



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Carta Marina Nova Tabula

Stock#: 30946
Map Maker: Gastaldi
Date: 1548
Place: Venice
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 6.5 x 5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

One of the Earliest Printed Sea Charts of the World, Part of Gastaldi's Influential Geographia

Giacomo Gastaldi's rare marine chart of the world, published in Venice, is based upon early sixteenth-century portolan charts of the period. The map is rich with coastal detail, much more so than Gastaldi's other world map from the same volume, his important *Geographia* of 1548.

The chart includes an unusual configuration of North America. The continent merges with Asia to the west, forming a massive land mass. A large bay is carved far into what is today the American Pacific Northwest, with California emerging as a peninsula. In the east the name *Montagna Verde* appears in what is now New York State. Mexico City and several other settlements are marked in North and South America.

Gastaldi also connects Europe and North America via a long land bridge. The bridge passes from North American to *Tierra Del Bacalaos*, *Tierra del Labrador* and *Gronlandia*, places known to Europeans at this time thanks to fishing operations, especially those of the Portuguese.

To the west, Gastaldi highlights the Malucho, or the Moluccas or Maluku islands in Indonesia. Arab merchants had arrived here as early as the fourteenth century to trade for spices, but Europeans had only begun to engage in this commerce in the region in the early sixteenth century. Venice, where Gastaldi lived, benefited from this trade as well as the overland trade from Asia. He also includes Gilolo, today known as Halmahera, the largest island in the Maluku.



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The joining of all the world's continents denotes a continued dependence on Ptolemy's ideas of interconnected landmasses. While Asia still shows many Ptolemaic features, Africa is very detailed thanks to the Portuguese expeditions that informed Europe of the shape of the continent in the late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries. However, another Ptolemaic influence is also at work here, with regard to the source of the Nile.

Ptolemy, in his original second century *Geographia*, postulates that the source lies near the Mountains of the Moon, where water flows into two large lakes at the same latitude. This theory came from Diogenes, who supposedly saw the mountains ca. 110 CE. Gastaldi has followed Ptolemy here in including a branched Nile which flows from a mountain range in southern Africa. This is one of the few inland details included in the chart.

The only landmass not connected to the other continents is Tierra del Fuego, in the south. This massive island represents European cartographic conjecture about the region at the time. Magellan had sailed through the Strait of Magellan, marked here, a quarter of a century before this map was made. However, the Dutch traders Schouten and Le Maire would not round Cape Horn until the early seventeenth century, leaving many to think that Tierra del Fuego was a part of a large southern continent.

Gastaldi's *Geographia*

Gastaldi's maps for the 1548 edition of his version of Ptolemy's *Geographia* are among the earliest examples of his work. They marked him as talented and paved the way to a long and successful career. The *Geographia* is a landmark in the history of cartography and is thought to be the most comprehensive atlas published between Martin Waldseemüller's *Geographiae* of 1513 and the first entirely modern atlas, Abraham Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* of 1570.

Gastaldi's edition of Ptolemy, with 26 Ptolemaic maps (no Ptolemaic world map) and 34 modern maps, was the first pocket-sized edition available on the market. This world chart was the last of the modern maps included. Although published in 1548, Gastaldi had been working on the project since at least 1542, which is the date on the map of Germany included in the volume. His was also the first edition of Ptolemy prepared in the vernacular, making it available to a wider audience.

Despite being prepared on a small format, the maps are original and detailed, as well as clearly and attractively engraved. They are also engraved in copper; Gastaldi's work marked a decisive shift toward the use of this medium in map publication. In this work, Gastaldi devised a new method whereby four copper plates were locked into a frame, speeding the printing process considerably.

Gastaldi was also the first to add regional maps of the American continent, with important maps of the



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eastern seaboard, a map of what is now the southern United States, of South America, and separate maps of Cuba and Hispaniola. Gastaldi himself published only a single edition, but his maps were copied by Girolomo Ruscelli for over 50 years.

This is one of the earliest obtainable world maps and one of the few which departs substantially from Munster's well-known map of 1540. It would be an important addition to any collection of world maps or sixteenth-century maps.

Detailed Condition: