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Narrator: From Curtco Media.

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Narrator: Coming up on the show...

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Matthew Upchurch: We have a huge number of virtuoso clients and travelers who had already made bets on Italy and Greece and Portugal, not knowing whether the borders were going to open or not. What's going to happen in this summer, in my opinion? You better get on it because it's going to sell out pretty darn fast.

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Bruce Wallin: That's Matthew Upchurch. I'm Bruce Wallin, and this is Travel That Matters. Hello, everybody and welcome to the very first episode of Travel that Matters. I'm your host, Bruce Wallin, and we have an incredible show coming up for you here. But first, I want to tell you a little bit about this podcast. This is a show about the world's most exceptional and meaningful travel experiences and the people who make them possible. I've been an editor and writer for more than 20 years, and in that time I've met so many great people who are doing amazing things in travel. People like National Geographic filmmakers Derek and Beverly Joubert, Rosewood Hotels President Radha Arora, Calium Morrison, the Founder of the Extraordinary Adventure Club. We've got all those people and many, many other great guests coming up on this show. But first, we're going to start with a person who I would argue is responsible for creating a greater number of these incredible travel experiences than anyone else on Earth. I'm talking about Matthew Upchurch, the CEO of the luxury travel network Virtuoso. Now, to set this up a bit. A couple of decades ago, Matthew made a big bet on travel agents at a time when pretty much everybody else was leaving them for dead. That bet has paid off huge for Virtuoso, for the travel industry at large and for travelers themselves. And it's proven particularly prescient in the past year, which we will get into in a bit. But for now, at a time when we all have so many questions about travel and the answers to those questions seem to keep changing on a daily basis, I think we're all in need of perspective. What's safe? Where can I go? How should I do it? But also, what does this all mean and what's going to happen next? If there's one person who can make sense of all this, who can tell us what on earth is going on and what we as travelers can expect in the future it is Matthew Upchurch, so sit back and enjoy my conversation with Matthew, but stick around after because I'll have a few tips of my own and updates on a couple of brand new hotels that opened up when none of us were paying attention. But for now, let's hear from Matthew. Matthew, welcome to Travel That Matters.

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Matthew Upchurch: So great to be here, Bruce. Thanks for having me.

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Bruce Wallin: OK, so I want to start with where we are today. There's obviously a lot of pent up demand. People are chomping at the bit, myself included to travel internationally. And we've all

had kind of this time to refocus and consider what our priorities are. You know, for me, certainly the break from international travel has made me want to go to more off the beaten path destinations. I'm thinking about Romania, Bolivia, I've got to get a whole list going. But at the same time, I'm dying to go back to Italy, right? And I'm certainly not alone in that opinion. So my question is, are we really going to travel differently or are we just going to kind of go back to all of our old habits?

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Matthew Upchurch: That is such a great question, because that really isn't a simple answer, but I'll give you my perspective. First of all, I just got back from Cancun, from the World Travel and Tourism Council Summit and this whole idea about the balance of world health and safety with the ability to travel. So a couple of things. Number one, one of the things that happens is whenever you have a major disruption, it accelerates trends either to the upside or the downside. You look back on history, major shocks and things always accelerate trends in one way or another. To your point, though, about the question, it's super interesting because you know the word hybrid, I actually did a talk in February and I said the word hybrid is here to stay. We started really talking about sustainability 12 years ago. But remember, when we talk about sustainability, we use three pillars: the environment, protecting the planet, the preservation of natural and cultural heritage and the benefit to local economies. Right? Really wanting to make sure that the local people that that it's regenerative, that it's positive and that there's travel for good and travel that would not manage what can be destructive. And the reason I call it a hybrid, because here's the deal, it's not just up to us. When I was on a panel on overtourism, I mean, talk about a difficult conversation. Overtourism is in the eye of the beholder, right? And people have livelihoods, whatever. So what happened is, I've had discussions with Florence, with Venice, with Amsterdam. And when we were talking about overtourism, it actually has to start with self-determination. We are the guests, so the communities need to get together and decide what it is and how they're going to handle that. So I do think that right now, in this exact moment, travel right now is being driven more by policy than by what we want. The other thing that you're talking about, which is the thing about going to new places versus going to places we love, that is a trend that's been there for years, which is the creative tension between the places I love because I know'em and the places that are new. If I were to make a bet right now. I would say that the preponderance would probably be to go back to those places that I really know, because it's almost like I feel like I'm responsible for helping them come back. The other thing I think that's happening is off-season travel was already something that the luxury sector off-season travel was a huge deal. A lot of our sophisticated travelers loved Europe during what would call, you know, instead of call it cold and gray, we would call it the cultural season, but it really was the cultural season, right? I mean, it wasn't just a gimmick. You interacted with the with the locals in a different way. You know, it wasn't so crowded. It wasn't so hot, particularly in the summer, things like that. And so people are looking for that authenticity and they want engagement. They want to participate.

