

# Virgin Galactic plans its next commercial flight to the edge of space for August

July 13 2023, by Susan Montoya Bryan

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Virgin Galactic's VSS Unity departs Mojave Air & Space Port in Mojave, Calif., for the final time as Virgin Galactic shifts its SpaceFlight operations to New Mexico, Feb. 13, 2020. Virgin Galactic is aiming for early August 2023 for its next flight to the edge of space, a trip that is expected to include the first of many ticket holders who have been waiting years for their chance at weightlessness aboard the company's rocket-powered plane. Credit: Matt Hartman via AP, File

Virgin Galactic is aiming for early August for its next flight to the edge of space, a trip that is expected to include the first of many ticket holders who have been waiting years for their chance at weightlessness aboard the company's rocket-powered plane.

The company announced Thursday that the window for the [commercial flight](#) from Spaceport America in southern New Mexico will open Aug. 10. The short up-and-down flight will be streamed live on Virgin Galactic's website.

Virgin Galactic confirmed that three private passengers will be on the flight. The plane has room for six—two Virgin Galactic pilots and four passengers.

Hundreds of people have purchased tickets over the years, including celebrities, scientists and entrepreneurs. The [company](#) is expected to release more details about the crew and three passengers next week.

The flight will mark Virgin Galactic's third this year. The most recent was in June—a [research flight](#) during which two Italian Air Force officers and an engineer with the National Research Council of Italy conducted a series of microgravity experiments during their moments of [weightlessness](#).

Virgin Galactic has been working for more than a decade to send paying passengers on short space hops and in 2021 finally won the federal government's approval. Founder Richard Branson joined Virgin Galactic employees for the first [flight](#) that summer.

It usually takes about an hour for the mother ship to carry the plane to an altitude where it is released and fires its [rocket motor](#) to make the final push to the edge of space.

Once they reach their highest point, passengers can unstrap from their seats, float around the cabin for a few minutes and take in views of the Earth. Then they strap in for the glide back down to the runway.

Virgin Galactic plans to fly monthly from its outpost in the New Mexico desert.

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