

First off – and still the First !



Airbus and India

The Airbus story in India began in 1976, with delivery of three A300(B2)s to Indian Airlines – the first domestic airline customer for the type. The A300, and later the A310, were the aircraft that cemented the then-fledgling Airbus Industrie’s reputation as a major manufacturer of aircraft, paving the way for the Company’s modern successes such as the A330, A320, A380 and A350. Hundreds of A300/A310s remain in service today, and Airbus projects that some 200 will still be operational around the world in 2025,

more than half a century after the first A300 prototype took the air!

The very next Airbus product, the revolutionary fly-by-wire A320, saw similarly enthusiastic acceptance in Indian skies, and indeed has become something of a ubiquitous presence in the subcontinent. Once again, Indian Airlines was the first customer, taking delivery in 1989 but it was the economic liberalisation of the 1990s that laid the groundwork for the A320’s runaway success in the Indian market. Nearly every new mainline airline established in the

2000s – from low-cost carriers Deccan, GoAir and Indigo, to full-service Kingfisher – adopted the A320 for their narrowbody needs. Later entrants to the market, AirAsia India and Vistara, also selected the A320 for their single-type fleets.

By the mid-2000s, the widebody A330 also began to receive some attention in India, and the A330-200 entered service with Jet Airways in April 2007. In December 2012, Jet received its first A330-300s, and put it into service on the Mumbai-Brussels route later that same month. Air India also briefly



Air India operated leased A330s in the 2000s