

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean and reached a continent that was previously unknown to him.
2. After Columbus's voyages, other explorers sailed to the Americas.

The Big Idea

Christopher Columbus's voyages led to new exchanges between Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

Key Terms and People

Christopher Columbus, p. 42
 Line of Demarcation, p. 44
 Treaty of Tordesillas, p. 44
 Ferdinand Magellan, p. 44
 circumnavigate, p. 44
 Columbian Exchange, p. 45

TAKING NOTES

As you read, take notes on the explorers, their journeys, and the effects of European voyages to the Americas. Write your notes in a chart like the one below.

Explorer	Sponsored by	Traveled to

Effects of Journeys

Europeans Reach the Americas

If YOU were there...

You are a European explorer who just returned to your homeland from the Americas. While you were gone, you tried new and different foods, including corn, potatoes, and cocoa. You have brought some of these foods back with you. You want your friends and family to sample these items, but they resist.

What will you say about these new foods?

BUILDING BACKGROUND Europeans, Africans, and Asians had traded with each other for centuries using land and sea routes. Native American groups also knew of each other through trade routes. Although sailors often explored new areas, before 1492 the two worlds had no communication with each other.

Columbus Sails across the Atlantic

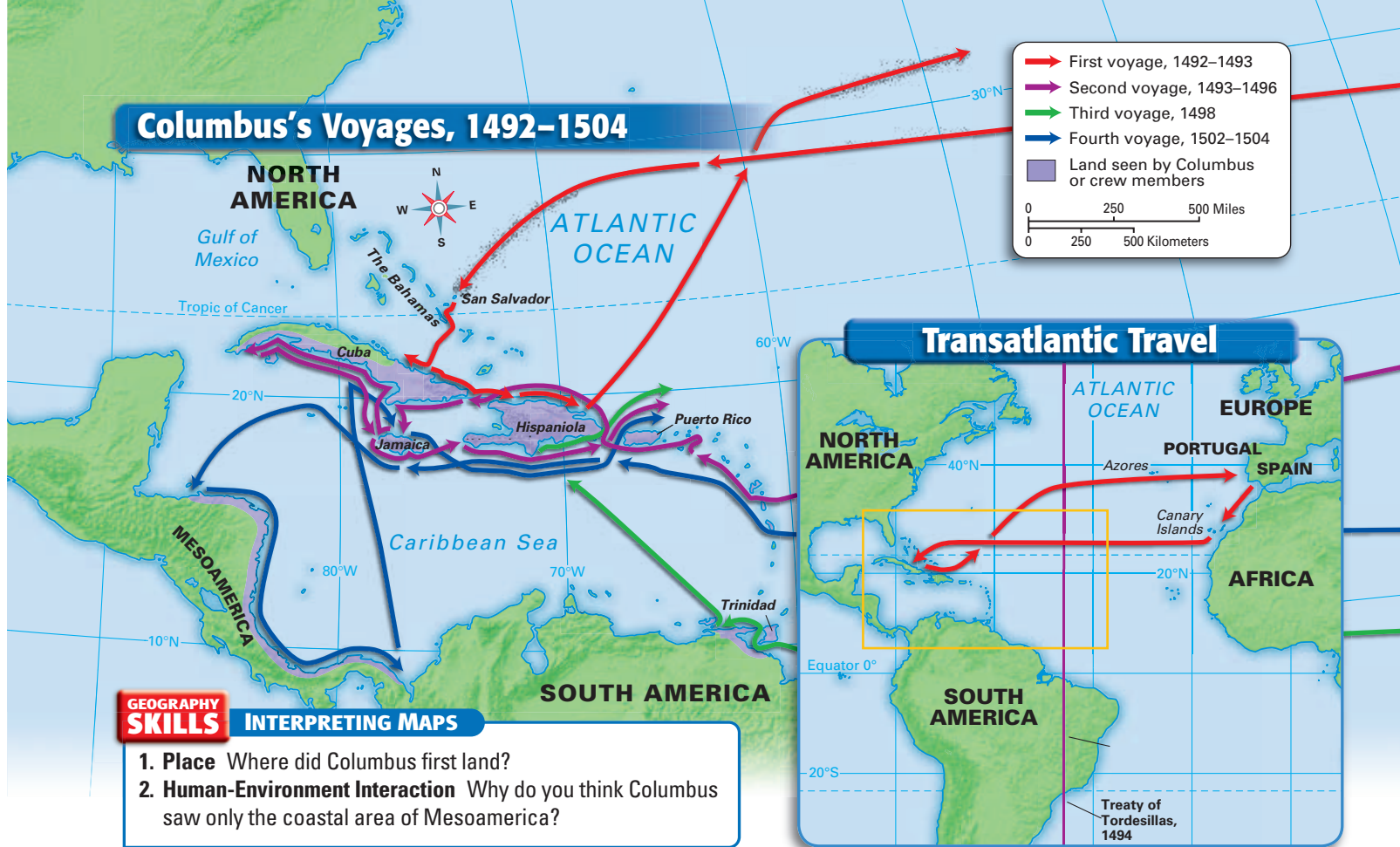
Stories of fabulous kingdoms and wealth in Asia captured the imagination of **Christopher Columbus**, a sailor from Genoa, Italy. Columbus was convinced that he could reach Asia by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean.

