

Costa Concordia disaster



From Wikipedia

The Costa Concordia disaster occurred when the Italian cruise ship Costa Concordia hit a reef and partially sank on 13 January 2012 off the Italian coast. The vessel ran aground at Isola del Giglio, Tuscany, resulting in the evacuation of 4,212 people on board. At least six people including five passengers and a crew

member died, sixty-four others were injured, two passengers and a crewmember trapped below deck have been rescued, and 15 are still unaccounted for. The captain and first officer have been arrested on suspicion of involuntary manslaughter after sailing much closer to the shore than allowed. The Costa Concordia entered service for Costa Cruises in July

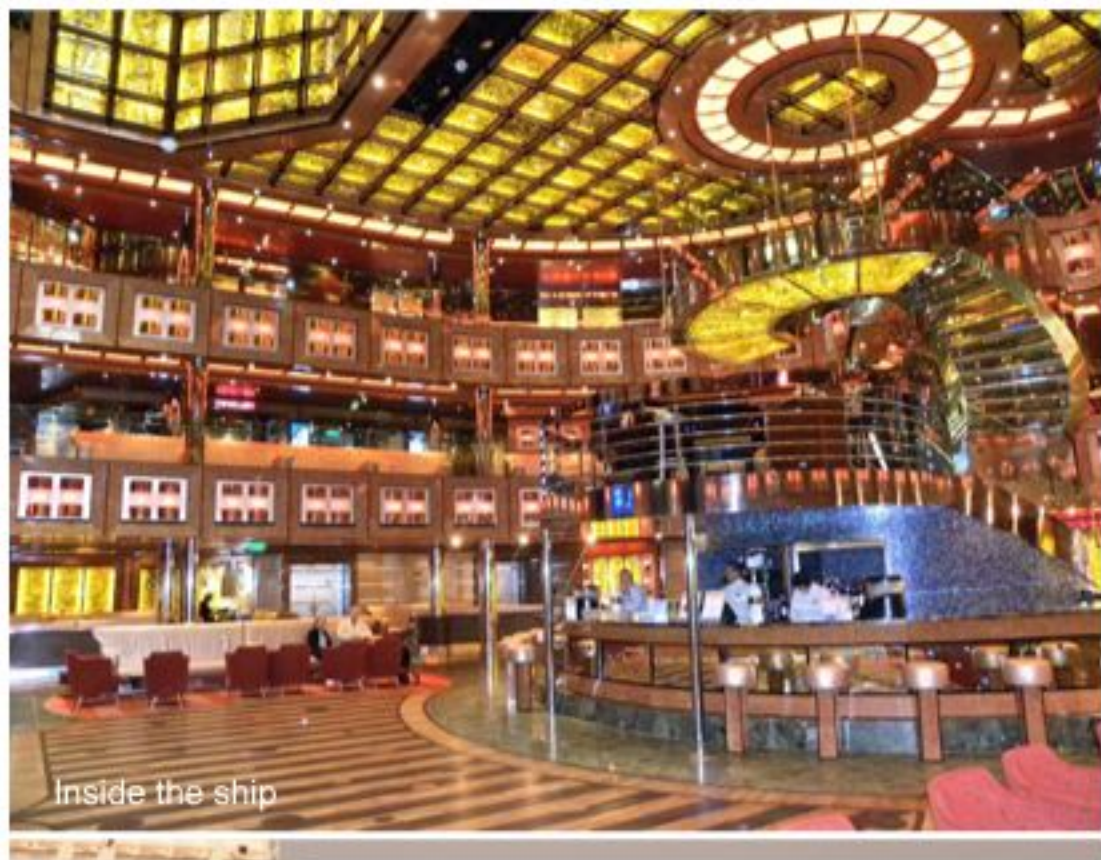
2006 as the largest ship built in Italy at the time, measuring 114,500 GT, 290.2 metres (952 ft) long, and costing €450 million (US\$569 million). It is the largest passenger shipwreck in history. Industry analysts believe the vessel is a constructive total loss.

Shipwreck

On 13 January 2012, Costa Concordia ran aground on a reef at around 21:30 local time off Isola

del Giglio, having left Civitavecchia earlier that evening at the beginning of a seven-day cruise sailing to Savona and then visiting Marseille, Barcelona, Palma, Tunis, and Palermo. According to the local coastguard, 3,206 passengers and 1,023 crew members were on board at the time.

