

Chapter 9

The Worst of Series

Here is a quick view of our —THE WORST OF series. Choose any of the —Worst Of categories that interest you or are a major concern and avoid those that rate the worst of in that category. If you have a tremendous fear or concern about natural disasters, diseases, crime, or not having enough money to live on, then peruse this series.

We take subjects that you might think are more important than others, wanting them to be weighed heavy against all the other categories, and come up with the worst country in that subject. Keep in mind; these are taken from our top 25 countries from the overall rating system. You can use this series to eliminate a country for making the ‘worst of’ in the category that is important to you.

Because many people simply are not looking at the 11th through 25th best countries, and will only consider the Top Ten, after each listing in our The Worst Of series we include a listing of all the Top Ten countries that made that Worst Of category.

Why do we not consider all 200 countries in our The Worst Of series? The whole purpose of this site is to provide pertinent and factual information on where to survive the next 5 to 15 years. It is not information on the ugliest country in the world, (Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan), the poorest (Sierra Leone), the most dangerous (Somalia, Pakistan, or Iraq), or the most politically corrupt (Nigeria, Cameroon, North Korea, and several others vie for the worst.)

Therefore, we take viable countries, which based upon our 100 category rating system came out to be the BEST 25 SURVIVAL countries in the world, using them to compare against each other, to present to you —The Worst Of.

Here are the Top 25 Survival Countries, based upon our 100 category rating system. These are the only countries that we include in our “Worst Of” series.

#1	Uruguay	657 points	TREND: Level
#2	Chile	654 points	TREND: Upward
#3	Costa Rica	643 Points	TREND: Upward
#4	Argentina	623 points	TREND: Down
#5	Ecuador	618 points	TREND: Level
#6	New Zealand	617 points	TREND: Upward
#7	Brazil	611 points	TREND: Down
#8	Peru	595 points	TREND: Upward
#8	Australia	595 points	TREND: Upward
#10	Paraguay	580 points	TREND: Level

#11	Bolivia	580 points	TREND: Level
#12	Panama	575 points	TREND: Upward
#13	Belize	570 points	TREND: Down
#14	Colombia	570 points	TREND: Level
#15	Venezuela	570 points	TREND: Upward
#16	Trinidad & Tobago	565 points	TREND: Down
#17	Mauritius	560 points	TREND: Down
#18	Nicaragua	560 points	TREND: Down
#19	Italy	560 points	TREND: Level
#20	Madagascar	555 points	TREND: Level
#21	Switzerland	540 points	TREND: Level
#22	Tonga	530 points	TREND: Level
#23	Dominica	530 Points	TREND: Level
#24	Norway	525 points	TREND: Upward
#25	South Africa	515 points	TREND: Down

The Worst Countries for Natural Disasters

Earthquakes, Volcanoes, Hurricanes, Floods, Fires, Tornadoes, Tsunamis, Landslides

Here are the worst ten countries (out of our top 25 best survival countries) for natural disasters. If you want to eliminate a country because of its natural disasters, this is your series. **They are in the order in which they would directly affect you, either in death, destruction, or major disruption of the country.** This information can easily be documented through statistics. I list the deaths reported from all natural disasters on average per decade over the past 50 years.

Chile	Problems with volcanoes and earthquakes. Periodic tsunamis, drought, floods. Deaths - several hundred per decade, due to earthquakes, tsunamis, floods
Italy	3rd worst volcanic country in the world, earthquakes, drought, killer heat waves. Deaths - hundreds per decade - mostly due to earthquakes
Nicaragua	Very destructive earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and hurricanes. Deaths run into the thousands due to earthquakes and hurricanes.
Belize	Devastating hurricanes (June to November) and coastal flooding. Deaths - a few hundred per decade due to hurricanes.
Peru	Earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, landslides, mild volcanic activity. Deaths -Over 100,000 died in the 70's alone, now it only hundreds per decade.

Ecuador	Volcanoes, earth quakes, mudslides, floods, landslides. Deaths - dramatically lower over past 50 years. Only a few hundred per decade.
New Zealand	Volcanoes, earthquakes, and storms are the main problems. Deaths are limited, but big earthquakes cause major damage and some deaths.
Tonga	Periodic cyclones from October to April, volcanoes and earthquakes. Deaths do occur due to frequent cyclones and earthquakes.
Costa Rica	No recorded hurricanes, but volcanoes do erupt, earthquakes and slides happen Deaths are nominal, less than 50 per decade on average.

The Worst Natural Disaster Countries in our Top Ten

Chile	Problems with volcanoes and earthquakes. Periodic tsunamis, drought, flood
Peru	Earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, landslides, mild volcanic activity.
Ecuador	Volcanoes, earth quakes, mudslides, floods, landslides.
New Zealand	Volcanoes, earthquakes, and storms are the main problems

The Worst (Most) Expensive Countries

Here we list the countries in our top 25 that are the most expensive to live in. These countries make it difficult for anyone outside of a multi-millionaire to live comfortably and maintain a high standard of living and lifestyle. The basics, such as land, housing, utilities, food, and clothing are more expensive than they are in the United States, up to four or five times more expensive!

