



TREVOR BEATTIE, 50
THE VISIONARY
Advertising guru,
executive producer
of the film *Moon*



THE 1ST SPACE TOURISTS

An ad man, a chemist, a film producer and a classical singer — meet the unlikely adventurers going where no tourist has gone before

Photographs by Paul Rees
Words by Mat Smith

REMARKABLY, ONLY 499 humans have gone into space — and 22 of them didn't return. The people here are among the first passengers who've put a deposit on a \$200,000 suborbital flight with Virgin Galactic. Their names will go into a draw to be the first six space tourists to travel on board Virgin's VSS Enterprise some time within the next year-and-a-half.

For those launching themselves beyond tourism's final frontier, the inaugural flight's planned trajectory will overlap Earth's atmosphere at 70,000ft, which will give lucky space cadets a six-minute period of weightlessness.

A spaceport is currently being built in New Mexico by Foster + Partners, and, in honour of the sci-fi series *Star Trek*, Sir Richard Branson's first two spaceships are to be named "Enterprise" and "Voyager". Engage!

"In December 1968, I fell over in the playground and had three scabs on my knuckles. I called them Borman, Lovell and Anders after the Apollo 8 crew. I did a school project on space and got a B+. When I glue my own little newspaper clipping in there I'll track my teacher down. Then I'll get an A.

People want me to do a documentary, but it's too personal. I don't want to halve or share the experience. They sent engineers and mechanics to the Moon and they came back poets and preachers. This time we're sending preachers, poets and artists. What will we come back as? I hope it will change me. It's changed everyone who's been.

To see the Earth from up there will be the ultimate homesickness. It's also about exploration and discovery — that's what creativity is about. I'm scared of heights, motorbikes and David Cameron being the Prime Minister. But I'm not scared of space.

I've never driven a car. I cycled once, fell off and never did it again. But I'd rather go to space than drive a car. If you're going to buy a penis extension I'd rather buy one that extends to 500,000ft."



LINA BOROZDINA, 41
THE SCIENTIST
DNA chemist

"When I was three, my dad would tell me space stories. Two shadows would climb over the fence and into a rocket, ready to go into space. The shadows were me and my cousin Inga. When it launched and came to zero gravity, the box would open and we would float out with the food and have a different space adventure every night.

By the age of six I knew all the constellations. The Little Dipper was my favourite as it was so hard to find. Now, I invent clinical DNA — pretty much creating life from nothing. But still, one of my favourite things is laying on my back and looking up at a black sky. The infinity of space gives me a positive sensation.

Growing up in Odessa [Ukraine], the idea of going to space was like going to Disneyland. I've worked really hard, slept on people's couches when I came to America. I took a second loan against my house for 20 years to pay for the trip and I make monthly payments to the bank to pay for it."

TIM NASH, 50
THE MONEY MAN
Paleoanthropologist, investment hotshot



"We didn't have TV in South Africa. People say, 'Did you watch the Moon landings and wish you could go to the Moon?' I say, 'No, I wished I could have had a television.'

The skull of a two-million-year-old hominid was recently discovered on the nature reserve where I grew up. Some people are calling it the missing link. It would be wonderful to take the skull of one of our early ancestors up with me.

Because of my interest in fossils, I tend to think about the probability of life on other planets and how it might have evolved — there are so many permutations. But space is so vast, it may be another million years before we can travel the kinds of distances needed to find it. It's going to be hilarious in 30 years to hear people say, 'You went up in that old contraption?' It will seem so unsophisticated compared to what could happen in our lifetimes.

People ask if it's acceptable to spend this amount of money when people are starving. You have to be a politician to change that. But we are setting up a foundation that will lead to benefits. The fact that people can afford to fly today came from the Wright brothers risking their lives. That's how progress comes about."



GEORGE DUFFIELD, 37
THE PRODUCER
Film impresario and environmental philanthropist

"Going into space means an awful lot to me because I was so intimately involved with Nasa, detecting life on other planets in the Sixties. That's when I began thinking how wonderful it would be to go up there myself.

The training has not been all that onerous. I normally walk five miles a day at a good speed and found the centrifuge training more interesting than unpleasant. The noise overwhelmed one's senses to the point where you could almost not notice the g-forces. I spent a lot of my time at sea under appalling conditions in small landing craft in the Second World War. Everybody was sick and some unconscious, but it didn't affect me, so I don't think the flight will bother me.

A lot of well-intentioned Greens disapprove, but I think they're wrong. Anything that dilutes the spirit of adventure is bad. I see this vehicle as the forerunner in a new way of travelling around the world that will be the greenest way of all, because the only fuel you'll use is to get up. The rest of the way it will coast ballistically."



JAMES LOVELOCK, 90
THE VETERAN
Scientist, futurologist and alien hunter

"I wanted to be an astronaut ever since I read the Tintin book, Destination Moon. I got a high-powered radio when I was young and would listen to the voices on the space shuttle as it passed overhead — tedious stuff like 'Dump the main oxygen valve' or 'Have you done your laundry?'

I tried to be an astronaut, but I had contact lenses and the RAF wasn't interested. So that was the end of the dream. And then along came Virgin. And all I've done since is worry about it.

The centrifuge put the fear of God into me. My vision went black and white, then it started tunnelling in black from both sides. I was fighting like hell to stay conscious. I'd like a space suit I could wear at a New Year's party and not look like a total wanker. I sold some investments to pay for the flight. The remaining ones halved in value, so it would have evaporated anyway."



PER WIMMER, 41
THE DAREDEVIL
 CEO, philanthropist and global financier

"I might look normal, but I'm not. There's a Danish law, Jante, which says you mustn't stick out too much. I'm very against that. I'm involved in an 800mph land-speed record and I hold the world record for a freefall tandem skydive over Everest. I've dived with sharks in Fiji, skied at 5,500m in Bolivia, done Africa and visited every country in South America.

I once hired a medicine man and boatman and went into the Amazon way beyond my ability to recognise where I was

and stayed with a family. I was in charge of fishing for piranhas for dinner.

But after a while the next country isn't enough. I want to be the first Dane in space. In the 21st century, that's where the new frontier is for adventurers. I'm hoping it will give me a new perspective. I always do a risk-reward assessment before any adventure. I know if I blow up in space it will be quick. But I hope things go well as I have a lot of other things I need to do. I want to plant the Danish flag on the Moon."

SARAH BRIGHTMAN, 49

THE SONGSTRESS
 Classical singer, former Lloyd Webber

"I was watching the first man land on the moon in 1969 when our TV packed up. I got hysterical and my parents rushed me to our neighbours' house. Seeing it changed me. The realisation that one can do things outside anything you can imagine gave me the drive and ambition to do what I do.

People remember me for 'I Lost My Heart To A Starship Trooper' — very tongue-in-cheek — the writer, Jeff Calvert, and me talked endlessly about space.

Some people want to dive into the ocean but I've always wanted to get off the planet rather than go back down to where we crawled out from. I've flown small aircraft since I was young and did some training in Harrier Jump Jets. My mother seemed shocked for a while, but she's used to me doing crazy things. My all-time space hero would probably be Han Solo. I was also a huge Joe 90 fan when I was younger. I desperately wanted him to be my boyfriend!"