10 LUXURY PLANES TO WATCH OUT FOR IN 2016

News / Airlines, Manufacturer

Within the realm of luxury planes, there are two distinct camps. These include the private planes or jets of the mega-wealthy and commercial planes that are outfitted with some of the most spectacularly luxurious cabins imaginable; also for the wealthy. The choice to own a private aircraft or to fly in complete comfort as a first class passenger depends on personal budget and preferences. Because flying is a much more challenging pursuit than it was in the past, many passengers are looking for ways to take the edge off of frustrations endured due to security measures or concern for safety.

Flying in luxury is a reward for traveling long distances, as well. Those who can afford to pay for the extra comfort and attention are taking advantage of the best commercial airlines have to offer. Of course, there are also those aviation enthusiasts who simply look for the most innovative flights they can find, trying out the newest planes launched whenever possible. Thanks to ever improving technology, a passion for flight and the desire for indulgence, there is a combination of luxury, comfort and intrigue available to please just about everyone.

gulfstream g650

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1. The Gulfstream G650ER

The newest aircraft of this industry leader is termed its flagship. It offers the highest nonstop range of up to 7,500 nautical miles with a flying speed of Mach 0.85. When flying at Mach 0.90, it is capable of carrying eight passengers for 6,400 nautical miles without stopping. There is literally no other aircraft serving business needs in the world that can match these numbers. It can be fitted for up to 19 passengers, it will sleep 10 and has a maximum take-off weight of 103,600 pounds. Its maximum cruising altitude is 51,000 feet. It offers the fastest and longest routes of any business aircraft. With its choice of 12 different floorplans, plus the option to customize individual space. The seats and divans are handcrafted, and key standard features include high definition video and digital audio equipment, 26 inch widescreen televisions, convection oven and fitted storage plus stemware, dinnerware and flatware for entertaining. Connectivity for many computer and phone devices is also included. The plan can fly above the usual commercial routes and weather patterns, ensuring the safest and smoothest rides. The Gulfstream jets are legendary and continue to increase the expectations of even the most discriminating customers.

lead-virgin-galactic-2

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2. The Virgin Galactic Space Plane

A “seat to space” on a Virgin Galactic Space Plane requires a $250,000 deposit, and any would-be astronaut must apply for the opportunity to train for this ultimate in luxury travel. The aircraft that will travel past our Earth’s atmosphere into the near edges of space and zero gravity is called the SpaceShipTwo. It will launch from the space port in New Mexico, and currently, there are over 700 applicants waiting for their turn. The cabin they fly in is described as being spacious and focused on maximizing the views of Earth and outer space for all passengers. Each person who travels must train rigorously for the chance to go, and safety is the number one concern of all those involved with this project. With the space plane 90% structurally complete and two-thirds assembled and testing scheduled to commence in 2015, seekers of the world’s only out of this world ride are welcomed to apply in 2016.

The Residence by Etihad Airways; Airbus A380

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3. The Residence by Etihad Airways; Airbus A380

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Though initially introduced in 2014, The Residence by Etihad Airways has continued to capture the imaginations and pocketbooks of luxury travelers worldwide. For this reason, the elegant Airbus A380 will be added to the airline's Abu Dhabi to New York route for the first time on December 1, 2015. Passengers planning to travel in 2016 should book early for the chance to fly in the first ever three-room cabin. It includes 125 square feet with a living room, a double bedroom suitable for one or two passengers, a separate en-suite shower room, a personal Savoy Academy trained butler and a chef. The living room has a 32 inch LCD monitor and the bedroom a 24 inch model. The Residency is located in the forward upper deck of the aircraft.

The Finnair Airbus A350 XWB

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4. The Finnair Airbus A350 XWB

Finnair is the proud owner of the first Airbus A350 XWB airplane in Europe. Luxury travelers will find much to appreciate in the design of this aircraft. One of the first things passengers will notice is the LED lighting illuminating the ceiling of the cabin which sports an array of 16.8 million colors which sync to the aircraft location, the time, and the plane's destination. Other distinct offerings include the filtering system which provides clean cabin air every two to three minutes, without drafts. Cabin pressure is kept in the sea level range so passengers will be comfortable. It is also

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possible to manipulate the temperature zones individually. There is also complimentary Wi-Fi and a dedicated ladies powder room with make-up and supplies provided. The onboard menu uses locally sourced ingredients in Nordic style dishes. Technology fans will appreciate that the aircraft wings are controlled by computer and can adapt while airborne to produce the maximum aerodynamic efficient flight possible.

The Four Seasons Boeing 757

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5. The Four Seasons Boeing 757

In April 2015, Four Seasons announced that its luxurious Boeing 757 will provide superlative accommodations in the skies, with global trips beginning in 2016. This is a flying hotel disguised as an airplane, and as such, it offers the amenities one would expect from a top-drawer establishment. There will be a cabin crew including a concierge, a guest services manager, an executive chef and a sous chef. The plane has handwoven carpets and leather seats for 52 passengers, who will travel together on month-long itineraries, while staying at Four Seasons hotels for several nights in prime destinations along the way. The prices start at $106,000 per

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person for the everything-included Four Seasons Private Jet Experience. There are four 2016 experiences scheduled for the months of January, April, September and November. The first is reported to be a 24-day, nine destination journey which will begin in Los Angeles and end in London. Stops along the way will include Hawaii, Bali, Thailand and much more, with a price of $132,000 per person.Comfort is first on this plane, with seats made of Italian leather and boasting 78 inches of legroom. Each has a cashmere blanket, an ottoman, iPad and Bose personal headphones. Kits of toiletries by Bulgari are provided for each traveler. Dom Perignon champagne is stocked on board, too.When passengers leave the plane, they are provided help with private excursions in the various destinations; each as individual as the traveler wishes. The only down side of all this luxury, as noted by one reporter, is that the bathrooms on the airplane are shared.

