

MODERN LOVE

EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF ROMANTIC TRAVEL

CREATED BY THE FUTURE LABORATORY AND MR & MRS SMITH

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Travel is always partly about looking into the future – blue-sky thinking, if you will. Primarily it’s in the form of staring at a packed diary and yelling ‘For the love of all that is holy, when can I next take a break?’ but, given we’ve a new decade to contend with, we started thinking in broader terms. What will it mean to travel in 2030? Or, more importantly, what will the world of *romantic* travel look like in a new era of dismantled norms, changing attitudes, political melodrama and planetary peril? For such an undertaking, we needed help from our most brainy of bedfellows, **The Future Laboratory**, to ponder everything from self-love to sustainability and create the pages of stimulating foresight that follow here. Whether you’re In The Industry, a member of the press or just a curious traveller, we hope you’ll find some next-generation nourishment within.

To infinity and beyond, then...

Richard MacKichan

Editor-in-chief, Mr & Mrs Smith

PART I:

FORESIGHT OVERVIEW

By 2030, our widely held notions of romance will have expanded considerably to become broader, more diverse and more meaningful than ever before. As people re-evaluate their relationships with themselves, each other and even the planet, romantic travel will foster human connections and intimacy in an increasingly automated world.

With more than 25% of the adult world single by choice (The Akin: The Future of Sex and Romance report), and 60% of US adults under 35 living without a spouse or partner (Pew Research Center), coupledness will no longer be assumed as one of our default life stages or aspirations. But far from spelling the end of partnership, this means that coupledness, for people who do choose to partner up, will be recast as a committed lifestyle, one where both parties seek to build their lives together through marked out rituals more relevant to a secular, less hierarchical culture dominated by wholly inadequate 20th-century norms or outmoded societal relationship systems.

With younger generations driving discussions on sexuality and gender, for example, fluidity will remould every industry. Mr and Mrs, Mr and Mr, Mrs and Mrs – even Mx and Mx – will be part of a plethora of new polyamorous possibilities that will include cross-gender throuples, and fling-in-the-middle unicorns, or bi-gender variants, who are there to improve their own social, sexual, financial and cultural positions in the romance game by spending agreed quality time with one, or other, or both parts of a couple, with the tripartite agreement of all parties involved.

‘These new pairings, or groupings, have to be viewed in the context of 21st-century romantic arrangements,’ says The Future Laboratory co-founder Martin Raymond. ‘Just as it is no longer cool or correct to discuss gender, or sexuality as binary and fixed, so it is no longer correct to talk of romance in such fixed, linear and familiar terms. The 21st century is about determining the shape, as well as the structure, of our own desires.’

‘And for Millennials, especially, this is very much a bespoke, personal, multiplex, if not multi-person, proposition where new relationships and new kinds of romantic and non-sexual contracts are being brokered and tested.’

■ SOUND HEALING

Aural baths for traveller wellness and sexual intimacy

■ ON-DEMAND, EXPRESS BEAUTY

Services as easy to select and order as a cocktail at a bar

■ PREMIUM PLAYSACES FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS

Providing bonding moments for adults and their offspring

■ BREATHWORK BUFFET

Offered at the same hours you would conventionally offer breakfast

■ DISCONNECTION TOUR

A day where phone is locked away, guided by local decelerator

■ BY-PRODUCT COOKING MASTERCLASS

Learning how to adopt zero-waste practices at home

■ PLEASURE PILGRIMAGE

Guided play for one, two, or more, enabled by responsive room mood lighting, and aural and AR stimulation

■ LOW-PROOF AND NON-ALCOHOLIC BARS

Tonics that engender emotive experiences

■ XR GUIDED ART TOUR

Where the city becomes an interactive canvas

■ IMMERSIVE NATURE

Glamping and luxury blend, with accommodation merged into the landscape without foregoing convenience



TOP HOTEL EXPERIENCES FOR 2030



In the coming decade, milestone trips like the first couple's holiday, the honeymoon and the first trip away with your kids will sit alongside new travel keystones:

NEW ROMANCE RISING

NUPTIAL NOMADISM

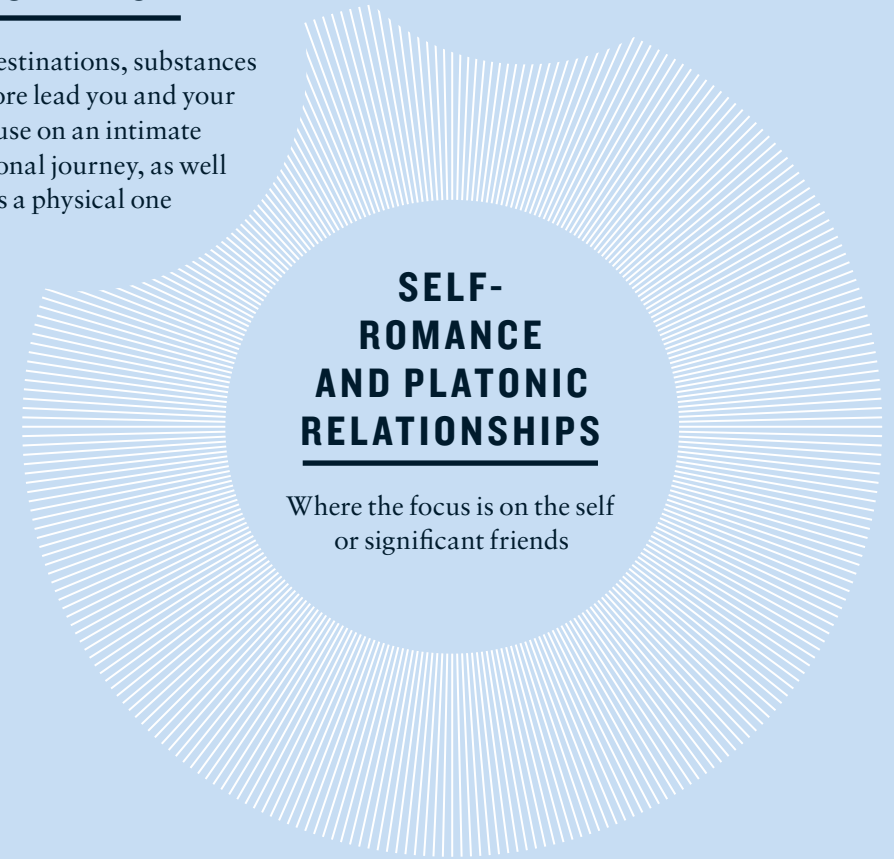
Where destinations, substances and more lead you and your spouse on an intimate emotional journey, as well as a physical one

