

 **skyscanner** presents

the future of travel 2024



Destinations & Hotels

*the future of travel:
destinations & hotels*

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1. The Hotel Room of the Future

Ten years is a long time in hotel technology, and the next decade will see the hotel room familiar to us now totally transformed for TOM's comfort and digital convenience.

Skyscanner's Director of Hotels **Nik Gupta** describes the exciting shape of hotels to come. 'In 10 years' time, advances in digital technology will mean that travellers will have no need to encounter a single human being from the time that they enter their chosen hotel to the time that they check out of their room,' he says.

'The fight back against peer-to-peer travel will see hotels empower their guests with incredible levels of hyper-personalisation through their mobile devices to provide the unique experiences they want.'



‘Hotel software will key in to a guest’s social media profiles to enable him or her to book a particular room where everything is set specifically for them.’



Guests will be provided with menus of things to do, restaurants to eat in and theatre performances to watch, that exactly meet their individual needs and preferences.’

In 2024, TOM will have a range of intuitive and embedded technology at his disposal from the second he steps inside his room, allowing him to create a highly personalised hotel experience.

Initial signs of this trend are already on display at The Peninsula Hong Kong, which uses Intelity technology to provide guests with a tablet device to control the lights, curtains, temperature and television, order dinner, make spa reservations and plan day trips.

Likewise Hilton brand Conrad has embraced new technology with their Conrad Concierge App which enables guests to ultra-personalise their stay by choosing their preferred bath amenities or making their breakfast choices on a smartphone while jogging in a nearby park, for example.

Futurologist Ian Pearson predicts that the hotel room of the near future will take this technology to new levels. Hotel bedrooms will incorporate pillows with embedded electronics that provide sleep-aiding head and neck massages and morning wake-up calls, while holographic systems that project 3D images of personal trainers, movie characters, or even friends and family will be on offer. He even predicts that in the future, hotels will offer guests sleep suits with sensors that can monitor blood sugar levels and offer relevant dietary advice.

Advances in the health and wellbeing of guests is already apparent in the Stay Well room at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, which has room lighting that is designed to reset the internal clocks of jetlagged guests, shower water infused with vitamin C, air filtered through advanced air purification filters, and optional aromatherapy infusions.

But we are also beginning to see designers and hoteliers create rooms and ambient spaces that are more interactive and conducive to changing with the mood and need of the room's inhabitants.

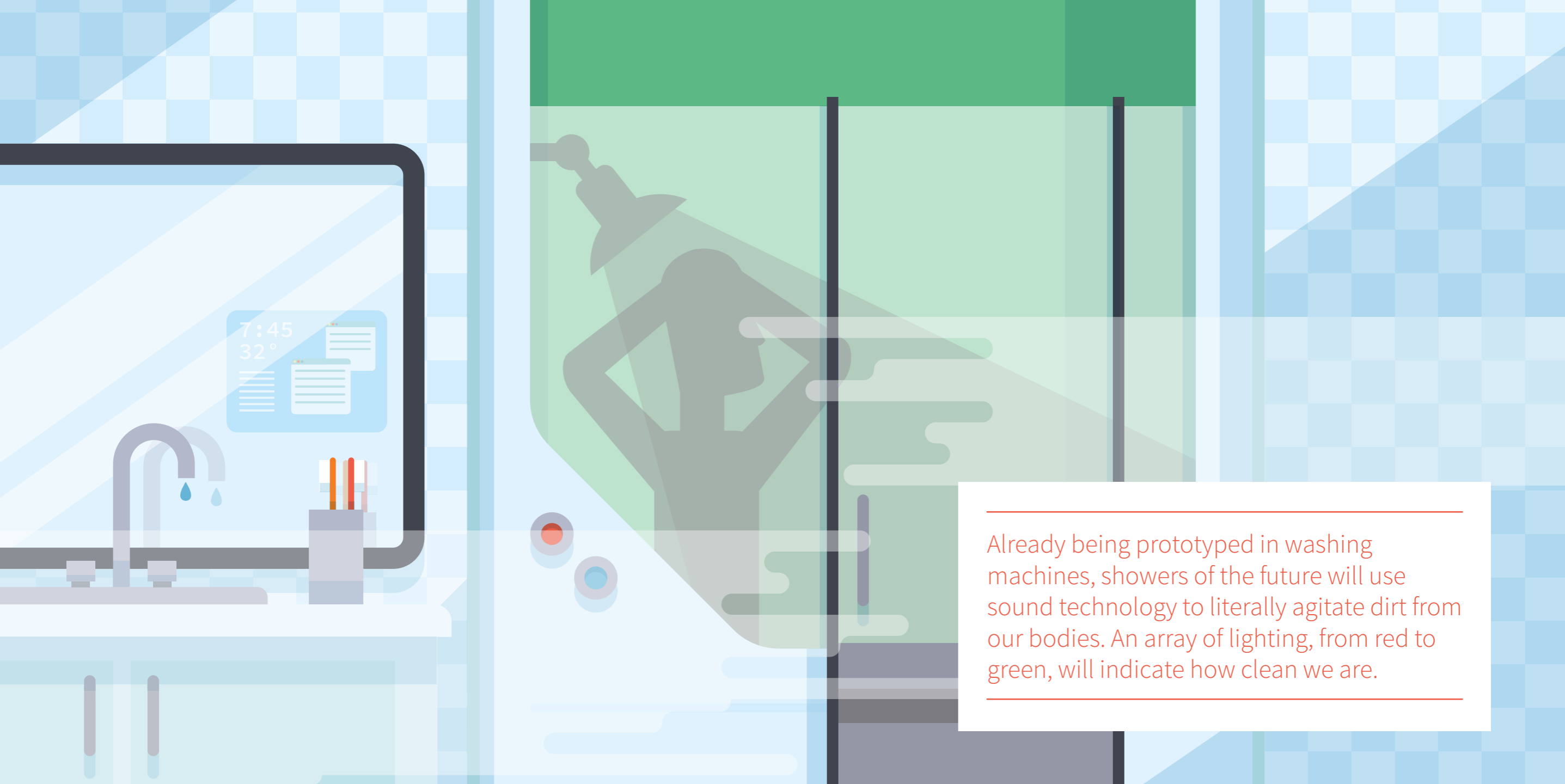
Additionally, such walls can frost over to create areas of privacy for showering and changing in even the smallest room.

