

# PLATINUM LIST 2014

LIKE PRECIOUS METAL, YOUR TRAVEL EXPERIENCES ARE SPECIAL. ST PRESENTS 70 PLATINUM REASONS TO PACK YOUR BAGS THIS YEAR. FROM ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME EVENTS TO EXOTIC ESCAPES, HOW TO GET THERE IN FIVE-STAR STYLE AND INDULGE WHEN YOU ARRIVE.

## CULTURE



### 9 Freeze frame

Aspen goes highbrow with the opening of a world-class art museum in August. Designed by international Japanese architect Shigeru Ban, the light-filled, rectangular-shaped building (above) will feature six primary gallery spaces spread over four levels. It's Ban's first US museum and is based on transparency and open view planes; [aspenartmuseum.org](http://aspenartmuseum.org).

### 10 Happy 90th Huka

Even after 90 years, Huka Lodge remains a shining jewel in New Zealand's luxe lodge portfolio. Huka is celebrating all year – including with an Italian Opera weekend from Friday, April 25 to Saturday 26. New Zealand opera diva Deborah Wai Kapohe will lead the program of Italian musical recitals as leading chef Stefano Manfredi satisfies your taste buds; [hukalodge.com](http://hukalodge.com).

### 11 Arias by the sea

If you can't make it across the pond, Opera Australia's next Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, *Madama Butterfly*, will leave you all aflutter. A brand new production by La Fura dels Baus, *Madama* opens on Friday, March 21 and runs until Saturday, April 12 at Mrs Macquaries Point. Tickets from \$79; [opera.org.au](http://opera.org.au).

### 12 In Country

For a Tasmanian culture hit, Saffire Freycinet's (above) indigenous guide Mick Quillian is now doing fascinating talks (complimentary for guests) on the history of the Oyster Bay people, taking in their coastal tracks, rock platforms, fauna and flora. Sample local bush tucker, learn about tools and foraging and gain a greater understanding of times gone by; [saffire-freycinet.com.au](http://saffire-freycinet.com.au).

### 13 Turkey's new culture trail

Cultural specialist Peter Sommer Travels has added the recently opened Hittite Trail to its portfolio. Hosted by historian and archaeologist Nota Karamaouna, the trek follows one of Turkey's new cultural routes, taking in spectacular Cappadocia landscapes (below) and oodles of Byzantine art. A 10-day tour from October 5-14 starts at £2450 (\$4490); [petersommer.com](http://petersommer.com).