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Bruce Wallin: So actually, you mentioned the off-season travel, I think it's also something I want to bring up, you guys, I know you guys have held your symposiums in places that have kind of

recently experienced some kind of traumatic event in the past. You know, like you went to Mexico City during swine flu, you went to Paris after the terrorist attacks. Some of my best travel experiences have been going places that are not as crowded because something has happened there. I actually went to, a couple of years ago, I went to Venice right after the big floods and we almost canceled. We figured it out we decided to go through with it, and it was an amazing, you know, we were in Venice with hardly anybody there. It was incredible. I think we went to Mexico during swine flu when most people weren't going there. And sure, there's this sense that you're going there and you're bringing in your tourist dollars at a time when they need it. But there's also, you know, a selfish reason for that is that you're experiencing these places at a time when there aren't a million other Americans there. But, I want to talk about that idea of going to these, kind of embracing the challenges of going into these destinations that are experiencing or have experienced a traumatic event. This traumatic event, it's worldwide, right? So, how do you embrace that and what are you encouraging people to do going forward?

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Matthew Upchurch: Just to give you, everybody listening, just a bit of perspective in 2020, 62 million jobs were lost, 4.5 trillion dollars was lost in travel and tourism. Those are the new final official numbers from WTTC. I've never been more happy that our network is truly global. Why is that? For example, let's take the country of Australia. Australia has always been in the top five places that our American, Canadian and North American clients, always want to remind everybody, having been born in Mexico, it is part of North America, by the way. And that's always been in the top five desired places. Australians are not, you know, not notorious. They're wonderful global travelers. Well, we were able to pivot with Tourism Australia to have all our Australian members book up all our Australian partners. And so that started happening all over the world. But I'll give you a perfect example about that pent up demand. Iceland was one of the first countries to say, if you're vaccinated, you can come. We just got an email yesterday that a couple of our partners in Iceland, their numbers in April, not April of 2020, April of 19 versus April of 2021 are four times the request they had of April of 19.

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Bruce Wallin: Wow. On that note, I want, I want to jump to the EU now, which recently announced that it is planning to open up to American tourists this this summer. Vaccinated tourists. That's fantastic news for all of us. We're all very excited about that. I'm hoping to go in late July. We'll see. What is that going to look like? What do you think European travel is going to look like? Is it going to be back to the Europe we knew? Is that going to take a couple of years to get back there? And also, you know, selfishly, I ask if my wife and I are both vaccinated, but our nine-year-old daughter is not, are we going to be able to go to Europe? You know, can she travel with us as a minor who's too young to get a vaccination? Paint a picture of what you think European travel is going to look like for the rest of 2021 and beyond.

