

# Summary: Europeans Arrive in the Americas



## Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**merchant** *noun*, someone who buys and sells goods to earn money

**navigation** *noun*, planning and controlling the direction of a ship

**profit** *noun*, money a business has left after all expenses have been paid

**Columbian Exchange** *noun*, the movement of plants, animals, and people between the Eastern and Western Hemispheres

**explorer** *noun*, a person who travels to new places to learn about them



## After You Read

**REVIEW** Why did Ferdinand and Isabella agree to pay for Columbus's voyage in 1492? Highlight the two sentences that tell the reasons they wanted to pay for Columbus's explorations.

**REVIEW** How did the Columbian Exchange change the diet of Europeans? Draw a box around the word that tells which food became important in Europe.

**REVIEW** Who named the Pacific Ocean and why? Circle the name of the explorer. Highlight the sentence that tells the answer.

### Christopher Columbus

In the 1400s, European merchants bought spices in Asia and brought them back to Europe to sell. Christopher Columbus had studied navigation and believed he could reach Asia by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean. He asked King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain to pay for the trip. They hoped Columbus would find riches. They agreed to pay for the trip because they hoped to make a profit. They also wanted to tell people about their religion, Roman Catholicism. Columbus landed on an island in the present-day Bahamas. He thought it was close to India. He called the peaceful Taíno people who lived there Indians.

### The Columbian Exchange

The Spanish rulers wanted Columbus to start a settlement and look for gold. His ships carried horses, cows, pigs, wheat, barley, and sugar cane. These animals and plants were new to the Americas. The Spanish also carried new diseases. People died in epidemics. Most of the Taíno died. The settlement destroyed many plants and animals. Columbus took home new foods, including potatoes, corn, beans, peanuts, and cacao. This movement of plants and animals between the Eastern and Western Hemispheres is called the Columbian Exchange. Potatoes became an important food in Europe.

### Exploration Continues

Other European rulers soon sent their own explorers to the Americas to claim lands and find riches. An explorer travels to new places to learn about them. Pedro Álvares Cabral claimed eastern South America for Portugal in 1500. In 1513, Vasco Núñez de Balboa saw the Pacific Ocean from Panama. Ferdinand Magellan tried to sail around the world. He named the ocean Pacific, which means peaceful, because it looked so calm. Magellan was killed, but his crew was the first to sail around the world.