

# BUSINESS JET TRAVELER<sup>®</sup>

## PAUL STANLEY

KISS'S LEAD SINGER DISCUSSES  
HIS STRUGGLES, SUCCESSES,  
AND FAVORITE JETS

- DOES THE 2017 TAX LAW BENEFIT BIZAV?
- THE WORLD'S BEST NEW RESORTS
- EPIC E1000: A DREAM TAKES OFF



# HondaJet is thankful to be the most delivered jet in its category in 2017.



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### On the Cover:

Kiss's Paul Stanley, photographed in Las Vegas for **Business Jet Traveler** by Michael Spain-Smith.

### Coming Soon in BJT

7th annual **Book of Lists**

**BBJ1** review

Visiting Portugal's **Madeira**



PHOTO: MADELINE FLANAGAN

## FEATURED CONTRIBUTOR

### MARION FLANAGAN

Flanagan, whose article on Verona, Italy begins on page 52, has reported on destinations from Indonesia to South Africa, but counts Italy as one of her favorite countries. "The topography is phenomenal—grapevines, olive groves, lemon trees, dramatic cliffs on the Tyrrhenian Sea, and active volcanoes," she says. "But it's the people—and their passion for food and life—that are intoxicating."

The New Jersey native started writing travel stories in 1999, when she became editor-in-chief of *TravelAge West*, a Los Angeles-based travel magazine. She has contributed to the *Chicago Tribune* and *Los Angeles Times* and several regional newspapers and magazines.

Flanagan rarely visits a destination twice, but she was so charmed by Verona that she plans to return. "It makes a great base to explore surrounding regions in northern Italy," she says, "and it's hard to top seeing a show in a 2,000-year-old arena."

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BY EMBRAER



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- Lance Mortensen , Owner, Mortensen Signature Homes  
Watch Lance's story and request more information at  
[EmbraerExecutiveJets.com/Lance](http://EmbraerExecutiveJets.com/Lance)



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# Up Front

**P**aul Stanley might not be the first name you'd free-associate with the words "private aviation," but as our cover photo suggests, the Kiss lead singer certainly knows his way around a business jet. He also knows more than you might expect about overcoming adversity, as he explains in Margie Goldsmith's engrossing interview (*see page 12*).

Stanley was born with microtia, a congenital disorder that caused deformity and deafness in his right ear and made him the subject of relentless bullying during childhood. As he candidly tells Margie, he saw rock and roll as "a remedy to my pain" and a way to achieve a position "where people would wish they'd been nice to me."

Today, Stanley ranks among the most successful rock stars of all time, but he says that emotional scars from his childhood remain. Determined to help people who deal with the sorts of challenges he encountered, he is a spokesperson for a charity called AboutFace, whose mission "is to promote and enhance the positive mental and emotional well-being of individuals with facial differences."

**K**iss have had their share of controversies and public spats over the years, though most have had the benefit of keeping them in the news cycle. Whatever you think of their music, you'll have to agree that they are branding masterminds (anyone remember the \$4,000 Kiss Kasket?) who know how to stay in the spotlight. Show me a person who can Google "rock band Kiss" and not fall down



Interviewing AvFuel CEO Craig Sincock (*see page 22*) at the 2017 EBACE show in Geneva.

a rabbit hole of drama, gossip, and colorful quotes and I will show you a person with more self-control than I.

As the web posts suggest, Kiss has millions of admirers but also a whole lot of detractors. Among the latter group, suggests Stanley, are many of the people who select inductees for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which he says has historically "despised" the band. He adds that he enjoyed a "victory lap" when they were finally inducted in 2014. No wonder he looks so satisfied in videos of the ceremony, as rock artist and longtime fan Tom Morello introduces the band with lines like these:

What if you had never seen or heard Kiss before? What if you had never heard a note of their music, never viewed a YouTube clip, never seen a reality show featuring any of the members? And what if you wandered into a divey club in your hometown and saw Kiss in all their glory, thrashing the place to the ground?

One guy belching fire and spraying blood past his gargantuan tongue. A drum riser bursting through the roof. A guitar player so incredible his axe billowed smoke and shot rockets. A frontman flying back and forth across the joint like a superhero Tarzan. All of them in frightening horror movie/comic book superstar, sexifying kabuki makeup. All of them in black and silver warrior bondage gear and seven-inch platform heels. The place blowing up with explosions, screeching with sirens, raining confetti, all to the pounding soundtrack of bareknuckle badass heavy-duty liberating rock and roll.

What would you say if you saw *that*? You'd say, "That band's [expletive] awesome and deserves to be in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame!" That's what you'd say.

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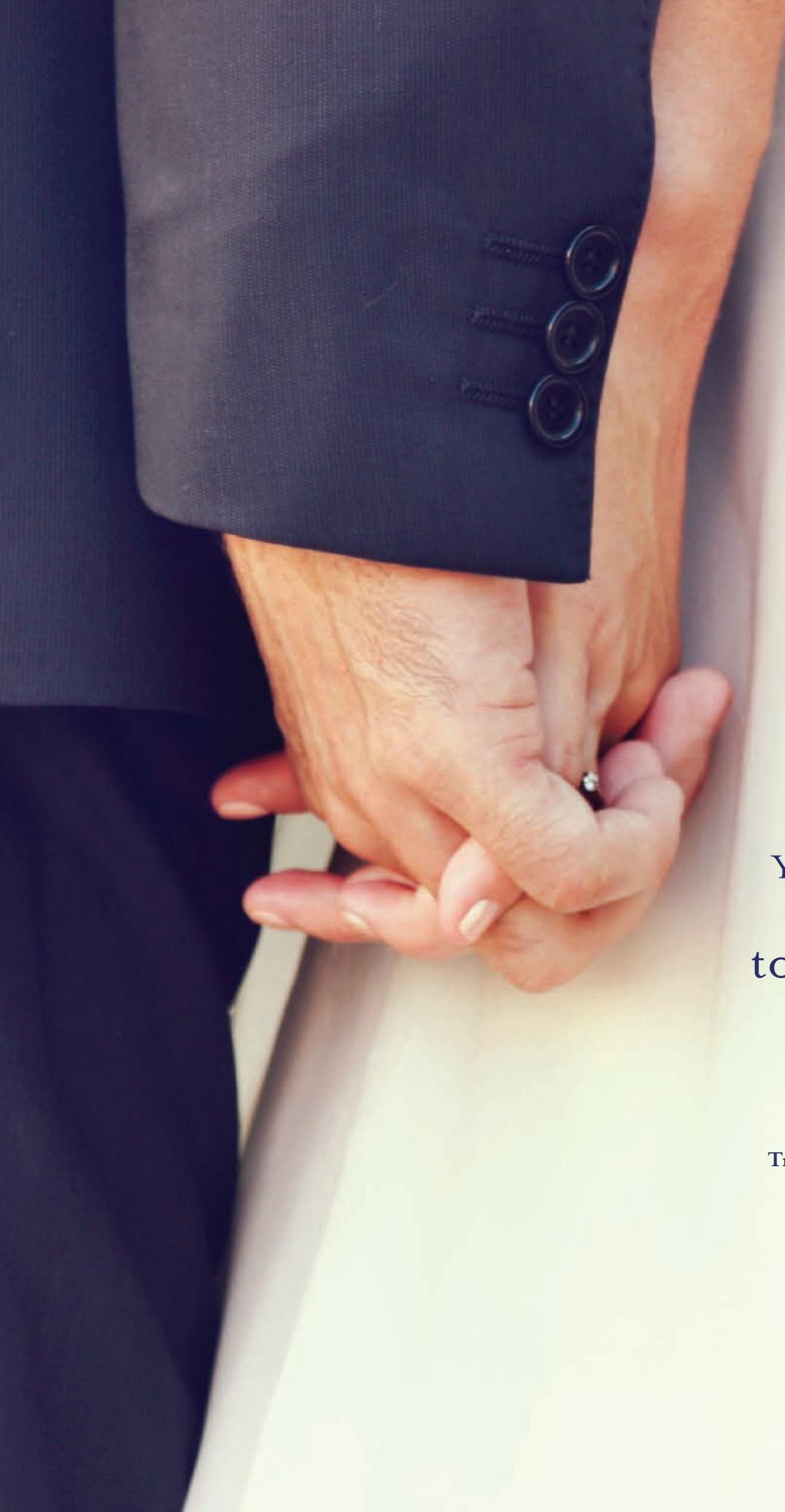
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*P.S. As regular BJT readers know, Margie Goldsmith is not only a first-rate interviewer but also an acclaimed travel writer, and we are proud to report that her article "A Very Frequent Traveler Looks Back" (August/September 2017) recently won three awards, including a gold prize, from the North American Travel Journalists Association.*



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"In the B-25, you feel the history, it's like flying for the first time," says Dave Shiffer, a pilot for the Champaign Aviation Museum in Urbana, Ohio.

# Flying into the Past

If you've ever wondered what it was like to fly before the jet age, book a ride on a vintage aircraft at one of nearly 100 venues listed on warbirdalley.com. In the U.S., paid flights in warbirds and other vintage aircraft generally operate under the Federal Aviation Administration's Living History Flight Experience waiver and are limited to a 25-mile radius of the airport. Still, the thrill of flying in a restored fighter or bomber makes up for the short flight.



Pilots Dave and Eric Shiffer fly one of the mere 45 B-25s that remain operational today.

"There's nothing like the sound of a round engine," says Dave Shiffer, referring to the radial engines powering the World War II B-25 Mitchell bomber that he flies for the Champaign Aviation Museum in Urbana, Ohio. "In the B-25, you feel the history. It's like flying for the first time."

Of the more than 40,000 medium and heavy bombers manufactured during WWII, fewer than 60 remain in flying condition today, including 45 B-25s. Most are operated by small aviation museums that require you to visit their venue on specific days to book a

ride. Larger associations such as the Experimental Aircraft Association and Commemorative Air Force take their aircraft on tours of U.S. and Canadian airports for a weekend at a time. The CAF even offers flights on its B-29 Superfortress Fifi, one of only two flying B-29s remaining. Prices for half-hour flights range from \$180 to \$1,795 per person, depending on the organization and aircraft.

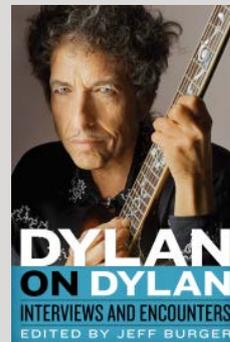
If you want to take the controls, check out Stallion 51 in Kissimmee, Florida, which provides orientation flights for pilots and non-pilots in two-seat TF-51 Mustang fighters and T-6 Texan piston-powered trainers. Prices for a half-day experience including ground briefings, pre-flight, and flight time start at \$600 in the T-6 and \$2,550 in the TF-51.

Looking for a romantic flight for two? Dozens of operators offer rides in open cockpit biplanes such as the 1930s-era Boeing PT-17 Stearman and Waco 10/YMF for approximately \$100 per person. "Whenever we fly over, people come out to watch," says Gretchen Hawk of Troy, Ohio's Waco Air Museum, where 30-minute biplane flights cost \$300 for both singles and couples. "Flying the Waco keeps our purpose alive: preserving the past and inspiring the future." —*Kim Rosenlof*

**CORRECTION:** "New York City Secrets," in our last issue, listed an incorrect address for the city's Plaza Hotel Food Hall. To reach it, enter at 1 West 59th Street, off Fifth Avenue, and take the escalator down one flight.

## BJT EDITOR'S LATEST BOOK FOCUSES ON BOB DYLAN

BJT editor Jeff Burger's latest book, *Dylan on Dylan: Interviews and Encounters*, focuses on one of the most influential singer/songwriters of our time. The chronologically arranged anthology features illuminating radio, TV, and print interviews, press conferences, and Q&A-based feature articles. Also included are excerpts from more than 80 additional conversations spanning Dylan's entire half-century-plus career as well as his 2016 Nobel Prize acceptance speech.



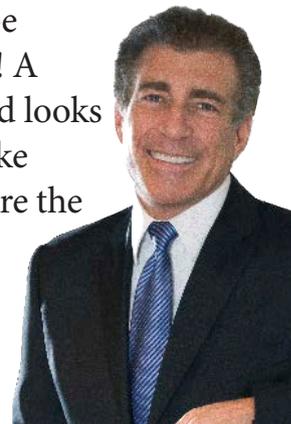
Much of the material has not been previously available in print. Interviewers include some of the top music journalists of our time, such as Mikal Gilmore and Robert Love, as well as musicians like Pete Seeger, Mary Travers, and Happy Traum. Introductions put each piece into context and, in many cases, include the interviewer's reminiscences about the encounter.

The 560-page book is published in the U.S. and Canada by Chicago Review Press, which also issued Burger's anthologies devoted to Bruce Springsteen, Leonard Cohen, and John Lennon. Those books have since been republished in nearly a dozen countries.

## QUOTE UNQUOTE

"If a guy comes in here with torn jeans and a T-shirt, that guy might be worth \$5 billion! A guy comes in and looks [well-dressed] like me, those guys are the working stiffs."

—*The Jet Business owner Steve Varsano*



SOURCE: THE NEW YORK TIMES



## RESTAURANT GUY SAVOY

Monnaie de Paris, 11 quai de Conti,  
guysavoy.com, 33 (0) 1 43 80 40 61

My expectations were sky-high when I arrived at Restaurant Guy Savoy: according to La List, which aggregates data from thousands of reviews and guides in 135 countries to determine the world's thousand finest dining establishments, this is No. 1—the best restaurant on the planet. I haven't dined at enough places to attest to that, but my meal here suggested that Guy Savoy is at least a contender for the throne.

I'd barely sat down in one of the small dining rooms, adorned with contemporary artworks, in the



17th century Monnaie de Paris (Paris Mint) when a champagne-laden cart rumbled into view. The ballet of friendly servers bearing tidbits—including spectacular, peppery foie gras and a single perfect cep—was nonstop until the meal proper got underway. The great chef himself even breezed through the room.

Lunch began with Savoy's famous artichoke and black truffle soup, which looked like an abstract painting. This autumnal dish par excellence, with deep, dark, woody, almost meaty flavors, arrived with a devastatingly good mushroom-and-truffle brioche with truffle butter. The autumnal theme continued in the main course with strips of three mouthwateringly tender game birds—wild duck, pheasant, and wood pigeon—topped with foie gras and served over wild mushrooms and sauerkraut.

The meal concluded with a towering mille-feuille filled with Tahaa-vanilla cream with an extra helping of cream on the side.

Aside from the food, one of the joys of the restaurant is the fantastic view of the Seine from many of the tables, something to ask for when reserving. —Heidi Ellison

*BJT's reviewers dine anonymously and pick up the tab.*

## Smithsonian Showcases Burning Man



Each August, more than 75,000 people converge in Nevada's Black Rock Desert, where they erect an entire city and gigantic experimental art installations, one of which is later ritually burned to

ashes. Known as Burning Man, the temporary metropolis is a hotbed of artistic ingenuity and communal participation.

This year, for the first time, you won't have to camp out in the desert to experience Burning Man. Opening March 30 at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery in Washington D.C., *No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man* will feature large-scale installations from the event as well as costumes, jewelry, video, photographs, and archival materials.

An outdoor extension, *No Spectators: Beyond the Renwick*, will display art throughout the surrounding 43-square-block neighborhood.

The exhibition will close in two stages, on September 16, 2018 and January 21, 2019.

—Margie Goldsmith



FoldHaus, *Shrumen Lumen*, at Burning Man.

RENE SMITH



Giving Back



### Changing Lives with Safe Water

About 2.3 billion people—one in three—lack access to a toilet, and 844 million have no safe drinking water at home, according to water.org. The group says that every \$1 invested in water and sanitation provides a \$4 economic return and a \$5 return in health benefits.

Since 2009, water.org founders Gary White and Matt Damon have pioneered a market-driven solution to the global water crisis and have transformed hundreds of communities in Africa, South Asia, and Central America. They've concluded that charity alone is not a long-term fix; corporate partnerships and access to affordable financing can make a difference, however.

The microfinance-based WaterCredit Initiative brings small, easily repayable loans to those who need them to make household water and toilet solutions a reality. This pay-it-forward system keeps families healthier while giving people who previously spent up to six hours each day collecting safe water time to pursue education and work.

