

Hottest Luxury Hotel Trends for 2017

NEW YORK — [Virtuoso](#), the global network of luxury travel agencies, has released the top trends and insights seen among recent additions to the Virtuoso Hotels & Resorts collection, it was announced Jan. 9.

Luxury Hotel Boom in Emerging Destinations: According to the 2017 Virtuoso Luxe Report, South Africa, Portugal and Colombia are among the hottest up-and-coming destinations this year. As a result, a new crop of luxury hotels and resorts are opening, such as South Africa's Tswalu Kalahari and Six Senses Douro Valley in Portugal.

Hotel Lobbies that Really 'Work': Hotels are continuing to reinvent the functionality of lobby spaces by creating ultra-cool lounges as places to meet, network and conduct business. The Palace Hotel in San Francisco offers a stunning historic court, with people on laptops gathering in a bar equipped with Wi-Fi and outlets. The new Four Seasons in downtown Manhattan offers lobby-specific amenities, such as laptops and interpreters for business meetings.

Hotels Bring the Destination to Life: To accommodate travelers' growing desire for authentic and adventurous experiences, hotels are increasing on- and off-property activities. Hotels immersed in the region's terrain also play an important role in attracting travelers. Those include Amanera Resort, recently opened in the heart of Dominican Republic's jungle, and the new Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba, based in Peru's Sacred Valley of the Incas.

Boutique Reigns: The desire for personalized travel experiences and Instagram-worthy design continues to drive the popularity of boutique hotels. Examples include Ted Turner's one-room Ladder Ranch in New Mexico, where guests will have outstanding wildlife-spotting opportunities on the 156,000-acre property, and at his 18-room Sierra Grande Lodge & Spa, also in New Mexico, guests can enjoy outdoor hot springs, which were first established by the region's Native Americans as a healing tradition.

Wellness 3.0: The rapidly growing travel niche is expected to hit \$680 billion this year. It is expanding 50 per cent faster than the overall tourism industry and hotels are responding accordingly. Mii amo, a destination spa in Sedona, goes beyond traditional treatments by offering restorative therapies such as Reiki, a Japanese technique for stress reduction. Clinique La Prairie, in Switzerland, is a pioneering medical retreat that combines cell therapy and holistic wellness.