SITUATIONSHIPS

Where the relationship is place- and context-based as much as it is person- or relationship-based

SELF- ROMANCE AND PLATONIC RELATIONSHIPS

Where the focus is on the self or significant friends



BROTOPIAN BREAKS

Where men take holidays with gay and straight friends to redefine notions of male bonding and togetherness

CO-ROMANTIC BREAKS

Where breaks are undertaken to suit the multi-romance requirements of all parties involved in the relationship

POLYCULE PEREGRINATIONS

Where the bonds between polyamorous lovers are strengthened and celebrated

BUDDYMOONS

Where you enhance your own commitment celebrations with your significant platonic others



BREAKS WITH ATTITUDE

And with 67% of UK adults craving more romance, according to eHarmony, there are clear opportunities for hospitality and hotels to rekindle butterflies-inducing moments in their customers' lives. Bubbles and roses will no longer be the cultural kingpin of romance. A range of options, from nature and ayahuasca to city breaks and civic altruism will allow couples to curate and customise the ways in which they connect with each other, as well as where they do it. These future romance couplings and categories will create new kinds of romance-related breaks and offers in their own right, including:

SHARED PURPOSE SEJOURS

Where romantic encounters
take a conscious travel and
positive-impact stance

SELF-CARE SECONDMENTS

Where workers extend their trips by
working remotely, allowing them the
time to fully immerse themselves in
all that a destination has to offer

BIO-POSITIVE BEAUTY

Where service offers, spa treatments and
all wellbeing moments are sourced locally,
contributing to a locale's economic as well
as environmental sustainability, from
the ingredients we eat to the champagne
and flowers we choose for our niche
neighbourhood bedrooms

NICHE- NEIGHBOURHOOD HANGOUTS

Where romance is all about
immersing yourself and your loved
one(s) in the hyper-local joys of
micro-locale living

PSYCHO-ACTIVE AWAY DAYS

How CBD and THC are adding
new dimensions to the sensual wellness
and travel scene

The romantic getaway will be further redefined in a working world that embraces self-care secondments, workcations and four-day weeks – extra days allocated to working remotely from another destination. As companies increasingly realise the benefits of travel for their employees' wellbeing and sense of motivation, consumers will seek extended holidays beyond simply a long weekend snatched here or there. This new flexibility will allow consumers to enjoy a mix of experiences, deceleration and connection over longer purpose-led breaks.

'Romantic weekends away were traditionally about the bland and the generic, then opened up to be more innovative and exciting in the last decade,' says Raymond. 'Now, it is all about true surprise, genuine wonder, new experiences, even the joys of chance encounters as solo-romantics use Scruff, Hinge, Bumble, Tinder or Grindr to book moments of fun, or so-called 'situationships', with their solace.'

With a nomadic group travelling from place to place, romance will increasingly be sparked on the move, as individuals immerse themselves in new countries and continents. For single travellers and those in platonic holiday couples, a deconstruction of romance thanks to apps and wi-fi connections will engender sporadic, spontaneous connections in destinations

near and far. Singledom, as our report suggests, will no longer be considered as exclusively about romance and intimacy, and the hospitality market will rush to cater for individuals' quests for intimate wellness and sexual self-care – whether that comes as self-love or as ephemeral flings.

As conscious tourism exponentially booms over the next decade, it won't just be what couples consider romantic that changes. Travellers in 2030 will also aim not just to leave zero impact on the destinations they travel to, they will also look to create lasting positive impact. With their most-trusted travel brands taking care of guilt-free travel, couples will be able to immerse themselves in their getaways with full peace of mind that the only thing they're leaving an impression on is each other.

In essence, by 2030 any traditional view of romance will have been challenged and repackaged in a hyper-personalised hospitality world that allows couples to explore not only new places, but also their partners and themselves in more profound ways than ever before.

**'NOW, IT IS ALL ABOUT
TRUE SURPRISE, GENUINE
WONDER, NEW EXPERIENCES,
EVEN THE JOYS OF CHANCE
ENCOUNTERS...'**



PART 2:

ROMANCE RELIT

In the next decade, a reconfiguration of our conception of relationships will influence what we believe to be romantic travel. From new coupledness to an increasing focus on pleasure and conscious travel, the future romantic getaway will look vastly different from the candle-lit dinner symbolism we think of today.

UNTETHERED LIVING

By 2030, our notion of romance will have morphed and escalated to include all kinds of relationships – between friends, lovers and the self. Indulging in the potential for frisson in each distinct type of ‘situationship’ will fuel romantic travel and what is being sought through it.

INDEPENDENT MONOGAMY

As a generation of consumers emerge who are engaging more than ever with the language of therapy, self-care and relationships, in the next 10 years monogamous coupledness will change from being considered as a set hallmark of adulthood to a lifestyle preference unbound by tradition.

As Kate Moyle, UK sex expert for Lelo, and therapist on BBC Three’s *Sex on the Couch*, acknowledges: ‘While there are more discussions around what our norms are, our concepts of love and romance to some extent are still idealised; we all want to be loved and to love. We still want to enjoy that closeness and intimacy with another, and our need to feel special hasn’t changed.’

With self-improvement and self-actualisation becoming key concerns, each

partner will seek to better themselves and to support their partner’s development. As a result, within a decade a trend will emerge of holidaying together, apart, to enhance those moments of shared intimacy when they do arise.

In uncoupled sleepovers, couples will book separate hotel rooms to create space and allow considered choices: deciding whether to invite their partner to stay over for the night, or opting instead to spend a morning or evening alone. Equally, couples might opt to spend a few days per trip dedicated to pursuing activities independently, allowing them time for personal growth during the day and providing an opportunity to re-unite and reconnect at night.

And with a growing number of couples saying they would take their friends on their honeymoons (47% of 18–35-year-olds, according to 2018 research by Pingit in the UK) the market is catering for the buddymoons trend, where a couple’s nearest and dearest accompany them on their first milestone trip. Whether it’s an extension of a destination wedding, with guests staying on for a few days before the couple move on to their next location alone, or bringing close friends out for one leg of the honeymoon, buddymoons will prove increasingly popular. Mexican hotel Grand Velas Riviera Maya, for example, caters specifically for such buddymoons. Couples can choose to celebrate with friends before or after their destination party, have a private cocktail party at the pool before participating in a special friendship ceremony.


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As the population remains single for longer than ever (UK men and women are marrying at 32.7 and 30.8 years, respectively, up from 24.6 and 22.6 in 1971, according to *Harper's Bazaar*), within a decade, categories like travel, beauty and hospitality will be reframed with single people in mind.

