

# Top Murder Capitals of the World



The world is a dangerous place and people can practically get killed or die anywhere – drown in their bathtub, get poisoned by leaking gas or hit by bus. Yet these accidental ways of dying are still quite “comfortable” compared to being murdered and robbed (or robbed and murdered) in a dark back street of an unknown city. The Foreign Policy, an international magazine of global politics, decided to warn the potential victims and created a list of the five most murderous cities in the world that is brought to you now by Tourism-Review.com.

## And the winner is ... Caracas, Venezuela

Population: 3.2 million

Murder rate: 130 per 100,000 residents (official)

Caracas has achieved a title it is probably not really proud of. Even the capital of the cocaine country Columbia, Bogotá, was left behind by the city ruled by the infamous Hugo Chávez. One might think that 130 murders per 100,000 inhabitants are not that bad, yet we have to count on the fact that this number is just the official one. There are many violent crimes happening in Caracas that, for some strange reason, just do not count. Non-governmental organisations state that the real numbers reach up to 160 murders per 100,000 residents. At the same time, most of them put the vast majority of the blame on El Presidente, or Hugo Chávez, whose government has failed to put a stop to the country's crime rates, that have been slowly but steadily rising for about 10 years. In fact, since Chávez took over in 1998, Venezuela's official homicide rate has increased 67 percent – mostly due to growing drug and gang violence.

## The silver medal goes to ... New Orleans, United States

Population: 220,614 to 312,000

Murder rate: From 67 (New Orleans Police Department) to 95 (FBI) per 100,000

It is quite a surprise that a US city made it to the “Top” Five and even reached the second position. It is on the other hand no surprise that this city is New Orleans. The city is inhabited mostly by poor immigrants with little or no education and about the same amount of life perspective. This poverty, which was furthermore deepened by the Katrina hurricane in 2005, pushes the city's violent crime rate high above the other US cities. The number given by the local police department differs considerably from those submitted by the FBI. This is mainly due to the fact that the overall number of New Orleans inhabitants is quite hard to determine, as many people and even whole families move in and out without informing their local authorities.

## The bronze medalist is ... Cape Town, South Africa

Population: 3.5 million

Murder rate: 62 per 100,000 inhabitants (5.9 per day)

The republic of South Africa has since the colonial period been one of the richest African countries

and at the same time a centre of racial conflicts between the native inhabitants and the white colonists. It would nevertheless be a mistake to blame the high crime rates on racial problems. Most of the violent crimes that take place in Cape Town happen in the poor suburbs and slums and bear mainly two common features: firstly, the majority of these crimes take place between people who know each other or even in families. And secondly, drugs are present in most cases - many murderers kill either to get money for their dose or directly under the influence of drugs. Even though the above written might scare off some potential tourists, the government states that murders rarely occur in tourism hot spots. The world will see how they will succeed in the real deal since in two years SA is to host the 2010 World Football Cup. This huge tournament, for which extra cops and other security forces are being hired, will prove the government right or wrong.

## **Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea**

Population: 254,200

Murder rate: 54 per 100,000 (official)

Some may be surprised by the presence of a Papuan city in the list. One would think there must be worst cities around the world. Yet Port Moresby "deserved" its position on the list. Not only that the violent crimes in the city are unpleasantly numerous and most downtown quarters are governed by street gangs, it is also the police that contribute considerably to the generally negative statistics. The level of corruption is very high and bribes are by many considered an honest and easy way to avoid punishment or to "push" the officials in the right direction. The police get paid to see - or not to see. Summarizing all these negative aspects and adding an unemployment rate of about 80%, poverty and racial problems between the original Papuans and the Chinese immigrants, fourth place could actually be considered success.

## **Moscow, Russia**

Population: 10.4 million

Murder rate: 9,6 per 100,000 (estimate)

Moscow has always been a city of two faces - the rich and the poor, the European and the Asian. In comparison to other cities in the Top Five 9,6 murders per 100,000 residents seems almost like a piece of cake. Nevertheless, we need to keep in mind that Moscow would like to count itself among the European capitals and in this prominent group its murder rate is just scary (London, Paris, Rome, or Madrid have rates below 2 murders per 100,000). What is the problem in Russia? Firstly, a large part of all the violent crimes in Moscow are racially motivated. Groups of young nationalists refuse to accept the huge number of immigrants coming both from abroad and from the poor parts of Russia itself. These immigrants are an easy target and so the number of racial murders keeps increasing. Another flourishing branch of the violent crime industry are contract murders, mostly for political reasons - the cases of the journalist Anna Politkovskaya or the former KGB agent Alexander Litvinenko, the murderers of whom have never been found nor punished, prove the Russian police and justice system to have yet a long way to go.

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