

**09 December 2009**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **SPACE TRAVEL WITH ELEGANT RESORTS**

#### **SIR RICHARD BRANSON AND DESIGNER BURT RUTAN UNVEIL VIRGIN GALACTIC SPACESHIP TWO TO THE PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME**

Last night, in the Mojave Desert, Virgin Founder, Sir Richard Branson and SpaceshipOne (SS1) designer, Burt Rutan, revealed SpaceShipTwo to the public for the first time since construction of the world's first manned commercial spaceship began in 2007. SS2 has been designed to take many thousands of private astronauts into space after test programming and all required U.S. government licensing has been completed.

The unveiling represents another major milestone in Virgin Galactic's quest to develop the World's first commercial space line providing private sector access to space using an environmentally benign launch system for people, payload and science. The spaceship draws on the experience developed during the successful flights of SS1 in 2004, which won the Ansari Xprize for completing the world's first manned private space flights. The SS2 design will be refined and completed during an extensive test flying program to commence shortly, and it will be an entirely new vehicle capable of carrying up to 6 passenger astronauts and up to 2 pilot astronauts into space on a sub-orbital flight.

Leading luxury travel company, Elegant Resorts is delighted to be the exclusive UK tour operator for the Virgin Galactic Experience. They offer the following exciting space experiences:

#### **Virgin Galactic Sub-Orbital Space Flights**

With 3 days of training required, including full G-force acclimatisation, the sub-orbital space flights will truly offer an experience unlike any other, with the opportunity to unfasten those seatbelts and float in zero gravity, enjoying extraordinary views of the earth below. After the three days training and fitness assessment, flight day will see passengers boarding SpaceShipTwo for their 2 hour sub-orbital experience, which will be followed by a launch at 50,000ft by WhiteKnightTwo. After accelerating to Mach 3.3 in 30 seconds in a vertical ascent, SS2 will slow to reach 110km into space from where passengers can view the earth below from their zero gravity position.

The Virgin Galactic Experience costs US\$200,000 p.p.\* with deposits starting at US\$20,000, and is planned to commence in 2-3 years.

And for those who just can't wait, Elegant Resorts offers two extraordinary 'space experiences':

### **ZERO-G Parabolic Flights**

Follow in the feet of all astronauts, who train for spaceflight on the specially modified Boeing 727. A ZERO-G Experience is the only one of its kind and the ultimate opportunity to experience true weightlessness. During the flight, 12-15 parabolic arcs are performed mid-air to create a weightless environment allowing you to float, flip and soar as if you were in space. The ZERO-G Experience is available with Elegant Resorts, from US \$5,445 per person\*.

### **National Aerospace Training & Research Centre Sub-Orbital Space Flight Introduction, Philadelphia**

Join the elite few to who have experienced the real sensations of space flight at NASTAR in Philadelphia. Learn the dynamics of space, the effects of G forces and practice comprehensive techniques used by real NASA astronauts to physically and mentally prepare you to handle the physical stresses that affect your body during space travel. Then, take your seat in the centre's high-performance human centrifuge and enjoy the Virgin Galactic sub-orbital space flight simulation experience.

The 1 day NASTAR Sub-Orbital Space Flight Introduction Programme with Elegant Resorts costs from US \$3000 per person\*.

\*All the above prices are exclusive of flights, transfers and accommodation.

**Elegant Resorts is extremely proud to be Virgin Galactic's only Accredited Space Agent for the UK. To book your Virgin Galactic, NASTAR or ZERO-G experience, and for further information about Space Travel with Virgin Galactic please contact the Elegant Resorts Space Team on 01244 897 003 or [space@elegantresorts.co.uk](mailto:space@elegantresorts.co.uk)**

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