Euromonitor predicts that by 2030, single-person households will see faster growth than any other household type globally and points to young professionals as a driver of this growth, as well as a population growing older alone. Equally, as stigma decreases and concerns for the environment increase, more people than ever are choosing to remain child-free.

With this in mind, family and marriage are no longer the only relationships that consumers and marketers are focusing on; instead, singledom will increasingly have an equal standing to coupledness in hospitality offerings. 'People who live alone tend to

spend more time socialising with friends and neighbours than people who are married,' says Eric Klinenberg, sociologist and author of *Going Solo*.

This means the growing market for self-romance and platonic romance travel will boom in the next decade. With an increase in young single women who choose to holiday with significant friends as opposed to romantic partners, a market exists to cater for these platonic romances, where intimacy and connection are valued as deeply as they are in intimate sexual relationships.

Hotels will provide the perfect space to meet like-minds as they attract consumers of a similar ilk. Not all solo travellers will be seeking romance, though. Some will take themselves away in search of self-care, self-love and to enhance their wellbeing. Hotel offerings can cater for these travellers by eliminating

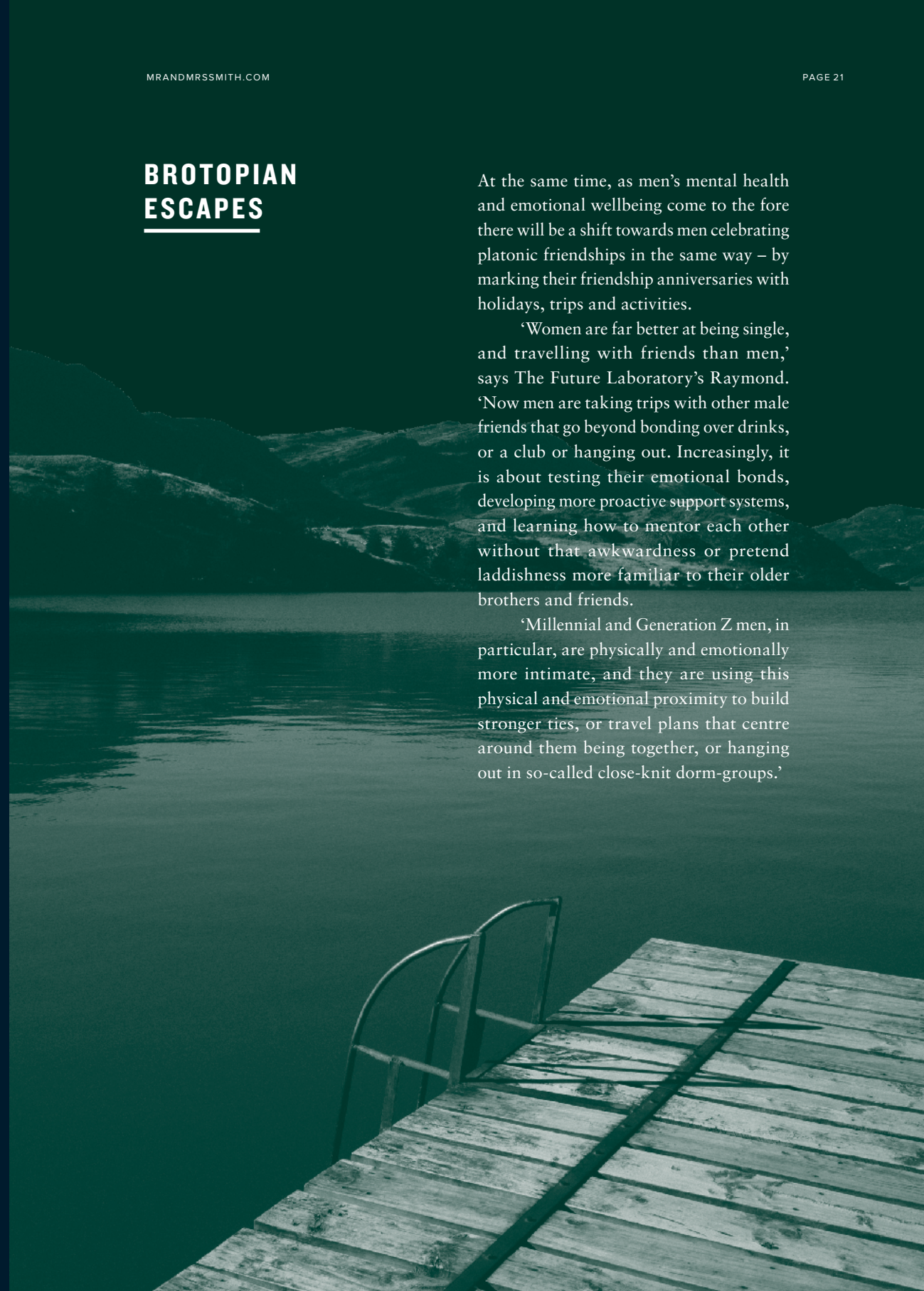
the 'singles tax' – the higher cost of a single occupancy room – giving the single consumer the same sense of indulgence and attention afforded to couples.

BROTOPIAN ESCAPES

At the same time, as men's mental health and emotional wellbeing come to the fore there will be a shift towards men celebrating platonic friendships in the same way – by marking their friendship anniversaries with holidays, trips and activities.

'Women are far better at being single, and travelling with friends than men,' says The Future Laboratory's Raymond. 'Now men are taking trips with other male friends that go beyond bonding over drinks, or a club or hanging out. Increasingly, it is about testing their emotional bonds, developing more proactive support systems, and learning how to mentor each other without that awkwardness or pretend laddishness more familiar to their older brothers and friends.'

'Millennial and Generation Z men, in particular, are physically and emotionally more intimate, and they are using this physical and emotional proximity to build stronger ties, or travel plans that centre around them being together, or hanging out in so-called close-knit dorm-groups.'



CO-ROMANCING RISING

As global living, co-working and co-living rise as trends, the idea that romance consists of monogamous marriage and cohabitation will be entirely deconstructed. Co-romancing will occur, with more people taking up multiple relationships and seeking connections with various partners. The first trip polymoon (honeymoon for polyamorous people) with boyfriend number two will be considered to be as significant as the honeymoon away with one's significant other.

'Social media and dating apps,' says Kate Moyle, 'have opened up visibility into the lives and relationships of others. The more we see people doing something, the more familiar it becomes and that shift in perspective gradually alters our idea of the norm.' This will mean that, within a decade, the notions of co-romancing will be entirely recognisable for a generation of digital nomads.