The Worst Ten Expensive Countries in our Top 25

- #1 Norway
- #2 Switzerland
- #3 Australia
- #4 Trinidad & Tobago
- #5 Italy
- #6 New Zealand
- #7 Brazil
- #8 Belize
- #9 South Africa
- #10 Dominica

The most expensive countries that are in our top ten include:

- Australia
- New Zealand
- Brazil

The Worst Crime Ridden Countries

WHEN CONCERNS ABOUT VIOLENT CRIME ARE A PRIORITY

This category investigates the personal safety issues. We look at statistics that involve murder, rape, armed robbery, auto theft, burglary, drug use, sex crimes, pedophilia, kidnappings, gangs, porno, potential riots, racism, civil war, fights between factions (left/right, white/black, rich/poor, etc.), attitudes towards expats (especially American expats), and the overall mental health of the populace.

The Worst Ten Crime Countries in our Top 25

#1 Columbia	One of the most violent nations on earth. Murders, drug crimes and corruption are high.
#2 South Africa	Racial tension, black on white crime, murders, and overall crime is bad.
#3 Belize	Narco crime, police brutality and corruption, and armed robberies are rampant.
#4 Nicaragua	Violent crime, drug trafficking, and robbery are problems.
#5 Trinidad & Tobago	Narcotics trafficking brings in “that” element. Murders and robberies are bad.
#6 Panama	High unemployment increases crime. Drug running and corruption are a problem.
#7 Venezuela	Murder is a problem, but major crime is limited to the big cities.
#8 Argentina	Burglary and armed robbery are the main threats.
#9 Brazil	Murder is the main problem. In the big cities, crime is horrible.
#10 Paraguay	The contraband capital of South America, including drug running.

The worst crime countries that are in our Top Ten are:

- Panama
- Argentina
- Brazil
- Paraguay

It is interestingly to note that our Top Three countries (Uruguay, Chile, and Costa Rica) do not have bad crime. (They do have petty theft.) However, all of them are experiencing increased crime. Sadly, Argentina has gone from one of the least crime ridden countries in the world to one that is plagued with theft, burglary, and robbery. Their crime statistics now compare with many other 1st World countries. Those that knew the old Argentina (of just ten years ago) are shocked with the increased number of thefts and robberies.

You can pay for protection and security, but most people thirst for a safe haven that is also safe from daily crime and criminals, not just world war, ruthless governments, natural disasters, famine/starvation, and disease. Which brings us to:

DISEASES

Here are the worst twelve countries (out of our top 25 best survival countries) for disease. If you want to eliminate a country because of potential for disease concerns, this is your series. But please keep this in perspective. Your chance of getting any of these diseases is *relatively* low **if** you will pay close attention to some simple health rules. Most experts believe many of the diseases listed below can turn into epidemics. So the potential for this category becoming more important is a very real possibility. The countries are in the order in which they would directly affect you, how widespread the diseases are, possibilities of causing death, harmfulness of the disease, or major problems (such as being forced to take vaccines in order to get back into the US, limiting the areas of the country you can visit SAFELY, your ability to enjoy life, restrictions, potential for epidemics, and history of past epidemics.)

Predicting future outbreaks and epidemics cannot be as precise as some other dangers (such as coastal flooding, earthquakes, famines, war, etc.) However, we know that the following three environments have caused a majority of the world's epidemics, and most certainly will play a factor in future ones as well.

1) For the most part, the more 3rd World, the greater the risk. Less access to clean water, open sewage/no sewer systems, etc.

2) Where there is less hygiene, the greater the risk. Culture and an uneducated populace factor in many diseases.

3) The more tropical the climate, with-out-a-doubt, the greater the risk. This is where mosquitoes and other vectors are prevalent. (A majority, but not all of the diseases mentioned below are periodically epidemic in the tropics.)

- Madagascar
- Colombia
- Nicaragua
- Belize
- Costa Rica
- Dengue
- epidemic
- Paraguay
- Serious Dengue epidemic: Bolivia
- Peru
- Ecuador
- Brazil (mostly in the Amazon jungles and big cities - which does not affect our recommend area for expats)
- Panama

The diseases to be concerned with are:

Dengue Fever

This is an infectious disease (through mosquitoes) that is manifested by a sudden onset of fever, with severe headache, muscle and joint pains, (severe pain gives it the name *break-bone fever* or *bone crusher disease*) and rashes. It can be life threatening especially if contracting the form called Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever (DHF). Recent outbreaks include Paraguay, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Thailand, Australia (northern), Puerto Rico, and some Caribbean island nations.

