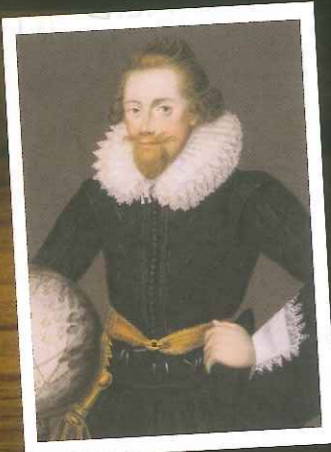


# In search of El Dorado



In 1595, Sir Walter Raleigh set sail from England on an expedition. He was looking for the legendary city of El Dorado, which he believed was in South America. Although El Dorado was never found, Raleigh and his crew did return to England with many riches, and stories of 'far off' places.

Life on board a Tudor galleon was dangerous and difficult. This inventory shows some of the things the sailors would have taken with them on their journey.

## Navigation aids

The ship's pilot had to guide the ship across the oceans using only simple equipment and the stars.

- magnetic compasses
- traverse board – a pegboard with strings attached. This was used to record the journey so sailors could retrace their route
- sundials and hour glasses
- charts, tide-tables and pilots' books, containing information on coastlines, winds, dangerous reefs and tides
- sounding lead – a lead weight on a rope which had a hollow end containing sticky animal fat which picked up sand from the seabed. This showed the pilot how deep the sea was.

6

## Weapons

Trading ships were less heavily armed than warships, but they still carried weapons for defence against attack by pirates.

- cannons
- iron, stone and lead shot
- gunpowder
- handguns
- carved wooden linstocks for lighting gunpowder
- pikes, swords, bills and daggers for fighting pirate invaders
- wooden bows and arrows made from goose or swan feathers

## Medicine chest

This was used by the ship's barber-surgeon. He trimmed hair and beards, healed wounds and performed operations – including amputations!

- drug flask
- jars of herbal ointment
- syringes
- metal bleeding bowl
- barber's bowl
- mallets for knocking out patients before operations
- velvet caps worn by barber-surgeon
- bandages soaked in herbal lotions

## Food supplies

The cooper looked after the wooden casks that contained food and drink. Most of the meat and fish was salted or smoked to stop it going bad.

- bacon, beef, pork, lamb, venison and fish
- biscuits
- damsons and plums
- water

## Cooking and tableware

The cook and his assistants worked in the ship's galley, preparing meals.

- pewter and wooden plates
- knives and spoons
- leather and wooden flagons
- pepper mills
- pots and cauldrons for cooking
- leather water buckets for putting out fires
- candlesticks
- bellows
- wood for fuel to cook with

## Entertainment

Sailors entertained themselves with gambling and board games. Musical instruments may also have helped to keep sailors in rhythm when pulling on sail ropes.

- dice and dominoes
- backgammon
- pipes and fiddles

## Bathroom kits

Officers kept these with their personal belongings.

- folding manicure kit
- combs for getting rid of lice in hair
- spice-filled pomanders to hide bad smells
- bone scoops for cleaning out ears

## Clothing repairs

The crew were responsible for keeping their own clothes in good repair.

- leather shoes
- ribbons and threads
- buttons, pins and thimbles
- weaving loom



7