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Matthew Upchurch: First of all, I'll say, prior to the pandemic, we were in the golden age of travel. There were a 100 million Chinese traveling. You had the elevation of the middle class all

over the world. You had the, particularly the U.S. and Western European Baby Boomers, because here's a statistic that by the time the last baby boomer turns sixty in 2024, it'll be the first generation in the history of the planet, where 80 percent of the generation is expected to live an additional generation, 20 to 25 years and 80 percent of those people who do live in relative health. So you have millennials and Gen Zs who are prioritizing experiences over goods, and then you've got this age of the longevity revolution and then you throw in 120 million Chinese travelers. There was a reason we were having some overtourism issues, right? But one of the things that we were talking about is if you want to be a savvy traveler, you know, you need to start thinking about the optimization of your experiences like you do the optimization of your financial portfolio. There's nothing wrong with doing things at the last minute, but I would suggest to you that having a strategy actually makes you even a better tactical person. One of the things that our customers that we are, we've been professing for a while. More and more people have been doing this, where you think about the next two or three years, you know, you think about your children, you think about milestones, you think about this stuff and you start kind of planning further in advance those big trips, those milestones, your big investments. Then you got the kind of the medium ones, right? You might want to plan six months in advance, three months in advance, whatever. And then you've got your end cap at the grocery store trips. You know, I'll buy one of those because it's an opportunity, you know, a spontaneous opportunity. And so what's happening is we have a huge number of Virtuoso clients and travelers who had already made bets on Italy and Greece and Portugal, not knowing whether the borders were going to open or not. The reason, what's going to happen in this summer, in my opinion, you better get on it because it's going to sell out pretty darn fast and it's going to sell out for two reasons: pent up demand, airlift, but also because capacity controls. And then to your point about children, that is that's a biggie it's a biggie for for travel because different policies are there and theoretically you can come in, but if the child doesn't have a vaccination, but if they test positive, then what are the quarantine rules and the quarantine rules are different. And again, this is where things are still evolving from the perspective of making some of those risk decisions. And by the way, it's not only where you're going, it's it's coming back.

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Bruce Wallin: Moving beyond the EU for a second. Let's do, I want to just kind of quickly run around the world some some popular spots and see your take in terms of like what's going to be possible, what's not? So let's start with the Caribbean, very popular spot for Americans. Obviously, like there's been a lot of visitation to the Caribbean, even though there's, you know, the rules have been changing on a daily basis. What are your thoughts on the Caribbean for the rest of 2021?

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Matthew Upchurch: I think I think both the Caribbean and Mexico will continue to manage it, but overall, I'm still pretty bullish about the way they're handling it, the way they're testing, the way they're doing. The whole issue right now on a macro level is this whole concept of vaccinated travel.

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Bruce Wallin: So the places that have really suffered clearly are the are the city destinations. And so places like, you know, what about Asian cities, Beijing, Singapore?

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Matthew Upchurch: One of the things that is very complicated right now, and it's for me as a travel industry person is kind of sad, is unfortunately the political element of whether we recognize a vaccine or not. Right? And I think this is what's hard about this, this particular because it's what will be the viable bubbles, what will be the viable corridors, the East West situation with with Asia. You know, I think that's going to continue to be something that we're all monitoring.

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Bruce Wallin: So, okay, what about you mentioned Australian and New Zealand earlier or Australia I believe, and very popular, people are, one of those destinations people are very eager to get back to. They've been completely shut down. Do you see? Do you see that changing at all?

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Matthew Upchurch: I literally just was WhatsApping one of our top members in Australia from Melbourne, he just sent me a photo of him being vaccinated. I asked him, I said, hey, well, what do you think about international travel? And he said, just follow the pattern. We'll probably open up to like Fiji and a couple of other places first, so, so they continue to take a more cautious approach. We're hoping, but again, you know, these things change, and right now, I'm not that sure what will happen in the short term for our summer, their winter. That seems to be still a little more limited.

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Bruce Wallin: A little farther out, yeah, yeah. So, I want to jump to cruising, because I read somewhere that you said that cruising is key not, just to, not just in this situation, but cruising is key to travel's recovery. Can you just explain what you mean by that?

