

## **Virgin Atlantic Flying Club by Dana Ailer**

Virgin Atlantic Airways is one of the world's most luxurious commercial airlines. Since its inception in 1984, Virgin has always been ahead of the industry curve with such innovative offerings as sleeping pods.

Virgin's loyalty program, Virgin Atlantic Airways Flying Club, is similarly innovative. This frequent flyer program encourages customers to earn points not only by flying with the airline, but also by flying with other airlines, staying in partner hotels, and using partner car rental agencies.

The Flying Club offers 3 levels of membership – Red, Silver, and Gold. Qualification for each level is based on "Tier Points." Rather than a 1 mile equals 1 point structure used by most other rewards programs, Tier Points offer a set number of points per trip almost without concern for the length of the trip. For example, on a one-way Virgin Atlantic flight, a seat in the Economy cabin would earn you 2 Tier Points; one in the Premium Economy Cabin will net 3 Tier Points; and a seat in Upper Class will be rewarded with 5 Tier points. Tier Points can be earned with Virgin's partner companies as well. These partner companies include 16 airlines, more than 20 hotel chains, and 24 companies in The Virgin Group. Additionally, a customer may even trade points they've earned through other companies' loyalty programs.