Hotels Encyclopedia Article

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For the general public, the concept of space tourism continues to be an exciting dream. The first stage of space tourism would consist of very simple low-Earth orbit treks: tourists would orbit Earth several times on a spaceship and then return to the planet in a one-day tour. Even these short tours would be sufficiently adventurous to attract many civilian space travelers in the near future.

The next phase of orbital tourism would consist of "space stays" of one or two nights. If people could reside in space for two or three days, public travel above Earth would be much more enjoyable. Space tourists would then be able to watch Earth, the Moon, and the stars for long periods. It would be possible to produce many interesting materials in **microgravity**, some of which would be very valuable souvenirs from space. Also, it would be possible for tourists to have many kinds of interesting physical experiences in microgravity.

An artist's depiction of a space hotel in low Earth orbit.

For people to stay in space for two or three days, "space cottages" would be essential. Those cottages would be small but would have to have minimum habitation systems for hygiene, dining, and sleeping, among other functions. One interesting proposal is the use of the habitation module of the International Space Station to provide room for space tourists after the station's formal planned mission has ended.

Eventually larger space hotels that would have many more functions for enjoying hotel life like those found in terrestrial resorts would be constructed. The accompanying picture shows an example of a space hotel of the future designed by Shimizu Corporation more than ten years ago.

The space hotel shown above has sixty-four guest rooms and a microgravity hall. All of the guest rooms are located on a circle with a radius of 70 meters (230 feet) that rotates three times a minute to produce 0.7 G artificial gravity. Therefore, in a guest room a hotel guest could stand, walk, and sleep normally. The figure on page 51 shows the interior design of a guest room. In the microgravity hall a guest could enjoy an environment in which it is possible to eat, drink, and play. In the future, space resorts will inspire the creation of many appealing microgravity games.

See Also

Habitats (Volume 3);; Living in Space (Volume 3);; Tourism (Volume 1).

Internet Resources

"Space Tourism."*Texas Aerospace Scholars.* NASA. <http://aerospacescholars.org/Cirr/Em/l8/Tourism.htm>.