Example: During the first months of 2007 over 16,000 cases were reported in Paraguay, of which around 100 were detected as DHF cases. This epidemic continued in Paraguay for several months, given the fact that continuous rain falls through the summer. Ten deaths were reported, including a high-ranking member of the Ministry of Health. The epidemic was the root of a scandal in the Paraguayan Department of Health, where one official resigned because he had approved the use of expired batches of insecticide to control the mosquito vectors of dengue.

NOTE: The deadly form, DHF, has become epidemic in Mexico. It wasn't long ago (2001) only 1 in 50 dengue cases in Mexico were DHF. In 2007 the ratio is one in four. In 2014 it went to one in three. Texas is now on the radar for a dengue fever epidemic.

The World Health Organization states that over 100 million people have been affected by Dengue Fever and that 3 BILLION people live in the area where there is a risk of dengue

transmission.

What are the countries in which you are at risk at getting Dengue Fever? It is simpler to tell you that in our top 25, only Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, New Zealand, Italy, Switzerland, and Norway **are dengue-free**.

The most dangerous countries are Paraguay (the tropical part), Costa Rica, Brazil, Colombia, and all the Central American countries. Beware of Thailand for those of you thinking about this country.

Malaria

This is another mosquito born disease found mostly near the equator, just like dengue. It is one of the leading causes of death in the world. Many of the world's experts on disease state **that half the people who have EVER lived, died of malaria!** In the early stages, malaria symptoms are sometimes similar to those of many other infections caused by bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Symptoms may include: fever, chills, headache, sweats, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, dry cough, muscle and/or back pain, and enlarged spleen. Symptoms may appear in cycles and may come and go at different intensities and for different lengths of time. It's endemic to 106 nations, threatening half the world's population. In recent years, the parasite has grown so entrenched and has developed resistance to so many drugs that the most potent strains can scarcely be controlled. **This year malaria will strike up to a half billion people.** At least a million will die, most of them under age five, the vast majority living in Africa. Though Malaria is found in every country within several hundred miles of the equator, 90% of all deaths are in Africa.

Malaria transmission consistently occurs in 9 countries that share the Amazon rainforest in South America (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela), 8 countries in Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Mexico) and in 2 countries that share the Caribbean island of Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic).

FYI: The ONLY countries south of the US border that are immune to malaria are Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina (though migrant workers from Bolivia, Paraguay, and Brazil that come into Argentina and Chile to work in the orchards and vineyards have been diagnosed with malaria).

What are the countries in which you are at risk at getting malaria? Again, it is simpler to tell you that in our top 25, only Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Switzerland, Chile, and Uruguay are malaria-free.

Paraguay and Barbados rarely have any cases. The most dangerous countries from our top 25 are mostly the Central American countries, especially Honduras (which is #31 and did not make our top 25). Also, malaria is common after a hurricane. Again, beware of Thailand for

those of you thinking about this country.

Amebiasis

Amebiasis occurs worldwide but is more common in areas of poor sanitation and nutrition, particularly in the tropics. The majority of *E. histolytica* infections, morbidity, and mortality occur in Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. Approximately 50 million cases of invasive *E. histolytica* disease occur each year, with up to 100,000 deaths. However, only an estimated 10% - 20% of infected individuals become symptomatic. In a study done on returning travelers, the rate of acute amebic diarrhea ranged from 1.5% in travelers returning from Southeast Asia to 3.6% in those returning from Central America.

Most cases of amebiasis have very mild symptoms. More severe infection may cause fever, profuse diarrhea, abdominal pain, jaundice, anorexia, and weight loss. In severe cases, it can lead to development of abscesses (pockets of amebae and inflammatory cells) in the liver or, more rarely, the brain.

Most Americans who have traveled to Mexico know this as Montezuma's Revenge. Countries that warn you to "only drink bottled water" or "boil water before drinking" are highly susceptible to amebiasis.

So what are the countries most prone to give the visitor, tourist, or expat amebic diarrhea? The 3rd World countries, which we have only Bolivia and Madagascar in that category. The poorer regions of 2nd World countries are also areas to look out for, such as Belize, Paraguay, Nicaragua, and South Africa.

Chagas Disease

American trypanosomiasis is a serious disease that leads to chronic progressive heart disease in approximately 20% to 40% of infected persons. It is also known as Chagas disease, having been named after the Brazilian physician Carlos Chagas who first described it in 1909. It is one of the leading causes of sudden death after coronary heart disease. Chagas disease occurs in roughly 150 species of wild and domestic animals and is transmitted to humans by the *Trypanosoma cruzi* parasite. Chagas disease exists only on the American Continent. A related disease called African trypanosomiasis, or sleeping sickness, is limited to sub-Saharan Africa.

