

= Regina Margherita @-@ class battleship =

The Regina Margherita class was a class of two battleships built for the Italian Regia Marina between 1898 and 1905 . The class comprised two ships : Regina Margherita and Benedetto Brin . The ships were designed by the latter 's namesake , Benedetto Brin , who died before the ships were completed . They were armed with a main battery of four 12 in (305 mm) guns and could steam at a speed of 20 knots (37 km / h ; 23 mph) .

Both ships saw extensive service with the Italian fleet for the first decade of their careers . They saw action in the Italo @-@ Turkish War of 1911 ? 1912 , where they participated in the seizure of Cyrenaica in North Africa and operations in the eastern Mediterranean Sea . They were reduced to training ships by World War I , and both ships were lost with heavy death tolls during the conflict . Benedetto Brin exploded in Brindisi in September 1915 , and Regina Margherita struck a mine and sank in December 1916 .

= = Design = =

After the negative experience with the preceding Ammiraglio di Saint Bon class , which were too weak to engage foreign battleships , and too slow to catch cruisers , the Italian navy wanted a new battleship that returned to a larger , more effective size . In particular , they wanted to be able to challenge the new Habsburg @-@ class battleships being built in neighboring Austria @-@ Hungary . They returned to the 12 @-@ inch (305 mm) gun that was standard in most other navies of the day , but sacrificed armor protection to achieve high speed . As such , the ships represented a hybrid type that merged the firepower of the slow battleships and the speed of a cruiser . Benedetto Brin initially wanted to arm the ships with only two of the 12 @-@ inch guns and twelve 8 in (203 mm) guns , but after his death , Admiral Ruggero Alfredo Micheli altered the design to double the number of 12 @-@ inch guns , at the expense of eight of the medium @-@ caliber pieces .

= = = General characteristics and machinery = = =

The Regina Margherita @-@ class ships were 130 meters (430 ft) long at the waterline and 138 @. @ 65 m (454 @. @ 9 ft) long overall . They had a beam of 23 @. @ 84 m (78 @. @ 2 ft) ; Regina Margherita had a draft of 8 @. @ 81 m (28 @. @ 9 ft) , while Benedetto Brin drew slightly more , at 9 m (30 ft) . They displaced 13 @, @ 215 metric tons (13 @, @ 006 long tons ; 14 @, @ 567 short tons) at normal loading and at full combat load , Regina Margherita displaced 14 @, @ 093 t (13 @, @ 870 long tons ; 15 @, @ 535 short tons) while Benedetto Brin , slightly heavier , displaced 14 @, @ 737 t (14 @, @ 504 long tons ; 16 @, @ 245 short tons) . Their hulls were equipped with a double bottom . The ships were built with a ram bow and had a raised forecastle deck . They had two masts , both with fighting tops ; the foremast was located directly behind the conning tower and bridge . The ships had a crew of 812 ? 900 officers and enlisted men .

The ships ' propulsion system consisted of two triple expansion engines . Steam for the engines was provided by twenty @-@ eight coal @-@ fired water @-@ tube Niclausse boilers in Regina Margherita . Benedetto Brin meanwhile was equipped with the same number of Belleville boilers . The lead ship 's engines were rated at 21 @, @ 790 indicated horsepower (16 @, @ 250 kW) , while Benedetto Brin 's were slightly less efficient , at 20 @, @ 475 ihp (15 @, @ 268 kW) . The two ships had a top speed of 20 kn (37 km / h ; 23 mph) and a range of approximately 10 @, @ 000 nautical miles (19 @, @ 000 km ; 12 @, @ 000 mi) at 10 kn (19 km / h ; 12 mph) .

= = = Armament and armor = = =

The ships were armed with four 12 in (305 mm) 40 @-@ caliber guns placed in two twin gun turrets , one forward and one aft . They were also equipped with four 8 in (203 mm) 40 @-@ cal. guns in casemates in the superstructure , and twelve 6 in (152 mm) 40 @-@ cal. guns , also in casemates in the side of the hull . Close @-@ range defense against torpedo boats was provided by

a battery of twenty 3 in (76 mm) 40 @-@ cal. guns . The ships also carried a pair of 47 mm (1 @.@ 9 in) guns , two 37 mm (1 @.@ 5 in) guns , and two 10 mm (0 @.@ 39 in) Maxim guns . The Regina Margherita @-@ class battleships were also equipped with four 17 @.@ 7 in (450 mm) torpedo tubes placed in the hull below the waterline .

The ships of the Regina Margherita class were protected with Harvey steel manufactured in Terni . The main belt was 6 in (152 mm) thick , and the deck was 3 @.@ 1 in (79 mm) thick . The conning tower and the casemate guns were also protected by 6 in of armor plating . The main battery guns had stronger armor protection , at 8 in (203 mm) thick . Coal was used extensively in the protection scheme , including a layer intended to protect the ships ' internals from underwater damage .

= = Ships of the class = =

= = Service history = =

Both Regina Margherita and Benedetto Brin served in the active duty squadron for the first few years of their careers , and participated in the peacetime routine of fleet training . Regina Margherita frequently served as the fleet flagship before the completion of the new Regina Elena @-@ class battleships . On 29 September 1911 , Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire , starting the Italo @-@ Turkish War . The two ships saw action during the war in the 3rd Division in the 2nd Squadron . Benedetto Brin took part in the attack on Tripoli in October 1911 , and both were involved in the campaign to seize Rhodes in the eastern Mediterranean Sea .

Italy initially remained neutral during World War I , but by 1915 , had been convinced by the Triple Entente to enter the war against Germany and Austria @-@ Hungary . Both the Italians and Austro @-@ Hungarians adopted a cautious fleet policy in the confined waters of the Adriatic Sea , and so the two Regina Margherita @-@ class battleships did not see action . Benedetto Brin served as a training ship based in Brindisi until she was destroyed in an internal explosion in the harbor on 27 September 1915 with heavy loss of life ; 454 men of the ship 's crew died in the explosion . Regina Margherita , also serving as a training ship , served for somewhat longer , until she struck a mine laid by the German submarine SM UC @-@ 14 on the night of 11 ? 12 December 1916 . Some 675 men were killed in the sinking .