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Matthew Upchurch: First of all, I felt that cruising got completely inappropriately, overly maligned. And by the way, I remember I believe me. I remember, because I remember at the beginning of the pandemic, it was Japan, what I mean, there was a couple of countries, you know, China, at the beginning, etc. and the Diamond Princess.

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Bruce Wallin: Yeah.

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Matthew Upchurch: I mean, it's a bad situation when a cruise ship was listed in a list of countries, right? But the reason I think that was so, so inappropriate and people say, well, what

about this and what about that? Well, tell me how that's different from some of the mistakes that governments made.

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Bruce Wallin: Right.

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Matthew Upchurch: You had x amount of information. You did the best you could. There were no protocols, no whatever, et cetera, et cetera. One of the reasons cruising gets maligned, you know, in my opinion inappropriately, is because they're the only form of travel that actually measure sickness perfectly. Now, I don't mean 90 percent 80. I mean perfectly. Why? Because every ship has to report to the, has always had to report to the CDC because of norovirus and all that stuff. They have hospital facilities, medical cruise. They measure everybody. It's a controlled environment. They know that. And so what I meant by, for travel to recover is, because it's not just about being on the cruise ship. The cruise industry is also going to be critical to the opening up of what are the protocols on on land. What about the air corridors? Cruises are vital to helping some of the most remote places in the world, right? Come back that don't have the typical infrastructure.

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Bruce Wallin: Okay, so do you feel comfortable cruising right now? Would you go on a cruise with your family this fall, this summer or whatever it is?

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Matthew Upchurch: And the answer is yes. When you look at what the cruise industry has done with the filtration, with the protocols, whatever, if I'm going to be on an airplane and going through airports and all that kind of stuff. And they've also thought through the protocols. Now, having said that, it goes back to that really important question you first answered: after 9/11, is it safe? Ultimately as an advisor, I can't tell you ultimate. I can give you the data, you know, and it's basically the same as, kind of like, when you signed a waiver and you go bungee jumping in New Zealand. It's called informed consent, right?

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Bruce Wallin: Do you have fears and concerns about your own personal travels going forward?

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Matthew Upchurch: yI think I probably mirror what I hear more and more from everybody is that number one our youngest is now 12, our 16-year-old old just got vaccinated. So I would say as a parent, I can by the way, there's multiple plans now where you can buy, even if you get COVID, evacuation insurance and stuff like that. I think the number one issue that still is the psychological barrier is this getting getting stuck right is the quarantining that if for some reason I do test positive, whatever, what happens. It's been interesting to see like where where I was just in Cancun, right, in Quintana Roo. A lot of the a lot of the properties there created this kind of like self-insurance thing because they weren't operating the hotels at full capacity in

order to have protocols. They were basically saying, if you for some reason do test positive, you literally, we will give you a room for you and your spouse separate and it's included. So those are some of the some of the things, but I think that's still the number one concern is the idea of being stuck in quarantine.

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Bruce Wallin: Has, let me I mean, this is the kind of the fundamental question of why do we travel for leisure, right? Why do we travel for leisure and has that changed the answer to that question?

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Matthew Upchurch: You know, I absolutely love that because I think what's happened is not to sound cliché, because you go back decades, right? Travel and particularly leisure travel, you know, used to be used to be seen our parents and our grandparents, you know, post-World War II the beginning of the gold, you know, the jet age. It was a luxury. It was seen as something that and over all these decades, it's become, you know, one of the most important parts of life. Call it a necessity or whatever. And I think more and more people have realized over time that getting out of your comfort zone, you know, being curious, having that white space to just think and immerse yourself in something, you know, if you think about every single self-help kind of how to be a better person, how to be a better entrepreneur, whatever it is, every single, Stephen Covey calls it, you know, sharpen the saw. You know, every single one of those has some form. Dan Sullivan, a strategic coach, has called it free days. Tony Robbins, I mean, everybody has a form of it, right? That humans only have so much emotional energy. Right? It's not infinite. And you have to have those breaks. It's kind of the focus of interval training, right, is more effective. And so I think that what's happened is, you know, you connect differently, you grow, you recharge and different people recharge in different ways. People want to go paragliding, they want to go sit on the beach and that the diversity of travel and what you can do is so amazing. I did a speech, a very short speech one time, it was a 50 minute kind of TED type talk. Why is travel transformational? And there actually is brain science. It takes a lot of energy and one away, one of the ways it conserves energy is by looking for patterns. When your brain says, oh, I know this because it's a pattern. It basically doesn't pay attention as much. Right? So when you go somewhere new or you taste something new or whatever, it's like, oh, what's going on here? And when it says, when you literally say travel opens your mind, there literally is scientific reason why it quote unquote opens your mind, because your mind is always looking for, oh, wait, I don't recognize this.

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Bruce Wallin: It's funny you say this. I've had arguments with friends before about traveling with young children, where you know the idea that, oh, there's no point in taking a, you know, a two-year-old or whatever on a trip. I completely disagree. My first memory as a human being is on a trip to England when I was three years old. I don't have a very good memory, I should say, but my first one was from a trip and I and I think that with my kids too, it's just that that experience of being somewhere completely different and doing something completely different than your routine, you're not taking a nap at the same time, you're not eating your snack at the

same time, it opens their minds. And, you know, are you going to remember it? No, but it definitely affects their minds. And I think, what to your point, it does. It continues to do so as we as we age and hopefully forever.

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Matthew Upchurch: I totally agree with you. I would even argue even younger, you may not remember, but I can tell you this. Our 16 year old visited 15 countries by the time he was two years old. I believe that the effect is even younger. They may not remember it as a memory, but I can tell you the way my children eat, their ability to eat all kinds of stuff, smells. Because, you know, it's taste, it's food, it's smells. It's different people and it's fundamental.

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Bruce Wallin: And those are the things that we've missed about it too, right? It's that, it's the smells, it's the taste. It's the people. It's all of those things together. And that's, you know, I think that's something that whether it's as a family or with friends or a spouse, it's just it's that shared experiences that, like you said, even if you're too young to remember it, it's still impacts you and it's something you carry with you.

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Matthew Upchurch: I'm sure a lot of people have watched the Social Dilemma about the effect of social media, right? Travel is also the antidote to the infinite scroll. It's like, the idea that you will pause and consciously go do something and however you recharge. It's about a conscious pause. So if you're an extrovert and you recharge by connecting with people, that's what you do. If you're an introvert and you like hiking the Himalayas, you know, or going to the Grand Tetons or something. But it's about being purposeful. It's about being conscious of it and doing that. And then, of course, then you add our social animal aspect of it. And then when you do that in conjunction with the people you love and those memories and how many times, you know, I was asked a long time ago, there was a survey of travel executives and said, You know, what do you remember it was, oh, it was a Thanksgiving thing, right? It was like, maybe I remember the BB gun I got when I was, you know, five years old or the this. But most of what I remember in my life are trips with my parents and things I did with my brothers and my sister and my family and my wife and what we did. I mean, it's just to give you a fun example. We have some grandmother matriarchs who literally told their grandkids, yes, I'm going to leave you a little money, but I'm telling you right now, I'm going to spend most of it, and I'm going to pay for an annual family trip to a really cool place. We're going to have family time together. We're going to learn our origin stories and get to know each other better, we're going to have those valuable moments. What a wise grandmother.

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Bruce Wallin: You know, you just outlined my plan for life right there. That is that is my one goal in life is to be that grandparent that gets to take everybody on these cool trips a couple of times a year. That is what I'm shooting for.

