

Barron Hilton

Aircraft Owner Interviews

Barron Hilton can purchase any aircraft he desires, and owns an enviable fleet - Cessna Citation V Ultra, McDonal-Douglas 500-E helicopter, Stearman biplane, Citabria aerobatic plane, a restored Beech Staggerwing, and two hot air balloons, and he flies them all. But what really tickles his fancy is soaring! Has four gliders and a tow plane.



"Soaring is the most natural form of flight for me," says Mr. Hilton. A mindful thinker, with a smooth smoke of a favorite cigar, Barron's passion is revealed, "through a careful blend of high-tech aircraft design and instinctive pilot skill, I am able to capture the sensation known only to birds of the air. Managing invisible updrafts of air to gain altitude. Gliding at high speeds in a gradual descent for hundreds of miles. All in a plane without an engine. A craft fueled only by the mind of the pilot." A visual which inspires new training.

Helicopter to the airport, Citation to the ranch, for almost 40 years Barron has escaped to his private ranch, The Flying M Ranch, in northern Nevada. Complete with airstrip and hangars. Over 500,000 acres. Come to find out, the mountains and hills on this ranch produce some of the best soaring conditions in the world. A special find. And plenty of wings in the hangars to regularly make use of earth's special gifts to soaring.

In 1981 Barron inaugurated The Barron Hilton Cup, an international soaring competition for pilots who fly the longest triangular flights in five regions of the world. They receive one of the most unique prizes in all of sports: a 10-day soaring camp at the Flying M Ranch. It is the largest aviation competition in the world, with over 3,000 pilots taking part annually. There is nothing comparable to this competition in the world. The combination of a marvellous desert landscape, excellent weather conditions, first-class aircraft and exquisite luxury on a secluded ranch surpasses everyone's expectations.

As a youngster, Barron often rode his bicycle from his home in Dallas to Love Field where he was mesmerized by the constant take-offs and landings. His dream of flying was realized in the Navy. At the end of the war, he attended USC Aeronautical School where he continued his training. Barron's license today has so many licenses and ratings that he has been issued two cards just to fit them all. He flies them all and loves them all, but there is nothing like soaring in the silence of the wind!

Quite an entrepreneur, Barron managed to start up many businesses. Vita Pakt citrus products, Carte Blanche credit cards, Air Finance Corporation and the San Diego Chargers football team to name a few. Finally, Barron joined his father, Conrad Hilton, as President of Hilton Hotels Corporation and over the next 30 years built it into a \$4 billion enterprise with the strongest balance sheet in the industry.