Fluent in the hotel concept when it comes to functionality and fluidity, co-romancers will look to luxury breaks to offer the perfect re-imagining of their living situation: distinct from the functional, essentialised co-working and co-living environments, next-level sensual bedrooms will offer a chance for nomadic workers to indulge in fantasy and romance in a completely different setting.

Tri-romantic Retreats will mean polyamorous groups – or polycules – will enjoy trips that help nurture their bonds, as any romantic getaway for couples would. The Summer House Weekend, for example, is open to polyamorous and monogamous couples, giving them room for exploration, intimacy and connection around group experiences, discussions and meditation.

More hotels will embrace these new relationship configurations, adding triple beds to the standard double and twin offering, with hotel room details to match: three robes, three sets of slippers and three chocolates left at turn-down.

FAMILY GETAWAY 2.0

As Millennials begin to start families, a new mode of family travel will emerge. Millennials have long been known as the most well-travelled generation, and their willingness to spend on travel is driving the most growth in the industry, according to a 2019 report by Travelport.

Millennials' nomadic impulse will be passed on to their children: Generation Alpha. According to Beano Studios, not only will Generation Alpha be incredibly well travelled, they will also be the most tech-fluent generation to date – counter-intuitively, this means they will be far less dependent on technology than Generation Z before them.

Equally, Generation Alpha will usher in a re-emergence of family values. A study by The Lego Foundation found that 17% of kids across nine countries reported feeling like they don't have time to play any more, while 32% of those children's parents felt they had little time to play with their children.

As a result, new concepts are tackling this lack of unstructured playtime. Cloud Twelve, a members' club for families in Notting Hill, caters for both parents and children with a luxurious space featuring soothing zones for adults, and educational classes and vegan food for children. The offering encourages adults not to forget their own wellbeing while child-rearing.

Similarly, The Wonder, a high-spec play space in New York, brings family members together through creative and educational activities, including art classes and children-led workshops. The Wonder provides a convenient pushchair-cleaning service for Millennial parents, as well as beer and board games, and bathrooms stocked with organic, natural baby care products. According to co-founder Noria Morales, the space tries to foster a sense of community in place of the traditional day-care centre.

Hotels will follow this trend for premium play spaces when conceptualising their family offerings in 2030. From interactive hotel rooms designed with both parents and children in mind to creative, educative hotel experiences that engender wonder and family bonding, hotels will adopt a flexible and inclusive approach to family travel, replacing the tired Kids' Club concept of yore.

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And with Millennials eager to keep travelling after the arrival of their children, a market for nomadic family travel will emerge. According to an MMGY forecast, holiday spending among US Millennial families rose by 19% by the end of 2018.

But by 2030, it won't just be young children that represent the notion of family travel. A study by McCrindle for P&O Cruises showed that there was an 18% increase in the number of Australian 18–29-year-olds travelling with their parents during the peak summer period in 2018, compared to 2016. And furthermore, multi-generational trips are on the rise, where three generations or extended family travel together in order to enrich their bonds abroad.

Such trips present an opportunity for bonding experiences for Flat Ager parents and their children. But the values of Millennials and Generation Z mean the gendered notions of the last decade (father-son road trips; mother-daughter spa breaks) will be entirely deconstructed. Whether it's a father-daughter duo opting for a gastronomic getaway or a hiking tour shared between mother and son, de-gendered travel around interests and values will be a crucial offering.

Psycho-activated Pleasure

As wellness booms and technology invades our everyday lives, the emphasis will increasingly fall on intimacy, pleasure and human connection. But this is no staid couples therapy cliché. With new-generation start-ups tackling the female pleasure gap, and rural escapes offering the chance to switch off from screens and switch on to each other, consumers will seek to re-centre themselves in their bodies and in the environment.





Following the legalisation of cannabis in many US states, a new generation of brands have entered the market that focus on pleasure and wellness, and women's pleasure in particular. Over the next decade these brands will herald a growing openness to substances with less damaging effects than alcohol to allow couples to arouse and excite their sensuality.

Foria, a premium wellness brand created by Matt Gerson, puts women's pleasure at the forefront of its offering. With products such as Awaken, a natural arousal oil; Pleasure, a THC-infused lube; and Explore, suppositories that combine CBD and THC, Foria caters for women's wellness needs where traditional medicine has often ignored them.

Equally, in the beauty space, brands like Prima rely on the all-natural wellness benefits of CBD to tackle skin inflammation, anxiety and sleeplessness. For female consumers, these brands offer a way to tackle the pleasure gap revealed by a 2017 report by *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* that showed while straight men orgasmed 95% of the time, straight and bisexual women orgasmed only 65% and 66% of the time, respectively. This number rose to 86% for lesbian women.

Remedy Review revealed that 68% of respondents that had tried CBD in the bedroom said it improved their sexual experiences. And, according to Business Wire, the global adult toys market, worth \$23.7bn in 2017, will be worth \$35.5bn by 2023, further affirming the trend towards more open sexual experimentation between intimate partners and on an individual level.

The popularity of CBD and THC products further points to a trend towards embracing nature and the natural to enhance sensuality, mood and pleasure. With Millennials moving to the countryside nearly 10 years younger than any other generation (the average age in the UK of moving to the country fell from 47 in 2008

to 37 in 2018, according to Hamptons International), it's clear that a younger generation are re-embracing the outdoors as natural escapism.

'Even across a broader base, we saw an increase in country bookings over city stays of almost 40% in 2019,' adds Mr & Mrs Smith co-founder Tamara Lohan.

With hedonism defined by what you're escaping from, it's clear that a world of over-stimulation, then, is leading younger consumers to embrace space, deceleration and reconnection. Where a champagne-fuelled evening of revelry provided young couples with excitement that was lacking in the mundane everyday of working urban life 15 years ago, as city living becomes increasingly visual, attention-grabbing and geared to excess, hedonism will be reframed as a pursuit of deceleration, re-introduction to nature and human connection away from screens.

Kate Moyle acknowledges how the screens in our lives not only disconnect us from the people in front of us, but also raise our expectations of romance. 'We see the parts of other people's lives they want us to see. Though we recognise it's not necessarily realistic, it's still influential. It's made younger people more sceptical of romance – particularly using apps to find it. But there's also an opportunity to begin from a place of communication.'

Wilbert Das, co-founder of Uxua in Brazil, acknowledges the importance

of connection in all aspects of the hotel experience: 'Human connection is the biggest luxury that you can have – with the people of the town that you visit or even with the staff that serve you. That is always going to be the best memory that you'll have. It's something we valued very much in the design [of Uxua], but also in the way that we treat guests and the way we treat our own staff. It's all about emotion.'

