

EXPLORERS

Marco Polo

HIGHLIGHTS

1. When Marco Polo began his famous journeys, virtually nothing of India and the Far East was known.
 2. Though great quantities of Chinese silk had reached the Roman Empire, no one seemed to have any knowledge of the country from which it had come nor the countries it had passed through.
 3. There were no books, no chronicles, no firsthand accounts of the lands to the East.
 4. Anything the 13th-century European knew about the East was based on distant rumor.
 5. Marco Polo's account of his travels was considered unbelievable. Many of his stories were dismissed as pure fiction.
2. Marco lived with an aunt after his mother died, but not much is known about him except for his famous journey.
 3. On their second visit to Kublai Khan, his father and uncle took Marco with them.
 4. The Polos were gone 24 years and Marco, who had learned four languages, served as an ambassador for the emperor while in China.
 5. After returning, Marco was imprisoned during the Genoa-Venice 100-Year War and did much of his writing there.
 6. Polo died in 1324 at the age of 70.
4. He created a path that connected the Western mind with the Eastern mind and led brave men and women into new, uncharted territories.
 5. He had respect for other religions, even comparing Buddha to a Christian saint.

UNIQUE INFLUENCE

1. Marco Polo gave the world a priceless piece of history — a look at 13th century life in the Far East.
2. He became a window through which one civilization took its first tentative peek at another.
3. He paved the way for trade and commerce between the two lands.
4. He brought to Europe many Chinese inventions such as paper-making, printing, and the compass.
5. He launched the age of East-West exploration which earned him a unique and priceless role in history.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Marco Polo was the first Western traveler to cross the entire length of Asia.
2. He was the first to record information on the area from Persia to Mongolia.
3. He became a living link between East and West, making two vastly different civilizations aware of each other.

THE PERSON

1. Marco Polo was born in Venice in 1254 while his father was traveling to China and establishing a relationship with Kublai Khan.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"I believe that it was God's will that we should return, so that men might know the things that are in the world, since ..., there was never man yet, Christian or Saracen (Moslem), Tartar or Pagan, who explored so much of the world as Messier Marco, son of Messier Niccolo Polo, great and noble citizen of the city of Venice." Marco Polo.

"Here you will find all the great wonders and curiosities of Greater Armenia and Persia, of the Tartars and of India ... and of many other

territories ... there has been no man who has known or explored so many various parts of the world and its great wonders as Marco Polo." From the introduction to The Travels of Marco Polo.

"Let me tell you next about black stones that burn like logs." Marco Polo's first encounter with coal.