According to New Scientist magazine, the emergence of large-scale organic light-emitting diode (OLED) wafer-style TV screens and digital walls from brands such as News Digital Systems (NDS) herald the arrival of the all-singing, all-dancing interactive hotel room wall.

Controlled by a simple app on your phone, these screens need no side lighting and can run images across a single wall of screens fitted together like tiles.

Work on a hotel room of the future by Spain's SerranoBrothers design studio shows us a room with interactive walls, capable of displaying films, stunning images, family portraits and video messages from friends.





Already being prototyped in washing machines, showers of the future will use sound technology to literally agitate dirt from our bodies. An array of lighting, from red to green, will indicate how clean we are.

But the planned innovations don't stop there. Even the already elaborate hotel bathroom will undergo a revolution in design, as smart meters are used to reduce water usage while motion sensors and galvanic side panels will be embedded in showers to alter temperature, water flow, water pattern and dispense vitamin C. Meanwhile, baths will offer chromatherapeutic lighting – violet to relax muscles, yellow to aid digestion or soft blue to stimulate and energise.

'It's early days yet,' says The Future Laboratory Co-founder Martin Raymond. 'But the technology is in place. The big problem scientists have is the effect these high-frequency sounds will have on the eardrums. They could blow them out. So, for the moment, we're likely to see this kind of technology being used to clean our hotel bed sheets.'

Cyber Mirror systems developed by Cybertecture will turn full-length mirrors into motion gesture touchscreens so that everything stored on the cloud can now be accessed when guests brush their teeth, while in the distant future 3D MakerBot-style printers will be offered in hotel rooms to print bathroom amenities such as toothpaste and soap..