On 15 January La Repubblica reported that the captain did not mention any mechanical problems



Inside the ship



but had stated that they were 300 metres (330 yd) from the rocks (i.e., about the length of the vessel) and that they hit a rock that was not marked on nautical charts. This reef was about 800 metres

(870 yd) south of the entrance to the harbour of Giglio. The vessel continued for approximately another 1,000 metres (1,100 yd) until just north of the harbour entrance. The vessel then turned



in an attempt to get close to the harbour. This turn shifted the centre of gravity to the starboard side of the ship, and it listed over to that side initially by about 20°, finally coming to rest in about 25 fathoms (150 ft; 46 m) of water at an angle of heel of about 80°. According to the local coast guard, the ship has a 50-metre (160 ft) gash on her port side,[13] with a large rock embedded in the ship's hull.

A local official said the ship deviated from her expected course, possibly to give passengers a view of Giglio Porto on the island's east coast. The La Stampa newspaper published a letter from

August 2011 in which Porto Giglio's mayor Sergio Ortelli thanked the Concordia's captain for the "incredible spectacle" of a previous close pass. "It's a very nice show to see, the ship all lit up when you see it from the land. This time round it went wrong," Mayor Ortellei said. Costa Cruises confirmed that the course taken was "not a defined route for passing Giglio." The ship lost cabin electrical power shortly after the initial collision. The webcam for the ship shows the last update on 13 January at 20:31 GMT.

Passengers were in the dining hall when there was a sudden, loud bang, which a crew member





© Reuters



(speaking over the intercom) ascribed to an "electrical failure". "We told the guests everything was okay and under control and we tried to stop them panicking," cabin steward Deodato Ordonez recalled. It was about an hour before a general emergency was announced, he said. "The boat started shaking. The noise – there was panic, like in a film, dishes crashing to the floor, people

running, people falling down the stairs," said survivor Fulvio Rocci. Those on board said the ship suddenly tilted to the port side. Passengers were later advised to put on their life-jackets. When the ship later turned around, attempting to head back to the harbour, it began to list approximately 20° to the starboard side, the change creating problems in launching the lifeboats. The president of Costa

Cruises, Gianni Onorato, said normal lifeboat evacuation had become "almost impossible" because the ship had listed so quickly.

In a press release dated 15 January, Costa Cruises stated, in part: "We are working with investigators to find out precisely what went wrong aboard the Costa Concordia. While the investigation is ongoing, preliminary indications are that there may have been significant human error on the part of the ship's Master, Captain Francesco Schettino, which resulted in these grave consequences. The route of the vessel appears to have been too close to the shore, and the Captain's judgment in handling the emergency appears to have not

followed standard Costa procedures." This contrasts with statements by the captain and his representatives. Speaking on Italian television, the ship's captain insisted the rocks that the Concordia hit were not marked on his map. "On the nautical chart, it was marked just as water," Schettino said, adding that the ship was about 300 meters from shore. But Nicastro, the Coast Guard spokesman, insisted that the waters where the ship ran aground were well-mapped. Local fishermen say the island coast of Giglio is known for its rocky sea floor. "Every danger in this area is on the nautical chart," Nicastro said. "This is a place where a lot of people come for diving and sailing. ... All the dangers are known.

Costa Concordia during the night



Costa
Concordia
Loading Up



Evacuation

Some passengers had jumped into the water to swim to shore, while others, ready to evacuate the vessel, were delayed by crew members up to 45 minutes, as they resisted immediately lowering the lifeboats. Three people reportedly drowned after jumping overboard, and another seven were critically injured. Local fire chief Ennio Aquilino said his men, "plucked one hundred people from the water and saved around sixty others who were trapped in the

boat."

Julian Bray, travel broadcaster and writer, reported: "Twelve hours later, a dozen passengers remain unaccounted for and many lifeboats (capacity 150 each) were not deployed due to the initial list and the subsequent rolling over of the vessel onto her side. Others were evacuated and taken to shelter on the island. The crew remained aboard and the shipping line initially insisted there was no danger of sinking." The first daylight pictures showed the ship

lying on her starboard side and half submerged, not far outside Giglio Harbour. Five helicopters from the Coast Guard, Navy and Air Force took turns airlifting survivors still aboard and ferrying them to safety.

