ST. BARTH COMMUTER - RECEPTION OF 6TH AIRCRAFT IN THE FLEET - CESSNA GRAND CARAVAN

News / Business aviation



When we left after CARIBAVIA2022, we knew the company is getting ready for a special trip – reception of the 6th aircraft. Thanks to Bertrand MAGRAS, the Managing Partner, we have details of the ceremony and of course the road back. Here is the essential of our discussion:

Q. When it became clear that the N6 aircraft is essential, why?

A. Several reasons motivated the purchase of this sixth aircraft. First of all, the need to keep a modern and young fleet to have maximum operational reliability. The need to send some of our older aircraft to the yard to repaint and refit the cabin, without reducing our supply. And finally, a growing demand in the Caribbean area.

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Q. When did you place the order and was the production and receiving process impacted by the pandemic?

A. The order was confirmed in December 2021. The delivery which was initially scheduled for May finally took place on June 20 and 21 because, like many others activity sectors it was impacted by difficulties of the supply chain following the Covid.



Q. Can you tell us more regarding the reception ceremony?

A. Delivering an aircraft is always quite an intense process. After a presentation of the aircraft in a hangar and the official photos there are three main stages.

The first is to proceed with a detailed examination of the aircraft and test some systems that can be controlled from the ground.

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Then we carry out an acceptance flight during which we make sure of the general behavior of the plane, although it has already been checked by a test pilot, and above all we check the performance of the various systems and avionic options which were chosen when ordering.

Finally, there is, as often, an administrative and documentary part which consists in checking the presence of all the documents which will be necessary for the technical follow-up of the aircraft and its passage to the French register, because when it leaves the factory the aircraft is registered in the United States.

When everything is finished, we can finally sign. In our case, it took 1 day and a half since we left with the plane on Tuesday at the end of the morning for Wichita before undertaking the delivery to St Barth.

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Q. The road home, how was it: the pilots, the journey, the stopovers, the arrival?

A. I carried out the delivery myself, with Andy Hodge who is an instructor pilot in the company and who takes care with me of the training and the maintenance of competence of our pilots.

It was an opportunity to familiarize with this latest evolution of the Garmin 100 avionics suite called “Nxi”.

The trip takes place over two days with 2 stages each time:

Day N°1:

Wichita – Meridian (3H05)

Meridian - Fort Lauderdale (3H25)

Day No. 2

Fort Lauderdale – Providenciales (3H15)

Providenciales – St Barths (3H55)

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The arrival in St Barth took place around 17:30 on Saturday June 25, with a large part of the team who had come to welcome us with the family of course.



Q. Once Cessna Grand Caravan has joined St-Barth Commuter fleet, what will be routes for this aircraft, missions?

A. This plane will not be assigned to a particular line. However, we wish to dedicate it to the private charter activity.

Two of our current aircraft should have this same livery by the end of the year and accompany it on these missions.

We look forward to fly with the 6th aircraft during next visit to the island!

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