



# Columbus Day

Columbus Day is on October 12, but it is sometimes celebrated on the second Monday in October. It is a federal holiday, so post offices and federal government offices are closed. Schools in some districts are open while in other districts they are closed. Columbus Day celebrates the 1492 landing of Christopher Columbus on San Salvador Island in the Bahamas. The Bahamas are part of the Americas. Christopher Columbus is also called Cristoforo Colombo and Cristóbal Colón.

# Who was Christopher Columbus?

- He was an Italian explorer who sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in 1492.
- Columbus "*discovered America*" when he landed on San Salvador Island in the Bahamas.
- He was not the first European to visit America, but his visit led to the Spanish colonization of the area, which encourage other European countries to also colonize the area.



# What was Columbus looking for?

- He was looking for a sea route to Asia.
- European merchants traveled across the land to get silk, spices, and opiates from China and India.
- Columbus thought he could find a faster route to Asia.



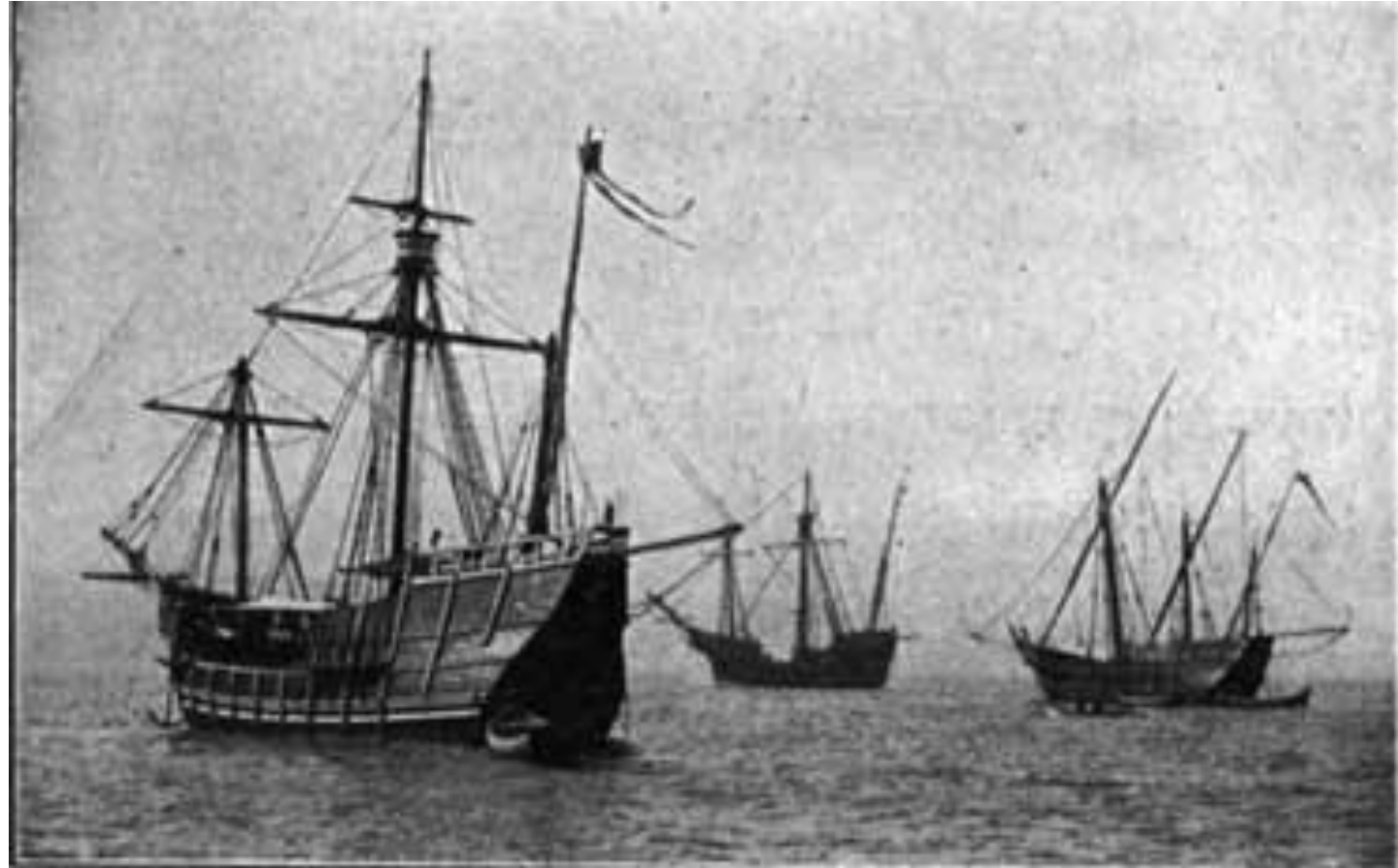
# Who financed Columbus's voyage?

- King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain financed his trip.



# How many ships made the voyage to the New World?

- There were three ships in Columbus's small fleet: the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria.
- Columbus sailed on the Santa Maria, which was the largest of the three ships.



# Where did Columbus and his men first land?

- They landed on an island in the Bahamas. Columbus called the place *San Salvador*.
- Columbus thought he and his men had reached the East-Asian mainland.



# Why did the King and Queen of Spain sponsor Columbus's voyage?

- They wanted to increase Spain's power and wealth by establishing new trade routes and new colonies.
- Columbus made four trips to the New World.



# What did Columbus call the inhabitants of North America?

- He thought he was in India, so he called them *Indians*.
- The arrival of Columbus and the European colonization that followed led to a genocide of the native population.
- Many native people were killed, enslaved, committed suicide or died from European diseases.





# When did Christopher Columbus die?

- He died on May 20, 1506. He was about 55 years old.
- He is buried in the Cathedral of Seville in Spain.
- Some experts believe that a mistake was made and that his remains are in Santo Domingo.

