

Christopher Columbus

Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy in 1451. While spending most of his early years at sea, Columbus began to believe that he could find a shortcut to the Indies by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean. Unfortunately, the King of Portugal refused to finance such a trip, and Columbus was forced to present his idea to the King and Queen of Spain. In 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella agreed to pay for his trip. They gave him a crew and three ships, the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria. Columbus sailed aboard the Santa Maria. The trip was long and hard. Many sailors grew restless and wanted to turn around. After two months at sea, land was finally sighted. The ships docked on the island of Hispaniola. Columbus named the native people he saw "Indians", because he believed he had found the shortcut he was looking for. In actuality, Columbus found North America, a brand new continent at that time. Columbus, however, couldn't be convinced. He died with the belief he had found the shortcut to the Indies. Soon, however, other explorers and nations understood the importance of his discoveries. Columbus' discoveries set the stage for the Age of Exploration, one of the most fascinating and exciting times in world history.