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**Cruise and Hotel News: Space Suite in Zurich; Panama by Small Ship**



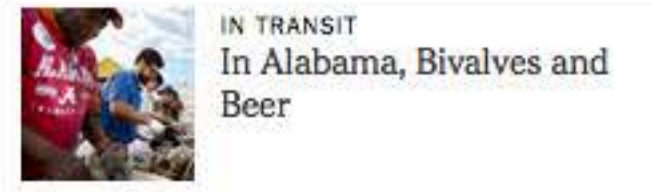
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TRAVEL

# Cruise and Hotel News: Space Suite in Zurich; Panama by Small Ship

OCT. 7, 2015



The Space Suite at the Kameha Grand Zurich hotel. Michael Najjar

## In Transit

By ELAINE GLUSAC



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## A SPACE ODYSSEY IN SWITZERLAND

One of the 245 rooms in the new [Kameha Grand Zurich](#) hotel, part of Marriott's Autograph Collection, aims to virtually launch guests into outer space. Designed by the German artist Michael Najjar, who has undergone astronaut training in Russia, the Space Suite envelops guests in the starry realm with images taken from the [Hubble Space Telescope](#) altered and applied to both carpets and ceilings. Upon entry, guests are greeted by an automated voice inspired by the science fiction film "Dark Star." Spotlights on the ceiling look like rocket engine exhaust and an astronaut's space glove mounted on a wall is designed to hold keys and cellphones. In the bedroom, called a "sleeping module," the cantilevered bed appears to be floating. An iPod beside it holds audio books in English and in German related to space, and the Apple TV offers more than 20 movies on the subject. To maintain focus on the faux space interiors, windows are covered by mirrors, and even a small window in the steam bath offers a view of Earth from space. The Space Suite costs 1,600 Swiss francs (about the same in dollars) per night. A two-night getaway package in the suite starts at 1,845 Swiss francs per night, including breakfast, 90 minutes of "bodyflying" or hovering over a wind channel, and the opportunity to visit Mr. Najjar's studio in Berlin.

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Travel news, deals and tips, written by the editors and reporters of the Travel section.

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## PANAMA CROSSING BY SMALL SHIP

The small-ship line [Un-Cruise](#) has just announced its first itinerary in Panama, which includes transiting the Panama Canal. Beginning in 2017, weeklong itineraries aboard the 64-passenger Safari Voyager will be staged round-trip out of Panama City, though travelers initially cross the isthmus overland to catch the ship on the Caribbean side in Colón. It then sails for two days among the islands of Guna Yala before making its way through the canal. Pacific-side highlights include hiking in the Punta Patiño Nature Reserve in the Darién jungle and sailing among the Pearl Islands with opportunities for kayaking, paddleboarding, snorkeling and whale watching. The first departure takes place April 29, 2017, and weekly cruises will continue through September. Fares start at \$4,395 per person, double occupancy.

## CARNIVAL INCREASES CONNECTIVITY

As it aims to attract younger guests, [Carnival Corporation](#) has announced it is expanding its Wi-Fi networks and offering new fee-based access plans that make posting to social media outlets more affordable. Among 100 ships spread across 10 cruise lines, including Holland America Line, Carnival Cruise Line and Princess Cruises, the company currently offers its mostly-satellite-based, high-bandwidth WiFi@Sea network on 30 ships, which will increase to 40 by year end with the goal of reaching most ships by the end of 2016.

Access packages vary by cruise line, but several have announced new pricing geared to social media users, including Carnival Cruise Line, which will introduce unlimited \$5-per-day access to popular social media sites in spring 2016. Europe-focused Aida Cruises will also introduce a flat rate plan of 4 euros (\$4.35) per day or 19 euros per week for unlimited access to social media sites next spring.

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## A CREDIT CARD FROM STASH

Many hotel loyalty programs offer their own credit cards, helping cardholders accrue points toward future stays and perks. Now the independent frequent-guest program [Stash Hotel Rewards](#) is offering its own card that allows travelers to earn points at chain properties as well as Stash's own, and redeem them at Stash independent hotels. The Stash Hotel Rewards Visa Signature offers three points per dollar spent at Stash hotels, which includes over 165 properties like the Sunset Marquis in West Hollywood and the Essex Resort & Spa in Vermont. The card also gives holders two points per dollar spent at other hotels and on gas and dining purchases. Stash points, which do not expire, can only be redeemed at Stash hotels. The chip-enabled card costs \$85 per year, which is waived for the first year, and will not trigger foreign transaction fees.

## UNIWORLD ON SALE

The high-end [Uniwold Boutique River Cruises](#) is offering an airfare sale on its 2016 European and Vietnam itineraries. The company is offering savings starting at \$1,000 per person on economy airfare and \$2,000 in business class on 14 itineraries in Europe, running between next March and August, and one in Vietnam between January and March. Airfare is included on an additional two itineraries, one in Italy and another in Russia, over select dates. To take advantage of the sale, travelers must book and pre-pay for their trip by Oct. 31.

