

# Rio De Janeiro Maru.

Type of ship; Passenger/cargo, 1940 converted to "submarine tender", 1943 changed to cargo and troop transport ship. Military designation; From 1940, Submarine tender. From 1943 Naval transport vessel.

Length: 140.5 m (461 feet).  
Wide: 18, 9 m (62 ft).  
Draught: 7.92 meters (26 feet).  
Tonnage: 9626 ton.  
Motor: 2 x Diesel engine.  
Engine power: 1503 hk.

Max speed:  
Service speed: CN.  
Crew: 150 &  
1140pasagere.  
Construction year:  
1938.  
Build No.: 45067.

Shipyard: Mitsubishi Zosenho,  
Nagasaki.  
Delivered: 15/05/1930  
Call sign: JISC.  
Owner: Osaka Shosen Kaisha,  
Osaka.  
Home port: Osaka.



Rio De Janeiro Maru was built by Osaka Shosen Kaisha, was a large and respected passenger shipping company from Osaka, founded in 1884. They had no less than 20 diesel powered passenger ships, as well as 26 with steam engines. They sailed on the company's route network, which basically connected Japan with the rest of the world.

The construction of Rio De Janeiro Maru was started 16<sup>th</sup> May 1929, she was launched 19<sup>th</sup> November 1929 and delivered 15<sup>th</sup> May 1930. She was built as a combined cargo and passenger ship, which was very typical of that time. She had a crew of 150 and could carry up to 1140 passengers.

Rio De Janeiro Maru sailed on the company's routes to the outbreak of WW II, when the Imperial Navy requisitioned her. Rio De Janeiro Maru was now got rebuilt to be a submarine tender (a ship that is a floating warehouse for the U-boats). Among other things, she got 2 pcs 6" (15cm/50-cal) guns, one mounted on the deck and one on the poop deck.

Rio De Janeiro had a sister ship, who became Buenos Aires Maru.

Buenos Aires Maru was too requisitioned by the Imperial Navy, but was converted into a hospital ship.

Throughout her duty in the Navy, Rio De Janeiro Maru was engaged in the Pacific and "East India" area.

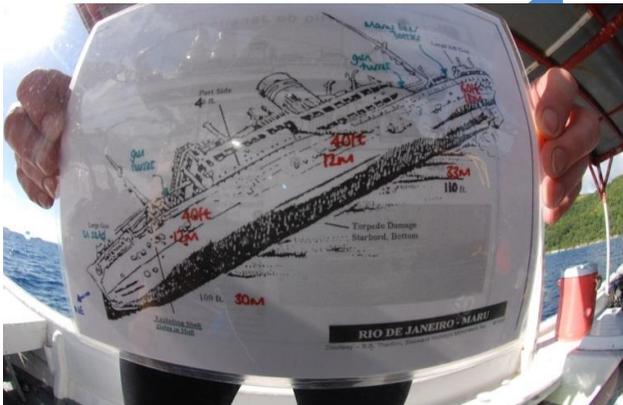
Rio De Janeiro Maru saw her share of "action" and was attacked several times, but without massive damage. She was, however, hit by a torpedo once, which caused a bit longer (about a month) repair in Hong Kong.

17<sup>th</sup> February 1944 Rio De Janeiro Maru was attacked by American aircrafts during the operation "Hailstone" while she was unloading her cargo of troops and ordinary war material.

After one of the assault waves which hit Truk Lagoon on 17. February 1944 she was reported hit by bombs and burning.

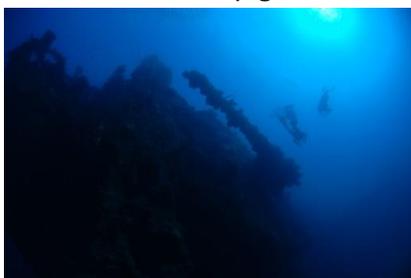
On 18<sup>th</sup> February 1944 U.S. military intercepted a Japanese radio communication message that stated that Rio De Janeiro was hit 17<sup>th</sup> February 1944 at 1200, caught fire and sank 18<sup>th</sup> February 1944 at 0030. The message also stated that all secret papers had been destroyed by the fire and there was no danger they would fall into enemy (United States) hands.

Diving Rio De Janeiro Maru:



Today she is approximately 400 m off the east coast of the island of Uman. The maximum depth is 36 m. Since Rio De Janeiro Maru lies on her starboard side, one meets the port side at a depth of 12 meters.

A typical dive begins by swimming down to the port propeller, located at a depth of approx. 16m, then the trip goes around the stern, where one still



underneath the fouling can see the name that has been welded to the stern. The dive continues around the stern to the Poop Deck (aft deck), where you can give your greetings to the large 6 "cannon.



Then we headed to the cargo hole no. 4 where at the bottom of the cargo space is a lot of beer or sake bottles, still in their wooden boxes.



Further it went up along the deck, passing hole no. 3 and we come to the accommodation. By the chimney, which is still in its place, through a "sky light", one can enter into the engine room. Because the wreck lies on its side, it is relatively easy to get down in the engine room, since you stay more or less at the same depth all the time. In the engine room there is much to look at, because everything is still there. All valves,

pressure gauges, contacts, etc. are in their places. You can actually swim through the engine room and out in the accommodation and get out on the forward part of the accommodation at the cargo hole no. 2. Some the other divers on our dive did that. As I had the large camera with me and it would be a bit tight, I chose to turn and swim back out through the sky-light and meet the other when they came out on the foredeck. This was, of course, agreed with the dive guide at the briefing before the dive.



Not much time was left when we all again were gathered in front of the accommodation, not much time was left before we had to begin the ascent; we used it to swim around in the port side deck alleyway which is located at 12-15 m. As well as studying all those strange corals, fish and other creatures that was on the shipside.



As the pressure in the tanks began to get low, it was time to head for the surface. The dive center, Truk Stop Dive center, which we dived with demanded that we as a minimum stopped 2 min. at 9 m, 3 min. at 6 m. and 10 min. at 3-4.5 m. If not our computers required more decompression. This was in order to avoid decompression sickness. After this had been introduced, the Centre had not had any with decompression sickness, not even "skin itching".



The bow of the Rio De Janeiro Maru do not get dived as much as the middle and aft part, as there's not as much to see, but is in my opinion worth a dive anyway.

At approx. 4 m a "deco bar" was suspended, which we could use to hold on to during the long and last deco stop. However, this was too much for one of the guys who just had to ride it, as it had been a kids swing ☺



SMC