Juan Sebastián De Elcano Encyclopedia Article

Juan Sebastián De Elcano

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c. 1476-1526

Spanish Basque mariner who completed the historic circumnavigation of the globe begun by Ferdinand Magellan (c. 1480-1521). Elcano sailed from Spain in 1519 as captain of the *Concepción,* but after Magellan perished in the Philippines in April 1521, he assumed command of the entire expedition. The group faced enormous hardships on the return journey, and by the time they landed in Spain in September 1522, only one ship (the *Victoria*), 18 sailors including Elcano, and four captured Indians remained. Elcano died in 1525 during an expedition to seize the Moluccas on behalf of Spain's Charles V.