The Journey Begins

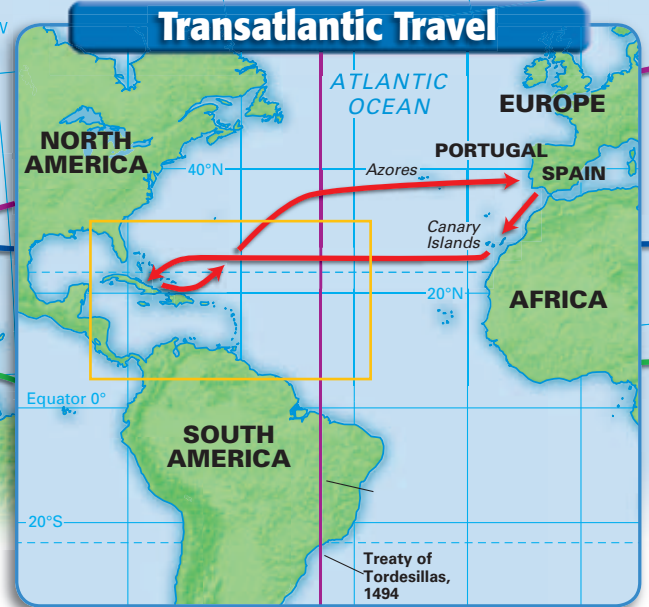
Columbus asked King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain to pay for an expedition across the Atlantic. He promised them great riches, new territory, and Catholic converts. It took Columbus several years to convince the king and queen, but they finally agreed to help finance the journey. Ferdinand and Isabella ordered Columbus to bring back any items of value and to claim for Spain any lands he explored.

On August 3, 1492, Columbus's three ships set sail. The *Niña* and the *Pinta* were caravels. Columbus sailed in the larger *Santa María*. The ships carried about 90 sailors and a year's worth of supplies. They made a stop in the Canary Islands, and then on September 6, they resumed their journey. Soon, they passed the limits of Columbus's

Columbus's Voyages, 1492–1504



Transatlantic Travel



GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Place** Where did Columbus first land?
- 2. Human-Environment Interaction** Why do you think Columbus saw only the coastal area of Mesoamerica?

maps and sailed into uncharted seas. After more than a month with no sight of land, the crew grew restless.

Soon the crew saw signs of land—birds and floating tree branches. Columbus promised a reward “to him who first sang out that he saw land.” On October 12, 1492, a lookout cried, “Land! Land!” ending the long journey from the Canary Islands.