By partnering with beer brand Stella Artois, water.org is engaging large customer bases, encouraging public giving, and reducing reliance on big-money donors. —Lysbeth McAleer

*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're spotlighting one deserving organization per issue. All of them have received a four-star overall rating from Charity Navigator (charitynavigator.org), which evaluates philanthropic institutions based on their finances, accountability and transparency.*

# “I’ll have the **canned ham** to go.”

Our columnist recalls an ill-advised meal choice in San Francisco and discusses the importance of combining business travel with a healthy diet and lifestyle.

by Joe Sharkey

I hate eating in restaurants by myself, even when my employer is willing to pick up the check.

This peculiarity became known some years ago, roughly in the middle of my 16-year tenure as the *New York Times*’ business travel columnist. I was attending a convention in San Francisco, obviously a great restaurant town; but, as I noted in my column, I didn’t dine out. Instead, I stopped at a Walgreens, bought a small package of rolls and a 12-ounce canned ham (the Celebrity brand, which the chain still sells for about \$3.25). Then I retreated for dinner to my hotel room, where I’d already stashed some beer in the fridge.

I had always been regarded as fiscally admirable, if amusingly naïve, for keeping my travel expenses low, but the Walgreens charges tripped a wire. An appalled senior editor at the *Times*, a man who had long cherished the pleasures of expense-account dining while reporting from some of the world’s great cities, called me. In the future, he pleaded, “have a proper dinner, especially if you’re going to mention it in your column.” The *New York Times*, he added, does

**In a survey of business travelers, 54 percent said they are less likely to exercise when traveling, while 44 percent conceded they are more likely to “eat unhealthy foods.”**

not expect its traveling correspondents to eat like a derelict who has just found a \$5 bill.

Since then, I have heard from many friends and colleagues who don’t like to dine alone in restaurants. They give various reasons, including the fact that it means prolonged periods of staring at the décor or poking at your phone. “My phone is my armor when I eat alone,” one woman who travels almost incessantly tells me.

Of course, I have never met anyone else who copped to the canned-ham option, which elicits a look of horror whenever I’m careless enough to mention it. Smart travelers these days appreciate the importance of eating in a healthy manner, whether at the hotel breakfast buffet or even at night in the room.

That’s not to say that everyone maintains a healthy diet and lifestyle during business trips. OnCall International, a travel risk-management company, recently released results of a national survey of 1,000 frequent business travelers in which a majority (54 percent) say they are less likely to exercise when traveling, while 44 percent concede they are more likely to “eat unhealthy foods.” Sixteen percent say they drink more booze when traveling—though anyone who has been to a party at a business convention might have reason

to think there’s a bit of self-under-reporting going on in that response.

Meanwhile, a recent study by researchers at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health and City University of New York produced even more alarming results. Extensive business travel is linked to risk of chronic diseases associated with lifestyle factors, the researchers say in the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. The study was based on medical records of more than 18,000 anonymous business travelers who underwent health assessments through a corporate-wellness program. Earlier research by Andrew Rundle, an epidemiology professor at Mailman, found that frequent business travel was associated with higher body-mass index, obesity, and higher blood pressure.

Business travelers need to take responsibility, but companies also need to ensure that their on-the-road employees have better education about the importance of healthy food options, says Rundle.

That leads me to recall the years-old admonition from the *Times* and admit something I’ve never said before to any editor: “You know what, pal? You were 100 percent right.” **EJTB**



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

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# PAUL STA

A full-page photograph of Paul Stanley on an airport tarmac. He is wearing a black blazer with red piping, a leopard-print scarf, a black t-shirt, blue jeans, and silver sneakers. He has long dark hair and is looking towards the camera with a serious expression. His arms are outstretched, and he is holding two large, crumpled pieces of tan paper. In the background, there are several commercial airplanes and a ground service vehicle under a clear blue sky.

**After selling millions of records and achieving worldwide fame with Kiss in the 1970s, he was still “on a mission to find happiness.” But even then, flying privately was one thing that brought him pleasure.**

*by Margie Goldsmith*

# STANLEY



PHOTO: MICHAEL SPAIN-SMITH

Paul Stanley is best known as the cofounder, lead singer, and rhythm guitarist for Kiss, the now 45-year-old rock band, which has collected 30 gold albums and claims to have sold more than 100 million records. He has written such Kiss hits as “Love Gun,” “God of Thunder,” “Black Diamond,” and “Rock and Roll All Nite.” The group—which is known for its elaborate costumes and facial makeup—was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2014.

Performing and writing are just part of what Stanley does. He designs Kiss album covers, stages, and apparel; he created the iconic Kiss logo; and he has overseen the group’s transformation into a worldwide brand with more than 2,000 licenses. He also designs guitars that have racked up over \$20 million in sales and paints portraits and abstracts that have garnered another \$3 million in sales. As an actor, Stanley played the title role in *The Phantom of the Opera* in Toronto in 1999,

earning standing ovations and helping the show post million-dollar weekly ticket sales.

Along with Gene Simmons—the only other original Kiss member who still performs with the group—Stanley is a partner in Rock & Brews restaurants, a franchise chain that has about 20 locations in the U.S. and expects to have a minimum of 50 within the next five years. His 2014 autobiography, *Face the Music: A Life Exposed*, was a *New York Times* bestseller.



## PAUL STANLEY

**Kiss's members fly together privately. Do you own an airplane?**

No. We lease or charter, depending upon the length of a tour. For myself, my flying is sporadic and it's also on a whim or on a day's notice. The idea of an aircraft sitting around really doesn't make monetary sense. I'm the first person to charter for a flight. There are certain pleasures that I feel very comfortable in saying I've earned, and at this point in my life flying private is very much one of them.

**Do you remember the first time you flew privately?**

It was on a small Learjet in the '70s. We had to go do an appearance. And as exciting as it was, I'm not a fan of cigar tubes with wings on them. That's not to defame Lear's or any of the small aircraft; it's just that I am a big guy and I don't want to crawl into an aircraft. I don't want my head hitting the ceiling. I am a big fan of six-foot cabin heights.

**Do you have a favorite airplane?**

If it's just me and my wife or just a few people, there's no need to get too crazy if it's a few hours' flight; any of the Citation IIIs or the variants that came afterwards are terrific. But if it's my family, I've always been a fan of the Embraer Legacys. I think it's tremendous bang for the buck. I'm happy with a Falcon 50—I still think they are terrific—and you can't beat any of the Gulfstreams. We started using them when we had a GII.

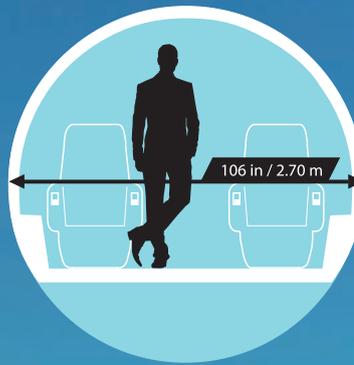
There's so many great aircraft out there. Any of the Gulfstreams, the 200s or the 280s. The Challenger 300s or 604. I believe there's a perfect aircraft for every use. I use a different aircraft to go to Hawaii or New York than I do to go to Vegas. When I need an aircraft, I can certainly shop for the best price per trip, but I've had great success with Cirrus Aviation out of Las Vegas.

MICHAEL SPAIN/SMITH



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# PAUL STANLEY

**You were born with microtia, a congenital condition that caused deafness and a stump in your right ear. Did kids make fun of you?**

Relentlessly. I was very defensive and insecure. I just wasn't comfortable in my own skin.

**Would you say that microtia helped to shape your personality?**

It certainly was at my core, and although I feel I've resolved most if not all of the issues, they don't leave you. You just come to terms with them.

**You've said that when you saw the Beatles on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1964, you saw being a rock artist as your ticket to becoming famous. Did you see fame as a way to disguise your pain about not fitting in?**

I saw it as both a remedy to my pain and as being in a position where people would wish they'd been nice to me. I loved that the Beatles had long hair because it meant I could cover my

ear. It was my ticket to what I thought was happiness and success. The same happened when I saw *Phantom of the Opera*. I found myself going, "I can do this." Ten years later, I became the final Phantom in the Toronto run of the show.

**How did Kiss begin?**

It began with Gene Simmons and me being in the band Wicked Lester [which evolved into Kiss] and actually having a record deal. I remember early Kiss gigs where for two or three nights of work, after all expenses, I might have \$18 or so. I got paid for what I love doing.

We wanted to be the band that we never saw—a band that gave audiences 100 percent. Too many times we saw artists who felt they were doing the audience a favor by being there.

**You've called the makeup you've worn in Kiss a defense mechanism to cover up who you really were.**

I think it was an extension and a magnification of either a part of our personalities or who we would like others to believe we were.



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL MUSIC

**"We all struggle and we are all imperfect. It's what we do with our imperfections and our problems that makes the difference."**

**In addition to the makeup, you wore costumes and high-heeled boots. Was this all part of trying to be different?**

Well, certainly it made us tall. If you want to stand heads above people around you, wear high shoes. Most of my heroes were British bands, and we tended to reflect that not only musically but style-wise.

**By the end of the 1970s you had made millions of dollars. Yet you weren't happy. What was missing?**

A sense of self. In life, we don't find comfort from the externals. Without a secure foundation, the whole tower you build is pretty hollow and shaky. I was on a mission to find happiness.

**There have been a lot of strange dynamics between the band members. How's your relationship with them now?**

It's terrific, but part of that's based upon getting rid of people with whom you can't find common ground. The key to a great partnership



COURTESY OF PAUL STANLEY



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# PAUL STANLEY

in business, bands, and life is knowing its limitations. If you don't expect anything unrealistic, you won't be disappointed. If you're looking for your band to be your family, you're better off going out and finding someone to marry.

## Gene Simmons implies that he's the frontman for Kiss and, in your book, you say you are. Who is?

A frontman is the person who does the talking and who gives a group its identity and communicates to the audience. There's only one person on the stage who does that. If that's the definition of a frontman, then it's undisputable [that I'm the frontman]. If you interpret frontman as something else...if it's being in the media, well then, it's different.

## What has Kiss tried to accomplish musically?

We've tried to stay true to ourselves. I believe in the law of commonality, which basically means that we are all very similar, and if I fulfill a need in myself, then I'll be fulfilling a need in someone else.

## What's it like when the house lights go down and your band comes out in front of thousands of people?

I can't wait, because they are expecting something if they've seen us before, or if they haven't,

they've heard this legend of what this band is, and I know that we are going to exceed anything they are expecting. I am like the prizefighter. Just drop that curtain and let me go, because I am going to make sure they get exactly what they are expecting and more.

## You've helped turn Kiss into a worldwide brand. How much time do you spend on licensing projects?

We don't go and solicit endorsements. We have people who weed through those and then we make sure that the product is a positive reflection of us and doesn't denigrate what we do or insult the people who make us what we are.

## What did it mean for you to be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame?

It was a victory lap. We have historically been despised by the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, and we have been eligible for 17 years. Being inducted was overdue.

## At your concerts, you lead the audiences in saying the Pledge of Allegiance—very unusual for a rock concert.

We needed to reinforce that patriotism and loving your country is always cool. It doesn't mean you always agree with the people in charge, but we should be proud of the basic tenets and what the Founding Fathers envisioned.

## What are your politics?

They vary. I am reluctant to get too deep into politics, and I don't expect politicians to get too deep into music.

## Why did you and your business partners start Rock & Brews?

When I started having children, in order to have a fun afternoon and a good lunch, I'd have to go somewhere and eat cardboard pizza served by somebody dressed like a giant rat. The idea [with Rock & Brews] was to have a restaurant with quality food that thematically was comfortable and that also was child friendly and pet friendly. Most important, it has to start with great food.

## You've said that Rock & Brews is supporting the Wounded Warriors Project and local school programs.

At every opening, the first people through the doors are vets to whom we serve lunch. It's a way to give them a quick thanks and take advantage of media coverage to spotlight organizations that help to bring these people back into society and to try to do for them what the government doesn't. Freedom is only free for the people who don't pay the price, and the people who do and make it possible are owed so much on their return. It's a crime how they get shortchanged. Rock & Brews champions the military and first responders and makes sure that we support local organizations.



MICHAEL SPAIN/SMITH

## FASTFACTS

- NAME:** Paul Stanley (born Stanley Bert Eisen)
- BIRTHDATE:** January 20, 1952 (age 66)
- POSITION:** Lead singer, rhythm guitarist, and songwriter for rock band Kiss, which he cofounded in 1973. Also designs guitars, paints, and is a partner in Rock & Brews restaurant chain.
- EDUCATION:** Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, New York City.
- PERSONAL:** Lives in Beverly Hills, California, with Erin Sutton, his wife since 2005, and their children Colin (11), Sarah (9), and Emily (6). Also has a son, Evan (23), from a previous marriage. Enjoys cooking and collecting wine.

**“There are certain pleasures that I feel very comfortable in saying I’ve earned, and flying private is very much one of them.”**

**When did you become interested in painting?**

In elementary school, when I was probably the best artist. In junior high school, the pond got bigger and all of a sudden, I was one of the two or three talented artists. I went to the High School of Music & Art in New York where you had to test to get in, and I got in for art, although when I got there, I saw that I wasn’t at the top or close to it. It reconfirmed for me that I wanted to do music instead. I wasn’t the best guitar player or the best singer, but nobody worked harder than me.

**What do you want your children to learn from your autobiography?**

I want them to understand how I got to where I am, what my struggles were, what is important in life, and to reaffirm what they have always seen. I’ve always believed you lead by example. I also wanted to shed secrets. I think the more secrets you have, the more it hinders your happiness. If you can rid yourself of secrets, you are free. I wanted people to realize that you may look to me as your inspiration and have this glossy image of perfection, but it’s not true. We all struggle and we are all imperfect. It’s what we do with our imperfections and our problems that makes the difference.

**Three years ago, you started Soul Station, a group that plays ’60s and ’70s soul classics. What made you create this band?**

I’ve always been steeped in soul music, Motown, Philly soul. I just thought, “Wouldn’t it be great to be able to recreate those songs the way they are supposed to be played?” What makes these songs so great is the groove and the lyric. The idea of being able to faithfully and respectfully and reverently recreate them was something that I thought would be amaz-



MICHAEL SPAIN-SMITH

ing. And to be on stage with these consummate players who have played with everyone from Smokey [Robinson] to Stevie Wonder to Whitney Houston—we all love this music.

**How often does Kiss tour?**

We probably do 50 dates a year. There were a few years where we were doing 200 a year. A lot of it has to do with whether my children are in school and can they come. If they can’t, I put a two-week limit on how long I am gone.

**Is Kiss planning any future albums?**

I don’t know. Invariably when people come to see us live, they want to hear classics. If you watch a live DVD of McCartney or the Stones, you’ll see that every time they are playing a new song, the audience sits down. So, if you want to do a new album purely as an artistic endeavor, that’s great, but I am not sure that there aren’t other things I’d rather spend that time doing.

**How have things changed for Kiss in this new era where CDs are less important, and most fans are streaming music or downloading singles?**

I was talking to Rod Stewart a couple of days ago, and I said, “Boy I wouldn’t want to be starting now,” and he said, “Amen.” It’s a very

different world. The income stream is so much less and there’s so much gray area and so many bands. I think that social media and the Internet have made for something that, besides the monetary aspect, is very homogenous. There was a time where there was much distinction between acts and there were far fewer of them. You didn’t have a situation where, for example, you can either take what’s offered to you in terms of a fee for your music or somebody will take it for free. That’s not how things are supposed to work.

**What do you think about the state of rock music today?**

Too much of it is faceless and interchangeable; between that and autotuning and mechanical beats, there’s a loss of what made all the music that came before so great. What we loved about Motown and Philly soul and the Beatles era was its imperfection and spontaneity. You’re missing that now.

**What do you still have left to do?**

I’ll know tomorrow.



Margie Goldsmith (mgoldsmith@bjtonline.com), a longtime BJT contributor, wrote about Scotland for our last issue. This interview has been edited and condensed.



# Does the 2017 tax law benefit business aviation?

The legislation includes some good news for the industry. But there's bad news as well, and nothing about the new rules is simple.

