

Space hotel sees 2012 opening

"Galactic Suite", the first hotel planned in space, expects to open for business in 2012 and would allow guests to travel around the world in 80 minutes.

Its Barcelona-based architects say the space hotel will be the most expensive in the galaxy, costing \$4 million for a three-day stay.

During that time guests would see the sun rise 15 times a day and use Velcro suits to crawl around their pod rooms by sticking themselves to the walls like Spiderman.

Company director Xavier Claramunt says, "It's the bathrooms in zero gravity that are the biggest. "How to accommodate the more intimate activities of the guests is not easy."

But they may have solved the issue of how to take a shower in weightlessness -- the guests will enter a spa room in which bubbles of water will float around.

When guests are not admiring the view from their portholes they will take part in scientific experiments on space travel.

Galactic Suite began as a hobby for former aerospace engineer Claramunt, until a space enthusiast decided to make the science fiction fantasy a reality by fronting most of the \$3 billion needed to build the hotel. An American company intent on colonizing Mars, which sees Galaxy Suite as a first step, has since come on board, and private investors from Japan, the United States and the United Arab Emirates are in talks.