

Swissair introduces the convair 990 coronado jet

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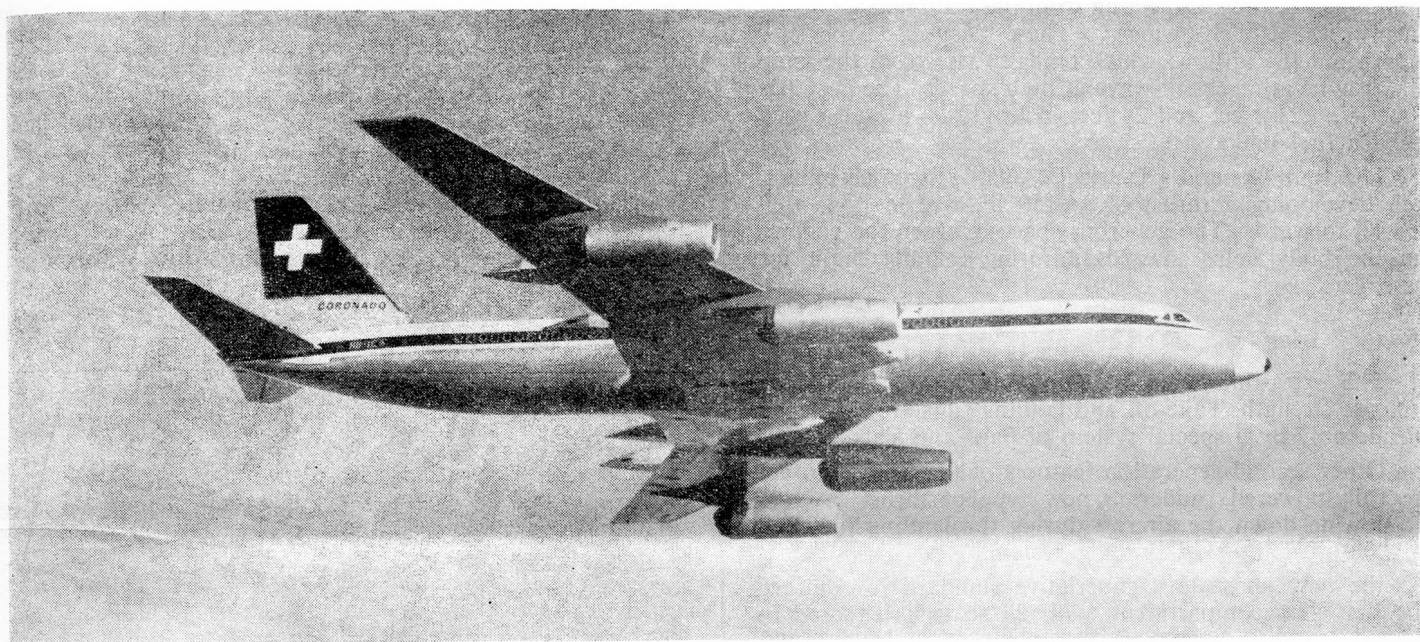
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SWISSAIR INTRODUCES THE CONVAIR 990 CORONADO JET THE SPEEDY CORONADO



The sharply swept-back wings and powerful engines give the new jet airliner a high cruising speed. Inside the aircraft, all the passengers can hear from the engines is a gentle hum — very like a vacuum cleaner being used in the next room.

On Wednesday, 21st February, the management of Swissair invited nearly one hundred guests to a Demonstration flight with the Convair 990 Coronado; amongst them H.E. the Swiss Ambassador, accompanied by Madame Daeniker, representatives of various Air Lines, Ministries of Aviation, Transport and Labour, Travel Agencies, Airport Officials, and about thirty members of the City Swiss Club.

It was a dull and dreary day when we took off from London Airport Central at 1.50 p.m. The four engines started to roar, and one was hardly able to fasten one's belt before becoming airborne; never in all my many travels have I left terra firma so quickly and smoothly. Gaining height rapidly, the machine pierced a bank of heavy cloud, and then in golden sunshine we travelled at a speed of between 500 and 600 m.p.h. over vast sea of glittering white clouds towards our destination, which was unknown, until it was announced from the microphone that the route would be via Dover, Ostend, Brussels, London.

Midway over the channel the clouds dispersed, and approaching the Belgian coast, Ostend, Knocke, La Zoute and Blankenbergh could be clearly seen in spite of the altitude which was then between 30,000 and 40,000 feet. Onward we went, passing over Bruges and Ghent towards the Belgian capital. Before reaching Brussels the charming

and pretty air hostesses began to serve a delicious and most generous snack luncheon accompanied with champagne. Not a drop of this delicate beverage was spilled, owing to the smoothness with which the machine travelled. The atmosphere in the cabins became suddenly very friendly and animated, and the noise of champagne bottles being uncorked nearly drowned the noise of the four engines.

Arriving over Brussels the airliner made a wide sweep over the capital, but I am afraid quite a number of my fellow passengers missed the sight, being more concerned in looking after their bodily welfare. In fact, we were already approaching the English coast on our return journey when my seat neighbour enquired whether we had as yet reached Brussels; all I could answer was "You have had it chum!" Crossing the coast somewhere near Dover, we again encountered heavy cloud which only lifted shortly before we landed, after exactly one hour's flight in one of the world's fastest airliners.

And now a few particulars about the latest of the big jet airliners, the Convair 990 Coronado (the name of Coronado has been given to this type of machine after the Spanish explorer, Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, who discovered much of the southern part of the U.S.A.). Swissair, ever alert to improve their air fleet, ordered in September 1959 seven of the 98-seater units of this type, of

which four have already been delivered. Two of these aircraft will, for a period of four years, be taken over by the Scandinavian Airlines System (S.A.S.). Delivery will be completed this summer.

Swissair will introduce its new Convair 990 Coronados successively on its routes to South America, the Far East, and the Middle East. It is also appearing regularly in place of the Caravelle on the London to Zurich run.

“Speed capsules”

A distinctive feature of the Coronado is the four streamlined fairings projecting from the trailing edge of the sharply swept-back wings. These “speed capsules” smooth out the airflow, which tends to rise from the wing as a drag-creating shock-wave at high speeds. The capsules — between 21½ feet and 24 feet in length — are also used as extra fuel tanks.

The four General Electric CJ-805-23 bypass engines, each developing a thrust of 16,150 lb., are in pods that jut well forward. The generous space between the engines and the body helps towards ensuring a quiet flight for passengers.

“Razor” wing

The extra-thin wing is of advanced design and has immense strength. Take-off and landing runs are shortened considerably by a special system of flaps and slats.

Other second-generation features of the Coronado are the fully-powered rudder, a new type of thrust reverser for slowing down the aircraft during the landing run, and an “on-off” anti-skid braking system.

the new jet seats a superlative standard in comfort. The first-class compartment, with 24 seats, is situated in

the forward section of the aircraft. The 74 economy-class seats are arranged in rows of five. There are two galleys, a cabin staff of six, and four flying crew.

The temperature throughout the aircraft is kept constant by the most up-to-date air-conditioning.

Technical data

Wing span: 120 feet.
Length: 139 feet.
Cruising speed: 600 m.p.h.
Max. range: approx. 3,000 miles.
Wing sweep-back: 37 degrees.
Max. take-off weight: 244,000 lb.
Max. landing weight: 180,000 lb.
Payload: 27,000 lb.
Fuel capacity: 13,046 gallons.

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