The ships landed on an island in the Bahamas. Columbus thought he had found a new route to Asia. Instead, he had reached another continent that was unknown to him. Columbus called the island San Salvador, which means “Holy Savior.” Columbus also visited another island he called Hispaniola. There he met the Taino (TY-noh). At that time Europeans called Asia the Indies, so Columbus, believing he was in Asia, called these Native American people Indians.

The Taino lived in small farming communities. In his journal, Columbus wrote that the Taino were “so generous . . . that no

one would believe it who has not seen it.” However, Columbus and his crew were not interested in Taino culture, but in gold. After three months of exploring, looking for gold, and collecting exotic plants and animals, Columbus returned to Spain.

Columbus made three more journeys to the Americas during his lifetime. In 1504 he returned to Spain in poor health. Columbus died two years later, still believing that he had reached Asia.

Impact of Columbus's Voyages

The voyages of Columbus changed the way Europeans thought of the world and their place in it. A new era of interaction between Europe and the Americas had begun.

Columbus's discovery also created conflict between European countries. Both Spain and Portugal wanted to add these lands to their growing empires. In 1493, Pope Alexander VI, originally from Spain, issued a decree that drew a new boundary for Spain and Portugal.

Primary Source

LETTER

Christopher Columbus, 1494

Two years after discovering the island of Hispaniola, Columbus wrote a letter to the Spanish king and queen outlining his ideas of its colonization.

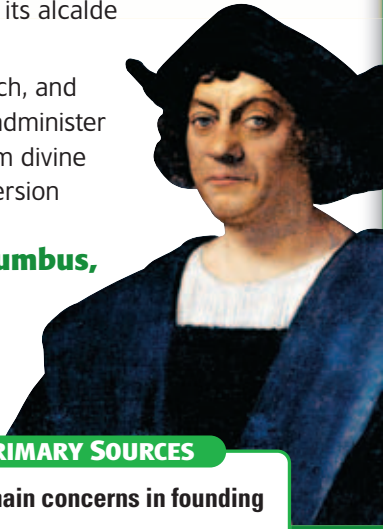
Most High and Mighty Sovereigns,

In the first place, as regards the Island of Espanola: Inasmuch as the number of colonists who desire to go thither [there] amounts to two thousand, owing to the land being safer and better for farming and trading . . .

1. That in the said island there shall be founded three or four towns . . .
2. That for the better and more speedy colonization of the said island, no one shall have liberty to collect gold in it except those who have taken out colonists' papers . . .
3. That each town shall have its alcalde [Mayor] . . .
4. That there shall be a church, and parish priests or friars to administer the sacraments, to perform divine worship, and for the conversion of the Indians.

—Christopher Columbus,

letter to the king and queen of Spain, 1494



ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

What were Columbus's main concerns in founding a colony on Hispaniola?

This imaginary **Line of Demarcation** divided the Atlantic Ocean. Spain could claim all land west of the line.

The Portuguese king believed that this arrangement favored Spain. To prevent war, the leaders of the two nations signed the **Treaty of Tordesillas**, which moved the Line of Demarcation 800 miles further west. This gave Portugal more opportunity to claim lands unexplored by other Europeans.

READING CHECK Identifying Points of View

Why did Columbus want to sail across the Atlantic?

Other Explorers Sail to the Americas

Columbus's discoveries inspired others to sail across the Atlantic Ocean. In 1501 explorer Amerigo Vespucci (vuh-SPOO-chee) led a Spanish fleet to the coast of present-day South America. He was convinced the land he reached was not Asia. Instead, Vespucci believed he had found a "new world." A German mapmaker labeled the continents across the ocean *America* in honor of Vespucci. Europeans began using the names North America and South America for these lands.

