



Conceptual WhiteKnightTwo & SpaceShipTwo flight

SPACE TOURISM 

By Patty Kovacevich



## A NEW CHOICE FOR BOOKING YOUR NEXT TRAVEL ADVENTURE IS ON THE HORIZON.

When talking about remote travel, hard-to-get-to places, and thrilling adventures to unknown heights,

*how does suborbital travel sound?*

If you're adventurous, healthy, and rich, you can sign up today for a one of a kind soon-to-launch extraterrestrial experience.

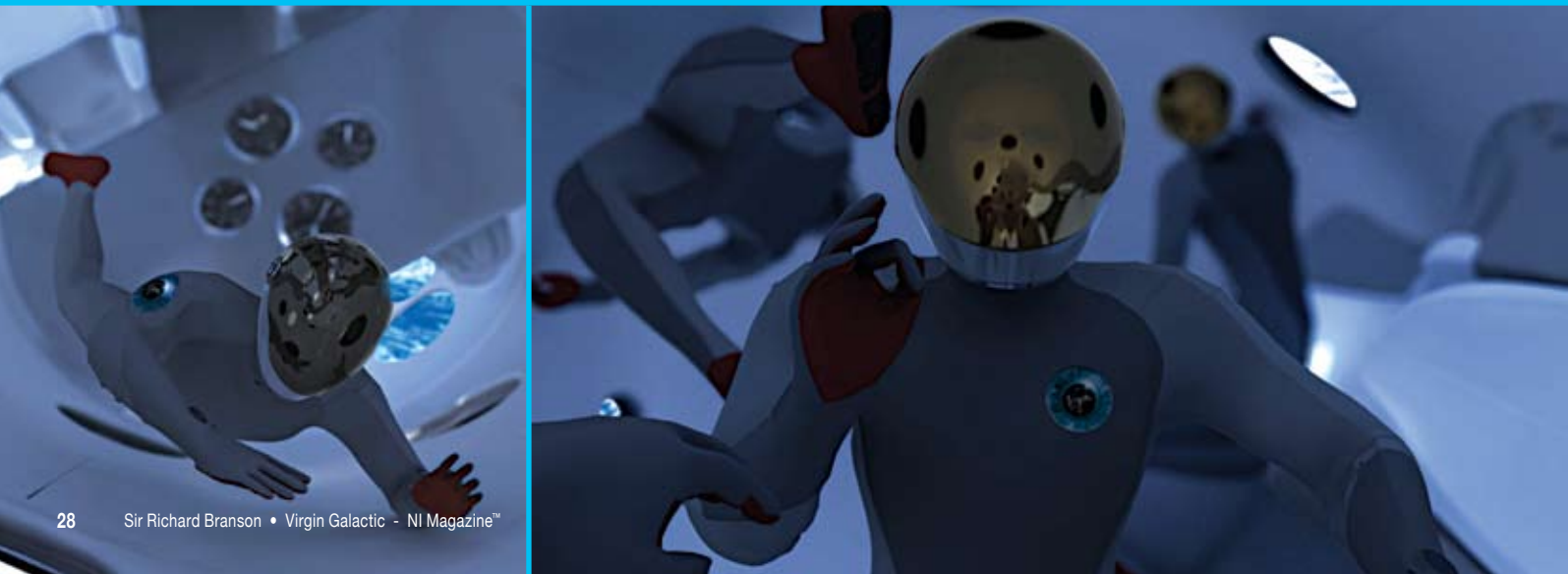
A carefully selected, elite group of travel agents known as "Space Agents" in North America and around the globe, are now offering luxurious, over-the-top, suborbital blasts into space for your next travel adventure.

Rocketing upward into the final frontier has been the brainchild of many futurists. Virgin Atlantic Airways Chairman Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic is one of the first companies in the world to sell the adventure of suborbital spaceflight travel. One can book a space flight with this elite company through one of their "Accredited Space Agents."