Emotional enhancement will drive a new openness to psychoactive tourism, including a rise in popularity of ayahuasca retreats, where the powerful South American medicine is used to facilitate a healing and spiritual journey, guided by a shaman. In an age of increased anxiety and depression, the boom in ayahuasca's popularity is testament to travellers' interest in healing.

Says Olivia Squire, print editor-in-chief of *Suitcase*: 'When it comes to ayahuasca retreats, travellers need to tread carefully – spiralling prices for a scarce resource are already taking it out of the hands of the Amazonian tribes who have used it as medicine for thousands of years. However, the mindful use of legal psychoactives, cannabis or even virtual reality could become cornerstones of therapeutic and consciousness-expanding experiences that help traverse mental as well as physical boundaries in the travel space.'



With sustainability and luxury now essentially synonymous, by 2030, guilt-free conscious tourism will underlie indulgent, romantic travel as an expected standard, rather than a bonus. With a couple's preferred travel company taking care of concerns over sustainability, each part of the romantic getaway will be underpinned by the knowledge they'll be leaving no trace on the dream destinations they're visiting.

SHARED PURPOSE SEJOURS

Travellers will increasingly look to make a positive impact through their travels, as well as deriving a sense of paired-up progress, bonding through a sense of shared purpose on their trips. Mission-based travel of this kind will become a key

tenet of a couple's sense of intimacy and connection as they travel, allowing them to create memories around meaningful experiences and milestones around purpose-based activities.

Bob Shevlin, co-owner of Uxua, acknowledges that romance translates from the passion involved in coming up with the sustainable hotel concept: 'We weren't thinking of romance directly when we were designing [Uxua]'. His co-founder Wilbert Das agrees: 'There was a romantic

atmosphere while we were building the hotel, because we had fallen head over heels in love with the town. The romantic vibe came from wanting to share that.'

For the couple, being among nature and working to protect a beloved environment is part and parcel of the romantic getaway. Indeed, Millennials and younger generations are leading the trend towards sustainable travel, and will account for 75% of all consumers and travellers by 2025, according to a report by Airbnb.

A 2019 survey by Booking.com found that, while all generations are embracing eco-escapes, Generation Z (aged 16 to 24) are the most likely to volunteer as a travel experience (37% versus the global average of 31%) and 44% stated they believe it's important to give back to the local community when travelling. Younger couples are likely to want to use their travels for good, visiting destinations where the regenerative nature of tourism can help rebuild countries like Rwanda or Kosovo, that have been affected by disasters and unrest.

Olivia Squire of *Suitcase* points out the non-negotiable aspect of sustainability for younger travellers: 'Particularly for the next generation of travellers, environmentally and socially conscious travel is already non-negotiable. The challenge for travel brands now is to think beyond removing plastic straws and be proactive rather than

GEN Z WERE THE MOST LIKELY TO VOLUNTEER AS A TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

reactionary to concerns about environmental impact, the consumption of resources and their impact on the local culture.'

Driven by concerns about over-tourism, younger couples will embrace culture-driven, community venues and destinations promoting long-term, sustainable solutions to damaging tourism. The city of Venice has tackled this problem by producing the Detourism: Travel Venice Like a Local campaign. Beginning as a series of maps in 2014, the slow and sustainable tourism campaign now circulates a digital magazine, operates social media accounts and encourages hotel concierges to recommend its less busy neighbourhoods.

In Paris, meanwhile, 43 strategically placed signs by the Enlarge Your Paris project recently pointed tourists away from well-known sights to discover the overlooked highlights of Greater Paris.

SELF-CARE SECONDMENTS

As we continue to deconstruct the typical working week, with co-working, remote work and flexible hours, there will be new opportunities for people to travel more. Not only are offices accommodating a mobile workforce with hotel rooms in their own workplaces, but companies are also embracing research that encourages us to travel more. This will lead to a rise in self-care secondments and workcations, where workers extend their trips by working remotely, allowing them the time to fully immerse themselves in all that a destination has to offer.

With employees ranking flexible working hours as the most preferred work benefit, there is good reason for consumers to take more time off to enjoy longer stints away. A 2019 OnePoll survey of 2,000 British workers found that more than half want their staff benefits to help improve their work-life balance.

This demand will give rise to extended and flexible periods of holiday, rather than the traditional long weekend or week-long break. Four-day peakends (the new long, long weekend) and three-day mid-weekers will become new models for booking, catering for flexible workers' needs and offering them better value, as well as enabling them to decelerate while spending time with their family and recuperate away from the office.

Similarly, so-called 'roamtels' such as Selina, Unsettled and Roam have become increasingly popular with groups like location-independent nomads, who work digitally and remotely all year round, or with more enlightened employers who allow teams to travel frequently.

'This less fixed way of working has enabled people to pursue heartfelt hospitality projects more easily as a way of self-fulfilment too,' notes Mr & Mrs Smith co-founder James Lohan. 'Lisbon's Casa Fortunato is a shining example: a painstakingly crafted design den whose architect owners live and work on-site and are at the very core of the guest experience'.

We will also continue to seek more impactful ways of re-igniting 'old-flame' destinations. 'This will become a much bigger trend as expert travellers are able to connect from afar,' acknowledges Ori Kafri, owner of JK Place. 'In the next 10 years, luxury travellers will embrace the off-peak season, looking to discover established destinations like Capri and [Lake] Garda to connect with the destination away from the tourist season.'

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HOTEL LOVERS' HORIZONS

PART 3:

By 2030, our concept of romance will have changed irrevocably: so what trends will emerge around romance and the new romantic getaway? From psychedelic connections to sensory, responsive hotel rooms, we will examine how hotel lovers' changing values will alter each aspect of the hotel experience.

THE FUTURE'S SEXIEST BEDROOMS

Travellers will look for intimacy, rest and emotional enhancement from their surroundings – not purely through the design and décor of the room, but through its extension onto the senses and the body. From mini-bars replete with ready-made romantic cocktails, infused with ingredients

to relax, arouse and centre, to bedrooms designed for polycules – with three shower heads, three sinks and three chocolates on the bed at night – the romantic hotel rooms of the future will be playful, adventurous and adapt to every guest's needs.

As urbanisation increases globally, hotels will find ways to re-ignite guests' senses by re-introducing them to nature. From Soneva Jani's retractable, star-gazing roofs and straight-to-sea slides to the retreat at Blue Lagoon set within the mineral-rich water of surrounding volcanic rock, far-flung getaways will be an opportunity

for privacy and intimacy that elevates old romantic cornerstones like the jacuzzi and in-room massage to the next level of luxury.

