



Michael Najjar's Space Suite at the Kameha Grand Zürich hotel

ART TRAVEL

A short stay in outer space?

As Michael Najjar's Space Suite opens at the Kameha Grand Zürich, Claire Wrathall checks into a hotel room that's out of this world



BY CLAIRE WRATHALL
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As and when Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic finally blasts off into the cosmos, among the pioneer astronauts on board will be the German photographer Michael Najjar, who is perhaps the only artist to have trained for space travel at Star City near Moscow. Anyone familiar with his work will know space is a preoccupation of his: check out his ongoing [Outer Space series](#) or better yet check into the Space Suite he has created at the Kameha Grand Zürich near Zürich airport, a creation that falls somewhere between a hotel room and an installation, which opens on 1 October.

The idea behind it is to give guests the impression that they are staying in a space station, albeit an unconventionally spacious one – it extends across a roomy 1,240 sq ft – furnished with a king size bed (no narrow bunks into which you must strap yourself here), separate sitting area and kitchenette. It's safe to say it was inspired not so much by real space travel as sci-fi and cinematic interpretations of how it might look. The bed has been cantilevered out from one wall to give the illusion that it is floating and that you have entered the realms of zero gravity, even if your feet remain reassuringly on the ground.



Michael Najjar's Space Suite with its 'floating bed'

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On the bed lies a rectangular black mattress intended to evoke the mysterious monolith in Stanley Kubrick's classic *2001: A Space Odyssey*. While the disembodied female voice that welcomes you on arrival and instructs you in suite's technology was inspired by the one in John Carpenter's film *Dark Star*. The clusters of ceiling-mounted spotlights were inspired by rocket engines and a selection of models of historic rockets and space ships, as well as three of Najjar's photographs, provide the decoration. The ceiling and floor have also been decorated to conjure an image of the Milky Way in negative: tiny black stars on a white ground (white on black might have been too oppressively dark).



Perhaps the suite's most original and alluring attribute, however, is its steam bath,



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A film still from Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey' 1969

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from which a small window looks out both into what appears to be deep space and down on Earth. Too bad the actual room is located just five floors above ground.

A two-night 'galaxy getaway' in the Space Suite at the Kameha Grand Zürich, part of Marriott's Autograph Collection, starts at £1,282 per night and includes breakfast, a 90-minute bodyflying session or an hour on an Airbus A320 simulator, a book of Michael Najjar's works and an invitation to visit him in his Berlin studio.

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