

YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS WITH US

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VIRTUOSO LIFE

THE

EU

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PRE

ISSUE

OSLO
GOES GREEN

PARIS
BY NIGHT

SCOTLAND'S
GIN TRAIL

DUBLIN
DINING

LISBON
ESSENTIALS

DOLOMITES
ON SKIS

PLUS
NINE MORE
DESTINATIONS
ON THE RISE



EUROPE CALLING

BY SARAH KHAN

NINE DESTINATIONS ON THE RISE IN 2019.

IN HONOR OF OUR Europe issue, we're keeping it exclusively Old Continent for this year's Where to Go Next collection. Of course, there are already plenty of reasons to hop the pond and explore, but these nine destinations feel fresh, exciting, and even a little bit undiscovered – and they're all firmly planted at the top of our wish lists. We're ready to dive into Greece's stunning

under-the-radar peninsula, or spend a summer weekend sipping wine at a once-every-two-decades spectacle (and "I really want to go to Warsaw" has been uttered more than once during recent office conversations). Guided by insight and expertise from Virtuoso travel advisors, we're making the case for beyond-the-classics Europe in 2019. Here's to a new year and new adventures ahead.

Such great heights: A hike to the Kallur lighthouse on Kalsoy in the Faroe Islands.

FRANCESCO RICCARDO / ACOMINO / MOMENT RF / GETTY IMAGES

FAROE ISLANDS

INTRODUCING ICELAND 2.0.

This rugged Danish archipelago in the North Atlantic between Iceland and Scandinavia is home to more sheep (70,000) than people (50,000), and it's drawing visitors seeking starkly ethereal landscapes away from the crowds descending on Reykjavik. "Coupled with the stunning beauty are the warm and friendly Faroese, which makes these islands a special place to visit," says Thornhill, Ontario-based Virtuoso travel advisor Zilla Parker. Adrenaline seekers and wildlife buffs go for the vast hiking trails and close encounters with puffins, kittiwakes, and gannets, but the remote region is also, surprisingly, a bit of a foodie haven: Travelers trek to this edge-of-the-world outpost to eat at Michelin-starred Koks, a 30-minute drive from the capital of Tórshavn. The restaurant's 17- to 21-course tasting menu exemplifies Faroese cuisine, which features foraged sea urchins, fermented lamb, and salted cod, among other Nordic delicacies. Your advisor can work with **The Travel Designer**, a Virtuoso on-site tour connection in Scandinavia, to create a custom journey through the islands.



The Drangarnir sea stacks, off the coast of Vágur in the Faroe Islands.

WARSAW, POLAND

AN URBAN ESCAPE READY TO SHINE.

The Polish capital is becoming one of Europe's hippest destinations for 2019. "The city has shed its dark past and transformed into a fun, cultural place with much to offer global travelers," says Chester, UK-based advisor Claire Parsons. Explore the easily walkable Old Town and its surrounding museums, including the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews; take in an alfresco summer concert featuring the music of Warsaw native Frédéric Chopin at Łazienki Park; and dive into the city's impressive dining scene. "You have to try a traditional *pačzek* doughnut; the best are from the Zagoździński bakery in the Wola district," Parsons says. Last year's opening of the 106-room **Raffles Europejski Warsaw** upped the city's accommodations game: The revived neo-Renaissance grande dame dates to 1857, but has been updated with a contemporary edge and a nearly 500-piece Polish art collection. *Doubles from \$251, including round-trip private airport transfers, breakfast daily, a tour of the hotel's art collection, and a \$100 hotel credit.*

Golden hour in Old Town
Warsaw's Castle Square.





LAKE GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

FAIRY-TALE VIEWS AND TASTEFUL TRADITIONS.

