Boeing 717-200 To Take Center Stage In Asia

The new Boeing 717-200 took off today on a two-week, nine-city marketing tour of Asia that will include flight demonstrations for airline executives, pilots, maintenance personnel, media, suppliers, government officials, and other aviation industry representatives.

During the tour, the airplane will be showcased in the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, India and Thailand before returning to the United States Oct. 23.

In July, the Boeing 717 completed a tour of Europe, which included 27 days of flying exhibitions and customer demonstrations in seven European countries. The airplane made 24 flights in 14 cities including crowd-pleasing performances at the Paris Air Show.

The 100-passenger, twin-engine jetliner passed major milestones in September when it received type certification from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and Europe's Joint Aviation Authorities as well as a production certificate from the FAA.

Boeing expects to deliver 12 of the new jetliners in 1999, years ahead of any other proposed 100-seat airplane. Delivery of the first 717 occurred Sept. 23 to launch customer AirTran Airways. AirTran plans to put the 717 into regular passenger service in mid-October.

"Boeing is committed to the 717 as the right airplane at the right time for the 100-seat regional market," said Rolf Sellge, director of 717 Product Marketing. "We know that the 717 is the profitable choice for airlines serving the high-frequency, quick-turnaround regional market. Once the airplane has demonstrated itself in revenue service, we believe airlines also will recognize how successful it is in meeting their high expectations."

The 717 is being delivered to customers with better fuel consumption, lower airplane noise and lower weight than original estimates, which makes the 717 the quietest and lightest new airplane in its class with the lowest fuel burn.

"At cruise, the 717 has up to eight percent better fuel consumption over our pre-flight-test estimates, and this means important cost savings for operators," Sellge said.

Sellge added that airport communities will be very impressed with the low noise characteristics of the 717.

"We designed it to be quiet, and flight test results validate that the 717 is the quietest airplane in its class," he said.

With a cabin interior arranged in two classes and with its quiet, clean engines, the 717 provides a new level of comfort for passengers who typically fly on short routes served by smaller airplanes.

"The 717 offers an exceptionally high level of comfort," Sellge said. "The 717 is specially designed for this market, where the majority of flights are between 500 and 800 kilometers in length. Its durable structural design is based on more than 30 years of twinjet experience at Boeing and provides airlines reliable service with a lighter-than-expected airframe. Most airlines will operate the 717 on six to 10 flights per day."

The 717 features the latest technology in engines and flight-deck systems for its two-person crew. It also offers a spacious interior design with extra-large, overhead stowbins, illuminated, full-grip hand rails, and comfortable, five-across seating in economy class.

The BR715 engine, developed by BMW/Rolls-Royce, not only is quiet, but also clean, with average exhaust emissions nearly 60 percent below current limits imposed by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

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