*by Jeff Wicand*

Last December, Congress passed the biggest—and probably the most controversial—tax bill since 1986. How does this “tax reform” affect business aviation?

The most obvious benefit is that it ends the long battle with the Internal Revenue Service over taxing payments by aircraft owners and lessees to aircraft management companies. If you give someone a ride on your business jet and charge for it, you're required to

collect the 7.5 percent federal transportation excise tax. But suppose you hire a management company to help operate your jet. The steady rise of companies in the business of managing private aircraft gave the IRS an incentive to argue that those companies, not the aircraft owners, had what the tax agency calls “possession, command, and control” of the airplanes; as such, said the IRS, the owners' payments to the management companies should be subject

to the 7.5 percent tax. In other words, you should be paying a tax to fly on your own aircraft.

The years of confusion and audit battles that ensued benefited lawyers and accountants more than the U.S. Treasury. Throughout, the National Business Aviation Association and other industry groups steadfastly maintained that management-company clients (the aircraft owners and lessees) in fact retained possession, command, and control of their aircraft for flights

under FAR Part 91 and that they simply hired the management companies to help them, not to provide them with transportation. (FAR Part 91 is the Federal Aviation Regulations category that covers non-commercial flights.)

Congress saw the light by providing in the new tax act that payments by aircraft owners and lessees for management services are not subject to the transportation excise tax. Though in some quarters this is viewed as a gift to rich jet owners,

it's the right result and a major victory for business aviation. Gifts to the rich lurk elsewhere in the act.

The legislation sends a more complex message regarding tax depreciation and recapture. Under prior law, to the extent that you used an aircraft in business, you could “write it off” (depreciate it) for tax purposes on a five- to 12-year schedule, depending on the nature of the business use. Then, when you sold the aircraft, the depreciation would be “recaptured” and taxed. For example, if you purchased an aircraft for \$20 million, depreciated it to \$0 for tax purposes and then sold it for \$12 million, you’d be subject to tax on \$12 million.

You could entirely avoid this tax, however, by purchasing a replacement aircraft in a tax-free or “like-kind” exchange. If the replacement aircraft cost \$25 million, its tax basis would be reduced by \$12 million and the \$13 million balance would be available to be written off for tax purposes going forward.

The new act, however, repeals like-kind exchanges of aircraft and other tangible personal property, while preserving like-kind exchanges of real estate. By itself, this change provides you with an incentive not to sell a depreciated aircraft (and thus not to buy a replacement) because you’d be unable to avoid taxable gain on recapture. The act compensates for this, however, by resurrecting 100 percent expensing for tangible personal property. The NBAA and other industry groups worked hard to make sure the act allowed for 100 percent expensing not just for new property but for preowned property as well. Business aviation achieved a significant last-minute victory when the Senate joined the House in agreeing to this provision.

Putting aside the question of why, as a matter of tax policy, what’s good for an airplane isn’t also good



for a building, at first glance this sounds like a welcome change. No more complicated depreciation schedules; just write off the new or preowned aircraft completely when you buy it, and then pay tax on the sale proceeds when you sell it. The repeal of like-kind exchange means sellers are relieved of the pressure to close within the tax-code deadlines (though they may want the 100 percent write-off on the replacement aircraft to occur in the same tax year as the recapture).

There are problems, though.

First, 100 percent expensing is not as simple as it sounds; it assumes, for example, that you predominantly employ the aircraft in “qualified business use” and the entertainment disallowance does not apply to flights.

Even if you meet these standards during the year you take delivery of the aircraft, you may fail to meet them in later years, so complicated tax rules may still apply and your 100 percent day-one deduction may turn into a multi-year straight-line write-off.

Second, though the demise of aircraft like-kind exchanges makes the extension of 100 percent expensing to used aircraft extremely important, it’s not a perfect solution. The idea behind bonus depreciation was to stimulate the sale, and thus the

manufacture, of factory-new assets like business jets.

Thus, making 100 percent expensing also available on pre-owned aircraft undercuts the whole purpose of allowing an immediate write-off in the first place and may on balance actually hurt aircraft manufacturers. Finally, the act’s repeal of like-kind exchange is permanent, but 100 percent expensing is to be phased out beginning in 2023, presumably to help raise cash to start paying down the deficits created by the big tax cuts in the act.

The act makes changes regarding the deduction for tax purposes of expenses, including aircraft-travel-related expenses. Except for reasons of employee safety, companies can no longer deduct the cost of flying employees from their residence to their place of employment, though some details of this change remain unclear. The act also disallows deductions for entertainment travel even when directly related to a business purpose. Further, employees will no longer be able to deduct employee business expenses, including for aircraft travel, to the extent that they exceed (when

**Under the new tax act, payments by aircraft owners and lessees for management services are not subject to the transportation excise tax. This is the right result and a major victory for business aviation.**

combined with other miscellaneous itemized deductions) 2 percent of adjusted gross income. None of these changes can be said to benefit business aviation.

Oddly, a proposed change that didn’t make it into the final bill would have disallowed a deduction by lower-level employees for expenses related to “entertainment” travel in excess of the amount included in income or reimbursed. Congress amended the tax code in 2005 to disallow that deduction for “specified individuals” of a company (generally owners, directors, top executives, and their personal guests). Why a company should be able to deduct such expenses for lower-level but not upper-level employees always struck me as mysterious. Arguably, retention of the deduction for lower-level employees is a win for business aviation, but not one that makes the tax code simpler or more rational.

Is business aviation better off under the new act? Maybe. But we would be better served by a more thoughtful process designed to develop reasonable changes instead of the ill-conceived “reform” served up by Congress in its politically charged 2017 year-end fire drill. **BJT**

**Jeff Wieand** (jwieand@bjtonline.com) is a senior vice president at Boston JetSearch and a member of the National Business Aviation Association’s Tax Committee.

Avfuel's

# Craig R. Sincock



MARK WAGNER

His company provides fuel for business and commercial aviation. Meanwhile, he fuels the company with enthusiasm.

*by Jennifer Leach English*

**W**hen Avfuel president and CEO Craig Sincock acquired Avfuel in 1983, it had fewer than a dozen employees; since then, he has built it into one of the world's leading aviation fuel suppliers, as well as a provider of such services as flight planning.

The Ann Arbor, Michigan-based business—which has more than 4,000 customers—boasts more than 3,000 locations around the world, including 650 Avfuel-branded dealers throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Sincock's unbridled joy about his job and pride in his company appear to be infectious to everyone around him, and may help explain why more than 10 percent of the 200 employees at Avfuel headquarters have been with the company longer than two decades. Our interview took place on the last day of the EBACE business aviation show in Geneva—the end of a notoriously busy week that leaves most exhibitors exhausted—but Sincock exuded energy and enthusiasm when we spoke.

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"I guess what drives it is that we have so much fun. People say, 'You want to retire and play golf?' Are you kidding me?"

**How did you get started in aviation?**

Some guys I was living with at the end of college were flight instructors. I said, "This is fun, this is a ball!" I got my pilot's license really fast, and four of us decided to buy a modest twin-engine Piper Apache. I just loved it. For about a decade [before buying Avfuel] I worked in investment banking but I was always flying.

**How many people did you start with at Avfuel?**

Maybe eight or 10, if you include the drivers. We were really fortunate in the early years to get extremely good people, and good people attract other good people. Today we have 700.

**What would surprise people about Avfuel?**

We supply fuel for a lot of things you might not even know are flying—freight of all types, ambulance services, military, corporations that have their own hangars. Some of them will buy fuel from the FBO but other times they will buy it on their own and put it in their tanks next to their hangars.

A major U.S. airline needed somebody to manage all their fuel for diversions that happen all the time because of thunderstorms, troop movements, anything that wasn't on the schedule. We do it for them because otherwise they would have to ramp up 24/7 and on weekends, trying to cover it. We are the exclusive manager for all their fueling needs outside their [official] schedule.

**How does Avfuel itself utilize business aviation?**

Our Cessna Citation XLS+ and Corvalis are indispensable for conducting business. Our team members utilize these aircraft regularly. The time we save traveling and the ability to work while traveling make for an extremely efficient experience.

We've frequently been able to visit four cities a day using business aviation. That's far more than you could hope for in a week using commercial transportation.

**What's happening behind the scenes that we don't see?**

It's all logistics. We aim to get the right amount of product in the right places at the right time. We are working with about 100 refiners and 300 locations where we pick up fuel

at terminals with big tanks. Then we move it around using trucks, pipelines, and barges.

**How do you prepare for events like ski season, where demand peaks?**

You have to anticipate the amount of fuel and have extra resources and assets to move it around. Fuel for the ski areas will come usually from Denver unless there is a big snowstorm and they close the Eisenhower Tunnel. Then we've got to replan—in real time as it is happening—and come from the other direction.

Florida is the same thing. It is very busy during holiday season and spring break. We'll schedule pipelines for the product to come in [approximately] million-gallon tanks, and we always have to use a multitude of trucking companies.

The 10-day period of the Masters in Augusta, Georgia is a lot of activity. We schedule extra fuel six months in advance. We position the trucks onsite. We put employees right on the scene at many events—boat shows, car shows, Indianapolis 500, Kentucky Derby.

Many times the FBOs can't pull all the product that they need to use right away, so

**RÉSUMÉ:**

**NAME:** Craig R. Sincok

**BORN:** June 13, 1952

**POSITION:** President and CEO, Avfuel

**AIRCRAFT:** Avfuel-owned Cessna Citation XLS+ and Corvalis

**EDUCATION:** University of Michigan's Ross School of Business

**BOARDS:** University of Michigan's Hospital Advisory Board and Ross School of Business Advisory Board, General Aviation Manufacturers Association

**PHILANTHROPY:** Susan L. and Craig R. Sincok Scholars' Endowment Fund, providing grants for University of Michigan medical and bio/pharmaceutical disciplines

**PERSONAL:** Lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with wife Sue. Enjoys boating (has sailed the Mackinac Boat Race). Licensed pilot (frequently flies company's aircraft).

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we have extra trucks waiting. At a busy location, you've got to have trucks arriving every one to four hours, depending on the usage that day. We are also a major supplier to the FBO chains—the Atlantics and the Signatures.

**Are there people behind the scenes handling these complicated logistics?**

Yes, 24/7. We have to layer on the weather. When Hurricane Katrina hit [in 2005], we immediately cleared the launching of fuel trucks from Chicago and Detroit all the way to the Gulf Coast, because we knew once the hurricane came on shore the electricity was going to be out, and you wouldn't be able to load fuel into the tanker trucks. Our dealer went from having approximately 10,000 gallons every five days to 50,000 or 60,000 gallons a day.

We know exactly what needs to happen. Even with something smaller, like a snowstorm in the Rockies—if Aspen closes, we know where all the [diverted aircraft] go, and we will have trucks ready to go there, because that is where they are going to need the fuel.

**What does it mean for an FBO to partner with you?**

It's somewhat like a franchise, like Hilton Hotels. Normally, when you see an Avfuel-branded dealer, it will be independently owned. There is training in place for each location. A customer can go online and say, just like you would for a hotel, "Where's the Avfuel dealer in any town in the Atlanta area?" You can make reservations or you can send them your fuel order, and we can fuel you around the globe.

**How does an aircraft owner get the best deal on fuel?**

Generally, there are about 30 places you can buy fuel. Do you need to look at all 30? Probably not. If you have two or three sources that will cover your needs, extend the credit, provide the right accounting, you are probably OK.

Avfuel has something called "contract fuel," which is a way for [owners and operators] to buy fuel for less than the posted price. We give pricing commensurate with volume. If somebody has 400 or 500 airplanes, they deserve a little bit better price, but smaller users can still get a good deal.

*"If a snowstorm closes Aspen, we know where all the [diverted aircraft] go, and we will have trucks ready to go there, because that is where they are going to need the fuel."*

**The company has grown so much. Did you have a master plan?**

I just kept looking at the goal and adjusting it upward. I guess what drives it is that we have so much fun. People say, "You want to retire and play golf?" Are you kidding me?

**How do you hire?**

First of all, do they fit the culture? We look for people who are bright, who are curious and ask questions if they don't understand something. Somebody who is passionate, somebody who's going to have fun, somebody that you would want to be working next to. Someone who is solution-oriented.

**Your son is your director of international business development. What's it like having him working beside you?**

C.R. and I get along really well about 90 percent of the time—if I said 100 percent it wouldn't be real. He brings different strengths to the company than I do. He is very analytical. He kind of grew up in the business—we would be flying around as a family and stopping at FBOs. After college he worked in private equity, at a Fortune 500 company, and at a hedge fund, then went back to grad school and came with us full time after that.

**Why did you start your foundation?**

My wife and I have always had an interest in helping out

and we are both University of Michigan alumni. They have the oldest teaching hospital in the country. We have established annual grants so that faculty and students can take early medical research and move it along until they pick up sponsorship from the federal government. In recent years, we've provided research grants to early-on biomedical pharma concepts. *[Typically, Avfuel will choose the grant based on a client or employee's personal or family struggle with a rare disease or cancer. —Ed.]*

**How did you learn to do business in other cultures?**

What helps is curiosity and knowing how to listen carefully, and we do a lot of research. We go on customer tours and we write things down so we don't forget.

**When someone at Avfuel makes a major mistake, how do you handle it?**

I try to make them feel like it was the right thing to do just to say, "Hey, I got a problem." Then we get out the white board, start writing down the facts, and figure out how to solve it.

**What are the current challenges facing Avfuel?**

There are not enough hours in a day for all the things we want to do. **BJT**



Sincock with son C.R.

Jennifer Leach English (jenglish@bjtonline.com), BJT's editorial director, interviewed hospitality entrepreneur John Terzian for our February/March 2018 issue. This interview has been edited and condensed.

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# JetSmarter attracts controversy—and customers

Skeptics continue to raise questions about the company, but its successes to date underscore the viability of per-seat charter.

by James Wynbrandt

JetSmarter, the members-only charter brokerage, appears to have helped to resuscitate the per-seat concept, which had been declared dead several times since its arguably premature birth in the last decade. The company is offering shared charter and shuttle flights, the latter on some 50 routes in the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East.

Like some other charter providers with novel business models (e.g., point-to-point pricing, owned-and-operated fleets, all-you-can-fly memberships), it has been the subject of a good deal of skepticism. But it could be that technology and today's "shared" economy ethos have dramatically expanded per-seat's potential.

When it launched in 2012, JetSmarter styled itself as a tech-driven discount brokerage whose members also got access to free seats on shuttle flights plying well-traveled routes. Today, about 8,000 people are onboard, Sergey Petrossov, CEO of the Fort Lauderdale, Florida-based company, told us in a recent interview.

To join, you pay an annual membership fee of \$15,000 or \$50,000. (The latter amount buys you discounts and greater access to seats on flights, among other perks.) There's also a \$2,500 initiation fee, plus the costs of whatever services beyond free shuttle flights you use, of course.

JetSmarter's per-seat offerings have drawn the most attention

among its charter services, and Petrossov claims they are the key to the company's future. "Traditionally, you have a private airplane with one passenger paying," he said. "I have 10 passengers paying. I can collect from 10 different sources. That's the basic economics. I'm charging more people for the same product."

Per-seat charter skeptics have always contended that the business model can't succeed because sharing a cabin with strangers is the antithesis of one of charter's chief calling cards: privacy. Business jet travelers, they've argued, would never submit to sharing cabins. So why do companies like JetSmarter seem to be attracting customers? Perhaps some

of them are travelers for whom the alternative is an airliner cabin with even more strangers (albeit in business- or first-class), along with security lines and searches; if that's the other option, sharing a business jet might not seem so bad.

Scheduled shuttles aside, JetSmarter's per-seat charter model relies on three things, Petrossov said: its powerful, user-friendly app; charter customers "willing to pay a premium" to fly when they want; and other members "willing to be flexible to get the private jet experience—a hybrid between on-demand and scheduled."

