



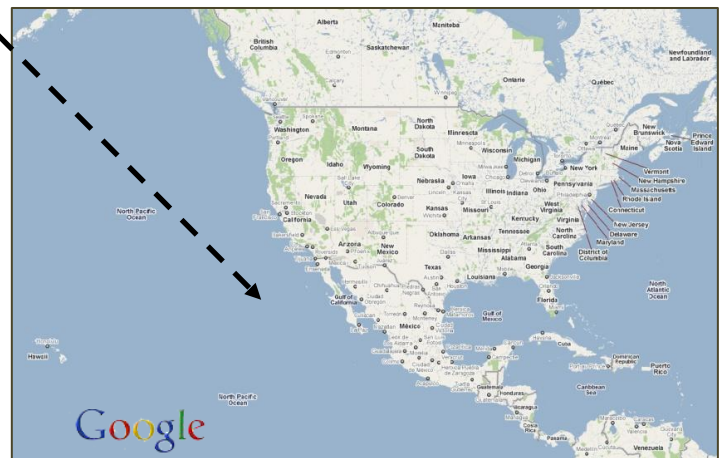
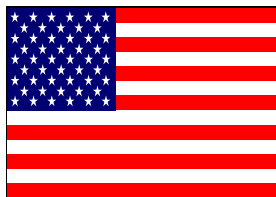
# Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



## Where are we now?

- Darren and Sandy are on the Pacific Ocean, between California and Hawaii, U.S.A, located at 31° N and 130° W.
- We have traveled approximately 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) from our starting point in California.



## People and Culture

- The Pacific Ocean was the last ocean discovered by European explorers. The first to view it was Spanish explorer Vasco Nunez de Balboa, who crossed Panama in 1513.
- Ferdinand Magellan sailed the Pacific in 1521 on the first voyage around the world. He called it "Mar Pacifico" in Portuguese, meaning "peaceful sea".
- When gold was discovered in California in 1848, the Pacific Ocean was two of the three ways to reach the gold mines from the U.S. East Coast. Travelers either sailed around Cape Horn in South America or crossed Panama from the Atlantic Ocean to get to the Pacific.
- Air travel across the Pacific began when the *China Clipper* made the first commercial transpacific flight on November 23, 1935. Planes took off and landed in the water and traveled from San Francisco to the Orient, via stops in the Hawaii, Midway, Wake, Guam and Philippines islands. The trip took about a week but was faster than the two weeks it took by sea.
- Today, the Pacific Ocean supports busy trade ports, such as Sydney, Australia, Shanghai and Hong Kong, China, Singapore, Bangkok, Thailand, Yokohama, Japan, and San Francisco and Los Angeles, United States.

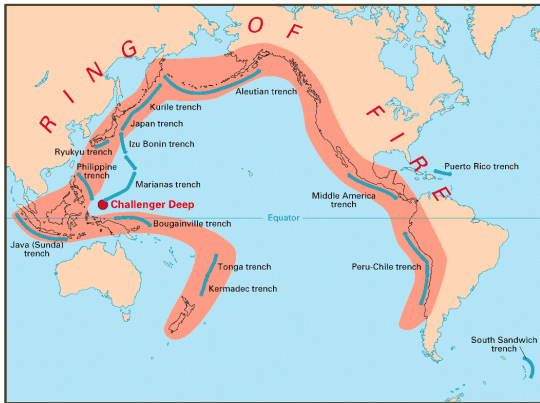
### Did you know?

The Age of Exploration or Age of Discovery lasted from the early 15th century until the 17th century. During this time many Europeans explored the world by ship to find new trade routes, as well as gold and silver. These voyages included the world circum-navigation by Magellan and Columbus's arrival in America in 1492. These discoveries opened up a larger world to explore.

source: [About.com](http://About.com)



*The China Clipper arriving in Hong Kong*  
(source: [Aviation History.com](http://Aviation History.com))



Map of the Pacific Ocean, showing Challenger Deep and "Ring of Fire" (source: [USGS.gov](http://USGS.gov))

## Coral Reefs

Coral reefs are complex ecosystems, supporting up to 33% of fish species. Several major coral reefs are located in the Pacific Ocean, including the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, as well as ones in New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea. The highest coral reef marine biodiversity is also found in the Pacific Ocean, between the Philippines and Indonesia.



sources: [EPA.gov](http://EPA.gov),  
[Coral-reef-info.com](http://Coral-reef-info.com), [Flickr.com/IanRobertson](http://Flickr.com/IanRobertson)

## Nature and Environment

- The Pacific Ocean is larger than all the Earth's continents put together and covers 1/3 of the planet's total surface. There are about 25,000 islands found in this ocean, more than the rest of the world's oceans combined.
- It is the deepest ocean in the world. The Mariana Trench is the deepest portion, with Challenger Deep, at over 35,000 (10,000 meters) deep, the maximum depth. If the tallest mountain in the world, Mount Everest, was placed on the bottom, it would fit totally under the ocean, with room to spare.
- A zone, known as the "Ring of Fire", surrounds the Pacific Ocean. This ring refers to the frequent occurrence of earthquakes and volcanic activity. More than 300 undersea volcanoes are still active in the region.
- Many animals are found in the Pacific Ocean, ranging from blue, humpback and sperm whales, to sharks and other varieties of fish to tiny plankton.
- Endangered animals living in the Pacific Ocean include the sea lion, sea otter, seals, turtles and whales.

## Our Plans

- We have finally begun our journey! We are now on a ship, carrying about 700 passengers, making our way toward Hawaii.
- After five days at sea from our starting point in San Diego we will arrive in Honolulu, Hawaii. We will spend a day there and another day on the island of Kauai before continuing to other Pacific Islands. We will reach Sydney, Australia 29 days after leaving the United States.
- We look forward to answering as many of your questions as we can, so please send them to us via Facebook, Twitter, our [website](#) or at [info@TrekkingThePlanet.net](mailto:info@TrekkingThePlanet.net).

## Pacific Ocean Contributions

The Pacific provides food, fuel and goods for use around the world, including:

- 60% of the world's fresh fishing catch
- Offshore oil and gas fields
- Minerals
- Sand and gravel for construction



*sources: [CIA.gov](http://CIA.gov),  
[Flickr.com/Jessie Reeder](http://Flickr.com/JessieReeder)*

## More Information

- <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/explorers/1500a.shtml>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific\\_Ocean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Ocean)
- <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/pacific-ocean-facts.html>
- <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h2091.html>
- <http://www.flyingclippers.com/transoceanic.html>
- <http://www.nature-articles.com/Art/34553/267/Pacific-Ocean-Facts-and-Its-Underwater-Life.html>

## Our Partners



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported License.