

Niobium Coin Commemorates a First in Flight

When aviator Charles A. Lindbergh landed his custom-built Spirit of St. Louis just outside Paris, France in 1927, he ushered in a new age in flight. Lindbergh became the first person ever to successfully complete the non-stop transatlantic voyage solo. The grueling flight from New York took 33 hours 39 minutes. By comparison, today's Concorde can make the same trip in under four hours. Lindbergh's feat looms as one of the great achievements in the history of aviation.



To commemorate this accomplishment, Wah Chang in conjunction with The Great Western Mint (Provo, Utah), has created a 99.9 percent pure niobium coin, depicting Lindbergh and the Spirit of St. Louis. Great Western minted a limited-edition run of 2,390 coins. (Ordering info below.)

The Lindbergh coin is the second niobium commemorative that Wah Chang has collaborated on. In 1994, the company teamed with Liberty Mint to create a coin celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the successful Apollo 11 mission. Wah Chang plans future coins in the "First in Flight" series, including one commemorating the 100-year anniversary of the Wright Brothers flight at Kittyhawk in 1903. Next year's piece will be introduced at the Northwest Art and Air Festival (Albany, Oregon, August 2002).

Niobium, named after Niobe, the Greek Goddess of Tears, makes a beautiful, silver-colored coin. In its pure state (refined from ore), niobium is rare enough that it would be difficult to counterfeit. This unique metal and its alloys exhibit strength at extremely high temperatures, corrosion resistance, and superconductivity (the ability to pass electricity with virtually no resistance). Niobium's melting point is approximately 4260°F (2468°C), and its density is 8.57 (g/cm³).

In aerospace, niobium alloys, such as C-103, have traveled to the moon in the form of components that perform at temperatures exceeding 1,300 °C. Niobium is perhaps the most practical superconductor, enabling such technologies as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), which allows the body's soft tissues to be scanned without X-rays. In physics research, niobium is at the heart of particle accelerators/colliders, helping to further our understanding of basic matter. In the last 20 years, jewelry makers have taken advantage of a process called anodization, electrochemically adding oxide layers to the metal that trap incoming light and create a range of lustrous colors.

For more information about niobium coins or to discuss coin-related applications, contact Kirk Richardson at 541-967-6955 or e-mail kirk.richardson@wahchang.com

Ordering Info: To order the limited edition Lindbergh Nb Commemorative, contact Sheryl Renzoni at 888-926-4211 (or 541-926-4211) ext: 6280. Each coin is \$29.95 plus \$3 shipping and handling. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and American Express.

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Zirconium

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Zirconium advertising token. – 1" D × 0.056", 4.6g