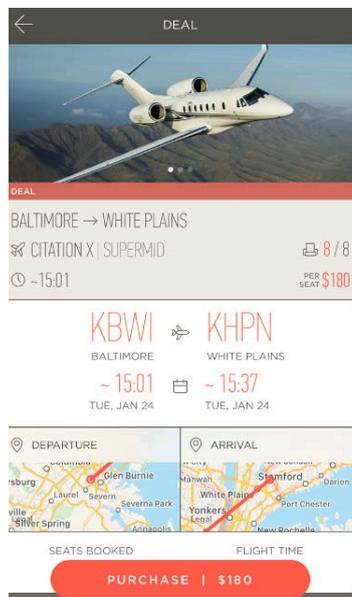
Added Petrossov: "The initiator of the flight is setting the time and the airport—like any traditional

## Some critics have contended that the business model can't succeed, because sharing a cabin with strangers eliminates one of charter's chief calling cards.

on-demand charter [customer would do]." The app then provides an instant quote, along with options for making one or more unoccupied seats available to other JetSmarter members. If any of those seats sell, the initiator earns credits that are applicable toward future flights.

"That's our core business," said Petrossov. "We call the concept social scheduling. We believe this is the future of air travel. It's not the aviation provider or the airline operator that's going to set the schedule in the future, it's going to be the community."

While JetSmarter's offerings and similar per-seat services from other providers are apparently



JetSmarter says its business model depends partly on its user-friendly app.

finding a market, some doubters warn not to confuse popularity with profitability. One of the company's strongest critics is Peter Maestres, CEO of Florida-based Airstream Jets, a competing charter and aircraft management company, who offered his opinion last year about investors' presumed hopes of taking JetSmarter public.

"JetSmarter will never be allowed to trade on a public exchange," Maestres wrote. After crunching what he considered conservative numbers on its operations and coming up with red, Maestres concluded that the company must be incurring losses that are offset only by an ever-growing number of new investors and members. "How angry will those investors be once they realize they were actually subsidizing thousands of corporate jet flights for complete strangers?"

Petrossov countered that only a small number of JetSmarter's scheduled shuttle flights are free. The company's technology, he said, enables it to identify in-demand routes where shuttle service could prove profitable. It then initiates that service with a limited number of free weekly flights. "We'll get the market going," said Petrossov. "[But] the third, fourth, and fifth flight—that is not going to be us [paying for it]. That's our go-to-market strategy."

Once free flights are regularly fully booked, members begin creating shared shuttle trips, and the route is on its way to profitability, he added.

"We can create flights on some days for as little as \$2,000, and the flight is guaranteed," Petrossov said, referring to shuttles between New York and Florida, the company's most vibrant route, with up to 50 round trips per week. "Some days, it's \$4,000, some days it's \$7,000, but it's by far the most cost-effective solution."

Meanwhile, the number of investors in the company is growing. Last August, Clearlake Capital Group and Leucadia National Corporation, both multibillion-dollar investment funds, signed on with JetSmarter, bringing the total raised to "upwards" of \$200 million, Petrossov said. Other investors reportedly include the Saudi royal family, rapper and businessman Shawn "Jay Z" Carter, and Goldman Sachs Capital Partners.

Petrossov said the company, with revenues of \$300 million last year, is "cash-flow profitable," and the challenge now is "how to grow from a \$300 million to a billion-dollar business. That's why we raise capital."

JetSmarter has been called the "Uber of private jets," and whether or not its business model is analogous to that of the car service, it has had its share of Uber-like behind-the-scenes drama. Last year, its then-president was charged with embezzlement (for activities unconnected to his position at JetSmarter). After Kim Kardashian tweeted that she was "obsessed" with the service, the nonprofit Truth in Advertising criticized her for not disclosing her commercial ties with the company. (JetSmarter admits it doesn't charge dues to



Sergey Petrossov, CEO of Fort Lauderdale, Florida-based JetSmarter

some celebrity members or pays for their flights, but at the time of the Kardashian incident, it refused to specify its relationship with her.)

The magazine *Verge*, meanwhile, requested a demo shuttle ride for one of its journalists, and then reported last year that JetSmarter had said the reporter would be charged \$2,000 for the flight if a positive article weren't published within five business days of it. The magazine also reported that members who use chat rooms to share thoughts on the service suspected that company employees were monitoring the sites, and that some memberships were terminated or not renewed for customers who made negative comments in such chat rooms. JetSmarter has denied this claim.

When we asked Petrossov about *Verge's* charges during our interview, a public relations spokesperson cut in, saying JetSmarter would provide written responses about this, as well as about Maestres's comments. Two follow-up requests for those responses went unanswered, however.

**BJT**

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

FACTORY-NEW  
AIRCRAFT

# Epic E1000

This single-engine turboprop seems likely to slay its nearest competitor by nearly every measure.

by Mark Huber

**D**reams die hard. Over the last two decades, there has been no shortage of new entrants into the turbine business aircraft market. Most fall woefully short of success. This is particularly true when it comes to makers of single-engine turboprops—and no wonder.

Demand for new business turboprops has been remarkably steady, according to data from the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA), with annual sales of new single-engine models averaging 475 units between 2012 and 2016; but when you break down those numbers, you see that most of the sales are being made by a small group of manufacturers.

In any given year, Air Tractor and Thrush—which make crop-dusting aircraft—collectively account for about one-third of production. Take that away, and you're left with approximately 250 to 300 new turboprop singles a year—virtually all from just five airframers: Textron Cessna, Daher, Pilatus, Piper, and Quest. Collectively, those manufacturers accounted for 299 of the 467 singles produced in 2016, according to GAMA.

To break into a market that's dominated by so few companies, you need a compelling product and an attractive price point. Epic Aircraft sought to provide both in 2004, when it introduced the sleek, all-composite six-seat LT as a kit, saving much of the time and expense that goes with marketing a certified aircraft.

I had an opportunity to fly one of the early builds shortly thereafter. It snapped off the runway, climbed like a banshee on fire (around 4,000 feet per

minute), and offered extremely smart styling and a nice, comfortable cabin, all—at the time—for around \$1.5 million. Granted, some assembly was required by the owner/builder per FAA regulation—one that was being widely abused as numerous firms popped up to “help,” meaning they would do almost all of your kit building for you.

The LT was a 338-knot rocket, and speed aficionados began lining up in small but sufficient numbers to buy kits for \$1.4 million to \$1.8 million each. Had Epic focused its attention strictly on this model, chances are the company's story would be far less interesting. But Epic's founder, Rick Schrameck, had dreams of building a company that made everything from light sport models to twinjets—and a production target of 400 aircraft per year. He actually built prototypes of some of these other models.

**W**here the money for this came from...well, the story appears to be more than a bit naughty if you believe the government. While the case has yet to be tried and Schrameck has pled not guilty, a 2014 federal indictment charges him with 18 counts of mail fraud, wire fraud, and money laundering. The indictment suggests he was not going to let legalities dash his dreams of an aviation empire or interfere with his “lavish lifestyle,” which were both allegedly fueled by deposits for LTs. By the time it was over and Epic filed for bankruptcy in 2009, LT customers had lost more than \$14 million.

Since then, Epic Aircraft's designs and physical assets have changed hands several times; and since 2012, the U.S.-based remains have been owned by







Russian maintenance, repair, and overhaul company Engineering LLC. Under its control, Epic announced an end to kit production and an intent to pursue manufacture of an FAA-certified variant of the LT, christened the E1000; and the company began taking orders, which now stand at more than 70. The first E1000 prototype flew in 2015, the second in January 2018. The company claims the \$3.25 million E1000 will be certified later this year.

The production E1000 will differ from the kit LT in subtle ways in appearance and substantial ways in equipment and capabilities.



The wing and the engine cowl intake have been redesigned to improve efficiency, the latter for the Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6-67A engine (derated to 1,200 shaft horsepower). The production aircraft will feature the three-screen Garmin G1000 NXi glass-panel avionics system and Genesys digital autopilot with radar, radar altimeter, and Iridium satellite transceiver options. The sculpted cockpit and the cabin both take the latest automotive styling cues and offer all the modern conveniences, including USB ports for carry-on electronics. Entry is via a rear airstair door, up a center aisle through the facing club-four passenger seat array. The 15-foot-long cabin offers more space than a twin-engine King Air C90.

On paper, the E1000 slays the TBM 930, its nearest competitor, in virtually every category save maximum cruise speed (the TBM is five knots faster). And it promises to be nearly \$700,000 cheaper. Notably, the E1000's 34,000-foot service ceiling is 6,000 feet higher than the LT's. The E1000 is expected to deliver fuel burns of 60 gallons per hour at cruise speeds of 300 knots down low, and 40 gallons per hour

## Epic E1000 at a Glance

Price	\$3.25 million	
Crew	1-2	
Passengers	4-5	
Engine	Pratt & Whitney Canada PT6A-67A (derated to 1,200 shp)	
Avionics	Garmin G1000 NXi	
Maximum Cruise Speed	325 kt	
Range	1,650 nm (at 265 knots)	
Full fuel	288 U.S. gal	
Payload with full fuel	1,100 lb	
Takeoff distance	1,600 feet	
Cabin	Length	15 ft
	Width	4 ft, 7 in
	Height	4 ft, 11 in

Source: Epic Aircraft. All data preliminary.

at 300 knots up at 34,000 feet. Time to climb to maximum altitude is just 15 minutes. Full fuel payload should be 1,100 pounds with a range of at least 1,650 nautical miles, according to the company. The E1000 is projected to be a short-field champ, needing just 1,600 feet of runway for takeoff.

Performance like that is the stuff of dreams. For this dream to fly, of course, the E1000 needs FAA certification and sufficient resources to achieve serial production. But those goals appear within reach. **BJT**

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



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# A focus on ethical conduct

Aircraft brokers and dealers, who are now unregulated, advocate for industrywide standards.

by James Wynbrandt

With millions of dollars routinely exchanged in an opaque marketplace, no certification or licensing requirements for brokers, and no government body to regulate the trade, aircraft sales and acquisitions can at times resemble a Wild West of commerce.

“There are no barriers to entry. All it takes to do multimillion-dollar transactions is a cell phone and a website,” says Brian Proctor, CEO of the Texas-based Mente Group, an aviation consultancy. By contrast, he adds, “In Texas, you need 1,500 hours of training just to cut somebody’s hair.”

Proctor is the newly elected president and chairman of the National Aircraft Resale Association (NARA), and both he and NARA—which has a code of ethics—are among a growing number in the industry calling for more regulation for aircraft brokers and dealers. (A broker represents a buyer or seller, a dealer takes aircraft in trade, and a broker-dealer can provide both services.)

For you as a buyer or seller, the risk is that your brokerage might be acting in its best interest, not yours. “If you can think of it, it’s probably been done,” Proctor says of the spectrum of potential ensuing chicanery.

To be sure, brokerage isn’t the only sphere of business aviation that faces ethical challenges. Last December, the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) released a statement that said

“all industry participants—whether representing the buyer or the seller of any products or services—should conduct themselves in a manner that seeks to avoid even the appearance of improper behavior when engaging in business transactions.” It called for companies to provide policies and training “on issues of ethical behavior.”

An NBAA spokesperson said no specific behavior prompted the document, which was championed by “a group of people within the membership.” Given the “complex” nature of aircraft transactions and flight-department operations, added the spokesperson, “sometimes even people with the best intentions may be unaware of all the ethical considerations that may be involved.”

In January, the NARA board unanimously endorsed the statement. NARA has about 40 broker-dealers on its rolls, a small fraction

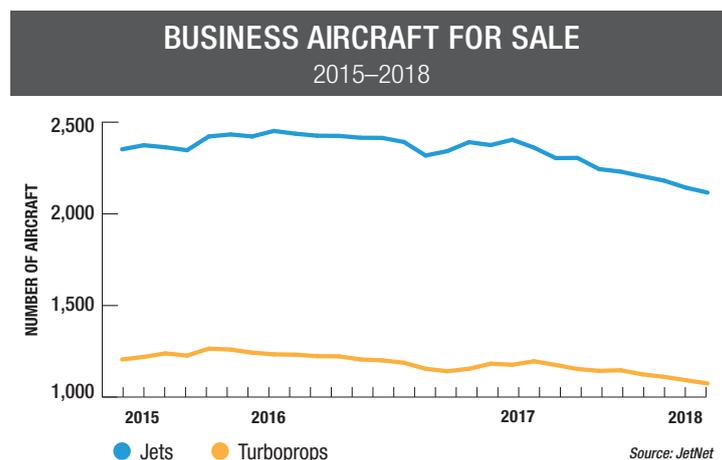
of the some 1,060 aircraft brokers in the U.S., yet they represent an outside proportion of deals: members handled about 60 percent of the 4,600 retail aircraft transactions conducted in 2017, according to the organization. (Brokerages must have been in business five years and must conduct a minimum of 10 transactions per year to be eligible for membership; membership fee and annual dues are \$8,000. Many brokerages that meet these and all other qualifications choose not to join.)

The call for more broker oversight extends beyond NARA. Following last year’s annual NBAA convention, Jay Mesinger, founder and chairman of Colorado-based Mesinger Jet Sales said, “I’ve never heard as much conversation around integrity and ethics. It’s clear we as an industry are going to embrace and create a real code of ethics.”

Some who tout regulation look to California and Florida statutes that govern yacht brokers as models for aircraft transactions. These states require those brokers to be bonded, undergo a criminal background check, successfully complete an accreditation program, and hold a state sales agent’s license for two years before becoming a licensed yacht broker; and sales contracts and commissions are standardized.

NARA has recently embarked on an initiative to create a certification program for brokers and dealers. “We’re building the strategic plan this year,” says Proctor. “The timing is right. There is a significant opportunity for the industry to grow up and mature, and I think the appropriate organizations are starting to look at this pretty hard. We’ve got to build discipline into the industry. At the end of the day, we all benefit by having more efficient markets.”

NARA has recently updated its own policies and procedures for handling questions about the conduct of its members. Previously, grievances were filed through a board member but, says Proctor, “We have developed a new ethics committee and we will have links on the website to make the process of filing a complaint a little easier.” **EJTB**



**James Wynbrandt** (jwynbrandt@bjtonline.com), a multiengine instrument-rated pilot, is a longtime **BJT** contributor.



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## AIRBUS HELICOPTERS' ECOSTAR EC130B4

Oversized windows, economical operation, and a quiet rotor system are among the reasons it earns high marks from owners, operators, pilots, and passengers.

by Mark Huber

**D**uring the 1980s, helicopter tours over U.S. National Parks surged in popularity. In 1987, Congress passed the National Park Overflight Act to limit noise over the Grand Canyon and other federal lands. The legislation defined a standard in decibels for “natural quiet” that tour overflights had to maintain at least 75 percent of the time. When the legislation was being drafted, it was assumed that none of the helicopters in use at the parks could meet that standard.

The helitour business saw the new law as a direct threat to its livelihood and began to

work with Eurocopter (now Airbus Helicopters) to design a rotorcraft that could comply with it. They succeeded with the EcoStar EC130B4, which beats the noise limits for National Parks as well as those set by the International Civil Aviation Organization. First delivered in 2001, the six- to seven-passenger EcoStar has now become the gold standard for helitour operators, not just at the Grand Canyon but worldwide.

The EcoStar marries the guts—engine, controls, and main rotor system—of the ubiquitous and proven Airbus Helicopters AS350B3

with the ducted tailrotor (called a Fenestron) from the company’s light twin H135 in a capacious, but bulbous 130-cubic-foot cabin that measures just over six feet wide and seven feet long. The forward fuselage of the EcoStar may not be the prettiest you’ve ever seen, but for a single-engine helicopter it is definitely the most comfortable; and it is shrouded in plenty of Plexiglas, which offers both pilot and passengers superb viewing—the primary sensory delight for flying in a helicopter.

Adding the Fenestron with a two-speed rotor system that automatically cuts cruise

power rpms resulted in a noise signature that's significantly below the limits. And besides being quiet, the EcoStar incorporates numerous advances aimed at reducing pilot workload and increasing safety and passenger comfort. A hammer attenuation system for the main rotor significantly reduces vibration. The Safran Arriel 2B-1 engine (847 shaft horsepower at takeoff) features full authority digital engine control (FADEC) for more precise operation. The EcoStar also has dual hydraulics for smoothness and safety; a skid and suspension system that makes landing and ground operations safer; and the shrouded Fenestron, which not only reduces noise and alters its pitch to make it less irritating but guards against anyone walking into it during power-on ground operations (unlike the exposed tailrotor on most helicopters).

While the pilot in command sits on the right side in most helicopters, he or she sits on the left in the EcoStar. This is primarily to guard against any accidental passenger bumping of the collective control that is operated with the left hand. Up to three passengers can sit next to the pilot and another four in the row behind.

