

MANDRAX

Known as "buttons" in the streets of South Africa, and referred to as "ludes" in the States, this now-illegal tablet was first developed as an antimalaria medication in India. It was discovered that the methaqualone, which is the active ingredient responsible for the "rush," or high, when smoked, was an excellent sleeping tablet with a low hangover threshold. Then the druggies in SA found that when you crush the tablets into powder and mix it with dagga (marijuana) and smoke it through a crude pipe, like a broken bottle-neck, it has a tremendous kick. This became known as a "white pipe."

Withdrawal can be severe for the serious Mandrax addict. Convulsion, severe headaches, nausea, stomach cramps, insomnia, and bad dreams are quite common among those who've been smoking two and three "guns" daily. Brain damage manifests in short-term memory loss and disorientation, and lung damage can be severe. It is also common for "button heads" to lose their appetite and become apathetic, and they tend to be attracted to Rasta music. . . . Yellow and brown stains on users' hands, especially the palms, are common, because of the manner in which the bottle neck is smoked.

<http://clubr.co.za/mx.htm>

America, and the Caribbean, where it is broken down into smaller shipments bound for the States or Europe. About 85 percent of the cocaine, and almost all the heroin nabbed in the United States, comes from Colombia. A DP check of prices in Peru and Colombia shows that 1 pure kilo of cocaine sells for \$1,200 to \$1,500 (quantity discounts available) and that same brick in the United States, sold on the street, can garner a stunning \$15,000 to \$25,000 profit. It's no wonder the jails are full of wannabe importers.

Mexico has increased drug production so much that smugglers have switched from cargo planes to cargo ships to meet the demand. The cargo is picked up by high-speed boats that meet smugglers off the coast. Small planes are also used to drop drugs in-country. The contrabandistas along the border are also eager to smuggle guns, dope, or people, if the price is right.

Nigeria is a major hub for smuggling coke and heroin by virtue of its corrupt customs and the eagerness of its mules, who will carry cocaine either ingested internally in condoms or on their person. The Nigerians leave South America, often via Rio, then bring the cocaine to Nigeria for sale in South Africa.

The Caribbean island of Aruba, off the coast of Venezuela, is a major drug transshipment point. Shipments funnel in from Colombia, Venezuela, and Suriname for transport to the United States and Europe.

Also, Vieques Island (Puerto Rico) and the U.S. Virgin Islands are popular delivery points from the islands of the Lesser Antilles. About 30 percent of the drugs that enter Britain come from the Caribbean. Drugs also flow from these islands into their home protectorate of France and the Netherlands. Cocaine is shipped by sea from South America and then loaded onto aircraft and ships on the ABC Islands. In general, many of the island chains offer ideal smuggling and transfer points due to the large amount of shoreline, number of watercraft, and lack of police in the area.

International Narcotics Control Board

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Cannabis/Marijuana/Hashish

It's pretty common to see that little foil pouch of the brown stuff come out in a hostel or city square. It's available to 91 percent of Americans and is considered by most to be a harmless drug and even a medicinal necessity. Who's a stoner? Well, everyone it seems. There is no racial, financial, or regional stereotype. Old ladies, gang bangers, and politicians all do it.

Marijuana can be grown from Alaska to Hawaii and anywhere in between. You are not really smoking the weed, but inhaling the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) contained in the plant and resin. In America, Mexican commercial grade (with seeds) and sensimilla (without seeds) are the most common variety. Hydroponically grown weed has a high THC content with normal strains having 5 to 30 percent. This type of weed was described scientifically by Drs. Cheech and Chong as "good" shit or "bad" shit. Weed prices are directly related to quality. Hydroponic is \$1,000 to \$2,500 per pound in the big cities. Regular weed is about \$500 a pound.

Weed is not really a top priority with the DEA, nor is it a major contributor to criminal activity. It is bulky, has a low margin, and can be homegrown easily by cheapskate customers. In many countries, you will find marijuana plants growing wild in backyards, along roads, and in fields. The benefits of the cannabis trade are that expensive chemicals to create an end product are not needed, and a laissez-faire attitude toward personal consumption in many European and Asian countries. Many countries do not have penalties for the consumption of weed, but do have stiff ones for dealing.

Pills

A major shift in the drug business is the change from organically grown products (heroin, coke, and weed) to chemical products (meth, Ecstasy,