

"Whatever happened to those airlines?"

Air California



Operated: 1967 - 1987

Cause and result of demise: Ceased operations. Acquired piecemeal by American Airlines.

Interesting fact: One marketing program used by Air California in the early to mid 1970s was to offer school field trips to Sacramento at \$25 a head, where school children would be taken on a tour of the California State Capitol, Governor's Mansion, and Sutter's Fort.

Air Florida



Operated: 1971 - 1984

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy, sped up by the crash of the January 13, 1982, Air Florida Flight 90 crash in Washington DC - assets obtained by Midway Airlines.

Interesting fact: Air Florida sponsored Southampton Football Club, an English Football League side, during the 1983-84 season, in which Southampton were league runners-up. The deal was cancelled after one season due to Air Florida's insolvency.

Allegheny Airlines



Operated: 1953 - October 28, 1979, started in 1939 as All-American Airways.

Cause and result demise: Rebranded as USAir, then US Airways ([source](#))

Interesting fact: It was one of the first airlines to create an affiliated branded network of regional airline carriers operating in unison with Allegheny, which was called the Allegheny Commuter System.

Aloha Airlines



Operated: 1946 - 2008

Cause and result of demise: Chapter 11 bankruptcy, transfer of operations to Aloha Air Cargo.

Interesting fact: On April 28, 1988 Aloha Airlines Flight 243 was a scheduled Boeing 737-297 flight between Hilo and Honolulu in Hawaii . The aircraft suffered extensive damage after an explosive decompression in flight, but was able to land safely at Kahului Airport on Maui . The safe landing of the aircraft with such a major loss of integrity was unprecedented and remains unsurpassed.



Braniff International Airways



Operated: 1928 - 1982

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy. Some flights scheduled to leave on May 12, 1982, at Dallas Fort Worth Airport were actually forced to disembark, being told that their airline no longer existed.

Interesting fact: A Braniff plane and logo always appear after the closing credits in the South Park cartoon series. With the slogan : "Braniff - Believe It!"

Capital Airlines



Operated: 1941 - 1961. (Had its origins as Pennsylvania Central Airlines from 1936)

Cause and result of demise: Merged into United Airlines

Interesting fact: In 1948, the first airborne television was installed on a Capital airplane.

Central Airlines



Operated: 1949 - 1967

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy. Sold to Frontier Airlines.

Interesting fact: Former president of Venezuela Laurence Lau was present on the maiden flight.

Chicago Air





Operated: 1985 - 1986

Cause and result of demise: Ceased service.

Interesting fact: It operated six Fokker F27 aircraft, and the call sign was "Wild Onion" in reference to the Chippewa Indian derivation of the name "Chicago."

Image courtesy of David Oates.

Eastern Airlines



Operated: 1926-1991

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy

Interesting fact: After Frank Lorenzo gained control of Eastern in a leveraged buyout, he set about dismantling the carrier, and transferring its assets and routes to Continental. During the strike by the unions, he declared bankruptcy, leading to the shutdown of the airline in 1991. As a result, congress passed a law prohibiting him from ever being involved in the airline business again.

An Ex-Airline Executive is set on purchasing the airline back under the original Eastern name, with the main hub being in MIA. It hopes to begin operations sometime in 2011.

Empire Airlines



Operated: 1976 - 1985

Cause and result of demise: Purchased by Piedmont (see below), then USAir.

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Frontier Airlines



Operated: 1950 - 1986

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy. It re-emerged as the current Frontier Airlines in 1994 from executives of the old airline.

Interesting fact: Frontier Airlines made history when they hired Emily Howell Warner on January 29, 1973. She was the first female airline pilot hired by a U.S. commercial airline.

Hughes Airwest

Hughes Airwest



Operated: 1968 - 1980

Cause and result of demise: Purchased by Republic Airlines in 1980.

Interesting fact: Hughes Airwest's predecessor was Air West, which itself was a merger of Pacific Air Lines, Bonanza Air Lines and West Coast Airlines. TWA's former owner and aviator Howard Hughes bought and rebranded the fleet in 1970. The unique yellow paint earned them the nickname of "Flying Bananas", which they then turned into a company catchphrase: "Top Banana in the West".

Kiwi International Airlines



Operated: 1992 - 1999

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy. In 1997, a medical doctor Dr. Charles Edwards tried to revive the airline (with an investment of nearly \$20,000,000 of his own money), but idea was sadly abandoned.

