

SPECIAL SECTION: **LIFT PROVIDERS**

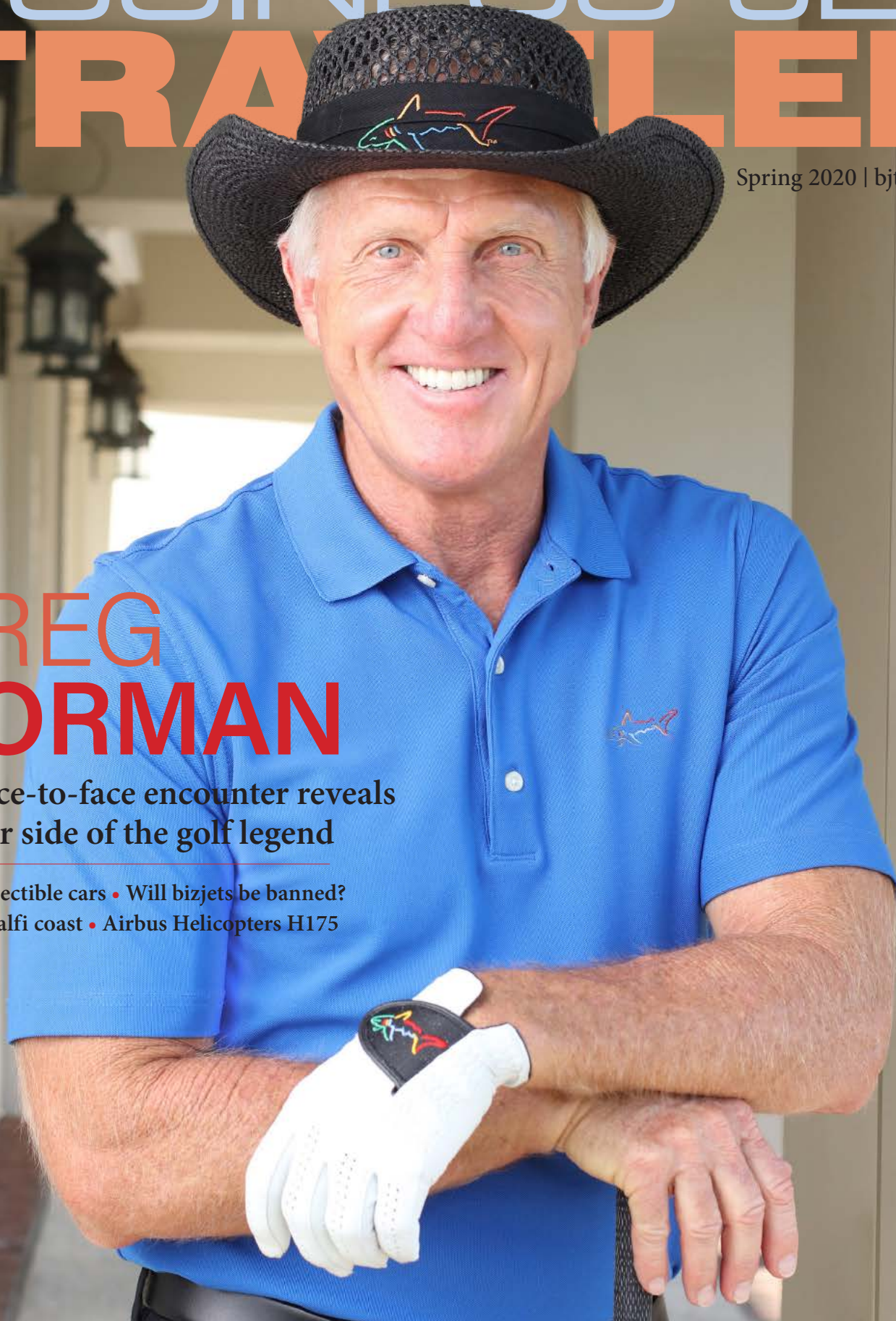
# BUSINESS JET TRAILER<sup>®</sup>

Spring 2020 | [bjtonline.com](http://bjtonline.com)

## GREG NORMAN

Our face-to-face encounter reveals  
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- Special section: Aircraft Buyers' Guide
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DAHER TBM940



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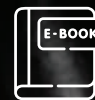


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# Up Front

**G**reg Norman, one of the most successful pro golfers of all time, graces the cover of our first issue of the year. I had the privilege of interviewing him (*page 18*) at his Palm Beach, Florida, headquarters, where he runs a multinational conglomerate that's involved in everything from golf course design and real estate to apparel and wine.

All of our cover subjects are experienced business jet travelers, but it's safe to say that few have been involved with bizav as long—or as enthusiastically—as Norman. He seems to have always intuited that business aircraft could help him succeed both on and off the golf course, and he is the only bizjet traveler I've ever encountered who doesn't even remember the first time he flew privately—perhaps because he's done so much private flying since then.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jeff Wieand's award-winning Taxes, Laws, and Finance column never disappoints, but "Will Business Jets Be Banned?" (*page 12*) is a particularly timely and incisive piece that explores the climate-change challenges facing aviation. As is his custom, Wieand examines the issue from all angles, and he ultimately suggests that a swift conversion to sustainable aviation jet fuel (SAF) might be the best way for bizav to help address the climate crisis.

The increased use of sustainable fuel is, in fact, a goal for organizations such as the National Business Aviation Association as well as for many major aircraft manufacturers. I recently spoke at length with Gulfstream Aerospace president Mark Burns (*page 34*), and he talked about his company's long-standing commitment to environmental sustainability and investment in SAF—and about his conviction that small steps by individuals offer the surest way to create lasting change.

Speaking of change, you'll find lots of it detailed in this issue's special section. It features James Wynbrandt's look at the innovative lift providers that are defining the future of private air travel (*page 48*) as well as his dissection of the



MICHELE HUBERT

Waiting with AIN videographer Mike Cutler for Gulfstream's G700 reveal at the National Business Aviation Association's annual convention in Las Vegas last October.

latest offerings from charter, membership, and jet-card companies (*page 52*), including programs with one-way fixed pricing, no peak-day surcharges, and other new enticements.

Look for more special sections in upcoming issues. Our summer edition will incorporate our Aircraft Buyers' Guide, which will offer expert advice and an updated directory of all popular business jets, turboprops, and helicopters. The fall issue will contain a report on cutting-edge cabin technology and furnishings while our winter edition will shine a spotlight on noteworthy new and upcoming aircraft models.

\*\*\*\*\*

Please remember that our print magazine represents only a fraction of what we have to offer. At [BJTonline.com](http://BJTonline.com), you'll find hundreds of aircraft reviews, news items, blog posts, videos, interviews, and other features—including many must-read stories that never find their way into print. To make sure you don't miss any of them, sign up for our free twice-weekly e-newsletter, **BJT Waypoints** ([BJTonline.com/subscribe](http://BJTonline.com/subscribe)).

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## A Culinary Renaissance Sweeps Ireland

The Earl of Dunraven's decision to build neo-gothic mansion Adare Manor in the mid 1800s was a boon to County Limerick, sustaining local craftspeople during Ireland's potato famine—a blight that devastated a country dependent on the starchy South American import.

Now that the house has been converted into an award-winning hotel, its flagship restaurant, the Oak Room, champions the much greater diversity of quality Irish foods and ingredients available today—including cod and trout, game, and award-winning cheeses from Galway Goat Farm—through *prix fixe*, customizable multicourse dinners emblematic of a culinary renaissance sweeping the Emerald Isle.

It's a movement that's attracting attention far beyond the country's borders. Over the last 10 years, the number of Michelin-starred restaurants in Ireland has more than doubled, with 16 listed in the 2019 guide. Galway's two-day annual Food on the Edge international symposium on the future of food evokes noma chef René Redzepi's acclaimed MAD festival, albeit on a much smaller scale.

Even within the tiny neighboring namesake village of Adare, dining options evidence the shift. Wade Murphy, chef-proprietor of that town's rustic-chic seasonal restaurant 1826, left acclaimed kitchens in London and Chicago after realizing he could procure better products at home; since he and his wife, a Limerick native, opened the establishment in 2013, they've garnered awards from *Food & Wine* magazine and Michelin.

"Moving back here was always the plan," Murphy says. "I'd get chicken in the U.S. that was supposed to be the best, and I'd think 'It's nothing like what we have in Ireland.' The produce here is incredible."

Oak Room chef Mike Tweedie says innovation goes hand in hand with tradition in the modern Irish kitchen. His exploration of new products includes wasabi grown on-property and a truffle farm that should produce its first crop in about seven years.

"We're trying to keep it modern and fresh—keeping up with current trends and setting our own at the same time," he says. —*Gemma Z. Price*

 Museum Watch

## Olympic and Paralympic Museum to Open in Colorado

The U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum, which opens this spring in Colorado Springs, Colorado, celebrates the international sports events with interactive exhibits, galleries, and cutting-edge digital content. A 40-foot video screen runs movie overviews of the summer and winter Olympic Games, the Parade of Nations, and the accomplishments of athletes such as snowboarder/skateboarder Shaun White.

Visitors can see exhibits honoring 154 Hall of Fame inductees as well as a complete collection of Olympic torches, including the one Muhammad Ali used to light the cauldron in Atlanta in 1996. The 60,000-square-foot facility also houses a collection of competition medals plus artifacts such as five-time Olympic champion Bonnie Blair's speed skates, the 1980 U.S. vs. Russia Miracle on Ice scoreboard, and three-time Paralympic medalist Amy Purdy's custom snowboard.

—*Margie Goldsmith*







So when upscale residential buildings are able to include parking, designers are making it count. Ximena Rodriguez is director of interior design at CetraRuddy, the team behind 443 Greenwich, an exclusive residence in New York City's Tribeca neighborhood. The building has 53 units but only 15 parking spaces.

"In New York, the question is 'how can you maximize?' because space is hard to get," says Rodriguez. "If you can include parking in your building, making the most of it is something you will strive for."

A typical single space in 443 Greenwich is 170 square feet, and a double space is 350 square feet. The double spots were available to residents for up to about \$1 million. With such a price tag, designers worked to make the parking as luxurious as the rest of the building.

"Finishing this garage as if it were another very important space and not an afterthought is something that distinguishes it," Rodriguez says. "We created a small lobby, a place of arrival, a place where you're coming home. We paid special attention to lighting because we wanted this space to feel thought through. We have sconces, we have pendants. Every spot here has an electric charger."

The attention to detail and privacy has not been lost on the building's high-profile residents, who have reportedly included Justin Timberlake and Meg Ryan. "They love it," says Rodriguez. "It's so convenient. You can drive through, be so close to your elevator, get to your unit. It's a level of luxury to have the parking." —Lauren Fitzpatrick

## Luxurious Homes for Luxurious Cars

Private parking spots are no longer necessarily just spaces to put your cars; some now feature almost enough designer amenities to make them viable venues for formal dinner parties. Think wrought-iron entry gates, vaulted ceilings, chandeliers, and period tiles. Summon your car using an app-based valet service, or travel from the garage lobby to your apartment in a private elevator.

In Miami's 60-story Porsche Design Tower, you can even step straight out of your vehicle into your apartment, because each residence has its own drive-in glass elevator. And, at Seattle's 41-story

Spire building, which is under construction, you'll be able to let robots do the work. It will have the city's first fully automated garage—you'll pull into an auto port, get out of your car, and watch as it disappears underground.

Robot technology, a demand for residential space, and shrinking municipally mandated parking requirements are driving the transformation of private parking in major cities. San Francisco recently removed the minimum parking requirement for new buildings, and parts of Manhattan implemented a cap on parking spaces in new developments.

## Giving Back

### Hope for the Warriors

Hope for the Warriors provides much-needed assistance to wounded American soldiers, veterans, and their families. The organization—created to serve those who were hurt while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan—provides programs that focus on transition, health and rehabilitation, and family support.

Transition programs include Drive for Hope, which helps wounded service members regain the ability to drive through training in adaptive vehicles; and Warrior's Compass, a job-placement service that helps to connect service members with a network

of over 1,500 companies that aim to hire veterans. The charity's wellness services fill gaps in veterans' mental-health care by providing treatment, education, and emotional support.

Service members returning from combat often rely heavily on their core support systems. Hope for the Warriors dedicates much of its efforts to serving the entire family by placing special attention on the needs of children of veterans and by providing grants and scholarship opportunities to spouses and caregivers.

—Jennifer Leach English

*BJT* readers—who represent one of the highest-net-worth magazine audiences anywhere—clearly have the means to contribute to a better world. To help you do that, we spotlight deserving organizations in every issue. All of them have received a four-star overall rating from Charity Navigator ([charitynavigator.org](http://charitynavigator.org)), which evaluates philanthropic institutions based on their finances, accountability, and transparency.



# Weather reports that scream

Are forecasters trying to make you feel anxious? Yup.

by Joe Sharkey

The weather report on Tucson, Arizona’s KVOA-TV Channel 4 features a logo that conveys alarm: “4Warn,” it says. I noticed that one morning online last December over this forecast: “Another BEAUTIFUL afternoon! Tons of sunshine with highs in the mid 70s.”

The forecast was no surprise in a city that averages 286 sunny days a year, and it made me wonder about that incongruous “4Warn” logo. I’ve since learned that it accompanies weather reports on many TV stations around the country that happen to occupy a Channel 4.

Instilling anxiety via the daily weather forecast—by far the most popular TV news segment nationwide—has become a key marketing tool on many stations. It’s a result of the broadcasters’ desperate attempt to “grab attention” of viewers, says Jamie Moker, a researcher on weather modeling at the University of Arizona.

Competition for that attention is fierce. Private weather-forecasting companies, which now constitute a \$7 billion industry, are busily monetizing free data from the National Weather Service and academia while generating custom analytics for business and private consumption on social-media and other digital platforms. Clamoring for attention, some TV outlets, including cable powerhouses like the Weather Channel, tend to speak “in all-caps even when the weather is calm,” noted an article in *GQ* last year.

There is some pushback. Joe Crain, a veteran weatherman on WICS-TV in Springfield, Illinois, created a storm last June when he lamented overuse by the station of its “Code Red” alerts to dramatize weather events, including routine ones. On air, he explained to viewers, “We want you to know it’s not us. This is a corporate initiative, this ‘Code Red’ alert.”

Oops. “Corporate”—in this case the Sinclair Broadcast Group, which operates TV stations in more than 100 markets—promptly fired Crain. Many consumers protested. “Overuse of Code Red,” one wrote in the local paper, is akin to “the boy who cried wolf. It makes the viewers skeptical of anything the weather people say.”

There’s also some pushback from the travel industry. “Overhyped Weather Forecasts Are Bad for Skiing,” read the headline in the *Outside Online* magazine last February. The article reported that ski resorts in the Northeast U.S. have mobilized to protest TV weather reports that treat “normal winter weather like a crisis,” such as by reporting the wind chill rather than the actual temperature.

That’s on the ground. In the air, of course, there has never been tolerance for weather hype. There’s robust innovation, including new private-industry systems such as so-called 3D weather radar, and the detailed weather information component in the FAA’s NextGen satellite-based ADS-B (Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast) system, which has been operating for many years.

General aviation is attuned. A 2017 report by the National Business Aviation Association said that “weather is a contributing factor in 35 percent of general aviation accidents, 75 percent of which involve fatalities.” The NBAA created a weather subcommittee “to interact with the broader aviation weather community to discuss and collaborate with the FAA and National Weather Service” on new forecasting capabilities.

Meanwhile, the TV weather reporters plow on. “In this 24-hour news cycle, they have to talk about something to keep people’s attention. So they sometimes can hype the weather on TV—though that’s definitely linked to real concern about climate change and the significantly different weather we seem to be getting,” says Bruce Hedlund, whose cockpit time spans a career in the U.S. Air Force, 20 years with American Airlines, and seven years in general aviation with his own airplane, a Cirrus SR22.

He remembers when pilots used to get preflight weather data off of Teletype printouts Scotch-taped to the walls at airport flight service stations. Today’s real-time cockpit weather technology is extraordinary, he says, adding that “there is a world of difference between the emotion-free weather reports and forecasts received during flight planning or in the cockpit and those we in the general public see on TV news.

“At the end of the day, we’re all essentially getting the product from the same source,” Hedlund says. “In the cockpit, you just get it straight, without the song and dance.”

**BJT**



**Joe Sharkey**

(jsharkey@bjtonline.com), the author of six books and a longtime **BJT** contributor, wrote a weekly business travel column for the *New York Times* for 16 years.



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# Will business jets be banned?

The industry is a growing target for environmental activists and needs to reduce and ultimately eliminate fossil-fuel emissions.

*by Jeff Wieand*

**L**ike all carbon-based emissions, aircraft fossil-fuel emissions are unquestionably bad for the environment. Burning fossil fuels emits carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that traps heat in the atmosphere; and as such emissions increase, the world gets hotter. A 1999 report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (jointly established by the World Meteorological Organization and the U.N. Environment Program) identified a host of aircraft emissions in addition to carbon dioxide, including water vapor, nitric oxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur oxides, and something called “soot.” According to the report, release of some of these chemicals at the altitudes flown by aircraft is more detrimental to the atmosphere than equivalent emissions on the ground.

One way to reduce emissions from jets is to make their engines more efficient so they burn less fuel. Ironically, says the Sierra Club, this has proved counterproductive for the environment. The organization notes that the less fuel the engines burn, the cheaper it is to operate aircraft, and as the cost of air travel goes down, more





people buy airline tickets, leading to more flights and rising emissions. According to the Sierra Club, aviation emissions were 70 percent higher last year than in 2005 and could triple by 2050.

Governments are counteracting cheaper airfares through taxation. To combat climate change, European countries like England and Sweden (and starting this year, France) are charging taxes on flights or air passengers to raise funds to support “eco-friendly” transport. Britain’s tax applies to passengers on flights by aircraft with an authorized takeoff weight of more than 6.28 tons (about 12,500 pounds; i.e., “large aircraft” for FAA purposes) or with more than 20 seats. The *Washington Post* reports that, to stop airlines from dodging such taxes by switching the departure jurisdictions, Holland is lobbying the European Union to impose such a tax on flights originating anywhere in the EU. Several bills have also been introduced in the U.S. Congress in an attempt to put a price tag on carbon emissions.

Only a small fraction of all jet flights involve business jets, and emissions by business jets are no worse for the environment than airliners. However, the vast majority of business jets have no more than 19 passenger seats, all of which are rarely full, so they carry fewer people and are perceived as contributing more to global warming and other environmental ills on a per-passenger basis.

As a result, business jets are a growing target for environmental activists. The *Guardian* recently reported that the British Labour Party is exploring the possibility of banning “private jets” (whatever that means) from U.K. airports beginning in 2025. Andy McDonald, the Labour Party’s so-called shadow transport secretary, was quoted as tweeting that “the multimillionaires & billionaires who travel by private jet are doing profound damage to the climate, and it’s the rest of us who’ll suffer the consequences. A phase-out date for the use of fossil fuel private jets is a sensible proposal.” Why McDonald thinks that the ultrarich won’t share in the consequences of climate change is unclear.

The alternative to trying to ban “private jets” would be to tax or ban travel by aircraft generally. In truth, only a minority of Earth’s inhabitants enjoy such travel: fewer than 18 percent of people on the planet have flown in an aircraft, according to a 2017 article by John Mandyck, the chief sustainability officer at United Technologies. A bill recently filed in the U.S. Congress to ban non-essential helicopter traffic over New York City was rationalized in part by “negative environmental

## Business jets will increasingly be a prime target for environmentalists.

impacts” and the relatively small number of people riding in the helicopters. The ban wasn’t limited to “private” aircraft but applied to all helicopters except those for flights by the police, medevac crews, and similar operators.

Obviously, imposing an across-the-board ban for all aircraft in the U.S. would be difficult. Compared with Sweden or Britain, the U.S. is a big place. Families and businesses are spread out all over the country, and the prospect of taking a train from New York to the West Coast to visit a factory or a grandchild is daunting. Even if you are open to eco-friendly travel alternatives, the U.S. doesn’t have the rail network (let alone a high-speed rail network) that’s available in, say, France or Japan.

While an outright ban in the U.S. seems far-fetched, there is a movement afoot in Europe called “flight shame” that’s designed to make people feel guilty about flying in airplanes. The effort seems to be working in Sweden, where rail travel has apparently surged. To publicize the movement and avoid flying on the airlines, Sweden’s 16-year-old Greta Thunberg has been sailing back and forth across the Atlantic to attend climate-action conferences. However, for flight shame to make a real difference in emissions, it will have to be widely accepted enough to reduce actual flights. At present, it probably doesn’t accomplish much except to produce some empty airline seats.

But resistance to flying is growing. The Sierra Club has called flying “an environmental sin.” France is considering a ban on short-haul flights between airports that are linked by rail, and KLM has launched a campaign called “Fly Responsibly” that asks people to fly less. When the airlines are against flying, you know there’s a problem. The International Air Transport Association’s deadline for carbon-neutral growth is already here, and the

UN’s carbon-offset initiative for international aviation (CORSIA), currently in a voluntary phase, is scheduled to become mandatory in 2027, though business aviation will be largely unaffected.

The issue for business jets is enormous. Already widely perceived as indulgences for rich people and costly extravagances for top executives that corporate shareholders shouldn’t have to pay for, business jets will increasingly be a prime target for environmentalists. The writing is on the wall: without decisive action, business aviation may be the first real casualty of the anti-flying movement.

To survive, the industry must take the lead in distancing itself from carbon emissions. Short of bans or taxes, there are basically three alternatives. First, carbon-offset programs allow you to offset your aircraft emissions by paying to reduce or compensate for emissions elsewhere (e.g., by planting CO<sub>2</sub>-eating trees, erecting wind turbines, or providing eco-friendly cooking stoves in the Third World). However, selecting a program you are happy with can be challenging, and a list of CORSIA-approved programs is not yet available.

Carbon-offsets are better than nothing, but you are still burning the carbon. Finding new ways to lower aviation fuel burn will reduce carbon emissions. Ceramic-based paint coating, for example, reduces drag and lowers fuel burn. Lowering fuel burn could lead to lower airline fares and more flights but should be a net gain for business aviation, where the lower cost is not as material.

The best solution, however, may be to switch to lower-carbon, and eventually carbon-free, fuels as soon as possible. Sustainable aviation jet fuel—which is made from blended biomass, oils, waste, etc.—isn’t carbon-free but can result in dramatically lower carbon emissions. Too bad there’s no list of the airports (such as LAX) that offer it. A gradually increasing tax on aviation carbon emissions may provide the funds and market incentive to develop and move us to lower-carbon and carbon-free fuels. **EJT**



### Jeff Wieand

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ADOBE STOCK

# How to hire a travel guide

by Helen Anne Travis

**W**hen it comes to travel planning, you can turn to a seemingly endless number of tools. Apps can translate menus, crowdsourcing sites can allow you to reserve everything from chalets to yachts, and booking sites can bring a city's top chefs to your hotel suite's kitchen. You can go online to customize every detail of a trip to your liking.

But while technology can help you plan a trip, much as a travel agent would, there are no apps or services that help you interpret the culture, language, and customs of a destination in real-time. That's one reason some travelers hire guides to help them experience a deeper level of meaning and connection during their trip.

"If you wanted to get the best results at the gym, you'd hire a personal trainer," says Marisa Lassman, founder of Another Africa, a London-based company specializing in high-end travel experiences. "The same principle applies to most things in life, including travel."

**F**or some, the phrase "travel guide" conjures up images of tour buses, crowds, and one-sided conversations in which you're bombarded with facts, figures, and boring anecdotes. This can be the case, but there are also plenty of guides offering bespoke experiential tours—ranging in length from a few hours to a few weeks—tailored to your interests and goals. Good guides can get you behind the scenes at a destination, offer-

## Prices and Tipping

The price of tour guides varies widely, says Lassman. "It depends how exclusive the experience is and the elements involved. Some guides might charge \$500 to \$600 per day, while others might charge thousands, especially if they're leading experts in their fields. If we're working with helicopters or in remote, unusual places, this could drive the price up significantly."

Tipping also varies, depending on the destination and cultural norms. For safaris, Lassman usually suggests that each person in your group tip each guide \$20 per day.



ing access and insight that you can't find in a guidebook or arrange through even the most technologically advanced booking tools.

"Private guides may be able to showcase areas of a destination not generally open to the public," says McLean Robbins, founder of Lily Pond Luxury, a travel agency. She recently helped clients schedule a private boat tour of Amsterdam, Holland, on the same ship that hosted former President Barack Obama during a recent visit. Another client was able to visit a Tuscan winery not open to the general public. Robbins also arranged for clients to be the first visitors of the day to the Tower of London.

"Private guides may be able to showcase areas of a destination not generally open to the public."

"There is no one-size-fits-all solution," says Lassman. "We've created night-sky safaris with renowned astronomers, offered clients Swahili language classes aboard a sailboat, and paired people who want to hike Mount Kilimanjaro with one of the best mountain guides you could ever hope to meet. Once we know a client's interests and passions, the sky's the limit."

If you're visiting a country where the cultural norms differ from those in your own country, guides can also help you get your bearings by offering translation services, cultural insight, and etiquette tips. They can work to ensure safe passage in destinations with civil unrest and, in an emergency, connect you with the services you need.

When one of Lassman's clients lost a passport, the guide brought him to a consulate, explained the situation to officials in the local language, and provided emotional support until a replacement passport arrived.

Some guides are also medically trained as first responders. Others offer security services or act as bodyguards, says Jimmy Carroll, cofounder of Pelorus, which organizes travel and yacht expeditions.

In most cases, guides will be flexible regarding your requests, even adjusting a tour in real time, if needed. "For a travel adviser with the right connections, no ask is too big or too small," says Robbins. "As long as your requests are reasonable, safe, and legal, they will likely be considered."

**I**f you're traveling to an all-inclusive resort and want nothing more than to relax by the pool with a drink in hand, then hiring a guide likely won't add any value to your trip.

