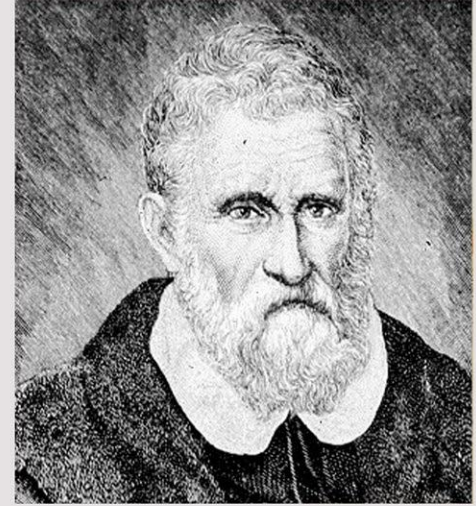


# Fact Sheet

## Marco Polo



**Date of birth:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 1254

**Place of birth:** Venice, Italy

**Why was Marco Polo Famous?** Marco Polo was famous for his travels to China and Central Asia and his work for Kublai Khan, the 1st Emperor of the Yuan dynasty and Emperor of China. He wrote an autobiography called 'The Travels of Marco Polo', which was a detailed chronicle of his experience. This book inspired Christopher Columbus and many other travellers.

**Early Life:** His mother died when he was very young and his father was a merchant. Marco's first trip to Asia was in 1271 when he was 17-years-old. He travelled with his father and his uncle to the Mongol Empire in China. It took four years for them to reach China.

**Important Work:** Marco Polo stayed in China for 24 years and worked as an advisor and aide to Kublai Khan. Marco is famous for his journeys through Asia, where he documented what he saw for Kublai Khan. When he returned to Venice at the age of 44, he was captured by the people living in Genoa and put in jail due to a conflict between Genoa and Venice. During his time in jail he wrote his book, 'The Travels of Marco Polo,' which described his travels through Asia.

**Later Years:** Marco was released from prison in 1299. In 1300 he married Donata Badoer and they had three daughters. He lived until the age of 69, although he was just a few months short of 70 at his death on January 8, 1324.

**Interesting Fact:** Polo's descriptions eventually wound up influencing Christopher Columbus. Columbus took a copy of Marco Polo's book with him when he set off to find a new route to the Orient.