

Spices Changed the World

Written by Veda Boyd Jones



Free Download

★ Contents ★

	The Trade Begins	4
	Why Europeans Wanted Spices	12
	Looking for a New Spice Route	17
	Sailors Go to Sea	22
	The Age of Discovery	29
	Glossary	31
	Index	32

The Trade Begins

Thousands of years ago, big **caravans** of Arab **merchants** crossed the deserts of Asia. They rode on camels. They were going to India and China. They were going to the markets of the Far East. At the markets, they filled their packs with products to trade.

A caravan slowly makes its way across the desert.





From the Far East, merchants brought silk, carpets, and fine china dishes back home. They also brought **spices**. Pepper, **cinnamon**, **nutmeg**, and **cloves** didn't weigh much. A camel could carry a lot of spices.



Sandstorms blow sand and change the look of the desert.

Many bad things could happen to the caravan. Robbers could wait for the merchants on the long route.

Sandstorms could cause them to lose their way. They could die of thirst in the desert. They could lose their way in the mountains. Angry **tribes** could attack them or demand **payment** to cross their lands.

Along the route, a few towns grew up around water wells. Merchants would travel to a town and stop. They would sell their products to another merchant. That merchant would take the products to another town. There, another merchant would buy them and take them to another town. Each time the products were sold, the price went up.





As stronger ships were built, Arab merchants changed their route. They went part of the way to and from the Far East by water. They stayed close to the coast. They were always in sight of land. Now there were new dangers. Pirates robbed them. And there was a danger that the ship could sink.



Italians took spices to towns across Europe.

Even with ships, the merchants still had to use caravans for part of their route. Camels carried their **expensive** products to towns around the Mediterranean. At these towns, merchants from Italy bought the spices. The Italians sold the spices across Europe. They raised the prices again. The Arab merchants got rich. The Italian merchants got rich.