COMING SOON

Republic F-47 Thunderbolt

Barrhead, Canada



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LOT	AUCTION	BRAND	CATEGORY
#214	#185	Republic Aviation Company	Aircraft

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DESCRIPTION

Collector's note: This fighter jet has been featured on CollectAirs as a special showcase piece to spark interest and c elebrate the fascination of aviation history. It is not presented as a standard active sales listing. For verified aircraft o pportunities, please browse our available listings or contact the CollectAirs team. The Republic F-47 Thunderbolt i s the post-war fighter designation for the aircraft better known in wartime as the P-47: the enormous single-seat r adial-engine fighter that earned its reputation by combining high-altitude escort work with punishing low-level g round attack. In a world that often remembers the sleeker P-51 Mustang first, the Thunderbolt remains the more m echanical, more industrial answer to the same problem: carry a great deal of engine, fuel and ammunition into h ostile airspace, then get home again. The designation covered former P-47 variants after the United States Air F orce adopted the "F" prefix; surviving examples need to be identified precisely as F-47D or F-47N before any b uyer compares specifications or restoration scope.

Alexander Kartveli's Republic design first flew in 1941, after the Army Air Corps demanded a fighter capable of m eeting the rapidly rising performance demands of the European war. Republic's answer centred on the Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp and a turbo-supercharger installation carried within a deep fuselage. It was not a li ght or delicate aeroplane, and that was rather the point. The later long-range N model introduced a redesigned, fu el-carrying wing for Pacific escort work; that distinction matters greatly in the F-47 world, because the N looks, ha ndles and supports its mission differently from earlier Thunderbolts.

Quick facts

What makes the F-47 Thunderbolt different from other warbird fighters?

The essential difference is mass used intelligently. The Thunderbolt's broad nose contains an 18-cylinder radial, w hile the fuselage behind it accommodates the ducting and turbo-supercharger system that gave the design strong h igh-altitude capability. The payoff is a fighter that feels substantial in every direction: big control surfaces, a w ide-track main undercarriage and a structure built for a demanding operational life. The penalty is equally obvious. I t is not an aircraft that rewards casual systems knowledge or improvised technique.

For a prospective owner, the attraction is not merely the aircraft's combat record. It is the engineering story. A Thunderbolt is a complex radial-engine warbird whose cooling, induction, turbocharging, fuel and hydraulic a rrangements belong to a serious military aeroplane, not a lightly adapted civilian type. The later F-47N is especially d istinctive: its larger wing, squared tips and greater internal fuel capacity were designed around long Pacific d istances rather than short-range point defence.

Powerplant, systems and technical highlights

- Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp: an air-cooled, twin-row, 18-cylinder radial engine.
- Exhaust-driven turbo-supercharger system arranged within the rear fuselage rather than immediately behind the engine.
- Four-blade constant-speed propeller installation; late F-47N references identify a Curtiss Electric unit.
- All-metal low-wing structure with retractable main gear and a retractable tailwheel.
- Late F-47N variants used a redesigned wing with increased fuel capacity and distinctive squared tips.
- The cockpit is a single-pilot military workstation, with engine, turbo-supercharger, hydraulic and fuel management deserving close attention.

How it compares

Comparison is with the North American P-51D Mustang. Figures vary by Thunderbolt subvariant, engine installation, operating rating and restoration configuration; an F-47D should not be assumed to match F-47N dimensions or performance.

Honest ownership note: An F-47 is a specialist warbird proposition, and the purchase decision begins with variant identity, documentation and engineering support rather than paint scheme. The R-2800, turbo-supercharger ducting, intercooler arrangements, hydraulic system, landing gear and original military hardware all demand a maintenance team familiar with large radial-engine aircraft and, ideally, with Thunderbolts specifically. Parts, drawings and technical publications do exist through specialist archives and restorers, but availability is not the same thing as immediate availability. A pre-purchase inspection should concentrate on airframe corrosion, wing structure, control-system condition, engine provenance and condition, turbo-system completeness, hydraulic leaks, gear operation, cooling baffles and the quality of any non-original electrical or avionics integration. Budget for research as well as spares; the paperwork can be nearly as important as the metal.

Exterior and cabin

Exterior

- Low-mounted cantilever wing, with no external bracing.
- Large circular radial-engine cowling ahead of a four-blade propeller.
- Deep, oval-section fuselage with a long rear fuselage and conventional tail.
- Retractable main gear folding into the wing and a retractable tailwheel.
- Late F-47N examples have a broader wing with square-cut tips.

Cabin and cockpit

- Single-seat cockpit positioned aft of the engine and wing leading edge.
- Late bubble-canopy Thunderbolts use a raised clear canopy over the pilot.
- Military-style instrument panel and side consoles with conspicuous engine and systems controls.
- Compact cockpit volume, designed around one pilot in parachute and flying equipment rather than passenger comfort.

Who is the F-47 Thunderbolt for?

- The experienced warbird owner drawn to radial-engine aircraft and prepared for military-grade complexity.
- The collector who values the Thunderbolt’s history as both escort fighter and fighter-bomber.
- The operator with access to proven R-2800, propeller, hydraulic and airframe support.
- The buyer who appreciates a machine with presence, systems depth and a distinctly different character from an inline-engine Mustang.

The F-47 Thunderbolt is not a casual entry into warbird ownership. Properly understood, it is a remarkable expression of Republic’s wartime engineering logic: large engine, substantial structure, serious systems and a mission profile that demanded more from both aeroplane and pilot than a Sunday afternoon usually does.

SPECIFICATIONS

General Information

Model	**Republic F-47 Thunderbolt**

Engine & Power Systems

Engine Type	**Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp air-cooled twin-row radial**
Propeller Type	**Four-blade constant-speed propeller; Curtiss Electric on late F-47N variants**

PHOTOGRAPHS

4 of 5 photographs reproduced here. The complete gallery is on the listing page.

EXTERIOR




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HOW TO BID ON THIS LOT

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