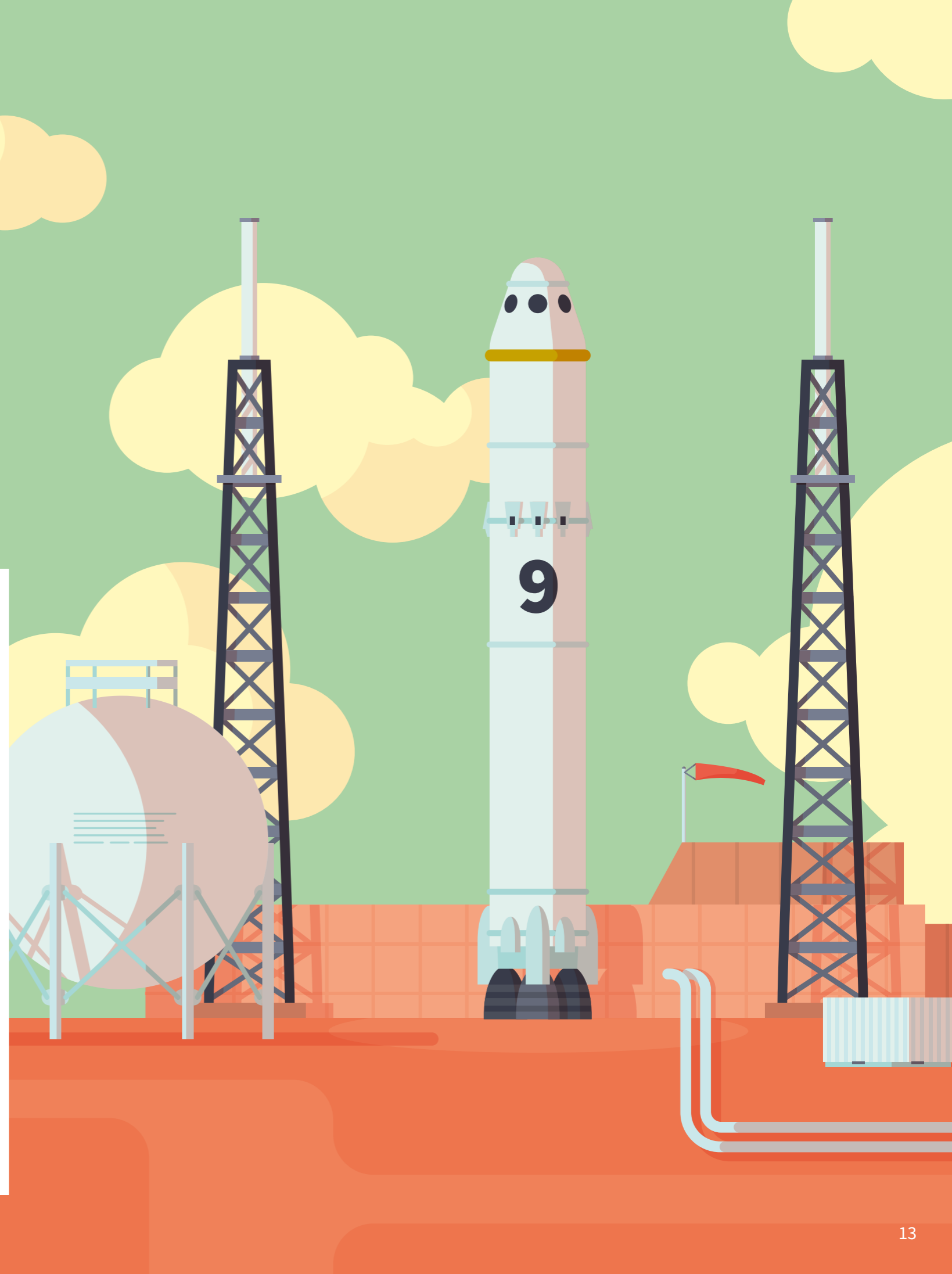
2. Going Up and Going Down

By 2024, space will be the final frontier for TOM as journeys into Earth's orbit become more affordable for the ultra-luxury market. Underwater resorts – already a reality at a handful of destinations worldwide – will become mainstream destinations that feature high on the travel agenda.

Space Travel

Today, private companies are vying with each other to make Earth's orbit a destination for the well-heeled rather than a place where only billionaires can afford to go. Indeed, some projects are looking much further into space with dreams of commercial flights to Mars.

As futurist Daniel Burrus says: 'Looking beyond the 10-year mark, we will be able to book more affordable trips into space where we can go up there and stay up long enough to enjoy and savour an exciting, alien environment.'





‘But relatively affordable trips in low Earth orbit that enable you to experience a few minutes of weightlessness – and establish serious traveller bragging rights – will happen very soon.’

The race for space will initially take intrepid travellers to the outer edges of our planet’s atmosphere.

From 2016, World View Enterprises will carry passengers 30km above the Earth’s surface in a pressurised cabin suspended beneath a high-tech 400,000-cubic metre helium balloon.

A US\$75,000 ticket will buy you a view previously only experienced by astronauts – that of the stunning curvature of the globe from ultra-high altitude.

Orbital space travel will be the next hot ticket and commercial companies are queuing up to make it a more affordable proposition. SpaceX announced a breakthrough in re-useable rocket technology in 2011 and has been further developing this with the launch of their latest version spaceship in May 2014 as they work towards their overall ambition to establish a colony on Mars.

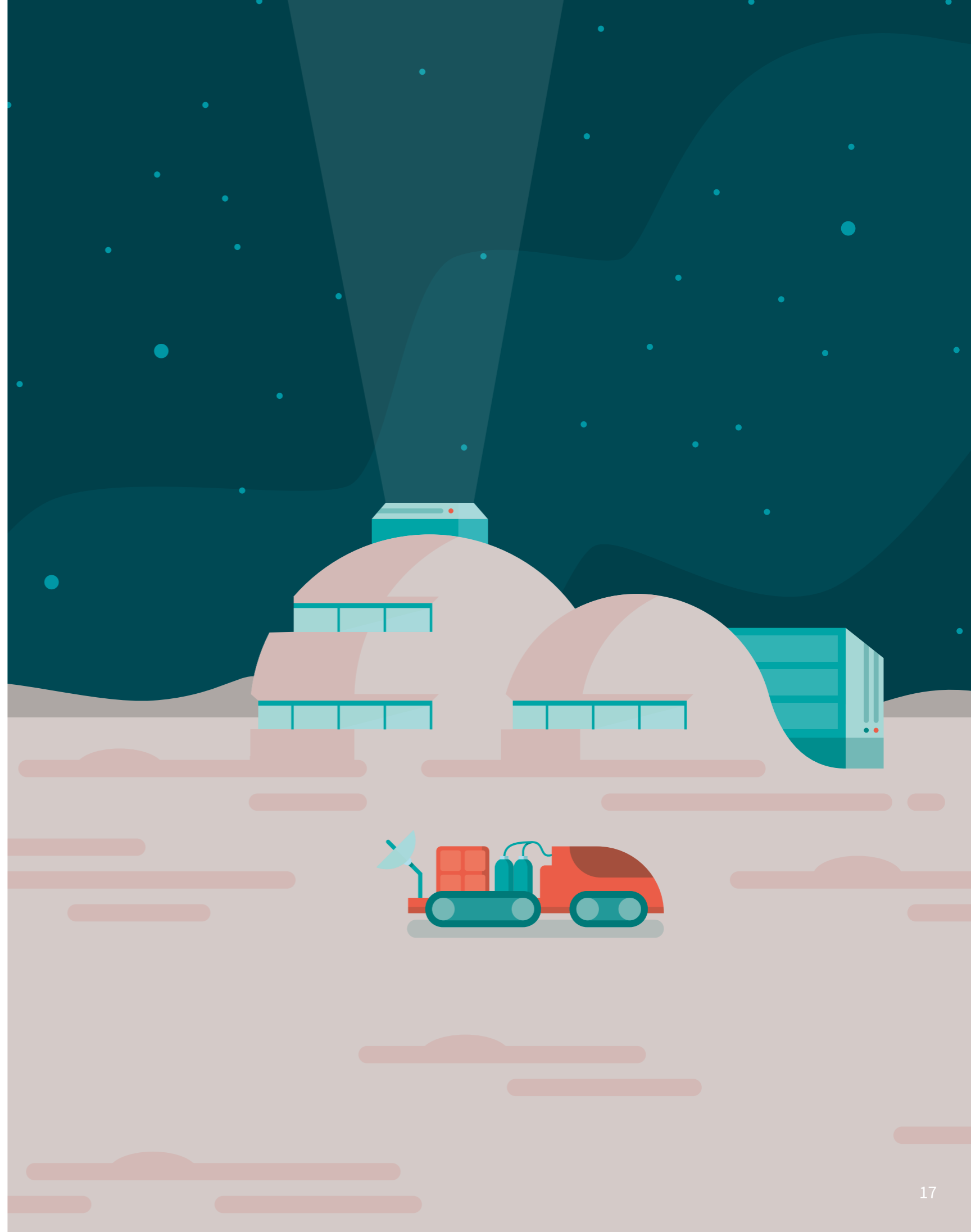
The European Space Agency and architecture firm Foster + Partners also announced plans to build a colony, this time on the Moon. An inflatable structure will be transported from Earth, say researchers, then covered with a shell built by 3D printers.

Skyscanner's CEO Gareth Williams comments, 'Without question, space tourism will grow and get cheaper. But what is affordable for the general public is a very arbitrary question given we're a planet of 7 billion people.'

'I suspect we'll see the habitation of Mars and the ambitions of Mars One or Elon Musk's vision coming to fruition before space travel becomes common enough and cheap enough to be affordable for the majority.'

For those who have an appetite for space travel but not the cosmic price tag that will come with it, there will be the Mobilona Space Hotel, Barcelona Island.

