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Continents

[#africa](#) [#asia](#) [#australia](#) [#europe](#) [#northamerica](#) [#southamerica](#)

See also the region [#middleamerica](#) which, while not strictly a continent in a scientific sense, can be used in a similar way for booklist searching.

Regions Overview

Note: for North American regions, see separate post regarding Colin Woodward's book, *Eleven Nations*

The list below is organized to follow a rough round-the-world journey beginning in North America, then south, then west across the Pacific through Oceania, north through Asia, west again through Europe, south to Africa, finally (theoretically) looping back to North America.

That choice is fairly arbitrary, made solely to retain some kind of logic whilst avoiding an alphabetical sort.

Note that regions can, and occasionally do, cross continental boundaries. A given country quite often belongs to multiple regions.

North America #northamerica

Caribbean Rim #rimland

Mainland #mainland

Mosquito Coast #mosquitocoast

Andes #andes

Brazil #brazil

Southern Cone #southerncone

Pacific Islands #pacificislands

Antipodes #antipodes

Southeast Asia #southeastasia

East Asia #eastasia

South Asia #southasia

Central Asia #centralasia

West Asia #westasia

Balkans #balkans

Eastern Europe #easterneurope

Northern Europe #northerneurope

Central Europe #centraleurope

Western Europe #westerneurope

Iberia #iberia

Mediterranean #mediterranean

Eastern Africa #easternafrika

Central Africa #centralafrika

Southern Africa #southernafrika

West Africa #westafrika

Regions in Detail

This section includes the region description & member countries / territories.

Rimland

#rimland

The Caribbean Sea as well as coastal zones of Central and South America bordering it.

This region is distinguished by the historic competitive sugar cane economy and its plantations, as well the decimation (or full extinction) of Amerindian peoples. After the Colombian Exchange, the work force was primarily sourced from the African Slave Trade.

Culturally speaking, The Rimland was one of the more tumultuous areas of the world in recent history: Amerindian pre-Columbus, then almost solely European, then with a majority African population.

These days, cultural norms tend towards a meld of European and western African, notably different from the Middle American Mainland. The specifics of which European influence applies will vary, since several empires competed in the sugar market.

USA, UK, France, Netherlands included for assorted territorial holdings

Belize	Anguilla	Saint Barthelemy
Colombia	Antigua	Saint Kitts
Costa Rica	Aruba	Saint Lucia
Cuba	Bahamas	Sint Maarten
Dominican Republic	Barbados	Saint Martin
Guatemala	Barbuda	Saint Vincint
Guyana	Cayman Islands	Turks and Caicos
Haiti	Curacao	Virgin Islands
Honduras	Dominica	
Mexico	French Guiana	
Jamaica	Grenada	
Nicaragua	Grenadines	
Panama	Guadeloupe	
Suriname	Martinique	
Trinidad and Tobago	Montserrat	
Venezuela		

Middle American Mainland

#mainland

A portion of Middle America distinguished by three primary factors:

- the culture following Colombian Exchange developed primarily as a Euro-Amerindian mix, although the degree of influence native peoples retained varies
- hacienda economy
- isolated from the European powers, thanks to the crowded Caribbean, so Spanish dominance during the imperial era was mostly unmolested

Mexico is the only country in the Middle American Mainland

Mosquito Coast

#mosquitocoast

More forest-y than Middle American Mainland and not as plantation-y as Rimland. Also known as Central America, but that term gets used in so many different ways that I went with something more memorable. Including Mexico here mostly for the Yucatan, which had a lot of crossover with Guatemala.

Belize
Costa Rica
El Salvador

Guatemala
Honduras
Mexico

Nicaragua
Panama

Andes

#andes

Although the mountain range itself stretches much further, when we think "Andean culture" we tend to think of the northwest Andes. Culturally, this area seems to be quite distinct from neighboring Chile.