Chagas disease is transmitted to humans through the bite of an infected triatomine insect (a blood-sucking, predatory bug of the Reduviidae family), popularly known as "kissing bug", "vinchuca", "barbeiro", "chipo", "assassin bug", etc. The insects tend to infest poor housing, especially made of mud, adobe or thatch. The infected bug deposits its feces, which are laden with the *T. cruzi* parasite at the time of biting, usually at night. The feces can then be rubbed accidentally by the individual into the bite wound or another open wound, the eyes or mouth. Chagas disease is endemic in 21 countries in the southern Western Hemisphere (Mexico,

Central and South America), where 16 to 18 million people are infected and 100 million people are at risk. The insects that transmit the parasite live in wall crevices and roofs of houses in poorer rural areas and urban slums. With the rural/urban migrations of the 1970s and 1980s in Latin America, Chagas disease has become an urban infection as a result of blood transfusion transmission.

Chagas disease occurs in two phases: the acute stage appearing shortly after infection and the chronic stage appearing 10 to 20 years after infection. Most people who have been infected with Chagas disease do not have symptoms until they reach the chronic stage, and some never develop symptoms at all.

Symptoms may include fever, fatigue, enlarged liver or spleen and swollen lymph glands. In some cases, eye swelling may occur usually where a bite was received or where feces were rubbed into the eye. Infants in the acute stage of Chagas disease may experience brain swelling, which can lead to death.

To be honest, we have very little concern that you will be infected with Chagas disease. It is extremely rare to get if you simply do not camp in shacks in the infected areas. However, in Latin America, it is **unknown** in Chile and Uruguay. It is rarely seen in northern Argentina (though there have been a few cases reported in the extreme north of the country where Bolivian migrant workers cross the border to work the vineyards and orchards).

Cholera

Cholera (or *Asiatic cholera* or *epidemic cholera*) is an extreme diarrhoeal disease caused by the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. Transmission to humans is by ingesting contaminated water or food. The major reservoir for cholera was long assumed to be humans, but some evidence suggests that it is the aquatic environment. In its most severe forms, **cholera is one of the most rapidly fatal illnesses known**—a healthy person may become hypotensive within an hour of the onset of symptoms and may die within 2-3 hours if no treatment is provided. More commonly, the disease progresses from the first liquid stool to shock in 4-12 hours, with death following in 18 hours to several days without rehydration treatment.

Symptoms include those of general GI tract (stomach) upset and massive watery diarrhea. Symptoms may also include terrible muscle and stomach cramps, vomiting and fever in early stages. In a later stage the diarrhea becomes “rice water stool” (almost clear with flecks of white).

Cholera can happen ANYWHERE in the world, it is NOT confined to warm tropical areas. Some of the world’s most deadly outbreaks have been in cold climates (London, St. Petersburg, Paris, Quebec, St. Louis, Chicago, Hamburg Germany, and several times in Russia.) The only major outbreak in South America came in January 1991 to September 1994, when it was apparently initiated when a ship discharged ballast water off the coast of Peru. In

Peru, there were 1.04 million identified cases and almost 10,000 deaths.

Hundreds of famous people have died from Cholera, including the 11th US President, James Polk, the famous composer Tchaikovsky, Mary Abigail Fillmore, daughter of U.S. president Millard Fillmore, Elizabeth Jackson, mother of U.S. president Andrew Jackson, Elliott Frost, son of American poet Robert Frost, Daniel Morgan Boone, founder of Kansas City, Missouri, and the son of Daniel Boone and many others.

FYI: Alexandre Dumas, French author of *The Three Musketeers* and one of our favorite books of all time, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, also contracted cholera in the 1832 Paris epidemic and almost died, before he wrote these two novels.

How do you protect yourself from Cholera? Simply choose to live in the cleanest and most sanitary conditions possible. THE BIG KEY is to live in an area with few people, not a city, not crowded, with healthy sanitary conditions.

River Blindness

Human onchocerciasis is caused by the prelarval (microfilaria) and adult stages of the filarial nematode *Onchocerca volvulus*. The disease is transmitted by the bite of certain species of female *Simulium* flies (black flies) that bite by day and are found near rapidly flowing rivers and streams. Onchocerciasis is endemic in more than 25 nations located in a broad band across the central part of Africa. Small endemic foci are also present in the Arabian Peninsula (Yemen) and in the Americas (Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, southern Mexico, and Venezuela).

Persons traveling for short periods in onchocerciasis-endemic regions appear to be at very low risk for acquiring this condition. However, travelers who visit or live in endemic regions for more than 3 months and live or work near black fly habitats are at greater risk for infection. Infections tend to occur in expatriate groups such as missionaries, field scientists, and Peace Corps volunteers. That is why we include this in our list of diseases.

Infection with *O. volvulus* can result in a highly pruritic, papular dermatitis; subcutaneous nodules; lymphadenitis; and ocular lesions, which can progress to visual loss and blindness.

