

Tekst 9

RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

Scientists have blunted Montezuma's revenge

1 It is the perfect moonlit night. The air is balmy as you gaze across to the grizzled Thai fishermen hauling in tomorrow's catch. An ominous rumble suddenly breaks the calm. You clutch your stomach apprehensively. "Damn, I don't think that squid was quite fresh enough." Too late. Tomorrow's session on the beach is already off. Even the meander through the bars of Phuket looks unlikely. Like 25 million tourists a year from the antiseptic North to the *E. coli*-rich developing world, you and your suffering innards have been conquered.

2 It is not only the backpackers in India and package tourists in Cairo who succumb to Delhi belly or gippy tummy. However selective they have been about the salad and fastidious with the shellfish, almost half the visitors to Africa, India, the Middle East, South-East Asia, Central America and the Caribbean suffer at least one bout of diarrhoea severe enough to empty half a packet of those invaluable emergency pills. But salvation is now on the horizon, thanks to boffins at Imperial College, London. A vaccine is about to be tested that promises almost complete protection from *E. coli* and from various other unpleasant ailments. No longer will inveterate travellers be able to boast about their cast-iron stomachs: now even wimps will be immune.

3 But is this development an unalloyed blessing? The need to ward

off those pesky bugs has served as an irrefutable medicinal pretext for several stiff G&T sundowners throughout the tropics. The high-spirited enthusiasm for the disinfecting properties of alcohol can add gaiety to many a visit to the nightclubs in Nairobi or Nicaragua. And though countries such as Italy have long ago, apparently, discovered the secrets of hygiene, those cultural gorgons who insisted on an improving visit to the *due belle cupole* of the local cathedral could be convincingly rebuffed with the excuse that you had "a touch of the tummy" – leaving an entire afternoon to slope off to the bars.

4 Delhi belly, indeed, was often nature's way of saying that the goat steak was underdone or that the mussels had absorbed a little too much local nutrient. What warning signals will there be now that you are about to be poisoned? Indeed, Montezuma's revenge might have been an ancient Inca guarantee that only the hardest modern tourist would make it through the jungle to swarm over the ruined pyramids. Without the dysentery disincentive, how can the fragile wonders of the Third World be protected from ruinous tourist feet? Suntan surfeit or pasta plethora offer no protection. And now, with the stomach conquered, tourists will be ready to conquer ever newer, remoter and still germ-laden worlds.

The Times

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- 1p **39** In welke zin wordt uitgelegd hoe “Scientists have blunted Montezuma’s revenge” (onderkop)?
Noteer de eerste twee woorden van de betreffende zin.
- “But is this development an unalloyed blessing?” (beginning of paragraph 3)
- 1p **40** How is this question answered in the paragraph?
- A** All in all it is, as it takes away the need for alcohol as a preventive medicine for diarrhoea.
 - B** It definitely is, as it enables travellers to enjoy their holidays without diarrhoea.
 - C** It depends, as it might result in a hangover instead of diarrhoea.
 - D** Not really, as it might encourage holidaymakers to drink excessively.
 - E** Perhaps not, as it invalidates the traveller’s justification for his alcohol consumption.
- 2p **41** Welke twee negatieve kanten van het verdwijnen van reizigersdiarree worden genoemd in alinea 4?