**E**ntry and egress is a no-drama affair, thanks to four large cabin doors; the front ones open forward on hinges while the rear ones slide aft in tracks, much like those on a minivan. The stock interior is relatively Spartan, and most tour and charter operators have either selected the factory's "Stylence" interior—which features upgraded seat coverings and accents—or fashioned their own retrofit through a completions shop. The three baggage holds (left, right, and rear) combine for a capacity of nearly 39 cubic feet; and you can augment them with optional and aftermarket left- and right-hand cargo pods called "squirrel cheeks" that increase storage room by 35



percent and can swallow sets of golf clubs and other outsized items. The "cheeks" add 44 pounds to the EcoStar's typical empty weight of 3,324 pounds; maximum takeoff weight is 5,321 pounds.

The vehicle and engine management display (VEMD) reduces pilot workload by presenting critical engine and rotor system information as needed. Combined with the engine's FADEC system, the VEMD makes the EcoStar "idiot proof," according to one large tour operator who flies dozens of EcoStars. The model addresses two of the biggest problems in single-engine helicopters—hydraulic and fuel-systems failure—by providing backup hydraulics and a virtually bulletproof hydro-mechanical metering unit for fuel. To start the engine, you simply push a button and the computers do the



CURTIS JONES

## Airbus Helicopters' EcoStar EC130B4 compared with other rotorcraft

Model	First year produced	Variable cost/hour	Seats exec/max	Range (nm)	Normal cruise (kt)	Max takeoff weight (lb)
<b>EC130B4</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>\$647</b>	<b>5/9</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>5,351</b>
Bell 407	1996	\$632	5/7	264	124	5,250
Leonardo AW119	1999	\$849	6/12	275	140	5,997

Assumptions: Aircraft are 2008 models. Jet fuel \$4.30/gal; variable cost: fuel plus maintenance reserves; four passengers; VFR reserves, maximum cabin altitude 8,000 ft.; passenger weight, 200 lb includes baggage; two pilots

Sources: Conklin & de Decker Life Cycle Cost, Conklin & de Decker Aircraft Performance Comparator

## Specifications & Performance

Passengers (executive)	5
Pilots	1-2
Range*	220 nm
Max cruise speed	135 ktas
Cabin	Height: 4.2 ft
	Width: 6.12 ft
	Length: 7.19 ft

\*seats full, VFR 30 min. reserve fuel

## Economics

Total variable flight cost/hour	\$647
Total fixed cost/year	\$280,235

Source: Conklin & de Decker

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rest. If something is amiss, the system won't let you start up.

Fuel capacity is 143 gallons (972 pounds), and at a comfortable cruise speed of 120 knots with a full load, the helicopter will burn around 347 pounds per hour, making the EcoStar a solid two-hour ship with ample reserves. Fast cruise is listed at 135 knots and you start to get a little chop in the cabin north of 130.

While operators and pilots praise the EcoStar EC130B4's low noise signature, spacious cabin, and outstanding visibility, the model does have a few quirks. The factory-supplied air conditioning is anemic—most operators have opted for a third-party provider such as Enviro Systems—and the helicopter's big windows, ideal for sightseeing, can turn the cabin into a greenhouse in places like Las Vegas and Maui. Door hinges and bushings have failed repeat-

edly under the daily tour grind.

Tail booms developed cracks near the Fenestron assembly, eventually prompting an airworthiness directive. Changing out a tail boom is not cheap—it costs about \$65,000. The Fenestron produces less anti-torque tail rotor authority than that of the unshrouded A-Star and when the winds kick up, it increases the likelihood of “running out of pedal” (in pilot vernacular). This makes maneuvering, particularly at low speeds close to the ground, the impetus for ramp betting pools. So when the winds are above 35 knots you are likely—and sensibly—to be sitting on the ground.

While the engine time-between-overhaul interval (TBO) is 3,500 hours, a critical engine component called the swirl plate—which creates a more efficient fuel-air mixture in the turbine—was routinely failing at half that interval,

making for unplanned downtime and maintenance. Changing out a swirl plate is no small task, requiring up to 40 maintenance man-hours. Overall maintenance hours required run approximately 1.4 to each hour of flight time.

**A**irbus Helicopters addressed most the EC130B4's deficiencies when it introduced the EC130T2 in 2012. The updated model offers longer routine-inspection intervals, 10 percent more engine power, and a completely flat-floor cabin. (B4 rear-row passenger seats are mounted on a box shelf.) The T2 also boasts better anti-vibration technology, improved factory air conditioning, new seats, and more maximum takeoff weight (5,512 pounds versus 5,351 on the B4). Of course, all these improvements come with a price; new T2s start around \$3.3 million while much of the fleet of 421 B4s can easily be had for less than \$2 million.

The EC130B4's large cabin is not only appreciated by tour passengers; it has made the model increasingly popular as a medevac helicopter for operators seeking twin-engine comfort with single-engine economics. You may not think of it as a corporate machine, but compared with noisier singles such as the Bell 407 and the A-Star, it has much to offer in terms of convenience and safety. It also stands as a welcome reminder of what manufacturers can achieve when they work closely with customers—a machine universally praised by owners, operators, pilots, and passengers. **EJT**

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



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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

RESET SEARCH

All aircraft data provided by Cirium & de Decker

MODEL #	MANUFACTURER	CABIN SIZE	RANGE	PRICE NEW	PRICE USED	Options
 3000	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	\$1.5M	\$310K - \$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		
 206LT	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	Cessna	352 cu ft				
 208 Grand Caravan EX	Cessna					
 208 Grand Caravan EX/Cargo Pod	Cessna					
 212						
 214B						
 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 an 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 No 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



**EMBRAER DELIVERS FIRST FLORIDA-ASSEMBLED LEGACY 500**



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**EMBRAER TO ASSEMBLE BULK OF LEGACY 450/500S IN FLORIDA**

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This recurring editorial feature spotlights aircraft that are for sale at press time. For this issue, we asked dealers to tell us about aircraft they're currently offering that have had only one owner to date. **BJT's** editorial department selects aircraft

for inclusion and the magazine receives no compensation in exchange for coverage. Brokers wishing to have their inventory considered for this department should email [readyfortakeoff@bjtonline.com](mailto:readyfortakeoff@bjtonline.com). —Ed.

# One-owner Aircraft

## ↓ 2010 Challenger 300

This nine-passenger jet, which the broker describes as being in "impeccable condition," has dual four-place club seating and a belted lav. It offers the Lufthansa nice HD cabin entertainment system, Airshow 4000, and an Iridium satellite phone system. The engines and APU are enrolled on JSSI. Avionics feature Pro Line 21 with dual file servers. The EASA-certified aircraft, now based in Portugal, has 3,728 hours of flight time.

**Asking price:** \$9.75 million

**Broker:** Guardian Jet



## ↓ 2010 Global Express XRS

This aircraft—the latest-model Global XRS on the market—has 2,689 flight hours. It is configured for 17 passengers and has forward and aft lavatories. It is enrolled in several maintenance programs and is in compliance with all 2020 avionics requirements. It has a well-equipped galley, and a wide array of entertainment and communications equipment.

**Asking price:** \$18.95 million

**Broker:** The Jet Business



## ↑ 2009 Falcon 900EX EASy

This 12-passenger aircraft, which has 7,251 flight hours, is next-generation ready. The three-zone cabin boasts a forward four-place club, a mid-cabin four-place conference group and credenza, and an aft three-place divan opposite a single VIP seat. Other features include a well-equipped forward galley with granite countertops, an in-flight-accessible baggage compartment, and an aft lavatory. The Honeywell engines are on JSSI's Premium Program, and the aircraft is enrolled in Dassault's Optimized Continuous Inspection Program.

**Asking price:** \$14.495 million

**Broker:** Leading Edge



## ↑ 2009 Global Express XRS

This aircraft, which is based in Seattle, includes seating for 13 passengers and a crew rest area. Total flight time is 3,751 hours. The aircraft is enrolled in Bombardier Smart Parts Plus and the engines are enrolled in Rolls-Royce Corporate Care. The numerous avionics features include six Honeywell Primus Elite displays, Rockwell Collins and ICG satcom systems, dual SwiftBroadband with Wi-Fi, and Honeywell Graphical Weather.

**Asking price:** \$18.12 million

**Broker:** Mesinger Jet Sales

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# The Best New Luxury Resorts

by Gemma Z. Price

More than a few noteworthy resorts launched in 2017. Some reimagine historic buildings to immerse guests in centuries of local culture. Others are entirely new creations that open up frontier destinations. Here are six to consider checking into. Rates are per room per night unless otherwise indicated.

## Kokomo Private Island Fiji

Fringed by sandy beaches and clear blue water, Kokomo Private Island—part of Fiji's Kadavu archipelago, a 45-minute seaplane or helicopter transfer from Nadi International Airport—is that rare luxury resort that not only offers jaw-dropping tropical-island-paradise vibes but caters simultaneously to couples, adventure seekers, and families.

Accommodations, including 21 beachfront villas and six residences with up to six bedrooms, are inspired by Fiji's traditional open-plan bures, rendered in a neutral palette that reflects the island's sand, driftwood, and natural grey rock. All feature private decks and infinity pools and are well spaced for privacy.

Kokomo's owner, billionaire Australian real estate tycoon Lang Walker, says he was drawn to the location by its proximity to the Great Astrolabe Reef, which he ranks among the world's best dive sites. Not surprisingly, the property is outfitted for water play, with a complimentary dive tank or Discover Scuba session with the island's certified trainers included with each stay. You can dine at one of the resort's three restaurants, in-room, or under the stars on a neighboring island; catch your own meal on a deep-sea fishing excursion and chefs will serve it with your choice of veggies from the organic garden. Butler and nanny services are included, as is a massage at the secluded Yaukuve Spa Sanctuary.

From \$7,500 (two nights), [kokomoislandfiji.com](http://kokomoislandfiji.com)



# The Bulgari Resort Dubai

Dubai, UAE

Roman jewelry brand Bulgari's mission to bring Italian hospitality and la bella figura to the world's most eminent destinations continued in December with the opening of Bulgari Resort Dubai—the brand's fifth and most ambitious property, following Bulgari Hotel Beijing, which debuted two months prior. Developed over 13 hectares on the seahorse-shaped, man-made island of Jumeira Bay, the property evokes an Italian maritime town on the shores of the Arabian Gulf, complete with boulevards, illuminated gardens and pools, and even a lemon grove.

The world's first Bulgari Marina & Yacht Club, incorporating 50 berths for superyachts up to 40 meters, abuts La Spiaggia beach club, which has its own private beach and striking mosaic-tiled outdoor pool. Bulgari Spa's 25-meter indoor pool is framed by floor-to-ceiling windows with expansive ocean views. Chef Niko Romito—whose restaurant in Abruzzo, Italy, has three Michelin stars—oversees main dining hub Il Ristorante.

At just four stories, the property has a lower profile than other Dubai developments but is no less lavishly appointed. Architect Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel's contemporary, marble-rich Italian buildings incorporate Middle Eastern and maritime touches, such as the coral-shaped, Arab-style *brise soleil* shading that links the ocean to the skyline; accommodations juxtapose furnishings by luxe Italian brands Maxalto, Flos, and Flexform with silk walls and Berber carpets.

And while the resort's 101 rooms are spacious, fronted by balconies overlooking either the gulf or the glittering city skyline, its 20 one-, two- and three-bedroom villas—all with butler service, private pool, and gazebo—are better suited to families or groups. The most lavish of these is the 5,810-square-foot, three-bedroom Bulgari Villa, which boasts a large outdoor swimming pool framed by lush gardens.

From \$750, [bulgarihotels.com/dubai](https://bulgarihotels.com/dubai)



# Amanyangyun

## Shanghai

It's easy to imagine that this knot of Ming and Qing Dynasty dwellings at Aman's new Amanyangyun resort—set within 10 hectares of tranquil, pond-dotted grounds 30 minutes from Shanghai—has stood unchanged for centuries. But a decade ago, these structures looked very different and were somewhere else entirely.

When entrepreneur and philanthropist Ma Dadong learned in 2002 that a new reservoir would submerge 50 ancient villas scattered over his home province of Jiangxi in eastern China, 400 miles away, he embarked on a mammoth conservation and restoration project to disassemble, preserve, and ultimately rebuild those structures here, brick by brick.

Kerry Hill Architects—the firm that designed Aman Tokyo—has reimaged the original buildings as 12 Aman residences for purchase and 13 four-bedroom antique villa guest

accommodations covering up to 1,000 square meters with a central courtyard, private pool, and Jacuzzi. At the property's center, the grandest house, Nan Shufang (named for the Forbidden City's royal reading pavilion), is a shared space to read and relax, practice calligraphy, participate in tea ceremonies, or watch a Kunqu Opera performance.

Some of the 10,000 camphor trees Dadong uprooted as part of the project—including a 1,000-year-old Emperor Tree—have found a new home here; the property also includes 24 new Ming Courtyard Suites, an expansive spa and fitness center with Russian banya and hammam, and five drinking and dining hubs: restaurants serving Cantonese, Japanese, and Italian cuisine; plus a bar and cigar lounge with a wine cellar and a humidor stocked with selections from Cuba and the Dominican Republic.



From \$810, [aman.com/resorts/amanyangyun](https://aman.com/resorts/amanyangyun)



# Alila Fort Bishangarh

## Jaipur, India

This 230-year-old former fort—perched atop a rugged, granite hillock in Bishangarh village in Jaipur, India—stands out for its rich aesthetics. A decade of careful renovations preserved its marble-and-sandstone-clad, two-meter-thick walls, which are pocked by openings for firearms. Interior emphasize elegance and simplicity over fussy opulence, taking their cues from local materials and architectural influences from the Mughals and the British—Tudor and cusped arches, stone Jaali work, brass embossed panels.

Because dining venues are scattered over towers, secret passages, and cellars, meal-times have a treasure-hunt feel. Amarsar, set in the former Shahpura royal residence, offers all-day, Silk-Road-cuisine-inspired dining. At outdoor grill terrace Nazaara, chef Ranveer Brar serves Rajput and hunter-style cuisine—meat cooked in its own juices in sandpits and firepits—against the backdrop of the Aravalli Range. Kachhawa Lounge, site of the former royal escape route, serves the 4 Cs—champagne, coffee, chai, and cakes—while open-air poolside hub Haveli offers Mediterranean cuisine informed by seasonal produce from the hotel's organic garden. The after-dinner hang-out is cigar-cum-cognac turret Madhuveni, which is ventilated by holes in the thick stone that were originally used to pour boiling oil over attacking enemies.



The Fort's 59 rooms and suites are spacious, ranging from 703 to 912 square feet, all with king-size or twin beds, daybeds set against large jarokha-style windows with uninterrupted views of Bishangarh's rural beauty, and footed or oversized tubs in the bathrooms.

There's Wi-Fi, a gym, and a marble-pillared library whose holdings still include a wall map of charming Bishangarh village and its havelis (mansions). Carved out of the granite, the fort's old dungeons have been reimagined at Spa Alila, where treatments combine the wellbeing rituals and spices and emollients of the region.

From \$219, [alilahotels.com/fortbishangarh](https://alilahotels.com/fortbishangarh)



# Hoshinoya

## Ubud, Bali

Perched atop a lushly forested hill slope overlooking the Pakerisan River in upscale Ubud, this 30-villa property—Hoshinoya’s first outside Japan—is Balinese inspired and Japanese designed, executed, and operated. Architect Rie Azuma has drawn on the layout of a traditional village to create 30 villas that blend local culture with Japanese spatial concepts. The grounds are networked by UNESCO World Heritage-listed Subak canals, which have supported the valley’s terraced rice paddies for a thousand years, and feature three swimming pools that are accessible from every villa’s terrace or balcony.

Operations manager Mari Kobayashi says her favorite villa category of the three available is Bulan, for its outdoor poolside living space, where a private *alang-alang*—thatched gazebo is oriented to catch the breeze from the roaring river below, and traditional carvings by Ubud artisans are placed above the bed. “The impression of the wood carving changes in accordance with the sunlight streaming



in the room and lightings throughout the day,” she explains.