Containing zero-gravity spas, space gliders and a space observatory, this Earth-based hotel will allow guests to "experience" space travel by offering lifelike views of galaxies through cabin windows and even feelings of weightlessness from the vertical wind tunnel.





However as Skyscanner's Filip Filipov points out, more thrilling than being able to holiday in space, whether for real or otherwise, will be the possibility of flying in low orbital space planes that will radically cut our inter-continental flight times.

'Taking travel to space will be a ground-breaking milestone for mankind in general,' he says, 'especially if Virgin Galactic and SpaceX achieve their missions.'

'But what is even more exciting is the transfer of technologies that space exploration can bring to commercial aviation. In the case of Virgin Galactic, whose ship can orbit the Earth for 2.5 hours, a regular traveller might see a London to Sydney flight in 2.5 hours if the same atmosphere-hopping technology can be applied safely in commercial aviation.'



Underwater Adventures

Journeys to the bottom of the sea will be another fashionable option for TOM, and one that comes with a more affordable price tag than space travel.

Underwater hotel rooms already exist as niche and novelty destinations. The Neptune and Poseidon suites at the Atlantis Hotel at The Palm in Dubai are billed as romantic hideaways with panoramic glass walls looking out into a sea filled with shoals of colourful fish. The Jules Undersea Lodge in Florida – built using existing submarine technology and materials – has been giving guests the ability to live 31 feet underwater since 1986.



Now, a new wave of travel innovators are scaling up the concept, aiming to build entire hotels beneath the waves rather than single rooms or suites, strongly suggesting that underwater holidays will be a far more mainstream proposition by 2024.

The Water Discus Hotel in Dubai is the first of the new breed.

Due to open in 2015, it will be built nine metres below sea level with aquarium-style windows in 21 suites and facilities that will allow guests to go outside in diving gear. Containing a spa, garden and pool, the hotel will be able to rotate under water and rise to the surface in as little as 15 minutes in emergencies.

Skyscanner CEO Gareth Williams predicts that underwater travel will trump space tourism in the 2020s. 'I suspect that mass underwater exploration and tourism will develop with greater pace than mass space tourism. And I suspect you would get more from it, because there is more to see down there than in space,' he says.

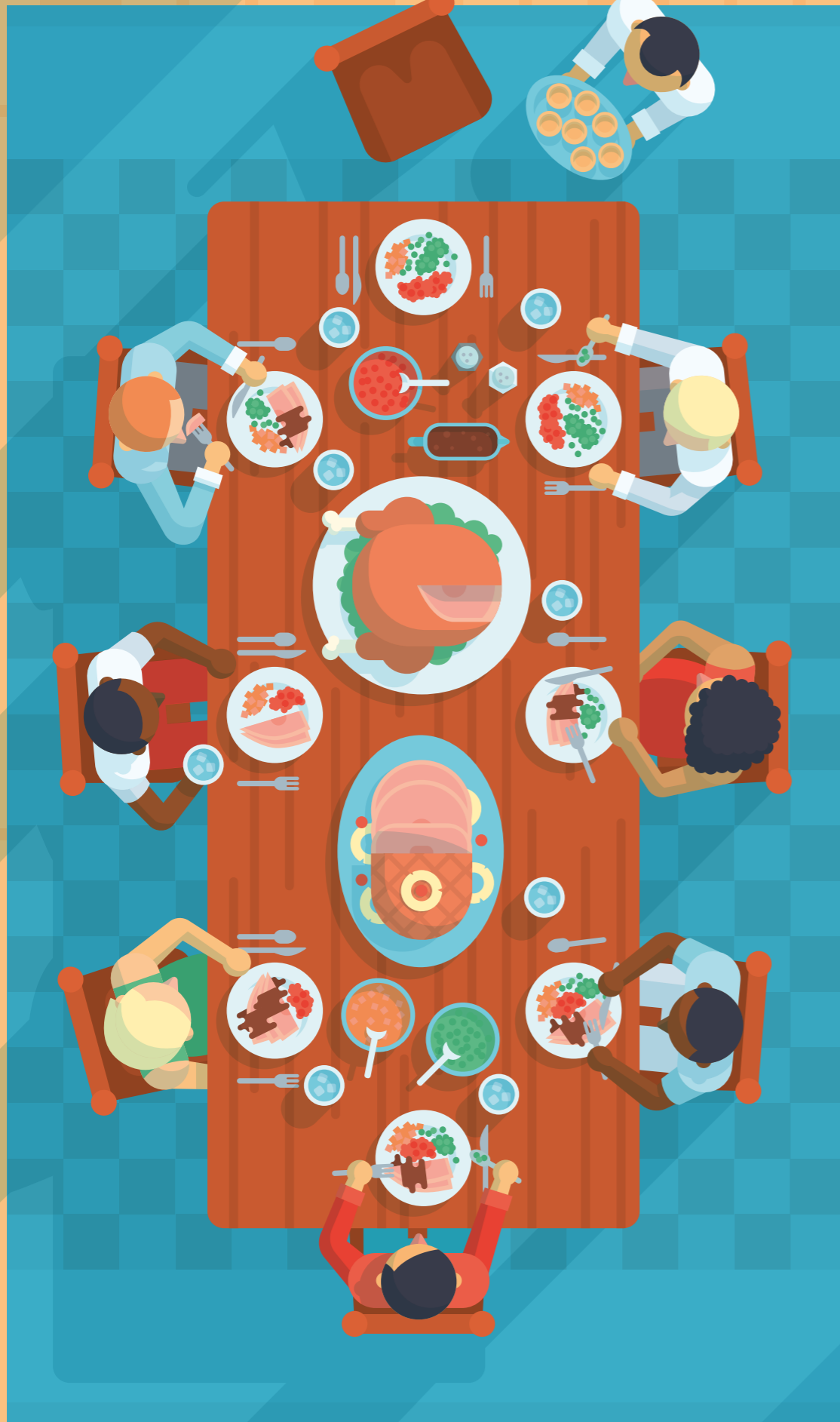
3. Getting Up Close and Personal: In search of personalised, local experiences



