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(Port of Palma, Canary Islands--Girolomo Benzoni's Voyage to America) Hieronymi Benzoni in Indiam Occidentalem

Stock#: 79558
Map Maker: De Bry

Date: 1594 circa
Place: Frankfurt
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 8 x 10 inches

Price: $ 495.00



Description:

Marvelous image of the early travel writer Girolamo Benzoni's ship, making its first stop after leaving Spain, on his voyage to the New World in 1541. This map originally appeared in a Latin edition of De Bry's important *Grands Voyages*, which provided an early history of the discovery of the Americas and of the East Indies.

Girolomo Benzoni wrote a remarkable account of his travels in the New World in 1541. He voyaged through the Caribbean and Central and South America, before returning to Italy in 1556. In 1565, the first account of his travels in the New World appeared under the title *Historia del Mondo Nuovo*, which was translated into English, German and French over the next thirty years.

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The present image shows Benzoni, then a young adventurer of 21 years of age, arriving by boat in Palma, where he hoped to find work on a ship headed for the New World. The following passage (translated into English by William Henry Smyth in 1857) occurs at the very beginning of Benzoni's account:

> *When I was a youth of twenty-two years of age, being, like many others, anxious to see the world, and hearing of those countries of the Indians, recently found, called by everybody the New World, I determined to go there. In the year 1541 therefore I started from Milan, in the name of God, the sustainer and governor of all the universe, going by land to Medina del Campo, where the people carry on great traffic during their fairs, receiving merchandize from all Spain. Thence I went to Seville, and thence by the river Guadalquivir to San Lucar de Baramcda, this being the port generally frequented by all the ships going to or coming from India.* ***Having found a ship about to sail, laden with goods for the island of the Great Canary, I embarked, being unable to find a more direct route for the journey I desired to make, for I had been informed that in those islands of the Canaries, which are seven in number, there are constantly ships going loaded to the Indies, with wine, flour, apples, cheese, and other things requisite for those countries. I thus obtained a passage there; and arriving in two months, I learnt that a caravel in the island of Palma was loading wine to go to the Indies, wherefore I started immediately in a brig, reached it in two days, and in a short time the ship was got ready, and we set sail.*** *Having sailed for fourteen days with a prosperous wind, we saw a great quantity of sea birds, from which, much to our joy, we judged that we were near land, and often in the night certain fishes of about a palm in length flew on board, which had what were almost the same as wings like those of birds. Already the skilfull pilot had begun to take the sun's altitude, which altitude is taken at noon, in the open day, but, at night observations were taken by the north [star] which we then had already very low; and after two days sailing in this way, on a Sunday morning at about sun-rise we saw land. The captain of the ship told me that this was the first island that the invincible Christopher Columbus saw in his second voyage, when he departed from Spain to go to the Spanish island [Hispaniola]: and after having sailed with his caravels some twenty-four or twenty-five days since he left the Canary islands, without ever seeing land, though very desirous of seeing it, when he did discover it he named it la Deseada.*

Detailed Condition: