

**THE FUTURISTIC ONE**



**Robot hotels**

IN Japan, Nagasaki's new Henn na hotel (h-n-h.jp) is almost entirely staffed by robots. Among the more memorable employees are a dinosaur receptionist, towel-delivering androids who come and knock on your door and a scarily gigantic left-luggage porter. Tips? In tweets, please. Apparently the machines are a cost-cutting move and it works. With rooms starting at £35 a night, it's good value for Japan.



**THE GIRLY ONE**

**Female-friendly rooms**

CHAMBERS – as they are cosily termed – at Virgin Hotels' Chicago debut (virginhotels.com, rooms from £140 per night) aren't exclusively for women but Sir Richard Branson did promise to make his rooms 'female-friendly'. That turns out to mean purpose-built vanity tables, separate his-and-hers wardrobes, a tiled shower bench at the perfect leg-shaving level, peepholes enabling towel-clad goddesses to preserve their modesty and extra-powerful hairdryers.



**THE GROOVY ONE**

**Bud & Breakfast**

POT tourism became an official thing in Washington and Colorado last year after the US states legalised possession of marijuana and dispensaries to sell recreational doses. Step forward an array of hash-friendly hotels like Denver's The Adagio (budandbfast.com, suites from £115 per night) and Airbnb-style site Bud & Breakfast (budandbreakfast.com, rentals from £28 per night). Note that possession is illegal in the UK, so no bringing back souvenirs...



**THE ANTI-HOTEL ONE**



**Home-office hybrids**

OPENING in Amsterdam in autumn – with further outposts due in London, Berlin, Paris and Barcelona next year – new brand Zoku (livezoku.com) has brazenly predicted 'the end of the hotel room'. Occupying a sphere somewhere between aparthotels and poshtels, its 'hive' of hybrid spaces blend office, bedroom/lounge and kitchen in a dazzling dream of multifunctionality. Scoring highest on the cool-o-meter are the retractable staircases that lead to loft sleep areas and the 'sidekicks' – chummy employees who provide local tips. In another modern trend, Zoku is chiefly geared towards long-stayers and prices (still tbc) will reflect as much, so a ten-day stay will offer far greater per-night value than a one-day break.

Hotels with **CHARACTER**

Bid farewell to bog-standard rooms and stay in a place that suits your personality, says **Richard Mellor**

ACCOMMODATION options used to be simple: resort, hotel, motel, self-catering, caravan, campsite. Then came glamping and homestays and

pay-what-you-want. And now? You can bed down in everything from ganja guesthouses to crying rooms and robot-run lodges. Here's our round-up of the latest wacky trends...

**THE WEEPY ONE**



**Crying rooms**

THE downside of a bed-and-beverage property (see far right) is likely to be a hangover so bad it makes your eyes water. If only you were holed up in Tokyo at one of the Mitsui Garden Yotsuya hotel's eight designated 'crying rooms' (gardenhotels.co.jp/eng/yotsuya, rooms from £55 per night). Available to women only – sexist, eh? – these special suites purport to help burdened ladies overcome their emotional problems by weeping 'heartily' in private. Should tears prove elusive, an array of aides are at hand: films such as Forrest Gump, sorrowful manga books and cashmere-soft tissues. And, just to prove they've thought of everything, make-up remover is provided for correcting inevitable mascara smudges.

**THE CAPITALIST ONE**

**Urban glamping**

BRIEFLY available as a pop-up experience in New York City two summers back, urban glamping has just reappeared with a vengeance atop a Melbourne shopping mall. Divided into two AstroTurfed sections, St Jerome's (stjeromesthehotel.com.au, tents from £156 per night, until November) – named after entrepreneurial founder Jerome Borazio – also incorporates bathrooms (phew!), a general store and a small art gallery (why not?). As you might expect from a third-storey perch, the views are fabulous. Still more fabulous are the 30 tents, with their wicker trunks, ottoman sofas, wi-fi and complimentary bottles of craft beer. Prices even cover burger-slider dinners, breakfast and afternoon teas with cupcakes and macarons.



**THE BOOZY ONE**



**Bed & Beverage**

THERE are hotels with a bar and now there are bars with a hotel. Leading the latter trend, Experimental Cocktail Club's first hotel is focused firmly on liquor. Each sharp room at the Grand Pigalle (grandpigalle.com, rooms from £139 per night) in Paris comes with a cocktail-making kit containing mixers and minis, while dialling room service means ringing the sommelier and corridors have Martini-themed carpets. A retro Citroën can transport guests to other ECC bars.