Virgin Galactic's space liners won't be like the cramped, strictly mechanical interiors of a NASA spacecraft. These space liners, about the size of a large business jet, will be outfitted with luxurious, reclining, and cushioned, leather seats, all with plenty of windows for better viewing capacity. Each SpaceShipTwo SS2 will transport six passengers and two pilots. Strapped to the belly of the revolutionary mother ship WhiteKnightTwo WK2, SS2 will climb in tandem to an altitude of around fifty-thousand feet (approximate cruising altitude of the Concorde). WK2 will thereafter release SS2, creating a phenomenal few seconds of freefall. SS2 will then fire her rocket and accelerate into a vertical climb, reaching a speed of 3.3 mach, or three times the speed of sound. Once she reaches an altitude of 110 km or 360,888 feet, SS2 will slow to a coast, allowing passenger astronauts one of the rarest experiences of all humankind – gazing down upon Mother Earth, enjoying a thousand mile view of the horizon, while experiencing zero gravity. Each passenger will see the ring of the Earth's atmosphere during these scheduled five-to-eight unforgettable minutes while hovering above the earth.



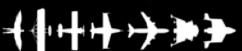
### Zero-Gravity



View of earth from SpaceShipOne taken by Brian Binnie



Richard Branson with SpaceShipOne



In the descent back to earth, SS2 will reconfigure its wings with "feathers" or flaps that serve as brakes, allowing a safe, gentle, slow glide back to Earth to a pleasant landing, like that of a plane, on the same takeoff runway at Mojave Spaceport.

The entire flight will last approximately two and a half hours, and traverse approximately two hundred miles. Each passenger will be ceremoniously pinned with Virgin Galactic astronaut wings, a rewarding tribute to this unforgettable accomplishment and experience.

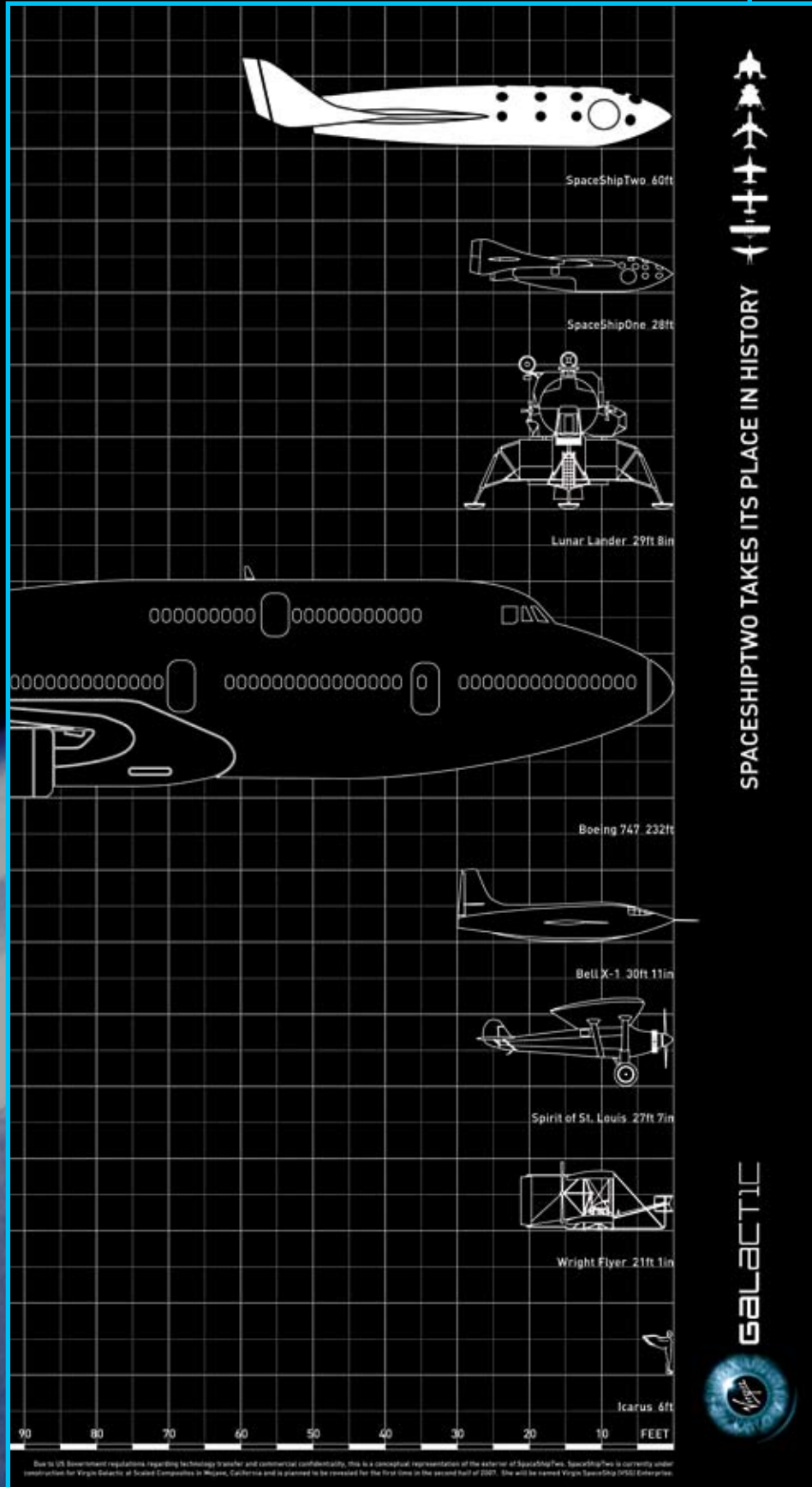
Branson, one of Britain's wealthiest entrepreneurs, will own and operate all of Virgin Galactic's privately built spaceships. SS2 will be a scaled version of the historic plane SpaceShipOne, designed and developed by Burt Rutan, world-renowned aerospace engineer. Virgin Galactic will also use evolved, safe technology, more environmentally friendly than found in any previously manned space vehicle. Rutan won the ten million dollar Ansari X Prize in October 2004, for successfully completing two manned flights within two weeks. Rutan's privately-held company, Scaled Composites, LLC, located in Mojave, California, will manufacture the first SpaceShipTwo to be used for suborbital flights by Virgin Galactic.

