

## **REPORTAGE SALEM EXPRES**

VIDEO:salem\_expres

### **HISTORY OF SALEM EXPRES**

The ship was launched in 1964 as Fred Scamaroni, later it was (with changes of owners) renamed several times: 1980 – Nuits Saint Georges, 1981 - Lord Sinai, 1984 – Al Tahra. The last owner was the Egyptian Samatour Shipping Company, which named the ship Salem Express. The last voyage of the ship took place on the 15th December 1991, when it sailed out from Jeddah in Saudi Arabia for Safaga in Egypt. According to official records, it was transporting 650 persons (578 passengers and 72 crew members). At night, in a bad weather and through big waves, the captain was attempting to get to Safaga from the southeast, where there are many reefs. The ferryboat ran into the westernmost promontory of the reef Hyndman. The damage in the front part of the ship was so great that the Salem Express sank in just few minutes. From all people who were on the board, only 180 persons were saved. Some resources state that more than a thousand of drowned bodies were lifted from the shipwreck. Speed of the sinking, nighttime and the tempestuous sea contributed to the extent of the disaster. Rescue works were not organized well. Rescue boats on the larboard are still lying in the water even today. Only tens of surviving people were able to swim on their own to the shore. Inside of the shipwreck, there are hundreds of luggages, under which bodies of their owners are still buried today. Some photos give a shocking impression.

### **STAFF - SALEM EXPRES**

Many expeditions have already been organized to the Salem Expres. From the point of diving, it concerns very easy dives. The wreck lies on the seabed in the depth of 30 meters, on a sandy plateau with a good visibility, sometimes even up to 40 meters. The external construction of the ship is well preserved with easy accesses to deck cabins and the captain's bridge. What is impressive are screw propellers and preserved boards on the rear deck including visible bollards.

## **IGC DIVING PRAHA**

TV PRIMA - Salem Express

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Drastic and full of mixed feelings are views inside the wreck.

The passages are full of accumulated luggages, purchased items from passengers, who are mostly lying under them. There are bricklayer's wheelbarrows full of televisions, a plenty of suitcases and backpacks, baby prams, female shoes, toys ... Unfortunately, these remaining items have been recently ransacked and the view of the torn up luggages is even more petrifying... The document was made for the television Prima by the director and documentarist Miloš Pilař. Photos of Bohumil Bochnák are used in the document.