




*Ambasciata d'Italia
Copenaghen*

ITALIAN NAVY SCHOOL SHIP “AMERIGO VESPUCCI”

FACT SHEET

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| Launch | 22 nd February 1931 (put into service in July 1931) |
| Building place: | Castellammare di Stabia, Italy |
| Displacement | 4.146 tons |
| Length | 82,4 m |
| Width | 15,5 m |
| Draught | 7 m |
| Sailage | 2.100 m ² |
| Masts | 3 masts respectively 50/54/43 m high |
| Engines | 2 E Fiat B-306-ESS + 1 E Marelli |
| Cruising power | 2.000 HP (1.471 kW) |
| Top speed | 10 kn |
| Autonomy | 5.500 nm / 6,5 kn |
| Crew | 16 officers + 72 non-commissioned officers + 190 sailors |
| Motto | <i>“Non chi comincia, ma quel che persevera”</i> <i>(“Not who begins, but he who perseveres”)</i> |
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| Name and | During the second half of the 1920s, the Italian Army set out to |

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| History | <p>renew the vessels used for the training of its Academy Cadets. Although the new fleet was based on an increasingly advanced technology, the Navy General Staff found that the best way to become familiar with the maritime environment was on board a sailing ship which – being more susceptible to the impact of the sea and the wind – would require a vaster knowledge of these forces of nature.</p> <p>In 1925, Minister for the Navy, Admiral Giuseppe Sirianni, therefore decided that two new school ships were to be constructed. The project was put into the hands of Lieutenant Colonel Francesco Rotundi from the Engineer Corps, whose designs were inspired by the warships of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth Century. The first of the two new vessels, the “Cristoforo Colombo”, was put into service at the beginning of 1928 and served as a School Ship until 1943. Unfortunately, after the end of the Second World War, it was handed over to the Soviet Union as compensation for war damages.</p> <p>The construction of “Amerigo Vespucci” – which bears the name of the famous navigator in whose honour the New World was named America – began on 12th of May 1930, at the Royal Shipyard of Castellammare di Stabia. The ship was launched on 22nd of February 1931, and put into service in July the same year. On 4th of July 1931, under the command of Commodore Augusto Radicati di Marmorito, the ship embarked on its first training campaign in Northern Europe.</p> |
| The previous “Amerigo Vespucci” | <p>The current “Amerigo Vespucci” had a predecessor. The former “Amerigo Vespucci” was driven by motor power as well as by wind power, and the appearance was quite similar to that of its successor, although on a smaller scale. The former “Amerigo Vespucci” served as a Royal Academy Cadets School Ship from 1893 to 1927, when it was disarmed and transferred to Venice in order to be used as a school for the education of sailors’ orphans.</p> |
| The ship and its features | <p>Today, the “Amerigo Vespucci” is the oldest ship in the fleet of Italian Navy. She is a full rigged, three masted steel hull, 70 metres long, with an overall length of 101 metres including the bowsprit, and a maximum width of 15,56 metres.</p> <p>The three steel masts are 50, 54, and 43 metres high, and carry sails that total 2.824 m². The “Amerigo Vespucci” has 26 sails – square sails, staysails and jibs, all of which are traditional canvas sails. The rig, some 30 km of rope, entirely uses traditional hemp ropes, too.</p> <p>The hull is painted black with two white stripes in reference to the two gun decks of the original ships the design is based on, but of course she carries no guns. The deck planks are of teak wood and need to be replaced every three years. Bow and stern are decorated with intricate ornaments; she has a life-size figurehead of “Amerigo Vespucci”. The ship has two diesel electric auxiliary engines and a twin steering. When carrying cadets, she is usually steered at the manual stern rudder station, which is operated by four steering wheels with two men each. At other times, the hydraulically assisted steering on the bridge is used. Except for the anchor winch, the winches aboard are man-powered. The bridge is equipped with sophisticated modern electronic navigation instruments.</p> <p>The standard crew of the “Amerigo Vespucci” comprises 278 members: 16 officers, 70 non-commissioned officers and 190</p> |

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| | coxswains and privates. During the training campaigns, when she embarks the midshipmen of the Naval Academy, there is a total crew of approximately 480 persons aboard. |
| Activities | <p>Since the beginning of its service, the ship has been used for training purposes (except during 1940, due to the war events, and in 1964, 1973 and 1997, due to maintenance), mainly in favour of the Naval Academy Cadets.</p> <p>Besides numerous short campaigns in the Mediterranean sea, the “Amerigo Vespucci” has carried out a total of 72 training campaigns with the 1st Class of Cadets of the Naval Academy, of which 38 in Northern Europe, 4 in the Eastern Atlantic, 7 in North America, 1 in South America and 2 on the occasion of the unique circumnavigation of the world, carried out between May 2002 and September 2003. During the same period, the ship has been involved in different activities related to the America’s Cup in New Zealand.</p> |