



For more information, Contact:

Scott Tims ♦ 214-378-7970

WingsOverHoustonPR@thepointgroup.com

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Oct. 19-20: CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow to Host Thunderbirds, Canadian Forces Snowbirds, F-35A Lightning II Demo and More

HOUSTON (Oct. 9 2019) – In less than two weeks, the **U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, Canadian Forces Thunderbirds**, and a first-time **F-35A Lightning II “full demo,”** along with many other performers, will be in Houston for the [35th Annual Commemorative Air Force \(CAF\) Wings Over Houston Airshow](http://www.wingsoverhouston.com) on **Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 19-20**, at **Ellington Airport**. The elite Thunderbirds team, which last performed in Houston in 2017, returns under the command of Lt. Col. John Caldwell. For the first time in Houston, the newly formed F-35A Lightning II Demonstration Team will present a full solo demonstration of the fifth-generation multirole combat fighter jet. Also headlining the show is the Canadian Forces Snowbirds demonstration team, returning to the show for the first time since 2011. World famous aerobatic pilot [Sean Tucker and Team Oracle](#) return to Houston to fly a new “duet” performance with pilot Jessy Panzer, which will be the last chance to see Tucker fly the famous Oracle Challenger III biplane before it is retired to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. To purchase tickets for the 2019 CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow, please visit the airshow’s website, www.wingsoverhouston.com, or call 888-4-FLYSHOW.

“We are incredibly excited to bring our fans three stunning demonstration performances this year with the Thunderbirds, Canadian Forces Snowbirds, and the F-35A Lightning II full solo demo that is only performing in 19 shows this season,” said **Airshow Director Bill Roach**. “We’ve put together a very well-rounded lineup, which will include Air Force Heritage and Navy Legacy flights, the legendary Tora! Tora! Tora! Show, and performances by aerobatic pilots Matt Chapman, Debby Rihn-Harvey,

and Paul Fiala, and much more. Of course, the show will feature one of the largest assemblies of flying and static displays of vintage aircraft in the world. And while there will be a lot in the air to see, we'll also have a lot of fun activities on the ground, too."

Produced by the Commemorative Air Force, the non-profit airshow performance line-up includes:

- [The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds](#) will exhibit some of the maximum capabilities of the multi-role F-16 Fighting Falcon, often flying only a few feet from wingtip to wingtip.
- [The Canadian Forces \(CF\) Snowbirds](#) return to Houston to wow crowds, flying Canadair CT-114 Tutor aircraft in more than 50 different formations and maneuvers, including 9-plane formations.
- [F-35A Lightning II](#) aircraft assigned to Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, and will be doing a full solo aerobatic routine this year. The F-35A Lightning II, the U.S. Air Force's latest fifth-generation fighter, features incredible aerodynamic performance and next-generation stealth capabilities. Wings Over Houston is one of only 19 shows hosting the demo this season.
- World famous aerobatic pilot [Sean Tucker and Team Oracle](#) will showcase a special "duet" performance with pilot Jessy Panzer. Wings Over Houston is one of only 10 airshows to host this performance this season, and this will be Tucker's final performance in the Oracle Challenger III biplane before its retirement to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.
- Aerobatic performances include: Matt Chapman and Embry Riddle Aeronautical University flying the Extra 330LX aircraft; La Porte resident [Deborah Rihn-Harvey](#), world aerobatic champion and one of the highest ranked competitors in the country; and longtime aviator **Paul Fiala** in his Great Lakes Biplane.
- The [Navy Legacy Flight](#) program comes to Houston this year, featuring modern and vintage aircraft (aircraft to be finalized closer to show).
- The U.S. Air Force will showcase a [Heritage Flight](#) formation featuring the F-35A Lightning II and other aircraft (not yet finalized).
- Fan favorite, [Tora! Tora! Tora!](#) returns again to wow fans with their explosive reenactment of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, which includes an exciting show on the ground, too.
- Fans can see and meet pilots of an **enormous display of static aircraft of all types and eras** and should visit the show's website to see the full list. Just a few of these aircraft include:

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B-17 Flying Fortress, RAF Supermarine Spitfire, P-40 Warhawk, B-25 Mitchell, P-51 Mustang, F4U Corsair, P-39 Aircobra, C-60 Loadstar, SB2C Helldiver, F6F Hellcat, P-47 Thunderbolt, SBD Dauntless, EA-18G Growler, A-10 Thunderbolt II, F-16C Flying Falcon, F-15 Strike Eagle, F-35A Lightning II, and the massive Lockheed C-5 Galaxy cargo plane. Also on display will be numerous helicopters, NASA training aircraft, massive cargo planes, and two MIG aircraft, the MIG-17 Fresco and a MIG-21 Fishbed.

- The [RE/MAX Skydiving Team](#) will open the show with a performance choreographed to the national anthem.
- The [Legends & Heroes Autograph Tent](#) will host a very large contingent of distinguished military veterans and astronauts. Several World War II veterans will appear, including ace Marine pilot Col. Dean Caswell who flew off the carrier U.S.S. Bunker Hill and Col. Joe McPhail who flew with the Death Rattlers in the Pacific. In celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon Landing, a several esteemed astronauts and NASA leaders will appear.

To purchase tickets for the 2019 CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow, please visit the airshow's website, www.wingsoverhouston.com, or call 888-4-FLYSHOW. On airshow performance days, general admission tickets will be sold at the gate. Once inside the gates, fans are welcome to visit reserved areas and purchase upgraded seating, if any are available.

About Commemorative Air Force (CAF) Wings Over Houston Airshow

The [Commemorative Air Force \(CAF\) Wings Over Houston Airshow](#) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) community event produced by a volunteer effort of the Gulf Coast Wing, Houston Wing, and Tora! Tora! Tora! of the Commemorative Air Force, with support from the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston, Vietnam War Flight Museum, Lewis Air Legends and Collings Foundation West. The Airshow is dedicated to showcasing vintage World War II aircraft, along with the thrills of modern aviation. One of the top air shows in the United States in its category, the CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow attracts more than 90,000 festival goers throughout Houston as well as from around the globe. The 2019 Airshow benefits the CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow Scholarship Program, Exchange Club of Sugar Land, military recruiting efforts, and the Commemorative Air Force aircraft restoration and flying historical programs, in addition to numerous other nonprofit participating organizations.

About the Commemorative Air Force

The Commemorative Air Force is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Dallas, and the recognized leader of the Warbird Movement—the effort to preserve and honor American military aviation history. Since it was founded in 1957, the CAF has accrued 170 historic aircraft—the largest collection of vintage military aircraft in the world. Educational outreach programs impact an estimated 20 million Americans each year thanks to over 12,000 volunteers who support the CAF nationally and overseas. The Commemorative Air Force honors the men and women who built, maintained, and flew in American airplanes during World War II. The organization believes that is best accomplished by maintaining the airplanes in flying condition; taking the airplanes to the people, allowing them to experience the sight and sound of the aircraft in flight. For more information, visit www.commemorativeairforce.org.