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Virtuoso’s ‘Best of the Best’ directory taps into 2017 hotel trends

NEW YORK — Virtuoso has released its ‘Best of the Best’ directory for 2017, the largest collection to date with 656 pages, including 75 new properties, bringing the total portfolio to over 1,150 hotels in 100 countries.

According to Virtuoso, hot hotel trends include:

Luxury hotel boom in emerging destinations

South Africa, Portugal and Colombia are among the top up-and-coming destinations, says Virtuoso. New luxury hotels and resorts include South Africa’s Tswalu Kalahari and Six Senses Douro Valley in Portugal.

Hotel lobbies that ‘work’

Hotels are upgrading their lobbies to create a more comfortable work place to meet, network and conduct business. Two examples: San Francisco’s The Palace Hotel and the Four Seasons Hotel New York.

Hotels that bring destinations to life

Virtuoso’s new collection incorporates 76 pages dedicated to cultural itineraries. These include sushi making with one of Tokyo’s top chefs, camel rides along Erg Chebbi and night safaris in Laos. Hotels are also now immersed in famous regions terrain, such as Amanera Resort inside the Dominican Republic’s jungle and Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba, located in Peru’s Sacred Valley of the Incas.

Boutique rules

Boutique and one-of-a-kind experiences are highly coveted. Some 60% of the 40 boutique hotels in Virtuoso’s directory have fewer than 100 rooms. New additions include Ted Turner’s one-room Ladder Ranch, spread over a 156,000-acre property, and the 18-room Sierra Grande Lodge & Spa with outdoor hot springs, both located in New Mexico.

Wellness 3.0

Wellness travel is expanding 50% faster than the overall tourism industry and is expected to hit US\$680 billion this year, says Virtuoso. A destination spa in Sedona, Mii amo, offers therapies such as Reiki, a Japanese technique for stress reduction. Clinique La Prairie in Switzerland, a new medical retreat, combines cell therapy and holistic wellness.