

Iranian woman blazes trail into space

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Anousheh Ansari, who grew up in Tehran and watched reruns of Star Trek, is set to become the world's first female space tourist.

The Sunday Times of London reported that Ansari, who lived in Tehran before the Islamic revolution, dreamed of becoming an astronaut and often told her friends that someday she would "see the stars."

Now Ansari, 39, is a multimillionaire in the United States, having made a fortune from telecommunications software. She recently secured a flight in a Russian Soyuz rocket to the international space station, about 220 miles above Earth.

After passing stringent medical tests, Ansari spent weeks training at Star City space center outside Moscow.

Ansari is scheduled to make the flight, which will cost her about \$18.5 million, next year.

Space tourism was pioneered in 2001 when Dennis Tito, a California tycoon, became the first space tourist.

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