

# JOURNEY

Explorers are planning to visit the world's most famous shipwreck before it rots away.

## AS YOU READ

Think about why people are fascinated by the *Titanic*.

**R**enata Rojas has had one dream ever since she was a little girl. That dream is to visit the shipwreck of the RMS *Titanic*. Millions of people are fascinated by one of the worst disasters in history. Rojas has long been one of them.

On April 10, 1912, the *Titanic* set sail from its port in England. It made headlines at the time. It was the largest, fastest, and fanciest ship of its day. And many people believed it was unsinkable.

But the ship crashed into an iceberg four days later. It sank

to the bottom of the sea in just a few hours. More than 1,500 people died.

A company called OceanGate is planning expeditions to the famous wreck in 2020. Rojas will be one of about 40 tourists on the trips. The tourists will assist scientists as they study what's left of the ship—before it disappears.

"I'm going to be part of history," says Rojas.

## A Titanic Discovery

The final resting place of the *Titanic* was a mystery for

decades. Explorer Robert Ballard discovered the wreck in 1985. About 200 people have visited it since then. These people include archaeologists and filmmakers.

Historians have learned a lot from those journeys. Thousands of objects have been found so far. These items include tickets, menus, and clothing. They have given us an idea of what was going on aboard the doomed ship. Are there more treasures yet to be found?

## Rotting Away

There's not much time left to find out. Some experts say what's left of the ship might be gone in 20 years.



The ship took on more than 400 tons of water per minute after it hit the iceberg.

There were only enough lifeboats for half of the passengers and crew on the *Titanic*.

GO  
ONLINE!

Dive deeper into the drama of the *Titanic*!

## WORDS TO KNOW

**expeditions** *noun, plural.* journeys with specific purposes

**deteriorating** *verb.* falling apart or becoming worse over time

This is an illustration of the sunken *Titanic*.



# TITANIC

Ocean currents and sea creatures have worn away at the *Titanic* for decades. And pieces of the wreck have broken apart. Experts say that's likely from past explorers bumping small ships into it. These ships are called submersibles.

The most alarming threat is metal-munching bacteria. They live in rusty, icicle-like formations called rusticles. And these bacteria eat away at the ship.

## Into the Deep

OceanGate's main goal is to analyze just how fast the *Titanic* is deteriorating. Members of the crew will cram into a tiny submersible to get down to the ship. They'll descend more than 12,000 feet down into the nearly pitch-black ocean.

Rojas and the crew will use special equipment to take scans of the ship. Those

images will be used to create an updated 3-D map of the wreck. Scientists will compare the new images with older ones. This will determine how quickly the ship is decaying.

Rojas says there's another

important reason to go down and visit the *Titanic*.

"We shouldn't forget about the disaster or the people who died," she says. "Visiting the *Titanic* helps us remember."

—by Tricia Culligan

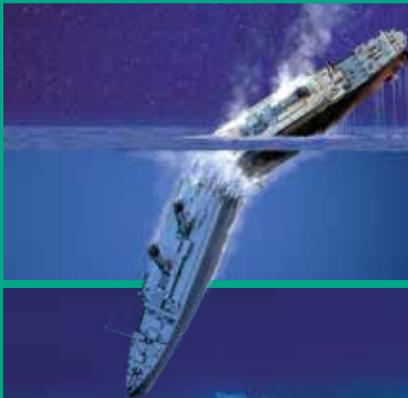
## From Ship to Wreck

The *Titanic* was on its first voyage when disaster struck. Here's what experts believe happened to the doomed ship.



**April 14, 1912**  
**11:40 p.m.**

The *Titanic* slams into an iceberg, tearing holes in the side of the ship. Soon, the boat begins to flood and sink.



**April 15, 1912**  
**2:19 a.m.**

Crack! The weight of the water onboard causes the ship to break in half. The bow, or front, plunges underwater first. The stern, or back, follows a few moments later.



**April 15, 1912**  
**2:21 a.m.**

The pieces float down to their final resting spots, about 12,000 feet below the ocean's surface.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

More than 5,500 artifacts have been removed from the *Titanic*. Some say it's disrespectful to take these items because they're part of a gravesite. But others argue that the objects help us learn about and remember those who died.

This shoe was found in the *Titanic* wreck.