But if you want to form a connection with a culture, have a particular experience or adventure, or learn about a specific aspect of a destination's history—without having to invest a lot of time and effort—then hiring a person, team, or agency with local expertise, insight, and connections can be a smart move.

As long as you find the right guide, of course.

Start with your personal network, recommends Laura Rosales, marketing manager of Say Hueque, a travel agency in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Ask friends and family who have traveled to the destination you want to visit or booked a similar experience whether they can recommend a guide or guide agency.

A Facebook post could help you find a well-reviewed guide. Your college alumni association may be able to connect you with a school travel club. Some credit-card companies offer travel concierge services.

You can also search the forums of sites like [fodors.com](http://fodors.com) and [ricksteves.com](http://ricksteves.com) to find recommended guides and companies. If you don't see your destination or desired experience mentioned, you can post a query asking for suggestions.

While many guides and agencies offer online booking, the experts we spoke with advise getting on the phone to talk about your needs before breaking out the credit card. During the call, be open and honest about your expectations, interests, and physical capabilities, and the type of traveler you are. Be specific about sites you want to see and experiences you want to have. Talking about past travels—what you did and didn't love—can also be helpful.

Most good guides will walk you through the conversation. "If a travel adviser is not taking the time to get to know you and your preferences, then move on," says Heather Keller, of Perfect Landing Travel. "Luxury travel is an investment, and an adviser should be willing to get to know

## How to Read Online Reviews

You'll find many guides and agencies listed on review sites like [TripAdvisor.com](http://TripAdvisor.com). But going through the recommendations and critiques of other travelers can feel overwhelming. Marta Laurent, founder of the [ForeverBarcelona](http://ForeverBarcelona.com) tour company, recommends narrowing the field to guides or agencies that have mostly five-star reviews.

If you see any reviews for three stars or less, says Laurent, look at what the client was unhappy about and whether the company offered a good response. If it didn't reply, that might also be a red flag. To find out, search the reviews to see whether anyone else mentioned the same issue. For example, maybe a three-star review said the food was poor. Did others comment similarly or did many recent reviewers rave about the meals? "Some people just have different tastes," Laurent says.

As you read the reviews, note which buzzwords travelers are using—for example, "knowledgeable," "fun," "kid-friendly," "flexible," "patient"—and make sure those adjectives resonate with you.

"If you're looking for a laid-back tour where you can take a lot of photos and relax, but everyone describes the tour as fast-paced, it may not be the best fit for you," Laurent says.

you before putting together an itinerary."

During the call, be sure to ask about the guide company's training and certifications, its insurance coverage, and how it deals with emergencies. This is also the time to learn exactly what's included in the price. Will the company help you chase after lost luggage or paperwork? What's the backup plan if the weather's not up to snuff?

Getting on the phone with a guide also allows you to suss out his or her personality. If you're planning a multi-day itinerary, you'll be spending a lot of time with this person. "You want to make sure you like their personality and that the tour will be a fun experience," says Newsha Tarifard, founder of [TravelWell Adventures](http://TravelWellAdventures.com).

If it seems to be a good match and you like what you hear, ask for references, ideally from repeat clients, before making a down payment. "There's no better benchmark than recommendations from other similarly discerning travelers with high expectations," says Lassman. **EJTB**

### Helen Anne Travis

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# Maintaining privacy in the age of transparency

Efforts to track business aircraft flights are increasing just as new technology is making such surveillance easier. But new protections for passengers may be on the way.

by James Wynbrandt

**H**ow private is your private jet? Bloomberg, Reuters, and other financial media reported recently that research firms were tracking aircraft owned by public companies and advising clients about potential deals based on the airplanes' movements. Michael Kors's acquisition of Versace, a Berkshire Hathaway investment in Occidental Petroleum, and Conagra's \$10.9 billion purchase of Pinnacle Foods were all tipped by corporate jet travel activity, according to Bloomberg.

Financial sleuthing aside, the security risks that travelers on business aircraft may face due to their wealth, power, or celebrity create concerns about privacy.

The good news is that if you charter, have a jet card, and/or own a fractional share in an aircraft, you're largely safe from this type of prying. But if you own or operate a business aircraft, next-generation tracking technology now required onboard makes this kind of surveillance easier than ever at the moment, though business aviation interests and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration are rushing to fashion protections.

Traditionally, business analysts' research on flight activity has been gathered the old-fashioned way: using publicly available FAA air traffic data to see which airplanes are going where; parsing and investigating registration

databases to determine owners' identities (which are often purposely hidden behind shell companies holding title to aircraft); and boots-on-the-ground intelligence from various sources.

**T**he FAA instituted the Block Aircraft Registry Request (BARR) program in 2000 to provide privacy on request, allowing operators to bar the agency from disseminating the identity of their aircraft in data feeds from air traffic radar. But a GPS-based technology, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) Out—which virtually all business and commercial aircraft were required to have installed by January 1 of this year—provides public access to information about private aircraft identities while offering no blocking options, rendering BARR protection moot.

A critical component of the NextGen air navigation system, ADS-B broadcasts the movement and precise location of each aircraft. This will allow packing more airplanes into the same airspace, and the eventual scrapping of today's more expensive but less precise radar tracking system. But the ADS-B system's database, maintained by the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO's) Civil Aviation Registry (CAR), links every

ILLUSTRATION: JOHN LEWIS





OJETS

# ENSURING SUCCESSFUL CHARTERS

## IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

Businesspeople throughout Asia-Pacific are awakening to the benefits of air charter—not simply for meeting travel needs but to maximize productivity, create opportunities, and enjoy time savings and convenience that no airline experience can offer.



“Customers first come to charter when commercial flights can’t meet their schedules,” said Keith Tsang of Singapore-based OJets, which provides air charter service worldwide. “Then they see they can carry eight or nine passengers comfortably, have meetings onboard with top executives, and make business deals in one day that would take three to do flying commercially—and they come back for more.”

Travelers eager to make the most of precious leisure time are also turning to charter. “Fiji, the Maldives, ski resorts—destinations change depending on the season,” said Tsang, OJets’ vice president of sales for Asia-Pacific.

The air charter concept is simple: instead of flying according to airlines’ routes and schedules, customers hire a private aircraft to take them exactly where and when they want to go. The destinations are often hours from the nearest airport served by an airline, and private aviation’s flexibility allows travelers to conduct multiple meetings in far-flung cities in a single day if needed.

### REGIONAL CHARTER CHALLENGES

But charter in Asia-Pacific is “not mature,” said Tsang, and the more customers know about regional challenges, and about the differences among charter companies, the more they can take advantage of its benefits.

Only about 300 business jets for charter are based in Asia-Pacific, according to Asian Sky Group, and the majority are available only when their owners aren’t using them, which can limit aircraft choice. Consequently, jets often fly long distances to pick up charter customers, and these so-called repositioning flights can add significantly to the cost of a charter trip. Additionally, on-the-ground support for private aircraft—dedicated terminals with customs facilities, fueling and catering services, even landing and parking slots—are scarce, while myriad



“Customers should look for providers who understand the unique dynamics of the Asia-Pacific market.”

Keith Tsang

OJets’ vice president of sales for Asia-Pacific

national jurisdictions, overflight rules, and other regulations make Asia-Pacific airspace among the world’s most complex. These all create challenges to delivering consistent, high-quality charter service.

“You need a lot of experience to operate in this region,” summed up Tsang. “Customers should look for providers who understand the unique dynamics of the Asia-Pacific market.”

### CHOICES IN PROVIDERS AND AIRCRAFT

One important distinction to recognize among charter providers: most are brokerages that simply arrange trips on behalf of clients with charter operators—the companies that manage and control the aircraft. When booking a flight, brokers must wait for operators to OK aircraft availability and trip details before they can complete the booking, which can create uncertainties and delays.

Meanwhile, most charter operators manage but don’t own the aircraft they employ and must get approval for any charter flight from the airplane’s owner before confirming a trip, which can also slow the booking process.

In contrast, OJets owns all the airplanes in its fleet, which is operated by Elit’Avia Malta Limited. This allows immediate bookings and confirmation—and a consistent, high-quality travel experience.

Aircraft used for charter can vary widely in quality. “The jet’s age, interior appointments, and entertainment and connectivity systems are all important parts of a charter flight,” Tsang noted. Does the aircraft provided have enough room to fit your group comfortably? Does it have enough range to reach the destination nonstop? What about a private stateroom with bed for transpacific flights? Is the cabin in like-new condition, or does it need refurbishment?



OJets' fleet consists of late-model, long-range Bombardier Global 5000 and 6000 and Challenger 650 jets. These aircraft, offering a selection of cabin configurations and accommodating up to 14 passengers, can take travelers anywhere in the region and connect major cities in Asia-Pacific with Europe, the U.S., or Africa nonstop. Moreover, OJets operates a "floating" fleet—meaning the jets have no home base they must travel from or return to—which reduces repositioning fees.

The onboard charter experience—the service by cabin attendants and flight crews, quality of catering, amenities, and attentiveness to customers' requests and needs—can vary as much as the aircraft. That's why charter customers should consider one additional regional distinction: Asia-Pacific's hospitality and service culture, which forms the core of OJets' operating philosophy. These principles are symbolized by the *ensō*, or "O"—Asian expression of elegance, strength, and infinite possibility—on the tail fin of its jets. The "enso" is also an expression of OJets'

dedication to providing the pinnacle of service excellence and an unparalleled luxury experience.

A dedication to service underpins the rigorous standards set for OJets' pilots and the hospitality training its multilingual cabin attendants receive.

Recognizing the importance of regional nuances within Asia-Pacific, OJets has built a team that speaks more than a score of languages among them, ensuring charter customers have a cabin attendant who really understands them and their preferences.

### CONSIDERING CHARTER COSTS

If you travel only occasionally, on-demand charter allows you to book your flights one at a time, with no further commitment. Alternatively, frequent travelers can take advantage of block-hour or jet card-type programs, which guarantee access to an aircraft as needed for a set number of prepaid flight hours. OJets provides both on-demand and block-hour programs,

tailored to fit customers' needs, schedules, and preferred routes for travel worldwide.

Cost is a key consideration for any flight. A charter company, after fielding a request for an ad hoc charter trip, will provide an estimated price quote before confirming the booking. The cost is based primarily on the aircraft's hourly rental rate multiplied by the flight time. But charter isn't a product to shop primarily by price. The safety systems, training, maintenance, capital investments, and other expenses of providing high-quality charter service add up and are typically well worth the money for the security and reliability top companies deliver.

In addition to the fee for the aircraft, many other charter expenses may be incurred, depending on the provider, such as for premium catering or fuel surcharges. "Those items can significantly inflate costs above the initial quote," said Tsang, so customers should discuss potential additional fees, cancellation policies, and other payment issues before confirming the flight.

OJets uses a simple method to ensure that customers aren't surprised by the final bill: its charter quotes provide an all-inclusive price (though individual costs are fully listed); and should the customer book the trip, that's the final price charged. On-board Wi-Fi (a rarity in Asia-Pacific) and premium catering are standard.

### ASIA-PACIFIC'S STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

With more business and leisure travelers realizing the advantages that private air travel offers, industry professionals expect strong growth in charter demand. Meanwhile, with its modern fleet, long experience, and dedication to service, OJets and its *ensō* are becoming the standard of excellence for many sophisticated travelers in the region.

"We're always ready to serve our clients," said Tsang. "We have a lot of trusted partners and networks, and it all comes from expertise gained through experience."





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aircraft's unique ADS-B signal to its registration number.

In the U.S., third-party trackers like FlightAware get the ADS-B data directly from the FAA, and it's also easily received by off-the-shelf technology, whether for use by high-tech airplane spotters or by entities disseminating the information in the name of the public's right to know, such as the ADS-B Exchange co-op, which maintains a global antenna network.

But privacy proponents argue there is no public right to know and that rules should be the same in the public airspace as on public roads, where one needn't worry that a motorist can Google a license-plate number and find out who owns a car, that person's address, and other currently non-public information.

As noted, if you use air charter, the aircraft registration can't tie you to a particular flight, even if the airplane and ownership are identified. Jet card holders are likewise anonymous occupants as far as current tracking technologies are concerned. Fractional owners could actually throw a greenhorn spotter off track: once a fractional aircraft's registration is identified, a sleuth could learn the multiple owners' identities—or at least that of the entities through which these assets are typically possessed. But identifying passengers on a flight would be nearly impossible, because fractional owners rarely fly on the specific aircraft to which their share is linked.

Two more comforting thoughts: the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 directs the agency to safeguard privacy protections for private aircraft amid technology upgrades; and two blocking solutions are on the cusp of introduction: the Limiting Aircraft Data Displayed (LADD) and Privacy ICAO Address (PIA) programs.

As a first step under both, the FAA is establishing new terms-of-service agreements with tracking services to limit the data they can share and creating opt-out paths for owners and operators. As we went to press, the service agreements were expected to be in place by the beginning of this year. (Both programs allow access to unfiltered data for vetted organizations with a need to know, such as law-enforcement agencies.)

The LADD program, which will replace BARR, also requires tracking services to demonstrate their ability to block real-time and historical data of shielded aircraft from public display. In addition, LADD beefs up FAA enforcement penalties against violators, including suspension or termination of access to FAA data. Opt-out requests will be submitted via a dedicated web page, mail, or email. And LADD will allow you to request "FAA Source Blocking," which prohibits your data's dissemination beyond the FAA; or "Subscriber Blocking," limiting its availability to select vendors. Also under review is an option to let owners and operators designate the specific vendors to share data with—for example, a contracted maintenance or flight-tracking service—but that functionality won't be available at introduction.

Once LADD is in place, the FAA will automatically transition current BARR registrants to the program.

But LADD blocks only data routed through the FAA; ADS-B transmissions with all identifying data can be received directly from aircraft. To address that vulnerability, PIA will let operators use alternate, temporary ICAO aircraft addresses untied to any airframe in the CAR, making the aircraft's registration unknowable. Moreover, once FAA Source Blocking is in place, the FAA won't

provide tracking data of any PIA aircraft to aircraft-tracking vendors (including any you may have hired to track your flights).

In Phase 1 of PIA, the FAA established a web portal for the filing of blocking requests, which is not exactly a user-friendly process. After filing a request with the necessary documentation, you should get a PIA, or temporary ICAO address, via email within 10 days. You then have 30 days to program the ADS-B transponder with the assigned PIA, fly in ADS-B coverage airspace, and complete the verification process on the website. If you do so successfully, the FAA will proclaim the verification complete and send final confirmation via email. The process will need to be repeated every few weeks.


In Phase 2, expected to commence in mid-2020, third-party service providers will assume administration of PIA.

For maximum protection, you should participate in both LADD and PIA once these programs are in place. In the meantime, if you need to maintain absolute privacy for business or security reasons, you may have to leave your own airplane on the ground (or send it on some diversionary missions) and use charter, a jet card, or a fractional share. **BJT**

For more on this subject, see "Flying Under the Radar," by Jeff Wieand, available at [BJTonline.com](http://BJTonline.com).—Ed.



**James Wynbrandt**  
([jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com](mailto:jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com)), a multi-engine instrument-rated pilot and regular **BJT** contributor, has written for the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, and *Barron's*.



The legendary golfer, businessman, and private aviation fan is not quite the person you've read about in magazines or seen on TV.

# Greg Norman

*by Jennifer Leach English*

Greg Norman's public persona conjures up a swashbuckling extrovert. But when I meet the golf great turned enormously successful CEO at his Palm Beach, Florida headquarters, he turns out to be soft-spoken and thoughtful—self-confident but certainly not flamboyant.

The dichotomy doesn't come as a complete surprise, because I've read Norman's 2006 autobiography, *The Way of the Shark: Lessons on Golf, Business, and Life*. The book reveals a self-described introvert who enjoys spending time alone contemplating his next triumph. It's simply written, but the messages are profound, and Norman does not shy away from detailing some of the early career disappointments, failures, and betrayals that shaped the entrepreneur he is today.

Something of a child prodigy, the Australia-born Norman took to golf quickly and without formal training and went on to spend 331 weeks as No. 1 in the Official World Golf Rankings and win 20 PGA Tour tournaments and two majors. He was known for doing things his own way on and off the course. But despite often making things look easy, Norman takes great pride in his work ethic, telling me he always “puts in the time to become the best.”

Today he is a dedicated family man who adores his children and grandchildren. He continues to lead the multinational Greg Norman Company, whose portfolio includes businesses focused on apparel, interior design, real estate, private equity, wine, and golf course design.





PHOTOS: COURTESY OF GREG NORMAN. EXCEPT WHERE OTHERWISE INDICATED.



**Your interest in aviation started early.**

I lived next to a Royal Australian Air Force base where F-111s were taking off. I was probably 13 or 14, and I was infatuated by them. In high school, I was doing the preliminary training to join the air force and become a pilot. I was about to join the air force and decided not to for some reason—even though I didn't even know I was going to become a professional golfer.

**How did you start playing golf?**

I watched my mother play. She was five-foot-four and 100 pounds wringing wet. But she could play, and I was so impressed—not that a woman could play, but that a small-statured person like her could play that well. And I thought, if my mom can play, I can play.

Nobody taught me how to put a club in my hand; I just picked it up. My fingers are kind of funky, because my little finger is short. An overlapping grip, which is what most players play with, felt terrible to me. So I came up with my own grip. I put the time in and got better and better. All of a sudden, I'm shooting in the low 70s; then I am in the 60s, then the low 60s. Before you know it, I'm turning pro. It's crazy—from the time I first picked up a golf club to the time I won my first tournament was only five years.



GREAT WHITE SHARK ENTERPRISES

**You've used business aviation all through your career in golf, as well as for business, I understand.**

I had a relationship with Bell Helicopter for a long time. I also bought a Jetstar around 1988. I paid a million dollars for it. I flew it around the world thinking I was the king of the hill. And then I went into a GIII and I got a relationship with Gulfstream, very similar to the one with Bell Helicopter. I would acquire the aircraft, but they would lease back time at a retail rate. I would [arrive at a tournament] on a Tuesday and wouldn't leave until Sunday, so my plane would sit idle in the Middle East or Asia or Japan for five or six days, and Gulfstream would use it as a demonstrator.



CVI/CVR



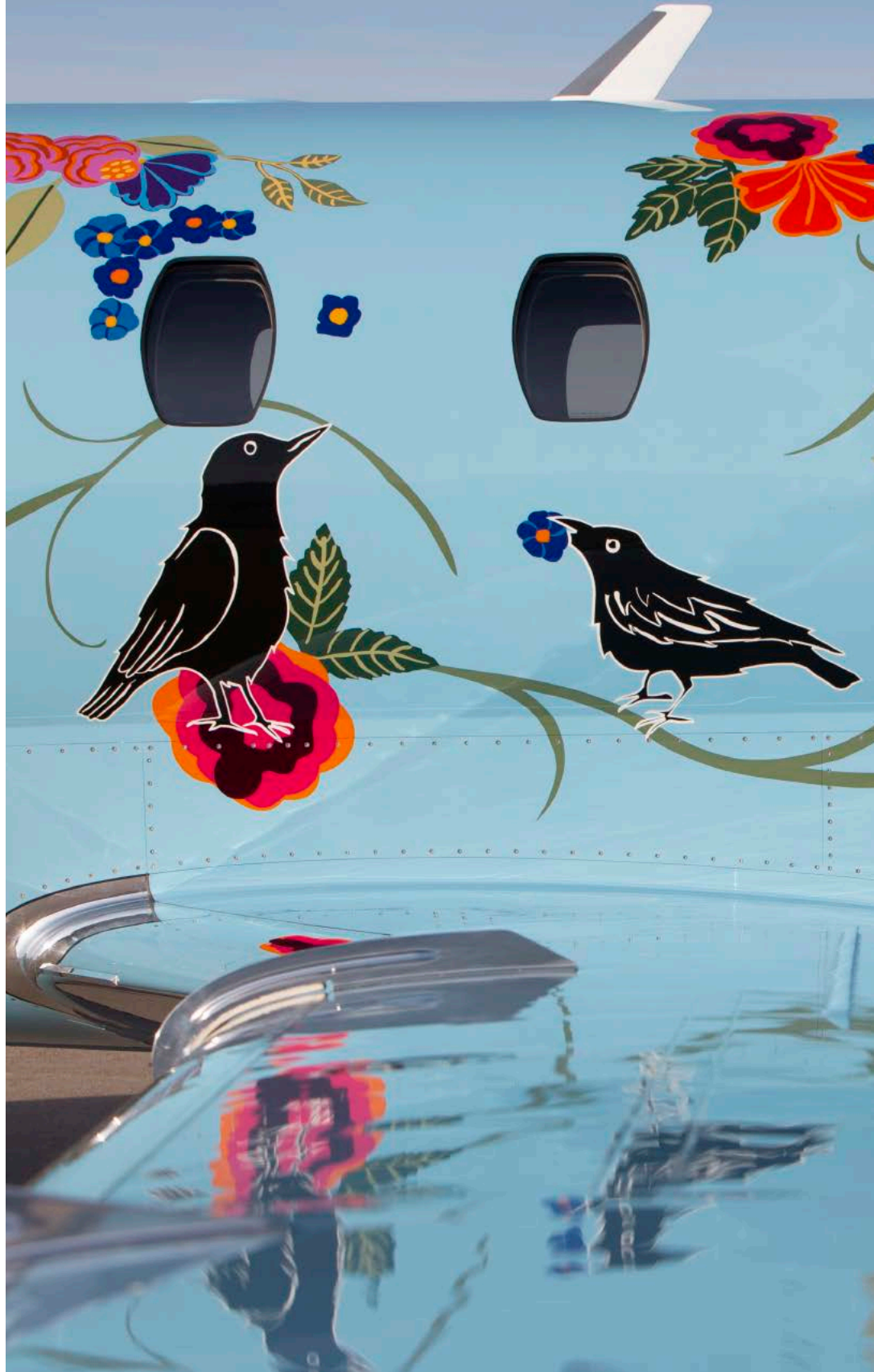


# ROSES AND RAVENS IN FLIGHT

Duncan Aviation recently commissioned a design for the company-owned Citation 560XLS from world-renowned artist Nancy Friedemann Sánchez, a Colombian-American contemporary artist. The design was brought to life by the aircraft artisans of Duncan Aviation.

WATCH THE TIMELAPSE:

[www.DuncanAviation.aero/ravens](http://www.DuncanAviation.aero/ravens)



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**You've had a couple of hard landings and close calls.**

**Has that ever spooked you?**

No. It's part of flying—or of driving a car or swimming in the ocean—it's part of life. If your number comes up, your number comes up.

**In your book, you talk about how you focus on one goal at a time. Can you elaborate?**

I might have 13 things [going on], but I focus on one and get it done. It's no different if I go to the gym, if I'm scuba diving, if I am sitting with the President of the United States. You've got to focus on that moment in time, move on, and then it's done.

**You also talk in your book about your relationship with your father.**

My dad taught me a lot of the values of life: never tell a lie and be true to yourself and stuff like that. He was tough because his dad was really tough on him. I didn't want to be that way. I wanted to break the chain, because you don't want to keep handing that generational [nonsense] down. So I made a decision when I was 14 or 15 to seize life for myself.

**Are you a consciously different kind of father?**

Totally different and absolutely it was a conscious decision. I'm very honest with my kids. I started talking to them at a very young age about certain values and other things. Kids are way smarter than what we give them credit for. Don't underestimate the intelligence of your child because the more you ignore it, the more they are going to rebel and go away from you. The more you embrace [kids' intelligence], the more they are going to hang around.

**Do you think it's challenging for your children to try to fill your shoes?**

Well, my two kids are very different. My daughter, Morgan, is intrinsically involved in my wine business. She took the helm on that because

she was a chef and she loved to pair foods and wine. She's very passionate about the brand and she's done a fantastic job. Greg's passion was water sports. He was a kite boarder and a surfer. I was [also] a very good surfer growing up. Surfing in my day was a non-moneymaking deal, but today it's pretty good. I took him very early on to all my favorite surfing spots in Australia, just dad and son. Then he got into kite boarding and I took him to Hawaii to learn how to kite board and he became a professional kite boarder. So just like Morgan following her passion, he followed his.

**What is your relationship to fame?**

I've always been a reluctant celebrity. I had to accept that if I became better and better at golf I would be in front of the public more. Am I antisocial? No. But do I like my quiet time, walking on the beach. For a long time, I was in the public eye, playing golf in front of 20,000 or 30,000 people four days a week and I was under a microscope. So you look for tranquility—a place to go to get away.

**I would imagine the gossip part of it is tough.**

I don't mind people having an opinion, but don't be vicious and totally lie. Or if you want to write a story, call up and ask for the facts and hear both sides of it. Don't just go off one version you've heard in the bar or somebody else telling you! That's what I hate about media and journalism. Trump [coined the term] "fake news," but I've seen so much fake news about myself for 40 years.

**Would you have been as successful as you have been in business if you'd never picked up a golf club?**

Absolutely not. I would have been an air force pilot, then maybe a private pilot, and then probably a commercial pilot. Sitting out there on a 747 or a 777 or 787—and bored! [Laughs.]

What probably helped me with my business was seeing how other people managed me. I hated it, and I thought [a lot of them] were parasites. Because you are treated like a pass-through entity, and they are



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## FASTFACTS

- ▶ **NAME:** Greg Norman
- ▶ **BORN:** Feb. 10, 1955 (age 65) in Mount Asa, Australia
- ▶ **CAREER:** Professional golfer who spent 331 weeks as No. 1 in the Official World Golf Rankings and has won 20 PGA Tour tournaments and two Open championships (1986, 1993). Founder and CEO of the Greg Norman Company, a diversified global firm focused on golf course design, real estate, wine, clothing, investments, and other businesses.
- ▶ **TRANSPORTATION:** Has owned many aircraft but currently charters a Gulfstream GV and a Cessna Citation X.
- ▶ **PHILANTHROPY:** CureSearch for Children's Cancer, Australian Bushfire Relief Fund, various veterans' initiatives
- ▶ **PERSONAL:** Married since 2010 to interior designer Kirstin Eulenhof. Two children from an earlier marriage, two stepchildren, three grandchildren.

going to milk you as much as they can and do other stuff around you [for money]. Once they secured you to play in a golf tournament, they would bolt on other top players, then sell sponsorships, sell television, get the gate money. But [as players] we had no piece of that.