In August of 2006, Virgin Galactic announced that travel company Virtuoso, a leisure travel network of more than 6,000 elite travel specialists, would be its exclusive retail travel group for North America. Only forty-five of those were chosen as Accredited Space Agents.



Being selected as one of only forty-five Accredited Space Agents is a very elite standing unto itself. Jim Sheehy, Managing Director of Southwest Division of Protravel International, one of the largest and best travel agencies in the country, is one of the forty-five travel agents in the country personally selected by the discerning Virgin Galactic company to become a Space Agent. Sheehy and the other Space Agents have undergone a lengthy application process and intense scrutiny before becoming approved as an Accredited Space Agents.





Due to US Government regulations regarding technology transfer and commercial confidentiality, this is a conceptual representation of the exterior of SpaceShipTwo. SpaceShipTwo is currently under construction for Virgin Galactic at Scaled Composites in Mojave, California and is planned to be revealed for the first time in the second half of 2007. She will be named Virgin SpaceShip (VSS) Enterprise.



**Jim Sheehy**  
Managing Director of Southwest Division of Protravel International

“We already have phone inquiries coming in from potential space travel adventurers,” Sheehy claims. “It’s very exciting and there are actually a surprising number of people willing to do whatever it takes to make a thrilling space voyage possible in their lifetime.” As a Virtuoso consultant, Jim Sheehy embodies the adventurous and entrepreneurial spirit needed to represent Virgin Galactic. “Jim’s passion for space travel, aeronautics and astronomy, combined with his talent for selling unique experiences, make him an ideal candidate for this new level of space,” claims Carolyn Wincer, Head of Astronaut Sales for Virgin Galactic.

“There are exceptions to every profile, but to my assessment, space travel is not for the general population at this time. That could change after a few years of operation. It’s really for someone who absolutely loves adventure, has the physical stamina to withstand the “g” forces and other factors, and lastly, is for one who has the financial resources to afford this experience. It is the ideal experience for someone who has been everywhere and done everything as well as for the person who is looking for their first great adventure,” Sheehy declares.

Sheehy claims that currently there are developers seriously studying the placement of self-contained hotels and environments on the moon; not so surprising, since the Virgin Galactic space experience is the genesis of a new era in aviation, much like the one provided by the Wright brothers some one-hundred years ago.

The passenger price of two hundred thousand dollars is a cool bargain considering that Dennis Tito, the first private citizen to pay out-of-pocket for space travel aboard a Russian spaceship in 2001, put down a whopping twenty million dollars and expressed delight at doing so.

Virgin Galactic anticipates the first WK2 and SS2 will be rolled out during Fall 2007, less than a year away. The inaugural flight should launch sometime towards the end of 2008, or the first half of 2009, but dates are subject to change. Virgin Galactic won’t commence commercial spaceflight operations until they are entirely satisfied that it is completely safe to do so. Branson is so committed to safety, that as his personal demonstration of his unshakable confidence in this revolutionary process, he plans to have his entire family aboard the initial flights.