On 14 January divers searched the waters until 18:00 and stopped for the night. Divers and firefighters continued to search for survivors who may be trapped in the ship, and rescued a Korean newlywed couple trapped in a cabin two decks above the Mediterranean water line, and a crewman with a

broken leg. One diver stated that in their rescue process, they would find a path into the ship and tie down obstacles such as mattresses, before making noise to alert trapped people.

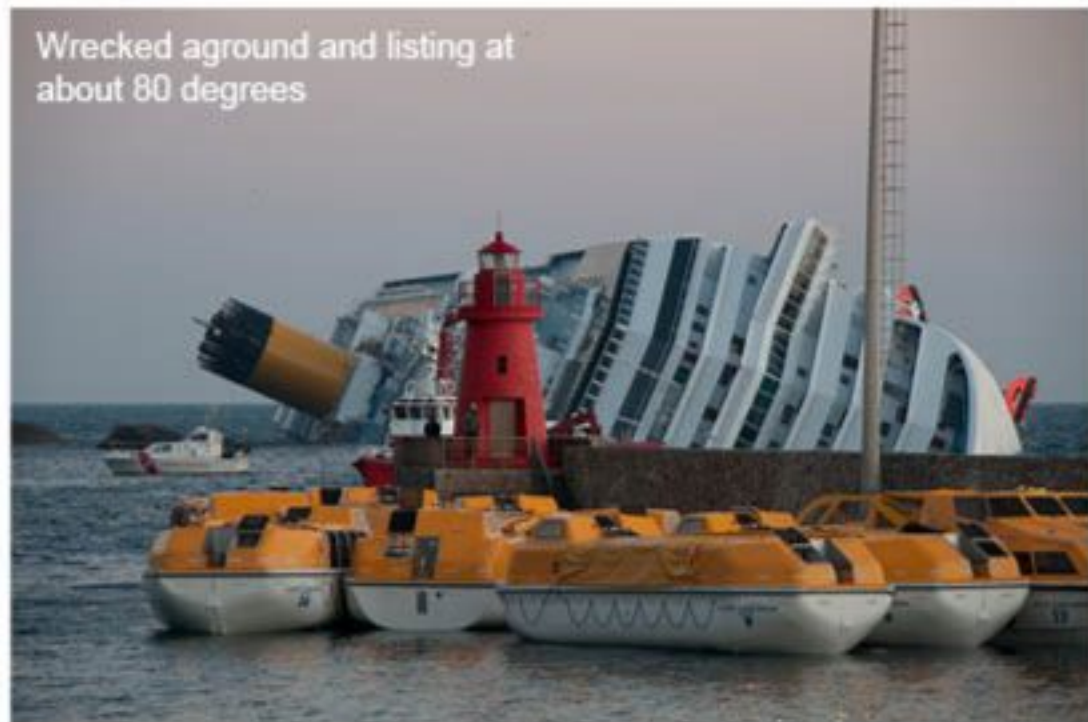
Aftermath

Six people including five passengers and a crew member are known to have died, and sixty-four others were injured. More than 24 hours after the accident, three people (two passengers and a crewman) trapped below deck were rescued. Six crew members



Costa Concordia pool

Wrecked aground and listing at about 80 degrees



and eleven passengers are still unaccounted for as rescue workers continued to search the partly submerged ship. The ship's "black box"—which "logged [the] ship's movements and conversations between crew"—was also recovered. When the search for survivors and bodies is completed, a Dutch salvage firm will remove the vessel's fuel.

Passengers and crew were housed in all available buildings and makeshift shelters in Giglio Porto and elsewhere on Isola del

Giglio.

Fifty-two-year-old Captain Francesco Schettino, who has worked for Costa Cruises for eleven years, and the ship's first officer have been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter and abandoning ship before passengers were evacuated. They were being questioned as of 14 January 2012. Officials are trying to determine why the ship did not issue a mayday and why it was navigating so close to the coast. "At the moment we can't exclude that the ship had some kind of



technical problem, and for this reason moved towards the coast in order to save the passengers, the crew and the ship. But they didn't send a mayday," said officer Emilio Del Santo of the Coastal Authorities of Livorno, "The ship got in contact with us once the evacuation procedures were already ongoing." An Italian broker and industry experts believe the ship is a constructive total loss, with damages estimated at US\$500 million or higher. Costa Cruises has not commented on the fate of the ship as yet.

Inside the ship