I realized I had to protect myself, because I didn't get any residual value. I knew quite a few actors and singers in those days, and they always got residuals, but every time Wonderful World of Golf played on TV, I didn't get a residual. So I fought pretty hard, and I was the lone wolf out there saying I want my residuals. I was the first guy to challenge [the PGA Tour branding rules].

### Your philanthropic efforts, especially towards children, are notable. How did that get started?

At the end of the day, when you are happy, healthy, and successful, if you don't pay attention to people who aren't as fortunate, you fall into this trap of ignoring the rest of the world. Playing golf, I had visibility to a lot of walks of lives. Kids who would come out and watch you in wheelchairs. A kid in Houston who had an allergy to the sun came to see me play in a space suit [covering his whole body]. A few stories like that [happened], and I said, what can I do?

[The interest in helping cure childhood cancers] really started with my ex brother-in-law Dr. Richard Andrassy. He's a pediatric surgeon [now head of surgery at UT Health]. I watched him operate on a premature baby who could fit in the palm of his hand. He designed a special catheter to go into this baby, and the baby survived. He changed someone's life—how cool is that? He still is one of my dear friends. I asked him questions about childhood cancer and that's how it morphed into my focus on the National Child Cancer Foundation [now called CureSearch]. Back when we started, the percentage of kids with cancer that were dying was much higher than it is now.

### How do you decide what brands to endorse?

I'll give you an example: when I was [represented by] a management company, they'd ask me to endorse a toilet seat. What is endorsing a toilet seat out of Japan going to do for my future except to put money in my bank account? Doesn't make sense to me. [Conversely], in the eighties I would pick up the phone to General Motors and say, "Hey, I drive your Suburban that just came out and I love it. Do you think we should do an endorse-

ment deal?" I'd fly to Detroit, meet with the CMO, and we'd sign a deal. If you validate a product, you have to be consistent with your brand standard. So I would never endorse a toilet seat. My brand has got a certain value.

### Many of your employees have been with you for decades. What's your management style?

I don't ask anybody to do more than what I do. I lead by example, and I'm a listener, not a talker, so I'll listen to people and I'll take their valued opinion whether it's from PR, marketing, the CFO, COO, my son, my daughter, whatever. I'm very open to constructive criticism—I've got a pretty thick skin.

### How do you handle it when someone makes a big mistake?

I always said to my kids: if you tell me a lie, you're going to be in serious trouble. No matter how bad the situation is, if you try to cover it up and then I have to find out about it and fix the problem then I'm really out of sorts. If you tell me the truth, then I will help you. We all make mistakes. I'll take things head-on, no matter how good or bad they are. If something is great, how do we keep it great? If it's bad, what happened, how did it happen, and let's not let it happen again.

Look, I've had times in my business where presidents have made wrong decisions. Is that because I wasn't paying 100 percent attention and I relied on them to make decisions instead of really knowing [what was going on]? You've empowered [executives] to do certain things and you can't micromanage them. But when you get stung it hurts, especially in a small business. You've got to sit that person down [and see if he or she is willing to be] 100 percent accountable. I'm definitely an accountability guy. You better be accountable for your failures just as much as your successes.

### What qualities do you look for when hiring a senior executive?

My team will probably find 20 or 30 people and boil [the list of candidates] down to three to five. Then I'll interview them and ask myself, "Can I sit with this person on my plane for a 20-hour trip?" **BJT**

### Jennifer Leach English

(jenglish@bjtonline.com) is the editorial director of **Business Jet Traveler**. This interview has been edited and condensed.





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# Buying (and Maybe Flying) a Jet Warbird

A surprising range of decommissioned military turbines are joining the used-aircraft market.

by James Wynbrandt

**F**orget for a moment the search for a practical business aircraft—the pre-owned warbird market has entered the jet age. Where World War II veterans like the iconic P-51 Mustang and trusty T-6 Texan trainer formerly ruled the civilian warbird skies, today a growing number of decommissioned military jets—from first-generation trainers to modern-era supersonic fighters—are available on the aftermarket, and some 1,000 turbine warbirds are now registered to private owners in the U.S.

Business jet owner/pilots looking for something a little faster and flashier to fly, and collectors seeking a jewel for their fleets, can find an assortment of choices in the warbird sections of publications and websites featuring aircraft for sale. Many of the listings are priced significantly below the seven-figure sums that a fully restored Mustang or other top World War II warbird commands.

But attention shoppers: purchase price aside, costs of operation and maintenance are much higher for a military jet than for a business jet or piston warbird. Additionally, regulations and operational limitations hobble their use. And piloting them safely requires a professional-caliber stick. Serious consideration of any one of these three issues is enough to shoot down many top-gun dreams, so before you start shopping, make sure you understand all the pros and cons.

Early turbines—including the USAF F-86 Sabre fighter and T-33 Shooting Star trainer and Russia's supersonic MiG-21, along with the second-generation Czech L-39 Albatros trainer—are among platforms popular with this jet set. That's thanks to attributes such as large production numbers, maintainability, availability of spare parts, and relative simplicity of operation. But more contemporary military jets are also available, with current inventory including a McDonnell Douglas F4H-1F Phantom, Dornier



F-86F Sabre



L-39ZA Albatros



MiG-21

Alpha Jet, Folland Gnat, and UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. (The U.S. military no longer sells operable tactical aircraft to the public due to concerns about terrorism, but they come to market from non-U.S. military operators upgrading their fleets.)

Some jets have been restored and updated with glass-panel cockpits; others are untold hours and dollars from being airworthy; and you can find everything in between. But establishing value is much more difficult with a turbine warbird than with a business jet.

“No two are the same—it’s such a one-off situation, and you can’t compare any of the aircraft to each other in terms of restoration,” says Jason Zilberbrand, president of aircraft appraisal service Vref.

**T**he Classic Jet Aircraft Association (CJAA), which represents the private owners of turbine warbirds, and the Experimental Aircraft Association’s Warbirds of America division, longtime champion of warbird owners and operators, should be at the top of any shopper’s resource



list for subject-matter experts. Several aircraft brokerages specializing in warbirds also freely share their expertise.

But be aware that once in private hands, former warships can be operated only in the Experimental, Exhibition category, which limits them to static and aerial displays demonstrating the airplanes' characteristics for the public and films; flights to and from these locations; and flights to attain and maintain pilot proficiency in the aircraft. In other words, they cannot be used for personal transport or to carry paying passengers.

But jet warbirds make poor cross-country transports, anyway. Designed for flights of about one and a half hours, trainers have limited range; and while a modern fighter doesn't necessarily require aerial refueling to cover the distance of an average business jet flight in a lot less time, these seemingly invincible machines lack conventional de-icing systems and are not reliable all-weather aircraft. Military jets are also at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to cabin comfort.

"They have a usefulness for historical display, but they're not a substitute for a Citation or Pilatus," says Mark Clark, president of Courtesy Aircraft in Rockford, Illinois, a longtime warbird brokerage.

Moreover, just because you have a pilot's license and can afford a warbird jet doesn't mean you'll be able to fly it. Pilot requirements include a minimum

of 1,000 hours of pilot-in-command flight time, and type rating in the jet, earned in a check ride with a designated examiner for the aircraft model; the flight examiner who gave you your IFR or multi-engine check ride will not suffice. Additionally, meeting all the pilot proficiency requirements doesn't guarantee you'll be able to get insurance for the aircraft, particularly if there's a disparity between its complexity and your flight experience.

But if you're willing to contend with all these hurdles, "the expense seems insignificant in relation to the sheer thrill provided by piloting a high-performance jet aircraft," the CJAA says.

**Y**ou can find a flyable MiG-21 for around \$70,000, according to Zilberbrand (a later model MiG-29 in good condition costs about \$5 million), and Courtesy has a listing for a Fouga CM-170 Magister for \$79,900.

"It's easy to fly, very straightforward, has a reasonable total time, and comes with a tremendous amount of spares" for replacement parts and components, Clark says of the Fouga.

Note that the weaponry on military aircraft imported into the U.S. must be removed or rendered permanently inoperable; and to ensure compliance they are typically inspected by three federal agencies: U.S. Customs, the Bureau of Alcohol

Tobacco and Firearms, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

However, there is exemption available for bypassing both the U.S. requirement for defanging privately owned warbirds and for operating solely in the Experimental, Exhibition category: some privately owned turbine warbirds are flown under government contract, in some cases providing aerial combat training services such as playing aggressor or enemy aircraft roles. These jets are equipped with modern combat radar and other weapons systems necessary for such realistic training. Draken International, based in Lakeland, Florida, has a fleet of warbirds for this kind of work, including the MiG-21bis, Aero L-39 and L-59, Mirage F1M, and Atlas Cheetah supersonic fighters.

If you've got the credentials to qualify for such airwork—and the funds for purchase—consider that current for-sale turbine warbird listings include a Douglas A-4D Skyhawk for \$1.6 million, advertised as having all inspections completed and being "ready to fly on a government contract." **BJT**

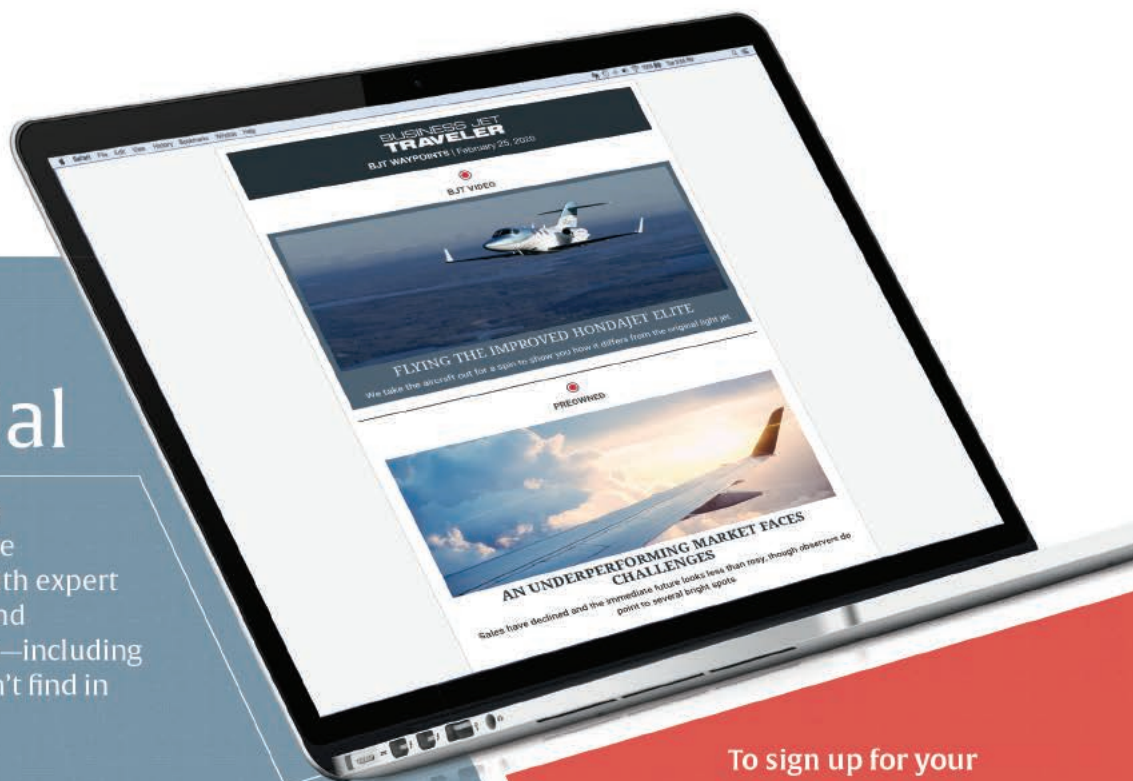


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# Cessna Citation X+

It has its shortcomings, but if you're looking for speed, you've come to the right place.

*by Mark Huber*

In 2018, Textron Aviation took what it had billed as the “world’s fastest business jet” off life support. After delivering a mere 29 copies since refreshing and stretching the Cessna Citation X and adding more thrust in 2014, the airframer discontinued production and allowed the X+ to fade away. The speed king was dead.

A near-supersonic, Mach 0.935 top speed wasn’t the Citation X+’s only standout feature. It also boasted a new Garmin G5000 avionics glass cockpit; an updated, mood-lit, and uber-connected cabin; elliptical winglets; and more powerful Rolls-Royce engines, a tad more speed and range, and better brakes than its predecessor offered. But it could not overcome the birth defects that it had inherited from the airplane’s first generation, the original Citation X, which hit the market in 1996. Those included a narrow, stoop-over cabin replete with a 1960s-style trenched center aisle, complex hydraulics, and direct operating costs that were 25 to 33 percent higher than those of a stable of competing super-midsize aircraft—business jets that had wider,

taller cabins and burned a lot less fuel.

By 2018, speed—the X family’s *raison d’être*—had become *de rigueur* on a new generation of larger and more comfortable bizjets being delivered or in the pipeline from Bombardier, Dassault, Embraer, and Gulfstream. And while none of those equaled the much-vaunted Mach 0.935 of the X+, the large-cabin jets came close, with top speeds of Mach 0.90 to 0.925, while super-midsize models priced similarly to the X+ topped out at Mach 0.83 to 0.86.

Much as Learjet discovered in the 1980s, moreover, customers were unwilling to trade ultimate speed for discomfort. And Textron did nothing to impede the X’s demise when in 2004 it introduced the Citation Sovereign—an aircraft that shared the X’s cabin but was fitted with different engines and wings, sold for millions less, had direct hourly operating costs that were at least \$1,000 lower, and offered nearly the same range (2,847 nautical miles versus 3,216).

So the Citation X+, posting economic numbers that were increasingly hard to defend, never found a sustainable audience. Ten of the 29 buyers were





## 2015 Cessna Citation X+ at a Glance

Price new	\$23.745 million
Price now	\$12 million
Crew	2
Passengers	8–12
Engines	2 Rolls-Royce AE3007C2, 7,034 lb of thrust each
Avionics	Garmin G5000
Top cruising speed	Mach 0.935, 528 ktas, 717 mph
Range	3,460 nm*
Service ceiling	51,000 ft
Takeoff distance	5,250 ft**
Cabin	Height: 5 ft, 8 in
	Width: 5 ft, 6 in
	Length: 25 ft, 2 in
Baggage capacity:	104 cu ft

\*four passengers, NBAA IFR reserves

\*\*at maximum takeoff weight, sea level, standard temperature

Source: Cessna

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upgrading from old Citation Xs. Like the supersonic airliner Concorde and the Mach 3-plus SR-71 U.S. spy airplane, the X+ fell victim to the actuary's knife. The X and X+ were one-trick ponies, built for speed. And the trick got old.

Not surprisingly, resale values have plummeted since Textron pulled the plug. A 2018 model year Citation X+ that sold new for \$23.3 million already has depreciated to \$17 million (retail), a 27 percent drop, according to the aircraft valuation service Vref. A 2015 model-year X+ is trading for a mere \$12 million, down 49 percent from its new list price. By any definition, this is a fire sale. But does it make sense to wade into the flames and take advantage of these prices?

Maybe.

The X and X+ can trim an hour or more off the time it would take to fly from Teterboro, New Jersey, to Van Nuys, California, on some other super-midsize aircraft. Ditto for flights between Boston and London. But for shorter hops, it's difficult to make a compelling case for using these models. If you're not regularly long-hauling it, owning a used X or X+ can be an expensive exercise in vanity, even accounting for the reduced capital costs due to smoldering depreciation. That said, for the Hollywood-New York set, an X+ is hard to beat for the money.



# The X+ is still the fastest business jet in the sky.

That's especially true when you're flying with a sparsely populated cabin. Yes, you can safely load 12 people into this tube, but you can expect it to feel crowded if you do.

This is not to say that Textron didn't try to make the most of the X+ cabin, which typically features a forward galley with optional kibitzer followed by two "club four" arrangements of single executive seats and an aft lav with belted potty. (A three-place divan can be substituted for two of the single seats.) The aircraft incorporates re-foamed and more ergonomic seats than its predecessor, color-adjustable LED lighting, and a wireless cabin-management system. The seats are restyled with eight extra degrees of pitch, allowing passengers to lean farther back in the takeoff and landing position.

The new side ledges are large enough for drinks and personal electronics and contain USB charging ports. The newer-generation cabin-management system (CMS) in the X+ provides access to a plethora of distractions, including internet and satcom, a Blu-ray player, and control of cabin lights, temperature, and window shades. The CMS integrates the cabin electrical system, avionics, and communication through a fiber-optic backbone. VIP controls can be assigned to any seat in the cabin. A lot of these styling cues and technology features ended up on Textron's newer and larger jets, the Latitude and Longitude.

Nifty stuff to be sure, but none of it could overcome the fact that the cabin is just 66 inches wide and 68 inches tall (in the trenched center aisle). Granted, Textron endeavored to improve passenger comfort by stretching the fuselage on the X+, yielding a 15-inch-longer cabin that gives passengers in the forward and rear club-four seat groupings more legroom and less proclivity for accidental



footsie. The galley and the lav each got an additional two inches as well. But this still provided less room than the flat-floor, super-midsized cabin cross-sections in such other super-midsized models as the Dassault Falcon 2000 (92 inches wide, 74 inches tall), Gulfstream G280 (84 inches wide, 75 inches tall), Bombardier Challenger 350 (86 inches wide, 73 inches tall), and Embraer's Legacy 500 (82 inches wide, 72 inches tall). Spending four or five hours in the X's more confined space certainly still beats being in the center seat in row 28 on Southwest, but with another passenger sitting across the aisle, things could get a little cozy.

Also, baggage capacity on the X+, at 104 cubic feet, is a tad cramped compared with the competition, which posts numbers ranging from 131 to 155 cubic feet.

But if speed is what you need, none of these things matter. The X+ climbs to 47,000 feet in just 24 minutes and is still the fastest bizjet in the sky.

The king is dead. Long live the king.

**BJT**

**Mark Huber**

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# Airbus Helicopters H175

There's a reason this super-medium twin has generated anemic demand, but it has nothing to do with the model's attributes.

by Mark Huber

The H175 is a much better helicopter than its sales would suggest. Airbus Helicopters sold just 38 of these super-medium, twin-engine aircraft from the time deliveries began in 2014 until the end of 2019. On the surface, this seems puzzling, given the helicopter's jet-smooth ride, comfortable cabin, advanced avionics, good operating economics, competitive price, executive seating for up to 12, and nearly 300-nautical-mile loaded range (seven passengers, two pilots, NBAA IFR reserves). These attributes would suggest brisk sales, but product qualities matter little when the largest market for the product is rapidly contracting.

That market is offshore oil.

The H175 has enough range to service 90 percent of the world's offshore energy rigs from shore. And when Airbus unveiled the model in 2008, the

company marketed it as a cost-efficient alternative to heavy-category helicopters costing \$25 million to \$32 million that were used to fly up to 18 energy workers to offshore platforms. At the time, oil was trading at better than \$100 per barrel; and for a while, it climbed to over \$150, with some analysts predicting even higher prices. In May 2008, Goldman Sachs analyst Arjun Murti brazenly told the *New York Times* that oil would soon top \$200 a barrel.

Then times changed—rapidly.

The worldwide economic crisis that began in late 2008 drove oil prices down to \$50 per barrel by January 2009, and, thanks in part to new capacity from land-based wells in the U.S., the picture only grew bleaker in the ensuing years, with oil falling below \$29 by 2016. Some offshore wells were capped and plans to bring others online were deferred or scrapped. Between 2014

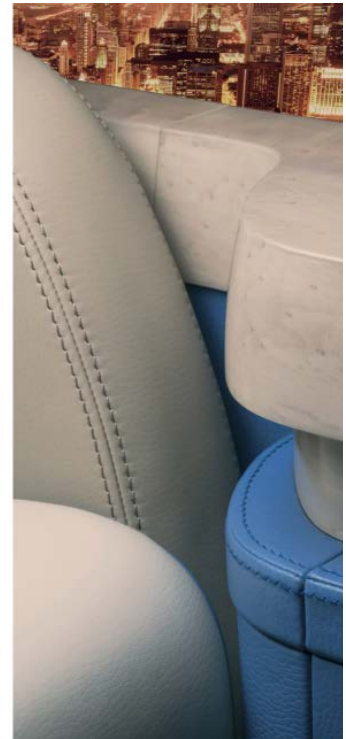
## FACTORY-NEW AIRCRAFT

and 2018, the number of in-service rigs in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico dropped from 60 to 20; between 2014 and 2017, worldwide demand for offshore “jack-up” rigs (feet on the seabed), plunged from over 400 to 300. Concurrently, energy companies became much more efficient in extracting more oil from existing rigs, reducing the need for new ones.

The main helicopter service companies flying to these rigs not only saw demand for their services reduced; their customers were also increasingly strong-arming them for lower prices and shorter contracts. Several of these companies—Bristow, CHC, and PHI—would eventually file for bankruptcy as a result, even as oil recovered to near \$70. Meanwhile, these companies’ orders for new helicopters—including the H175—evaporated. Fleets were downsized. Helicopters were mothballed. The resale prices of large-category helicopters—such as the Sikorsky S-92A—plummeted to the point where it became demonstrably cheaper, when you include capital costs, to operate them on offshore routes than to employ new midsize and super-midsize helicopters.



In October, Airbus said it still held orders for 110 H175s, but without the drag from offshore parsimony, that number could easily have been twice as large. Of the more than three dozen H175s in service, around two dozen are flying to rigs in the North Sea. A handful do the job in other locales. The remainder have been configured for parapublic duty or VIP/head-of-state missions. The anemic demand has forced Airbus to hold the line on prices—you can buy a nicely equipped H175 with an executive interior for \$16 million. (Of course, you can spend more—those gold-plated fixtures and stingray-hide sidewalls can add up.)



### 2020 ACH175 at a Glance

Crew	1–2
Passengers	7–12
Maximum range	613 nm (ferry, no reserve)
Maximum takeoff weight	17,196 lb
Maximum cruising speed	151 kt
Interior	Length: 13 ft
	Width: 7 ft
	Height: 5 ft

Source: Airbus Corporate Helicopters

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Executive and VIP H175s are badged ACH175s and sold by Airbus Corporate Helicopters. Through last year, ACH had delivered eight VIP-configured ACH175s, including two as aerial tenders for super-yachts and “several” head-of-state aircraft, according to Frederic Lemos, ACH CEO. An ACH175 delivered in December was the first certified for single-pilot IFR operations.

Lemos says the ACH175’s large cabin—all 434 cubic feet of it—lends itself to bespoke interiors with all the latest features including cabin-management systems, satcom, mood lighting, electrochromatic dimming for the panoramic windows, a small galley and seating, veneers, accents, and fabrics as plush as you’re likely to find in any large-cabin business jet. Entry is through a hinged door on the side of the aircraft and boarding is eased via electrically deployable steps. The 95-cubic-foot baggage compartment is larger than those in some midsize corporate jets.

The two-zone environmental control system (ECS) eliminates the Hobson’s choice of either freezing in the cabin or frying in the cockpit (or vice versa). Each seat has its own overhead gasper, and passengers can adjust the ECS via side-ledge controls or an app on their smartphones. The ACH175 doesn’t have an auxiliary power unit, but one engine can be run on the ground while declutched from the rotors, providing power to cool the cabin prior to passenger loading.

The standard cabin noise level is just 71 dB (add more insulation and that number goes down), allowing normal-tone-of-voice conversations between passengers without the need for headphones. Airbus accesses a variety of suppliers for its executive and VIP cabins but performs all the integration and installation at its VIP department in Merignane, France. This ensures a single point of responsibility for everything in the cabin as far as the customer is concerned.



In the spacious and comfortable cockpit, the Helionix avionics system offers all the latest safety features, including automatic hover, which corrects for wind drift. Helionix also incorporates redundant flight computers and a four-axis autopilot and has the capacity to keep the helicopter stable in challenging situations such as brownout (kicking up blinding dirt while taking off or

## The H175 has been designed for ease of maintenance.

landing) or inadvertent encounter with instrument flight conditions.

Power comes from a pair of Pratt & Whitney PT6-67E turboshafts (1,776 shp each) that can propel the H175 to 19,685 feet in under seven minutes. The H175 has good one-engine-inoperative performance. Maximum takeoff weight is 17,196 pounds and standard fuel capacity is 695 U.S. gallons. The engines, main gearbox, and rotors all have an initial time between overhaul (TBO) limitation of 5,000 hours.

The helicopter has been designed for ease of maintenance. Its tall cowling facilitates access to a variety of systems; the flared exhaust stacks whisk heat away more quickly from the work area; and a variety of ladder attach points are built into the fuselage, enabling quick climbing.

The H175 does have a couple of minor misses: it is not available with folding main rotor blades for shipboard operations and the baggage compartment door is so high up that a ladder is required for loading and unloading—a consequence of the positioning of the built-in emergency floats. But other than that, the H175 is a solid, comfortable—albeit underappreciated—performer, delivering large-cabin capabilities for a midsize-cabin price. **BJT**

**Mark Huber** (mhuber@bjtonline.com), an aviation industry veteran, has reviewed aircraft for **BJT** since 2005.

# Mark Burns

**The president of Gulfstream Aerospace discusses business aviation, sustainable fuel, innovation, and teamwork.**

*by Jennifer Leach English*

If you met Mark Burns at a cocktail party, you might not learn a thing about his long, distinguished career at Gulfstream Aerospace. The self-effacing executive, who joined the company in 1983 as a computer-aided-design operator, worked in engineering and customer support before rising to become president in 2015. But he doesn't talk much about his own achievements and says he prefers to think of himself as just a member of the team.