Be cautious in the river areas of Northern Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

The Plague

Plague, a zoonosis involving rodents and their fleas, is caused by infection with the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*. Humans are incidental hosts and are usually infected by the bite of rodent fleas. Plague can also be acquired by direct contact with infectious animals or other materials or inhalation of infective respiratory droplets.

Plague continues to be enzootic in wild rodent populations over large rural areas of the Americas, Africa, and Asia, with occasional outbreaks among commensal rats or other hosts in villages and small towns. Wild rodent plague poses a real, although limited, risk to persons. When infection spreads to rats in urban or populated areas, persons are at markedly increased risk of exposure. In recent decades, however, urban outbreaks have been rare and limited in size.

Plague causes high mortality unless promptly diagnosed and treated. Initial signs and symptoms of plague can be nonspecific, with fever, chills, headache, malaise, myalgia, nausea, and prostration. Bubonic plague, the most common form, is characterized by painful, swollen lymph nodes (buboes) that develop in the afferent lymphatic chain draining the site of the bite from an infected flea. Septicemic plague may be primary when the bacterium invades and multiplies in the bloodstream in the apparent absence of a bubo, or it may also occur secondarily to bubonic plague. Patients with pneumonic plague often have many of the above signs and symptoms, as well as cough, breathing difficulties and, in later stages of the illness, bloody sputum.

Wild rodent plague exists in the western third of the United States and the immediately adjoining areas of Canada; **widely scattered areas** of South America, including Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru; north-central, northwestern, eastern, and southern Africa; **Madagascar**; Iran; along the frontier between Yemen and Saudi Arabia; eastern Jordan, central and southeast Asia (Burma, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and other former Soviet Republics of central Asia, Mongolia, and Vietnam); and in parts of extreme southern Russia. In recent years, human plague has been identified in Africa from Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe; in Asia from Burma (Myanmar), China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Laos, Mongolia, and Vietnam.

The chance of being infected with the bubonic plague is rare. However, it is advisable to be careful in Madagascar, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru.

Schistosomiasis

Schistosomiasis (also known as bilharzia) is a parasitic infection caused by *Schistosoma* flukes, which have complex life cycles involving specific freshwater snail species as intermediate hosts. Infected snails release large numbers of minute, free-swimming larvae (cercariae) that are capable of penetrating the unbroken skin of the human host. **Even brief exposure to contaminated freshwater** (e.g., during wading, swimming, or bathing) can result in infection. Human schistosomiasis cannot be acquired by contact with salt water (oceans or seas).

This infection occurs widely throughout the tropics and subtropics, affecting some **200**

million persons. Schistosomiasis is most prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa. In highly disease-endemic areas, prevalence rates can exceed 50% among the local population, and high rates have been reported among expatriates living in such areas and even among short-term travelers to these areas.

Clinical manifestations of acute infection can occur within 2-12 weeks of exposure to cercariae-infested water, but most acute infections are asymptomatic. The most common acute syndrome is Katayama fever. Symptoms include fever, loss of appetite, weight loss, abdominal pain, hematuria, weakness, headaches, joint and muscle pain, diarrhea, nausea, and cough. Rarely, the central nervous system can be involved, producing seizures or transverse myelitis as a result of mass lesions of the brain or spinal cord. Chronic infections can cause disease in the liver, intestinal tract, bladder (including bladder cancer), kidneys, or lung. Many persons with chronic infections recall no symptoms of acute infection.

It is only found in Brazil, Venezuela, Madagascar, and Mauritius in our top 25 countries.

Tuberculosis

Mycobacterium tuberculosis is a rod-shaped bacterium that can cause disseminated disease but is most frequently associated with chronic pneumonia. Transmission occurs when a contagious patient coughs, spreading the bacilli through the airborne route to a person sharing the same air space. The exposed person may acquire latent infection (sometimes abbreviated LTBI) or, depending on host factors, tuberculosis disease. Both conditions can usually be treated successfully with medications. XDR (Extreme Drug Resistant) Tuberculosis has rapidly expanded its range in the world.

To become infected, a person usually has to spend a relatively long time in a closed environment where the air was contaminated by a person with untreated tuberculosis who was coughing and who had numerous *M. tuberculosis* organisms (or tubercle bacilli) in secretions from the lungs or larynx. Infection is generally transmitted through the air; therefore, there is little danger of its being spread by dishes, linens, and other items that are touched, or by most food products. However, it can be transmitted through unpasteurized milk or milk products (e.g., some cheeses) obtained from infected cattle. Documented sites of XDR-TB include crowded hospitals, prisons, homeless shelters, and other settings where susceptible persons come in contact with infected persons with TB disease.

XDR Tuberculosis is in most Asian countries and is now moving west into Eastern European countries. It is also found in Mexico, Ecuador, and Thailand (countries we mention in our report). Regular Tuberculosis is found almost everywhere (even in the southern US). However, the countries with higher concentrations are Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Madagascar, and Nicaragua.