And beyond romantic design, rooms will become more adaptable as new technologies allow architecture to adapt to each individual occupant. No longer bound to screens, technology will be woven into the fabric of places, helping couples optimise their mood and physical wellbeing upon arrival.

An early indicator of such technology is Layer's Move smart seating for Airbus, an aeroplane seat knitted with

conductive thread that responds to the occupant's weight, size and movements. In Stockholm, meanwhile, digital marketing agency Clear Channel recently created The Emotional Art Gallery, a project that used data including Google searches, news articles and traffic information to analyse

commuters' mood and select the most appropriate artwork to help lift the city's collective spirit. Adaptable fabrics and artwork of this kind will be a feature of future hotel rooms to respond to each visitor's biometric make-up, and will be able to be programmed to suit a couple's mood – from arousal to rest.

With CBD appearing in coffee shops, spas and high-end restaurants, a natural extension will be for CBD- and THC-infused products to be included in the hotel room. Whether it's offering enhanced oil and lubes, or including a vial



of CBD oil in the turn-down service in order to help guests off to sleep, cannabis will increasingly be adopted in the luxury hotel room offering.

Having grown up surrounded by visual media, culture and stimulation, younger consumers are increasingly turning to sound as a way of decelerating, according to a new study by Spotify. The Culture Next report found that 55% of UK consumers aged between 15 and 37 believe there is too much visual stimulation and that audio offers an escape.

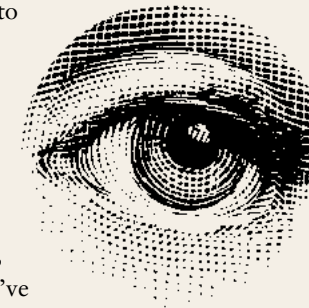
This extends to sensuality, with erotic audio apps such as Dipsea and Quinn aiming to encourage female sexual curiosity and arousal through audio content. 'For far too long, sexuality has been defined by men as physical, rather than mental,' says Gina Gutierrez, co-creator of Dipsea. 'We've heard so many women question whether something is wrong with them because they don't get spontaneously horny.'

This approach to sensuality is extended through innovations from brands like Wisp – a premium sex toy brand – whose luxury offerings focus on female pleasure, exploring how scent, temperature, and air and tactile sensations can increase arousal. The popularity of luxury sex brands such as Coco de Mer points to a rising openness among consumers to explore sexuality; globally, the sex toy industry is predicted to grow by \$9.9bn by 2023, according to Technavio.

But it won't be the body alone that will be stimulated. As rooms are curated to delight the senses and ignite couples' sensuality, there will be opportunities to take away different kinds of souvenirs. Entirely shoppable hotel rooms will become the norm, with items from the room selected and delivered to a guest's home in time for their arrival back. The Shinola Hotel in Detroit's downtown shopping district combines such elements of hospitality and retail on a grand scale. The hotel, which is spread across two restored buildings, is presented as a 'living room' for the city, with 129 guest rooms and 16,000 square feet of retail, dining and bar space open to all.

Hotels will respond to couples' wishes to decelerate and educate themselves by providing printed pages, with curated print usurping the large in-room flat screen as smart hoteliers' core entertainment offering. With a growing awareness of the value of digital desaturation, many hotels are reviving the hotel library – an offering once thought to be defunct.

Mal Journal by Feeld and Serpentine Galleries could be one such title to stimulate travellers' curiosity. Existing as a physical extension of Feeld, a dating app for open-minded singles and couples wishing to explore their desires, the journal has been created as a vital platform for the most incisive and original voices engaging with sex, gender, race and LGBT+ issues, now and in the future.



NARRATIVE

N O M A D I S M

It's no secret that everyone wants to tell the most exciting holiday stories around the table at a dinner party. In 2030, what will make those holiday tales compelling will be a mix of neighbourhood insight and purposeful endeavours. In a decade, what will consumers think it's worth getting out of bed for?

As couples seek to blend into the local fabric of a destination, they will increasingly look to experiences and cultural programming guided by local insiders. Sir Hotels is one such boutique hotel group pioneering these enriched encounters with its Sir Explore programme, which pairs travellers with local figures across industries from nightlife to wellness. The tours place guests directly at the heart of city life in Amsterdam, Berlin, Barcelona and beyond.

Equally, couples will look to discover new and emerging neighbourhoods in destinations they've never visited before, as well as those they have. A market will emerge for 'rediscovery-moons', where couples take trips back in time to see what's changed since they were last in a locale.

A honeymoon in Paris in 2010, for example, might have focused on the traditional tourist areas around the Left Bank and Champs Élysées. On a rediscovery-moon in 2020, the same couple could discover the new Right Bank, where in the past five years there has been a proliferation of pop-up stores, concept restaurants and cultural venues.

As technology begins to move off-screen, integrating into how we experience physical space, we will see new potential experiences in 2030 such as augmented reality art tours that overlay the cityscape with information, extensions of art experiences and cultural commentary from local guides.

AR will also be used to enhance romantic occasions and intimate bonds. Artist Lucy McCrae's immersive Compression Cradle experience is a sign of things to come. Taking a sci-fi approach to wellness, the project questions whether design can enter the area of the intangible, and areas of pleasure, health and medicine. A machine squeezes visitors to re-enact the oxytocin-releasing experience of human touch, exploring how technology can replicate and enhance human interaction.

Hotels and cultural programming can facilitate further interaction in an attempt to re-introduce moments of serendipity and

romance into visitors' stays. As the trend for Co-romancing Rising takes off, hotels will look to provide nomadic individuals chance encounters on their travels, as well as enabling paired-up travellers to meet like-minded couples in the local neighbourhood.

Bob Shevlin, co-owner of Uxua, observes: 'There's no such thing, really, as solo travel any more. Often, our guests have already set up dates with other travellers or locals using apps.'

The Standard responded to this potential for frisson with the creation of The Lobby app, exclusively for those staying at its boutique High Line hotel. The app enables guests to create a digital alias with which they can engage in chat room conversations, or invite them to meet in real life at one of The Standard's various social spaces. Adding to the app's element of anonymity, all of The Lobby's content disappears when guests check out, leaving no digital trail.



BIO-POSITIVE PRODUCE

Oysters on their own will no longer be an aphrodisiac in 2030. Instead, the aphrodisiac will lie in the experience around the oysters: a couple will help farm them sustainably, learn how to shuck them and prepare them for a romantic dinner at night.

In a decade, couples will embark on adventures in dedicated veg-end breaks where sustainability and indulgence are key features, with plant-based food offerings for vegetarian and vegan lovebirds.