It's a pretty spectacular team. Gulfstream—whose business aircraft are known for their innovative features, sleek design, and unique windows—has produced more than 2,800 airplanes since its founding in 1958. The company, which has nearly 17,000 employees, has introduced six models into the market since 2008, including the Collier Trophy-winning G650. Customer deliveries of its latest flagship, the ultra-long-range, \$78 million G700, are expected to begin in 2022. Fourth-quarter 2019 sales rose 54 percent year-over-year at the company, making it the second-best quarter ever for Gulfstream, which delivered 147 aircraft during the year, 26 more than in 2018.

Despite extensive travel all over the world and daily interactions with high-profile customers, Burns has managed to remain humble, unpretentious, and true to his modest Savannah, Georgia, roots. During our interview at Gulfstream's headquarters, he repeatedly deflected credit to his colleagues and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to lead a company he loves. "When I was growing up," he said, "it was ingrained in me that you respect the people you work with and make sure there is a team success for every individual success."





## Did you always want a career in aviation?

I actually wanted to be an architect when I was young. I always liked building things. I don't think I ever even got on an airplane until I was 17.

When I was a junior in college, we built an ultralight airplane as part of our mechanical-engineering classes. We had some people from Gulfstream American [the company's name between 1978 and 1982] come and critique the build, and they just happened to be starting the design of the GIV. Through happenstance, I ended up at Gulfstream when I was 22.

I had not intended to stay in Savannah. I was the first one from my family to ever graduate from college, so that was sort of a monumental thing, and I had assumed I needed to move away [to have a good career].

I was fortunate to be exposed to some really bright people when I got to Gulfstream. The very first manager that I worked for in engineering was one of the brightest people I've ever met. He taught me about solving problems and troubleshooting and getting to the simplest solution.

## Why do aircraft owners stay loyal to the Gulfstream brand?

You can sell something to somebody one time, but if you don't deliver on your promise it's going to be hard to sell again to that customer. If we say an airplane will go so far or so fast, it does that. If we say we're going to have service around the world 24 hours a day, we deliver on that. We build great airplanes, but I believe we're [ultimately] a customer-service organization. It's up to us to protect our brand and the customers' ownership experience.

## You have a customer advisory board.

We started that in 1997, and it's integrated into the culture of our company. The customers are split up into [categories such as] cabin crew, flight crew, technicians, or maintenance, and then we split them up by the model airplane that they work on. We typically have about 100 customers on the board at any one time. We rotate customers often to make sure we have fresh ideas on the committees, and there is a waiting list of people who want to join.

Everybody in the leadership teams from various parts of Gulfstream attends the meetings, and they get to hear firsthand how our customers feel about the product, the service, the things we can do better. It's a lively discussion and a great guiding light for us.

## What made Gulfstream commit to sustainable fuel as early as it did?

Climate change is important to our customers and to our employees. We've been at the forefront of this for quite some time, and we've made significant breakthroughs. We fly all of our corporate, demonstration, and customer-support airplanes with sustainable aviation fuel [SAF]. A lot of our flight testing is done on sustainable fuel. This past year, we started selling SAF to customers in Southern California at Long Beach and Van Nuys. [World Fuel provides the SAF. —Ed.] There's more and more customer demand. The sustainable fuel we are using produces 50 percent less carbon emissions, so it's a significant [reduction]. It's about \$2 to \$3 more [per gallon], but the price will come down as more people start to use it. And it's fractionally lighter than regular fuel, so there are actually other benefits.

## Sometimes the sustainability challenges feel overwhelming, and it's easy to get discouraged or feel that one person can't make a difference.

You know, the older I get, the more I understand that it really is up to each person to make a difference. You have to have a vision that allows other people to follow. Gulfstream setting the example in this area is important.

## What do you look for when you hire?

If you've got the right attitude [toward customers and other employees] and you're engaged, I think we can teach you some of the [rest], though when it's a job with a technical component we're not even going to interview somebody who doesn't have the qualifications.

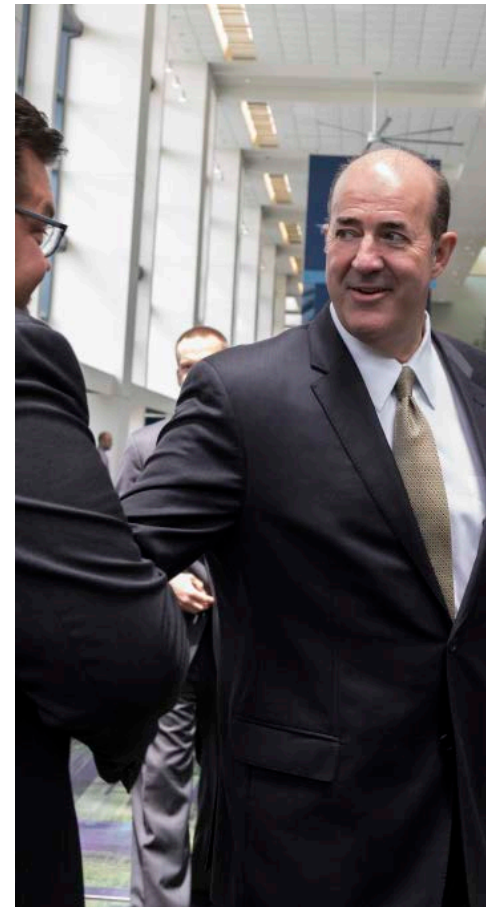
## Since you've been president, two women have been appointed to Gulfstream's leadership team.

The fact that we have two women on the team now is significant, but we found the right leaders. They happen to be women, but that wasn't why they got the jobs. [Shortly after this interview took place, Gulfstream appointed a third woman to its leadership team. —Ed.]

With all job openings we do try to ensure there is a diverse slate of candidates. The good news is that we now have a significant [qualified and diverse] population to draw from.

## What advice would you give a young person who wants to get into engineering or business aviation?

We talk to a lot of young people, because we're the largest employer in the area. It's about finding



## FASTFACTS

▶ **NAME:** Mark Burns

▶ **BORN:** Savannah, Georgia. Age 60.

▶ **POSITIONS:** President of Gulfstream Aerospace since July 2015. Vice president of parent company General Dynamics since February 2014.

▶ **PREVIOUS POSITIONS:** President and vice president of customer support. Vice president of Savannah service center. Vice president of Completions Engineering.

▶ **MEMBERSHIPS:** Board of directors, Georgia Power and Corporate Angel Network. Immediate past chairman of the Executive Committee, General Aviation Manufacturers Association.

▶ **HONORS:** 2018 recipient of National Aeronautic Association's Wesley L. McDonald Distinguished Statesman of Aviation Award

▶ **EDUCATION:** B.A. in mechanical engineering, Georgia Southern University

something that has meaning to you. But math and science are where the world is heading. Aviation is one of the leading-edge industries in the world, and I think that we're just now at the beginning. Think about what we've done in 100 years of aviation, think about the way the world population is growing and how interconnected industries are. Aviation is going to become exponentially bigger, and I think speed is the next frontier. Part of our job is to create an aspirational industry that people want to be part of.

**Gulfstream puts a big emphasis on giving back to the community.**

A lot of what we do is with school-age kids: reading programs, library programs, student-leadership programs. We do a lot of speaking in the counties around Gulfstream where our

engineers and businesspeople try to inspire kids to continue their education—but we also try to encourage them to look at aviation. [Business aviation is facing] pilot, technician, and engineer shortages, and it's getting more difficult every year.

**What's creating those shortages?**

We're fighting against other high-tech industries that didn't exist 20 years ago. The internet has taken a larger role in the last 20 years, but aviation is still connecting the world. Although we compete against Silicon Valley and some other places for talent, we've got a great story to tell.

**What business aviation markets do you think have the most growth potential?**

The U.S. is still the strongest and most ma-

*"We build great airplanes, but I believe we're ultimately a customer-service organization."*

ture market. Brazil is improving. China is still trying to gain the infrastructure necessary to support a larger number of airplanes, but I think it's going to be a huge market. There's some growth in Southeast Asia now that wasn't there a few years ago.

**How do you start your workday?**

The first thing I do is read customer surveys—they could be from owners or pilots. The second thing I do is look to see what transpired overnight and what issues occurred. I am fortunate that I can call the [aircraft] owners directly and say, "Hey, I know about this" or "Can we help you with that?"

**How do you respond to a major mistake or internal problem?**

I see us do some of our best work when there's a challenge, because we are collaborating to solve the problem, and communication gets really focused. I would rather hear the concerns than have somebody just tell me it's okay. It's energizing for me to be able to help solve the problem.

**What are you most proud of?**

You know, I get asked that all the time, but I guess I don't look at it that way. I am amazed thinking about how far we've come and at the gravity of what we're doing, because I can still remember working in that little hangar over there [points outside]. I maybe have a little bit of a larger voice here today than I did 37 years ago, but I look at my role as being part of the group. **BJT**



**Jennifer Leach English** (jenglish@bjtonline.com) is the editorial director of **Business Jet Traveler**. This interview has been edited and condensed.





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# Ireland's Wild West

It offers abundant arts and culture, superb cuisine, and topography torn from a romantic poet's sketchbook.

*by Chris Allsop*

**O**n the west coast of Ireland, first and foremost, is the ocean. Storms rolling off the Atlantic gild the slate rooftops of Galway City with moss verdigris, tuck the bogs deeper into their grassy beds, and provide excuses to tarry by the pub's glowing hearth until the weather subsides. And it does—more often than you'd think.

As the skies clear, you'll find yourself in a deeply authentic swath of the country with dramatic and unexpected sights that deserve a clear-eyed, clear-skied examination. You won't soon forget white-sand Dog's Bay, which brings a taste of the Caribbean to Connemara (although the water temperature never lies); the soaring Cliffs of Moher in County Clare; and the busy streets and lanes of Galway City, the pulse of the region, with its independent streak, gastronomy, and ties to traditional Gaelic culture.





Connemara National Park

THE ENLIGHT PROJECT, UNSPLASH



Puffins breed on Ireland's West Coast.

WYMAN VAN POORTVLIET, UNSPLASH

Northwest of the city is rural Connemara—a rugged, rocky wilderness edged by the Atlantic on three sides and Lough Corrib to the east, and one of Ireland's Gaelic-language heartlands. The most common ways of seeing Connemara are either in passing, through a car window, or by strapping on your hiking boots and tramping the heather-covered hinterland (protected as Connemara National Park).

The region is one of the highlights of Ireland's 1,600-mile Wild Atlantic Way coastal driving route, which starts at the Inishowen Peninsula and concludes in the picturesque town of Kinsale. The Way hugs the coastal peninsulas that characterize Connemara's seaward extent, offering views of the moody inland crags while a salty ocean bluster buffets the circling seabirds' mews.



Culdaff Beach, Inishowen Peninsula

TOURISM IRELAND

If you're traveling north to south, you'll pass Ireland's only fjord—Killary Harbour—before entering Connemara. It's a rolling, gentle kind of fjord that won't cause Norwegian tourism executives any sleepless nights, but its influence extends much further than its crooked inland ingress might suggest, with sought-after Killary salmon and mussels appearing on every local seafood menu worth its seaweed salt.

An alternative to the bracing switchbacks of the Way is an inland detour through the Inagh Valley—a picturesque highway skimming past lakes and mountains and fringed by coppery bracken and silver birch. Be careful to not be so mesmerized by the landscape that you forget the nonchalant sheep and goats that often stray—or even sit—across the narrow, unfenced roadway. (The occasional skid mark is a helpful, if alarming, reminder.)

**T**he Inagh Valley also contains Kylemore Abbey, with its immense pale-grey, neo-Gothic dimensions looking ghostly against the mountainside. This lakeside pile—the go-to place when an unforeseen squall puts the kibosh on the seaweed foraging—is now run by pottery-throwing Benedictine nuns but used to be the holiday home of textile merchant Mitchell Henry, one of 19th century Britain's richest men.

The Abbey has just completed an expensive, cutting-edge refurbishment intended to make its history more accessible through multimedia displays and even a talking chair. (That history is colorful: the Abbey's second owner, the flamboyant Duke of Manchester, bet the place in a game of cards—and lost.) You can't actually stay at Kylemore Abbey (although the nuns are planning to create a spiritual retreat there in the near future), so most visitors find a berth in the main town of Clifden. Clustered around a small harbor, with a striking mountain backdrop, this is a resort town with added Irish panache.

If you can remove yourself from the welcoming Lowry's pub (twice voted Best Traditional Bar in Ireland), you'll find Clifden is the place to gear up for salmon fishing in the broad rivers or expeditions into the national park to spot some of the famous Connemara ponies (apparently the result of Arab horses surviving a Spanish shipwreck and breeding with the local ponies).





# MANAGING AIRCRAFT IN THE NEW DECADE

The 2020s arrive amid a transformation of the private aviation field due to technological, regulatory, and social changes. How will these changes impact aircraft owners and managers?

We asked executives at five management companies and one turbine-engine manufacturer what they see coming for their customers and the industry, and how they're preparing for the future. The six companies they represent—Clay Lacy Aviation, Executive Jet Management, Gama Aviation Signature, Meridian, Priester Aviation, and Rolls-Royce—together operate more than 600 aircraft; and with 3,200 engines in service, Rolls-Royce claims to power more business jets than any other manufacturer at the high end of the market. All have decades of experience in the highest business aviation operations, allowing them to provide valuable perspective on today's critical issues.

## AN EVOLUTION IN OWNER-MANAGER RELATIONSHIPS

A shift in the way they view clients—from customers to something more like partners—is a recurring theme heard from these companies. So is a widening view of managers' responsibilities and capabilities. Both trends are made possible and accompanied by technological advances.

"We're moving from being aircraft managers to being aviation advisors," said Patti Ann Sullivan, vice president for aircraft management at Meridian. "We're being more proactive and consulting with customers or their representatives about trends and what we see coming, whether with their specific model or larger is-

sues—the pilot shortage, rising insurance rates, technology. And we're explaining how we're using technology to serve them better."

Among the technologies Meridian and others in this group have recently deployed are revamped customer-service portals, which provide owners with unprecedented access to troves of data and analysis tools.

"Customers can access their accounts and view all kinds of information about their aircraft, and their financial advisers can use the financial tools," said Sullivan.

At Clay Lacy Aviation, "Internally, we refer to ourselves as asset managers," echoed Brian Kirkdoffer, president and CEO. "We want to talk with our customers about trends in the

context of the industry rather than simply saying, 'This is what your airplane did last year.'

Kirkdoffer added that in mid-2019 Clay Lacy launched a division "that focuses on financial analysis and planning, to deliver what our customers are looking for: reliable data to make good decisions."

Besides providing more data, management companies are putting added effort into keeping customers informed about issues affecting ownership and operations.

"Aviation is changing more rapidly than most businesses," said Andy Priester, president and CEO of Priester Aviation. "We're launching initiatives to educate our customers so they can understand and embrace those changes with us, and we can manage their expectations."

"We're also working to increase the cadence and frequency of meetings with customers," Priester added. "Because change has been so rapid and consistent over the past several years, our communication and interaction has to increase to provide owners the information they need."

Summed up Brian Hirsh, president of Executive Jet Management (EJM), "Aircraft ownership is complex, and owners are looking for simplification. It's a management company's job to simplify that experience, and today we have a lot more technology to help us take on that task."

It's noteworthy that after cataloging new ways EJM is offering enhanced data and simplification tools for customers, Hirsh stressed the importance of making parallel solutions available to flight crews.

"The aircraft we operate today are more complex, with more technology and the ca-

pability to fly farther, and it's our job to help simplify that experience for pilots," Hirsh said. "Our flight operations team, financial team, human resources team, legal team, and customer support team are all here to support crewmembers. And since the crews are always working from mobile devices, we've teamed up our pilots with our IT folks, as well."

The growing complexity that flight crews confront is equaled by compliance challenges facing operations departments.

"The days of one individual wearing multiple hats within the regulatory infrastructure of a management company are long gone," said KC Ihlefeld, senior vice president of aircraft management at Gama Aviation Signature. "Today's ever-changing regulatory environment requires managers to employ and provide internal regulatory infrastructure, to ensure they can always stay ahead of regulatory issues." Additionally, "technological solutions to enhance client experience and maintain 24/7 connectivity with our clients has become the norm," Ihlefeld said. "That requires managers to seek out solutions to be able to meet that expectation."

Aligned with the ownership simplification trend, engine manufacturer Rolls-Royce is taking steps to provide end-customers—and their asset managers—a simplified ownership experience.

"We construct our service agreements to be comprehensive and simple," said Andrew Robinson, senior vice president for services and customer support—business aviation, at Rolls-Royce. "If a management company is involved with overseeing the operational aspects of the aircraft, when a situation arises that requires Rolls-Royce's support, we consult, involve, and

engage the management company every step of the way. The solution is meant to be seamless and invisible to the owner."

Rolls-Royce established a Corporate Customer Council (C3), comprised of aftermarket service-agreement customers, to help ensure that it is meeting customer needs, and it recently enhanced the CorporateCare program in response to council members who "insisted on more comprehensive coverage on all components we supply," Robinson said.

The offering also dovetails with the expanded advisory role that management companies are adopting, providing "increased asset value and liquidity, while mitigating maintenance cost risk and protecting against unforeseen and unscheduled events anywhere in the world," said Robinson.

## LINKING SAFETY, SECURITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

One overarching objective unites owners and these management companies: "The top concern of our customers is safety," said Ihlefeld at Gama Aviation Signature, echoing a principle and practices voiced by all company representatives interviewed. Ihlefeld credits the Teterboro, New Jersey-based company's "safety-first approach to the operation of their aircraft" for the trust underlying its customer relationships. Additionally, in a world where high expectations, mechanical systems, and weather can be in conflict, honesty helps.

"We tell them the good, the bad, and sometimes, the ugly," Ihlefeld said. "We don't tiptoe around the facts, and they appreciate that. To-



CLAY LACY AVIATION, DYLAN PATRICK PHOTOGRAPHY



**BRIAN  
KIRKDOFFER**

CLAY LACY AVIATION

### Q What role can big data play in managing aircraft?

A "We have not only OEM data—we have about 120 aircraft and a lot of real-time, real-life operations data to compare and contrast, to help customers better realize their ownership objectives. Safety, service, and value is more of an expectation, and now with the availability of real-time data, we can track and reports those metrics better."



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"We tell them the good, the bad, and sometimes, the ugly," Ihlefeld said. "We don't tiptoe around the facts, and they appreciate that. Total transparency is one of Gama's core values."

Here, too, technology is providing tools to advance safety-focused cultures.

With flight crews crossing multiple time zones, EJM has instituted a fatigue-management program. "It's a biomathematical-model product that indicates when pilots may be at risk of reduced alertness and increased fatigue," and it allows the risks to be anticipated and mitigated, said Hirsh.

Meanwhile, passengers who need to stay connected while airborne face new security threats. "Cybersecurity is another issue we've been focusing on a lot," Hirsh said. "We're not just building robust firewalls. We constantly monitor and test the systems, working with external experts and agencies."

Clay Lacy has instituted a FOQA (flight operations quality assurance) program, which records flight data from equipped aircraft that can be reviewed and analyzed to ensure the equipment is being operated according to procedures and "so we can identify safety

trends across our entire fleet," said Kirkdoffer. Some 70 aircraft are participating.

Meridian has a Safety Management System (SMS) and is IS-BAO Stage 2 certified and IATA TCO approved, in addition to holding Argus Platinum and Wyvern Wingman certification. But today, its safety responsibilities extend beyond flight operations.

"Customers are flying into some remote and unique areas, so we do a tremendous amount of risk assessment," said Sullivan. "We use third-party providers to determine risk level of a country at a particular time, and we discuss the airport, hotel, and ground conditions. We often arrange for private security, be it to watch over the aircraft or for individuals who don't have a personal security officer."

Similarly, Priester Aviation, headquartered in Chicago, has IS-BAO Stage 3, Air Charter Safety Foundation, Argus Platinum, and Wyvern certifications, and also has an SMS, a dedicated safety officer, an Aviation Safety Action Program, and a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan. Yet a new global focus on social responsibility and environmental issues creates macro threats to business aviation that Priester and these other companies are also taking a lead in addressing. All have long practiced environmentally responsible policies for their own operations, and they're expanding those efforts to include environmentally friendly flight options as new programs become available.

Priester has an internal sustainability working group and this summer is launching an educational initiative "to ensure owners are informed of all aspects of sustainability issues

and potential solutions," said Priester. The company is also expanding internal efforts, such as arranging financial incentives for employees to purchase electric automobiles.

EJM, meanwhile, is a pioneer member of CORSIA, the European Union's carbon-offset program, and is keeping owners on top of these issues and available options.

"It's the role of management to provide solutions on the aviation side of topics, and that includes on sustainability," said Hirsh. "It's all part of being responsible corporate citizens."

Clay Lacy Aviation, which received certification as a Green Business by the city of Los Angeles in 2018, updated its headquarters to include a solar-array installation and LED lighting. "One of our newest areas of focus is helping owners operate sustainably—what's available in carbon offsets, sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), and in the future, hybrid and electric propulsion," said Kirkdoffer.

Clay Lacy demonstrated that commitment last year when its Van Nuys, California, flagship facility hosted an SAF demonstration, and the company is now offering SAF as available.

"There's no silver bullet," said Kirkdoffer. "We need to continue to look holistically at how we do business, but not flying is not an option. There's too much economic, social, and other good that is done by people moving around this world."

SAF is approved by all manufacturers of business jets and business jet engines for use in their products. The fuel joins a parade of green initiatives and reduced emissions that have long driven aircraft engine technology advances.



**BRIAN HIRSH**

EXECUTIVE  
JET MANAGEMENT

**Q What role can big data play in managing aircraft?**

**A** "First and foremost, it has a role on the safety side. About 70 percent of our aircraft have flight data recorders, and every flight generates a tremendous amount of data we can extract to analyze, identify, and report on trends. This will ultimately make the aviation industry safer."



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Rolls-Royce's Pearl 700, the latest member of the Pearl family powering Gulfstream's recently unveiled new flagship G700, combines the state-of-the-art Advance2 engine core with a brand-new blisked low-pressure system. This will deliver a 5 percent boost in efficiency while maintaining the Pearl's "class-leading low-noise and low-emissions performance," said Robinson. He added that the Pearl 700 will also improve thrust-to-weight ratio by 12 percent and increase takeoff thrust by 8 percent.

Meanwhile, CorporateCare Enhanced, which covers additional services items and includes unlimited troubleshooting and mobile repair team travel costs, is keeping in-service engines operating at peak efficiency.

Coverage for the Pearl 15, BR710 and BR725 engines "includes the whole powerplant as well as nacelle, engine build-up, and thrust-reverser-unit-related services," Robinson said. It is now standard for all new CorporateCare customers and available as an upgrade to existing contracts. About 70 percent of buyers of new Rolls-Royce-powered aircraft opt for CorporateCare coverage, Robinson noted.

## TECHNOLOGY AND THE PERSONAL TOUCH

New technology and digital tools notwithstanding, aircraft management remains a relationship-driven business. Can these relationships be maintained—let alone strengthened—in an era of digital communication, one-click fulfillment, and new portals that provide customers real-time, fingertip access to man-

agement apps?

"It's one more way for customers to choose how they want to interact with EJM, not replace relationships," said Hirsh of its enhanced customer portal. "It's a tool available to them and their teams to more quickly access the data they want."

Keeping it personal, EJM, headquartered in Cincinnati, is concurrently growing its more-than-300-member customer-resource team by 20 percent, and engaging the IT department "to understand their needs and build them into [CRM] solutions." The goal of these efforts, Hirsh said, is "more face-to-face integration with our customers and a personalized management experience."

Priester likewise views "these digital interfaces as a way to enhance, not replace, relationships," and he highlighted a management company's foundational role in utilizing the information: "We're here to help an owner interpret, understand, analyze, and project how that data impacts their operations," said Priester. "Technology can't apply context to data, and it can't replace relationships—especially on the management side."

A need for personal relationships extends beyond customers. Priester noted "on the back end of things," pursuant to ensuring its international operations are in full compliance with EASA requirements, company representatives recently met in Cologne, Germany, with regulatory officials "to make sure we had the information directly from EASA."

Rolls-Royce, meanwhile, "views management companies as key partners in business aviation," said Robinson, and it includes

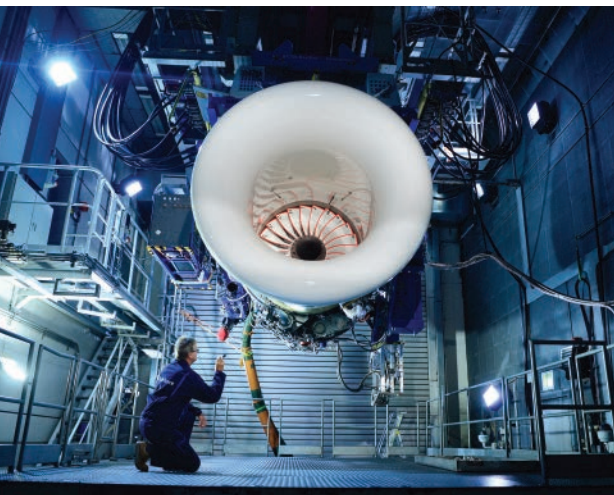
management companies in events such as its biannual C3 meetings, where it talks with customers and partners to understand their service needs. Rolls-Royce has long provided Engine Health Monitoring (EHM) services for its customers, but Robinson noted that the "next generation of big-data-capable EHM systems on Bombardier's Global 6500 and Gulfstream's G700" will bring a corresponding new level of utility, which will keep the company even closer to customers should the need arise. This is all part of Rolls-Royce's IntelligentEngine vision, which brings together its products, services, and digital technology.

"With the quantity of data we collect across the fleet of engines, our advanced algorithms are able to identify potential issues—most of the times even before these result in an 'aircraft on ground' situation. And if a sudden event were to occur, we'd quickly know what has happened and how to fix it," Robinson said.

At Gama Aviation Signature, which last year ranked as the largest Part 135 charter operator in the U.S., according to Argus International, Ihlefeld has seen "a generational shift in customer-care demands."

