



City of Fortune: How Venice Ruled the Seas

Roger Crowley

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“The rise and fall of Venice’s empire is an irresistible story and [Roger] Crowley, with his rousing descriptive gifts and scholarly attention to detail, is its perfect chronicler.”—*The Financial Times*

The *New York Times* bestselling author of *Empires of the Sea* charts Venice’s astounding five-hundred-year voyage to the pinnacle of power in an epic story that stands unrivaled for drama, intrigue, and sheer opulent majesty. *City of Fortune* traces the full arc of the Venetian imperial saga, from the ill-fated Fourth Crusade, which culminates in the sacking of Constantinople in 1204, to the Ottoman-Venetian War of 1499–1503, which sees the Ottoman Turks supplant the Venetians as the preeminent naval power in the Mediterranean. In between are three centuries of Venetian maritime dominance, during which a tiny city of “lagoon dwellers” grow into the richest place on earth. Drawing on firsthand accounts of pitched sea battles, skillful negotiations, and diplomatic maneuvers, Crowley paints a vivid picture of this avaricious, enterprising people and the bountiful lands that came under their dominion. From the opening of the spice routes to the clash between Christianity and Islam, Venice played a leading role in the defining conflicts of its time—the reverberations of which are still being felt today.

“[Crowley] writes with a racy briskness that lifts sea battles and sieges off the page.”—*The New York Times*

“Crowley chronicles the peak of Venice’s past glory with Wordsworthian sympathy, supplemented by impressive learning and infectious enthusiasm.”—*The Wall Street Journal*

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