



## **GRACE MARKUS NAMED 2024 VIRTUOSO® CRUISE ICON, LUXURY CRUISING'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS RECOGNITION**

**BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA** (May 6, 2024) – [Virtuoso®](#), the leading global network specializing in luxury and experiential travel, proudly recognizes Grace Markus of Direct Travel in Vancouver as a 2024 Virtuoso Cruise Icon, a distinctive honor for advisors whose sales performance excels within the industry. Markus joins an elite group of 146 advisors across eight countries worldwide who have earned the Virtuoso Cruise Icon designation and who collectively represent the top one percent in Virtuoso's cruise sales, reinforcing their position as leaders within the luxury travel industry.

As a Virtuoso Cruise Icon, Markus will have access to various events and networking opportunities designed to foster growth and collaboration while sharing and cultivating best practices within the network's cruise community. Events such as Virtuoso Travel Week, luxury travel's preeminent worldwide gathering, will bring Markus face to face with some of the most respected cruise brands in the industry, while this year's Cruise Icon Voyage in Tahiti aboard Windstar's *Star Breeze* recognizes the effort it takes to maintain status as a top-tier cruise producer.

"We extend our warmest congratulations to Grace for her well-deserved recognition as a Virtuoso Cruise Icon," said Virtuoso's Vice President of Cruise Melissa Araya. "She has demonstrated resilience, ingenuity and a steadfast commitment to exceeding client expectations while supporting our cruise partners. Grace's achievements serve as an inspiration to fellow advisors and a testament to her skill, determination and passion for cruising as a means of delivering unforgettable travel experiences."

"I am deeply honored to be recognized as a Virtuoso Cruise Icon, and I am incredibly grateful for the support and opportunities provided by Virtuoso throughout my journey in the travel industry," said Markus. "The network's unwavering dedication to excellence and innovation in the travel industry has been instrumental in helping me exceed client expectations and deliver unforgettable cruise experiences. It is a privilege to be part of the Virtuoso community, and I am excited to continue our partnership in creating magical moments for our clients."

Because of their affiliation with Virtuoso, Cruise Icons can offer exclusive benefits to their clients on over 400 select cruises annually across 13 separate cruise lines via the Virtuoso Voyages program, including a dedicated onboard host and a choice of an additional benefit ranging in value from \$500 per couple to several thousand dollars, depending on the sailing.

For more information about Direct Travel and its luxury travel offerings, please visit [www.visiontravel.ca](http://www.visiontravel.ca) or contact Grace Markus at 1-844-847-4477 (ext. 102) or email [grace@gracescruises.com](mailto:grace@gracescruises.com). To learn more about Virtuoso and its professional travel advisors, please visit [www.virtuoso.com](http://www.virtuoso.com).

**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 54 countries throughout North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. Drawing upon its preferred relationships with more than 2,300 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.) \$28-\$32 billion make Virtuoso a powerhouse in the luxury travel industry. For more information, visit [www.virtuoso.com](http://www.virtuoso.com).

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