VSS Enterprise touchdown



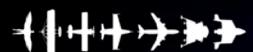
SpaceShipOne taken by Jim Koepnick





SpaceShipOne taken by Jim Koepnick

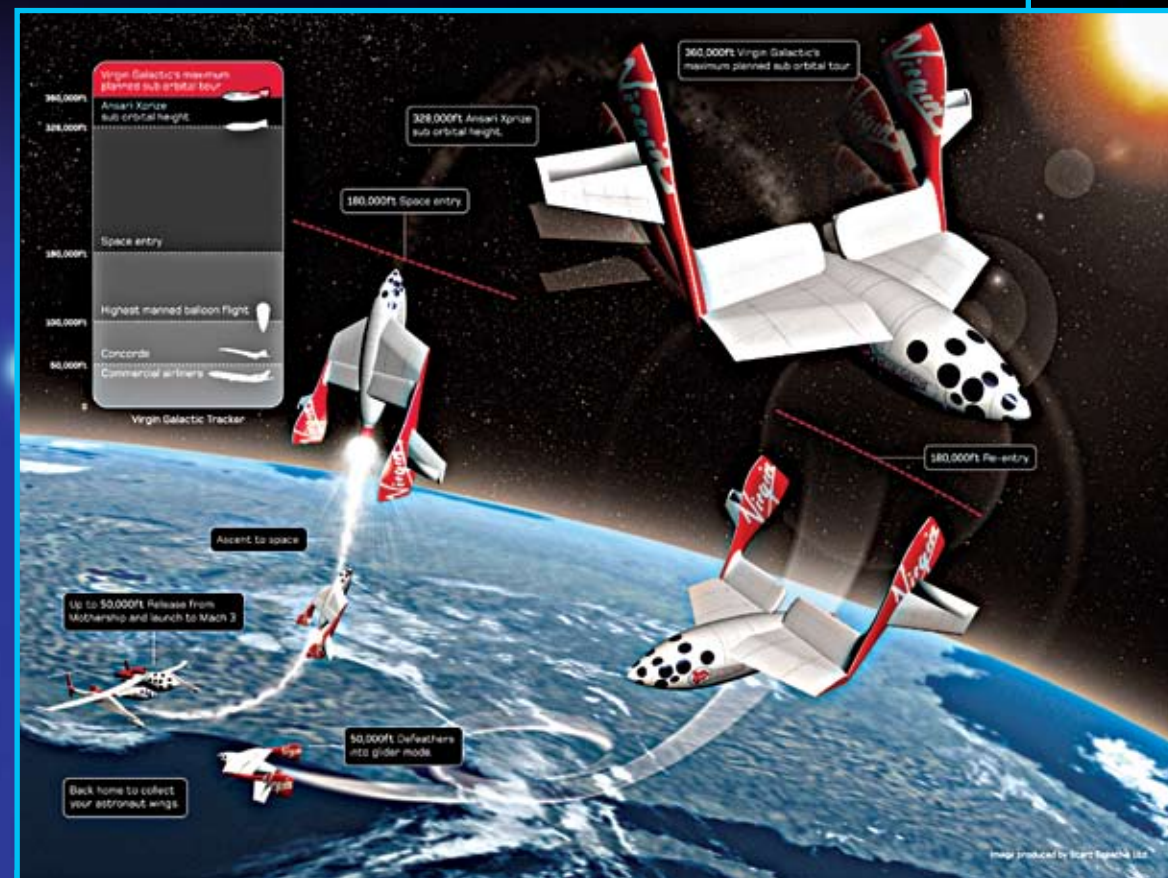
WhiteKnightOne



"Founders" will be the first one hundred people to fly commercially, and must pay the full fee up front. "Founder" seats are available by invitation only. "Pioneers" will be the next four hundred passengers to fly, with deposits ranging from one hundred thousand dollars. "Voyagers" will fly after the first five hundred passengers, and currently pay deposits of twenty thousand dollars to secure their seats. Virgin Galactic expects to take-off once a week during its first year and to transport as many as thirty-five thousand passengers over the next ten years. Insurance coverage is not currently available to potential astronauts; however, Virgin Galactic expects coverage to become available after their first successful flights take place.

