

= Partenope @-@ class cruiser =

The Partenope class was a group of eight torpedo cruisers built for the Italian Regia Marina ( Royal Navy ) in the 1880s and 1890s . The class comprised Partenope , Minerva , Euridice , Urania , Iride , Aretusa , Caprera , and Calatafimi . Based on the earlier cruiser Tripoli , the Partenope class represented a temporary embrace of the Jeune École , which emphasized the use of cheap torpedo @-@ armed vessels as a means to defeat the much more expensive ironclad battleships of the day . To fulfill their intended role , the vessels were armed with five or six 450 mm ( 17 @.@ 7 in ) torpedo tubes .

The ships of the class primarily served in the main Italian fleet throughout their careers . Their time with the fleet was spent conducting training exercises , along with occasional travels to foreign countries . In late 1900s , Partenope and Minerva were converted into minelayers and Euridice and Calatafimi were sold for scrap . Several of the vessels saw action during the Italo @-@ Turkish War of 1911 ? 12 , primarily conducting shore bombardments in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula . Three more vessels ? Urania , Aretusa , and Caprera ? were sold in the later stages of the war or shortly thereafter . Partenope laid minefields in the Adriatic Sea after Italy entered World War I in 1915 , and was later sunk by a German U @-@ boat in March 1918 . Minerva and Iride survived the war and were sold for scrap in 1921 and 1920 , respectively .

= = Design = =

The design for the Partenope class was prepared by Engineering Inspector Carlo Vigna , and was based on the earlier torpedo cruiser Tripoli , the first modern vessel of the type built by Italy . The development of torpedo cruisers in Italy in the mid @-@ 1880s represented a shift away from the emphasis on large capital ships that had been built for the previous decade and toward the ideas of the Jeune École , which emphasized small , fast , torpedo @-@ armed vessels that could damage or destroy the much larger battleships at a fraction of the cost . The Partenope class were followed by the Agordat class , the last class of torpedo cruisers built by Italy .

= = = General characteristics and machinery = = =

The ships of the Partenope class were 70 meters ( 230 ft ) long between perpendiculars and 73 @.@ 1 m ( 239 ft 10 in ) long overall . They had a beam of 8 @.@ 22 m ( 27 ft 0 in ) and an average draft of 3 @.@ 48 m ( 11 ft 5 in ) . They displaced from 821 to 931 metric tons ( 808 to 916 long tons ; 905 to 1 @,@ 026 short tons ) normally . Their hulls were steel @-@ built . The ships had a crew of between 96 ? 121 . They were initially fitted with a fore and aft sailing rig with two masts , but the rigging was later removed . The ships were protected by an armored deck that was up to 1 @.@ 6 in ( 41 mm ) thick ; their conning tower was armored with the same thickness of steel plate .

Their propulsion system consisted of a pair of horizontal triple @-@ expansion steam engines , each driving a single screw propeller . Steam was supplied by four coal @-@ fired locomotive boilers that were trunked into two widely spaced funnels . Specific figures for each ship 's engine performance have not survived , but the ships of the class had top speeds of 18 @.@ 1 to 20 @.@ 8 knots ( 33 @.@ 5 to 38 @.@ 5 km / h ; 20 @.@ 8 to 23 @.@ 9 mph ) from 3 @,@ 884 to 4 @,@ 422 indicated horsepower ( 2 @,@ 896 to 3 @,@ 297 kW ) . The ships had a cruising radius of about 1 @,@ 800 nautical miles ( 3 @,@ 300 km ; 2 @,@ 100 mi ) at a speed of 10 knots ( 19 km / h ; 12 mph ) .

Partenope and Minerva were reboilered in 1906 ? 08 and 1909 ? 10 , respectively , with new oil @-@ fired models . Partenope 's performance after the refit was 17 @.@ 05 knots ( 31 @.@ 58 km / h ; 19 @.@ 62 mph ) from 2 @,@ 481 ihp ( 1 @,@ 850 kW ) , while Minerva was faster , at 18 @.@ 28 knots ( 33 @.@ 85 km / h ; 21 @.@ 04 mph ) from 3 @,@ 524 ihp ( 2 @,@ 628 kW ) .

= = = Armament = = =

The Partenope @-@ class cruisers , with the exception of Caprera , were armed with a main battery of one 120 mm ( 4 @.@ 7 in ) 40 @-@ caliber ( cal . ) gun and six 57 mm ( 2 @.@ 2 in ) 43 @-@ cal. guns mounted singly . They were also equipped with three 37 mm ( 1 @.@ 5 in ) 20 @-@ cal. guns in single mounts . Caprera instead had two 120 mm guns , four 57 mm guns , and two of the 37 mm weapons . The ships ' primary offensive weapon was their 450 mm ( 17 @.@ 7 in ) torpedo tubes ; Partenope and Caprera had five tubes , while the rest of the class had six .

During their refits in the late 1900s , Partenope and Minerva were converted into minelayers . Their armament was revised significantly , and now consisted of a pair of 3 in ( 76 mm ) guns , four 57 mm guns , and two 37 mm guns . Partenope was equipped to carry sixty naval mines , with a bank of thirty mines on a platform on each side of the ship ; the details of Minerva 's mine handling equipment and storage are unknown .

= = Ships = =

= = Service history = =

For much of the ships ' careers , they were assigned to the main Italian fleet , where they were frequently occupied with conducting training exercises . These exercises frequently gamed attacks by the French fleet , such as the maneuvers conducted in 1893 , which simulated a French attack on Naples . In 1895 , Partenope joined a squadron that visited Great Britain , and later that year took part in an international naval demonstration off Crete in an attempt to defuse tensions between Greece and the Ottoman Empire . Euridice took part in a similar demonstration , again off Crete , in 1897 ; this was a reaction to the Greco @-@ Turkish War that had broken out that year . Between 1906 and 1908 , Partenope was converted into a minelayer , and Minerva underwent a similar conversion in 1909 ? 1910 . Two ships , Calatafimi and Euridice , were discarded in early 1907 .

During the Italo @-@ Turkish War , Partenope operated off Libya , bombarding Ottoman troops and supporting Italian forces . Iride escorted a troopship convoy to North Africa and then conducted shore bombardments . Aretusa was stationed in the Red Sea at the outbreak of the war , and she briefly engaged the Ottoman cruiser ' . Aretusa , joined by Caprera in early 1912 , thereafter participated in bombardment and blockade operations against Ottoman ports in the area . Minerva was assigned to the 4th Division at the time , but did not see action during the war . Three more members of the class were sold for scrap after the end of the war , with Urania and Aretusa being stricken in 1912 and Caprera being discarded in early 1913 .

Partenope and Minerva laid a series of defensive minefields in the Adriatic Sea after Italy entered World War I in 1915 . They did not see action for much of the rest of the war , owing to the cautious strategies adopted by Italy and its enemy across the Adriatic , Austria @-@ Hungary . On 24 March 1918 , the German U @-@ boat UC @-@ 67 torpedoed and sank Partenope north of Bizerte , Tunisia . Iride and Minerva survived the war and were discarded in December 1920 and May 1921 , respectively .