Balinese spirituality also imbues wellness activities. Daily yoga sessions are geared towards morning awakening and moonlight meditation; at spa villas set halfway down the hill from the resort, where exotic birds flit between steaming, sheen-covered trees, massage therapists use techniques originating in the courts of Javanese kings to realign guests’ *ki*.

Kyoto-born chef Makoto Miyamaguchi offers Indonesian cuisine using Japanese techniques and aesthetics, with dishes available a la carte or as a nine-course prix fixe set menu served at the restaurant or one of seven birdcage-like gazebos perched in the jungle canopy. And should you fancy a change, Ubud’s litany of great restaurants is just outside the gate.

From \$495, [hoshinoya.com/bali](http://hoshinoya.com/bali)



# Miavana Island Sanctuary

## Madagascar

In Madagascar's relatively undeveloped luxury hospitality scene, Miavana stands out for its commitment to conservation and creating sustainable livelihoods for hundreds of local people. Set on the sand-and-coral-ringed island of Nosy Ankaon, it's accessible only by helicopter and offers a unique base for water and sky safaris to neighboring islands and mainland parks.

Anchored by a central plaza and offering a couple of dining options and dive training by PADI-certified instructors, the resort has been designed by South African architects Silvio Rech and Lesley Carstens—and handcrafted

by more than 500 Malagasi using native materials—to connect guests with the setting at every opportunity.

The stone Fort bar overlooks an infinity pool that seems to spill into the Indian Ocean. The Cabinet of Curiosities showcases artifacts, including elephant bird eggs, a sapphire collection, and a brass propeller that took 36 people to move. Inside the resort's 14 villas—which trace the west coastline for uninterrupted ocean views and direct beach access—bathtubs overlook the sea and are framed by curtains hand-dyed to reflect its gradients from the shallows to deep blue.

From \$6,000, [timeandtideafrica.com/miavana](http://timeandtideafrica.com/miavana)



## The 10 Best New U.S. Hotels

**Waldorf Astoria, Beverly Hills, California.** Interior firebrand Pierre-Yves Rochon designed the terraced rooms, suites, and penthouses, and the chef is the world-renowned Jean-Georges Vongerichten. Other attractions include a La Prairie spa and a rooftop pool overlooking one of California's most coveted ZIP codes.

From \$855, [waldorfastoriabeverlyhills.com](http://waldorfastoriabeverlyhills.com)

**San Francisco Proper, San Francisco.**

This 131-guest-room property in San Francisco's Financial District attracts locals who come for cocktails by bar scene stalwarts Josh Harris and Morgan Schick and food by James Beard-nominated executive chef Jason Franey, formerly of Michelin-starred Campton Place and Eleven Madison Park.

From \$140, [properhotel.com/san-francisco](http://properhotel.com/san-francisco)

**Life Hotel, New York.** Sleep where writers produced some of the 20th century's most compelling stories at this hotel,

which occupies the former headquarters of *Life* magazine, just off Fifth Avenue in midtown.

From \$125, [lifehotel.com](http://lifehotel.com)

**1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn, New York.**

Local artisans have used greenery and reclaimed materials to great effect in this hotel's welcoming spaces. Rooms and the newly opened rooftop bar overlook the East River and Manhattan skyline.

From \$309, [1hotels.com/brooklyn-bridge](http://1hotels.com/brooklyn-bridge)

**Ventana Big Sur, Big Sur, California.**

Upscale resort Ventana took the enforced closure of Highway 1 south of Carmel, along which it's situated, as an opportunity to renovate its 59 rooms and common spaces. The five-star, adults-only facility reopened last October as Alila's first North American property.

From \$650, [ventanabigsur.com](http://ventanabigsur.com)

**Nobu Ryokan, Malibu, California.**

Eleven of this hotel's 16 rooms have ocean views, and all have fireplaces and teak soaking tubs; guests have priority access to the adjacent Nobu restaurant.

From \$2,000, [noburyokanmalibu.com](http://noburyokanmalibu.com)

**The Line, Washington, D.C.**

Set within a 110-year-old historic church, this hotel showcases the work of the capital's best local chefs, bartenders, artists, and designers, and features 3,000 artworks plus curated micro-libraries. James Beard-recognized chefs Spike Gjerde and Erik Bruner-Yang ensure dining is tip-top.

From \$199, [thelinehotel.com/dc](http://thelinehotel.com/dc)

**Four Seasons Hotel at the Surf Club, Surfside, Florida.**

Five minutes from Bal Harbour, architect Richard Meier and designer Joseph Dirand have channeled old-school Miami glamor to create 77 light, airy rooms and lofty public spaces at

this former surf club on the beach, which also features the first overseas restaurant outlet by Amalfi Coast icon Le Sirenuse.

From \$995, [fourseasons.com/surfside](http://fourseasons.com/surfside)

**Las Alcobas, Napa, California.**

Occupying a 1907 Georgian-style farmhouse separated from Beringer Vineyards by a narrow stream, this 13-room hotel offers wine country charm in spades plus a saltwater pool, spa, and 50-seat restaurant Acacia House by Chris Cosentino of San Francisco's Cockscomb.

From \$695, [lasalcobasnapavalley.com](http://lasalcobasnapavalley.com)

**Andaz Scottsdale, Arizona.**

Set against the backdrop of Camelback Mountain, all 201 mid-century-modern-inspired bungalow-style rooms and suites feature patios and terraces overlooking the surrounding Sonoran Desert; the complex also includes Cattle Track Arts Compound, an expansive wedge-shaped pool and luxe Palo Verde spa.

From \$319, [scottsdale.andaz.hyatt.com](http://scottsdale.andaz.hyatt.com)

**Gemma Z. Price** ([gprice@bjtonline.com](mailto:gprice@bjtonline.com)) is a freelance writer who has contributed to *Time*, *CNN Traveler*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*. Her last major BJT feature was a 2017 cover story on Argentinian billionaire Alejandro Bulgheroni.

— *No flight of fancy* —

# Law firm exports Houston's cost advantages to Silicon Valley

by *L.M. Sixel*

Using private jets, Texas attorneys avoid the expenses of a Northern California base, where clients work.

In the early light of a Tuesday morning at Sugar Land [Texas] Regional Airport, a group of lawyers in sports coats and button-down shirts with open collars climbed aboard the idling Gulfstream G200 jet, handed their bags to the pilots, and settled into the cabin with polished eye-of-maple paneling, plush leather seats, and a well-stocked bar. A signal came from the top partner. Wheels up.

But this was no junket to a private golf course or to a luxury resort, and the gleaming jet was no trophy from a blockbuster verdict that yielded millions of dollars in fees. Rather, the jet is part of a novel strategy by the intellectual property firm Patterson and Sheridan to expand in Silicon Valley by exporting the cost advantages of Houston to one of the most expensive places in the world to do business.

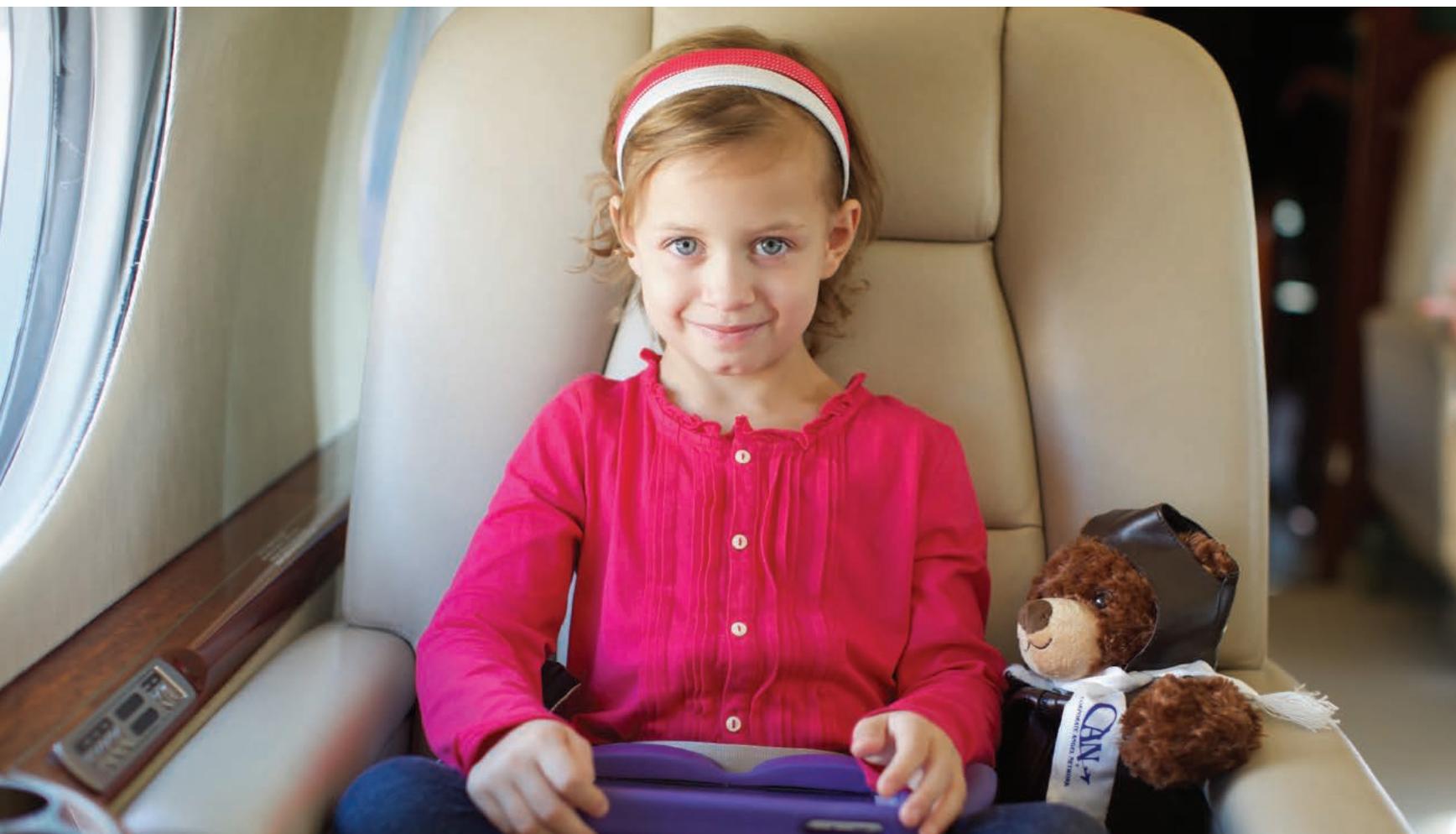
Instead of plunking down money on astronomically priced real estate and staffing up an office with some of the highest-price talent, the Houston firm bought a nine-seat corporate jet that each month flies a planeload of lawyers from Sugar Land to California, where they meet clients and try to find new ones. Even with the \$3 million cost of the jet and the \$2,500 an hour it costs to operate it, Patterson and



ALL PHOTOS: JANICE RUBIN

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Sheridan says the firm is still able to offer companies and inventors lower costs because most of the patent work is done in Houston, where commercial real estate is 43 percent cheaper, salaries 52 percent lower, and competition for technical talent far less fierce.

The wager has paid off. The firm has gained several major clients, including Intuit, the financial software maker; Western Digital, a computer data storage company; and Cavendish Kinetics, a maker of radio frequency devices. “In some cases, clients pay a little less,” said Bruce Patterson, the firm’s senior partner. “But we make more doing it.”

Fox Factory, a company outside of Santa Cruz, is one of the stops on Patterson and Sheridan’s California circuit. Fox makes shock absorbers for motor bikes, snowmobiles, and other sports equipment and showcases its inventions in a first-floor museum. General counsel David Haugen said it doesn’t matter whether lawyers live in Houston or Silicon Valley as long as they are available when he needs them.

“You can have a firm next door that is inattentive,” he said, “and a firm that is 1,500 miles away that is very attentive.”

It’s not unusual for lawyers to own jets, which have become the ultimate status symbol for millionaire personal injury lawyers. But Patterson and Sheridan’s Gulfstream, known as “the bus” around the firm, is a workhorse, logging 150,000 miles a year, including occasional trips to visit clients in Seattle; St. Louis; Greensboro, North Carolina; and Rochester, Minnesota.

William Cobb, managing partner of Cobb Consulting in Houston, which advises law firms on compensation and strategy, said Patterson and Sheridan has come up with an unusual, if not unique, expansion model. The only similar example he could think of was that of the San

Francisco firm Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison, which avoided some of the skyrocketing costs of Silicon Valley during the dot-com boom of 20 years ago by maintaining a small office in San Jose, which it operated Tuesday through Thursday by rotating lawyers from its headquarters about 50 miles away.

“I can see how it could work,” said Cobb of Patterson and Sheridan’s strategy. “If you are trying to establish an office and trying to hire, that would push me toward other alternatives.”

## The firm has made the jet a selling point to recruit young lawyers, promoting the chance to work with top tech companies but live in a city far more affordable than Palo Alto.



One of Patterson and Sheridan’s competitors is Fish and Richardson, a patent firm with 360 lawyers. Fish and Richardson operates an office in Redwood City, about seven miles from Palo Alto, with about 36 lawyers. Rick Anderson, the chief operating officer who works out of the firm’s Minneapolis office, said the firm has done what it has needed to do to practice in Silicon Valley, including paying exorbitant rents and high salaries to compete for talent, not only with other law firms, but also with high-flying startups and with large tech firms.

But flying in a plane load of lawyers each month? Anderson was surprised to hear about Patterson and Sheridan.

“They found a way that is very interesting and very intriguing,” he said.

The “bus” pulls out of Sugar Land Airport on the second Tuesday of each month. After a few short safety reminders from the pilot, Jason Branson, and the copilot, Mark Allen, the lawyers get immediately to work—laptops open, papers spread across their laps.

It may seem the firm could spend less by buying round-trip tickets on commercial airlines. But other factors make private air travel more cost effective, said Todd Patterson, who founded the firm in 1996 and is now managing partner of the Houston office. He is not related to Bruce Patterson.

It costs roughly \$1,900 per passenger, Todd Patterson estimated, but each hour on the three- to four-hour flight is billable because the lawyers work the entire time. On commercial flights, their work is restricted to protect confidential information because one look from an unknown competitor sitting next to a lawyer working on a patent could undermine the value of an invention.

The private flights also avoid about 36 hours in time spent arriving early for commercial flights, checking bags, and going through security. Apply a \$250 per hour average billing rate to the flight and wait times of commercial travel, and it pretty much covers the cost of the trip, Todd Patterson said.

“We fly it full,” he said. “It’s not a luxury item.”

Patterson and Sheridan first hit upon the idea of using a private jet to make regular monthly trips to Silicon Valley in 2010. The firm had tried teleconferencing, but clients found it unsatisfactory because inventors want to sit down and show their inventions. Lawyers also found they could find more business by being around after work for dinners and drinks.

The firm has made the jet a selling point to recruit young lawyers, promoting the chance to work with top tech companies but live in a

city far more affordable than Palo Alto, where the average monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$3,800 and median home price is \$2.6 million.

It's a good mix for Puja Detjen, a six-year associate at Patterson and Sheridan who enjoys her periodic trips but prefers to live in Houston, where her husband is a chemical engineer for an oil company. While enjoying the lower cost of living, she said, "we're able to live in a place with good career prospects."

On the way to San Jose, the jet stopped at the airport in Carlsbad, California, from where lawyers headed to nearby San Diego to visit clients Taylor Guitars, which makes acoustic and electric guitars, and Qualcomm, the semiconductor company. The jet pulled up to the terminal, shut the engine for refueling and lowered the stairs.

A few feet away, two rental cars waited, trunks open and keys in the ignition. Four lawyers grabbed their bags, threw them in, and drove off.

The jet soon after taxied for takeoff. "Hold your stuff," Todd Patterson said loudly, over the din of the twin jet engines. "We're going to take off hard." With that warning, the Gulfstream



pulled up sharply, lest it veer onto the golf course just beyond the asphalt runway.

Next stop: San Jose. Over the next two days, the lawyers fanned out to meet with clients, including Fox Factory and Applied Materials. Around noon on Thursday, Bruce Patterson walked through the firm's small Palo Alto office, jerking his thumb in the air. "It's time to go," he said.

In less than an hour, they were at the San Jose International Airport and on board the jet.

