



The Wehrmacht's 2nd Panzer Division was one of World War II's most celebrated armored units. Formed in 1935, one of its earliest commanders was General Heinz Guderian, the noted innovator in combined arms organization and the Father of Germany's Panzerwaffe.

In 1939, 2nd Panzer Division took part in the Invasion of Poland where it was involved in some of the hardest fighting in the campaign. In 1940, the division spearheaded the armored *Blitzkrieg* that swept through France to the English Channel where 2nd Panzer captured Abbeville in May and sealed the British into their beachfront pocket at Dunkirk.

In 1941, the division was again was at the forefront of battle in Romania during the Balkans Offensive and captured the city of Athens during the conquest of Greece.

In Operation Barbarossa, the 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union, 2nd Panzer Division served with Army Group Center where it advanced to within sight of Moscow. The division spent 1942 and 1943 involved in some of the heaviest fighting of the Eastern Front including Operation Citadel, the massive German armored offensive at Kursk.

2nd Panzer Division was withdrawn from Russia in early 1944 and transferred to France to refit and to train its Panzertruppen with new equipment including the SdKfz 234/2 "Puma" heavy armored car and the Panzer MK V-A "Panther" tank.

After the Invasion of Normandy, 2nd Panzer fought throughout the campaign and broke out of the Falaise Pocket only after suffering near total loss to the encircling Allied forces. The division was withdrawn to Germany and reinforced with the remnants of the 352nd Infantry Division that defended against the American seaborne assault at Omaha Beach.

2nd Panzer Division took part in the Ardennes Offensive in the winter of 1944. Ordered to bypass the town of Bastogne, the Pumas of its Armored Reconnaissance Battalion led the division farther toward the strategic objective of Antwerp than any other German unit.

2nd Panzer's remaining units fought on defending the West Wall until, rendered combat ineffective without relief or supply, they surrendered to the U.S. forces in April 1945.

