



St Nicholas News

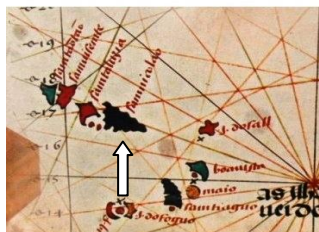
A communication channel to keep in touch with St Nicholas' Friends around the world

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director of the
St Nicholas Research Center in Bari

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THREE ISLANDS OF ST NICHOLAS: CABO VERDE, ITALY AND CALIFORNIA

**ILHA DE
SAO
NICOLAU
CABO VERDE**



Cabo Verde is the extreme western cape of Senegal and all Africa. At a little less than 600 km of distance from African coasts there is in the Atlantic Ocean the archipelago of the Republic of Green Cape Islands. From 1975 this Republic is independent from Portugal and is inhabited by half million people. Saint Nicholas Island (Sao Nicolau), here indicated by the white arrow, only recently was inserted in touristic itineraries (with a little airport).

The archipelago was discovered by the venetian navigator Alvise Cadamosto (together with Antoniotto Usodimare) in the year 1456, while the genovese navigator Antonio de Noli a few years later went close to St Nicholas Island. But a true exploration of the Islands of St Nicholas, St Vincent and St Anthony was achieved only by **Diogo Alfonso Gomes** in the year 1461 or 1462. For about two centuries St Nicholas was almost uninhabited, only sometimes employed

like stop off in the commerce of slaves toward America. Afterwards, in the middle of XVIIth century, a first village was built (Porto da Lapa). Compelled by pirates attacks, the inhabitants retired into the inner part of the island, where a village arose, to which was given the name of **Ribeira Brava** (see photo below). Its access to the sea was the Preguiça Harbour





A certain rebirth came after pope Gregory XII's decision (1412) to send there the **Lateran canons**.

In the year 1567 the abbey resisted to the attacks of a fleet of Soliman the Magnific. But the decline of the **XVIII century** pushed king Ferdinand IV of Naples to transform it into a **penal colony**. In 1911 were confined here **1300 Libians** who guided a fierce resistance against the Italian occupation of their country.

The Island is protected by contrary currents by the presence of Cretaccio, the nearby reef-island. But on the *Corriere del Mezzogiorno* (Friday 12 august 2011) appeared this article: *Tremiti, wave-motion is cleaving Cretaccio*.

In danger is St Nicholas' Island too. Cretaccio is the smallest of the Tremiti Islands and is victim of an erosion phenomenon that threatens its existence.

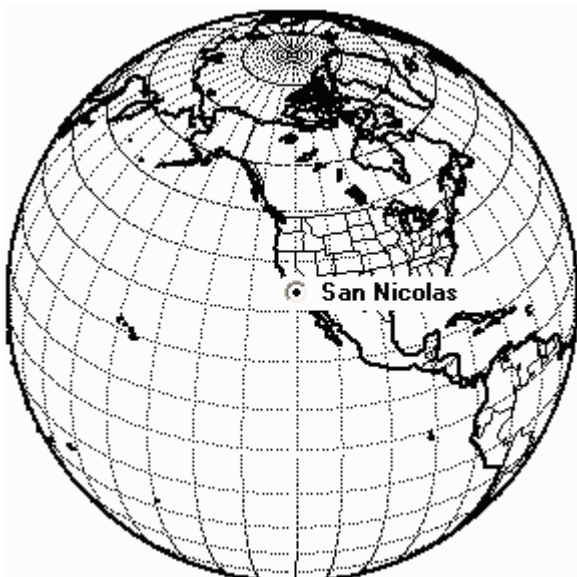
This may create problems to St Nicholas too, because Cretaccio is "the unique barrier protecting the island from the north wind. Its disappearance would let the marine streams cause a dangerous erosion to St Nicholas too".



SAN NICOLAS ISLAND

CALIFORNIA'S CHANNEL ISLANDS

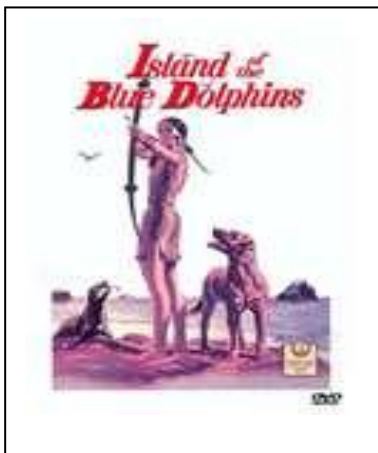
As it happened for many places of Northern America, where the West has retained the Spanish names, St Nicholas Island too in California is written "San Nicolas Island".



San Nicolas Island is the one with the red star



This Island in front of the Californian Coasts was discovered by the Spanish explorer Sebastián Vizcaíno in the year 1602. The inhabitants were of the same race of the Tongva of the dry land and Santa Catalina. The Mission Fathers, to free them from the oppressions of the Russian-Aleutian buccaneers, shifted this little Nicoleño pueblo, who in few decades disappeared.



To this extinction is linked the legend of the *Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island*, who at the baptism received the name of Juana Maria. Living alone on the Island for 18 years, she was found by captain George Nidever in 1853 and brought to Santa Barbara. She died few years afterwards, because not accustomed to normal Californian nutrition. Her history inspired Scott O'Dell's novel *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (medal prize 1960).

At first whaleboat's base, from 1957 San Nicolas Island was served by Naval Outlying Field and used as weapons testing and training facility. Part of the Pacific Missile Range, its ground was selected for several nuclear tests.



Officially the island is uninhabited, but every day there are more than 200 marins experts in high military technology. In these last years there has been a development of specialistic tourism.



Its landscape is wild and hosts at least three different species of rare birds. Their existence is however put in danger by the voraciousness of wild cats and foxes.



Greetings from Bari
to all St Nicholas' friends
 Orthodox, Protestant, Catholic,
 Monophysite and Nestorian