See also border regions: Middle America Rimland, Brazil and Southern Cone

Bolivia
Colombia

Ecuador
Peru

Venezuela

Brazil

#brazil

It's weird to have a list for a single country, but Brazil is an enormous region and it happens to hit boundaries geographic and linguistic. It could be broken up further, but that probably enters diminishing returns for these lists... so we'll roll with it.

Includes the Amazon basin, Brazilian Highlands, tropical wetlands of the Pantanal.

Southern Cone

#southerncone

The most prosperous region of this continent.

Strictest definitions of this zone often exclude Paraguay, but this seems as good a place as any for it. Brazil included for some crossover in its southern regions.

See also border zones: Andes and Brazil

Argentina
Brazil

Chile
Paraguay

Uruguay

Pacific Islands

#pacificislands

An enormous catch-all. USA, France, Chile, China included for their territorial holdings.

Melanesia
Micronesia
Polynesia

Cook Islands
Easter Island
Fiji
Guam
Hawaii
Kiribati
Mariana
Marshall Islands
Nauru
New Caledonia
New Guinea
New Zealand

Palau
Papua New Guinea
Pitcairn Islands
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tokelau
Tonga
Tuvalu
Vanuatu
Wake Island

Antipodes

#antipodes

This is a British term, but... well... if you think of a better one, let us know. Oceania is just too much to process.

Australia

New Zealand

Southeast Asia

#southeastasia

Thailand
The Philippines
Laos
Cambodia

Myanmar
Vietnam
Malaysia
Singapore

Indonesia
Brunei
Timor L'este

East Asia

#eastasia

Vietnam is here again (see also Southeast Asia) because of its long cultural exchange with China, particularly up north, and Russia is here for eastern Siberia.

China
Hong Kong
Japan
Macau

Mongolia
North Korea
Russia

South Korea
Taiwan
Vietnam

Central Asia

#centralasia

From the Caspian Sea in the west to western China in the east. Largely a blend of Turkic, Iranian, Mongolian heritage. Sometimes also referred to as "steppe peoples".

Including China here for its majority-Islam western regions, especially Uighers in Xinjiang. Russia for Turkic Siberians. Also including Tibet as its own country, for easy searching by Westerners. Please don't interpret that as political commentary.

Afghanistan
China
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan

Russia
Tajikistan
Tibet

Turkmenistan
Tuva
Uzbekistan

South Asia

#southasia

Also often referred to as "The Indian Subcontinent". See also border regions, especially West Asia & Central Asia

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Bhutan

India
Maldives
Nepal

Pakistan
Sri Lanka

West Asia

#westasia

This area goes by so many names, it was tough to choose something suitable. Often referred to as "The Middle East" – but even ignoring obvious Eurocentric concerns with that convention ... The Levant isn't really Middle East, yet belongs in the same region so... oof.

A trade-heavy corner of the world, lots of cultural crossover everywhere. Look to ancient Persia and the Ottoman Empire as a general guide? But see also border regions: Central Asia, South Asia, North Africa, East Africa, Mediterranean.

Abkhazia
Armenia
Artsakh
Azerbaijan
Bahrain
Cyprus
Georgia
Iran

Iraq
Israel
Jordan
Kuwait
Lebanon
Oman
Palestine
Qatar

Saudi Arabia
South Ossetia
Syria
Turkey
United Arab Emirates
Yemen

Balkans

#balkans

aka Southeast Europe. Consists mostly of the Balkan peninsula, with very soft edges. Bounded on the west by the Adriatic, to the south by the Mediterranean, to the east by the Black Sea.

This region has been known as a crossroads of cultures for centuries (millennia?): a connection between branches of the Roman Empire, a mix of Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians, a boundary between Islam and Christianity.

Albania	Kosovo	Romania
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Macedonia	Serbia
Bulgaria	Montenegro	Slovenia
Croatia		

Eastern Europe

#easterneurope

Use of this term is so varied, particularly during and after the Cold War era, that it can be terribly frustrating. There aren't clear geographical boundaries between West / Central and East here, either. So we'll just try our best. :-)

Bounded to the east by the Ural and Caucasus ranges, but note soft edges.

