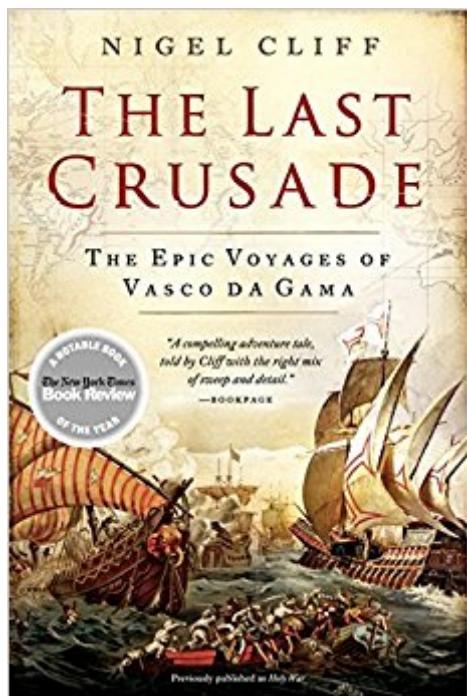


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The Last Crusade: The Epic Voyages Of Vasco Da Gama



Synopsis

Historian Nigel Cliff delivers a sweeping, radical reinterpretation of Vasco da Gama's pioneering voyages, revealing their significance as a decisive turning point in the struggle between Christianity and Islam—a series of events which forever altered the relationship between East and West. Perfect for readers of Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage, Galileo's Daughter, and Atlantic, this first-ever complete account of da Gama's voyages includes new information from the recently discovered diaries of his sailors and an extraordinary series of letters between da Gama and the Zamorin, a king of modern-day Kerala, India. Cliff, the author of The Shakespeare Riots, draws upon his own travels in da Gama's footsteps to add detail, authenticity, and a contemporary perspective to this riveting, one-of-a-kind historical epic.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Lively and ambitious... Cliff has a novelist's gift for depicting character... he brings 16th century Portugal in all its splendor and squalor pungently to life.” (Eric Ormsby, *New York Times Book Review*)
“Epic... a compelling adventure tale, told by Cliff with the right mix of sweep and detail.” (BookPage)
“Readers who enjoy a yeasty narrative by a skilled storyteller will mark this book as one of their favorites of the year.” (Cleveland Plain Dealer)
“Nigel Cliff's Holy War is one of the most readable, engaging, and provoking books of the season, hands down... Cliff... writes with considerable energy, humor and narrative

skill. (Kansas City Star) A fresh take on the history of the age of discovery. Cliff opens new vistas on much-explored territory. (Publishers Weekly) A useful addition to a continuing lively discussion of Christianity and Islam, situated both in respect of religions and culture, as well as empires and trade. (Kirkus) Cliff tells an often thrilling tale of adventure. He effectively restores the luster of da Gama's achievement and provocatively reassesses the goals and significance of his expedition. (Booklist) A story told with great flair and serious scholarship. (James Eckardt, *The Nation*) A stirring epic book. A thrilling narrative. This is broad-brush history, but it is accurate, and enlivened by splendid spots of color. (Sunday Times (London))

In 1498 a young captain named Vasco da Gama sailed from Portugal, circumnavigated Africa, crossed the Indian Ocean, and discovered the sea route to the Indies and, with it, access to the fabled wealth of the East. It was the longest voyage ever undertaken at that time. With blood-red Crusader crosses emblazoned on their sails, the explorers arrived in the heart of the Muslim East in an era when the old hostilities between Christianity and Islam had risen to a new level of intensity. In two voyages that spanned six years, da Gama would fight a running sea battle that would ultimately change the fate of three continents. The Last Crusade is an epic tale of spies, intrigue, and treachery of bravado, brinkmanship, and confused, often comical collisions between cultures offering a surprising new interpretation of the broad sweep of history.

In a style that combines the right amount of detail within the grand scope of the age of Portuguese exploration and expansion, Mr Cliff has produced a fine enthralling account of Vasco da Gama's role in the exploration of East Africa and India by Europeans. It is rare to read a work of history and be caught up and absorbed in it as if it were a novel, almost disappointed to have finished it. That's how well written and exciting The Last Crusade was for me. Cliff's theme is that the Portuguese explorations were intrinsically tied to the struggle between Christianity and the Islamic world with long reaching historical ramifications that extend to the present day. He makes his case effectively and enlightens and entertains while doing so. I absolutely loved this book and highly recommend it.

The three voyages of da Gama around Africa to India. A lot of emphasis on the anti-Islam nature of the voyages and da Gama's hatred for Islam. Of course, he was a product of his times and his origin in Inquisitional Iberia. There is much information I didn't know, and it is told in a compelling way. Cliff

is a good writer and this is a story worth knowing.

This should be a required read to breath air. The pages turn themselves as you realize where we are today has been going on for thousands of years. The beginning of the book gives you the background to proceed to destroy a valid society. The trips that Vasco took to India are amazing and Nigel Cliff writes in detail what the trip took to get back with the spices the West needed. I'm reading for the second time to get the finer points correct. Just order the book and open your eyes.....

A fascinating book that covers Portugal's exploration and discovery of the sea route to India. There is a wealth of information here that provides the cultural, religious and economic context for Portugal's drive to explore the coast of Africa and finally reach the Indian Ocean. I highly recommend this book.

I've tried reading this a few times. I don't know if it is me but it never really 'clicked'. I felt like there were a lot of general statements (which I guess I am making now). Certainly an interesting topic however and I'd recommend it to someone looking at Vasco Da Gama and subsequent European expansion into Asia.

The Last Crusade is very well written book that give the reader the chance to understand the multiple cultural influences that are so evident at the Indian basin. At the same time, the way the author links Vasco da Gama epic voyages with the past Crusades let learn how relevant these campaigns developed in the Middle Ages were and how those influenced the Europeans Courts, specially in the continent, at the time to interact with the Muslim world. At the same time, this book help to have a comprehensive view on the complexities the cultural factors have in the present.

Well written... comparable narrative history style to Nathaniel Philbrick and Roger Crowley. Looking forward to seeing more from this author.

Fascinating and well-written. I've come away with a very different perspective on the Age of Discovery than what I was taught in elementary school.

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