"It's become an app-based, go-now world," he said. "This can be challenging because our service is very hands on. Our clients want digital communication tools primarily for the basic day-to-day needs, and by providing access to our resources and transparency, we can better educate clients on what they can and should expect. The earlier we can establish that dialog and connection, the greater the chance for success."

Yet face-to-face contact remains essential. "When they want to talk or meet with us, we



**ANDREW ROBINSON**

ROLLS-ROYCE

### Q What role can big data play in managing aircraft?

A "Data has become the fuel of the future. We use AI and other analytics to create a digital twin/profile of the asset that tells us how the engine develops and behaves over its life span, and that builds the foundation to provide predictions on degradation and potential pending failures. It also tells us how to optimize its operation and maintenance to provide recommendations to OEMs and their customers."



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are there,” Ihlefeld said. “We encourage regular visits, and they are always appreciative when they see a Gama hat or shirt greet them at the FBO.”

Meridian representatives are likewise “getting together with our owners as often as they allow,” said Sullivan, to review budgets and expenses in person. “An app doesn’t have that personal touch, or understanding of personal preferences,” she added.

The personal bonds help Meridian stay ahead of its customers’ preferences and demands.

“We are seeing differences in the new generation” of owners, Sullivan said. “They are a little more experience-driven. They’re vacationing in non-traditional locations, and the whole trip is about the experience—the culinary experience onboard, the appointments on the aircraft, the beverages, and the type of service they want. This applies to our charter customers as well.”

But more than simply listening, Meridian, based in Teterboro, New Jersey, takes steps to ensure that every customer touchpoint reinforces its service focus. All Meridian team members are trained to Ritz-Carlton service standards and undergo annual recurrency training for “high-touch service,” said Sullivan.

Hand-in-hand with Clay Lacy’s updated portal and financial reporting and analysis, “we’re asking for more customer face time,” said Kirkdoffer. “There’s more [customer] interest and engagement because there’s more meaningful, actionable information to discuss, and options to consider. Access to the data in context and having it in real time takes the

emotion out the equation, and there’s much more confidence in making decisions.”

On management’s side, “We can dive in deeper and better understand their goals and expectations,” added Kirkdoffer.

As a bonus, Clay Lacy’s data automation has freed some employees to be “reallocated to providing more face time to clients,” Kirkdoffer noted.

## ATTRACTING AND KEEPING EMPLOYEES

A shortage of business aviation professionals—most immediately pilots, but also maintenance technicians, dispatchers, and management professionals—now concerns management companies and owners alike. Ensuring team members receive competitive pay and benefits packages is only the starting point for companies hungry to attract and retain the best.

“We are going through a behavioral evolution,” said Priester. “People who work in aviation have different expectations today, and it changes how we behave as management companies and operators.”

Priester managers regularly meet with pilots, crew chiefs, and other employees, and they report hearing that quality of life is among the biggest factors in job satisfaction. “Schedule predictability is one of the biggest drivers” of such satisfaction, Priester said.

In response, the company ensures that flight crews have predictable schedules, and that owners hire sufficient crews so that pilots can have a family life.

Reaching out to a new generation is also a

key mission for these and all forward-thinking companies. Priester has instituted a recruitment outreach in local schools, “promoting corporate aviation careers, to get young people into the pipeline, train them, and create incentives for them to stay with our company and grow.”

EJM has an in-house recruiting team “scouring the country” for crewmembers, while keeping owners “educated on market conditions and what it takes to hire pilots,” Hirsh said, agreeing that “quality of life is one of the factors that comes up as much as compensation and benefits” in discussions with job candidates.

To minimize attrition, EJM has a rewards program to recognize performance; utilizes video conferencing, messaging, and face-to-face visits to maintain close contact with employees; fosters employee activities; and offers work-from-home opportunities. EJM is also adding staff across all business units and leveraging technology to help them operate more efficiently. Meanwhile, its national internship program recruits entrants “to all facets of sales and marketing, maintenance, and flights operations,” Hirsh said. “We feel it’s our responsibility to help develop the future of private aviation, and expose more people to the industry.”

Ihlefeld puts recruitment and retention among his company’s most pressing challenges. “Gama is in the service-delivery business, and recruiting people to provide best-in-class service is vital to our success,” he said. The company has achieved its low attrition rate and standing as a career destination, he said, “by providing competitive compensation and an



**ANDY  
PRIESTER**  
PRIESTER AVIATION

### Q What role can big data play in managing aircraft?

A “Having more data on how the fleet is performing—the fuel spend, maintenance data, HR records, and the rest—allows us to make good business decisions and improve operations. It does have an important role there. I don’t think we’re big enough, with the number of airplanes we have, that we can make micro decisions on massive amounts of data.”





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environment that empowers employees to be able to understand the uniqueness of each client, and tailor their service approach to each.”

Gama also has a summer intern program “that each year attracts young talent who have never been exposed to aviation,” Ihlefeld said. With Gama’s scale of operations, “We offer a lot of opportunities for internal mobility and development on the operational, regulatory, customer-service, or commercial sides of the house,” he added.

Clay Lacy has earned a reputation for trend-setting internship and career-development programs.

“Attracting, recruiting, and retaining the next generation of great people into this wonderful industry is getting more important each year,” said Kirkdoffer. “This new decade will be defined by the people who come into this industry, and we want them to be smart,

happy, well trained, and excited to continue the pioneering spirit and the romance and passion that so many of us find in aviation.”

That means “hitting every angle we can identify,” Kirkdoffer said. “We want to provide financial support to get them enticed to finish pilot’s license or A&P training. We will invest in employee training for their career path and also in making sure we have a scope of services that allows people to get into the industry and follow their passion,” he said, whether they want to be pilots, mechanics, financial analysts, or dispatchers. “It’s important to the culture of Clay Lacy and to aircraft owners that we provide these opportunities,” Kirkdoffer added.

With some 50,000 employees and an ambitious engine-development program, Rolls-Royce is constantly seeking talented newcomers. The company has apprentice-

ship programs in the UK for college students and select high school graduates, as well as for individuals seeking to change careers. The programs provide paid training that mixes classroom study with work experience while preparing participants for a career at the company.

“We’re a global business,” said Robinson. “We offer young people the opportunity to work with world-class engineers and other professionals who are passionate about passing on their experience. And we make sure these young people are doing work that matters from day one.”

Meridian’s Sullivan noted that making sure owners understand “realistic salary, benefits, and a work-life balance” must be backed up by providing flight crews with growth opportunities, if they want to attract the best candidates.

“It is a fine line of meeting the owners’



**PATTI ANN SULLIVAN**

MERIDIAN

Q

**What role can big data play in managing aircraft?**

A

“Big data helps in understanding maintenance and operational trends; looking back helps predict the future to some extent. It helps identify where safety and efficiency can be gained and services can be sharpened. We also use it to tailor proposals—for example, estimating the number of charter hours and potential revenues based on location and on historical models.”



**KC IHLEFELD**

GAMA AVIATION  
SIGNATURE

Q

**What role can big data play in managing aircraft?**

A

“Analyzing data from top airport markets ensures that we deliver the best fuel pricing. Additionally, understanding clients’ travel patterns allows us to plan efficiently for them. For example, if we know a customer goes to Aspen every February 23rd, we can get a head start on managing crews, arranging hotels, etc. Previous-trip data helps us deliver a better customer experience.”





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Alternatively, just south of Clifden and well worth a visit is a memorial to the landing site of the first nonstop transatlantic flight; it honors John Alcock and Arthur Brown who, in 1919, journeyed in a modified World War I bomber from Newfoundland to Connemara. Also south of town lies the Connemara Championship Golf Links, offering stunning views and devilish onshore winds—a place for the golfer with insulated plus fours.

Even windier than the back nine at Connemara are the Aran Islands, just off the south coast of Connemara, which you can reach via a regularly operated 40-minute ferry or seaplane service. There are three islands to visit, with Inish Mór (or Inishmore) the largest and most populated. (Inishmore translates as “big island.”)

The archipelago is best known for its distinctive cable-knit sweaters (which Grace Kelly and Steve McQueen wore), though they are now almost entirely produced on the mainland. Originally, according to Aran-born guide Cyril O’Flaherty (of Aran Walking Tours), it was hand-knitted socks that were emblematic of the islanders’ hard existence: their distinctive patterns identified the washed-up bodies of drowned loved ones.

**T**he history of these islands, whose sheer sea cliffs are a natural breakwater for Galway Bay, extends as far back as the Bronze Age, as evidenced by the circular hill forts that dot the landscape. Inishmore’s Dun Aengus, the most visited structure, is dramatically sited on a cliff edge, but O’Flaherty dismisses it as something of a tourist trap. Instead, he leads visitors on the backroads to other off-the-beaten-track forts offering views over the higgledy-piggledy gridwork of drystone walls riddling the island’s flat, mostly treeless surface.

Scattered over the islands are the remains of churches that, for the most part, have weathered less well than the forts. One of the earliest seminaries in Western Europe was established here, and many Irish saints—such as the fifth century warrior-king, St. Enda—have links to the archipelago. For O’Flaherty, an artist as well as a guide, life on the Aran Islands remains a spiritual experience. He describes how those who relocate to these outposts of civilization can find it hard, the limitations imposed capable of “breaking you down.”

## Traveler Fast Facts

### WHAT IT IS:

Connemara is a cultural region in West Ireland and one of the country’s Irish-speaking heartlands. Its topography is torn from a romantic poet’s sketchbook, with its brooding 12 Ben mountain range and its forlorn, watery lowlands inhabited by wild Connemara ponies. South of Connemara is the Aran archipelago—a trio of karst limestone islands moored in the mouth of Galway Bay and a repository of 11,000 years of history. Looking out at the islands from the mainland is Galway City—Ireland’s Capital of Culture 2020, known as the “City of Festivals,” and a leading light in the country’s food and restaurant scene.



VINCENT GIEFSCH, UNSPLASH

### CLIMATE:

It rains, on average, for 151 days of the year in Galway County with much of that precipitation falling in the winter. Otherwise there’s a temperate climate with highs of 63°F in July. Between this summer apex and mid-October is the best time to visit, both from climate and event perspectives. Be prepared to see some glowing white Galwegian skin on display when the sun emerges. Spring also offers some fair weather, and accommodation prices are competitive during the shoulder seasons, although the wind whips at all times of the year when you’re at the coast.

### GETTING THERE:

Shannon Airport, one hour’s drive south of Galway City, is Ireland’s third-largest airport and is capable of handling private aircraft of all sizes. Alternatively, Dublin Airport is the major international hub for the country. It’s a straight drive across the country of just over two hours to Galway City.

### WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

The tourist infrastructure in Connemara tends to go into hibernation from mid-fall into early spring. However, the festivals and events just keep coming during Galway’s Capital of Culture year—be sure to consult its program on [gias.ie](http://gias.ie) to make sure you don’t miss anything you’d want to see.

RUBY DOAN, UNSPLASH



The Claddagh, Galway





Connemara Loop, County Galway

But there's also support in this tight-knit community, with everyone on hand to help one another if needed. While the lights mostly stay on now even during the most powerful storms, when there is a power cut, O'Flaherty says, there's an unwritten rule that everyone on the island makes their way to Joe Mac bar for a candlelit drinking session. (Joe Mac is also just a couple of minutes from the docks, a superb place to wait for the ferry.)

But if it's a party you're after, make a beeline for Galway City. This port city, its rainbow of pub facades cutting through the gloom of overcast days, has a history that echoes Bristol—another westward-facing port. Ruled over by an oligarchy of 14 merchant families in the Middle Ages known as the "Tribes of Galway," it is where you'll find the Spanish Arch—a reminder that Galway was once Ireland's principal trading port with the Spanish and French, exporting mainly wool and fish. Decline followed, and Galway saw a great



deal of deprivation, especially following the potato famines of the 19th century, until the Celtic Tiger helped set the city back on its feet.

This year sees Galway's thriving arts and culture scene in the European spotlight as the E.U.'s Capital of Culture for 2020. Already known as the City of Festivals, Galway is witnessing an even more active program of public performances, art exhibitions, and, yes, festivals than in previous years.

But this isn't the first time that the E.U. has celebrated this part of Ireland—in 2018, Galway County was designated a European Region of Gastronomy in recognition of its organic-food movement. This passion for high-quality ingredients farmed in a sustainable way—from dulce seaweed to a floury Irish potato—has resulted in a food renaissance in Galway, which saw its first Michelin star awarded in 2013 to Aniar (*see "Traveler Report Card," at right*).

Aniar is a treat, but the ultimate Galway experience has to be a night in legendary boho pub Tigh Neachtain (pronounced "Naughton") with a warm bowl of creamy Atlantic chowder in hand, a silky pint of Guinness in the other, and the folk band striking up their pipes as, far out to sea, another storm begins to build. **BJT**

### Chris Allsop

(callsop@bjtonline.com) is a U.K.-based travel writer and frequent **BJT** contributor. The Irish Tourist Board covered his travel expenses for this article.

## Traveler Report Card

### ACCOMMODATIONS:

Connemara has several castles turned hotels, and **Ballynahinch Castle Hotel** (A) is perhaps the best of them. The rooms in the main house recently enjoyed a luxurious refurbishment, but because it sits in a 700-acre outdoorsman's Irish fantasyland, you'll probably spend much of your time here looking out the windows... The **Quay House** (A) at Clifden is a delightfully idiosyncratic B&B run by Julia and the Napoleon-obsessed Paddy. The oldest building in town, it features harbor-facing rooms that have views of the 12 Bens... The luxuriously appointed **Inis Meáin Restaurant and Suites** (A+), on the smallest and least-developed of the Aran Islands, offers a retreat from modern civilization alongside international-class cooking from chef Ruairi de Blacam.



### CUISINE:

An incredibly popular seafood restaurant in the heart of Clifden (it gets booked up even mid-week) is **Mitchell's Seafood** (B+). Despite all of its upscale trappings, it is at heart a down-to-earth seafood specialist serving up hearty mains such as a salty bowl of Killary mussels drowned in a pool of fragrant basil and lemon... **Loam** (A) is the restaurant that Enda McEvoy—who was head chef of Aniar when it won western Ireland's first Michelin star—set up on his own. It's a sophisticated dining room with a choice between a la carte and tasting menus of memorable small plates such as charred cabbage with poached oyster and red currant and kelp sauce... **Aniar** (A+)—owned by a leading light in the local food scene, chef J.P. MacMahon—is probably the cosiest Michelin-starred experience you'll come across. Aniar translates as "from the West" and its tasting menu reflects the region's ingredients and traditions, with dishes like potato foam and smoked eel served with a specially carved spoon... You'll also find superb, imaginative cuisine on the streets of the compact, busker-busy city center at independent businesses like **Marmalade Bakery** (B+), bean-to-bar chocolate shop **Hazel Mountain Chocolates** (B+), and the fabulous new Brutalist cinema, **Pálás** (A), which serves up a menu at its in-house restaurant inspired by the films playing at the time.





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# Set Sail on a Superyacht

For the vacation of a lifetime, charter one of these opulent vessels.

by Narina Exelby

To charter a superyacht is to indulge in the ultimate getaway: you can slip out from the everyday and into a space where impeccable service, privacy, and luxury are not only attainable but are combined with a feeling of adventure that you won't experience in a hotel. Charter a superyacht and you could find yourself sailing between the most glamorous marinas that grace the Mediterranean or exploring a pristine beach on one of the most remote islands on the planet.

When it comes to choosing a superyacht, you have lots of options, some of the best of which are described below. Most of them are multiple award winners, and all are bound to deliver a vacation experience you won't soon forget.

---

## Firebird

A landscape white with snow might not be the first setting that comes to mind when you picture the ultimate superyacht holiday—unless, perhaps, you're a winter-sports enthusiast with a penchant for adventure.

The spacious *Firebird* has been customized for round-the-world passages. While it cruises the eastern Mediterranean and secluded coastlines of Norway during summer, it is its winter appeal that makes it truly special: *Firebird* is suited to sailing deep into the Arctic Circle. This yacht's crew specializes in taking guests to pristine off-piste ski slopes, and other adventures offered include dogsledding, snowshoeing, glacier hiking, and whale watching.

Ski gear is available and there is an eight-pair boot heater, a ski rack, and a storage cabinet for crampons and ice equipment. The windows that wrap around the saloon offer 360-degree views of the Arctic landscape, while the heated cockpit allows guests to watch the Northern Lights during dinner.



**Sails:** Arctic Norway, eastern Mediterranean, Caribbean, Chile, Antarctica

**Length:** 27 meters

**Sleeps:** seven guests in four cabins

**Crew:** four (in Norway, three plus a mountain guide)

**Built:** 2016

**Cost:** from \$45,000 per week



## EnCore

This motor yacht, which sails New Zealand and the South Pacific, is primed for enjoying life outdoors. You'll discover a variety of al fresco dining locations, a top deck that boasts a Jacuzzi, a bar, and a barbecue area, and an entertainment system for outdoor movie nights.

The styling of *EnCore* is what you'd expect of a modern white yacht: shiny surfaces and clean, contemporary lines. The high railings around the decks make the vessel suitable for families, and the range of watersports gear promises a fun, active holiday: you'll find a large swim platform; jet ski, snorkeling, diving, and fishing equipment; underwater sea scooters; and paddle boards.



**Sails:** New Zealand and South Pacific  
**Length:** 30 meters  
**Sleeps:** eight guests in four cabins  
**Crew:** four  
**Built:** 2011 (2017 refit)  
**Cost:** from \$60,000 per week

## Dunia Baru

One glance at *Dunia Baru* and your imagination will transport you to the spice-trade era, the days of naval exploration, and a time when naturalists were discovering new species almost daily. Even the yacht's name, which is Indonesian for "new world," evokes a sense of discovery. This is a superyacht with adventure ingrained in its DNA.

The traditional two-masted wooden sailing ships of Indonesia inspired the style of the majestic vessel, which was handcrafted there from teak and ironwood by seventh-generation shipwrights. Throughout, the craftsmanship is outstanding, and there are all the comforts and high-tech systems that you'd expect of a modern superyacht.

The decks have ample space for beanbags, sunset cocktail sessions, and al fresco dinners. The ship sails some of the most pristine and secluded archipelagos on earth (including West Papua's Raja Ampat islands, where *Dunia Baru* is pioneering an eco-learning center in a remote village); and it carries all the diving gear and water toys needed to ensure unparalleled adventures.



**Sails:** Indonesia  
**Length:** 51 meters  
**Sleeps:** 14 guests  
**Crew:** 18  
**Built:** 2014  
**Cost:** from \$94,500 per week

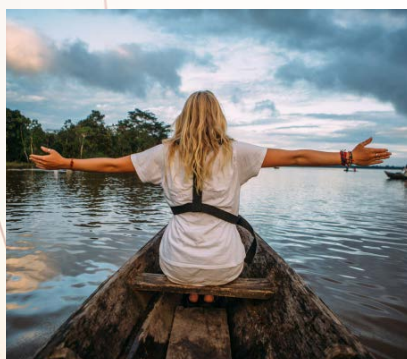
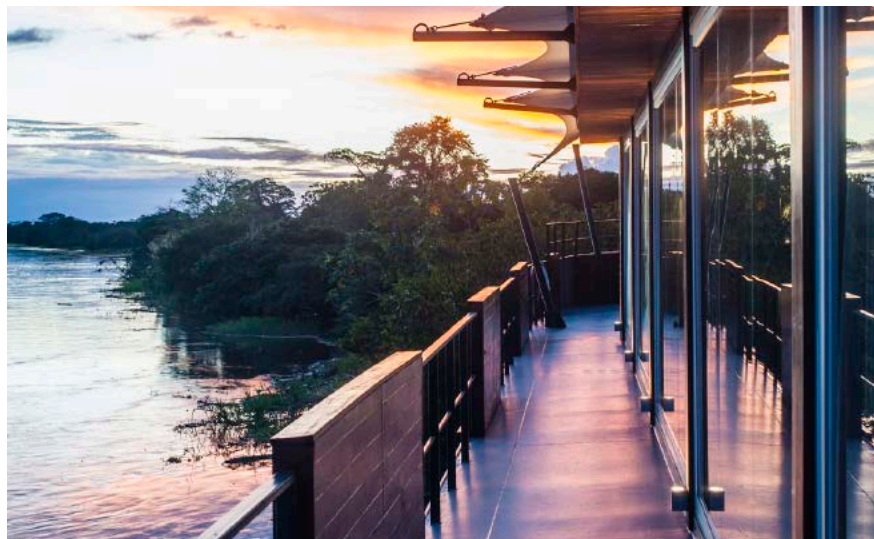


## Aria Amazon

A trip to the Amazon is sure to be amazing—and when that trip is on a vessel designed by Peruvian architect Jordi Puig specifically for cruising that river, you can be certain that there will be no compromises when it comes to amenities.

The 16 suites on *Aria Amazon*, which have their own lounge areas, feature floor-to-ceiling windows, allowing you to enjoy spectacular river and jungle views from the comfort of your own private space. There's a spa, a small gym (with uninterrupted views), and a Jacuzzi on the observation deck.

To help you experience the destination, the boat has an Amazon wildlife reference library, a multimedia room, and kayaks. In some locations, bicycles are available for shore excursions. While individual suites are sold, this floating five-star boutique hotel, which has an upper-deck bar and multiple dining and lounge areas, can be chartered privately.



**Sails:** Peruvian Amazon River

**Length:** 45 meters

**Sleeps:** 32 guests in 16 cabins

**Crew:** 27 (including a paramedic and four English-speaking naturalist guides)

**Built:** 2010 (refurbished 2015)

**Cost:** from \$278,000 per week

## Malahne

In addition to classic beauty and styling, *Malahne* offers a rich history.

Delivered in 1937 to businessman William Lawrence Stephenson (aka the British Mr. Woolworth), the motor yacht initially sailed the Mediterranean and was involved in the Dunkirk evacuations during World War II. When director Sam Spiegel owned *Malahne*, it was the production headquarters for *Lawrence of Arabia* and also hosted Hollywood stars including Grace Kelly, Kirk Douglas, Elizabeth Taylor, and Frank Sinatra.

Though a 1980s refit stripped the yacht of its historical charm, an extensive restoration, completed in 2015, restored its Art Deco glam. Guy Oliver—whose projects have included London's Connaught hotel and 10 Downing Street—designed the sumptuous interiors and the ample deck space, which is perfect for entertaining. While this yacht is reminiscent of a bygone era, it offers all the modern conveniences and water toys you'd expect of a vessel in this class.



**Sails:** Mediterranean and Caribbean

**Length:** 50 meters

**Sleeps:** 10 guests in six cabins

**Crew:** 11

**Built:** 1937 (2015 restoration and refit)

**Cost:** from \$145,000 per week



## Nero

*Nero* is one of the most classic and graceful superyachts to ever have sailed the Mediterranean. The sleek lines of its black steel hull, white superstructure, and bright yellow smokestack are a nod to the yacht that inspired its design: *Corsair IV*, the steamer built in 1930—with no expenses spared—for American financier J.P. Morgan.

Launched in 2007 and extensively refurbished in 2016, the *Nero* is one of the world's largest luxury motor yachts. It transports you back to the elegant 1920s and 1930s, but it incorporates all the latest conveniences.

The vast master suite boasts a cinema lounge, office space, and private dining area. Modern art in antique frames and a grand staircase create a sense of occasion, while the plush furnishings, chosen to echo the colors of the ocean, foster a subtle sense of relaxation. There are abundant lounge and dining venues, extensive deck spaces, a gym, a 5.7-meter swimming pool, a Jacuzzi, a library, state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment, an outdoor cinema and, of course, a wide selection of watersports gear.



**Sails:** Mediterranean  
**Length:** 90.1 meters  
**Sleeps:** 12 guests in eight cabins  
**Crew:** 20  
**Built:** 2007 (2016 refit)  
**Cost:** from \$490,000 per week

## Savannah

Superyacht *Savannah* is a statement of uncompromising opulence blended seamlessly with conscientious cruising. Christina Gherardi, previously head of architecture for Christian Dior, designed the yacht and its interiors, which are characterized by elegant horizontal lines. The hybrid vessel produces very low emissions and operates in almost absolute silence.

*Savannah* boasts features never seen on a yacht before. In the Nemo room, plush couches and cushions face a glass wall that is half submerged, offering sublime views that are simultaneously above and below the ocean. Other features include curved interior walls and extensive windows that allow a view from every room on the yacht's four decks. Spaces flow effortlessly, integrating a sense of place into the elegant and comfortable interiors.

The superyacht also incorporates a modern art collection, a basketball court, an elevator, a 9.1-meter swimming pool, a Jacuzzi, a gym, a hammam, a spa, and a private sundeck with DJ station.



**Sails:** Mediterranean in summer, exotic destinations in winter  
**Length:** 83.5 meters  
**Sleeps:** 12 guests in six cabins  
**Crew:** 24  
**Built:** 2015  
**Cost:** from €1 million per week

### Narina Exelby

(nexelby@bjtonline.com) has contributed to the *Telegraph*, *Fodor's*, the *Guardian*, *Marie Claire*, and many other publications. This is her first article for **BJT**.

# The Access Innovators

These providers are stretching the envelope and defining the future of air charter.

by James Wynbrandt

Business aircraft travelers enter the 2020s with a variety of tools and options introduced in the last decade: membership programs, per-seat charter, all-you-can-fly plans, and instant booking apps. These offerings evolved from developments in the century's first decade, including the expansion of fractional ownership and the introduction of jet cards and point-to-point pricing.

What's next? A handful of providers have taken steps that will enable them to drive the expanding choices you are likely to enjoy over the next decade. Meanwhile, a pilot shortage, a spike in aircraft insurance rates, and costs of meeting avionics mandates like ADS-B are among challenges that could test the survival of some smaller operators, further shifting power to large yet nimble access providers.

The companies featured here are doing more than simply adding to their fleets. They're growing primarily by strategic acquisitions of complementary enterprises, smartly adding programs that customers want, and following well-planned business models. Read on for more about how they're thriving and what they have in the works.