In 2024, peer-to-peer travel and home-from-home hotels will be the way that our travellers satisfy their desire to explore a destination through the eyes of locals.

Home-swapping collaborative travel, pioneered by brands such as Airbnb, was born in the wake of the 2008 global financial crash when cash-strapped consumers began to demand authentic local experiences above pre-crash luxury.

By 2013, revenues flowing directly into people's wallets in the collaborative economy in the US – incorporating sharing services such as Parking Panda, SnapGoods and On Liquid – were estimated to reach \$3.5bn, according to Forbes.



And it is not just the accommodation choices which allow visitors to live like locals, but also the dining experience.

Supper clubs – evenings with paid-for dinners hosted by local foodies in their own homes – have exploded too. Find a Supper Club, a website for people running clubs in their home in Europe and the US, now has almost 7,000 members.

In the next decade, the ramifications for the global travel industry of this consumer shift towards collaborative behaviour will be enormous. ‘In the future, I think collaborative travel will make a significant dent in the number of hotel rooms that are booked,’ says B Joseph Pine II, co-author of *The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage*, and Co-founder of Strategic Horizons.

‘I believe we could see 5–10% of people renting out their homes to travellers – and that’s a truly huge number. For those seeking affordable authentic travel experiences in the developed world, I don’t think there is anything like it.’

Futurist Daniel Burrus is quick to highlight the impact social media has had on the travel industry and our quest for a travel experience tailored to our needs and wants. 'Social Travel will become an increasingly formalised part of the travel industry within five years. Social media tools will be used to aid collaboration between travellers and people on the ground in their destination of choice,' he says.

Filip Filipov of Skyscanner predicts that this trend will continue to expand into the 2020s.

'Crowdsourced travel and services are successful because we trust our friends and family. The voice of the crowd has credibility,' he says. 'It's an amazing part of the way that we make our decisions and discover new travel possibilities.'



4. First and Last Travellers: Newly accessible regions and vanishing habitats

With the growth of social media showing no signs of abating, establishing bragging rights will continue to be a key travel motivator in 2024.



Like many of today's travellers, TOM may be keen to notch up unique journey experiences that makes him the envy of his friends and family and it is predicted he will have two diametrically opposed ways of doing so.

A trip to one of the Forbidden Zones – the countries and regions once rendered inaccessible by conflict or political problems – will enable him to boast that he was among the first, while travelling to see a habitat or species threatened with extinction will give him the kudos of being among the last.

Because of their rarity, and the need to focus the global community on how close these places are to extinction, environmentalists are considering the radical step of opening up hitherto no-go areas to high-paying and influential tourists, who can use their fiscal and social media muscle to alert people to what is happening.

Skyscanner's Filip Filipov predicts that Forbidden Zone travel will be a big draw in the 2020s. 'Travellers from both the developed and the emerging worlds will be looking for the thrill of the new – for a chance to explore countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America that their friends have never visited,' he says.