The terraced vineyards of Lavaux are some of the world's most attractive – situated on a steep slope of Lake Geneva's north shore in French-speaking Switzerland, they overlook the Alps – and some of the most storied too. Here, winemakers have been tending to Chasselas grapes since the eleventh century; roughly every 20 years since 1797, they honor tradition and history during the Fête des Vignerons, a theatrical spectacle featuring a cast of 5,500 locals, set in a lakeside stadium in Vevey. This year's celebration, held July 18 through August 11, promises to draw wine connoisseurs from around the globe, who will find pageantry and parades – plus a chance to taste a varietal that's rarely exported. Lausanne's 168-room **Beau-Rivage Palace** (14 minutes from Vevey by train) has secured premium tickets, and its forward-thinking concierge team ensures that guests not only have access to the event, but also know how to navigate it. *Doubles from \$586, including breakfast daily and a \$100 hotel credit. Premium fête tickets from \$359.* – Megan Padilla

At 1,977 acres, Lavaux is the largest contiguous wine region in Switzerland.



ISTANBUL, TURKEY

NEW INFRASTRUCTURE – AND A CELEBRATED COMEBACK.

It's been a rough few years for this continent-straddling Turkish city, but Istanbul tourism is back and embracing the future. "Istanbul is bristling with new buildings, and its vibrant and affluent center is full of beautiful people," says Peter Lloyd, an Atlanta-based Virtuoso advisor. Istanbul's European side, west of the Bosphorus, showcases the city's past and present, from the seventeenth-century Blue Mosque to a modern-art installation inside the ancient Theodosius Cistern, and Bomontiada, a former beer factory turned art gallery and entertainment complex in Bomonti. It's easier to arrive here than ever before: the new Istanbul Airport, which opened its first section late last year, will become one of the world's busiest, and later this year an expanded cruise terminal is set to debut in Karaköy. Cruise ships are returning to the city after a three-year hiatus, including **Regent Seven Seas Cruises'** 700-passenger *Seven Seas Voyager*, on an 11-day Athens-to-Barcelona sailing. *Departure: October 16; from \$9,799.* – Lisa Morrow

↓
Istanbul's Sultan
Ahmed Mosque,
known as the Blue
Mosque for the hue
of its interior tiles.

THE PELOPONNESE, GREECE

WHAT'S (REALLY) OLD IS COOL AGAIN.

A little more than an hour's drive west of Athens and a million light-years from the cruise-ship crowds on Mykonos, the Peloponnese packs a dizzying mix of vineyards, beaches, and UNESCO-designated sites into a dreamy stretch of southern Greece. Atlanta- and Brussels-based travel advisor Marina Kiriazis likes to move the mountainous peninsula out of the history books and onto itineraries, offering travelers more of the country to sample beyond its famed isles. ("Greece is joining the likes of Italy, France, and Spain in having appeal for repeat visitors," Kiriazis says.) While the Peloponnese is best known as the site of the ancient city of Olympia, travelers can also hike through gorges, bike around vineyards and olive groves, and take a cooking lesson with a local *yiayia* (grandma). **Artisans of Leisure's** private, ten-day tour provides a little bit of everything: a few nights in Athens and Santorini, plus a stay in the Peloponnese at the gorgeous 50-room Amanzoe. *Departures: Any day through 2019; from \$17,585.*

→ The Ancient Theatre of Epidauros, which still hosts performances today.

PRIORAT, SPAIN

SAY ¡SALUD! TO YOUR NEW FAVORITE SPANISH WINE.

While they're not as globally renowned as Rioja, the sultry, multifaceted reds from Priorat, a rocky swath of Catalonia southwest of Barcelona, have long been on connoisseurs' radars – and now the rest of the world is catching up. "An energetic group of young winemakers has earned the region a reputation as one of Spain's most innovative," says Andrew De Angelis, a travel advisor from Calgary, Alberta. "The area's pristine natural beauty, distinctive terroir, and abundance of sunshine make it a great place to visit on a winetasting excursion." Your advisor can work with **Valesa Cultural Services**, a Virtuoso on-site tour connection in Spain, to customize a just-launched jaunt through Priorat. Travelers will visit an olive grove, take cooking classes with local chefs, and tour top local wineries such as Scala Dei, which dates back to the twelfth century. *Four-day private trips from \$5,700, including accommodations, tours, and some meals.*

← Vineyards near the Costa Daurada in Priorat, Spain.



