



Deep Descent: Adventure and Death Diving the Andrea Doria

By Kevin F. McMurray

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On a foggy July evening in 1956, the Italian cruise liner *Andrea Doria*, bound for New York, was struck broadside by another vessel. In eleven hours, she would sink nearly 250 feet to the murky Atlantic Ocean floor. Thanks to a daring rescue operation, only 51 of more than 1,700 people died in the tragedy. But the *Andrea Doria* is still taking lives.

Considered the Mt. Everest of diving, the *Andrea Doria* is the ultimate deepwater wreck challenge. Over the years, a small but fanatical group of extreme scuba divers have investigated the *Andrea Doria*, pushing themselves to the very limits of human endurance to explore her -- and not all have returned. Diver Kevin McMurray takes you inside this elite club with a hard, honest look at those who go deeper, farther, and closer to the edge than others would ever dream. *Deep Descent* is the riveting true story of the human spirit overcoming human frailty and of fearsome, mortal risks traded for a hard-core adrenaline rush. Chronicling these adventures in his page-turning narrative and in dozens of dramatic photos, McMurray draws us deeper into the cold heart of the unforgiving sea, giving us a powerful vision of a place to which few will ever have the skills -- or the courage -- to go.

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Deep Descent: Adventure and Death Diving the Andrea Doria By Kevin F. McMurray Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

McMurray's is an earnest journal of deep-sea wreck diving, mostly over the Italian passenger liner Andrea Doria, which sank in a collision off Cape Cod in 1956. The Doria still draws extreme scuba divers 235 feet down to "the Everest of scuba," where, over the last 20 years, 12 divers have met their deaths. After a Night to Remember-style introduction to the ship's history, the author turns his talents as a journalist and diver (he has reached and explored the Doria hulk several times) to question why inverse mountaineers still come back to the wreck. McMurray renders a shared obsession, mostly through fuzzy sketches of expeditions to the wreck in the 1980s and '90s, and follows a dozen divers down to the Doria. Yet his descriptions are uninspiring; even the accounts of fatal dives are flat (despite a multiple-photo series of a body being hauled to the dive boat). His we-band-of-brother-divers tone can't substitute for description or character; indeed, it proves an obstacle to thoughtful storytelling. McMurray the scuba diver never quite admits to McMurray the journalist-observer that divers visit the Andrea Doria because of not in spite of the risks. 75 b&w photos. (June) Forecast: Despite the current public fascination with dangerous sport, this book won't appeal to the uninitiated. McMurray could become a sort of Sebastian Junger-esque celebrity he holds a world record for swimming around the island of Manhattan except that his book can't compare with *The Perfect Storm*. It is for fellow scuba samurai only.

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From Library Journal

In 1956, on her maiden voyage to New York, traveling at 21 knots in thick fog, the passenger liner Andrea Doria collided with the Swedish steamship Stockholm and sunk 160 miles off the coast of New York. McMurray, a skilled diver and adventure journalist who has written for *Outside*, *Yankee*, *Men's Journal*, *Rock & Ice*, and the *New York Times*, chronicles the underwater exploration of the wreck site by amateur divers in search of souvenirs. Because the Andrea Doria lies at a depth of 235', divers visiting the wreck exceed the maximum safe depth of 130' recommended for scuba diving and must use special dry suits and exotic breathing gear to avoid the "bends" when resurfacing. Two dive boats, the *Wahoo* and the *Seeker*, specialize in charter expeditions to the site, and though they are skippered by experienced and responsible crews with the latest equipment, there have been 12 deaths associated with the wreck. McMurray describes his own underwater experiences visiting the wreck and interviews crew and dive buddies so that he can vividly re-create each fatality. The result is a good history of noncommercial deep diving and a solid account of the sinking of the Andrea Doria. Exciting and powerful, this account is highly recommended for public libraries. John Kenny, San Francisco P.L.

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Review

Clive Cussler A compelling masterwork of the greatest shipwreck killer in maritime history. McMurray involves you in the life-and-death drama as if you are actually diving in the depths.

Library Journal Exciting and powerful.

The Philadelphia Inquirer This is a book you will have a hard time putting down. Page after page leads you through adventure, mystery, suspense, and acts of heroism.

Kirkus Reviews McMurray knows his stuff...Compelling...Full of high drama in low places.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Winston Craig:

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Nathaniel Thomas:

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