JetPurple Airwayz

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6. JetPurple Airways

An entire company of luxury planes to watch, but not necessarily in a positive way, is JetPurple Airways. This is one airline brand that is popping up all over the media due to marked conflicts

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between what is advertised and said about it as opposed to what is truly certain.

To start, one must consider the advertising promises made by CEO Adam Blumnkranz and what the various news agencies have reported about them. The company is to offer purple reclining chairs that are spacious enough for sleeping once reclined. It is also planning to carry the purple color throughout its plane interiors; used in the carpeting, blankets, pillows, and, of course, the company logo. Purple was chosen by Blumenkranz, who noted that the fashionable color symbolizes passion and valor.

The planes are expected to fly first and business class passengers only, with routes from San Diego International Airport to the Scottsdale/Phoenix area. The airline will use only charter airplanes, which offers travelers the opportunity to avoid conventional long lines and security checks. Using private terminals allows passengers to enjoy more streamlined flying experiences. To receive these amenities, passengers must be screened for the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) No-Fly List. There will be extra ground security and this will translate into extra expense. The TSA will not be on site, allowing passengers a VIP traveling experience. There will be less than thirty seats per flight, with each operating under rules designed for private jetliners.

Other JetPurple amenities planned are complimentary meals, drinks and snacks, and in-flight entertainment. There will be no baggage fees and free parking at the private airport terminals the planes will use. The airline plans to use Boeing 737-BBJ and Airbus ATR-42 Turbos, and has long term goals of offering flights to Singapore, China and South Korea from Burbank, California.

While all of these items sound wonderful, and the company has announced that it will begin operation in 2016, the actual start date for service is unclear. In fact, some reporters have discovered that the announcements about the luxury airline have been made, but as recently as late 2015, the officials at Scottsdale Airport have yet to be in contact with the airline. Some reports indicate that the company hasn't been in contact with the airport officials at all, and that the only things they know about the airline is what has been released in the media. The privately financed airline may, or may not, be operating in luxury sometime in 2016.

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7. The Cobalt Co50 Valkyrie

Anyone in the market for a luxury private jet should take a look at the new Co50 Valkyrie created by Cobalt. Though the jets will not be available until 2017, the company is taking pre-orders now and reservations with a $15,000 deposit on the $699,000 aircraft. Including the pilot, the Co50 can transport 5 people, reaching a maximum speed of 299 mph, making it the fastest in its category. This world-class jet is fully certified, using the best of modern technology and design features. Its 350hp propulsion engine is located in the rear, which helps to keep the cabin area quiet. It is designed with a forewing to prevent stalls and has a parachute onboard. Both interior and exterior can be customized in terms of finishes, and former Hermes artisans have hand-stitched the leather seats. Designed for storing ample amounts of luggage, skis or golf clubs, the jet is perfect for travel and aviation enthusiasts.

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8. The British Airways A380

Known for its superb quality Rolls-Royce engines, British Airways has its own version of the A380 aircraft. As the largest commercial passenger aircraft in the world, it has taken its place in the fleet of many airlines. But the British always have an eye toward cabin comfort and flexibility. The first class offers 14 demi cabins which multitask as dens for passengers, with the option to sleep, work, view videos and dine on personal schedules. The airplane is a wide body, double deck jet with four engines manufactured by the European consortium Airbus Industries. It is constructed of strong, yet light weight carbon fiber reinforced plastic. Its upper deck extends the entire length of the plane’s fuselage. As the greenest, having the lowest emissions per passenger of all large airplanes. Its take-offs are 50% quieter than other similar airplanes, even though it boasts more floor and head space. For those who want to travel in the newest airplanes with the most amenities offered at a reasonable price, this is an excellent choice.

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9. Smithsonian Journeys Boeing 757

Another see the world by private jet tour on a custom-configured aircraft, these intellectual explorations of the world's famous historical sites is an excellent option. The Boeing 757 is a formidable presence in the world of custom tours, as many companies have chosen it for their transportation. The Smithsonian versions cost about $79,000 per person, but include many iconic and exotic destinations, cultural activities and dedicated, expert guides for up to 80 passengers. As of July 2015, 738 of the narrow bodied Boeing 757 were still in service. Its ability to take off from shorter runways, yet provide a smooth, higher altitude flight have made it a popular choice for many commercial airlines.

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10. Singapore Airlines Airbus A380 Suites Class

Singapore Airlines was the first carrier as of 2006 to fly the new Airbus A380. Normally, this plane can carry up to 555 passengers, but the Suites Class has provided a new level of luxury that other airlines were fairly swift to imitate. The average cost for flying in The Suites is about $18,000 in U.S. dollars. What makes them different from other airlines' use of the Airbus A380 available space is that The Suites are individually compartmentalized areas set apart from each other with sliding doors. The cabins inside are divided into living area, bedroom and dining room. Inside, there are double beds, soft armchairs, Dom Perignon and a wide variety of food choices to request. There is a dedicated butler to see to every need, Bose headphones, a Salvatore Ferragamo amenity kit, Givenchy pillows, pajamas, slippers and blankets, drinks on request and a 5 course dinner. Meal choices can even be pre-ordered. The luxury begins before the plane departs as passengers are led to The Private Room, which is a waiting area dedicated to The Suites passengers, where food and drink are gourmet quality and in abundance. The popularity of The Suites has continued since its inception and is most likely to remain throughout 2016 and beyond.

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