Typhoid fever

Typhoid fever is an acute, life-threatening febrile illness caused by the bacterium *Salmonella enterica* serotype Typhi. An estimated **25 million cases of typhoid fever and 500,000 related deaths occur worldwide each year**. Approximately 400 cases of typhoid fever among persons with onset of illness in the United States, most of whom are recent travelers, are reported to CDC each year.

Risk is greatest for travelers to South Asia and developing countries in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. Travelers to South Asia are at highest risk for infections that are nalidixic acid-resistant or multidrug-resistant (i.e., resistant to ampicillin, chloramphenicol, and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole).

Travelers who are visiting relatives or friends and who may be less likely to eat only safe foods (cooked and served hot) and beverages (carbonated beverages or those made from water that has been boiled) are at greater risk. Travelers have acquired typhoid fever even during brief visits of less than 1 week to countries where the disease is endemic. However, anyone can contract typhoid. It does appear mostly in developing countries (3rd World) and areas of 2nd World countries that do not practice good hygiene.

The hallmark of typhoid infection is persistent, high fever as high as 103° to 104° F (39° to 40° C). Other common symptoms and signs include headache, malaise, anorexia, splenomegaly, a rash of flat, rose-colored spots, and relative bradycardia (slow heartbeat). Many mild and atypical infections occur. It does kill a half of million people per year, more than any other disease we have listed except malaria.

What are the countries that you should be concerned about? We only have two 3rd World countries in our top 25, Bolivia and Madagascar. The poor, rural areas of Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru are more likely to have typhoid than other countries.

Overall Precautions to use when traveling in tropical, subtropical, and 3rd World countries:

- Do not eat food purchased from street vendors or food that is not well cooked to reduce risk of infection (i.e., hepatitis A and typhoid fever).
- Do not drink beverages with ice. Drink only bottled water.
- Avoid dairy products, unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Do not swim in fresh water to avoid exposure to certain water-borne diseases such as schistosomiasis.
- Do not handle animals, especially monkeys, dogs, and cats, to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague).
- Consider pre-exposure rabies vaccination if you might have extensive unprotected outdoor exposure in rural areas.
- Do not share needles for tattoos, body piercing or injections to prevent infections such as HIV and hepatitis B.

Here is our overall warning for the worst countries when it comes to disease. They are listed from greatest concern for disease to less concern for disease.

The Worst Ten Countries in our Top 25

#20	Madagascar
#16	Colombia
#17	Nicaragua
#10	Belize
#5	Paraguay
#7	Bolivia
#13	Peru
#14	Ecuador
#4	Brazil
#9	Panama

NOTE: Uruguay, and Chile (our #1 & #2) are nearly immune from disease problems and risks. This is because they are: closer to being 1st World, not in the tropics (which is a BIG plus for eliminating many disease risks) have adequate hygiene, running water, sewer/waste water systems, and have a more educated/sophisticated populace. Our #3 country, Costa Rica has the mountainous highlands (which is the only place we recommend to live in Costa Rica) that have dramatically fewer cases of most tropical diseases. It is also a clean country, has a more sophisticated and educated populace, has clean drinking water, and very modern and 1st World.

For more information on disease and health concerns/risks – read our Best Of Series on The Healthiest Countries.

The Worst Of The Worst 150 Overall Countries in the World

Here is the Bottom of the Barrel. The worst 50 countries in the world. They are horrible to live in **now**, and will only get worse. No one in their right mind would look at any of these countries to immigrate to. They are in order of worst (#200) to less worse (#151).

#200	Zimbabwe
#199	Mozambique
#198	Iraq
#197	Ethiopia
#196	Angola
#195	Iran
#194	Sudan

#193	Somalia
#192	Afghanistan
#191	Yemen
#190	Sierra Leone
#189	Chad
#188	Liberia
#187	North Korea
#186	Saudi Arabia
#185	Djibouti
#184	Eritrea
#183	Congo
#182	Central African Republic
#181	Pakistan
#180	Uganda
#179	Libya
#178	Haiti
#177	Guinea
#176	Cote d'Ivoire
#175	Cameroon
#174	Laos
#173	Guinea Bissau
#172	Bangladesh
#171	Rwanda
#170	Burundi
#169	Nigeria
#168	Myanmar (formerly Burma)
#167	Niger
#166	Tajikistan
#165	Mauritania
#164	Turkmenistan
#163	Cambodia
#162	Burkina Faso
#161	Oman
#160	Gabon
#159	Togo
#158	Mali
#157	Gambia
#156	United Arab Emirates
#155	Indonesia
#154	Uzbekistan

#153	Kuwait
#152	Kazakhstan
#151	Algeria

Here is the next worst group of 50 countries. #150 through #101. Nearly all of these countries are **undesirable now**, and will only get worse as times goes by. There are no exceptions in this group. We have placed some comments with a few of the countries that some people may wonder why they are not rated higher (better).

