

GOODBYE FAIR LADIES

I first heard the Kingston Trio's spirited recording of this song in 1962 – the year I graduated from high school. I was already well on my way to being a hard-core folkie. Away Rio is a traditional capstan shanty – dating to the 1860s or before. The “Rio Grande” of this song is almost certainly not the river of southwestern North America, but rather the province Rio Grande do Sul of southern Brazil. You can hear a traditional rendering of the song [here](#), or on the [HFMS Audio Archive](#). Every version I have heard has different verses, or the lyrics in a different order.

AWAY, RIO

Traditional

D A D
 O say, were you ever in Rio Grande? Away, Rio!
 G D A D
 It's there that the river runs down golden strand;
 A D
 And we're bound for the Rio Grande

CHORUS

G D G D
 And away... Rio! Away... Rio!
 G D A Bm
 So fare you well, my pretty young girl
 D A D
 We're bound for the Rio Grande!

Oh, Galveston town is no place for me! Away Rio!
 So I'll pack up me sea chest and go back to sea!
 And we're... **CHORUS**

We'll man the good capstan and run her around. Away Rio!
 We'll haul up the anchor from out in the sound.
 And we're... **CHORUS**

The anchor is weighed and the sails they are set. Away Rio!
 The girls that we're leavin' we'll never forget.
 And we're... **CHORUS**

So goodbye fair ladies we know in this town. Away Rio!
 We've left you enough to buy a silk gown.
 And we're... **CHORUS**

Our ship went a-sailin' out over the bar. Away Rio!
 We've pointed her bow to the Southern Star.
 And we're... **CHORUS**

