

Jet-Age (Continued)

main cabin into compartments, varying the ceiling heights, and varying the positions of each group of four to eight seats.

Décor by experts like Dorothy Draper runs to bright pastels in modern patterns calculated to put the mind at ease. Each seat has its own reading light, but subtle ceiling illumination alters imperceptibly to make cabin conditions seem one with the world outside at all times.

Perhaps the only jet phenomenon that can't be duplicated altogether by lighting tricks is the strange way night comes. It does not "fall." It rises from the earth below, very gradually, until at length it envelops the ship speeding along six to ten miles up.

Nevertheless a jet's overhead illumination is striking. If you take off in broad daylight, that's how the cabin is lighted. At sunset or dawn, the hidden fixtures give off a pleasant rosy hue. As you turn away at last from the window and fix your attention on refreshments or dinner, the cabin has a star-studded midnight-blue glow. Your eyes are fully adjusted and you can see everything plainly. Warm, air-conditioned, and well-fed, you drowse along among the planets at close to the speed of sound.

Convair expects to make good its "world's fastest jetliner" boast by cruising the 880 at 615 mph. Douglas rates the DC-8 for an average 580 with a top speed of 590. Boeing has five separate models of the 707, the two for domestic traffic cruising at 591 mph and the three intercontinentals at 605.

Not exactly competitive but very much in the picture as an executive aircraft and Air Force trainer is Lockheed's twin JetStar, a 10-passenger craft that will cruise 10 miles up at 630 mph. It recently crossed the nation coast-to-coast twice in a record 14½ hours

airborne. Top speed: 686 mph.

The JetStar's pair of powerful turbojets are mounted close to the after part of the fuselage for an exceptionally quiet ride. This ship's \$1-million cost seems cheap against \$5 million for a

707, DC-8, or 880, but greater capacity makes the four-engine jetliner a bargain on commercial runs.

The Convair will take 80 to 84 passengers on a luxury flight and up to 109 tourists. The Douglas can seat 118 to 122 first class, 144 tourist, and has an astounding maximum capacity of 176. But the Boeing overseas commercial jets, which like their domestic versions are designed for 131 first class, can comfortably seat 180 people on one of the planned week-end tourist round trips to Paris or Honolulu.

BUT WON'T these massive jetliners be noisy?

If you mean noisy on the inside, because of up to 180 people talking, the answer is: no, not even then. Bulkheading into compartments will dampen sound, for one thing, and so will acoustical materials used for cabin walls, floors, and ceiling.

If you mean noisy on the inside because of those four big 12-foot jet engines, the answer is still no. Acoustical engineers have made certain that neither interior hubbub nor ex-

terior engine whistle disturbs the luxurious quiet of your jetliner voyage. Turbojet sound will combine with air passing over the ship's skin to make, at most, a soothing whisper. Otherwise, there's deep-rug, library quiet.

If, however, you mean noisy on the outside, new questions arise. To most of them, commercial jet makers have found the answers. Noise suppression devices to muffle the roar of jet engines on take-off, where most of the problem focuses, now do their job so thoroughly that four-engine jetliners can lift off and pass over residential areas adjacent to airports *more quietly by several decibels* than even a DC-7 or Super-Constellation!

In the months ahead major airports throughout the nation will be welcoming their first jets. Initially these visits will be test runs, with everybody's eyes—and especially ears—very much on the alert. But since all jetliners have been designed to utilize existing airport facilities, with a minimum of fuss except for portable blast fences to protect against jet exhausts, the advance assurance is that, in general, the welcome mat will be out.

Though it's known that the Convair 880, for instance, can comfortably land, unload, refuel, reload, turn around, and take off in from 16 to 20 minutes at any of more than 150 large and medium-size airports, some cities already have begun stretching their welcome mat for jets they have yet to see. New Orleans and Miami are pumping millions in private funds and tax money into the 7,000- to 11,000-foot runways which the speedier jets of day-after-tomorrow will undoubtedly require. So are other big air centers like Oklahoma City and Boston.

But for some reason, that doorway to the Western air world, New York City, is all but standing pat. The big town's powerful Port Authority sees no reason at present to depart from its 1951 prohibition against the landing of scheduled jetliners at Idlewild. Our own jets aren't even scheduled for testing at Idlewild, and no additional facilities are planned at any New York area airports if and when large jets are allowed.

It may sound a little grim but things will work out. They'll have to. Two years from now a full third of all air travel will be by jetliner, with 66 million of us flying 35 billion passenger miles. Five years later, in 1965, prop-driven transports will be flying their last, even on the 300-mile runs which are supposed to be rock-bottom minimum for economical and profitable jet operation.

Into the commercial jets of the present hour, airframe manufacturers have poured fortunes for research and safety testing. Boeing alone, which already had extensive jet-bomber and tanker experience, spent \$16 million developing the 707 prototype. Another half-million went into an elaborate mockup of this jetliner's cabin on the eighth floor of a New York office building.

Convair has been spurred on by the fact that it won't roll out the finished 880 until December. The maiden flight will be two months later. Even using the first three Convair jets for CAA certification, "the world's fastest jetliner" may have to wait until late next year to do its stuff on the world's airlines.

Douglas, on the other hand, put all its chips on intensive lab work. This is a Douglas tradition. They let the mathematics boys worry out all the bugs as the ship developed. When the DC-8 flew for the first time last May, its six

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- Nervous and tense
- Arthritic
- Heart trouble
- Invalid
- Middle-aged or elderly
- Pregnant or nursing
- High blood pressure

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