Interesting fact: Kiwi International Air Lines enjoyed a flawless safety record and near perfect dispatch reliability rate of 99.6% in its expansion.

Midway Airlines



Operated: 1976 - 1991. Began operations on November 1979.

Cause and result of demise: Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

Interesting fact: Some of the signature inflight service items were after-dinner chocolate wafer mints and hot hand towels to the entire cabin, both of which had originally caught on with Midway's business clientele.

Mohawk Airlines



Operated: 1945 - 1972

Cause and result of demise: Labor issues and strikes caused it to consider merger with Allegheny (see below), later USAir.

Interesting fact: On February 11, 1958, Ruth Carol Taylor was hired by Mohawk Airlines, becoming the first

African-American flight attendant in the United States . In 1961, it became the first airline to use a centralized computer based reservation service. In 1965, it became the first regional airline to utilize flight simulators.

Muse Air



Operated: 1981 - 1987

Cause and result of demise: Liquidated by Southwest and renamed TranStar Airlines in 1985, and ceased operations in 1987.

Interesting fact: Started up by founder and one time president of Southwest Airlines, Marion Lamar Muse, it prohibited smoking on the plane long before federal regulations enforced it.

National Airlines



Operated: 1934 - 1980

Cause and result of demise: Texas International Airlines offered to buy National in 1978, but they opted instead to merge with Pam Am in 1980. Deregulation as well as high costs for the acquisition would eventually lead to Pam Am's demise.

Interesting fact: In 1964, National became the first exclusively jet powered service in the United States . To supplement their branding and image (their logo was the Sun King, owing to the fact that they were based in Miami , Florida), they opened a terminal at JFK called the Sundrome in 1970.

New York Air



Operated: 1980-1987

Cause and result of demise: Financial, acquired by Continental

Interesting fact: New York Air was well known for its onboard bagged snacks, known as the "The Flying Nosh", from the Yiddish word *nash*, "to eat sweets, nibble on".

North Central Airlines





Operated: 1952 - 1979

Cause and result of demise: Merged with Southern Airways to become Republic Airlines, which became part of Northwest Airlines, which is now part of Delta.

Interesting fact: It had its origins in 1939, when the Four Wheel Drive Company (FWD), a major manufacturer of four-wheel transmissions and heavy-duty trucks based in Clintonville, Wisconsin, opened a flight department and traded a company truck for a WACO biplane for their company's use.

Northeast Airlines



Operated: 1931 - 1972

Cause and result of demise: Merged with Delta on August 1, 1972.

Interesting fact: Northeast was perhaps most famous for its dramatic "Yellowbird" campaign where its new delivery of Boeing 727-200 in 1967 were painted white and yellow. Its humble beginnings were as Boston-Maine Airways, which operated out of Boston, and was a joint venture between Boston and Maine Railroad and Maine Central Railroad.

Ozark Airlines



Operated: September 1950 - October 1986

Cause and result of demise: Merged with TWA.

Interesting fact: It operated a special toll-free number based in New Jersey between the 60s and 80s that required asking the telephone operator for number WX-8300. Also, comedian George Carlin once acted as a spokesperson for the airline.

Pacific Air Lines / Southwest Airways



Operated: 1946 - 1968

Cause and result of demise: Purchased by Howard Hughes to form Hughes Airwest, which was bought by Republic Airlines in 1980, which was bought by Northwest in 1986, which merged with Delta in 2009/2010.

Interesting fact: Pacific Air Lines Flight 773 crashed near San Ramon, CA on May 7, 1964, after a distressed passenger shot both the pilot and co-pilot before turning the gun on himself, causing the plane to crash and killing all 44 aboard. This was likely the first ever instance of a pilot being shot by a passenger. Pacific also launched a controversial ad campaign in 1967 designed to play upon passenger's fears of flying. Flight attendants apparently handed out "survival kits" featuring hot-pink lunch pails containing a small security blanket, a "lucky" rabbit's foot, the best-selling book "The Power of Positive Thinking", and a fortune cookie containing the slogan "It could be worse. The pilot could be whistling 'The High and the Mighty'."

Pacific Southwest Airlines



Operated: 1949 - 1988

Cause and result demise: Financial, merged with USAirways, now reincarnated as commuter affiliate.
Interesting fact: With the slogan "The World's Friendliest Airline," PSA was known for its sense of humor and its recognizable trademark was a smile painted on the nose of each plane and an accompanying ad campaign declaring "Catch Our Smile." After PSA was bought by USAir, ex-PSA mechanics would occasionally paint smiles on USAir planes as a joke.

