



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

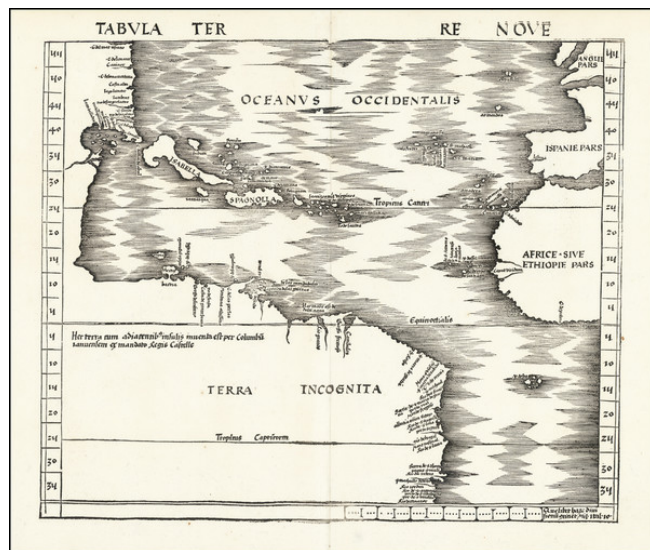
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## Tabula Terre Nove [The Admiral's Map]

**Stock#:** 67071  
**Map Maker:** Waldseemüller  
**Date:** 1513  
**Place:** Strasbourg  
**Color:** Uncolored  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 17.5 x 15 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### *The Earliest Obtainable Map to Focus on America.*

Fine wide-margined example of Waldseemüller's groundbreaking map of 1513, the earliest obtainable map to focus on America.

Martin Waldseemüller's *Tabula Terre Nove* is the first obtainable printed map to focus on the New World. Commonly known as the "Admiral's Map", it is preceded only by the small map of the Spanish Main by Peter Martyr in Seville, 1511 (12 surviving examples known) and Johannes Stobnicza's map of 1512 (3 surviving known examples).

This map is the most important map included in Johann Schott's edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia*, published in Strasbourg in 1513. Given its radical role in asserting the existence of the New World, it was perhaps ironic that it appeared in an edition of Ptolemy, for it helped to shatter the traditional Ptolemaic conventions of geography.

Waldseemüller's map shows a continuous coastline between North and South America, with the massive east-west coastline of South America being the map's single largest feature, extending south to approximately the Rio de la Plata. The enigmatic interior of the continent is aptly labeled "Terra Incognita". In the Caribbean, the islands of Cuba (named Isabella, after Queen Isabella of Spain), Hispaniola (Spagnolla), and Puerto Rico (Boriguem), Jamaica (Jamaiqua) are shown, along with numerous smaller islands of the Caribbean and Bahamian archipelagos.



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North America is charted to a point within modern Atlantic Canada, including a river named Caninor, quite possibly the St. Lawrence River. This region had almost certainly been explored by Iberian fishermen, as well as various expeditions emanating from Bristol. In all, about 20 place names are shown on the North American coastline, drawn primarily from Portuguese sources, including the Cantino Portolano World Map of 1502 and the Caveri World Map of circa 1505.

The representations of Florida pre-dates the first recorded European contact (Ponce de Leon), which occurred the same year that this map was printed. It also predates the first mapping of the Gulf of Mexico done during Alonso Álvarez de Pineda's voyage of 1517-9. The striking appearance of the Floridian peninsula and the telltale curve of the northern Gulf Coast suggest that Waldseemüller had access to the reports of unrecorded voyages which had been completed and were prior to 1513.

The inscription printed in South America notes that the land and adjacent islands were discovered by Columbus under Spanish authority, as it reads, "Hec terra cum adjacentib insulis inuenta est per Columbus ianuensem ex mandato Regis Castelle" ("This land with its adjacent islands was discovered by Columbus, sent by the king of Castile"). Waldseemüller had previously credited Amerigo Vespucci with the discovery of America.

In the text to his 1513 edition of Ptolemy, Waldseemüller refers to the "Admiral" as the source of the map. The identity of the Admiral has long been a source of scholarly debate. Traditionally it was assumed that it was a reference to Columbus, who held the title "Admiral of the Ocean Sea", while others have countered that it is a reference to Amerigo Vespucci, the *Piloto Mayor* of Spain, whose name is closely linked to Waldseemüller's work. More recently, it has been revealed that it likely derives from an inscription in the Caveri's manuscript map of 1505, which resides at Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris.

The map is a cartographic landmark of the utmost importance in the mapping of America. With the exception of the reduced size edition of this map published by Laurent Fries (Lyon, 1522 /1541), it would be more than twenty years before the next large-scale regional map of the eastern coastline of the Americas was published, that being Ramusio's map of 1534.

Martin Waldseemüller (c.1470-c.1522) was one of the most foremost cartographers of the first great period of global exploration, yet details of his sources and his personal history remain enigmatic. Educated at the University of Freiburg im Bressgau, Germany, he became the center of a circle of great humanist scholars based at the Abbey of St. Dié in Alsace. Funded by René II of Lorraine, the school of St. Dié was responsible for a trio of publications which revolutionized the traditional conceptions of global geography. Inspired by Amerigo Vespucci's outrageously entertaining best seller, *Mundus Novus* (1503), which asserted for the first time that the New World was a distinct continental landmass. In 1507 Waldseemüller published a fantastically large World map. This great work definitively shows the Americas as being "the



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Fourth Part of the World" or a new continent, complete with a western coastline showing it to be definitely separate from Asia.

Waldseemüller's monumental world map, which today survives in only a single copy at the Library of Congress, labels the New World as "America" in honor of Vespucci. While Waldseemüller's map was groundbreaking, literally upending the traditional Ptolemaic conception of the globe, his attribution of the discovery of the Americas to Vespucci, and the fact that it showed America as unambiguously being a distinct continental landmass would have been highly controversial, if not incendiary, in many contemporary circles. Moreover, the sources for Waldseemüller's astoundingly progressive geography are an enduring mystery and the topic of much academic debate.

The publication of the "Admiral's Map" in Johann Schott's edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia*, while still revolutionary, was an attempt to back-track somewhat from the bold stance Waldseemüller endeavored in 1507. Unlike in his earlier world map, Waldseemüller does not show the New World to have a Western coastline, and thus its identity as a separate continental landmass is left to be a bit more ambiguous. Moreover, the name "America" has been omitted, and credit for the discovery is explicitly given to Columbus. In spite of this 'clarification', the name 'America' would be picked up by Mercator in 1538, and from there was forevermore the name of the New World.

The style of the *Tabula Terre Nove* is unique and arresting, owing especially to the signature striations which occupy the maritime spaces, which were carved into the pearwood blocks used to make the print. An essential map for collectors of early World and American maps.

#### **Detailed Condition:**

Several minor worm holes, expertly repaired.