Laptops opened, and papers came out as lawyers focused intensely on their work. But when the plane entered Texas airspace, the mood lightened. Some of the men unbuttoned their button-down shirts to reveal T-shirts underneath. Whispered conversations grew louder.

And the bar was open.

**EJT**

L.M. Sixel is a business writer for the *Houston Chronicle*, where this article first appeared.

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# Verona

You'll fall for this charming northern Italian

*"city of love,"*

where Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*  
takes place.



*by Marion Flanagan*

As we walked down Via Cappello, one of Verona, Italy's lovely cobblestone streets, we noticed a stream of tourists funneling into an alcove like ants to a mound. My husband, daughter, and I followed them into a courtyard, where we maneuvered through the throngs flanking Casa di Giulietta (Juliet's House), a 13th century palazzo. Women stood on men's shoulders to graffiti the higher, less-scrawled stone walls with hearts and proclamations of love. Others used gum to stick missives to the walls or adhered bandages adorned with hearts and initials over dense, overlapping graffiti. Girls posed and waved from a small balcony above the fray.

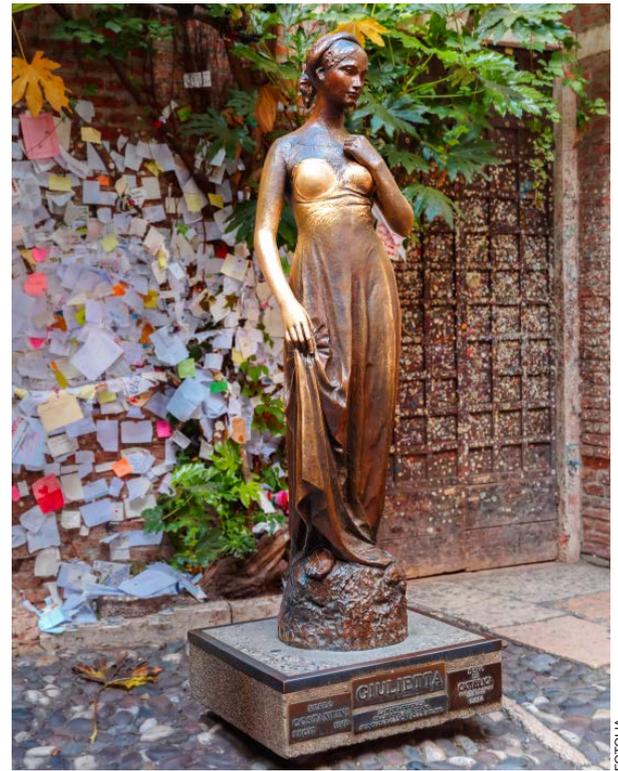
A lodestone for tourists and the lonely hearted, Casa di Giulietta is one of Verona's most popular—and kitschy—tourist attractions. It stands as a tribute to William Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*, which is set in Verona and reportedly based on two feuding local families. Crowds circle a bronze statue of the tragic heroine, waiting to take selfies or pose for photos while grabbing her breasts. (If you grasp the right one, it's supposed to bring luck in love.)

Watching the spectacle (reportedly a debacle in the eyes of the approximately 260,000 Veronese who live here year-round), I could see why Verona is dubbed "the city of love"—and ultimately misunderstood. It is beautiful and romantic, but its heart is urbane and multifaceted. The northern Italian city is an architectural, cultural, and gastronomic powerhouse, with Roman ruins running beneath its floors and esteemed Amarone wine flowing from its surrounding vineyards.

At the foot of the Lessini Mountains on the River Adige, Verona has been seducing travelers for more than 2,000 years. It charmed Julius Caesar, who regularly vacationed here, and coddled Dante, who called Verona his "earliest refuge" and spent six years holed up in exile in the city while editing *Inferno*.

Part of its appeal is that unlike the many Italian destinations that are overrun with tourists, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is still relatively underrated. Tourists certainly come here, but most of the time, they blend with the locals rather than outnumbering them. During a stay late last August, we ran into few Americans.

FOTOLIA



Casa di Giulietta is one of Verona's most popular—and kitschy—tourist attractions.

Though many vacationers have yet to discover Verona, it is achingly beautiful. You can't help but succumb to its magic. I was smitten the minute I passed under the double arches of Portoni della Bra and into the knots of postcard-worthy side streets, each showcasing mustard and melon-pink medieval buildings, balconies drizzling ivy, faded frescos, and Romanesque and Gothic structures.

One of the best ways to soak in such sights and the Veronese culture is to wander the city's navigable streets. There are the obvious landmarks worthy of touring, such as the quartet of Romanesque and Gothic churches, including a stunning, red-striped duomo. There's also the imposing Castelvécchio—a brick medieval castle built in 1354 that houses a museum with paintings, sculptures, and weapons.

I was more enamored of the serendipitous finds without a map. During an evening stroll (nightly walks are a revered Veronese tradition called *passaggiata*), we headed into the bustling Piazza Bra and stumbled upon queues of families waiting to look through one of four impromptu telescope stations that local astronomy aficionados had set up to view Saturn and the moon.

Another day, walking along a street called Corso Porta Borsari, which is intersected by enchanting courtyards and alcoves, I wandered into a discrete entrance of a diminutive church called San Giovanni in Foro. It had a small nave and altar and a narrow side room exposing extensive Roman relics covered in glass. Roman ruins run throughout the city and many hotels and businesses unearth them during construction



## Traveler Fast Facts

### WHAT IT IS:

The historic city of Verona, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in northern Italy's Veneto region, is an architectural, cultural, and gastronomic powerhouse. It boasts one of the richest collections of Roman relics in northern Italy and Amarone wine flowing from its surrounding vineyards.

### CLIMATE:

Verona has moderately hot summers and cool, foggy winters. November is the rainiest month.

### GETTING THERE:

Verona International Airport is about six miles outside the city center. It's suitable for a variety of private jets and also caters to several international airlines, such as Aer Lingus and British Airways.

### WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

To get a ticket to one of the summer opera performances, you'll need to book in advance ([www.arena.it/arena/en](http://www.arena.it/arena/en)). If you don't like crowds, steer clear of dates around Valentine's Day, when there's a four-day "Verona in Love" festival, and in April, when Vinitaly, a major wine event, draws oenophiles from around the world.

and make them part of their design. The basement floor of the United Colors of Benetton retail store on Via Giuseppe Mazzini, for example, looks like a museum. Clothes are sparsely arranged around an entire floor of preserved ruins.

If you continue east on Corso Porta Borsari, the narrow street will open onto Piazza delle Erbe, the epicenter of Verona and the site of the original Roman Forum. Vendors in white-tented stalls hawking everything from T-shirts to tomatoes crowd a section of it. Restaurants line some of the perimeter, their tables filled with people sipping the signature orange-hued Italian *aperitivo*, Aperol spritz, through a straw. The rest of the square is lined with buildings and monuments, some with frescos, and an arch with a whalebone rib dangling from it. (No one knows where it came from or why it's there.) At the center is a fountain from the 14th century with a 4th century Madonna Verona statue.

The city's prime attraction, however, is the Arena di Verona, a coliseum-like, 1st century amphitheater in the café-packed Piazza Bra. Once the site of entertainment ranging from gladiator fights to jousts and tournaments, the circular, open-air theater now features year-round performances and a summer-long opera season with productions that can last four hours. We saw Verdi's *Aida* 1913, which ran about three and a half hours with several intermissions. (A woman dramatically strikes a hand held gong to signal the end of each one.) The arena, which holds 15,000 people, also hosts shows ranging from rock concerts to ballets. If you're looking for comfort, get tickets well in advance and opt for reserved seats (with backs) rather than the non-reserved stone seating along the upper ring.

Pasta and prosciutto may prevail in some parts of Italy, but menus in Verona are dramatically different. We routinely saw horsemeat as an entrée—as a steak, shredded, braised, tartare, even meatballs. The gastronomic tradition dates back to barbaric invasions at the end of the Roman Empire. I like horses too much to eat them, so I opted for the *bollito misto* (boiled meats) with *pearra* sauce (breadcrumbs and bone-marrow mix), a Sunday tradition in Verona. You can find it in restaurants such as Torcolo. The less adventurous would do well with a plate of the signature *risotto all'Amarone*, a rich, russet-hued, creamy dish mixing the region's pricey, powerhouse wine—Amarone—with locally cultivated rice.

For a casual lunch or light dinner, the local wine store, Signorvino, has a delightful adjoining café with glass-topped tables on wine barrels and simple, yet delicious offerings such as olive and cheese plates and wine tastings by the glass. (It's also a great place to buy local wine.)

One of my favorite restaurants was Antica Bottega del Vino, which is known for its *risotto all'Amarone*. You can feel the history the minute you enter the warm, wood-paneled restaurant. Wine bottles line the walls—and for good reason: the wine menu, which represents a cellar valued at \$1 million, is huge. Another standout is Locanda 4 Cuochi, which serves Italian cuisine with a modern twist. The open kitchen and adjoining dining room are bright and sophisticated.

For one of the best bird's-eye views of Verona, hike to Re Teodorico, a hilltop restaurant and bar, and quench your thirst on its outdoor patio while enjoying the simple, well-prepared menu.

PHOTO: TOM FLANAGAN





FOTOLIA

**One of the major perks of staying in Verona is that it provides a base to see the other Italian cities and landmarks that are within an hour's drive of the city.**

One of the major perks of staying in Verona is that it provides a base to see the other Italian cities and landmarks that are within an hour's drive of the city. Directly north, there's the 25,000-acre Lessinia Natural Regional Park. To the west sits Italy's largest lake, Lake Garda, and miles of vineyards churning out the esteemed Amarone wine. To the east, there's Padua, home to Italy's second-oldest university (Galileo taught math here), and gondola-laden Venice. Directly south are olive groves and olive-oil tastings, a balsamic vinegar region in Modena, and rice fields that supply Verona's signature food, risotto.

We opted for a trip to the Soave and Valpolicella wine regions with Veronality, an upscale tour company that customizes experiences to individual tastes. We visited Soave, a popular, white-wine producer with acres of hearty Garganaga grapes on stunning volcanic hills that have supported vineyards since the Roman times. Soave has revamped its wine—and its cheap, jug-wine image from the 1970s—and produces highly rated white wines, often under the Coffele label.

We also ventured to the king of Amarone wine production, Dal Forno. Located in Val d'Illasi, the winery is run by owner Romano Dal Forno

and his three sons. When we pulled up to the electronic gates, Romano's wife, Loretta, rode up on an old bicycle with a basket. "These are people who are proud to be farmers," said our guide. "They are willing to get their hands dirty."

Both a passionate innovator and an entrepreneur, Romano led a tour of his facility and explained the painstaking process of producing world-class Amarone (which runs more than \$200 a bottle) with fickle grapes and loads of variables. "Every bottle is different," he said. "It's something alive. It's not just Coca Cola."

Another day, we headed to the country's largest lake, Lake Garda, which is often eclipsed by nearby Lake Como's popularity, but equally beautiful. Trains and buses can get you there, but there's no direct stop at one of the nicest—albeit most-crowded—towns along the lake: Sirmione. Hire a driver or rent a car and pause on the way in Borghetto sul Mincio for a bowl of the town specialty—freshly made *nodo d'amore* (love-knot) tortellini.

While most tourists choose to visit Verona in the summer, each season offers something unique. Fall is best for olive-oil tastings and the wine harvest, while winter is a cozier time with fewer crowds. Spring brings warmer temperatures, but also a slew of festivals.

One night, we asked a local what to see and do in Verona. He shrugged and said, "You can find whatever you want." **BJT**

**Marion Flanagan** (mflanagan@bjtonline.com) is a New Jersey-based journalist who specializes in travel subjects. For this article, Veronality provided a tour of the wine country and Palazzo Victoria partly covered lodging.

## Traveler Report Card

### ACCOMMODATIONS:

We stayed at **Palazzo Victoria** (A+), an elegant, villa-like hotel in Verona's historic center. Its 74 rooms are both medieval and modern, and showcase Roman ruins and remnants from the villa into which the hotel is built and the three 14th century houses that later occupied the site. Opt for the Victoria suite with an original fresco on the ceiling, or the alfresco suite, with its velvet door, wooden ceiling, and frescoed walls. Rooms can be adjoined to create a private floor for up to eight guests. Breakfast is served in a lovely courtyard. Another luxury option is **Due Torri Hotel** (A), which is about a 10-minute walk from the arena and a member of Leading Hotels of the World.



COURTESY OF PALAZZO VICTORIA

### FOOD (A):

Risotto, not pasta, is the signature entree here, thanks to the neighboring rice fields. Don't leave Verona without trying the *risotto all'Amarone*, a creamy dish flavored with the region's pricey, powerhouse wine—Amarone. Local cheeses, such as Monte Veronese, are excellent. For the adventurous, *cavallo* (horsemeat) can be found on many menus. Boiled meat with *peara* sauce (breadcrumbs and bone-marrow mix) is also a traditional Veronese dish. Restaurant options (*see main story*) include the historic **Antica Bottega del Vino** (A+), which features an extensive wine list and *risotto all'Amarone*; **Locanda 4 Cuochi** (A), which offers items such as gorgonzola gnocchi and suckling pig; and **Re Teodorico** (A-), for a stellar view and dishes like Florentine steak and baccala.



TOM FLANAGAN

### ACTIVITIES (A+):

Verona is a year-round destination, with activities and events to suit varied interests. Within the city are Roman ruins, churches, castles, high-end shops on Via Mazzini, a coliseum-like arena with summer-long opera performances, a Roman theater (built in the 1st century B.C.), and the kitschy Juliet's House. Verona's viniculture is thousands of years old and its vineyards, including the noble Amarone, are a must-see. Several companies offer vineyard and wine-tasting tours.

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# Luggage you can love

by Margie Goldsmith

Luggage has entered the world of high tech. The newest bags are smarter and lighter than products introduced only a few years ago. GPS and associated apps let you track some of this luggage yourself; and TSA-approved locks let you use fingerprint-sensor technology to open it. Here's a look at a few of our favorite new and soon-to-be-introduced offerings:



**G-Ro.** With a carry-on that has been on the market nearly a year, G-Ro will introduce four new companion bags via Kickstarter this June. The company claims that its bags' oversized wheels perform better and are more durable than standard wheels. The carry-on, in durable nylon ballistic weave, includes a power bank capable of charging your laptop, phone, or tablet up to four times via two USB outlets. The bag includes a Tile bluetooth luggage tracker and a TSA-approved lock and comes with a lifetime warranty. **\$449**



**Rimowa.** This company's latest model is the Limbo, a lightweight polycarbonate bag. The line is water-proof and zipperless—thus tamper-proof—with an exterior caddy strap, TSA-approved locks, a versatile handle, and four easily gliding wheels. When you fly by either Lufthansa or EVA Airlines, you can check your bag from home with an app on your smartphone via E Ink technology. As there is no paper tag to be potentially lost or ripped, your bag has less chance of getting lost. The luggage, available in 12 sizes, comes with a five-year warranty. **\$695–\$825**



**Raden.** Made from durable light polycarbonate, Raden luggage uses a companion app to inform you of its location and weight. (The case's handle doubles as a scale.) The app also reports weather conditions, traffic alerts, and flight details, and the luggage incorporates a battery that can charge your mobile phone up to five times via two ports on the exterior of the case, which is available in two sizes. (The removable battery can be used as a standalone charger.) **\$295–\$395**



**IT Luggage.** At four pounds, this is the world's lightest double-wheeled roller-board. The posterior is rugged polyester with a water-resistant backing that won't tear or fray and can be wiped clean. The bag is reinforced with aluminum tubing and fiberglass rods to provide strength and structure. An 18-inch-long outside pocket holds a tablet and an additional pocket takes electronics and personal items. The polyester-lined interior has adjustable straps to buckle clothes down and the 19-inch telescoping and locking handle sports a padded grip. The bag, which has a 10-year warranty, comes in two sizes. **\$150–\$200**

**Briggs & Riley.** This company, which introduced the first wheeled luggage in 1970, has created the Transcend VX with a zipperless variable expansion option (just snap a small panel in the interior, and the bag expands up to 2.5 inches). There are double spinner wheels and a signature Outsider handle providing a flat-packing bar inside the bag. The sleek new spinners come in three colors and can be paired with a companion cabin bag, shopping tote, or cargo backpack. A SmartLink system attaches one hard-sided bag to another for easy transport and specially designed pockets allow for quick storage of small items at security checkpoints. The Briggs & Riley Transcend VX collection includes spinners in five sizes, rolling cabin back, cargo backpack, shopping tote, and toiletry kit, all with lifetime warranties. **\$69–\$529**



**Travelmate Robotics.** This California company's bag, the Travelmate, includes a handle that you apparently won't often need to use. Billed as a "fully autonomous robot suitcase" and expected to be available this year, the suitcase integrates with your smartphone and moves on its own without being held. The manufacturer claims it can match your speed accurately (up to 6.75 miles per hour), navigate through large crowds, and avoid objects in its path. **\$499**

Several major U.S. airlines announced plans last December to ban checked bags that incorporate non-removable lithium ion batteries, because the batteries have the potential to explode. None of the luggage items featured here have non-removable batteries. —Ed.

