

Style/ Tech & Design

## This HK\$10 million survival pod is a self-sustaining transformable floating unit

When sea levels rise above the earth, we may have to resort to floating in an eco-friendly and self-sufficient pod, making the ocean our permanent home



**Kris Chan**

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The Pod is a self-sustaining living unit that can be connected with one another to form a community on the water. Illustrations: Anzon Wong



From top: Rowena Gonzales, Sam Hui and Dominic Cheung

**WHO:** Liquid Interiors is one of the pioneers in the field of green commercial design. The Hong Kong-based firm aims to create eco-friendly space. Principal and founder of the firm Rowena Gonzales teams up with interior designer Sam Hui, assistant interior designer Dominic Cheung, LEED APs and many other talents. They work according to high standards to provide green ideas for the hospitality and residential sectors.

**The earth is in danger,** and the biggest threat faced by humans is rising sea levels. As an eco-conscious interior design studio, Liquid Interiors has worked with *STYLE* to come up with the ultimate solution that would save us from being engulfed by the boundless ocean.

“Global sea levels have been expected to rise each year since 1993. However, such a rise has been accelerated by global warming. In the foreseeable future, we could end up dwelling at sea, making the ocean our permanent home,” says principal and founder of Liquid Interiors Rowena Gonzales. In response to a potential future life on water, the team has created The Pod, which “is a self-sustaining transformable floating unit that transforms the exterior shell to create functional interior space for living”.

The unit is a three-storey living space that combines indoor and outdoor areas below and above sea level. All activities needed to sustain a quality life are brought on board. “Self-sustainable features are integrated into The Pod to generate self-sufficient resources for survival,” Gonzales says.



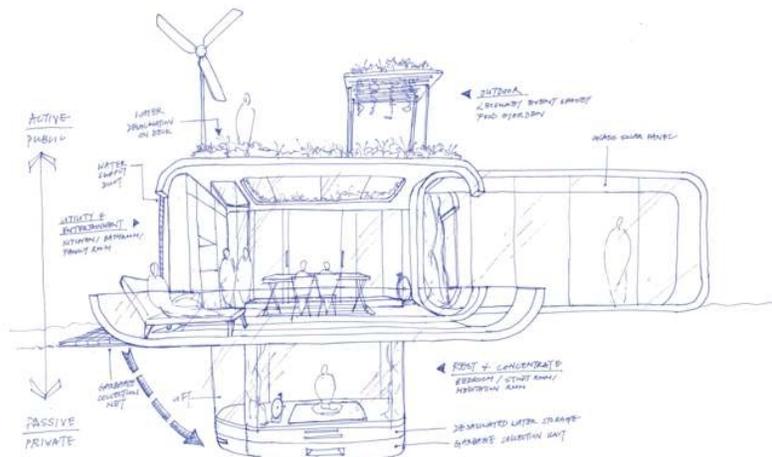
The first mission is to fill the stomach. The food garden on the upper outdoor space is a green rooftop for growing vegetables as side dishes to the seafood caught on board. A natural water desalination system is also located on the upper deck to produce clean drinking water from sea water.

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Electricity to run the floating house is produced by the glass façade which is actually solar detection panels. There is also an extension unit where rubbish such as plastic is collected for recycling to produce building materials for The Pod.



The lower deck is where all the daily activities take place. The multifunctional space can serve as an airy dining area with an in-wall kitchen. Once the gimmicks are triggered, the space can be easily transformed into a comfortable family room where a sofa is dropped from the wall while the dining table can be lowered as a teapoy or hidden underground.

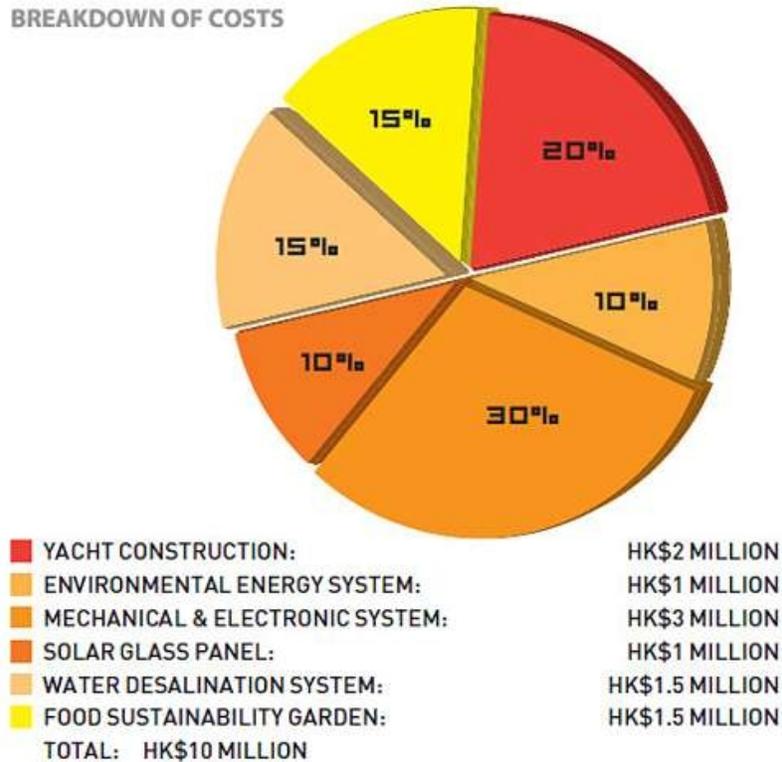
There is an additional surprise under the sea. The glass chamber, surrounded by spectacular underwater views, provides a calming environment for meditation, study and a good night's sleep.

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From soothing interiors to multiple wide-open outdoor spaces including a green playground, a balcony and an extra outdoor extension on the lower deck, The Pod transforms from a floating block into a practical and entertaining haven of peace.



Social life is also an integral part of a comprehensive and healthy lifestyle. Gonzales is hoping The Pod can offer more. “The Pod is not only a transformable survival unit, but also a modular unit that allows connections with others, forming a community of pods that create a sustainable artificial island as our future of ocean living.”

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