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Frontin, Pedro Max Fernando

By [Karl Schurster](#)

Frontin, *Pedro* Max Fernando
Admiral in the Brazilian navy
Born 08 February 1867 in Petrópolis, Brazil
Died 07 April 1939 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Pedro Frontin was a Brazilian navy admiral. He commanded the Brazilian Naval Division during military operations in World War I, acting in conjunction with British and U.S. naval forces along the coast of Brazil and the African coast from May to November 1918.

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Military Career

The Brazilian Admiral Pedro Frontin (1867-1939) was born on 8 February 1867 in Petrópolis, in the state of Rio de Janeiro. He enlisted at the Navy School in 1882 and graduated as a midshipman in 1884. Promoted to captain lieutenant in 1890, he served on board several navy vessels. After that, he served as director of the Naval War College and also of the Second Navy Division and the Naval Division of the South.

Frontin as Commander of the DNOG

Soon after the declaration of war against [Germany](#), Brazilian Naval Minister Admiral [Alexandrino Faria de Alencar](#) (1848-1926) and U.S. Admiral [William Banks Caperton](#) (1855-1941) agreed that

[Brazil](#) should assume responsibility in patrolling the South Atlantic in order to prevent the Germans from establishing [submarine](#) bases in the area. After a long dispute, it was settled that Brazilian naval forces should cooperate with the [United States](#) instead of [Great Britain](#) along the western coast of [France](#), using Gibraltar as base of operations.

After reaching this agreement, Brazil sent a naval division to the theatre of war, entitled [Naval Division in War Operations](#) (*Divisão Naval em Operações de Guerra*, DNOG) and commanded by Pedro Frontin. The Brazilian fleet had been assembled in 1910 and was unprepared for this kind of war, especially eight years later with the corresponding developments in war technology. Frontin himself criticized severely the Brazilian naval arsenal, pointing to the problems that occurred during the Atlantic crossing from Rio de Janeiro to Gibraltar.

Despite the cost of war and the fact that Brazilian forces did not actually participate in the conflict, Admiral Frontin and his fleet were publicly acclaimed by the Brazilian people upon their return. World War I marked Brazil's entry onto the global scene as a major actor, a fact represented by the celebration of Frontin's military mission. The admiral was nominated president of the Military Supreme Court in 1934 and passed away on 7 April 1939 in Rio de Janeiro. He was granted several medals from the United States, [Belgium](#), [Italy](#) and [Japan](#), as well as the Brazilian Medal of Victory (*Medalha da Vitória*) and the Great Cross of the Naval Merit Order (*Grã-Cruz da Ordem do Mérito Naval*).

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