



*Guest Senior Correspondent PDLeF, San Diego CA:* I'm a retired Navy vet, and enjoy seagoing history. Here are my favorite European warship museums:

HMS Victory, Portsmouth UK: Commanded by the legendary Admiral Horatio Nelson, the HMS Victory was his flagship during the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar. Restored and still manned by a Royal Navy crew, she's berthed at the Portsmouth Naval Base on England's South Coast.

There are year-round programs aboard HMS Victory, allowing visitors to experience how British sailors lived and fought more than 200 years ago. With a tour group, I saw crew living quarters, armaments, the cabin where Admiral Nelson died and many other areas of the ship.

Vasa, Stockholm, Sweden: Launched in 1628, but within a few minutes on her maiden voyage, the poorly-constructed Vasa sank in Stockholm Harbor. The Vasa would have been lost forever, but in 1961 she was brought ashore to become a maritime museum.

She looks almost intact, and today offers a virtual window into the history of 17th Century warships when Sweden was a major naval power. Visitors see many artifacts, including clothing, coins tools, and several of the warship's cannon.

G Averof, Athens, Greece: The Greek battleship G Averof was built in 1911, and after service in two World Wars, is now a museum at the Marina Trokadero in Athens. She participated in naval battles in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, and in World War I operations in 1917 and 1918. When the Germans occupied Greece in 1940, the Georgios Averof escaped to join Allied forces. She was the first warship into Athens Harbor in 1944 when Greece was liberated.

Mary Rose, Portsmouth UK: She is a fully-restored warship built in the early 16th Century, also docked at the British Navy Base in Portsmouth. She was a huge ocean-going fortress of her time, sailing out with 70 cannon and a crew of 200 sailors and 185 Marines.

The Mary Rose won her first sea battle outside France's Brest Harbor in 1512. After other wartime ventures, the warship sank, possibly caused by a huge internal gunpowder explosion in a 1545 action against the French fleet.

After many explorations, the Mary Rose was raised in 1982, along with thousands of remnants. Current restoration continues to return the favorite ship of King Henry VIII to her original condition.

Aurora, St. Petersburg, Russia: The Imperial Russian cruiser was commissioned in 1903. After action in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 and in World War I, she was then taken over by Russian revolutionaries to serve in the Soviet Navy.

The Aurora participated in World War II, providing artillery and anti-aircraft protection for her home port, then renamed Leningrad. She was sunk by German bombers in 1942, but raised several years later. After a decade as a naval training ship, the Aurora became a St. Petersburg museum.