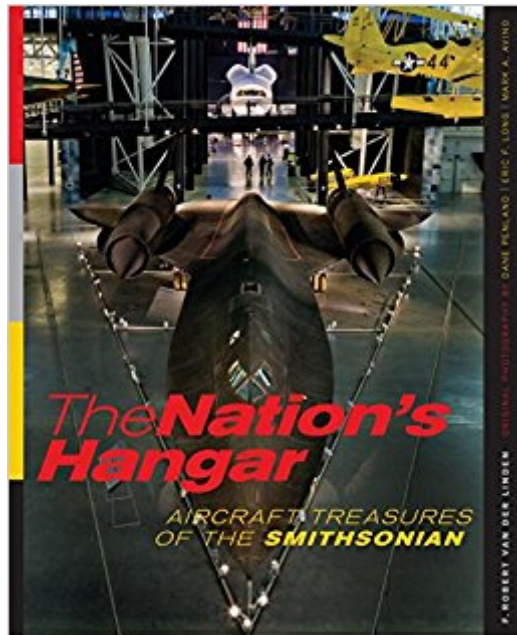




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The Nation's Hangar: Aircraft Treasures Of The Smithsonian



Synopsis

The Nation's Hangar: Aircraft Treasures of the Smithsonian offers a fascinating textual and visual history of civilian, military, and commercial aviation from the earliest balloon flights to today's most advanced aircraft. The Nation's Hangar charts the awe-inspiring history of flight around the world. F. Robert Van Der Linden, a Smithsonian curator and leading expert on aviation history, explains the fascinating stories behind aviation's great technological advances and provides historic and social context that highlights the many ways in which these innovations have changed the course of human history. The Nation's Hangar is also a visual delight. The Smithsonian aircraft collection has never looked so compelling and sleek. The Nation's Hangar is a must-have for that fly boy or fly girl in your flight pattern.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

LIBRARY JOURNAL, Starred ReviewThe Nation's Hangar: Aircraft Treasures of the Smithsonian takes the reader on a fascinating journey through 60-odd years of aeronautical history. He reviews the priceless aircraft and artifacts currently housed in the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, a mammoth four-hangar repository, and discusses the center's accession criteria, principles of preservation, space, display, and funding challenges. Van der Linden's informative narrative acquaints readers with such period exhibits as international military fighters and bombers, passenger liners, helicopters, seaplanes, recreational and racing craft, utility flyers such as crop dusters, and the world's fastest jet-powered manned plane—the U.S.

SR-71 Blackbird. Equally compelling is his treatment of the talented people who bankrolled, designed, maintained, flew, and finally restored these magnificent birds to their pristine glory. His volume is replete with more than 225 full-color illustrations and 75 black-and-white photographs – a visual feast. VERDICT This splendidly crafted pictorial tribute to a national treasure will appeal to the full spectrum of aviation scholars, collectors, and dedicated buffs. Highly recommended. – John Carver Edwards, Univ. of Georgia Libs., Cleveland American Heritage

As the National Air and Space Museum’s director boasts in his foreword, the Smithsonian was interested in aeronautical matters even before aviation was invented, having begun collecting Chinese kites in 1876. This descriptive catalogue celebrates the latest addition to Smithsonian’s family of museums, the huge NASM annex known as the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, located 30 miles from the National Mall at Dulles International Airport. The book is instructive, straightforward, laudatory, and colorful in its photographs. Notably, the chapter on “Restoration and Conservation” purposefully describes the criteria for acquiring, stabilizing, and preserving artifacts. Proper stewardship does not, for example, make all old objects look spanking new. Much of value of museum-quality holdings lies in their antiquity, including the scars of their experience. At best, a museum’s proper goal in handling some objects is simply to stabilize them in perpetuity, while a proper activity is not simply to collect as many examples of this-and-that as it can find. NASM consequently has defined clear criteria – historical, technological, and practical standards – to govern its acquisitions. While here is the Enola Gay, the plane that dropped the first atomic bomb in anger, and there the Concorde, the fastest commercial airliner ever, museums are not properly halls merely of “oh, wow!” They must also be educational, historiographic, and conservative in the word’s original sense. Discussions of “The Early Years of Flight” and the “The Golden Age of Flight” provide overviews of those eras, with heavy emphasis on the airplanes and other flying machines on display at the Udvar-Hazy Center. Three chapters are devoted to military aircraft and the exploits of U.S. aviators in wartime.

F. ROBERT VAN DER LINDEN is the curator of special purpose aircraft and commercial aviation in the Smithsonian Institution National Air & Space Museum’s Aeronautics Division. He is also the author of *Best of the National Air & Space Museum*. The author lives in Boyds, Maryland.

Yet another in a long series of photos of the collection of the National Air and Space Museum. Worth a look if you haven’t seen the previous books or haven’t been to the museum for a while. High

quality photos well printed on good paper.

Gave it as a gift to a person who worked on the restoration of one of the highlights at "The Nation's Hangar."

I have to say after reading reviews and advice from my more knowledgeable aviation friends, this was a superb book to read before visiting the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center also known as the National Air and Space Museum at the Dulles airport. It doesn't cover every plane in the hanger, but it really highlights the more significant ones that had historical impact on the world in both the military and commercial segments. I would highly recommend buying a used book since most of the time, books that are text book thick, such as this, tend to be taken better care than smaller, paper back books. Save some money, learn some history and hit the museums! My other recommendation is to pick up Flight: The Complete History by R. G. Grant (Shoot, anything made by Grant is pretty interesting) as its really a great cliff notes to all of aviation history.

I have not completed reading it yet, but I enjoyed the first few chapters and the pictures.

Well illustrated review of these national treasures.

Bought as a gift. Husband loved it.

Very Good Book

It's no secret that the most oft visited venue in Washington, D.C., is the Air & Space Museum along the Mall. If you have never been there, go. If you think nothing there will interest you, go. I guarantee something there will mesmerize you; fill you with awe and wonder. Go. Now, to the book. The amount of room available at the museum on the was just not large enough to do justice to the museum's collection of aircraft. Far too many aircraft had to be kept in storage and various aircraft were rotated off or into display at the space on the mall. The solution, long in coming to fruition, was to build a special hanger just for the aircraft. Thus came into existence the Udvar-Hazy Center, which houses not only the spacious hanger, but is also home to the Mary Baker Engen Restoration Hanger, where miracles of restoration of what sometimes, to the layperson appear to be piles of junk and scrap. So much painstaking love, patience, meticulous attention to detail and dedication result

in near miracles when a project is completed. In this massive space, so much more of this nation's collection of the artifacts of the world's history of aviation can be respectfully displayed. This book does its best to show the wonder of aviation history, and it does its job in both pictures and text. It is a remarkable achievement. I give fair warning to the reader: if your interest is in the realm of passing historical interest, the book will likely suffice. However, if the reader is more of a fanatic about aviation, the longing to go in person may become overwhelming. Located near Dulles International Airport, the hangar is not hard to reach, once you are in the D.C. area. The book is nothing short of a treasure; it is a "must have" for the aviation historian. I feel I must add that the hangar itself is a "must see" for those same people. I am pretty sure where one stop my next vacation will include, and I have this book to thank for that. Highest Recommendation.

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