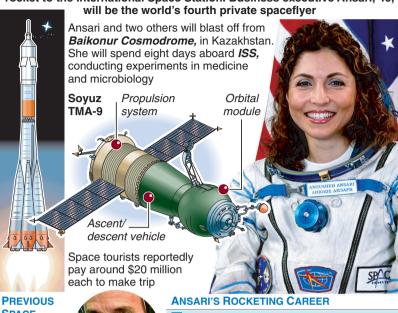
First woman space tourist fulfills dream

Anousheh Ansari, a U.S. citizen of Iranian origin, will become the world's first female space tourist when she blasts off aboard a Russian Soyuz rocket to the International Space Station. Business executive Ansari, 40,



SPACE TOURISTS

1. Apr 2001: Californian financier

Dennis Tito

2. Apr 2002: South African internet millionaire

Shuttleworth
3. Oct 2005:

Mark

American scientist and entrepreneur Gregory Olsen

Source: Space Adventures

- 1984: Migrates to U.S. as teenager later earns master's degree in electrical engineering
- 1993: Co-founds Texas-based company *Telecom Technologies*
- 2004: Ansari family helps fund \$10m Ansari X-Prize competition for first commercial, sub-orbital spaceflight won by SpaceShipOne
- Currently spearheading family venture, *Prodea*, to develop fleet of suborbital spacecraft for commercial use in partnership with Virginia-based *Space Adventures*, *Ltd.* and Russia's *Federal Space Agency*
- Ansari holds reservation for first flights on commercial version of *SpaceShipOne*, being developed by *Virgin Galactic Spaceflight*

Pictures: Associated Press

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