Roughly dividing this zone based on religious and historical affiliation: regions where Eastern Christian (aka Orthodox) traditions prevailed following The Great Schism, whilst recognizing its distinctiveness from The Balkans.

Baltic states could go here, or Northern Europe, depending whom you ask.

Belarus	Lithuania	Azerbaijan
Moldova	Georgia	Russia
Estonia	Armenia	Ukraine
Latvia		

Northern Europe

#northerneurope

Britannia, Scandinavia, Jutland, and the many islands thereabouts.

If those old pirates went a-viking here, and/or their progeny settled, we included it on this list. (e.g. France, for its northern regions)

Denmark	Ireland	Russia
England	Latvia	Scotland
Estonia	Lithuania	Sweden
Finland	Norway	United Kingdom
Iceland		

Central Europe

#centraleurope

Another zone that is more historical & cultural than geographical... however, that doesn't make it any less real.

Roughly drawn based on influence from Holy Roman, German and Austro-Hungarian empires.

The proper zone for Baltic States is very much up for debate... we included them in Eastern Europe for booklist purposes, but they could also go here (or Northern Europe based on geography). /sigh

As always, edges are soft!

Austria
Czech Republic
Germany

Hungary
Lichtenstein
Poland

Slovakia
Switzerland

Western Europe

#westerneurope

As I found whilst researching all these global zones: if we try to exit Cold War era thinking, then Western Europe is defined more by what it is **not** than by what it **is**. It isn't Northern. It isn't Eastern. It isn't Mediterranean. (And, as you can see in the Iberia thread, I ultimately decided it isn't Iberian).

It's France, and French-influenced Britain, and the Low Countries. Maybe even Francophonic Switzerland? Some parts of modern Germany?

Belgium
England
France

Ireland
Luxembourg

Netherlands
Scotland

Iberia

#iberia

I absolutely **agonized** over whether this should get its own thread. How granular is too granular? Are these places suitably Mediterranean (as UNESCO groups them) or Western (as geography or 20th century politics might do) to just include elsewhere?

Ultimately, the deciding factor was cultural and probably is most evident in the results of the colonial era. The flavor of Spanish and Portuguese empires was fundamentally different from that of their their Western European counterparts, and the child states of Iberian settlements remain noticeably different today. Catholicism vs Protestantism, yes, but there is more to it. A divergence of lifestyle and priorities, perhaps? It's nebulous, but very much there.

Andorra
Gibraltar

Spain
Portugal

United Kingdom

Mediterranean

#mediterranean

Albania	Israel	Montenegro
Algeria	Italy	Slovenia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Lebanon	Spain
Croatia	Libya	Syria
Cyprus	Malta	Tunisia
France	Morocco	Turkey
Greece	Monaco	

Eastern Africa

#easternafrica

On the usual "edges are soft" tip -- there will be some crossover between Eastern Africa and Arabia / West Asia. For ancients, there's a fair bit of crossover with Mediterranean also, particularly Egypt and Rome up to Augustus / Cleopatra / Amanirenas

Burundi	Malawi	Somalia
Comoros	Mauritius	Tanzania
Djibouti	Mayotte	Uganda
Eritrea	Mozambique	Zambia
Ethiopia	Reunion	Zimbabwe
Kenya	Rwanda	
Madagascar	Seychelles	

Central Africa

#centralafrica

Keeping in mind borders always bleed in real life, and global organizations slightly differ on Central Africa vs Middle Africa.

Angola	Chad	Equatorial Guinea
Cameroon	Democratic Republic of Congo	Gabon
Central African Republic	Congo Republic	Sao Tome and Principe

Southern Africa

#southernafrica

Botswana	Namibia	Swaziland
Lesotho	South Africa	

West Africa

#westafrica

Benin
Burkina Faso
Cape Verde Islands
Cote d'Ivoire
Gambia
Ghana
Guinea

Guinea-Bissau
Liberia
Mali
Mauritania
Niger
Nigeria

St Helena
Ascension Island
Tristan da Cunha
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Togo