An explosion of Chinese travel will be one of the drivers of the desire to explore off-the-beaten-track Forbidden Zones. 'There will be a flood of Chinese tourists to the classic destinations such as Paris, Rome and New York in the 2020s,' says Daniel Burrus.

'Many people will turn away from these classic places because they are so crowded and use their e-agent devices to seek out hidden jewels that the mass market doesn't yet know about.'

Destination	Time	Gate
Kabul	13:35	C5
Pyongyang	13:40	C19
Tehran	14:10	C7
Beirut	14:15	C13
Paro	14:20	C2

Destination	Time	Gate
Paris	14:00	B1
Rome	14:05	B3
Milan	14:10	B5
London	14:30	A1
New York	14:40	B9
Los Angeles	14:45	B20
Tokyo	14:50	A2
Sydney	15:00	A4
Barcelona	15:15	B8

Travel futurologist Dr Ian Yeoman agrees. 'In the 2020s, countries such as Afghanistan, North Korea and Iran will become hugely attractive because travellers will want to be the first to go to places that their friends have never been to,' he says.

'In Africa, Botswana is one to watch. It has a successful economy, it's safer than South Africa and there are good national parks there. Angola is also seeing a lot of investment from China and could take off too.'

'Lebanon will become the new Dubai if the political situation continues to improve. And Bhutan will become one of the big global players in luxury travel.'

Being the first person into a Forbidden Zone may carry a social cachet for the more daring traveller in 2024. But so will being the last person to see a rhino, a tiger or an orangutan in the wild, or to visit a 'lost' tribe before they are assimilated into the encroaching global culture.

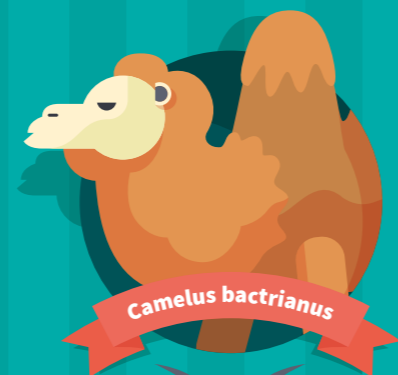
As Raynald Harvey Lemelin, Co-editor of *Last Chance Tourism: Adapting Tourism Opportunities in a Changing World*, says:

'In the past, the motivation to 'be the first' facilitated a rush to exotic destinations. But in a rapidly changing world, the rush to be one of the 'last' is the new travel phenomenon.'

One strand of this travel trend will be the 'extinction race' as travellers, particularly from the developed world, rush to see species that may not be around in the wild for much longer.

'Many of our current travellers have an urgency to see the polar bears before the full effects of global warming affect them further,'

says **Rick Guthke**, General Manager of specialist tour operator Natural Habitat Adventures. Tens of thousands of tourists flock to northern Canada to do so before the rapidly melting sea ice stops such polar bears from reaching their traditional seal hunting grounds.



Other endangered species that scientists believe will be extinct within the next decade include leatherback turtles (the Indian Ocean), bare-faced tamarins (Manaus, Brazil), the black rhino (East & Central Africa), the Chinese alligator (Yangtze river), the sheath-tailed bat (the Seychelles), the Dama gazelle (Chad), the Bactrian camel (Gobi Desert), the hairy-nosed wombat (Australia), the Iberian lynx (Spain), and the Sumatran orangutan (Borneo and Sumatra).

However as reported by The Daily Telegraph, most conservationists agree that income from tourism has a crucial role to play if the battle for survival of endangered species is to be won.

"The bottom line is this: if we abandon tourism, we abandon conservation," says Kenyan wildlife expert Jonathan Scott. "When people ask me, 'How can we help?' we say: 'By taking a safari.' Wildlife-based tourism is not a choice but a necessity. It pays the bills that keep the game parks and their wildlife secure. Without the tourist dollars you might as well hand over all the remaining wildlife to the poachers."

This view will encourage TOM to visit a future ecotourism initiative, allowing him to show support of endangered species, while at the same time fulfilling his own desire to see a species or habitat while it still exists.

'Ego-tourism is a form of eco-tourism. People once wanted to seek out new places to be the first to get there, but now they want to see a place before it disappears,' says Rosaleen Duffy, author of *Nature Crime: How We're Getting Conservation Wrong*.

