

NetJets Europe

Who are they: It all started with NetJets, formerly Executive Jet, in the US in 1964, which was founded as the first private jet charter and aircraft management company in the world. NetJets Europe started in 1996 and today is the largest operator of business jets in the region. The NetJets model is built around fractional ownership of a particular type of aircraft. Customers join the Owner Programme, suitable for those who want to own a jet without the initial, single outlay, and who think they are likely to need more than 50 hours of jet time per year. A simpler, no-strings approach is the NetJets Private Jet Card. This gives the ability to access 25 hours of flight time over 12 months.

What's new: \$400m (£205m) worth of 25 new aircraft in 2006. The company also placed the largest single order in European private aviation history with a \$1.1bn order for 24 state-of-the-art Dassault Falcon 7X jets. NetJets Europe ended 2006 with more than 1,300 customers and a fleet of 114 aircraft.

Client fit: The right strand is worked out for customers based on five criteria – their cabin size requirement, typical trip length, travel frequency, preferred duration of commitment and financial structure. More than 900 of Europe's top companies, decision-makers and opinion-formers fly with NetJets, including executives of Gillette, Nokia and General Electric.

Key destinations: NetJets' clients choose from 1,000 airports in Europe alone, enabling them to fly whenever they want from wherever they want.

What the jets offer: There are several aircraft types available – Citation Bravo (seven passengers), Hawker 400XP (seats seven), Citation Excel/XS (seats seven), Hawker 800 XP (seats six), Falcon 2000 (seats 10), Gulfstream V/550 (seats 14) and Boeing Business Jet (seats 18).

Contact: 020 7361 9620. www.netjetsurope.com

Price: NetJets Private Jet Card prices start at £85,000 for 25 hours per year in a seven-seater Hawker 400XP.

Recommended by: Readers of *Luxury Travel*. You voted them Best Private Jet in the LT Reader Awards (see pp14-17 Jan/Feb issue).

"I think agents use us as their little secret, booking our services and looking wonderful to their clients"

Justine Angelli
co-founder, Avolus



Avolus

Who are they: Founded just over a year ago by Justine Angelli and Alexis Grabar. Avolus combines tailor-made private jet, helicopter, yacht and chauffeured car arrangements with standardised pricing around the world. Avolus does offer ad-hoc charter, but the key to the business is the offering of a pre-paid Avolus Card system where 'credit' (anything from £500 upwards) is placed and then used against any combination of vehicle. Transport can be booked at the last minute, as no fund clearance is required. There is no membership or annual fee and no additional charges. Customer preferences and information are kept on file, from favourite newspaper to passport information.

What's new: The whole concept is new, namely that clients can book all private travel arrangements via the Avolus Card and then use a secure website (a service only Avolus currently offers) to check balances, top up credits and view journey details. The Avolus Card is presented on arrival of the vehicle to confirm identity. The company is opening offices in Moscow, Kazakhstan and Dubai and is also planning a division to advise customers on the buying and selling of aircraft.

Client fit: Agnelli says clients so far are half business and half leisure or private use, and have been varied – from a man chartering a jet for Valentine's Day to propose to his girlfriend to a house-hunter wanting to check out many European spots in a short space of time; and from transatlantic travellers who had to have their pets travel with them in the cabin, to golfers who wanted to play several courses in a day.

Key destinations: Could be anywhere. Ibiza, skiing-heli-skiing combinations, Italy, South of France, the Maldives, as well as key sporting events, such as the current Cricket World Cup in the Caribbean.

What the jets offer: Avolus can access 1,000 aircraft worldwide, from Learjets up to Airbus 319s. Around 200 helicopters can be accessed, as well as yachts around the world, a fleet of Mercedes and Bentleys and 'Air Force One', a sleek customised coach for just 15 passengers.

Contact: 0845 450 1504. www.avolus.com

Price: A golfing trip to Portugal would cost from £10,830 including E-Class Mercedes pick-up from central London to Biggin Hill, return flight to Faro, car from Faro to the golf course, flight home and return drop to central London. □

