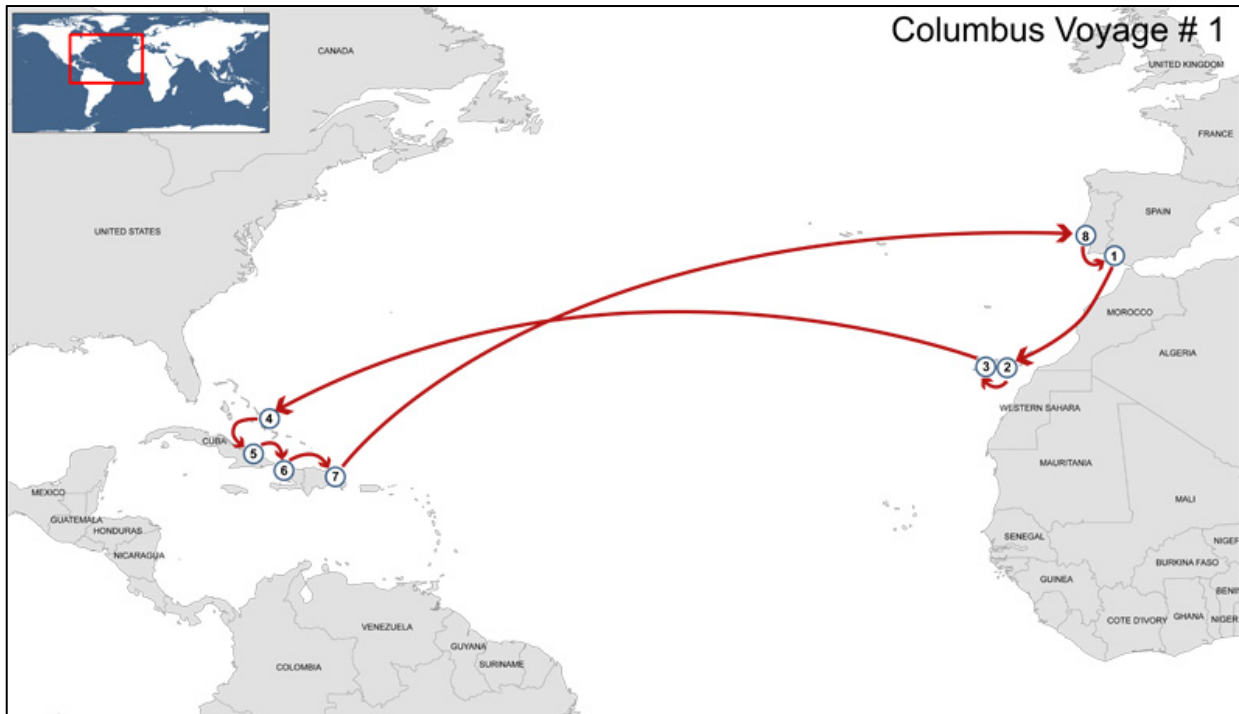


## Indigenous People Day, Columbus Day, and the Taíno people

Columbus first arrived in the New World on October 12, 1492. Below is the map of that first trip.



Map of Columbus's first voyage from Cornell University library

Below is a blow-up picture of those first landings.



- ④ San Salvador Island, Bahamas
- ⑤ Cuba (northeast coast)
- ⑥ Môle-Saint-Nicolas, Haiti
- ⑦ Bay of Rincon, in Samaná, the Dominican Republic

San Salvador's original name was Guanahani. When Columbus landed there he renamed it San Salvador (Spanish for "Holy Savior"). The island was thickly populated by the Taíno people.

It's estimated that these regions were populated by almost 3 million Taíno people by the end of the 15th century. Their population was decimated by the arrival of the Spanish with their brutal treatment and the European diseases.

1. Do you think that Christopher Columbus "discovered" America? Why or why not?
2. Can you think of a better word to describe Columbus's finding a New World for the Europeans?

3. Why do you suppose many people have been angry about celebrating Columbus Day?
  
4. Does your experience with historical literature (like text books) truthfully represent what evidently occurred as the story of Columbus's voyages to the New World are described?

A little math - **How large must Columbus have thought the Earth to be?**

Traveling East from Spain to Calcutta, India = 5,324 miles (8,568 km) but Columbus sailed West.  
 Circumference of Earth = 24,901 miles (40,074 km)



Distance from Spain to San Salvador = 4,170 miles (6,711 km)

Around 240 BC, Eratosthenes, a Greek librarian in Egypt, calculated the circumference of the Earth. By the time of Columbus, it was well known that the Earth was a sphere and that it had a polar diameter of about 7,850 miles.

5. Columbus thought that he had reached the East Indies. How big must he have considered the world's circumference to be?



Sources: <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/about/understandings - eublock6>  
<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/qccalc.shtml>  
<https://pwg.gsfc.nasa.gov/stargaze/Scolumb.htm>