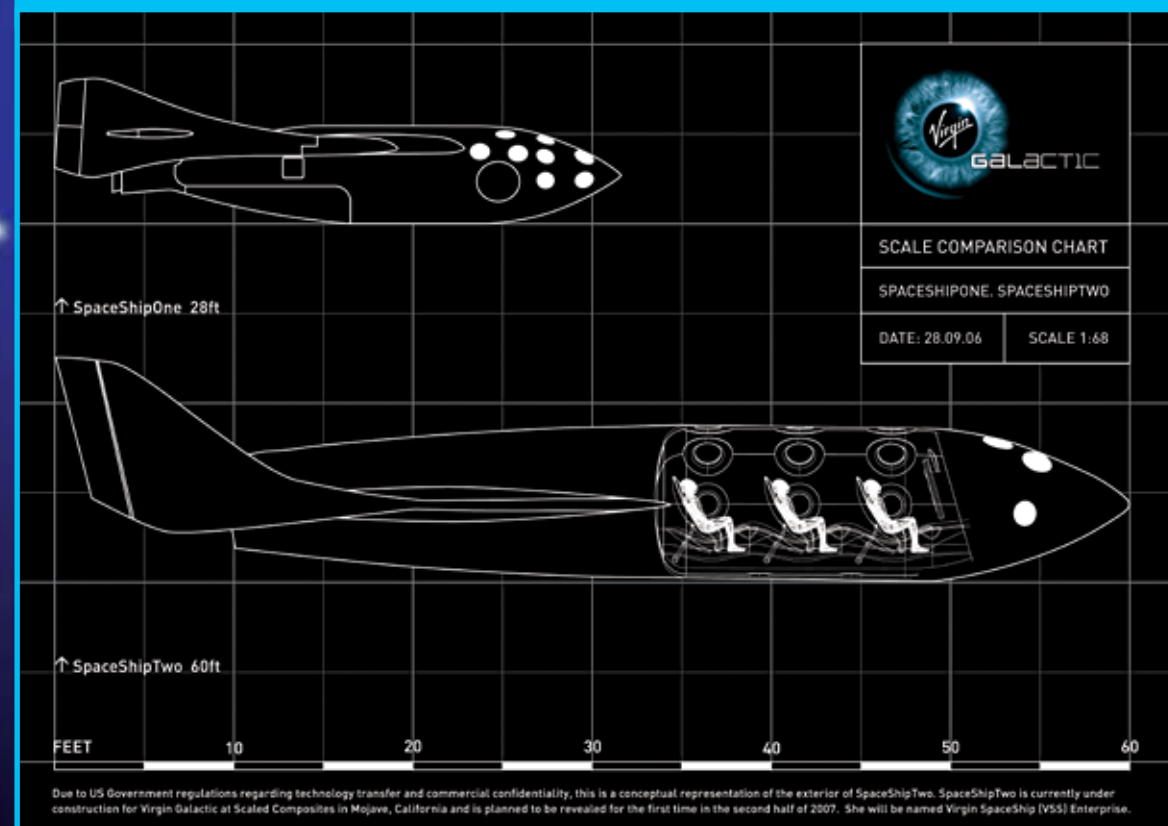
As yet, Virgin Galactic hasn't released their finalized plans for their pre-flight training for passengers. They promise it will be an unforgettable two-day experience, and will include the possibility of riding in a centrifuge as well as aboard a high-flying aircraft, to acclimate patrons to the sensation of weightlessness. In other words, a glimpse into the ultimate thrill and physical adventure awaiting them, laced with Virgin Galactic's signature elegance.

Initially, Virgin Galactic's spaceflights will operate from the Mojave Spaceport, while new headquarters in New Mexico, presently under construction, are completed for the world's first commercial spaceport.



Flight Plan

### Comparison of SpaceShipOne & SpaceShipTwo





**BRANSON AND RUTAN'S TEAM BELIEVE THAT IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE, SPACE TRAVEL WILL BE AS COMMON AND AS SAFE AS TODAY'S AIR TRAVEL.**

They also believe that it will require private industry to make this a reality. From the start, The Virgin Galactic Group will make this travel experience both a remarkable and luxurious adventure. The experience will leave each passenger inspired and transformed, and with the lasting memory of the breathtaking beauty of the Earth from above - seen and forever remembered by a privileged few.

*For more information, contact:*

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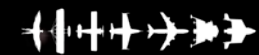
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Richard Branson & New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, announcing Mojave Spaceport & new headquarters.



SpaceShipOne in Smithsonian alongside DNA of flight colleagues, Spirit of Saint Louis & Bell X-1

