

Columbus Sailed the Ocean Green

In Praise of Columbus

by [Kirby Olson](#) (August 2020)



When Columbus sailed to Hispaniola

the natives came out in canoes with flowers.

Two great civilizations merged.

We wanted only their gold,

but they added syphilis.

A few years before, the Ottomans

sacked Byzantium.

Columbus sought gold

so that Isabella and Ferdinand

could push the Muslims from Seville.

Out they went by 1506,

when the last minaret went silent.

Turks were stopped in Slovenia,

and by the Greeks and Romanians,

when Vlad papered the forests with their heads.

The Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria

lit the harbor with sails

as Christ came to America,
and the New World was born,
as depicted by Salvador Dali in 1959.

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