

Buying Abroad: A Foreign Experience?

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So, are our attitudes towards buying over the counter at home mirrored by our behaviour abroad?
It would seem not.

While 35% of people globally strongly or somewhat agree that they are comfortable buying OTC medicines abroad, half of Chileans and Germans are uncomfortable buying OTC medications abroad.

"The data indicates that the majority in markets with high trust in pharmacist's advice at home are uncomfortable buying over the counter medications abroad, with the UAE as an exception. Whereas the majority in countries with a high mistrust are fine buying OTC medicines abroad," observes Germany's Schafer.

"It appears that this attitude depends directly on the quality assigned to pharmacist's advice. Travellers might fear that they do not get the consultancy abroad they are used to at home. As soon as they do not expect good advice anyway, they feel comfortable to buy anywhere."

Added Chile's Cespedes:

"There is some ambiguity between attitudes and actual behaviour of Chileans when it comes to over the counter drugs. Three quarters have bought OTC medicines in the last six months yet 60% say they are concerned about taking medications not prescribed by a physician. In this scenario, it is no wonder they do not feel comfortable buying medicines abroad. This attitude can also be influenced by the fact that the majority of trips abroad made by Chileans are in other South American countries, countries that are considered less reliable than Chile on health issues."

At the other end of the spectrum, those most comfortable buying OTC medicines abroad are Spaniards (58% strongly or somewhat agree that they're comfortable doing this) and, to some extent, Americans (40% strongly or somewhat agree).

Indeed, 70% of Spaniards and Americans and 56% of Brits would even ask others to buy over the counter medicines for them when abroad.

Now that's an interesting souvenir to bring home.

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