



## USS PONCE (LPD 15) Amphibious Transport Dock Homeport: Norfolk, Virginia www.ponce.navy.mil

USS Ponce, when loaded, carries up to 900 Marines along with their vehicles, tanks, artillery, ammunition and tracked landing vehicles; thus, maintaining the combat integrity of the assault force during an extended deployment. The stern has a hinged gate that can be lowered. We use this gate, in conjunction with a ballast system, to fill our well deck area with water. In this manner, amphibious assault craft and boats can drive in and out of our well deck embarking or debarking passengers and equipment. To give you a rough idea of the dimensions involved, the well deck area is large enough to fit two full size basketball courts, and the ballast tanks used to flood the well deck have a capacity of 2.3 million gallons of water.

Ponce has a large flight deck that can be used to launch helicopters affording a rapid attack of a potential enemy. The flight deck is large enough to accommodate three complete tennis courts and eleven trips around the flight deck are equivalent to traveling 1 mile. There is sufficient room on the flight deck to operate four helicopters simultaneously; although, normally only two are operated at one time. Helicopters will embark for extended missions, a hangar provides the opportunity to conduct limited maintenance on helicopters. The flight deck is certified to operate practically every type of helicopter in the world, regardless of its size. In addition, vertical takeoff and landing type jet aircraft may operate off Ponce's flight deck. As you might imagine, the flight deck can be a very busy place during amphibious operations. Close teamwork and discipline are required to ensure all flight operations are conducted safely and correctly.

When Ponce goes to sea, as with all ships, it must be self-sufficient. Ponce is designed with all the facilities of a modern city. There are four electrical generators that can make enough electricity to power a city of 26,000, while our distilling plants can make 60,000 gallons of freshwater a day. The ship also carries enough fuel to go nearly half way around the world without refueling and have modern recycling, waste, and sewage facilities.

Ponce must be able provide all the services that we cannot get from home. The ship provides a place for the crew to eat, sleep, and bathe. The ship's doctor and dentist, along with a medical staff, 12 bed ward, X-ray facilities, bacteriological laboratory, sterilizing room, and dental surgery rooms, take care of our health. Our storerooms and refrigerated spaces can hold enough food to sustain the crew for 60 days while our ship's store sells everything from candy and toothpaste to clothes and cameras. The ship also has personnel that serve as Fire Fighters, Policemen, Postal Clerks, Bankers, and Barbers. Ponce has a closed circuit television station complete with a Direct to Sailor digital satellite programming link. The ship also has a complete intranet with email for the entire crew. Ponce is, in every sense, a small floating city.

### SHIP'S SPECIFICATIONS:

#### GENERAL

Length - 570 feet  
Beam (Maximum)- 84 feet  
Speed: 21 knots  
Draft (Navigational)- 23 feet  
Displacement- 17,000 tons full load  
Complement- 24 officers/396 enlisted  
Marines: 900

#### ENGINEERING

Propulsion: 2 boilers, 2 steam turbines  
2 shafts (24,000 shaft horsepower)  
Electrical:  
Services:

#### SENSORS

SPS-40 Air Search Radar  
SPS-67 Surface Search Radar  
SPS-64 Navigational Radar  
Furuno Navigational Radar

#### WEAPONS

2 25mm MK38 guns  
2 Phalanx CIWS  
8 50-caliber machine guns

#### AIRCRAFT

Up to 6 CH-46 Sea Knight Helicopters