



## The Travels of Marco Polo

*Rustichello da Pisa (1272 -1300) and Marco Polo (1254 - 1324)*

Read by:	Multiple readers	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	15 hours 37 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1133
Language:	English	UPC:	0683422134524
Style:	Collaborative	MSLP:	11.99
Genre:	Travel, History		

*The Travels of Marco Polo* is the English title of a travelogue about Marco Polo's travels to Asia and his experiences at the court of Kublai Khan in the 13th century. Polo left Venice with his father and uncle in 1276 to travel the Silk Road to China, which are called Cathay (North China) and Manji (south China) in the book, and left China in 1291, arriving in Italy in 1295. The book was written by French romance writer Rustichello da Pisa from stories he heard from Marco Polo when two were imprisoned during 1298-1299. It is believed that the stories were dictated by Marco Polo and that da Pisa may also have worked from Polo's notes. The book was published about 1300 and titled both *Livre des Merveilles du Monde* (*Book of the Marvels of the World*) and *Devisement du Monde* (*Description of the World*) in French. It consists of four books: Book One describes the Middle East and Central Asia; Book Two describes China; Book Three covers coastal lands of the east, including Japan, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, and the east coast of Africa; Book Four describes the return to Italy. Produced before the advent of the printing press, the book was quite popular. Some have questioned the veracity of the sometimes fabulous tales, but scholars have come to believe that the accounts are largely authentic and can be trusted in broad terms. *The Travels of Marco Polo* were an important influence in Christopher Columbus' quest to seek a western route to Asia by sea.

Marco Polo (September 15, 1254 – January 8, 1324) was an Italian merchant who is well known for his stories of his travels to Asia and the court of Kublai Khan, documented in *The Travels of Marco Polo*. He was born into a wealthy and prestigious merchant family in Venice. His father Niccolo and uncle Maffeo travelled to China before Marco was born, and he did not meet them until the age of 15 when they returned in 1269. Their travels spanned a course of 24 years, many of them spent in service to Kublai Khan. When they returned in 1295 Venice was at war with Genoa. Marco was imprisoned in Genoa, where he related his stories to cellmate Rustichello da Pisa. He was released, made a fortune as a merchant, married and fathered three children. While Marco Polo was not the first to visit China, he was the first to document the experience and thus providing Europeans with their first comprehensive picture of the Far East.