## DIRECTIONAL AVIATION CAPITAL

Directional Aviation Capital (DAC) is a private investment firm whose companies provide business aviation access and support services, including fractional ownership (Flexjet), jet cards (Sentient Jet), on-demand charter and booking-app technology (PrivateFly), remanufactured aircraft (Nextant), and aircraft refurbishment and maintenance (Constant Aviation). Principal Kenn Ricci, who founded DAC in 2007 to fund these businesses, has been building a bizav empire since the early 1980s, when he acquired Corporate Wings, a small, Cleveland-based aircraft charter/management firm.

Flexjet is the U.S. launch customer for Gulfstream's flagship G700, which was introduced in October. The fractional-share provider has also opened a London office to support planned European expansion.

Sentient Jet, meanwhile, has debuted its SJ25+ jet card, which costs \$224,275 and guarantees 25 hours of access to Wi-Fi-equipped, year 2000 or newer super-midsize aircraft. The company's other 25-hour cards include Preferred and Select forms for most varieties, providing access to either year 2000 and newer or pre-2000 aircraft, respectively, while offering guaranteed access, round-trip discounts, liberal callout and cancellation times, and a partnership program that features many on-the-ground perks.



U.K.-based PrivateFly, which DAC bought in 2018, has introduced fixed-price transcontinental programs in the U.S. on Challenger 300s and European city-pair fares aboard the Nextant 400XTi, a light jet upgrade made by DAC's own Nextant Aerospace.

Last year, also, DAC launched Tuvoli, an open-technology charter platform that allows brokers and operators to source, book, and arrange payment for charter and support services. Avinode owns this B2B market now but charges a subscription fee (presumably reflected somewhere in charter rates); Tuvoli charges no ongoing fee.





## WHEELS UP

With the stated goal of democratizing private aviation, Kenny Dichter, developer of NetJets' Marquis jet card, launched Wheels Up in 2013. The first charter-fleet membership program, it offers guaranteed access to the company's owned aircraft at fixed hourly rates. Wheels Up began modestly, utilizing Beechcraft King Air 350i twin turboprops. But it has since expanded its fleet offerings; diversified into charter brokerage; made key acquisitions and technology investments; and established partnerships.

Among a flurry of recent developments, the biggest is Wheels Up's merger with Delta Private Jets, a subsidiary of Delta Air Lines, which will add some 70 owned and operated aircraft to the Wheels Up fleet. Most of the additions are large-cabin jets, a category previously absent from Wheels Up's stable. Moreover, Delta Air Lines will become Wheels Up's largest investor; the access firm has previously announced more than \$550 million in funding.

Wheels Up also bought wholesale light jet charter operator Travel Management Company and its light jets last year, bringing its fleet total to nearly 120 aircraft. But Dichter apparently sees that fleet and its users as just a stepping stone: at the National Business Aviation Association convention in October, he compared the company's foundational closed-fleet membership program to Amazon's book business, which powered its initial growth but now makes up only a fraction of its revenues.



DAVID McINTOSH

Dichter is bullish on the brokerage side of the access marketplace, and Wheels Up went live last year with its online Charter Marketplace, a search app that gives members access to pricing and instant booking of some 1,200 vetted charter aircraft. Then in September Wheels Up bought flight management software developer Avianis, to help build the digital foundations upon which many industry insiders say tomorrow's charter market offerings will be built. Wheels Up's 80-person IT department represents the company's largest division.

In 2019, meanwhile, the company introduced its entry-level Connect membership (\$2,995 for the first year; \$2,495 annually for renewals) for travelers flying 10 or fewer hours per year. The program allows participants to buy seats offered for sale by full members on their flights; it also provides access to the fleet at fixed rates on an as-available rather than guaranteed basis.



## VISTA GLOBAL HOLDINGS

After performing the seemingly impossible by making money chartering out a jet he used for his own business, entrepreneur Thomas Flohr founded Malta-based VistaJet in 2004, offering on-demand and block-hour charter on an owned and operated all-Bombardier fleet of bespoke Globals and large-cabin Challengers. In 2018 the company unveiled its worldwide ambitions with the formation of Vista Global Holdings (VGH), an aviation services company with VistaJet as its flagship offering and some \$200 million in investment capital to fund complementary acquisitions.

VGH then bought charter provider XOJet and per-seat charter pioneer and booking-app-developer JetSmarter and also created a leasing division. Together, these moves allowed the holding company to offer options ranging from per-seat charter to ownership-like leasing of the latest ultra-long-range jets, all without the capital costs of ownership.

Recently, VGH combined XOJet and JetSmarter into XO, a one-stop offering where customers can select the access option that best suits a particular need and book a seat or aircraft instantly. XO's Access membership levels are Rise (up to 15 hours, \$595 annual fee), Select (up to 25 hours), Signature (more than 25 hours), and Elite (for access to three aircraft categories at fixed hourly rates). All of these programs are available in three tiers: Classic (older aircraft, turboprops to heavy jets, many Wi-Fi-equipped), Premium (newer jets from light to ultra-long-range, all with Wi-Fi), and Luxe (the newest jets from super-mids through ultra-long-range, many with designer cabins and high-end amenities).

Early this year, VistaJet welcomed the Bombardier Global 7500 to its fleet, becoming the first operator to provide the ultra-long-range jet for charter. The flagship program also recently launched VistaJet World, a selection of 15 multi-stop travel adventures offering access to places and experiences that have been curated and tailored to suit individual members' passions. One adventure allows travelers to join an archaeological team discovering a lost city in the Amazon rainforest and take part in pioneering research while helping to preserve the region's forests, species, and indigenous cultures. Another is a private tour across the U.S. for meetings with leaders of top emerging health-technology enterprises.

### NETJETS



Analysts have called fractional shares one of the most expensive ways to fly, and in the wake of the 2008 economic meltdown, some pronounced the business model dead. Still, many people continue to prefer fractional ownership because of its tax advantages, lack of administrative headaches compared with full ownership, and other benefits.

As the creator of the fractional-ownership concept, Columbus, Ohio-based NetJets holds a position in the business aviation firmament something akin to George Washington in American history: it sparked a jump in demand and production that transformed business aviation, and its reputation has been burnished by its operation of the world's largest business aviation fleet and its ownership by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway.

NetJets now supplements its signature program with a reinvented jet card offering and ancillary services, including a division (QS Partners) to handle customer transitions in or out of a fractional share and disposal of retiring fleet aircraft.

Not long ago, NetJets began selling jet cards, available in 25-hour increments and for specific models. It also added the Phenom 300 and Citation XLS to its fleet. More recently, the company introduced Access, a customized prepaid program (50-hour annual minimum, three-year term) that provides the equivalent of the fractional-ownership experience for one inclusive fixed annual fee, eliminating all other costs and billing.

On the fractional side of the operation, NetJets began taking deliveries at the end of 2019 of 15 new 12-passenger, super-midsize Citation Longitudes. It will start adding Bombardier Global 7500s next year.

NetJets launched QS Security Services in October, with tiered security packages scaled to the destination's threat level and passenger needs. Currently, security packages are being offered only at Paris Le Bourget and in Mexico; they will expand through North America and Europe this year and into the rest of the Americas, the Middle East, and Africa next year, with worldwide coverage expected in 2023.

NetJets is also opening a sales office in Dubai, U.A.E., in the first quarter of this year to service the Middle East market.

### SOME NOTABLE SMALLER OPERATORS

After opening as a fractional-ownership program in 1999, Omaha, Nebraska's Jet Linx transitioned to a local access/aircraft management company before beginning national expansion of its jet card program a decade ago. Jet Linx teams with a minority stakeholder with strong ties to the business aviation community in each location where it establishes a base. It operates from its own private terminals, and

its card members are served exclusively by its managed fleet, allowing Jet Linx to ensure consistent service.

Jet Linx recently added OpenSeat Exchange, a flight-sharing program, enabling members to buy or sell seats aboard one another's flights through the company's mobile app. It also inaugurated proprietary service standards developed by the *Forbes Travel Guide* and opened its 18th private terminal, at business aviation hub Teterboro Airport, its first in the New York metro area. In addition, Jet Linx expanded its ancillary-benefits offerings, adding programs including discounted medevac plans through MedjetAssist or Medjet Horizon.

Kansas-based fractional-ownership provider Airshare (the former Executive Airshare) launched early in this century in response to local customers looking for a lower-cost alternative to similarly structured national programs. Airshare found the answer with a King Air share offering. Unlike most fractional programs, Airshare allocates flight time based on days rather than hours of use: the company assumes 288 flying days per year, so, for example, a one-eighth share entitles an owner to 36 days of access annually. (Flexjet now employs a days-based plan for its Gulfstream 650 ownership program.)

Today, Airshare offers Phenom 100s and 300s exclusively, with about 100 aircraft in its fleet, and also markets the Embark jet card, which, like the fractional program, is based on days of access (10 minimum) rather than hours. **BJT**

### Rockin' Roll Ups

Amidst the high-profile consolidation underway at the apex of the charter world, some 2,000 small, independent charter operators in the U.S. ply their trade, but they face a litany of mounting challenges. Among them: rising fuel and insurance costs; increasing competition from larger operations with more buying power; human-resource shortages; and infrastructure-upgrade needs.

The pressures could make some indies acquisition targets and cause others to simply close down, leaving their customers to look for new sources of lift. In an effort to forestall such scenarios, brokerage Fly Louie, which arranges shuttle flights in the Northeast, recently launched the Fly Louie Alliance to unite independent operators and use the organization's scale and leverage to craft solutions for members. The alliance offers discounted fuel prices for members, and CEO Julia Takeda reports that more than 30 providers operating over 230 aircraft have joined.

How far up the charter chain could such pressure be felt? JetSuite, owner/operator of an all-Embraer (Phenom 100/300, Legacy 650) charter fleet and the SuiteKey membership program, has proven it can stand on its own, but could it do better allied with one of the new conglomerates? If a Wheels Up can subsume a Delta Private Jets, surely one of these emerging business aviation conglomerates and the JetSuite family could create a mutually advantageous relationship.



**James Wynbrandt**

([jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com](mailto:jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com)), a multi-engine instrument-rated pilot and regular **BJT** contributor, has written for the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, and *Barron's*.



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# New Routes to the Runway

Charter, membership, and jet card programs add more options for business jet travelers.

*by James Wynbrandt*

Once approximately as short as a handwritten prix fixe dinner menu at a Michelin-starred restaurant, the list of available jet card, membership, shuttle, and other charter access programs now resembles a roadside diner's multi-page opus. For business jet travelers, that means expanded routes and regions, more pricing options, and greater choice of aircraft models via programs that are likely more convenient and less costly than on-demand charter.

If you're happy with your current service, you may feel little need to investigate new alternatives, and that's perfectly reasonable. Conversely, if you're a charter neophyte or are considering a switch, don't focus on the latest access programs alone. Many long-standing providers continue to offer excellent card, block-charter, and other options, complete with fully refundable deposits and guaranteed access, and they deserve consideration

despite their lack of new bells and whistles.

Still, those bells and whistles are noteworthy. The expanding universe of options reflects growing consumer sophistication and grasp of details from hourly rates and baggage capacities to high-and-hot runway requirements, in combination with digital technologies allowing providers to identify and exploit service niches.

Here we present some of the new programs and other developments driving today's action.



Before the recent announcement of **Delta Private Jets**' merger with **Wheels Up**, the Delta Air Lines subsidiary introduced long-range aircraft to its jet card program (minimum deposit \$150,000) and added more lift (*see sidebar*) to support that and its Sky Access on-demand charter customers (\$6,000 annual membership).

\*\*\*\*\*

Massachusetts-based **Magellan Jets** has restructured its card program with the debut of the Elevate Card, which features all-inclusive guaranteed rates, access to all fleet aircraft without interchange fees, and no peak-day surcharges or blackout days. Backed by a 30-day money-back guarantee, the customizable cards provide options, including standard light- and midsize-jet pricing versus preferred aircraft. Standard light jets cost \$5,250 per hour, and the Phenom 300, new to the fleet, is \$7,199. Standard midsize runs \$6,994 and the Hawker 800XP is \$7,751. Hourly rates for a super-midsize Citation X and large-cabin Gulfstream 450 are \$8,972 and \$13,500, respectively. The card also provides access in New York City to Sikorsky helicopters (\$13,799 per hour, \$4,100 trip minimum).

\*\*\*\*\*

Could "premium" per seat be the next big charter trend? High-end per-seat shuttle membership program **Airspace**, linking the New York City area and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, launched in December and immediately sold out its limited-availability membership program. (There is a wait list.) Aimed at filling a gap between charter and first-class com-

mercial service, Airspace lets members select individual seats, priced by location on the aircraft, on a Gulfstream 650 or Bombardier Global 6000. The monthly fee for individual members is \$2,600, which guarantees the right to purchase one seat per month. Helmed by CEO Robert Molsbergen, former NetJets COO, Airspace plans to add New York-Los Angeles as its next shuttle route this year.

\*\*\*\*\*

Fixed-rate transatlantic jet cards offered by brokers are in vogue. These programs are backed by commitments from operators to make specific tail numbers available, from models including Bombardier Global 5000 and 6000, Dassault Falcon 7X and 8X, and Gulfstream GV and G550/650 jets.

Publicly traded U.K. mega-broker **Air Partner** introduced a fixed-rate, guaranteed-availability, fully refundable transatlantic jet card, with an entry-level 10-hour card priced at \$156,500 (seven-hour-segment minimum), with a 15 percent discount for qualifying round trips. On the card, one-way from Teterboro, New Jersey, to London Luton would run about \$109,550, and Washington, D.C., to Paris Le Bourget would cost about \$117,845.

\*\*\*\*\*

New York's **JetSet Group** has also introduced a transatlantic card, starting at \$145,000 for 10 hours of flight time, with no peak-day surcharges and 10 percent round-trip discounts, as has New Hampshire-based jet card brokerage and aviation consul-

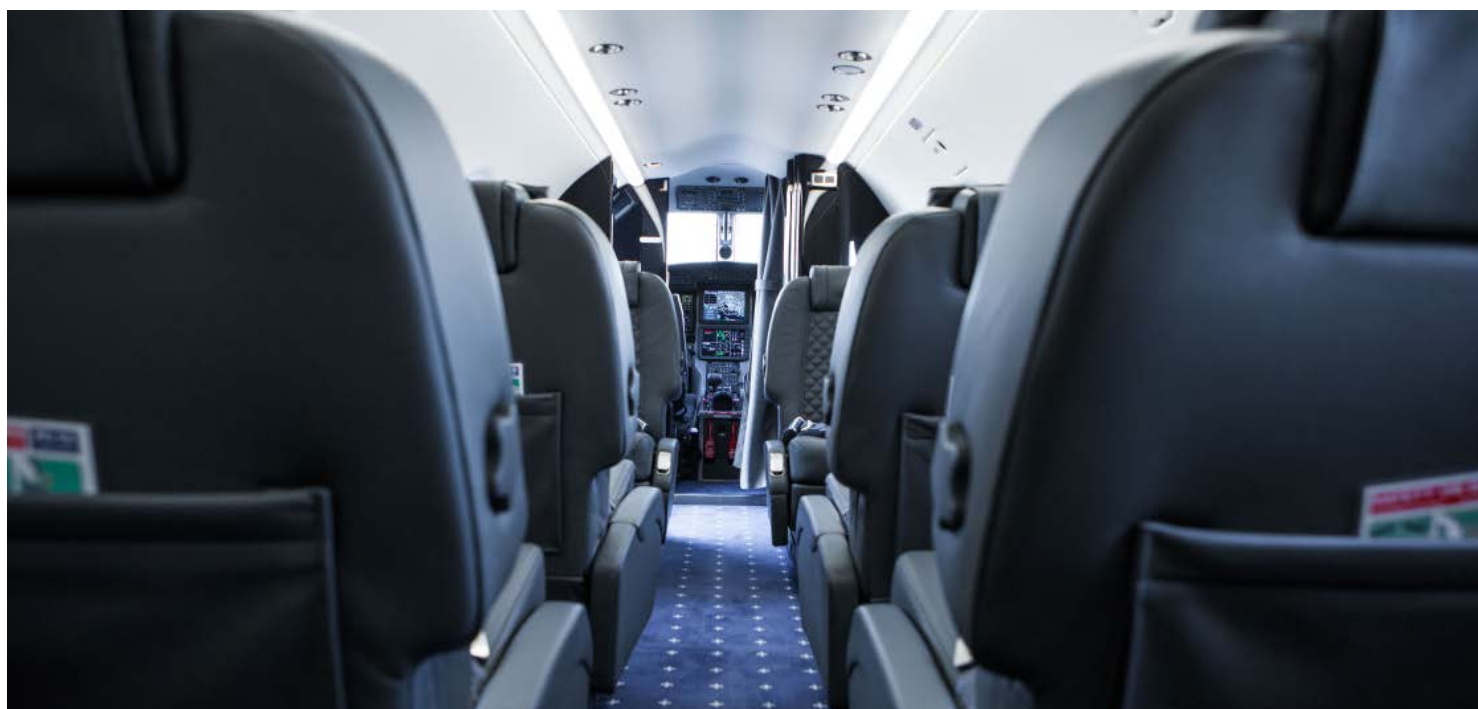


tancy **Private Jet Services Group**.

PJSG has also rolled out updated memberships, allowing customers to choose either estimated or actual flight times for their charges when booking, and reducing minimum flight times on light jets from 78 to 60 minutes. The company's cards offer Elite (year 2000 and newer) hourly aircraft access for \$5,490 (light jets) to \$13,005 (heavy jets). Priority (pre-2000) aircraft access costs \$4,890 (light jets) to \$11,050 (heavy jets).

\*\*\*\*\*

Rebounding from setbacks in 2018, **Surf Air**, the all-you-can-fly membership model pioneer, is expanding the schedule and frequency of its flights, linking the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas, along with Las Vegas and Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Growth has been driven by Surf Air's entry-level Express membership, introduced a year ago, which provides individual seats starting at \$500 each for one annual \$2,500 fee. The company also still offers its \$1,995-a-month all-you-can-fly pro-



gram and is expanding with the recent purchase of charter broker BlackBird.

\*\*\*\*\*

Wondering what happened to Dallas-based shuttle charter airline **JetSuiteX**? It rebranded as **JSX** and continues to sell seats on scheduled flights aboard its 30-passenger, business-class-configured Embraer E135s. JSX's route network includes Las Vegas; Phoenix; and, in California, Orange County, Concord/East Bay, Oakland, Burbank, and (seasonally) Mammoth Mountain. In April, it is adding service between Portland, Oregon, and Seattle.

\*\*\*\*\*

Now you can trade your obsolete jet for a jet card. With ADS-B mandates grounding legacy airframes, **Alliance Aviation** and **Encore Plane Parts**, which specializes in aircraft disposals, have partnered to offer a Fly Alliance jet card for owners of mandate-grounded aircraft. If you're parting out your aircraft, you can exchange a portion of the hull value for jet card hours, yielding a higher rate of value than a cash sale would produce, the companies say. You provide a CAMP or equivalent report, Encore inspects the aircraft,

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## Some Noteworthy Fleet Additions

- California's **Solairus Aviation** recently became the first operator to offer the Gulfstream G600 for charter. Its G600, based at San Francisco International Airport, boasts a 6,500-mile range and a maximum speed of Mach 0.925.
  - **Delta Private Jets** has added three large-cabin Gulfstreams and a Dassault Falcon 900. Based in the New York metro area and southeastern U.S., DPJ operates more than 70 Wi-Fi-equipped jets in its charter fleet.
  - **Presidential Aviation** based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, notched the first Gulfstream G500 in its managed charter fleet. Joining the 15 jets on Presidential's charter certificate, the 18-passenger twinjet is based at Miami Opa-Locka Executive Airport.
  - In San Diego, **Latitude 33** took delivery in December of its sixth Bombardier aircraft—a Challenger 350 that has the distinction of being the first airplane the manufacturer has delivered with a load of sustainable aviation fuel.
  - Jet card provider **Nicholas Air** introduced a Phenom 300E to its fleet late last year and plans mid- and super-mid fleet additions this year.
  - Boca Raton, Florida's **Journey Aviation** added a Gulfstream GIV-SP—its first wholly-owned aircraft—to its charter certificate, bringing the firm's heavy jet charter fleet to 15 Gulfstreams, Falcons, and Hawks.
  - Joining a G650 from the same owner, **Planet Nine Private Air** added a Gulfstream 550 to its fleet and has expanded support staff and hangar space at its Van Nuys, California, base to accommodate the aircraft.
  - Another Van Nuys-based operator, **Clay Lacy**, added a Gulfstream GV to its fleet, but this one is in Naples, Florida. The GV is the only ultra-long-range charter aircraft based in Naples, according to Clay Lacy, and its recently updated interior features a three-zone configuration and divans that convert into beds.
- 







and you take payment in jet card hours (though cash payment is also available). Sold in 25-hour blocks from 25 to 100 hours, the Alliance card offers light to large-cabin jets for \$4,995 to \$10,890 per hour, as well as fixed one-way rates on popular routes and roundtrip discounts. (The majority of card programs include the 7.5 percent Federal Excise Tax in quoted hourly rates but this program does not.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Shuttle and on-demand charter operator **Tradewind Aviation** has introduced a Pilatus PC-12 turboprop card. Using the 23 PC-12s in the Connecticut company's managed fleet, the card covers the Northeast U.S. and Caribbean (within 300 nautical miles of Tradewinds' operating bases at New York's Westchester County and San Juan International Airports, respectively). It doesn't guarantee availability but does

offer fixed-rate, one-way pricing on popular routes, and no peak-day surcharges or blackout dates. Hourly rates range from \$4,100 (10 hours) to \$3,800 (40 hours), and single-day roundtrips can qualify for a 30 percent discount.

\*\*\*\*\*

With concerns about sustainability rising, Washington, D.C., brokerage **Paramount Business Jets** has introduced the Easy Private Jet Carbon Offset Calculator, enabling charter and business aircraft passengers to compute their emissions, flight-by-flight, based on the airplane type and time en route. Available on the company's website, the calculator lets users enter origin, destination, and aircraft type from dropdown menus; then it computes flight time and emissions and lists organizations (Terrapass, Carbon Fund, and Climate Care, for example) that offer carbon credits for the flight.

Paramount founder and CEO Richard Zaher says he will provide the source code for the calculator free of charge to any companies wishing to post it on their websites.

\*\*\*\*\*

Anticipating growth in its charter business in the Americas, **Air Charter Service** has more than doubled the size of its U.S. headquarters in New York. The global brokerage opened three of its nine offices in the hemisphere in the last two years, and "we have more planned in the near future," ACS Americas president Richard Thompson says. Along with ability to select the aircraft model, the company's Empyrean jet card provides a choice of capped hourly rates and guaranteed access; fixed hourly rates based on aircraft category; or market rates based on dynamic pricing. **BJT**



## SPECIAL SECTION: LIFT PROVIDERS—COMPANY DIRECTORY

PROVIDERS OF AIR CHARTER (AC), JET CARDS (JC), FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP (FO), AND FLIGHT CLUBS (FC)

### AAG

(flyaag.com, 845-463-6500)

Wappingers Falls, New York.

*Subsidiary of Sikorsky Aircraft operates its S-76 helicopters in Northeast U.S. [AC, FO]*

### Advantage Aviation Charter

(advantageaviationcharter.com, 510-299-5716)

Hayward, California. Also: Santa Ana, California.

*Argus Gold-rated company operates Citation Xs, Gulfstream IV-SPs, Gulfstream Vs, and more and provides broker services for access to aircraft not in fleet. [AC]*

### Aero Air

(aeroair.com, 503-640-3711)

Hillsboro, Oregon.

*Fleet ranges from turboprops to large-cabin jets. [AC]*

### Aero-Dienst

(aero-dienst.de, +49 911 93 56 603)

Nuremberg, Germany.

*Fleet includes Cessna CJ4 and Learjet 45XR and 60. [AC]*

### Aerolineas Ejecutivas

(aerolineasejecutivas.com, 800-712-0414)

Toluca, Mexico.

*Operates more than 25 aircraft, from Leonardo AW109 helicopters to Hawker and Learjet midsize business jets. [AC]*

### Air Charter Service

(aircharterservice.com, 310-205-8959)

Los Angeles. Also: Uniondale, New York; Miami; Houston; Charlotte, North Carolina; San Francisco; Kazakhstan; Moscow and Saint Petersburg, Russia; Toronto; São Paulo, Brazil; Paris; Frankfurt, Germany; Madrid, Spain; Geneva; Surrey, U.K.; Johannesburg, South Africa; Dubai and Abu Dhabi, UAE; Sydney, Australia; Beijing; Hong Kong; Mumbai, India. *Charter broker arranges nearly 9,000 charters annually. [AC, JC]*

### Air Partner

(airpartner.com, +44 203-457-0879)

London. Also: Fort Lauderdale, Florida; New York; Washington; Houston; Los Angeles; Paris; Cologne, Germany; Vienna, Austria; Milan, Italy; Monaco; Moscow; Singapore; Madrid, Spain; Zurich, Switzerland; Budapest, Hungary; İstanbul, Turkey. *Charter broker offers access to all aircraft categories and types from vetted operators. [AC, JC]*

### Airshare

(flyairshare.com, 877-372-5136)

Lenexa, Kansas.

*Fleet includes Embraer Phenom 100 and 300. [AC, FO]*

### Airstream Jets

(airstreamjets.com, 561-826-7056)

Boca Raton, Florida. Also: Teterboro, New Jersey. *Jet card offers distance-based pricing. [AC, JC]*

### Alerion Aviation

(flyalerion.com, 855-359-2576)

Los Angeles. Also: Teterboro, New Jersey; Long Beach, California; Farmingdale, New York; West Palm Beach, Florida.

*Operates large, super-midsize, and midsize jets. [AC]*

### AMAC Corporate Jet

(amacaerospace.com/aircraft-management-charter-request, +41 58 310 32 32)

Zurich, Switzerland.

