



17 GALACTIC ENTERPRISE

Words [Ingeborg van Lieshout](#)
Renderings courtesy of [Equip](#)

01 'The curved, soft walls remind me of a hilly Tuscan landscape covered in the most glamorous, sensual materials,' says Xavier Claramunt.

02 The recreational module accommodates an area for weightless exercise and the Space Spa.

Galactic Suite, outer space

Typical guest	Wealthy space enthusiast
Room rate	€3 million (six days)
Atmosphere	Planet Earth is blue
Featuring	Earth-to-orbit communication, view of universe from 'The Eye'
Most ordered	Space cocktail
Visit	www.equip.com.es

Design	Equip, www.equip.com.es
Size	500 m ³
Completion	December 2012
Materials	Velcro, aluminium, composites
Composition	Cluster of rigid modules

We're watching the sun rise for the one-hundredth time. It's the last day of our six-day stay in the Galactic Suite, and seeing the sun slide into view from behind the earth is still an amazing sight. When compared with our trip to the Himalayas in 2011 and our expedition to Antarctica the previous year, this holiday tops them both. For a mere €3 million, the organizers even threw in an all-inclusive 16-week stay on a tropical island, where we learned everything an astro-tourist needs to know before rocketing into space.

Designed by Equip Xavier Claramunt, the Galactic Suite space hotel—it's been described as 'a modular bunch of grapes'—orbits the earth in just 80 minutes. Service and recreational modules are cylindrical, while each of the three hotel pods features 'The Eye', a round window that frames an endless view of the universe. Walls padded with a soft yellow-gold material invite guests to lean back and gaze at the stars in comfort. I can't say

that a Velcro spacesuit is the most charming outfit I've ever worn, but in this zero-gravity environment it allows me to do a touch-and-stick 'crawl' around the room, kind of like Spiderman. Back on earth, I had dreamed of sleeping while floating weightlessly, but now I'm starting to appreciate concepts like 'secure footing' and 'sound orientation'.

A bed is superfluous, as are dining tables and chairs. Meals at 450 km above the earth's surface are 'served' in futuristic packaging, and anything spilled becomes the makings of a catch-me-if-you-can game. Experiments done during the day involve cooking, space crystal growth, organic growth in space and earth observation. I have to smile when it occurs to me that the results of Stephen Hawking's research may someday be taught by university professors along with Paris Hilton's observations of the amazing blue marble, as viewed from space. ✎