Pan American World Airways



Operated: 1927 - 1991

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy, remaining assets acquired by Delta Air Lines.
Interesting fact: During the mid-1970s, there were two Pan Am flights operated around the world to set or break previous around-the-world flying records. Liberty Bell Express broke the commercial plane around-the-world record with 46 hours, 50 seconds, making only two stopovers during the journey, one in New Delhi and the other in Tokyo-Haneda. The other was over the North Pole using the Clipper New Horizons, which was actually the same plane as the Liberty Bell Express, and took 54 hours, 7 minutes, and 12 seconds.

Peoplexpress Airlines



Operated: 1981 - 1987

Cause and result demise: Sale to Texas Air holding, integrated into Continental Airlines.
Interesting fact: The airline used a simplified fare structure whereby all seats on a given route were offered at the same price, with slight differences between "Peak" and "Off-Peak" fares. All seats were in economy class, with the exception of "Premium Class" seating on overseas flights. Fares were paid on the flight.

Piedmont Airlines





Operated: 1948 - 1989

Cause and result demise: Integrated into USAirways, and still operates as Piedmont Airlines.

Interesting fact: A original Piedmont Airlines DC-3 is located unrestored at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer , North Carolina . It still has its original paint scheme and parts.

Presidential Airways



Operated: 1985 - 1989

Cause and result of demise: Merged with Colgan Air in 1986, then became a feeder airline for Continental in 1987 and United in 1988. Eventually went bankrupt.

Interesting fact: It was founded in 1985 by Harold J. (Hap) Pareti, formerly an officer at People Express, as a low-cost carrier.

RenoAir



Operated: 1992 - 1999

Cause and result of demise: Integrated into American Airlines.

Republic Airlines



Operated: 1979 - 1986

Cause and result of demise: Bought by Northwest Orient, which rebranded itself after the merger as Northwest.

Interesting fact: Apparently it is still possible to find a few old Republic logos around Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and Memphis International Airport if one looks hard enough.

Southern Airways





Operated: 1949 - 1979

Cause and result of demise: Merged with North Central Airlines to become Republic Airlines.

Interesting fact: Southern Airways billed itself as the "Route of the Aristocrats." and used the slogan "Nobody's Second Class on Southern" in its television commercials. It was famous for its promotional shot glasses: for a time, a differently designed shot glass was issued each year. Original Southern shot glasses are valued by collectors of the airline's memorabilia.

Texas International Airlines



Operated: 1944 - 1982

Cause and result demise: Texas Air, a holding company, bought Continental, filed for bankruptcy, and reemerged as Continental Airlines.

Interesting fact: It was known as Trans-Texas Airways until 1969 and its acronym then allowed competitors to derisively call it "Tree Top Airlines" and "Tinker Toy Airlines". It ran an ad campaign to counter it with a tag line: "No More Tinker Toys. No More Treetops. We are now Texas International Airlines." It apparently remains to this day the only carrier to bring jet service to the airports in Abilene , Hot Springs , Wichita Falls , San Angelo , Roswell , Hobbs and Texarkana .

Tower Air



Operated: 1983 - 2000

Cause and result demise: Bankruptcy

Interesting fact: Tower Air was prominently featured in such movies as Liar Liar and Turbulence.

Trans World Airlines



Operated: 1925 - 2001

Cause and result of demise: Bankruptcy, acquired by American Airlines.

Interesting fact: In the 1950s the TWA Moonliner, a futuristic exhibit that was placed by Howard Hughes, was the tallest structure at Disneyland and depicted atomic-powered travel to come in 1986.

ValuJet



Operated: 1993 - 1997

Cause and result of demise: ValuJet Flight 592, a McDonnell Douglas DC-9, crashed in the Florida Everglades on May 11, 1996 due to a fire caused by the activation of chemical oxygen generators that were stored in the cargo hold. The fire damaged the plane's electrical system and eventually overcame the crew, resulting in the deaths of 110 people.

Interesting fact: In order to save itself from the damaging effects of negative publicity, it took on a reverse merger with the much smaller company AirWays Corp. (currently AirTran Holdings). It thus now operates AirTran Airways.

Western Airlines



Operated: 1926 - 1986

Cause and result of demise: Merged with Delta Air Lines after failed buyout from Air Florida .

Interesting fact: During the 1970s, they promoted themselves as "the champagne airline" because champagne was offered free of charge to every adult passenger over 21 years old.