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Plane Genius

A new program from the team at **flyADVANCED** aims to make aircraft ownership more accessible without all of the typical expenses and hassles. **by Matt Cosentino | photos by Jeff Anderson**

Ask someone if they have ever thought about owning an airplane of their own and they would likely admit that the thought is beyond their grasp. The price tag typically includes not only the cost of the aircraft itself, but also significant expenses like pilots, fuel, maintenance, insurance, hangar space, and more. As a result, most people have the impression that it's an indulgence reserved only for the very wealthy.

Not so fast.

Regis de Ramel and his team at flyADVANCED Aviation Group want to turn that way of thinking upside down and make aircraft ownership accessible to more people. Through a new program called flySHARES, four co-owners can each purchase a quarter share of a plane, providing 100 hours of flight time annually with all of the expenses and details handled by flyADVANCED.

"We wanted to come up with a way for individuals, families, or even businesses to own a share of an airplane without the huge costs associated with it," says de Ramel, the company's founder. "Our program handles everything for you, from soup to nuts. It's all buttoned up in one refined package, almost like a country club membership."

The two options available are both from Cirrus Aircraft: the Cirrus SR22, a single-engine piston airplane that ideally holds two adults and two kids, and the Cirrus Vision Jet SF50, which can comfortably hold four adults and two children.

The planes are particularly well suited to regional flights, making them a fit for people who regularly travel throughout the Mid-Atlantic for business, vacations, or trips to second homes. Instead of sitting in traffic for car rides up to five or six hours long, they can hop on a plane and be there in 45 minutes or an hour.

"A lot of people use them to fly from ILG in New Castle or Wings Field in Blue Bell to

Martha's Vineyard, for example, or Rhode Island or Maine to their summer homes," says Carter Alexander, Vice President of Commercial Operations at flyADVANCED. "We've found that there's a lot of interest from the general public in the area for chartering, and we think that a lot of people charter enough that they might want to take the next step and become an owner of the aircraft. It's not just that it would make sense financially, but it's more of an ease of usage and you get a tax benefit from the ownership as well."

The co-ownership model is intended to remove the stress and complexity from private aviation. Regular charters are notorious for their cost fluctuations and inefficiency, with multiple steps and time-consuming paperwork. With flySHARES, it just takes one call to a dedicated scheduling representative.

"Once you sign up, all you have to do is call us whenever you want to fly, tell us where you want to go and when you want to leave, and we take care of the rest," Alexander says.

Another differentiator from traditional charters is that the 100-hour flight time accounts only for actual time spent on an airplane. Co-owners are not responsible for



paying for the reposition of the aircraft from its previous destination or to its next one.

Safety is always of the utmost importance at flyADVANCED—the company is a WYVERN Wingman Gold operator, one of the highest safety ratings in the private aviation space—and the same holds true for flySHARES. Both aircraft options are equipped with the Cirrus Airframe Parachute System (CAPS), which is designed to lower the entire plane to the ground in an emer-

gency. They also feature Safe Return technology, which allows a passenger to activate an emergency landing procedure.

"It will take over the aircraft, communicate with air traffic control, find the most suitable airport and runway, and land automatically," de Ramel says. "These are new technologies that haven't even been out there for the general public to know about. They're very popular in the pilot community and we're trying to make it accessible for the non-pilot

community in a co-ownership program."

Before launching flyADVANCED more than 20 years ago, de Ramel worked for Cirrus Aircraft as a sales director, and he still has strong ties to one of the world's leading plane manufacturers. His company, which has six locations across Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia, owns multiple Cirrus maintenance and training centers as well.

While he encourages those interested in becoming a pilot to come to flyADVANCED for training, acquiring a license requires many hours of lessons and flight experience. With flySHARES there is no need to become a pilot, and plenty of time is saved with the quick flights as well. A businessperson can attend multiple meetings a few states away and be home in time for dinner, or parents can visit a child at college without wasting time on the drive.

"We can fly into any major airport, but one of the benefits of these aircraft is that they can fly into airports that a lot of bigger jets cannot get into," Alexander adds. "So we can get you a lot closer to your destination, which saves times on both ends."

In the rare case that one of the other co-owners is using the plane at the same time, clients have access to flyADVANCED's entire 50-plane fleet and can simply book another one. Larger parties or farther flights across the country, to the Caribbean, or even Europe can also be accommodated through flyADVANCED's traditional charter department.

What's more, co-owners can drive right up to their plane and unload their bags, and their car will be parked for them and brought back upon their return. The program makes sense on so many levels that the company has adopted the marketing phrase *Plane Genius* to describe it.

"Aviation is both a vocation and passion of mine," says de Ramel, a licensed pilot with more than 8,000 hours of flight time. "I really believe in the product and I believe that this should be more accessible and available to more people. One of the reasons why I'm doing this is because I feel like one of the big bottlenecks in personal and private aviation is that one needs to become a pilot, and I think that's a mistake.

"People have to dedicate a huge amount of time to become a pilot, and they also have to dedicate a lot of time to stay current," he continues. "Our idea is to take that stress out of your hands and make it more affordable for you to fly, because ultimately that's what you want. You want to be able to get from A to B and back to A." ■

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flySHARES and **flyADVANCED**,
including its multiple locations in
the region, visit www.flyshares.com
and www.flyadvanced.com.