#150	Kyrgyzstan
#149	Israel (Chronic war, horrible oppression of Christians, massive political corruption, military...)
#148	Qatar
#147	Syria
#146	Azerbaijan
#145	Malawi
#144	China
#143	Brunei
#142	Philippines (Volcanoes, earthquakes, heat & humidity, sex tourism, political corruption, kidnappings,)
#141	Maldives (1,200 islands that are no more than 5 feet above sea level, an Islamic sultanate...)
#140	Solomon Islands
#139	Egypt
#138	Nepal
#137	Vietnam
#136	Tuvalu
#135	Russia
#134	Marshall Islands (Atolls, not really islands, at or near sea level, no resources...)
#133	Cape Verde (Would be great if they had water. A desalination plant or water source might bring them into the top 75.)
#132	Benin
#131	Tanzania
#130	Equatorial Guinea
#129	Comoros
#128	Vanuatu (Has some expats, but has to import most of its food, has cyclones.)
#127	Bahrain
#126	Zambia
#125	Swaziland
#124	Senegal
#123	Lesotho

#122	Mongolia
#121	India
#120	Sri Lanka
#119	Bhutan
#118	Morocco (Some expats on the Mediterranean Sea, but problems abound: 99% Sunni Muslim, Islamic military threat..)
#117	Ghana
#116	Kenya
#115	Lebanon
#114	Micronesia (Lacks water, food, and basic resources.)
#113	Belarus
#112	Tunisia
#111	Ukraine
#110	Kiribati
#109	Georgia
#108	Malaysia
#107	Nauru
#106	Namibia
#105	Singapore
#104	Turkey
#103	Moldova
#102	Monaco
#101	Samoa

Continuing from the bottom, here are the next (final) worst 50 countries, ranked #99 through #50. There are some possible exceptions in this group. Exceptions are noted with an asterisk. (*) Exceptions mean that some event could change the survivability of this country so dramatically that it could thrust it in the top 40, or a miracle could occur and it could make the top 25 (though this would be extraordinarily rare). This would most likely still be too low of a rank to even consider, but we make these distinctions in order to be thorough.

#100	Palau (Has some potential, but dependent on imports, US controlled, typhoons, totally dependent on foreign aid)
#99	Jordan
#98	Armenia
#97	Macedonia
#96	Albania (70% Sunni Muslim, worst polluted European country...)
#95	Cuba (Actually has some good things going for it, but until the Communists are out of power....)
#94	Papua New Guinea

#93	Seychelles (Catholic, English/French islands, beautiful, total food imports, corruption, dependent on tourism)
#92	Japan
#91	United States
#90	Bulgaria
#89	South Korea
#88	Yugoslavia (Serbia & Montenegro)
#87	Jamaica
#86	Taiwan
#85	Bosnia-Herzegovina
#84	Montserrat (Sadly, the Soufriere volcano has destroyed the country. It once was a beautiful Caribbean island.)
#83	Dominican Republic (Eastern half of Hispaniola, hurricanes, Spanish, narcotics, illegal Haitian immigrants, disease)
#82	French Polynesia (150 small islands/atolls scattered over a million square miles, not self sufficient)
#81	Bahamas (700 islands, British controlled, relies upon US tourism, hurricanes, <1% arable land)
#80	Poland
#79	Estonia
#78	Anguilla
#77	Latvia
#76	Norfolk Island (An Australian territory, very tiny island, with less than 2,000 people.)
#75	Guadeloupe
#74	British Virgin Islands
#73	St. Vincent & The Grenadines
#72	Turks& Caicos *
#71	St. Lucia
#70	Mexico * (Small enclaves of US expats may survive the next 10-15 years. To us, it isn't worth the risk.)
#69	Botswana (The highest ranked African country outside of South Africa, Mauritius, and Madagascar.)
#68	Canada * (Very rural areas with covenant communities may survive.)
#67	El Salvador (Devastating earthquakes, crime, dense population, horrible heat, infrastructure, civil war)
#66	Cayman Islands (British islands south of Cuba, expensive, tourism & offshore finance rules.)
#65	Germany (Strong police/military state, pro-EU, high unemployment, too globalist.)