In a Spanish settlement in present-day Panama, another explorer, Vasco Núñez de Balboa (NOON-yays day bahl-BOH-uh), heard stories from local Native Americans about another ocean farther west. Balboa set out to find it. For weeks he and his men struggled through thick jungle and deadly swamps. In 1513 they reached the top of a mountain. From this spot Balboa saw a great blue sea—the Pacific Ocean—stretching out before him.

In 1519, **Ferdinand Magellan** (muh-JEHL-uhn), a Portuguese navigator, set out with a Spanish fleet to sail down the east coast of South America. After sailing around the southern tip of the continent, Magellan continued into the Pacific even though his ships were dangerously low on food and fresh water.

Magellan's fleet sailed across the Pacific Ocean. In the Philippines, Magellan was killed in a battle with native peoples. Down to three ships, the expedition continued sailing west into the Indian Ocean. In 1522 the voyage's only remaining ship returned to Spain. Only 18 members of Magellan's original crew survived. These sailors were the first people to **circumnavigate**, or go all the way around, the globe. Their entire journey was some 40,000 miles long.

European explorers and settlers took plants and animals with them to the Americas. They also brought back a variety of new plants and animals to Europe, Asia, and Africa.

This transfer became known as the **Columbian Exchange** because it started with Columbus's explorations. The Columbian Exchange dramatically changed the world.

European explorers found many plants in the Americas that were unknown to them, including corn, potatoes, tobacco, and cocoa. They brought these items to Europe, where they were highly valued. The explorers also introduced horses, cattle, and pigs to the Americas. Native Americans came to use these animals for food and transportation. They also started to farm European grains such as wheat and barley.

Without intending to do so, the explorers also introduced deadly new diseases to the Americas. Native Americans had no natural resistance to European diseases and often died as a result of their exposure to them.

Over time, a trading pattern involving the exchange of raw materials, manufactured products, and slaves developed among Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Europeans shipped millions of enslaved Africans to work in the colonies in the New World.

READING CHECK **Evaluating** What were the negative aspects of the Columbian Exchange?

Section 2 Assessment

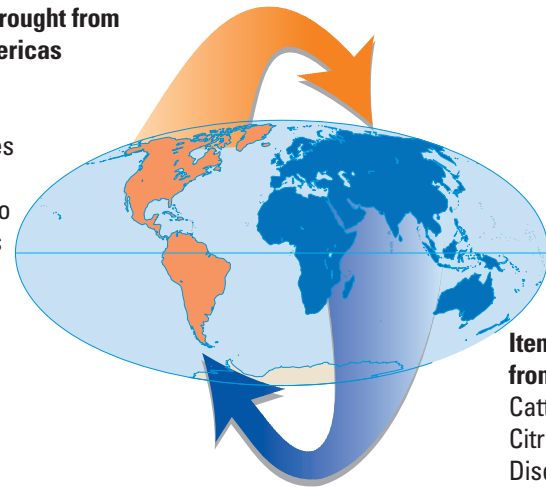
Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- Recall** What agreement did **Christopher Columbus** make with Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain?
 - Explain** Where did Columbus think he had landed when he reached the Bahamas?
 - Evaluate** How did Columbus's voyage lead to a dispute between Spain and Portugal?
- Identify** Who was the first European explorer to see the Pacific Ocean?
 - Summarize** What route did **Ferdinand Magellan's** ships take to **circumnavigate** the globe?
 - Draw Conclusions** How did the **Columbian Exchange** and the slave trade affect the economies and the people of Europe, Africa, and the Americas?

The Columbian Exchange

Items brought from the Americas

Cocoa
Corn
Potatoes
Squash
Tobacco
Turkeys



Items brought from Europe

Cattle
Citrus Fruits
Diseases
Grains
Horses
Sugarcane

ANALYSIS SKILL

Which side of the Atlantic did cattle come from? Potatoes? Sugarcane?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW Columbus's voyages to America inspired other Europeans to explore the "New World." This led to new exchanges between both sides of the Atlantic. In the next section you will learn about Spain's empire in the Americas.