

The Discovery of America – Santiago Bolívar

Spain discovered America in 1492, beginning the modern age.

In 1513, Spanish vessels sent by Ponce de León discovered Florida, initiating the Spanish presence in what is now the United States, which led to the exploration of the entire East and West Coasts and part of the Canadian coasts, naming every noteworthy geographical feature on them. Inland, the Spaniards deeply explored the territory, despite the absence of precious metals.

They were attempting to guarantee communications in the best way possible: with Asia to the West; with the Manila galleon, and with Europe to the East; with the West Indies Fleet, and inland, in the nexus between the East and the West. The method used by Spain for achieving such a task was preferably to utilize peaceful methods, by settling the Spaniards and their way of life with a clear intention of permanency, which is why the conflicts between the indigenous population and those of Spanish origin were fewer in this area.

This enormous Spanish task of discovering, exploring, instructing and coexisting with the native population, has left an enormous and fulfilling legacy, with notable names like the ones previously mentioned: Ponce de León, Vázquez de Ayllón, Alonso Álvarez de Pineda, Esteban Gómez, Pánfilo de Narváez, Cabeza de Vaca, Menéndez de Avilés, Hernando de Soto, Vázquez de Coronado, Juan de Oñate, Junípero Serra, and of course of all those Spaniards that lost their lives there in the effort.

To the same extent, it is necessary to highlight the contribution of Spain in the defense of the independence of the United States, through important figures such as King Carlos III, Jerónimo Grimaldi, Marquis of Grimaldi, José Moñino y Redondo, Count of Floridablanca, Pedro Pablo Abarca de Bolea, Count of Aranda, José de Gálvez, Bernardo de Gálvez, Matías de Gálvez, Francisco de Saavedra de Sangronis, and not to mention all the Spaniards that lost their lives in support of the independence, which facilitated a profound relationship between the United States and Spain for almost the entirety of the 19th Century.

Admiral Santiago Bolívar Piñeiro.