

## The Fourth Voyage 1502-1504

Columbus was determined to discover the riches that awaited him in the mainland of China and to regain his reputation and offices. The Spanish Monarch agreed to once again finance another voyage. On May 9, 1502 Columbus set sail from Cadiz, Spain with four ships. His 13-year old son, Fernando, sailed with him. His ships arrived at Hispaniola on June 29, but Columbus was forbidden to land. It was feared that his presence would rekindle trouble and resentment in the fledgling colony. While Columbus was anchored near the colony, a hurricane devastated a group of ships waiting to make the return voyage to Spain. Columbus had predicted the storm, tried to warn the colony, but was able to get his ships to shelter. He set off again on July 4 in his quest to find a way to the East. What he found was the coast of Central America. Finding some gold near Panama, he set up a trading post, but the Natives grew hostile and forced Columbus and his men to flee. The rest of the voyage was plagued with problems; Columbus was ill, the food was bad, and the ships were leaking like sieves from shipworms. Only two ships remained to make the journey back to Hispaniola. These were blown off course and barely made it to Jamaica in late June, but were too badly damaged to continue. Columbus sent men in native canoes to seek help from Hispaniola, but the governor, a rival of Columbus, delayed sending help for a year. It was a year of privation for Columbus and his remaining crew. His men mutinied, food was scarce, the Natives hostile and uncooperative. After his year long ordeal, Columbus sailed back to Spain, broken in health and spirit. He still had not found a new route to the East. He hoped to make another voyage, but his great patroness, Queen Isabella was dead, and his days of exploration were over. He died in Valladolid, Spain in 1506.

