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The Next Big Thing: the container hotel

As our cities become increasingly crowded, luxury travellers could soon be checking in to high-rise "container hotels"



A rendering shows how Hive-Inn could look

Picture: Ova Studio

BY JOHN O'CEALLAIGH

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To cater to the rising number of high net worth travellers who will visit swelling cities such as New York and London for work or pleasure, the Hong Kong-based architecture firm [Ova Studio](#) has released plans for the development of Hive-Inn, a towering, teetering luxury hotel made of stacked shipping containers.

With a solid core containing all services (such as lifts, staircases, electrical and plumbing infrastructure and so on) forming its spine, the hotel would be enveloped by a steel lattice skeleton into which containers could be slotted. As demand increases, more units could be added.

While it might seem as though the premise was inspired by a game of Jenga, Ova Studio is confident the soaring structure will prove popular in congested regions. With the containers prefabricated, each property could be built rapidly or deconstructed quickly should it be necessary



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to move the building. The firm has suggested, for example, that a more basic version of the Hive-Inn could be erected where emergency accommodation is needed after a natural disaster.

More typically, it is expected the structure would serve luxury travellers, with each container incorporating a large window at one end and accommodating bespoke

interiors determined by different hoteliers' tastes. The studio has suggested that hotel groups could further capitalise on the property's unique form by emblazoning advertising on the units or partnering with different luxury brands to provide guests with targeted experiences. A Rolex-branded room, the team says, could include a display of the company's watches, with the option to buy a limited-edition model while staying there; luxury fashion brands could display lines from their latest collections in specially furnished rooms.

As yet, Hive-Inn is a concept only, but its creators say building could commence imminently should someone be willing to finance it. The scheme may look unorthodox but it could gain favour as cities expand, and it's not without precedent. Opened in Shoreditch, east London in 2011, Boxpark is a collection of shops all housed in refitted shipping containers; while Sleeping Around, which launched in Antwerp last year, is [an upmarket "pop-up" hotel room housed in a shipping container](#). Equipped with a rain shower, iPod docking station and air conditioning, it is placed at locations around the city. Guests only find out where they'll spend the night after paying for their booking, at which point directions to the room are released via GPS. It is one of a number of [unique hotel rooms that have gained international recognition](#), and drawn travellers from around the world, due to their one-of-a-kind designs.

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