

Commemorative Issue



Stamp Bulletin No. 336



**500th Anniversary - First
Voyage of Columbus**

1992.12.01

Philatelic Bureau, Department of Posts

General Post Office, Colombo 1

SHRI LANKA

Department of Posts
Transworks House,
Colombo - 01.

The Philatelic Bureau of the Department of Posts will issue on 01st December, 1992 four new Postage Stamps in the denominations of Rs. 1.00, Rs. 11.00, Rs. 13.00 and Rs. 15.00 to mark the 500th Anniversary-First Voyage of Columbus.

Christopher Columbus' first voyage to the Americas. Sailing under the flag of Spain, Columbus, an Italian seaman, sighted land in the Bahamas on October 12, 1492.

Although it is now known that the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas was preceded by the voyages and even brief settlement in Newfoundland of Norse seamen some five centuries earlier, this does not diminish Columbus' achievement. The voyages of Columbus took a much longer southerly route and, most importantly, were followed by widespread, rapid and permanent European settlement in the New World.

Aside from his discovery of America, Columbus himself was a remarkable man for his era. Born in humble circumstances to a Genoese weaver father, and largely self-educated both in the basic skills of literacy and in navigation, he made an excellent marriage into a distinguished and propertied Genoese family. He was rewarded for his daring first voyage to the Americas by the Spanish titles of admiral and viceroy, and by a coat of arms. Thus Columbus was a self-made man who rose to the highest levels of society.

Columbus' original agreement with the Spanish Crown for his 1492 voyage enabled him to "discover islands and mainland in the Ocean Sea," the "islands" and "mainland" referring to Cipangu and Cathay—Marco Polo's names for Japan and China. As the world already was accepted as round and there was no knowledge of an intervening continent, Columbus's proposal was deemed quite reasonable and based on respectable authority. Thus when Columbus landed on the Bahamain cay of San Salvador in October 1492, he erroneously regarded the island as an outlying Japanese island. To the end of his days Columbus persisted in this misapprehension. On his fourth and last voyage he explored the western reaches of the Caribbean Sea in search of the Malaya peninsula and India. His characteristic stubbornness and sense of divine guidance led him to reject all contradictory evidence.

Like most of the other early European explores, Columbus was an adventurer in obsessive search of gold. This led to a only half-hearted participation in the Hispaniola colonization efforts and to an at-times brutal treatment of the native Caribbean peoples. In his last years in Spain, Columbus enjoyed a substantial income from his West Indian discoveries, along with a tarnished reputation. He died in Valladolid in relative obscurity, and it remained to his younger son Fernando to rescue his reputation and to raise Columbus to legendary status.

Technical Details

<i>Date of Issue</i>	: 01st December 1992
<i>Denomination</i>	: Rs. 1.00, Rs. 11.00, Rs. 13.00 Rs. 15.00
<i>Designer</i>	: House of Questa Ltd., U. K.
<i>Design</i>	: Rs. 1.00 Depicts First Voyage of Columbus Rs. 11.00 Depicts First Landing - The Americas Rs. 13.00 Depicts The Santa Maria is Wrecked. Rs. 15.00 Depicts The Return to Spain
<i>Format</i>	: Verticle
<i>Stamp size</i>	: 28.45 × 42.58 mm.
<i>Perforation</i>	: 14
<i>Printing process</i>	: Offset Lithography
<i>Sheet composition</i>	: 50 Stamps per Sheet
<i>Printers</i>	: House of Questa Ltd., U.K.
<i>Colours (used)</i>	: 4 Colours
<i>Paper</i>	: 102 g.s.m. Stamp Paper
<i>Gum</i>	: P V A
<i>Quantity printed</i>	: Rs. 1.00 - 500,000 Rs. 11.00 - 250,000 Rs. 13.00 - 250,000 Rs. 15.00 - 250,000
<i>Miniature sheet</i>	: 40,000

Terms of Sale

Orders for supply of the new stamps and First Day Covers should be addressed with full particulars to the Director, Philatelic Bureau, Department of Posts, General Post Office, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka and should be accompanied by Mail Transfer, International Money Order, British Postal Order or Bank Draft drawn on the Bank of Ceylon, Colombo or any other bank in Sri Lanka. Cheques drawn in favour of "Central Bank of Ceylon — Postmaster-General's No. 1, Account No. 10396" and forwarded to the Director, Philatelic Bureau. Uncertified personal cheques are not acceptable.

Telephone Nos. : 2 5 5 8 8, 2 6 1 6 3, 2 6 1 7 7

Special Notice

The Philatelic Bureau is the sole agent of the United Nations Postal Administration for the sale of its stamps in Sri Lanka.

Current stamps of the U.N.P.A. including issues of New York, Geneva and Vienna are available for sale.