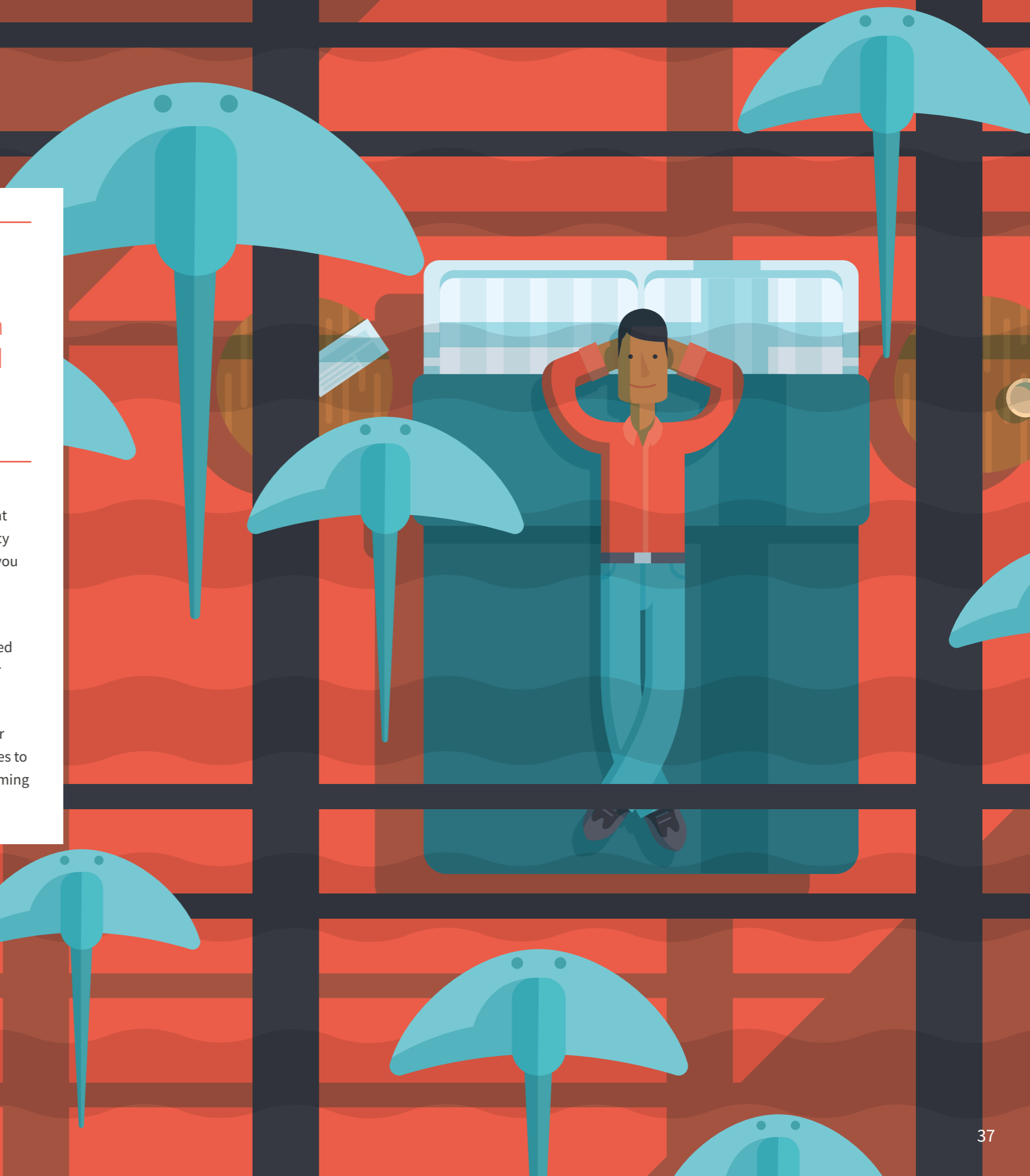
Conclusion

By 2024, not only the hotel room in which TOM stays will have been changed utterly by advances in technology, but the destination in which the hotel is situated will be transformed too as entire new resorts, regional sectors and formats emerge.

Hyper-personalised hotel suites will have touch-activated interactive walls that act as video screens, communication hubs, or even transform into frosted privacy screens. Vitamin C showers, retinal door entry, electronic pillows that massage you to sleep and holographic personal trainers will be part of the expected package.

Hot destinations of the next decade will include trips – and even stays – in Earth orbit, vacations in underwater hotels and journeys to be first to see once-troubled countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East – or to be the last to see a species or habitat threatened by climate change or human encroachment.

Getting up close and personal with the locals – and the locality – will gain further collaborative momentum by the mid-2020s as millions of people rent their homes to tourists, and hotels and resorts adopt a peer-to-peer ambience and ethos, becoming home-from-homes.





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