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Matthew Upchurch: Yeah! Isn't it awesome?

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Bruce Wallin: Okay, so you're definitely going to be that grandfather. But for now with, you know, someone with all your access, you've got to have something coming up like, what? What over the top trip do you have planned?

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Matthew Upchurch: Well, it's interesting you call it over the over the top. So, Virtuoso and myself personally, I've been involved with Virgin Galactic since its inception and I've been to all the events that the launching of the spaceship, the mothership, the this, the that and the other, and I can't wait to do it. And by the way, I'm not a thrill seeker, right? There's some people, I'm not I'm not like, I'm not like a thrill seeker. I'm not like -

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Bruce Wallin: You're not like Richard Branson.

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Matthew Upchurch: I'm not Richard Branson. But, I was at the unveiling of the mothership in Mojave years and years ago. And besides Virtuoso selling Virgin Galactic, I'm also one of the founder astronauts, which means I bought my ticket years ago. There's, you know, almost 700 people have already bought their tickets, but I'm in the 84 and we're by lottery, right? So, I'll be there. Richard will go first. And either the flight number two to flight twelve or something like that, because there are six people per flight. Anyway, I was also asked because I'm going to I'm actually a customer. I was asked if I would be in the media pool of customers to talk to the media. I got selected to and ended up being for, I think it's ITV one of the British television stations, and the British reporter was really nice, kind of buttered me up. And, so I'm like, you know, you can tell by my personality on this podcast I'm pretty easy going, you know, I love to tell a story. And so the guy goes, okay, we're on camera. He goes, this is dadada coming from Mojave, blah blah blah. And I have Matthew Upchurch, you know, who's going to go up in space, blah blah blah. A Virgin Galactic founder astronaut. But, isn't this about a bunch of rich people getting their jollies? I mean, he puts the microphone in my... and I, oh my, you know? And I'm thinking in the back of my head well, and I said, look, I get what you're saying, but I've made my career in travel. If you think about what people pay to fly on a Pan Am back in the 40s, it was pretty expensive, right? Every single product in the world always goes through a democratization curve. And Richard Branson, has all been about democratization. So I said, but I will tell you why I'm going up there. I'm not a thrill seeker. I don't fly my own planes. But, I have spent my entire life in travel. I read the Overview, the book, the Overview Effect about people who have gone to space. I've met astronauts through Virgin Galactic and through other programs. And why I love travel so much is because it takes you out of your comfort zone. It forces you to see things from a different angle. And for me, having gone to nearly 100 countries in the world and all this kind of stuff, the idea that I, even for a few minutes, can be in space, looking down and seeing no borders, no, this the climate, whatever. And then hearing about how it changes people's lives. And then when I come back home, the ability to become an

ambassador to that idea. Right? The ability for those of us to go up in space to be able to come back as just mere citizens.

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Bruce Wallin: You know, honestly, the idea of going to space has never really interested me that much. But hearing you describe it that way, I get it. You know, maybe I have to add another one to my list. But either way, aside from the space travel and some of these other things we have to look forward to. What are the next steps for luxury travel? What is the best form that luxury travel can take going forward?

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Matthew Upchurch: First of all, nothing changes a human being more than having taken something away from them that they took for granted. I think both the destinations are going to be more conscious about what they do, and there's going to be this, yes, there'll be this tension between economic recovery, but then how do we want to come back? You know, I think that luxury travel this pandemic will have accelerated the fact that people want authenticity. They want to be participants. They want to make sure that their travel is a force for good. They want to see that they're spending. I mean, we have a we have a data point that we did a survey of travelers in about 16 countries that said it was called the commoditization of quality. As overall quality has become better and better and better. More and more clients are saying, You know what? I'm going to also choose the companies I do business with based on something other than just the base level of quality I know I'm going to expect. So, you know, some shared values, what they do, things like that. But again, I think what's really interesting, I was asked a long time ago, and I'm thinking about it now when you ask me this question. I remember, I remember being asked the question on Australian television one time define luxury, you know, is it a price point? Is it this is it that? And I think that to some degree, luxury is kind of like finding people and organizations that actually listen to what's important to you and deliver that. You don't just ask the question, how was your trip? You ask the question like if there was one thing about that trip that you would have liked to have seen done differently or that you would change? What would it be? Now that's a very pointed question. And so what happens is when you're working with a collaborative smart travel advisor with every trip, the totality of the way you experience things improves. And so I think for me, luxury travel going forward is more conscious, more purposeful. I think that products are being designed to be a platform that allows for that customization. I think you're going to see travel that is much more. You go back to the places you love. You want to do something different. People are going to travel to more places than ever, and more and more products are going to be refined to the particular needs and desires of what is important to you.

