

How to Travel Safer in an Age of Zika and Terrorism

Here's what you need to know about traveling to three hot spots: Istanbul, Mexico City, and Brazil.



It was recently named the number one place to visit in 2016 by the *New York Times*, but Zika fears are leading many people to shun the so-called city of palaces. "Clients are staying away from areas like Costa Rica, Mexico, and Jamaica because they feel that the risk of infection is too high," says Eric Grayson, owner of luxury travel agency [Discover 7](#). But the good news is you can keep it on your bucket list after all. "It's at a very high elevation, so mosquitoes won't venture up there," points out Amesh Adalja, MD an infectious disease specialist at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. The CDC also says anything above 6,500 feet (and Mexico City is at almost 7,400) is safe. Even more reassuring is the fact that resorts like the [Four Seasons Mexico City](#) told *T&C* that they have not had any guests or employees develop the Zika virus, and that bookings have remained relatively unaffected.

Keep in mind that while areas like Mexico City are generally considered now safe for everyone (including pregnant women) you do expose yourself to risk if you venture down to lower lying areas. But for most people, that's fine. "If you're not pregnant or planning on trying to conceive within the next six months, travel to Zika-affected areas is generally considered safe," says Richards. If you are in a Zika infested area, your best defense is **judicious use of mosquito repellent that contains either DEET or the more natural ingredient Picaridin** — that means reapplying every couple hours to all exposed areas, since it can evaporate with sweating. While it may be difficult to follow the CDC advice to wear long sleeves to protect yourself against mosquitos in 90-plus degree heat, you can **buy clothing pre-treated with bug repellent** from stores like L.L. Bean.

Verdict: Go