*Charter broker for everything from small turboprops to VIP airliners. [AC]*

### Chapman Freeborn

(chapman-freeborn.com/en, +86 10 5676 2020)

Beijing. Also: Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Houston; London; Melbourne; Belgium; Toronto; Hong Kong; Shanghai; Copenhagen, Denmark; Paris; Berlin; Cologne, Frankfurt, and Munich, Germany; Mumbai and New Delhi, India; Milan, Italy; Amsterdam, Netherlands; Katowice and Warsaw, Poland; Lisbon, Portugal; Bucharest, Romania; Singapore; Johannesburg, South Africa; Seoul, South Korea; Barcelona and Madrid, Spain; Zurich, Switzerland; Dubai, U.A.E.; Entebbe, Uganda.

*Charter broker offers access to aircraft from helicopters to executive-configured airliners sourced from vetted commercial and business aircraft operators. [AC]*

### Chartright Air Group

(chartright.com, 800-595-9395)

Mississauga, Canada. Also: Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Calgary, Regina, Vancouver, and Waterloo, Canada.

*Charter operator, founded 1987, has fleet ranging from turboprops to large jets such as Falcon 900B and Challenger 605. [AC]*

### Clay Lacy Aviation

(claylacy.com, 818-989-2900)

Van Nuys, California. Also: Oxford, Connecticut; Seattle; Carlsbad, Long Beach, Santa Ana, Santa Monica, Santa Barbara, and Oakland, California; Kahului, Hawaii; Belgrade, Montana; Las Vegas; Portland, Oregon; Philadelphia; White Plains, New York; Miami; Bedford, Massachusetts; Nashua and Portsmouth, New Hampshire; West Palm Beach, Florida.

*Founded 1968. Operates large fleet. [AC]*





**Contour**

(flycfm.com, 615-534-4600)

Smyrna, Tennessee.

*Founded 1982. Fleet includes Bombardier Challenger 300, Hawker 800, Learjet 35, Citation V. [AC]*

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**Corporate Eagle**

(corporateeagle.com, 248-461-9000)

Waterford Township, Michigan.

*Argus Platinum-rated provider serves southeast Michigan with 13 aircraft. [FO, JC]*

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**CSI Aviation**

(csiaviation.com, 800-765-9464)

Albuquerque, New Mexico.

*Founded in 1979. Operates twin-engine turboprops. [AC]*

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**Deer Jet**

(en.deerjet.com, +86 4000 666888)

Beijing. Also: Shanghai; Hong Kong, and Tianjing, China.

*[AC, FO, JC]*

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**Delta Private Jets**

(deltaprivatejets.com, 859-534-4300)

Erlanger, Kentucky.

*Division of Delta Air Lines. Fractional and card programs offer one-way pricing using more than 1,000 light, midsize, super-midsize, and large-cabin jets from owned and managed fleet and partner charter operators. [AC, FO, JC]*

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**Desert Jet**

(desertjet.com, 800-381-5387)

Palm Springs, California.

*Operates seven Citation jets and brokers charter through affiliate network of operators. [AC]*

---

**Dumont Jets**

(dumontgroup.com/charter, 302-317-3310)

New Castle, Delaware.

*Jets for charter include several Gulfstream IV-SPs, Falcon 2000s, and a Hawker 400XP. [AC]*

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**Elevate**

(elevatecharter.com, 365-778-1188)

Toronto.

*Brokers on-demand charter and arranges empty-leg and shared flights. [AC]*

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**Elliott Aviation**

(elliottaviation.com, 800-447-6711)

Minneapolis. Also: Des Moines, Iowa; Moline, Illinois.

*Fleet includes Citation Excel, Hawker 400 XP, Learjet 45XR, and Nextant 400XT. [AC]*

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**Empire Aviation Group**

(empire.aero, +971 4 299 8444)

United Arab Emirates. Also: Karnataka, India; Scottsdale, Arizona.

*Charter fleet includes Bombardier Global 6000, Global Express XRS, Embraer Legacy 650. [AC]*

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**ExcelAire**

(excelaire.com, 800-773-9235)

Ronkonkoma, New York.

*Fleet includes Cessna Citation Latitude, Embraer Legacy 600, Gulfstream GV. [AC]*

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**ExecuJet**

(execujet.com, +41 1 223 803 555)

Zürich, Switzerland. Also: Singapore; Cape Town, South Africa; Moscow; Palma, Spain; Dubai, U.A.E.; Toluca, Mexico.

*Fleet ranges from light jets to a Lineage 1000 bizliner and helicopters. [AC, JC]*

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**Executive Flightways**

(fly-efi.com, 800-533-3363)

Ronkonkoma, New York.

*Founded 1981. Operates light to heavy jets. [AC]*

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**Executive Jet Management**

(executivejetmanagement.com, 800-451-2822)

Cincinnati. Also: London.

*NetJets division offers "city pair" one-way pricing and flat-rate pay-as-you-go block-charter program with discounted rates. [AC]*

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**FAI Rent-a-Jet**

(rent-a-jet.de/en, +49-911-36009-0)

Nuremberg, Germany.

*Founded 1987. Has more than two dozen aircraft, including seven Global Expresses. [AC]*

---

**Fair Wind Air Charter**

(flyfairwind.com, 800-989-9665)

Stuart, Florida.

*Serves North and South America with more than 20 aircraft from light to large-cabin jets and access to additional lift from vetted operators. Offers airport-to-airport guaranteed pricing and one-way and round-trip per-hour rates. [AC]*

---

**Flexjet**

(flexjet, 866-473-0025)

Cleveland.

*Provides access to light, super-light, midsize, large, and ultra-long-range jets. Fleet includes Gulfstream, Embraer, and Bombardier models. [FO, JC]*

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**Flightstar**

(flightstar.com, 800-747-4777)

Savoy, Illinois.

*Wide-ranging charter fleet travels to over 13 worldwide destinations, including Africa and Russia. [AC]*

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**FlightWorks**

(flightworks.com, 770-422-7375)

Atlanta.

*Fleet ranges from turboprops to large-cabin business jets. [AC, JC]*

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**Freespeed Aviation**

(freespeedaviation.com, 310-362-6909)

Newport Beach, California.

*Brokers charter flights, handles aircraft sales and acquisitions, and offers consulting services. [AC]*

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**Freestream Aircraft**

(freestream.com/charter-2, +44 20 7584 3800)

London.

*Offers wide-ranging fleet with aircraft based worldwide. [AC]*

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**Gama Aviation**

(gamaaviation.com, +44 1252 553020)

Farnborough, United Kingdom.

*Operates large fleet of aircraft in Asia, Europe, and Middle East. [AC]*

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**Gama Aviation Signature**

(gamasignature.com, 203-337-4600)

Shelton, Connecticut. Also: Dallas; Santa Clara, California; Chicago and Waukegan, Illinois; Stratford, Connecticut; White Plains, New York; Milwaukee; St. Louis; Los Angeles; Bedford, Massachusetts; Las Vegas; West Palm Beach, Florida; Teterboro, New Jersey.

*Over 200 aircraft in fleet. [AC]*

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**Hongkong Jet**

(hongkongjet.com.hk/our-services, +852 3126 1000)

Hong Kong.

*Operates Gulfstream and Falcon large-cabin jets and a Boeing BBJ 737-700 IGW with seating for up to 27 passengers. [AC]*

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## SPECIAL SECTION: LIFT PROVIDERS—COMPANY DIRECTORY

PROVIDERS OF AIR CHARTER (AC), JET CARDS (JC), FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP (FO), AND FLIGHT CLUBS (FC)

### JA Air Center

(jaflight.com/charter, 630-549-2150)

Chicago.

*Charters Citation Bravo and Citation Caravan. [AC]*

### Jet Aviation

(jetaviation.com, +41 58 158 8686)

Basel, Switzerland. Also: Teterboro, New Jersey.

*Wide-ranging charter services available worldwide. [AC]*

### Jet Edge

(flyjetedge.com, 818-442-0096)

Van Nuys, California.

*Operates more than 30 predominantly large-cabin jets. [AC]*

### Jet Linx

(jetlinx.com, 404-465-1550)

Atlanta. Also: Englewood, Colorado; Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston, Texas; Indianapolis; Nashville, Tennessee; Omaha, Nebraska; Scottsdale, Arizona; St. Louis; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Waterford Township, Michigan; Bedford, Massachusetts; Wheeling, Illinois; Teterboro, New Jersey; Bridgeton, Missouri; Sterling, Virginia.

*Offers jet cards for light, midsize, super-midsize, and large-cabin jets. [AC, JC]*

### Jet Methods

(jetmethods.com, 877-538-6384)

Carlsbad, California.

*Founded 2003. [AC]*

### Jet Partners

(jetpartners.aero, 866-235-2852)

New York.

*Broker arranges flights worldwide and specializes in empty legs. [AC, JC]*

### Jetlux

(jetlux.com, 855-538-5893)

Miami.

*Broker offers access to small, midsize, and large jets. [AC]*

### JetOptions Private Jets

(flyjetoptions.com, 310-573-7778)

Beverly Hills, California. Also: Dallas.

*Argus- and Wyvern-registered broker founded in 2000. [AC, JC]*

### JetSelect Aviation

(jetselectaviation.com, 614-586-1425)

Columbus, Ohio.

*Owned by Jet Edge, operates two-dozen light-mid, midsize, super-midsize, and large-cabin jets for U.S. and international service with locations across the U.S. [AC]*

### JetSuite

(jetsuite.com, 866-779-7770)

Irvine, California.

*Owns and operates Embraer Phenom 100s and JetSuite Edition Cessna Citation CJ3 light jets in continental U.S. and Carribean.*

*One-way pricing; membership program provides discount rates. [AC, JC]*

### Journey Aviation

(journeyflight.com, 561-826-9400)

Florida. Also: Teterboro, New Jersey;

Van Nuys, California. [AC]

### Kalitta Charters

(kalittacharters.com, 800-525-4882)

Ypsilanti, Michigan.

*Fleet includes Learjets, Falcons, and King Air turboprops. [AC]*

### L.J. Aviation

(laviation.com, 888-552-4278)

Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

*Fleet includes everything from helicopters and turboprops to large-cabin jets. [AC]*

### Latitude 33 Aviation

(l33jets.com, 800-840-0310)

Carlsbad, California.

*Argus Platinum-rated company charters Cessna Citations and Embraer Phenoms. [AC]*

### LeBas International

(lebas.com, 805-593-0510)

Huntington Beach, California.

Also: Shannon, Ireland.

*Founded 1990. Broker books flights via charter carriers worldwide. [AC]*

### Leviate Air Group

(leviateair.com, 877-407-8507)

Dallas.

*Fleet includes light jets, turboprop aircraft, helicopters, and larger aircraft ranging in size from midsize to ultra long range. [AC]*

### Linear Air

(linearair.com, 877-254-6327)

Bedford, Massachusetts. Also: Utah.

*Operates Eclipse 500 VLJs and Cirrus SR22 single-engine piston aircraft, offering low-cost short-haul charter in the Northeast, Southeast, and Salt Lake City areas of the U.S. [AC]*

### Luxaviation

(luxaviation.com/en, +352 4252 52)

Luxembourg.

*Offers flights in Europe, Africa, Asia Pacific region, Middle East, and Latin America. [AC]*

### Lyon Aviation

(lyonaviation.com, 413-443-6700)

Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

*Family-owned firm, founded 1980. Owned and operated fleet includes Hawkers, Falcon 50s, several heavy jets. [AC]*

### Mac Air Group

(macairgroup.com, 888-359-7600)

South Portland, Maine.

*Charters light to large jets and offers fractional program that incorporates revenue sharing. [AC, FC]*

### Magellan Jets

(magellanjets.com, 877-550-5387)

Quincy, Massachusetts.

*Charters aircraft ranging from turboprops to heavy jets. Also offers helicopter service and jet cards starting at 25 hours. [AC, JC]*

### Meridian Air Charter

(meridian.aero, 201-288-5040)

Teterboro, New Jersey.

Also: Hayward, California.

*Operates a score of business jets and accesses additional lift from select vetted aircraft. [AC]*

### MetroJet

(metrojet.com, +852 2523 6407)

Hong Kong.

*Founded 1995. Offers charter and block charter in China, Philippines, and Singapore. [AC]*

### Million Air

(millionair.com/charter, 713-640-4000)

Houston. Also: Addison, Texas and Richmond, Virginia.

*Charters more than a dozen business jets, ranging from Citation CJ3 to Gulfstream G650. [AC]*



### Mountain Aviation

(mountainaviation.com, 877-700-2491)

Broomfield, Colorado. Also: Telluride, Aspen, and Vail, Colorado.

*Operates worldwide with more than a dozen aircraft in managed fleet and partner network. [AC]*

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### National Airways Corporation

(nac.co.za, +27 11 267 5000)

Johannesburg, South Africa. [AC]

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### NetJets

(netjets.com, 877-356-5823)

Columbus, Ohio.

*Berkshire Hathaway-owned behemoth operates the fractional industry's largest, most diverse fleet. Marquis Jet Card offers access in 25-hour blocks. [FO, JC]*

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### NetJets Europe

(netjetseurope.com/pt, +351 21 446 8400)

Lisbon, Portugal. [FO]

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### Nicholas Air

(nicholasair.com, 866-935-7771)

Oxford, Mississippi. Also: Atlanta; Charlotte, North Carolina; San Francisco; Dallas; Nashville, Tennessee.

*Serves U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Caribbean and offers access to Citation CJ3 and Latitude jets, Pilatus PC-12 turboprop, and Embraer Phenom 100/300 light jets. [FC, FO, JC]*

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### Nomad Aviation

(nomadjet.com, +41 58 800 0800)

Zurich, Switzerland. Also: Malta.

*Fleet includes Bombardier Challenger 604, Embraer Legacy 600, Cessna Citation CJ1+. [AC]*

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### Northern Jet Management

(northernjet.net, 800-462-7709)

Grand Rapids, Michigan.

*Fleet includes Learjet 40XR, 45XR, 70. [AC, JC]*

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### Ojets

(ojets.com/en, +65 6350 7199)

Singapore.

*Offers on-demand and block-hour charter. Fleet includes Bombardier Global 6000s, Challenger 650. [AC]*

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### Paramount Business Jets

(paramountbusinessjets.com, 877-727-2538)

Leesburg, Virginia.

*Charter broker offers aircraft in all categories worldwide. [AC, JC]*

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### Pentastar Aviation

(pentastaraviation.com, 800-662-9612)

Waterford Township, Michigan.

*Operates light, midsize, super-midsize, and heavy jets. [AC]*

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### PlaneSense

(planesense.com, 888-214-1212)

*Offers shares in Pilatus PC-12 single-engine turboprops and PC-24 and Nextant 400XTi light jets. Operating area includes continental US, Canada, Bahamas, Bermuda, Caribbean. [AC]*

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### Priester Aviation

(priesterav.com, 888-323-7887)

Wheeling, Illinois.

*Founded 1945. Operates more than 20 aircraft, from turboprops to large-cabin models. [AC]*

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### Privaira

(privaira.com, 844-778-2472)

Boca Raton, Florida. Also: Teterboro, New Jersey.

*Operates fleet ranging from turboprops to long-range business jets. [AC, JC]*

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### Red Wing Aeroplane

(redwingaero.com, 651-797-0900)

Bay City, Wisconsin.

*Operates a dozen Citation V and Citation V Ultra aircraft and serves U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Caribbean. [AC]*

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### Reynolds Jet

(reynoldsjet.com, 877-533-0393)

Cincinnati.

*Operates light, midsize, super-midsize, and large-cabin jets worldwide. [AC]*

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### Royal Jet

(royaljetgroup.com, +971 2 5051 500)

Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.

*Fleet includes Bombardier Global 5000, and Boeing BBJ, as well as medevac aircraft. [AC]*

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### SC Aviation

(scaviation.net, 866-290-9999)

Chicago. Also: Milwaukee and Janesville, Wisconsin. [AC]

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### Sentient Jet

(sentient.com, 866-602-0044)

Braintree, Massachusetts.

*Jet cards provide access to light, midsize, super-midsize, and heavy jets from more than 100 vetted operators. [JC]*

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### Sierra West Airlines

(sierrawestairlines.com, 800-538-7787)

Oakdale, California.

Also: El Paso, Texas; Swanton, Ohio. *Founded 1982. Charters Learjet 55, Metroliner III, and Falcon 20. [AC]*

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## SPECIAL SECTION: LIFT PROVIDERS—COMPANY DIRECTORY

PROVIDERS OF AIR CHARTER (AC), JET CARDS (JC), FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP (FO), AND FLIGHT CLUBS (FC)

### Silver Air

(silverair.com, 800-889-5840)

Santa Barbara, California.

*Charters nearly two dozen managed aircraft, ranging from light jets to BBJ. [AC]*

### Skycharter

(skycharter.com, 905-677-6901)

Mississauga, Canada.

*Charter fleet includes 11 business jets. [AC]*

### Skyjet

(skyjet.com, 855-475-9538)

New York.

*Broker arranges flights aboard all categories of aircraft from vetted operators. Owned by Directional Aviation Capital, parent of Flight Options, Flexjet, and Sentient. [AC]*

### Skyservice

(skyservice.com, 888-759-7591)

Toronto. Also: Ottawa, Calgary, and Montreal, Canada.

*Operates more than 30 aircraft ranging from helicopters and turboprops to all categories of business jets. [AC]*

### SoFly

(soflyus.com, 770-886-3700)

Atlanta.

*Founded 1989. Broker provides aircraft worldwide. [AC]*

### Solairus Aviation

(solairusaviation.com, 800-359-7861)

Petaluma, California. Also: Harrison, New York; Englewood, Colorado.

*Operates charter aircraft, from turboprops to large-cabin jets, based across the U.S., and sources aircraft from vetted operators. [AC, FC]*

### Sun Air Jets

(sunairjets.com, 805-389-9330)

Los Angeles. Also: Camarillo, California.

*Founded 1999. Operates nearly a dozen heavy and super-midsize jets, including Gulfstream V, G500, and GIV-SP; Global 6000; Challenger 601 and 605; Citation X; Falcon 2000; and Hawker 800XP. [AC]*

### Sunwest Aviation

(sunwestaviation.ca, 888-291-4566)

Calgary, Canada.

*Offers more than a dozen aircraft types, from turboprops to light, midsize, and large-cabin jets. [AC]*

### Surf Air

(surfair.com, 800-365-6179)

California. Also: Texas.

*Offers unlimited flights between Southern and Northern California and Nevada cities for monthly fee. Similar deal covers flights within Texas. Also offers flights on a la carte basis. [AC, FC]*

### TAG Aviation

(tagaviation.com, +41 22 717 00 00)

Geneva. Also: Farnborough, England; Bahrain; Malta.

*Operates more than 50 aircraft, including many European-based large-cabin jets, and sources aircraft from partner operators worldwide. [AC]*

### Talon Air

(talonairjets.com, 888-825-6624)

Farmingdale, New York.

*Owns and operates helicopters, turboprops, and light, midsize, super-midsize, and large-cabin jets. [AC]*

### Tampa Bay Aviation

(tampabayaviation.com, 727-461-5229)

Clearwater, Florida. Also: St. Petersburg, Florida.

*Fleet includes single-engine piston models, turboprops, and small jets as well as helicopters. Offers discount-card program. [AC, JC]*

### Travel Management Company

(tmcjets.com, 866-569-3296)

Elkhart, Indiana.

*Operates more than two dozen business jets and offers point-to-point pricing. [AC]*

### Ultimate Jetcharters

(ultimatejetcharters.com, 330-497-3344)

North Canton, Ohio.

*Operates 30-seat Dornier 328 jets. [AC]*

### Velocity Jets

(velocityjets.com, 866-575-5387)

Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

*Brokers charter and offers jet card utilizing worldwide network of 5,500 aircraft of all categories. [AC, JC]*

### VistaJet

(vistajet.com, +852 2901 0500)

Hong Kong. Also: Beijing, New York.

*Owns and operates all-Bombardier fleet (Challenger 350, 605, and 850, Global 5000 and 6000) in Europe, Russia and CIS, Africa, Middle East, Asia, U.S., and China. [AC]*

### Voyager Jet Center

(voyagerjet.com, 412-267-8000)

West Mifflin, Pennsylvania. [AC, JC]

### Western Aircraft

(westair.com, 800-333-3442)

Boise, Idaho.

*Charters Pilatus PC-12, PC-24. [AC]*

### Western Airways

(flywesternairways.com, 800-373-0896)

Houston.

*Founded 1974. [AC, FC]*

### Wheels Up

(wheelsup.com, 855-359-8760)

New York.

*Offers hourly pricing and access to King Air 350i and Citation Excel/XLS. [AC]*

### Wing Aviation

(wingaviation.com, 866-944-9464)

Houston.

*Operates more than 20 aircraft, ranging from twin turboprops to large-cabin jets. [AC]*

### Worldwide Jet Charter

(worldwidejet.com, 602-726-9990)

Phoenix.

*Fleet includes, Gulfstream IVs, and Bombardier Global Express, Challengers, and Learjet 60s. [AC]*

### XO

(flyxo.com, 888-803-5996)

Dubai, U.A.E.

*Offers point-to-point pricing on more than 40 owned-and-operated, Wi-Fi-equipped light, midsize, super-midsize and large-cabin jets and an additional 900 aircraft through Preferred Partner Network. [AC, FC]*

*Though this directory includes companies that BJT deems noteworthy, a listing here does not represent an endorsement by the magazine. Visit BJTonline.com for an expanded interactive directory that covers a wide variety of business aviation manufacturers and service providers.*



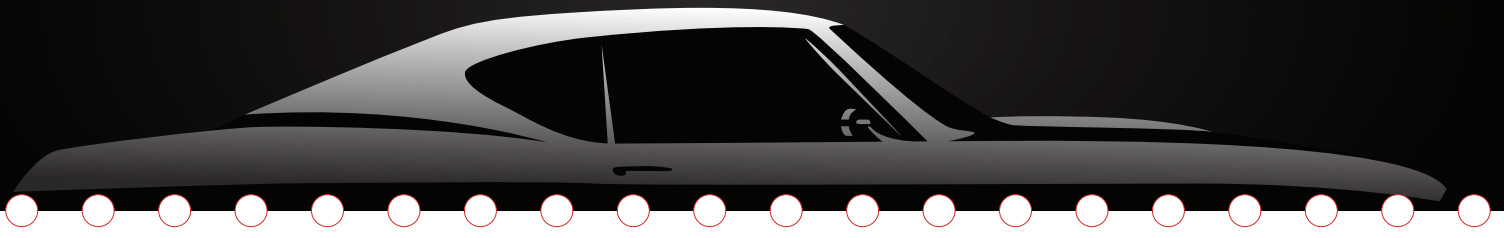
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# A New Crop of Collectible Cars

Today's buyers are eyeing autos from the 1980s and 1990s with affection, causing values to rise.

by Ian Whelan

*Collectors tend to idolize the cars of their youth that were once unattainable. It wasn't long ago that buyers went crazy for 1960s and 1970s muscle cars, and their prices skyrocketed to absurd levels. Now a younger generation is looking at autos from the 1980s and 1990s through a nostalgic lens.*

*Cars from those two decades also garner attention because they represent the end of an era, after which automakers began to add more luxury and safety features while arguably also producing vehicles with less character. Most importantly, enthusiast-spec manual transmissions were still readily available before the turn of the century.*

*One indicator of this era's cars becoming more collectible is the popularity of the Radwood show. This is the 1980s and 1990s take on the Goodwood Revival, which celebrates 1950s and 1960s British automobiles and culture.*

*The Radwood event started in 2017 in San Francisco before touring to other locations across the U.S. and even the U.K. The show claims to be "a celebration of '80s and '90s automotive lifestyle," and has received lots of attention from the automotive press. Attendees salute the culture of the era with a sense of humor by dressing in period garb. The show embraces everything from the halo cars that were once poster queens to the daily drivers that your mom and dad may have owned.*

*Like many autos that eventually become collectible, a lot of these have gone through a period of being simply old cars that have lost their shine. That means a fair number of them have been abused, worn out, or crashed, so the pool of fine examples has shrunk over the last 30 to 40 years. Here's a sample of cars that may be only at the beginning of their value curve.*

**Saab 900 Turbo:** Saab's unconventional and underappreciated 900 Turbo offers performance, luxury, safety, and utility in a package that still fascinates with its characterful approach to design and engineering. The automaker produced it from 1979 through 1993 (1994 for the convertible), and in 1985 its 143-hp turbocharged eight-valve 2.0-liter inline-four received an upgrade to 16 valves and 160 hp. Later SPG trims rose to 185 hp. A five-speed manual transmission was standard, with automatic optional. Most cars of this era were lighter than their modern descendants, so the car is quicker than you'd expect. It handles well, too, thanks to a dual wishbone front suspension. Mainly available as a three-door coupe or two-door convertible in the U.S., it sells in excellent shape for \$10,000 to \$20,000 in BringaTrailer.com auctions, and these were sub-\$10,000 cars only a few years ago.



**Acura Integra Type-R:** Honda offered its hottest hatch to the U.S. market between 1997 and 2001, importing only 3,823 during that period. The company introduced the Type-R as a homologation special to meet FIA production requirements for racing. Weighing 93 pounds less than a standard Integra GS-R, it features a special 1.8-liter DOHC VTEC inline-four that produces 195 hp with an 8400-rpm redline, sending power through a five-speed manual transmission with a limited slip differential. Those figures mean that the engine produces 108 hp per liter, a record at the time for a naturally aspirated car sold in the U.S. Hagerty Insurance's price guide says that a 1997 Type-R in excellent condition is worth \$49,900. Its value has jumped more than \$15,000 in the last two years.



**Porsche 928:** In 1977, Porsche debuted the 928 as a successor to its aging but iconic air-cooled 911 sports car. The company designed this all-new model as a grand tourer with high levels of refinement and the latest technology. Equipped with a front-mounted water-cooled V8 engine, it produced up to 345 hp in GTS trim, and the avant-garde sheet metal wrapped around it looked like something out of *Star Trek*. Buyers could choose between a five-speed manual transmission or automatic, although the latter is far more common. In the last two years, the value in excellent condition of both versions from 1978 (the first model year in the U.S.) and the end-of-the-run 1995 GTS has risen about \$20,000; and they are now worth around \$45,000 and \$101,000, respectively, according to Hagerty. The 928 didn't replace the 911, but it remains an important piece of automotive history as Porsche's first V8 production model.

