

FACT SHEET

About the National Air Tour 2003



When: Sept. 8 – Sept. 24, 2003, weather permitting
Tour Stops: 26 cities
Miles: More than 4,000 statute miles
Aircraft: More than two dozen museum-quality aircraft.
Web site: www.NationalAirTour.org; includes history, photos, schedule and updates from the Tour

The National Air Tour 2003 is the re-creation of the National Air Tours that took place from 1925 through 1931 during the “Golden Age of Aviation” — a period in aviation history between the two World Wars. On Sept. 8, the National Air Tour will take to the air again, flying a route for what would have been a 1932 Tour. Funding for the '32 Tour was depleted with the onset of the Great Depression.

Just as with all previous Tours, the National Air Tour 2003 will begin and end in the Dearborn, Mich., area. The Tour will land in 26 cities along a 4,000-mile route for fuel stops and/or overnight stays. From chicken dinners to local bands, airports and community organizations are helping to make each stop an outstanding experience for the public and pilots. Please visit www.NationalAirTour.org for the route, schedule and information about each stop.

National Air Tour Honorary Chairperson: Edsel B. Ford II

Just as his grandfather Edsel B. Ford did for the original Tours, Edsel B. Ford II will flag-off the start of the Tour when it departs the Dearborn, Mich. area on Sept. 8, and present the trophy to participants at the completion.

A Tour Highlight: Visiting the Site of the First Flight

In this centennial year of powered flight, the National Air Tour 2003 will make a special stop at the Wright Brothers National Memorial on Sunday, Sept. 21 – weather permitting. The pilots and airplanes will pay homage to the site of the first powered, controlled and sustained flight by positioning their aircraft in a circle around the base of the 60-foot granite pylon monument.

25 Rare Airplanes — the Kind You See In Museums

The aircraft on Tour are among the best of America’s vintage aircraft fleet and include Ford Tri-motors, Sikorsky flying boats and even open cockpit biplanes designed to give pleasure rides. Each airplane is being flown by volunteer pilots and crew from 20 states and Canada. Some aircraft are original to the Tours and many are of only a handful that remain in the world. The National Air Tour 2003 marks the first time many of the aircraft on the Tour will fly together since the Golden Age of Aviation.

Celebrating Two Centennials: Flight and Ford Motor Company

Officially known in 1927 as the National Air Tour, the Tours were frequently referred to as the Ford Air Tours. Edsel B. Ford, a staunch supporter, provided the elegant trophy and Ford Motor Company provided financial support. The National Air Tour 2003 celebrates Ford’s support of the original Tours, their sponsorship of the 2003 Tour and coincides with Ford’s 100th Anniversary.

On Dec. 17, 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright made the first powered, controlled and sustained flights at Kitty Hawk, N.C. This year marks a centennial since the first flights. The National Air Tour 2003 is an official U.S. Centennial of Flight event that celebrates the contributions made to aviation during the Golden Age.

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For additional information about the National Air Tour 2003, visit www.NationalAirTour.org or contact Suzanne Fedoruk at 612-861-7807, cell: 612-247-3079, sfedoruk@mn.rr.com.