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One small cottage for man

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What the red Swedish space-cottage might look like. Only, you know, on the moon.

The space race saw two superpowers facing off against each other in the inky blackness of the void, as America and the USSR competed for supremacy. But now plans are underway for Sweden to become an unexpected late entrant in the exploration of the moon – and they're planning to build a cottage there.

The traditional red cottage is one of the best known features of the Swedish countryside – seen by many Swedes as a symbol of their country. And, according to Swedish news source The Local, the Swedish Space Corporation now wants to put a little red cottage on the moon.

The SSC has reportedly undertaken a technical study showing that the little red cottage plan is feasible, a committee of top experts has been placed in charge of the project, and a competition has been launched to design the space-cottage.

Fredrik von Schéele, of the SSC, said: 'If we manage to do this Sweden will be the third country to occupy the moon.'



The space-cottage idea was originally conceived by artist Mikael Genberg in 1999. At the time, he thought the concept would be technologically impossible – but after he started making enquiries in 2003, the idea took off.

'The project will cost 500 million kronor [about £36million], which is quite reasonable. I think if we can make absolutely sure that this will happen it should be possible to finance it,' Genberg told The Local.

To be transported to the moon, the cottage-making kit must weigh no more than four kilos, and cannot be larger than eight metres square. One suggested mechanism is for the cottage to be inflatable, expanding after the moon-lander has completed its experiments. Sadly, it appears that an IKEA-style flat-pack moon-cottage is not on the cards.

Project leaders hope to be in a position to build their cottage on the moon by 2011.