In a mark of things to come, an entire suite at Hilton's London Bankside location was refurbished with vegan materials and ethical design elements. The vegan suite, co-created with experience design studio Bompas & Parr, was designed to rethink every touchpoint, allowing the hotel to provide an eco-conscious luxury experience.

This trend will emerge amid an increasing number of far-flung gourmet getaways, the main draw of which is their food offering. The Garden Hotpot Restaurant in Chengdu weaves through a forest in rural China, taking advantage of the region's climate to immerse diners in its verdant landscape.

Hotels will be shaped around gourmet offerings, with a trend for restaurant-first hospitality. Ergon House Hotel in Athens is situated at the foot of the Acropolis, which incorporates a marketplace that celebrates the best of Greek cuisine culture. The hotel features common space in which to cook, a lounge and a gym.

Equally, beverages will become a main draw for hospitality experiences. The Distillery, a multi-faceted gin hotel dedicated to the spirit in London, comprises two bars,

a distillery, an interactive tour on the history of gin and three boutique guest rooms. The space enables guests to learn more about the process behind Portobello Road gin. Wine estate Entre Cielos, in Argentina's Malbec country, even has a stand-alone stilted loft suite way out among its vast vineyards for full guest immersion.

Meanwhile, with 61% of UK consumers seeking better options when it comes to non-alcoholic drinks, according to Distill Ventures, cocktails will be re-invented, with more aperitif-style offers becoming popular. Traditionally, these lower-strength spirits and wines were served to stimulate the appetite with their dry or bitter flavours. Now, brands are re-interpreting aperitifs for modern drinkers, creating both low-alcohol and non-alcoholic alternatives that can be mixed with ingredients specifically with arousal in mind.

Indeed, at Uxua, a dedicated laboratory – Vida Lab – explores the nutritional power of the rainforest and its fruit. Shevlin acknowledges the marked increase in consumers' interest in the physical benefits of such superfoods. 'Younger couples are really interested in it. Sexual health has to do with feeling physically powerful and vital. They love to go to the laboratory and find out what juices they can drink to wake up or to reinvigorate. That trend will only grow: and it's not about image or weight loss – it's to do with feeling invigorated, feeling sexy and feeling powerful.'



WELLNESS AWAKENING

Whether it's in service to self-love or coupled-up kindling, pleasure, sensuality and deceleration will become key tenets of wellness and spa offerings in the hotel space. Modern Med Spas will focus on rejuvenation, romance and sexual self-care, as spas become destination retreats in and of themselves, and use increasingly innovative treatments to allow couples to explore pleasure and wellbeing.

The sexual wellness industry is growing exponentially, worth \$32bn in 2019, according to Technavio, and the focus on sexual care is fast blending into the beauty and wellness sectors. Major retailers such as FeelUnique now offer sexual care categories, and young brands

such as Blume tackle the taboo of female puberty. In response, sexual wellness will be increasingly placed at the heart of spa and beauty offerings in the hotel space, encouraging couples, singles or polycules to reconnect with their sensuality through treatments that will be offered in the privacy of their own rooms.

Alongside this focus on pleasure and sexual wellness, Bio-positive Beauty will come to the fore, with treatments that are sustainably sourced throughout the supply chain. Hotel guests will enjoy their spa treatments with peace of mind, knowing that the ingredients are sourced locally, contributing to a locale's economic as well as environmental sustainability.

In Mauritius, for example, Salt of Palmar's Salt Equilibrium spa contains the island's first salt therapy room and a menu of unique salt-based treatments, as well as an active running programme, sunrise serenity beach walks and yoga. But it also offers a skills-swap for guests to trade knowledge with locals, runs educational trips to its sustainable salt farm and a host of other innovatively immersive experiences.

Larger resorts have taken note, too. 'It's one thing to promote and run a spa that draws from the purest organic marine elements, or activities that rely on a pristine marine environment, but if that resort isn't taking solid steps to preserve that environment then it isn't operating

as honestly or as ethically as it can,' says Four Seasons Asia-Pacific spa director Luisa Anderson.

Equally, spas will increasingly draw on the local surroundings to inspire guests. Concepts like Caudalie's Vinotherapie, drawing on its vintage-rich setting of Bordeaux, or Euphoria Retreat's holistic blend of Hellenic and medical treatments will inspire spa-first destination retreats where a generation of couples escape to in order to unwind and decelerate.

Fig in Vancouver is one such spa that is marrying modern convenience with demand

for a more sustainable approach to beauty. The store, where treatments take place in one of three pods that feature Japanese barber chairs and full-height velvet curtains, demonstrates how the need for express

ENCOURAGING COUPLES, SINGLES OR POLYCULES TO RECONNECT WITH THEIR SENSUALITY

treatments does not exclude a sustainable approach.

And beyond beauty, physical wellness in the gym will be equally re-imagined. For hotels where romance is key, in-room gym facilities as well as personal trainers will be within reach of the bed, so couples can indulge in the ultimate weekend workout. Much as with the trend for gourmet getaways, fitness will become a key draw in and of itself, as fitness brands such as Equinox expand into the hospitality space, providing wowing workout spaces to act as a luxurious upgrade from guests' more routine gym experiences.

TRAVEL CLUB 2030

CONTEMPORARY CONTENT

The demand for authenticity and word-of-mouth credibility are influencing how future travellers will document their experiences, with a younger set of influencers eschewing the old filtered approach, opting instead for a candid, unretouched documentation of their experiences.

Generation Z are already spurning this obsessively curatorial lifestyle approach. Some 50% of this demographic say they believe that too much emphasis is spent on social media when travelling, according to Booking.com.

For niche hotels whose raison d'être is beautiful design, the notion of producing no-filter, uncurated content will seem like anathema. But signs point to Generation Z's embracing of no-filter as infecting all industries – including design. Messy fonts, digitally scrappy experiences and lo-fi internet culture will all have made their mark, rippling out and blurring the lines between good and bad taste.

Adopting this new-generation approach to documentation, Louis Vuitton turned to 18-year-old YouTube star Emma Chamberlain – known for her lo-fi, candid content – to present her experience of attending the brand's Paris Fashion Week show. To date, 10.7m people have watched her self-shot, stream-of-consciousness take that moves away from the curated approach of traditional fashion influencers.

CURATED COMMS

In 2030, customers will expect to interact with brands like they do with their friends. Messaging apps and social media will be their preferred means of communication, itinerary-building and booking. They will expect to WhatsApp their hotel, as they would a friend, in order to receive last-minute recommendations as well as being introduced to key insiders in the neighbourhood.

