supported by travelers; and 80 percent of members observe that clients are open to exploring alternative destinations due to climate. The full report can be found [here](#).
- Based on Hall Upchurch's guiding principle of "start where you are," Virtuoso created professional development tools to support advisors who are just diving into the sustainability space, as well as those who are already leading the way.
- Last year, sustainability-focused Study Tours launched, and a group of advisors traveled to Andalucía with Made for Spain and Portugal. This year, they explored Southern Africa with Wilderness, and the next Study Tours are gearing up to take place in Peru with Big Five and in Sri Lanka with Intrepid Travel.
- Virtuoso Partners self-nominate for an award by answering the question, "What are you most proud of?" The responses revealed stories worth celebrating and sharing. Those stories now fuel editorial content and inspire others. [The Virtuoso Impact List](#), the most-read piece on Virtuoso.com, launched on Earth Day and profiles 18 travel companies driving positive change.

Virtuoso wishes to thank all its partners and members that contributed to the report, while also congratulating all award recipients this year. Photos available upon request. For more details on Virtuoso's network of the world's best travel agencies, advisors and preferred partners, please visit www.Virtuoso.com.

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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. Normalized annual sales of (U.S.) \$35 billion make Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit www.virtuoso.com.

Media Contacts:

Misty Belles, Virtuoso – Vice President, Global Public Relations
+1.202.553.8817 / mbelles@virtuoso.com

Lauren Wintemberg
Alice Marshall Public Relations – Vice President

+1.212.861.4031 / lauren@alicemarshall.com