
Delta bids goodbye to the DC-9

By **Rick Lundstrom** on December, 31 2013 | Airline & Terminal News



The flight will mark the last scheduled commercial flight of the DC-9 by a major U.S. airline.



Since 2008, Delta has removed or retired more than 350 aircraft from its fleet including 50-seat CRJ-200s; Saab 340s and DC-9s; while adding the 777-200LR; two-class, 65 and 76-seat regional jets and variants of the 737 and 717.

The DC-9 retirement comes after Delta began taking delivery of its orders of 88 717-200s and 100 737-900ERs, which began entering service in October and November, respectively. Each aircraft features a First Class cabin and slim-line seats throughout Delta's Economy Comfort and Economy cabin along with Wi-Fi connectivity and in-seat power ports. The 737-900ER offers on-demand entertainment throughout the cabin. Delta also recently announced its order for 40 Airbus aircraft including 30 narrowbody A321s, which will begin to be delivered in 2016.

Delta was the launch customer for the original 65-seat version of the DC-9 in 1965 as the airline replaced propeller aircraft on high-frequency, short-haul domestic routes. The twin-engine aircraft was removed from the Delta fleet in 1993, but larger variants re-entered service following the merger with Northwest Airlines after it acquired Republic Airlines in 1986. Delta has flown a total of 305 DC-9s since 1965.

To acknowledge the DC-9's retirement, the last flight has been tagged DL2014 noting the final year of service, while the preceding flight operating from Detroit to Minneapolis/St. Paul will be flight DL1965, the aircraft's initial year of service.

"The DC-9 has been a workhorse in our domestic fleet while providing a reliable customer experience," said Nat Pieper, Delta's Vice President - Fleet Strategy. "The aircraft's retirement paves the way for newer, more efficient aircraft."

