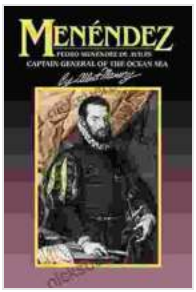
# Pedro Menéndez de Avilés: Captain General of the Ocean Sea and Founder of St. Augustine

Pedro Menéndez de Avilés (1519-1574) was a Spanish admiral, explorer, and conquistador. He is best known for founding the city of St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565, which is the oldest continuously inhabited European settlement in the United States. Menéndez was also the first Captain General of the Ocean Sea, a position that gave him command of all Spanish naval forces in the Atlantic Ocean.

## Early Life and Career

Menéndez was born in Avilés, Spain, in 1519. He began his naval career at a young age, and by the age of 20, he was commanding his own ship. In 1544, he was appointed Captain General of the Spanish Armada, and he led several successful expeditions against the French and English.




**Menendez: Pedro Menendez de Aviles, Captain General of the Ocean Sea** by Susan Hertog

4.8 out of 5

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|---|---|
| Language | : English |
| File size | : 2435 KB |
| Text-to-Speech | : Enabled |
| Screen Reader | : Supported |
| Enhanced typesetting | : Enabled |
| Word Wise | : Enabled |
| Print length | : 116 pages |

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## Expedition to Florida

In 1565, Menéndez was given command of an expedition to Florida. His mission was to establish a permanent Spanish colony in the region and to suppress the French Huguenot settlement at Fort Caroline. Menéndez arrived in Florida in August 1565, and he quickly established a base at St. Augustine. He then marched inland and attacked Fort Caroline, which he captured on September 20, 1565. The French Huguenots were massacred, and Menéndez founded a new settlement at the site of Fort Caroline, which he named San Mateo.

### Governor of Florida

Menéndez was appointed governor of Florida in 1567. He established a strong Spanish presence in the region, and he led several expeditions against the Native American tribes that resisted Spanish rule. Menéndez also founded several other settlements in Florida, including Pensacola and Santa Elena.

### Later Career

Menéndez returned to Spain in 1572, and he was appointed Captain General of the Ocean Sea in 1573. He held this position until his death in 1574. During his tenure as Captain General, Menéndez led several expeditions against the Dutch and English, and he helped to secure Spanish control of the Atlantic Ocean.

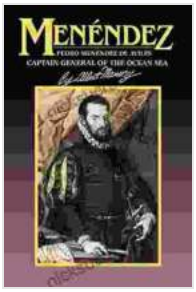
### Legacy

Pedro Menéndez de Avilés is considered one of the most important figures in the history of Florida. He founded the first permanent European settlement in the United States, and he played a major role in establishing

Spanish control of the region. Menéndez was a skilled navigator and military commander, and he is remembered as a hero in Spain and Florida.

### Further Reading

- Pedro Menéndez de Avilés Britannica
- Pedro Menéndez de Avilés Florida Memory
- Pedro Menéndez de Avilés Encyclopedia

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