#64	Netherlands (Welfare state, aged population, high drug use, New World Order country,...)
#63	Cyprus (Off the coast of Turkey and Syria. Ongoing Turk-Cypriot war. HOT and DRY.)
#62	Bermuda (British islands, very low in elevation, very little food production, expensive!)
#61	Martinique (French island suffers horrible natural disasters, Pelee volcano, hurricanes, etc.)
#60	Romania (Ethnic tensions, pros and cons, leans communistic.)
#59	Croatia/Slovenia (Dalmatia is beautiful. Catholics kicked out Orthodox Christians, war damage huge, ethnic problems)
#58	Lithuania (Still a bit too Russian leaning. Very low lying, no mountains. Cold.)
#57	United Kingdom (Extremely over populated. 100,000's of the best & brightest flee the UK every year.)
#56	Belgium (Horrible population density. Heart of the Beast, the EU.)
#55	Guatemala (Horrible earthquakes/volcanoes. Disease. Hurricanes. Violent crime. Extreme poverty.)
#54	Luxembourg (Banking center, which is most of the economy, very EUish, very Catholic.)
#53	Denmark (VERY EXPENSIVE, the flattest country in the world, damp climate.)
#52	Czech Republic * (Improving, but it is still Europe. Population density bad. Has some potential.)
#51	Hungary * (Cold, cloudy, wet, windy winters. Joined EU in 2004. Energy deficient.)

How should we put this? The last 50 countries in the world are the “least worst”? Most people will take a look at these countries and skip those rated #50 through #26 or so. (They simply do not compare at all to the top/best 25.) These countries (#50 thru #26) are mostly European and Central American countries that have some major problems that the top/best 25 do not have. The European countries are overcrowded and VERY expensive. The Central American countries are disease prone, relatively poor, subject to various natural disasters, and have social/political problems.

The top/best 25 countries are the ones that you should concentrate on and learn more about. Each of them has its own set of problems as well as its positives and benefits for survival. The Top Five are **extraordinary** in their survivability in comparison to other countries.

The TOP 50

Continuing on with the best 50 countries in the world to survive the next ten years. They continue in order from “worst to best”.

#50	Fiji (Ethnic tensions have caused the educated professionals to flee. HAD potential, but strife/coup is bad.)
#49	Malta (English, EXTREME population density. Low crime. NO WATER! Catholic. Imports.)
#48	Slovakia (Moving up in the rankings, has potential. Heavy snowfall in winter.)
#47	Nevis & St. Kitts (Hurricane prone, no energy resources, but beautiful islands.)
#46	Guyana (Borders Venezuela, Brazil, and Suriname. Racial tensions. 3 rd World. HOT and humid.)
#45	Portugal (Moving up slowly, but may never make the top 25)
#44	Spain (Gorgeous country. Unstable politically. Expensive. Severe Drought.)
#43	Puerto Rico (The US "colony" is too closely connected with the US. Daily earthquakes.)
#42	France (Very sophisticated and extremely expensive country. Low on overall survivability.)
#41	Greece (2,000 islands along with the mainland that borders former Yugoslavia. Pros and Cons.)
#40	Aruba (Used to be in the top 20. Dutch. Dense population. Hurricane threat. No mountains. Drug trafficking.)
#39	French Guiana (Borders Brazil and Suriname. 90% rain forest. VERY little population.)
#38	Sweden (EXPENSIVE! Member of the EU, socialist welfare state, very 1 st world, weather is COLD.)
#37	Finland (Horrible taxes, extreme weather - COLD, bizarre government, economic instability.)
#36	Surinam (Dutch speaking country of South America. Has little potential.)
#35	Barbados (English speaking, modern, beautiful. VERY small island, hurricanes, need to import goods.)
#34	Austria (Typical European country, with horrible population density.)
#33	Thailand (Has some good qualities, but its negatives keep it out of the top 25.)
#32	Antigua & Barbuda (VERY small islands, no natural resources, solely tourist islands.)
#31	Honduras (Hurricanes, crime, unemployment, political corruption, poor infrastructure.)
#30	Liechtenstein (Very small country and VERY European. Banking haven. Beautiful.)
#29	Andorra (Like Switzerland in many ways. VERY small country. VERY expensive.)
#28	Grenada (Off Venezuelan coast, somewhat less hurricane threat, poor infrastructure, small island.)

#27	Iceland (A nearly all Lutheran country. Spectacular country. Volcanoes. Weather is cool.)
#26	Ireland

The Top 25

#25	South Africa (Beautiful and 1st world, but rapidly deteriorating.)
#24	Norway (Extremely expensive. Possibly the most solid 1st World nation on earth.)
#23	Dominica (Small, but beautiful mountainous island. Has potential as a safe haven. Hurricanes.)
#22	Tonga (Monarchy in South Pacific, English speaking, has potential. No energy source, need to import some food.)
#21	Switzerland
#20	Madagascar
#19	Italy
#18	Nicaragua
#17	Mauritus
#16	Trinidad & Tobago
#15	Venezuela
#14	Colombia
#13	Belize
#12	Panama
#11	Bolivia
#10	Paraguay
#9	Australia
#8	Peru
#7	Brazil
#5	New Zealand
#5	Ecuador
#4	Argentina
#3	Costa Rica
#2	Chile
#1	Uruguay