^



**BMW 8 Series:** The elegant styling of the 8 Series exemplifies the pinnacle of BMW's 1990s design language with its slippery 0.29 drag coefficient, low-profile nose with pop-up headlights, and B-pillarless hardtop roof. Debuted in 1989 as a halo model, the grand tourer was the first road car to offer a V12 engine mated to a six-speed manual transmission, although an automatic was available. The 5.6-liter iteration of that engine produced 375 hp in the top-of-the-range CSI trim, but a 282-hp V8 was also available. The 8 Series was one of the first cars to feature fly-by-wire throttle control, traction control, and stability control in one package. BMWs of this era have found a strong following, because the company's design language completely changed soon after, in a manner generally accepted as being for the worse. The cars were sold from 1990 through 1997 in the U.S., but BMW brought only 7,232 of them to America. The value of a 1995 850Ci in excellent condition has more than doubled from \$50,000 to \$109,000 in the past two years, according to Hagerty.

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**Nissan Skyline GT-R:** This model has long been out of reach in the U.S. market, but you can legally import the R32-generation GT-R, which was built from 1989 to 1994. (In fact, you can import any car that has reached its 25th birthday, even if it wasn't certified to the U.S.'s safety or emissions standards.) Known as "Godzilla," a 2.6-liter twin turbocharged inline-six sends 276 hp to all four wheels via a five-speed manual transmission. Many cars have been modified in their lives, so finding a clean, original example can be challenging. Hagerty says that one in excellent condition is worth about \$55,000 now, up about \$10,000 from two years ago. If you're interested in owning one of these cars, work with a specialty importer that has experience with the process, and keep in mind that they're right-hand-drive only. On the horizon is the next-generation R33 model, which should be available for import in 2020.

**Mercedes-Benz 500 E:** If you miss the days of autobahn missiles with Teutonic box-like styling, take a look at Mercedes-Benz's 500 E. Developed in collaboration with Stuttgart neighbor Porsche, the car was hand-built in its factory. This hot rod was subtly equipped with flared fenders, a front air dam, and sideskirts but not much else to clue onlookers into how special this car is. A 5.0-liter V8 is under the hood, producing 322 hp, and is mated to a four-speed automatic transmission. Brakes and suspension also saw upgrades for long stints at triple-digit speeds. Mercedes-Benz imported only 1,528 of these cars into the U.S. between 1991 and 1994, and Hagerty values an excellent-condition end-of-the-run 1995 Limited example at \$60,200, up from about \$37,000 only a couple of years ago.

^



If you're considering purchase of any classic car, your best bet is to buy something that speaks to you and avoid getting wrapped up in speculation. You can spend a lot of money or a little and still have fun, but there's no guarantee of a return on your investment. However, if you do your research and buy well, you may end up with an appreciating asset that you can enjoy a lot more than a mutual fund, and not just because you can drive it: one of the best benefits of owning a classic car is interacting with the community that shares the hobby. **BJT**

**Ian Whelan**

(iwhelan@bjtonline.com), who drives a 1987 Porsche 911 Carrera, is director of video for AIN Publications, publisher of **BJT**.



# Italy's Amalfi Coast



ALL PHOTOS: ADOBE STOCK





# It's a feast for the eyes—and for the gourmand as well.

by Drew Limsky

Italy's Amalfi Coast occupies a high position on many travelers' bucket lists and conjures up fond memories for those who've experienced it. It's a gorgeous region and quite popular in season despite being not particularly easy to get to. It's also rich in history and culture—it was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997—while simultaneously serving as the epitome of hedonism and *la dolce vita*.

The region contains some of the most beautiful and beautifully positioned accommodations in all of Italy. Like most Mediterranean resort areas, it comes alive in spring, summer, and fall, with hotels, restaurants, and beach clubs opening their doors in March or April; places start winding down in October, when the weather is typically still lovely. Spring and fall offer an opportunity to avoid the tourist swarm, but if you want to swim, June through October are the prime months.

The Amalfi Coast is understood to mean the stretch of Campania waterfront south of Sorrento and north of Salerno on the sparkling Tyrrhenian Sea. (Naples and Salerno are the nearest major cities.) But most would agree that the epicenter of the Amalfi Coast lies between Positano and Amalfi.



# Italy's Amalfi Coast



Top to bottom: a family views Positano on the Amalfi coast; hiking through Campania; fishermen's boats.



The namesake town of the Amalfi Coast sits 10 miles to the south of Positano along the famously twisty, scenic, and vertigo-inducing Amalfi Drive. Known formally as Strada Statale 163, it was built by the Romans before the concept of two-lane roads took hold. “Dramatic” is too weak a word for the drive: it goes over breathtaking fjords, ravines, and slim bridges, and the right-hand side puts you on the edge of a cliff that overlooks the sea. In some places, the road swerves through tunnels carved into the rock; in other spots, it’s so narrow that cars must back up to allow buses to pass.

First-time travelers to the area would be wise to choose Positano or Amalfi as a base while repeat visitors may want to stay in or near a blink-and-you-missed-it village on the road between the two, such as Praiano or Furore. In these lesser-known towns, you can enjoy quiet and semi-seclusion along with the extraordinary setting; usually all that is visible of the hotels and restaurants from the road are signs and carpools, since the properties dot the cliff that overlooks the sea. Holing up in one of the tiny village boutiques here (in Furore, that would be La

Locanda del Fiordo) will make you feel as if you’ve discovered a secret place, though you’ll be within one of the world’s most popular destinations and only a short ride from Positano and Amalfi.

\*\*\*\*\*

When you’re traveling from north to south, the Amalfi Coast essentially begins with Positano, the jewel in the crown. John Steinbeck celebrated the town in a 1953 essay, helping to transform it from a modest fishing village into a jet-set locale.

Accessing the village by sea is a memorable experience, as the Church of Maria Assunta, overlooking Spiaggia Grande, the pebbly main beach, comes into view. The scene, featured in such films as *Only You* (1994) and *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003), should be



## Traveler Fast Facts

### WHAT IT IS:

The Amalfi Coast is a 35-mile stretch in the Campania region of Italy, set on the Tyrrhenian Sea, which is part of the Mediterranean. The area is dotted with scenic fishing villages and hill towns, many of which have become chic, world-renowned resort destinations.

### CLIMATE:

The region enjoys a Mediterranean climate. The best time to visit is between April and October. July and August are the hottest (and most crowded) months, with daytime temperatures in the mid 80s Fahrenheit and nighttime temperatures in the mid 70s. September and October are glorious, with low humidity, and cool nights in the 60s.

### GETTING THERE:

United Airlines offers seasonal non-stop service from the U.S. to Naples International Airport, which also accommodates private aircraft. Salerno-Costa D’Amalfi Airport is another option for private jets. For a nearly unlimited choice of commercial carriers (including American, United, Delta, Alitalia, Air France, and British Airways), it’s best to fly into Rome-Fiumicino International Airport, then drive or take a train south to Naples or Salerno. If you have a car or a driver, it will take you a little more than an hour to get to Positano from Naples. Given the serpentine Amalfi Coast, a better option might be to take the train to Salerno and then backtrack up the coast via ferry to Amalfi or Positano. It’s only a short walk from Salerno’s train station to the Port of Salerno.

### WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

The Amalfi Coast is a walker’s destination, so bring comfortable shoes for the stone paths and stairways. Sandals are key for the pebbly beaches. While locals will appreciate an Italian greeting and knowledge of a few key phrases, English is widely spoken all along the coast and in the islands. Note that in general, the more far-flung a place is, the shorter the season. In other words, by mid-October, some Ravello restaurants and Capri beach clubs may be closed while Amalfi and Positano will still have a few more weeks of life—indeed revelry—left in them.



instantly recognizable, as the church's iconic dome, decorated with green and yellow majolica tiles, commands a prime spot among the village's famous jumble of colorful villas, hotels, and terraces. Orange lounge chairs and umbrellas ring Spiaggia Grande, which is backed by lively cafes like Chez Black.

Positano's secondary beach, Fornillo, reached via a seaside walkway, offers a quieter scene than Spiaggia Grande. Lined with clubs like da Ferdinando, where you can rent a chair and enjoy excellent bruschetta, Fornillo is a place where you can choose a tiny cove to watch the low wispy clouds thread through the limestone cliffs and up into the canyons.

Positano doesn't have a center; you discover the town slowly, walking the winding pathways that climb up the hill, browsing boutiques along the way, stopping for a gelato or lemon granita. (The region is famed for its lemons, and limoncello is ubiquitous.) Hang around until six to watch kids playing soccer on the beach as the church bells chime. It's magical.

\*\*\*\*\*

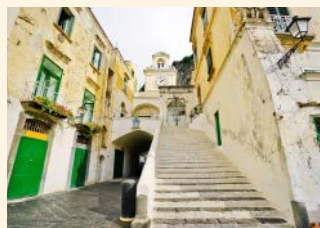
Amalfi has a different flavor than Positano and a richer history, as it was the capital of the Duchy of Amalfi during the medieval period. Despite this royal background, Amalfi feels less glitzy and more authentic than Positano. In the piazza, which is across the street (and under an

arch) from the beach, residents and visitors mingle beside a charming fountain, licking gelato cones from a dessert shop called Pasticceria Savoia.

The piazza sits at the base of the Cathedral of St. Andrew, with its wide 62-step staircase and striped marble Byzantine façade. Dating from the 9th century, the church combines several styles—Arab-Norman, Renaissance, baroque—and is complemented by a magnificently ornate bell tower, which was under construction for a century and completed in 1280.

As you head up from the square, you'll see that pedestrians, Vespas, and cars share the narrow road, so keep your eyes open and be patient. Pop into shoe stores, ceramics shops, and little markets selling cheeses, cured meats, pastas, and produce. There are also pizza places, gelaterias, and chocolate shops. The whitewashed, flower-filled stairways off the street beg for exploration; if you follow them up, you may discover an out-of-the-way restaurant or a soccer game in full swing.

If your feet are up for more, venture just south of Amalfi to the town of Atrani, which features its own pocket beach and the baroque 10th century Church of San Salvatore de' Birecto. Then, if you haven't had your fill of beachfront villages, you can head for compact Minori (about two and a half miles from Amalfi) and the more spread-out Maiori (another 25 minutes on foot), with its picturesque seafront



Clockwise from top left: Atrani village, just south of Amalfi; statue in Amalfi; Atrani under a full moon; Atrani's waterfront.



Cathedral of St. Andrew, Amalfi

## Traveler Report Card

### ACCOMMODATIONS:

**Il San Pietro di Positano** (A+) remains one of the world's most glamorous hotels. Positioned on the outskirts of town, it boasts spectacular terraced gardens and a private beach. On Ischia, **San Montano Resort & Spa** (A+), a member of Small Luxury Resorts, offers duplex nautically themed rooms with patio access to an infinity pool, in addition to 10 thermal pools of various sizes, shapes, and temperatures. **Punta Tragara** (A+), lovingly looked after by the Manfredi family, is among the most luxurious hotels on Capri, and none of the others can match its views of the Faraglioni rocks.

### CUISINE:

The Amalfi Coast is blessed with prime seafood, and you can find some of the best at **La Locanda del Fiordo** (A+), the restaurant at a charming clifftop hotel in Furio. Its seafood salad (clams, mussels, prawns, octopus, and calamari) is fresh and flavorful, and the grilled scamorza cheese with vegetables is sublime. For some of the best Neapolitan pizza, try casual trattorias: **Capricci** (A), right off the beach in Positano; and **Stella Maris** (A+), overlooking the sea in Amalfi. For a more upscale and romantic experience (and memorable lemon pasta), book a sea-view table at **Rada** (A) in Positano. In minuscule Montepertuso, which is a strenuous but rewarding hike or 20-minute taxi ride up a mountain from Positano, a trattoria named **Donna Rosa** (A+) serves up some of the best ravioli in the area.



# Italy's Amalfi Coast



promenade. Gaze up to see lemon groves terraced into the mountains.

The affluent Ravello, a 30-minute drive in the mountains above Amalfi, has long been a refuge for artists (Joan Miro), actors (Greta Garbo), writers (Truman Capote, Graham Greene, Tennessee Williams), and musicians (Leonard Bernstein, Richard Wagner, Edvard Grieg). The figure most associated with Ravello is author Gore Vidal, who hosted many a celebrity at La Rondinaia, his legendary 10,500-square-foot whitewashed villa. As such a following might suggest, Ravello is the site of music festivals and light shows, as well as a source of world-class hand-painted ceramics.

Even compared with Positano, Ravello is refined and sophisticated. The town is also a place of peerless vistas; the top-heavy stone pines (aka umbrella pines) framing the sea below have graced many a postcard and calendar. If you have time to venture off from the main piazza, head for the village's top historic homes and their gardens, which are open to the public: Villa Rufolo, and Villa Cimbrone. There is also a Hotel Villa Cimbrone, which is lined with Roman busts that cut impressive profiles against the Tyrrhenian Sea.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you're staying more than a few days, a trip to the island of Capri is a must. Though not technically part of the Amalfi Coast, it is part of many visitors' itineraries, and ferries run frequently to Capri from Amalfi and Positano.

The island didn't need to be popularized in

*Top: a saltwater pool in Ischia. Above left: a statue in Ravello, a town near Amalfi. Right: shopping in Capri.*

modernity the way Positano was; it has been a resort since Roman times, with the emperors Augustus and Tiberius constructing palatial villas. Visiting Capri comes with a caveat: due to its renown, the rocky island is choked with tourists, even in April and October. (Tip: book a room for a few days, thus avoiding the bottlenecks that day-trippers and tour groups create—at least in the mornings and evenings.) Capri's tiny, café-bordered piazza is the best orientation spot; from there you can walk along cobbled lanes lined with storefronts of global luxury brands like Gucci, Fendi, and Brunello Cucinelli.

A more adventurous experience is to stroll along the jasmine-infused Via Tragara to its endpoint at the Hotel Punta Tragara, where you can view Capri's iconic faraglioni rocks—three tall seastacks just off the coast. But what most visitors don't know is that if you head downhill, a pathway that turns into a series of switchbacks will lead you even closer to the faraglioni—and to the beach clubs that overlook them, Da Luigi and La Fontelina. Each has its own restaurant, and there's no better place to while away the hours in Capri. (Note that there is no actual beach in the American sense, but rather platforms set between the rocks; so rent a lounge chair and jump in.)

Like Capri, the volcanic island of Ischia is also not officially part of the Amalfi Coast but is

## EDITOR'S NOTE

My family and I recently returned from our own visit to Amalfi and the surrounding area. A few recommendations: 1) Check out the Museum of Handmade Amalfi Paper, which offers tours and showcases water-powered equipment that dates from the 13th century. 2) Take a side trip—about 30 miles north of Amalfi by car or train—to see the ruins of Pompeii. 3) If you opt to stay in Salerno (which is a delightful 50-minute ferry ride from Amalfi), consider the well-located L'Infinito guest house. It's no five-star hotel; and to access it, you pass through an old wooden door and an unremarkable courtyard. But once inside, you'll find modern, high-ceilinged guest rooms; excellent breakfasts; and a hostess who goes out of her way to be accommodating and make you feel at home.—*Jeff Burger*

accessible via ferry from Amalfi and Positano. Ischia, with numerous deep bays and sandy beaches, is just as scenic as Capri—and as cinematic. It was the location for Elizabeth Taylor's 1963 version of *Cleopatra* and contains the beach (Bagno Antonio) where Jude Law and Matt Damon meet in the 1999 film *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

Ischia is much bigger than Capri (nearly 18 square miles vs. Capri's four), so if you don't stay over, it's even more important to be economical with your time. Consider heading to one of the island's fantastic day spas (Poseidon and Negombo are among the best), where you can walk around luxuriant gardens, hop from pool to therapeutic pool of different temperatures (courtesy of geothermal heat), and end the day at the beach.

The Amalfi Coast and its nearby isles endure as a paradisiacal destination where you are immersed in culture, history, scenery, toothsome cuisine, and luminous waters, heated naturally—if not from above, then from below the surface of splendid southern Italy. **EJTB**

### Drew Limsy

(dlimsky@bjtonline.com) is a Miami- and New York-based writer and editor who has contributed to such publications as the *New York Times*, *Miami Herald*, *Robb Report*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. On a portion of his latest trip to the Amalfi Coast, he was hosted by San Montano Resort & Spa.



# BJT AIRCRAFT DIRECTORY

A data-packed, photo-rich guide to every major business jet, turboprop, and helicopter.


















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## BUSINESS JET TRAVELER

### BUSINESS AIRCRAFT DATA DIRECTORY

TYPE	CATEGORY	IN PRODUCTION	MANUFACTURER
All	All	All	All
MINIMUM PRICE	MAXIMUM PRICE	RANGE	SEATING
All	All	All	All

All aircraft data provided by Cirium & de Decker

MODEL #	MANUFACTURER	CABIN SIZE	RANGE	PRICE NEW	PRICE USED	Options
 5000	Twin Commander	233 cu ft	1,210 nm	\$3.9M	\$262K - \$1.1M	LOG IN TO COMPARE
 206AL	Bell	208 cu ft	206 nm	\$960K	\$1.6M - \$2.0M	
 206B3	Bell	54 cu ft	270 nm	\$2.4M	\$322K - \$1.1M	
 206BR	Bell	54 cu ft	270 nm	\$3.5M	\$302K - \$1.1M	
 206L1	Bell	73 cu ft	240 nm	\$500K	\$400K	
 206L3	Bell	73 cu ft	210 nm	\$1.0M		
 206L4	Bell	73 cu ft	253 nm	\$2.3M		
 206L7	Bell	73 cu ft	106 nm			
 208 Caravan	Cessna	271 cu ft	315 nm			
 208 Caravan/Cargo Pod	Cessna	271 cu ft				
 208 Grand Caravan/Carg Pod	Cessna	352 cu ft				
 208 Grand Caravan	Cessna					
 208 Grand Caravan EX	Cessna					
 208 Grand Caravan EX/Carg Pod	Cessna					
 212						
 214E						
 214ST						

### EMBRAER LEGACY 500

TYPE

JET

CABIN SIZE

823 CU FT

RANGE

3,193 NM

PRICE NEW


\$20M

EMBRAER LEGACY 500 RANGE

Embraer Legacy 500 has a range of 3,193 miles. Select a departure city from the list below to update the range map.

NEW YORK

Range is the maximum PFD range of the aircraft knowing of Avg Range Cruise speed with all passenger seats occupied.




### EMBRAER LEGACY 500 SPECS


PRICING		PRODUCTION		FINANCIAL	
Price New	\$20M	Year Started	2014	Total Fixed Cost/Year	\$164,366
Price Used (Min)	\$18M	Year Ended	In Production	Total Fixed Cost/Hour	\$1,915
Price Used (Max)	\$19M			Total Fixed Cost/Unit Distance	\$4/rev
				Total Mile Cost/Hour	\$16,962
				Total Mile Cost/Year	\$544
				Total Crew Cost/Year	\$45,130
				Total Fuel Cost/Year	\$1,557
				Total Mo Cost/Year	\$870
				Total Variable Cost/Year	\$1,190,368
				Total Variable Cost/Hour	\$2,963
				Total Variable Cost/Unit Distance	\$6/rev

All aircraft data provided by Cirium & de Decker. Cost/Rev. figures are based on 299 hours inquired per year; Cost/Unit Distance figures are based on 175,000 nautical miles traveled per year.


### EMBRAER LEGACY 500 ARTICLES



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Hundreds of species pass through a strip of Texas coastline every spring. You don't have to be an ornithologist to feel welcome at a festival that celebrates their arrival.



# April is for the **birds**

*by Thomas R. Pero*







America's "birdiest" place—that's what avid birdwatchers with the San Diego Audubon Society have nicknamed the strip of Texas coastline anchored by Corpus Christi. It's a major migration route for hundreds of species—waterfowl to raptors to songbirds—heading north from Central America and Mexico. April is peak time. It's also just before the hot, steamy wet season sets in. To celebrate the return of the birds, the not-for-profit South Texas Botanical Gardens hosts the Birdiest Festival in America.

This year's event takes place April 22 to 26. It features casual lectures and small tours to local areas rich in bird life, such as Goose Island and Blucher Park. Part of the aim is to introduce people to the experience of nature tourism.

Especially exciting to the organizers of the event is the appearance of world-renowned artist and ornithologist David Allen Sibley as keynote speaker. His lavishly self-illustrated *The Sibley Guide to Birds*, first published in 2000, became the fastest-selling bird book ever. Millions of copies are now in print. The *New York Times* placed it in the category of Audubon's *Birds of America* (1838) and Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds* (1934), calling it a book that "changes the way people look at the world."

"This is our fourth year," Denise Housler says of the Texas festival, "and each year we've added more interesting programs." She is volunteer president of the botanical gardens, a 182-acre reserve of native coastal scrub and grassland. "The nice thing is that the festival is new enough and small enough that it's not intimidating. We welcome people from all walks of birding."

Housler admits that she herself is by no means an expert bird-watcher, and she always learns something from many participants, who come from all over North America. She says that some enthusiasts show up every year with binoculars that have never even been out of their box. But they leave having seen and identified dozens of species of birds new to them—the beginning of their own "life list" and, quite literally, an eye-opening exposure to the abundance of winged inhabitants of the natural world. Last year, Birdiest Festival attendees identified 262 species.

Don't have binoculars, a spotting scope, or fancy guidebooks? Just come on down for some old-fashioned south Texas hospitality, including a kickoff barbecue. Sign up for one of the tours led by expert birders who will introduce you to the area, show you what to look for, and, if you ask, recommend equipment that might be best for the birding you'd like to do.

BJT



## Birds Above, Shipwrecks Below

The fluvial deposits of sand, silt, clay, gravel, and rich calcium carbonate from the Pleistocene age that underlie Corpus Christi Bay and the surrounding land create ideal feeding habitats for birds. Outside the large, shallow bay are the gorgeous beaches of Mustang and South Padre islands. This national seashore is the longest stretch of undeveloped barrier beach in the world with 70 miles of coastline, hiking trails, dunes, and lagoons to explore on foot or kayak. Onshore, South Padre is a nesting home for the rare Kemp's ridley sea turtle. Offshore lie the remains of three wrecked Spanish ships from 1554.—TRP



### Thomas R. Pero

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# Telling **the truth** about business aviation

Unfortunately, the general public rarely hears the facts.

by Mark Phelps

“There’s a reason why they call it a business jet.”

That’s how Bob Taylor, cofounder of Taylor Guitars, says he explained to a friend that, no, he could not “go for a ride” in the company’s Gulfstream G450. After I interviewed Taylor and cofounder Kurt Listug for **BJT** a few years ago, the National Business Aviation Association literally made them poster examples of responsible use of a business jet.

Taylor and Listug use their company airplane to maximize Taylor Guitars’ bottom line, and that’s all. Unfortunately, though, they are the antithesis of what most of the public sees as the typical business jet traveler. They didn’t order fancy linens for the cabin; they don’t use the airplane to try to impress friends or even clients; and if they ever fly for personal travel (which is practically never), they adhere staunchly to the financial rules outlined by the IRS, FAA, and 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

To Taylor and Listug, asking to “go for a ride” in the Gulfstream is as illogical as asking whether you could stop by the guitar factory and play around with the milling lathes.

I wish they could be around to explain how business aviation really works when people read stories about how private flying is simply a luxury for the ultra-elite. Even the *Economist*, which I usually rely on for unbiased reporting, has published articles decrying business flying as a perk enabling billionaires to “save a little time.”

**I**f members of the general public understood the way business aviation really works, they probably wouldn’t be so quick to condemn. It’s all about the optics, and bizav users have not always done a good job of keeping that lens in focus.

Whenever a business-aviation-related dust-up makes the news—as when Detroit’s automaker CEOs flew their corporate jets to Washington to discuss a government bailout—most other end users go dark on the topic until the story fades away. That strategy may be effective in the short term, but over time, each such episode adds another, thicker layer to the distorted image of elitism.



Kurt Listug in Taylor Guitars’ Gulfstream G450.

Rarely does anyone peek over the rim of the foxhole to defend their use of corporate aircraft, even when it is clearly demonstrable that its flexibility and efficiency enables their company to prosper.

There have been exceptions where steely-nerved business aviation users have spoken out. In the 1980s, for example, then-Chrysler president Lee Iacocca, faced with cutting costs to the bone, publicly singled out the company jet as an untouchable resource, vital to completing the recovery. Despite being known for his no-frills lifestyle, also, billionaire Warren Buffett famously spoke up in support of corporate jet use, changing his nickname for his Bombardier Challenger from “The Indefensible” to “The Indispensable.”

More recently, when Elton John provided a jet to fly England’s Prince Harry and his wife to visit the singer at his home in Nice, France, the uproar was louder than the crowd at one of his concerts. But he didn’t shrink from his actions, tweeting that “to maintain a high level of much-needed protection, we provided them with a private jet flight.”

Sir Elton added: “To support Prince Harry’s commitment to the environment, we ensured their flight was carbon neutral, by making the appropriate contribution to Carbon Footprint.”

**T**here is a real climate crisis, and objections to gratuitous flying are not without merit. But it’s important to grasp the context and to be able to explain it when the optics of irresponsible jetsetters blow the picture out of proportion. Here are some facts that can help you to do that:

Ground travel accounts for 74 percent of all fossil fuel–related carbon emissions, compared with only 2 percent for all forms of air travel, according to the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG). Moreover, business and personal aviation are responsible for only 10 percent of the air-travel total—or just 0.2 percent of all CO<sub>2</sub> generated by fossil fuels. Further, every new generation of jet engines has reduced fuel burn by double-digit percentages. ATAG notes that today’s emissions are 80 percent less than those from the first passenger jets from the 1960s.

When’s the last time you saw statistics like these in the mainstream media? **BJT**



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(mphelps@bjtonline.com) is the executive editor of AIN Publications, publisher of **BJT**.



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