

Negative Facts about Columbus, Many people do not know

*Americans believe him to be a great hero who accomplished an amazing feat by sailing across the **ocean** with three ships, **the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria**, in search of new lands. Even the paintings that depict **Christopher Columbus** are not based on knowledge of what he really looked like, and it remains a mystery to this day. The way that **Christopher Columbus** is depicted and the stark truth about his life are drastically different. Here are some other facts about **Christopher Columbus** that are little known and surprising.*

-**Columbus** first began his sailing career at the young age of fourteen. In 1476, he took his first sailing venture into the **Atlantic Ocean** aboard a vessel that was part of a fleet of five commercial ships headed to **England**. However, the fleet was attacked by French privateers, and both sides suffered the loss of several ships. **Columbus** was unfortunate enough to be aboard a ship that was burned, and he was left drifting in the **ocean** clinging to debris from the ruined vessel. He eventually made it six miles to the shores of **Portugal**, where he recovered from his ordeal. Soon thereafter he met and married a woman named Felipa and moved to the **island** of Madeira, where Felipa gave birth to a son named Diego. Shortly after his sons' birth, Felipa died.

-It was not **Christopher Columbus'** idea to sail across the **ocean**. The credit for this idea belongs to his brother, Bartholomew. He was a map maker who lived in Lisbon, **Portugal**. According to a personal diary belonging to Bartholomew, he shared his idea with his brother, who embraced it's possibilities for fame and fortune. **Columbus** had dreamed of sailing across the world since he was a young boy, to see if one really would "fall off" the ends of the **earth**.

-**Christopher Columbus** was not the first person to dispute the belief that the world was flat, as was most widely believed. This great honor rightfully belongs to the scholar **Aristotle**, who showed that the **earth** casts a shadow upon the **moon** during an eclipse that is spherical in shape.

-The discovery of **North America** was not philosophical in nature at all, because **Columbus'** intention was to find a faster trade route to **China** and **India**, in order acquire more economic status by shortening the route. Finding the Americas was purely an accident.

-**Christopher Columbus** was known to be a very cruel and brutal man, and was eventually arrested for his atrocious crimes against his people while he was governor of the colony Hispaniola. His cruelty caused him to be arrested and returned to **Spain**. For his brutalities to be considered worthy of arrest and trial (23 people testified against him), his actions had to have been extremely bad given the time period. He was found innocent, possibly because of his staunchest defenders, the King and Queen of **Spain**.

-He was an opium addict. Opium is the dried latex from poppies. It contains 12% morphine, and is the same drug that is chemically altered to produce heroin today. Opium use during the 1400s was not uncommon, in fact the King and Queen of **Spain** also indulged in this habit. It does however, cast more doubt on **Christopher Columbus** as

being a great hero.

-It is written in many historical texts that **Columbus** and his men may have been responsible for introducing Syphilis to **Europe**. There is new genetic evidence supporting this theory. **Columbus** and his men are believed to have brought the disease, which is sexually transmitted, to **Europe** in 1493. An estimated five million people died in **Europe** as a result of a massive Syphilis epidemic.

-**Columbus** incorrectly estimated the circumference of the **earth**, as well as the distance from the Canary **Islands** to **Japan**. Many scholars followed this faulty **train** of thought, so it is likely that even these declarations made about distance were not original ideas that **Columbus** himself came up with. One such scholar that believed these ideas to be fact was geographer Paulo de Pozzi Toscanelli, and **Columbus** was thought to have maintained frequent correspondence with him.

-He had another son out of wedlock, with a woman named Beatriz Enriquez de Arana. He carried on a love affair with Beatriz for many years but never married her. His second sons' name was Ferdinand, who accompanied his father on his last voyage to the Americas.

-It is commonly thought by many researchers that the original misconception that the American indigenous peoples were barbaric and unclean came from **Christopher Columbus**. This carried so much weight that all of **Europe** maintained this faulty belief upon settlement of the American colonies. No one ever attempted to learn the intricacies of the native cultures at all, but instead sought to eradicate the people. White men brought with them to the Americas many diseases such as Small Pox, Diphtheria and Measles which wiped out entire populations of native people.