

Putting down a mutiny, Magellan settled-in for the winter. One of his ships - the *Santiago* - was wrecked on coastal rocks.

After seven months, waiting for winter to pass, Magellan resumed his quest for a passageway linking the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans.

Then ... on the 21st of October, 1520, the men discovered an inlet in which the water tasted salty. Might this finally be the right way?

Magellan had, in fact, discovered the Strait which later bore his name - but no one knew it. A circular place, it was surrounded by mountains. Would there actually be a way out?

The *San Antonio*, in an act of rebellion, turned round and headed back to Spain. The ship carried many of the expedition's provisions - a devastating blow for Magellan.

It took more than a month for Magellan to make it through the 530-kilometer strait. Weeping for joy, he realized he'd found the fabled passage when his ships sailed into the Pacific on the 28th of November, 1520.

So important was this discovery - a water passage linking the two oceans - that the Strait of Magellan was continuously used by commercial ships for the next four hundred years. It wasn't until the man-made Panama Canal that the Strait of Magellan was replaced by a shorter passageway.

Because the ocean on the western end of the strait was so calm, Magellan named it the "Pacific" - the peaceful sea. What he hadn't counted on - what he could not have known - was its huge expanse.

The expedition's three remaining ships sailed ... and sailed ... and sailed ... with no land in sight.

See, also:

[Magellan and his Voyage of Discovery - Part 1](#)

[Magellan and his Voyage of Discovery - Part 2](#)

[Magellan and his Voyage of Discovery - Part 4](#)

[Magellan and his Voyage of Discovery - Part 5](#)

Credits:

Clip from "[Voyages of Discovery: Circumnavigation](#)," produced for the BBC.

[Paul Rose](#) (former ten-year base commander of the British Rothera research station in Antarctica) presents the unimaginable story of Ferdinand Magellan and his crew (as they attempt to find a westward passage to the Spice Islands), in "[Voyages of Discovery - Circumnavigation](#)."

Directed by Sean Smith; written by Chris Bould.

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