As itineraries are shaped around learning conferences, festivals or food and fitness offerings, customers will opt for positive-impact hotels whose commitment to sustainability and authenticity is easily legible and fact-checked. As a travel companion, a Chief Romantic Officer (CRO) will be on hand in order to tailor a couple's trip at any given moment, assisting as much or as little as they need – as well as offering moments of surprise or innovation by suggesting unexpected or new romantic ideas. The CRO could advise couples on new moments of wonder, suggesting a day apart to come together or anticipating a moment of bonding by booking couples into augmented experiences they have not tried before. Here, couples, throuples and singles alike would benefit from the new and next of romance, predicated on their personalised needs, on hand at any moment.

PART 4:

CONCLUSIONS

From destination spas, back-to-nature rooms and psychoactive pleasure pursuits to peakends, self-romantic getaways and workcations, the tenets of the romantic trip will have definitively changed and expanded by 2030.

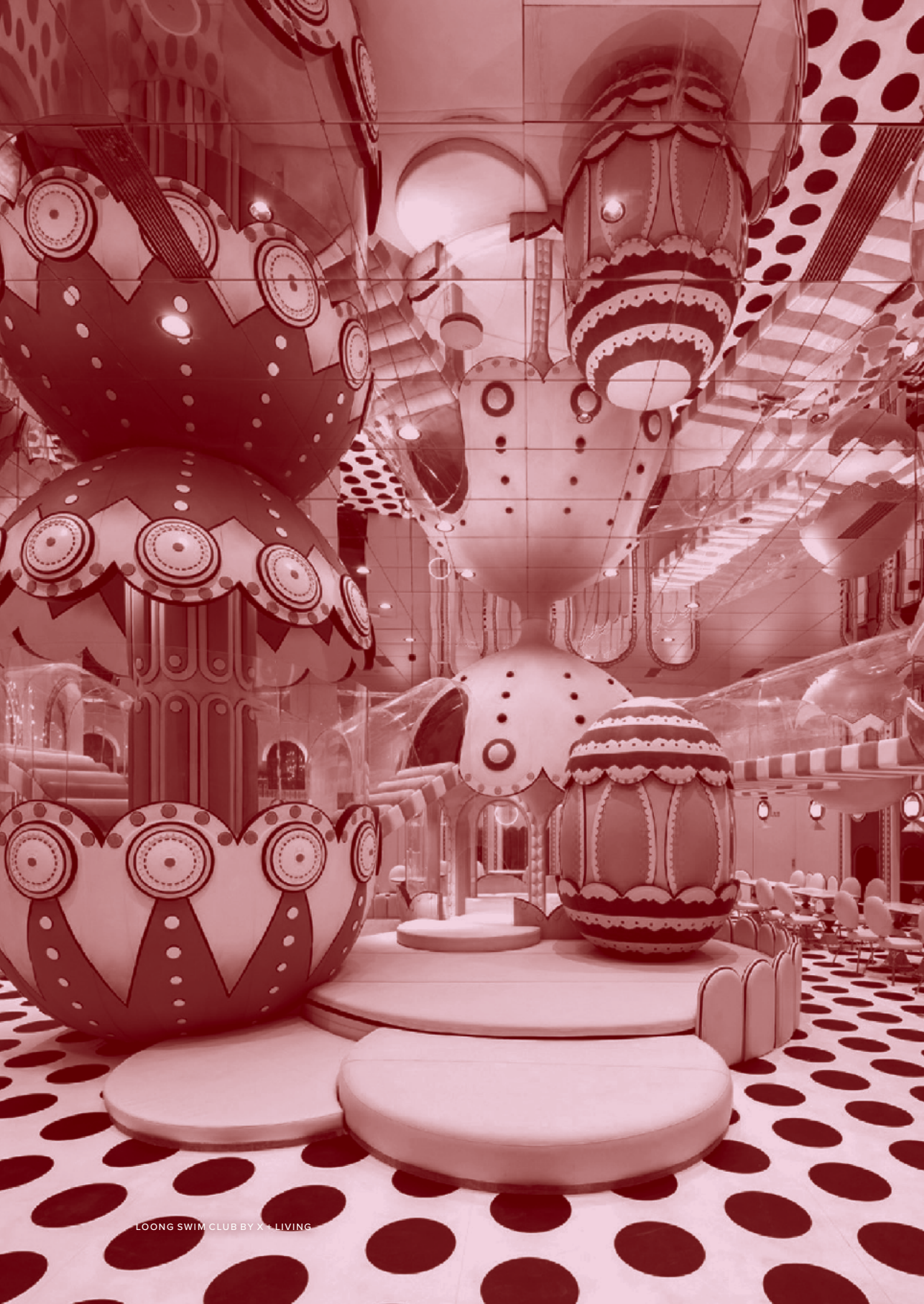
1 Hotels will increasingly embrace a younger generation of couples, singles and polycules who seek meaning, pleasure and purpose through their travels.

2 They will be conscious, playful and will seek adaptable luxury personalised to their own unique concepts of romance, and will look to travel and hospitality to introduce moments of wonder, connection and intimacy into their lives.

3 While some, naturally, will still indulge in the tried-and-tested notions of candle-lit dinners and jacuzzis, others will look to reinforce their bonds by strengthening the communities in the neighbourhoods they visit.

4 Families will travel multi-generationally, while singles will be open to serendipitous situationships as they travel. And as the working world becomes inherently more flexible, mid-weekers, peakends and workcations will become the go-to model for couples' rest and recuperation.

5 Within a decade, myriad new ways to indulge and rekindle romantic partnerships will emerge – as well as brands that embrace the cultural and social shifts that will represent this era of new romanticism, transforming romantic travel from something standard to a passionate, rekindling exploration from which, once experienced, there will be no going back.



IN/OUT

WHAT'S OLD AND WHAT'S NEW FOR THE ROMANTIC WEEKEND

OLD	NEW
CANDLE-LIT DINNER	BIOMETRICALLY RESPONSIVE ROOM LIGHTING
FINE DINING	ZERO-IMPACT TASTING MENU
MASSAGE FOR TWO	MINDFULNESS FOR TWO
ROSES	CBD+THC-INFUSED LUBE
KING SIZE BED	CALIFORNIA KING – FOR THREE
WEEKEND GETAWAY	FOUR-DAY PEAKEND BREAKS
CHAMPAGNE-FUELLED REVELRY	AYAHUASCA-ENHANCED INTIMACY
HIS AND HERS	THEIRS AND THEIRS
KIDS CLUB	PREMIUM PLAYSACES
CONCIERGE	CHIEF ROMANTIC OFFICER

MODERN LOVE

EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF ROMANTIC TRAVEL

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