**Margie Goldsmith** (mgoldsmith@bjtonline.com), who contributes regularly to **BJT**, has visited nearly 120 countries and written about all of them.

**Micro Luggage:** Getting from an FBO to a business jet is typically a snap, but what about those long walks to the gate when you use airlines? Micro Luggage makes those treks just as easy. The case comes with an attached scooter so you can pull it, ride it to the gate, and then fold the scooter flat against the luggage. The hard-shell case is small enough to fit in the overhead if you're flying commercial, and its structure makes it ideal for use as a carrier bag, trolley, and last but not least, as a kickboard with a case. **\$300**



## If Luggage Isn't Your Bag

Tired of packing and unpacking, taking clothes to the dry cleaner, or dragging your bags onto airplanes? Several businesses will do the work for you:

**Dufl.** This company sends you a large suitcase to fill with clothes you typically wear on the road. Once it's packed, you schedule a pickup and Dufl delivers the bag to a warehouse where its contents are inventoried, photographed, cleaned, and stored. Then, when you're about to make a trip, you use an app to select which clothes you'd like to take and enter your destination and arrival date. You travel luggage free and find your bag waiting for you at your destination. When it's time to go home, you can use the app to schedule a pickup and leave your bag at the hotel desk. The service charges \$9.95 per month for storage and \$99 per round trip in the U.S., which includes pickup and delivery, dry cleaning, laundering, ironing, sourcing, packing, and shipping.



**Luggage Forward.** With this service, you do have to pack, but you don't have to carry; and when you fly the airlines, you don't need to check luggage or deal with baggage claim. Luggage Forward picks up your bags at your home or office and delivers them to your destination, worldwide. You can book the service online or by phone with the company, which offers an on-time guarantee. Charges, which can be calculated online, depend on your itinerary, what you're shipping, and how quickly you need a pickup.

**Babierge.** Have small children? This company rents and delivers all the baby equipment you need while on vacation, including cribs, car seats, strollers, infant swings, bathtubs, books, games, toys, diapers, wipes, food, and drinks. Babierge operates in 82 travel destinations in the U.S. and Canada. —M.G.

Florida's

# Streamsong Black

A round at this massive new central Florida course transitions from broad valley to dramatic dunes, back across the valley, and into a cozy little zone of crumpled ground.

by Bradley S. Klein

**L**eave it to one of Florida's largest private landholders to steer you onto "terra incognita." Streamsong Resort—virtually equidistant from Orlando, Tampa, and Sebring—is dead center in the middle of nowhere and probably looks nothing like the state you thought you knew.

Mosaic Co., a global force in the mining and manufacture of phosphate and potash, has devoted 16,000 acres (25 square miles) of central Florida land to a starkly modernist golf resort and spa. The beauty of the place is the sharp juxtaposition of classically inspired golf courses against a backdrop of stunningly linear buildings, all of it set in a manufactured landscape of debris mounds, settlement ponds, and reclaimed sandy dunes.

Streamsong Black, a par-73 course measuring 5,293 yards up to 7,331, was designed by Gil Hanse and opened in September 2017. It is the third 18-hole layout onsite, complementing and in many ways transcending the scale of the resort's first two layouts—Streamsong Blue by Tom Doak and Streamsong Red by Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw—both of which opened in 2013.

The course routing occupies an unusually expansive ground: 300 acres, two miles from end to end, with 85 acres of fairway. The greens are also massive, on the order of 12,000 to 16,000 square feet. A round here transitions from broad valley to dramatic dunes, back across the valley and into a cozy little zone of crumpled ground comprising holes 12–17 that Hanse describes as "the glove."

While a classical sensibility of place emphasizes the ground game, walking, and creative shot making, the Streamsong Resort embraces a modernistic look in its buildings. Streamsong Black's clubhouse is a linear block of steel and glass. And the 216-room lodge and 25,000-square-foot conference center look like New Age Scandinavian buildings that house top-secret security operations. Somehow, the architecture works to highlight the playful inventiveness of a site that has been completely reclaimed and reinvented. **BJT**

**Bradley S. Klein** (bklein@bjtonline.com), who spent many years as architecture editor of *Golfweek*, is now a senior editor at the Golf Channel. His latest book is *Wide Open Fairways*.





**COURSE**

For more information about Streamsong Black, visit [streamsongresort.com](http://streamsongresort.com) or call (888) 294-6322.

**AIRPORTS**

Wauchula Municipal Airport (CHN) is 17 miles south of the resort and has a 4,005-foot runway. Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (LAL) is 28 miles to the north and has an 8,499-foot runway. Orlando International Airport (MCO) is 85 miles northeast and has a 12,005-foot runway. Tampa International Airport (TPA) is 64 miles northwest and has an 11,002-foot runway.



# TRAVELER CALENDAR

April 28–May 4

## ANTIGUA SAILING WEEK

Antigua. This event will showcase first-class competitive racing; state-of-the-art, high-tech sailboats; and performance cruising yachts. Top that off with superb coastal race courses and conditions, plus festive parties, and you have a memorable five days in the Caribbean. Info: [sailingweek.com](http://sailingweek.com)

May 5

## KENTUCKY DERBY

Louisville, Kentucky. Steeped in tradition from mint juleps to broad-brimmed hats, America's most prestigious thoroughbred horse race runs every year on the first Saturday in May at the legendary Churchill Downs. Established in 1875, it makes up part of thoroughbred racing's coveted Triple Crown, along with the Preakness and Belmont Stakes. Info: [kentuckyderby.com](http://kentuckyderby.com)

May 8–19

## CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Cannes, France. Film fans and stars will converge at the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès for this festival's 71st edition. This year, actress Cate Blanchett heads the jury that will preview new movies of all genres from around the world and choose the recipient of the coveted Palme d'Or. Info: [festival-cannes.com](http://festival-cannes.com)

May 14–July 7

## AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE

New York. The spring season opens at the Metropolitan Opera House, with the romantic *Giselle*, brought to life by ABT's unrivaled roster of international ballet stars. Info: [abt.org](http://abt.org)

May 24–27

## MONACO GRAND PRIX

Monaco. Watch 750-horsepower race cars fly around 2.075 miles of road that's been transformed into a state-of-the-art circuit. This Formula 1 race is part of the Triple Crown of Motorsport, along with the Indianapolis 500 and 24 Hours of Le Mans. Info: [monaco-grand-prix.com](http://monaco-grand-prix.com)



Kentucky Derby

May 25–27

## CONCORSO D'ELEGANZA VILLA D'ESTE

Lake Como, Italy. An auto aficionado's dream, this event showcases 50 of the world's most beautiful cars from the 1920s to the 1980s. Sponsored by BMW, it is held on the shores of Italy's Lake Como at the spectacular gardens and buildings of Villa d'Este and Villa Erba. The concorso gives two awards for the automobiles that best express beauty, passion, and uniqueness. Info: [concorsodeleganzavilladeste.com](http://concorsodeleganzavilladeste.com)



ABT's *Giselle*

GENE SCHIAPONE

June 7–9

## BELMONT STAKES

Elmont, New York. First run in 1867, the mile-and-a-half final leg of the Triple Crown—known as “The Test of the Champion”—has been won by such thoroughbreds as Man o' War, Secretariat, and Seattle Slew. Info: [belmontstakes.com](http://belmontstakes.com)

June 8–9

## G7 SUMMIT

Charlevoix, Quebec, Canada. At the iconic Manoir Richelieu, world leaders will focus on themes that promote gender equality, women's empowerment, clean energy, and economic growth. Info: [g7.gc.ca/en](http://g7.gc.ca/en)

## ASIA'S PREMIER BUSINESS AVIATION EVENT

Entrepreneurs, wealth creators, aircraft-purchase decision makers, and other high-level attendees from across Asia will gather in Shanghai from April 17 to 19 for the Asian Business Aviation Conference & Exhibition (ABACE). The event—which will take place at the Shanghai Hawker Pacific Business Aviation Service Centre—is cohosted by the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) and the Asian Business Aviation Association (AsBAA). The organizers expect to attract 8,000 attendees from more than 50 countries, about 165 exhibitors and 30 aircraft on static display, and approximately 500 members of the media. Info: [abace.aero](http://abace.aero) —Lysbeth McAleer



DAVID McINTOSH

For a long-range events calendar, please visit [bjtonline.com/calendar](http://bjtonline.com/calendar).

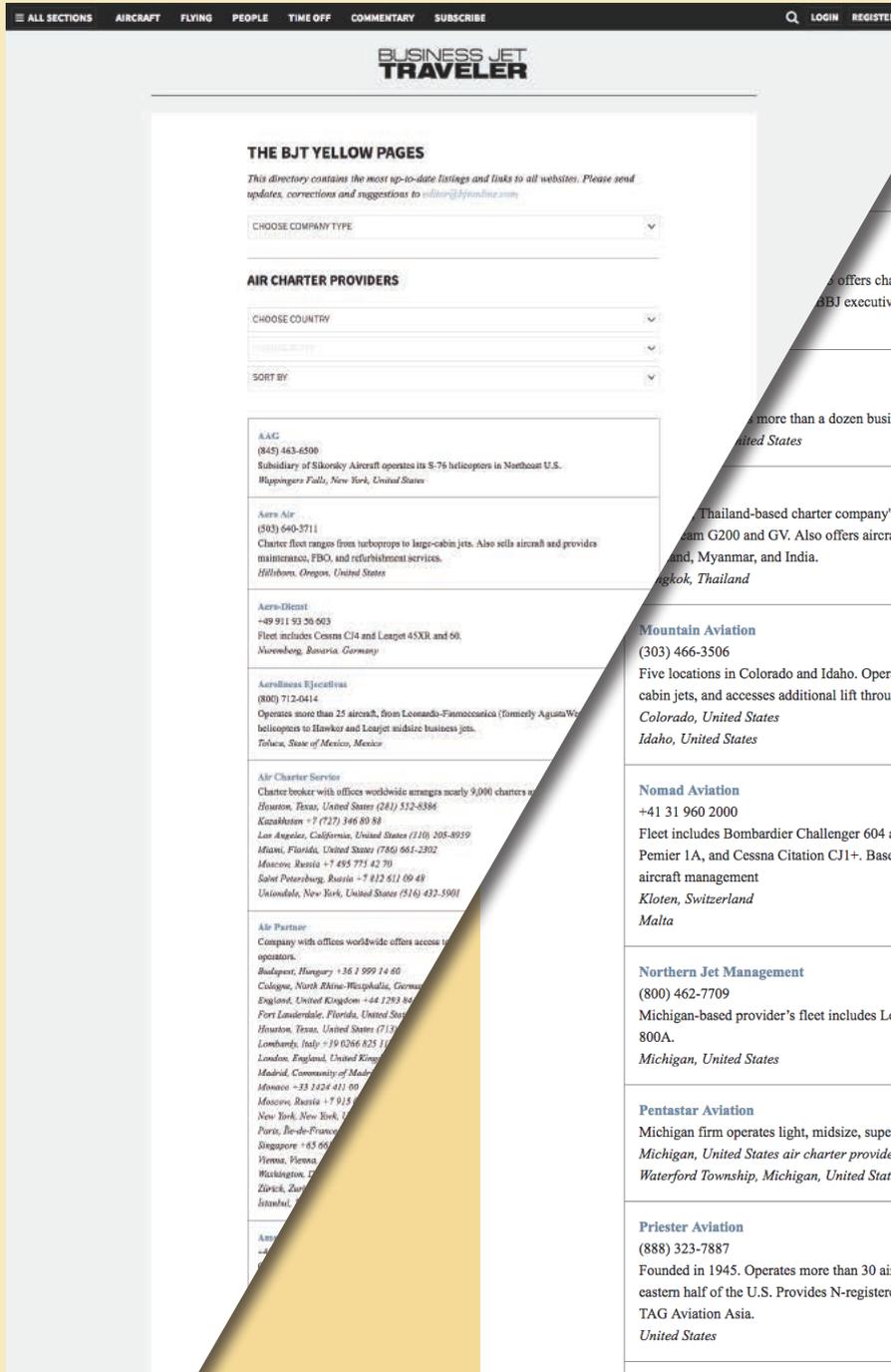


Antigua Sailing Week

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# Abandoned airplanes

Some could have value, but many are just hunks of worthless aluminum.

by Mark Phelps

I recently signed on to the “General Aviation Junkyard” Facebook page, and it’s been fun to follow—and interesting. People post pictures of abandoned aircraft from around the world. Many are rotting hulks alongside overgrown runways in jungles and deserts, but there are also plenty of images of not-so-derelict-looking airplanes, including business jets, tied down at airports, with messages like, “hasn’t moved in 11 years.” Sometimes these airplanes have flat tires and/or weeds growing up around them.

With almost every post, someone will comment that it’s a tragedy that such a noble flying machine has been left so neglected. The comments also frequently include requests for the location of an airplane, and for information on how the reader can get in touch with the owner to try to “rescue” it.

This is an extension of the “barn-found” syndrome—the undying optimism of dreamers hoping to resurrect a precious classic for pennies on the dollar. The problem is that the aircraft’s real-world dollar value seldom comes close to the figure the dreamer has in mind.

As the former editor of an antique-airplane magazine, I recognize that historic flying machines can be well worth the effort to restore them—over and over again. Like classic Packards and Rolls Royces, golden-age Wacos, Stinsons, and Beech Staggerwings—the business transports of their



NIALL MORAN/GENERAL AVIATION JUNKYARD

age—almost always have enough collector value to justify the loving care it takes to keep them running. The oft-repeated mantra of the antique-airplane aficionado is, “We serve only as temporary stewards of these timeless machines, which we’ll someday pass along to their next custodians.”

But the harsh reality is that simply being old does not guarantee an airplane’s value and desirability. Sometimes, you just have to let these aging aircraft go the way of, say, a 1972 Ford Pinto station wagon. That truth has become even more harsh in the past couple of decades.

During that time, airframers have worked to establish general aviation aircraft as a practical mode of transportation, rather than just a hobby for owner-pilot enthusiasts—or a luxury indulgence for business jet cabin dwellers. While that has served to legitimize private flying, it has also eroded much of the magic and panache.

**Sometimes, you just have to let these aging aircraft go the way of, say, a 1972 Ford Pinto station wagon.**

On a more practical, dollars-and-cents level, the economic downturn of 2008 reversed a long-standing dynamic trend of business jets retaining much of their resale value for many years. Indeed, there was a time when a freshly delivered jet placed for immediate sale was often worth more than a brand-new one ordered from the factory, because manufacturers’ delivery backlogs stretched out for many months, if not years.

But those days are long gone, perhaps never to return.

Also, new-aircraft technology has accelerated—not just in aerodynamics and engines, but even more so in cockpit and cabin electronics. So upgrading what used to be a “middle-aged” aircraft to like-new utility has become much more expensive, if not physically impossible.

The result is that many older aircraft that would have been repainted and reupholstered in past years are now not worth the investment. They are being stripped of usable parts and components (the list of what is “usable” is also getting shorter), and the hulks are being abandoned in fields like so many dinosaur skeletons.

Ironically, aviation-grade aluminum is such a sophisticated blend that it cannot even be melted down to be recycled for beer cans, kitchenware, or other common uses. So the leftover airframe of a once-proud, globe-girdling private jet is often not even worth cutting up for scrap. **EJT**

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



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