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Bruce Wallin: Matthew, it's been a real pleasure having you here today. I really appreciate the time. This has been fascinating, your insights on on everything that's going on. Very excited for what's ahead in the future for Virtuoso and for all of us as travelers. So thank you.

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Matthew Upchurch: Thank you so much for us.

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Bruce Wallin: Matthew had some great insights on the state of travel, and now that it's time to travel again, where should you go? Well, I have a few ideas

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Narrator: And now for the Wallin wrap up.

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Bruce Wallin: Not that I needed to get any more excited about travel right now, but my talk with Matthew really got me thinking about all the great new things that we have to look forward to as travelers. I've always been someone, I've stayed on top of the latest luxury travel news. You know, what, new hotels are opening, emerging destinations, new trips, tours, yachts, you name it, but that became kind of a depressing exercise during the pandemic. And now, you know, now things are different. We're emerging. There's a lot to be excited about, and there are a lot of great new hotels that opened up when when none of us were paying any attention. Let's take Madrid, for instance, one of my favorite cities. Three new hotels there. The Ritz Madrid has just reopened as a Mandarin Oriental Hotel. Villa Magna is opening as a Rosewood hotel and Four Seasons just opened up a hotel right near the Plaza Mayor. Four Seasons, by the way, also has brand new hotels in New Orleans and Tokyo. Further on in Japan, there's a ton going on in Kyoto. There's a new Amaan, a Park Hyatt, the Hotel Mitsui there. We've got the Ritz-Carlton in Niseko, Japan. That's that's really tops on my list. Just an incredible ski resort. But the thing I'm most excited about has to be the new Aqua Nera boat on the Amazon. This is from Aqua Expeditions, which I've done on their trips on the Amazon, and it was so cool, like just one of the best trips I've ever done. It's like, it's like being in a luxury safari camp, but you're on the water in the river, seeing pink dolphins and anacondas and all these monkeys and birds. And it's such a cool experience and a little side note on my trip. It was just me and my two older kids, and this boat holds 32 people. And it just so happened that we got their week where there was only five other people on board. And so we kind of lucked out. But it, you know, with that, we became good friends with everybody else on board. We're having a great time, all these great adventures, every morning you go on an adventure together every afternoon. And it wasn't until about 48 hours in that we realized that one of the guests was the greatest snowboarder of all time, Shaun White. And, but it didn't matter out. There was just like, we were all doing these things that none of us had ever done before. And again, it brings up that kind of the shared experiences and the bonding that happens in those times. And anyways, that is that is a long way of saying check out the Aqua Nera. It's going to be very cool, as are so many of these other things. We've got a lot of exciting things to look forward to, so we will see you out there on the road soon. Thanks again to Matthew Upchurch for joining us today on Travel That Matters. Please share this episode with your traveling friends and family. And be sure to check out our show notes for more information on Virtuoso. This show is produced and edited by A.J. Moseley and Darra Stone for Curtco Media. Music by Joey Salvia. I'm Bruce Wallin. Enjoy your journeys and I'll see you down the road.

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Narrator: Curtco Media, media for your mind.