

Newsweek

Must I Tip the Pilot?

Newsweek

Feb. 20, 2006 issue - Business travel in the air only seems glamorous to folks who don't do it. Upstart "boutique" airlines are working to change that: Eos and Maxjet recently began luxury service between New York to London, and Maxjet plans D.C.-to-London flights next month. But the newest trend is smaller planes and "air taxis."

Eclipse Aviation in Albuquerque, N.M., aims to begin delivering its six-seat, very light jets this summer. The \$1.4-million planes will be able to use shorter runways and cost only \$400 an hour to operate. That will enable the company's premier client, DayJet in Delray Beach, Fla., to offer \$700 taxi service between small regional airports in the Southeast before the end of the year.

Linear Air is already running air taxis between Boston and New York for similar fares. Former American Airlines CEO Robert Crandall is planning a Northeast air-taxi service as well. The skies may be getting a little bit friendlier.

—L.S.