A retreat for sailboats
in Zadar, Croatia.



COASTAL CROATIA

GOODBYE, MEDITERRANEAN;
HELLO, ADRIATIC.

Croatia is (still) having a moment: It's the No. 2 emerging global destination, according to this year's **Virtuoso Luxe Report**, a trends survey of more than 1,000 Virtuoso travel advisors. Leave the *Game of Thrones* devotees to make their pilgrimages through Dubrovnik's city walls; for everyone else, one of the best ways to explore this diverse country is by ship. "Cruising the Dalmatian coast is an experience that needs to be on your list," says Becky Robinson, a travel advisor from Austin, Texas. "The Croatian coast is lush with vegetation, and many charming small islands dot the coastline." Case in point: the breathtaking isle of Hvar, with its stately Venetian fortress, and Zadar, an uncrowded coastal city that Alfred Hitchcock once proclaimed to have the most beautiful sunsets in the world. Cruise lines have noticed this surge in interest and responded by adding fresh itineraries and ships. An eight-day, round-trip-from-Venice sailing on **Azamara Club Cruises'** new 690-passenger *Azamara Pursuit* calls on all of the above, plus the picturesque port towns of Rijeka and Split. *Departure: June 29; from \$3,299.*

ARLES, FRANCE

CREATIVITY IN THE COUNTRY.

Beyond the Roman ruins and cobblestoned lanes, there's a stylish air to this Provençal town. The centerpiece of its new Luma Arles arts complex – a Frank Gehry-designed tower sheathed in 10,000 glistening steel panels – will open in 2020. (Other parts of Luma, housed near the old Parc des Ateliers railroad, are set to open this year.) The \$175 million complex may help make Arles a global arts capital, an idea whose roots were laid down more than a century ago: Vincent van Gogh retreated to Arles for 15 months in the late 1880s and wanted to create an artists' colony in the town. "This is true France," says Beverly Hills, California-based advisor Howard Lewis, who believes there's no better way to experience the French lifestyle than at Arles' vibrant Saturday market: "The aromas are overwhelming, and even though you may not understand French, you can't help but laugh at the play-by-play between sellers and customers." Explore the town from the 39-room **Domaine de Manville**, a quintessential French country retreat in Les Baux-de-Provence, a 30-minute drive away. *Doubles from \$371, including breakfast daily and a complimentary round of golf for two or a \$100 dining credit.*

Afternoon strolls in the heart of Arles.





ISCHIA, ITALY

FROM THE PAGE TO THE BEACH.

ITALY REIGNS: The country is the No. 1 overall destination – plus the top spot for millennials, families, and honeymooners – in this year's Virtuoso Luxe Report.

While literary phenom Elena Ferrante, the pseudonymous author of the acclaimed Neapolitan novels, prefers to remain anonymous, she's managed to put one of Italy's most beguiling corners firmly on the map. "Elena, the main character in the Neapolitan novels, stays in Barano and goes to Maronti, one of Ischia's most beautiful beaches," says Trento, Italy-based travel advisor Anna Mariotti of the volcanic isle in the Bay of Naples. With the recent debut of HBO's miniseries *My Brilliant Friend*, based on Ferrante's work, Ischia's many charms are attracting an even wider audience. At the 54-room **Terme Manzi Hotel & Spa**, a new experience lets literary-minded guests explore Naples, Ischia, and Procida through Ferrante's eyes, visiting places made famous by her prose. Don't stop there, Mariotti says: Ischia's thermal spas, including Giardini Poseidon Terme and Parco Termale Castiglione, are musts for wellness-minded travelers. *Doubles from \$283, including breakfast daily and one massage or dinner for two. Terme Manzi is open seasonally, April through October. Five-day Ferrante experience from \$1,436, including accommodations and tours.* VI.

A proper post-Ferrante-tour wind-down: Ischia's Giardini Poseidon Terme. ←