

A Closer Look at the Map

- Chaves used the Latin words **Septentrio**, **Oriens**, and **Occidens** to orient his map
 - **Septentrio** refers to the unexplored areas in the north, and comes from the seven stars of the Great Dipper
 - **Oriens** refers to the east, where the sun rises
 - **Occidens** refers to the west, where the sun sets

- Cartographers used the words **Cum Privilegio** (Latin) to establish the proper authority of a map. Published with the King's approval, these words are also included in the cartouche on this map.



- **Circulus Cancrici** (Latin – Circle of the Crab) refers to the Tropic of Cancer at latitude 23.5°N.
- Chaves drew remarkably accurate latitude lines on this map, but his attempt at calculating longitude was problematic. Between the 16th and 18th centuries, longitude lines are a serious puzzle for cartographers – how did one measure lines that bend around the earth and meet at the poles? As more ships sailed transcontinental voyages, it became imperative that they sail swiftly and without incident. The puzzle was solved in part by clock maker John Harrison, who submitted his solution for the Longitude Prize to the British government. For more information, visit the [Royal Museum in Greenwich](http://www.rmg.co.uk/harrison) to learn more about this problem and solution. <http://www.rmg.co.uk/harrison>
- Chaves chose Toledo, Spain as the prime meridian for this map. Before 1884 when Greenwich, England was chosen as the international prime meridian, cartographers promoted their own ideas or countries with their placement of the prime meridian.
- Early explorers recognized the value of the St. Johns River in Florida. Although cartographers changed the name and placement of the river many times between 1500 and 1850, the river was always present on a Florida map. The place names given to the river on different occasions offer clues about the origin and intended audiences of the map. On this map, Chaves used a name given to the river by Spanish sailors – **Rio de Corrientes** (River of Currents).



- The promontory **C. de Canareal** (Cape Canaveral) is found on the east coast. The easy-to-recognize landmark was essential to navigators who used the cape to calculate distances from one point to another. These measurements kept them from running into the coastline and other obstructions that might damage their boats and cost them their lives. The name Canareal came from Spanish sailors who thought the tall reeds growing along the coastline were sugar cane – ‘canareal.’ Cape Canaveral is still used today and is the oldest name in the continental United States designating a specific location.
- Perhaps in an effort to protect Spain’s vital base location in the New World from rivals, St. Augustine is not included on this map.

