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## Navigator Hotel Adds 727 Wing for New Aviation Theme

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By Terry Stephens

You'll know you're in flying country when you walk under a 727 wing and a Fokker F-28 fuselage canopy to enter the newly expanded and remodeled Best Western Navigator Inn & Suites in Everett, Wash.

Formerly Cambridge Inn, the hotel is located less than a mile from Paine Field, Boeing's airliner assembly plant, the Museum of Flight's aircraft restoration center and the Future of Flight Aviation Center and Boeing Tour facility. That led to the decision to create an aviation theme for clientele. "Many of our guests are connected to the aviation industry or they're tourists coming to see the area's aviation exhibits," said hotel manager Bill Rode. "Now that the Future of Flight is also providing Boeing tours on weekends, that's a major attraction."

The hotel has doubled in size and now boasts 103 rooms with added amenities.

"People like our hotel's east and west wings and our aviation-themed artwork," Rode said.

The area's only hotel with such a theme, the Navigator will also be close to the new home of Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen's Flying Heritage Collection of rare warbirds. Displayed for the past three years at Arlington Municipal Airport (AWO), the collection will open its 2008 season in a renovated hangar at Paine Field.

Even the hotel's exterior has changed, from a residential neighborhood motif with wooden shingles to a multi-colored exterior of ribbed metal walls and curved rooflines reminiscent of airport hangars.

The Navigator's most prominent feature is the giant aircraft wing stretching over its entrance. Previously used by a now retired Boeing 727, the wing rests just above the F-28 fuselage canopy over the entrance walkway. At night, the path from the parking lot to the hotel entrance is lit like runway landing lights. Inside, the guest lounge has aircraft models hanging over the breakfast counter and specially designed aluminum tables.

"My husband came up with the aviation theme," said Shaiza Damji, managing director of the 360° Hotel Group in Seattle, which owns the Navigator Inn. "It started to take shape when one of our hotel guests turned out to be connected with Columbia Pacific Aviation in Moses Lake, a business that salvages retired aircraft. They had donated a 727 cockpit to the Future of Flight Aviation Center and Boeing Tour facility at Paine Field, and he said they could provide us with a 727 airliner wing. That's where our entrance canopy came from, too."

Renovating the hotel's entrance was quite an unusual project.



Photo By Terry Stephens

A 727 wing and a Fokker F28 fuselage for a canopy are part of the new aviation theme for the Navigator Inn & Suites near Paine Field. The new ribbed steel siding and rounded rooftops suggest airport hangars and buildings.



"Everyone was enthusiastic about it, including the vendors and contractors," she said. "We had to close down the adjacent Highway 99 one night, from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m., just to move the wing into place. The truck driver said it was the most unusual delivery he'd ever made."

For more information, visit [www.navigatorsuites.com](http://www.navigatorsuites.com).



[Back to Page 1](#)



Photo By Terry Stephens

As part of its new aviation theme, the lobby's breakfast area at the Navigator Inn is decorated with aluminum-topped tables and aircraft and balloon models.



Photo By Terry Stephens

The front entrance and each room in the Navigator Inn feature this custom photo of a model aircraft over a map of Everett, Wash.