

= Italian ironclad Italia =

Italia was an Italian ironclad battleship built for the Italian Regia Marina (Royal Navy), the lead ship of the Italia class . She and her single sister ship , Lepanto , had lengthy construction times . Italia was laid down in January 1876 , launched in September 1880 , and completed in October 1885 . She was armed with a main battery of four 17 in (432 mm) guns mounted in a central barbette and was capable of a top speed of 17 @. @ 8 knots (33 @. @ 0 km / h ; 20 @. @ 5 mph) . Unusually , for ships of that era , Italia had an armored deck rather than the typical belt armor .

Italia spent the first two decades of her career in the Active and Reserve Squadrons , where she took part in annual training maneuvers with the rest of the fleet . She was withdrawn from service in 1905 for a significant modernization . Upon returning to service in 1909 , Italia was employed as a training ship . During the Italo @-@ Turkish War of 1911 ? 12 , the ship provided fire support to Italian troops defending Tripoli in Libya . She was used as a floating battery at Brindisi after Italy entered World War I in 1915 . The ship was rebuilt as a grain carrier in December 1917 ? June 1918 . Italia served in this capacity for only a short time , being stricken in November 1921 and then scrapped .

= = Design = =

Italia was 124 @. @ 7 meters (409 ft) long overall and had a beam of 22 @. @ 54 m (74 @. @ 0 ft) and an average draft of 8 @. @ 75 m (28 @. @ 7 ft) . She displaced 13 @, @ 678 metric tons (13 @, @ 462 long tons ; 15 @, @ 077 short tons) normally and up to 15 @, @ 407 t (15 @, @ 164 long tons ; 16 @, @ 983 short tons) at full load . Her propulsion system consisted of four compound steam engines each driving a single screw propeller , with steam supplied by eight coal @-@ fired , oval boilers and sixteen fire @-@ tube boilers . Her engines produced a top speed of 17 @. @ 8 knots (33 @. @ 0 km / h ; 20 @. @ 5 mph) at 11 @, @ 986 indicated horsepower (8 @, @ 938 kW) . She could steam for 5 @, @ 000 nautical miles (9 @, @ 300 km ; 5 @, @ 800 mi) at a speed of 10 knots (19 km / h ; 12 mph) . She had a crew of 669 ? 701 officers and men .

Italia was armed with a main battery of four 17 in (432 mm) guns , mounted in two pairs en echelon in a central barbette . Three guns were 26 @-@ caliber guns , while the fourth was a slightly longer 27 @-@ caliber version . She carried a secondary battery of seven 5 @. @ 9 in (150 mm) 26 @-@ caliber guns and four 4 @. @ 7 in (119 mm) 23 @-@ caliber guns . As was customary for capital ships of the period , she carried four 14 in (356 mm) torpedo tubes . Unlike other ships built at the time , Italia dispensed with vertical belt armor . Her designer , Benedetto Brin , believed that contemporary steel alloys could not effectively defeat armor @-@ piercing shells of the day , and so he discarded it completely . Italia was instead protected by an armored deck that was 4 in (102 mm) thick . Her conning tower was armored with 4 in of steel plate . The barbette had 19 in (483 mm) of steel armor .

= = Service history = =

Italia was under construction for nearly 10 years . She was laid down at Regio Cantiere di Castellammare di Stabia shipyard on 3 January 1876 , originally under the name Stella D 'Italia . She then spent over four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half years on the building ways and was launched on 29 September 1880 . She was not completed for another five years , her construction finally being finished on 16 October 1885 . She nonetheless was completed 22 months before her sister Lepanto , which took almost 11 years to build . After Italia was completed , several smaller caliber guns were added , including two 75 mm (3 @. @ 0 in) guns , twelve 57 mm (2 @. @ 2 in) 40 @-@ caliber guns , twelve 37 mm (1 @. @ 5 in) revolver cannon , and two machine guns .

Italia took part in the annual 1888 fleet maneuvers , along with the ironclads Caio Duilio , Lepanto , Enrico Dandolo , and San Martino , a protected cruiser , four torpedo cruisers , and numerous smaller vessels . The maneuvers consisted of close @-@ order drills and a simulated attack on and defense of La Spezia . Later that year , the ship was present during a naval review held for the

German Kaiser Wilhelm II during a visit to Italy . Italia served as the flagship of the 2nd Division of the Active Squadron during the 1893 fleet maneuvers , along with the ironclad Andrea Doria , the torpedo cruiser Iride , and four torpedo boats . During the maneuvers , which lasted from 6 August to 5 September , the ships of the Active Squadron simulated a French attack on the Italian fleet .

In 1895 , Italia and Lepanto were assigned to the Reserve Squadron , along with the ironclads Ruggiero di Lauria and Re Umberto . Italia was not assigned to either the Active or Reserve Squadrons in 1898 , though she took part in the annual fleet maneuvers that year . In the early 1890s , the Italian Navy considered rebuilding Italia along the same lines as Enrico Dandolo , which had received new , quick @-@ firing 10 @-@ inch (250 mm) guns in place of her slow 17 @-@ inch guns . Italia and her sister were to have their guns replaced with new 13 @.@ 4 @-@ inch (340 mm) guns , but by 1902 this plan had been abandoned as too costly .

In 1905 , Italia went into drydock for a major reconstruction that lasted into 1908 . Her six funnels were reduced to four , and a second mast was erected . One of her 5 @.@ 9 in guns , six of the 57 mm guns , and eight of the 37 mm revolver cannon were removed . After returning to service in 1909 , she served as a torpedo training ship ; she served in this capacity through 1910 . At the start of the Italo @-@ Turkish War of 1911 ? 12 , Italia was assigned to the 5th Division of the Italian fleet , along with her sister Lepanto and Enrico Dandolo . In December 1911 , Italia and Lepanto were sent to Tripoli , replacing the three Re Umberto @-@ class ironclads , to support the Italian garrison that had captured the city . The two ships were sent in large part because the Italian Navy had a large stockpile of 17 in shells .

She was employed as a training ship for petty officers in 1912 , and by 1914 she was stationed in Taranto as a guard ship . Italia was laid up on 1 June 1914 and stricken from the naval register three days later . Despite having all of her secondary guns removed , the ship was towed to Brindisi on 20 April 1915 , shortly before Italy entered World War I , to defend the harbor . She was formally returned to the naval register on 23 May , the day Italy declared war on Austria Hungary , and was recommissioned on 1 June as a " first class auxiliary " . She remained at Brindisi until 16 December 1917 , when she was taken to La Spezia for conversion into a grain carrier , retaining only two of her 4 @.@ 7 in guns . She was transferred initially to the Ministry of Transport on 1 June but was quickly reassigned to the State Railways on 27 July 1919 . She remained there briefly , returning to the Navy on 13 January 1921 . Italia was finally stricken on 16 November 1921 and subsequently broken up for scrap .