

Columbus' steps retraced

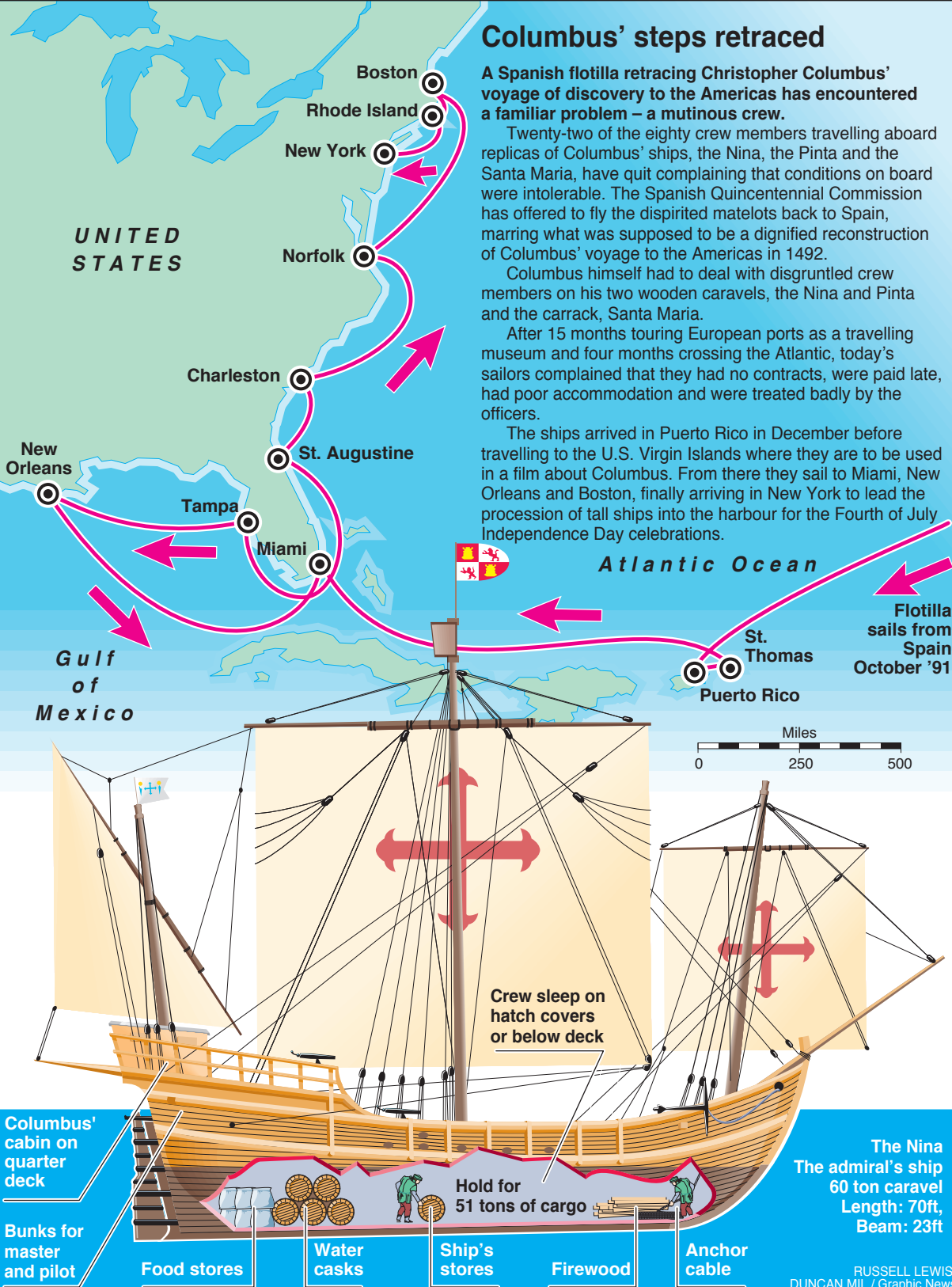
A Spanish flotilla retracing Christopher Columbus' voyage of discovery to the Americas has encountered a familiar problem – a mutinous crew.

Twenty-two of the eighty crew members travelling aboard replicas of Columbus' ships, the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria, have quit complaining that conditions on board were intolerable. The Spanish Quincentennial Commission has offered to fly the dispirited matelots back to Spain, marring what was supposed to be a dignified reconstruction of Columbus' voyage to the Americas in 1492.

Columbus himself had to deal with disgruntled crew members on his two wooden caravels, the Nina and Pinta and the carrack, Santa Maria.

After 15 months touring European ports as a travelling museum and four months crossing the Atlantic, today's sailors complained that they had no contracts, were paid late, had poor accommodation and were treated badly by the officers.

The ships arrived in Puerto Rico in December before travelling to the U.S. Virgin Islands where they are to be used in a film about Columbus. From there they sail to Miami, New Orleans and Boston, finally arriving in New York to lead the procession of tall ships into the harbour for the Fourth of July Independence Day celebrations.



Atlantic Ocean

Flotilla sails from Spain October '91

Miles
0 250 500

Crew sleep on hatch covers or below deck

Columbus' cabin on quarter deck

Bunks for master and pilot

Food stores

Water casks

Ship's stores

Firewood

Anchor cable

The Nina
The admiral's ship
60 ton caravel
Length: 70ft,
Beam: 23ft

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