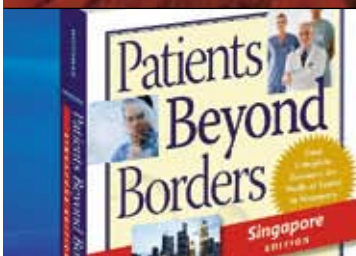
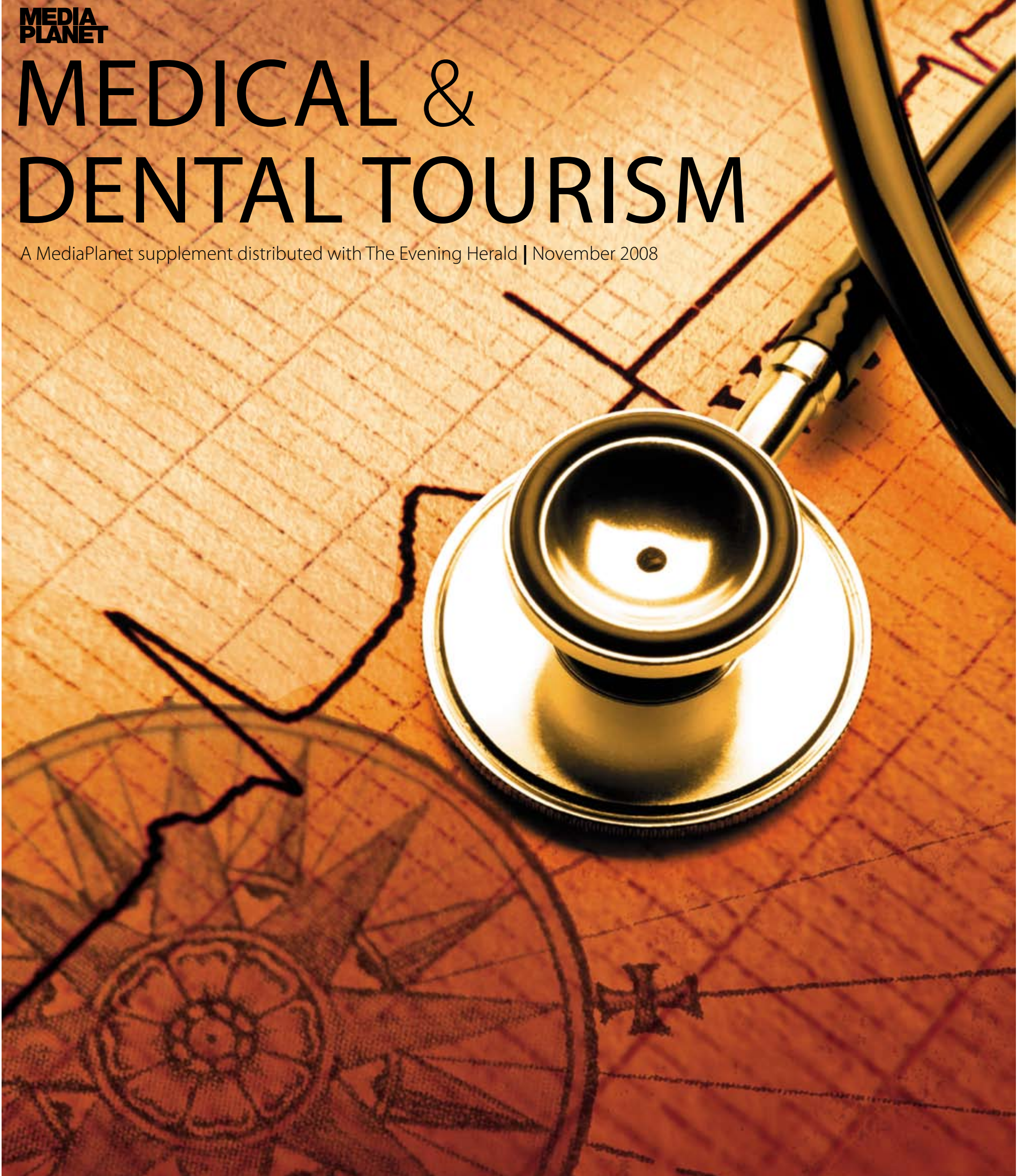
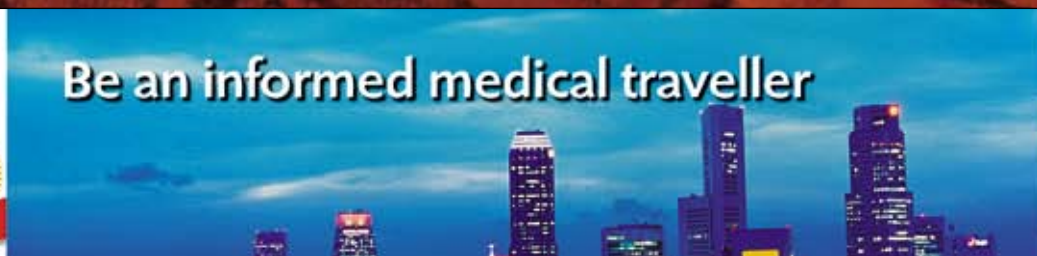


# MEDICAL & DENTAL TOURISM

A MediaPlanet supplement distributed with The Evening Herald | November 2008



Be an informed medical traveller



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# Foreword

By Caelen King

Where did medical tourism come from? If you think about it, it is not a new phenomenon. Lots of us have been making the short trip north of the border for dental work for years. Others made trips to the UK for cosmetic surgery before it became so widely available here. These trips were easy to make largely because we speak the same language and often we had friends who could recommend a clinic to go to. In the case of dentistry, there was often a lot of money to be saved too.

Now people in Ireland are looking further afield for a wider choice of options. Thanks largely to cheap flights, the internet, and the Euro, it is now just as easy to make trips to destinations like Hungary, Poland, Turkey or Croatia. People can turn to websites and blogs to get recommendations just as easily as asking a friend. In all of these destinations clinics are starting to pay particular attention to attracting patients from Ireland and consequently employ staff with perfect English to look after you during your trip.

As for saving money, treatment abroad is often 50% cheaper than it is in Ireland. A dental implant that costs €2,500 in Ireland can cost as little as €1,000 in Hungary, or even less in Poland or Turkey. Breast augmentation that costs €5,000 here can cost as little as €2,500 abroad.

With 20,000 people a year in Ireland undertaking some form of medical tourism, the clinics abroad are also starting to expand their offerings. The top dental clinics are now flying their dentists to Ireland to do pre-consultations and to prepare treatment plans prior to patients travelling. Dedicated cosmetic surgery resorts are popping up to offer the chance to recuperate in privacy and luxury.

Whatever type of treatment you are interested in, you now have more than just local options. With a bit of investigation you could find yourself a clinic that will offer treatment, transport, accommodation and activities for less than the cost of treatment alone at home. With the new economic reality settling in for the long haul, it's going to pay more than ever to shop around.



**Caelen King** is the CEO of RevaHealth.com, a free-to-use search engine which allows visitors to compare healthcare services in relation to their own personal needs, budget and location, particularly in relation to dentistry and cosmetic surgery. Since its inception just 18 months ago, RevaHealth.com has helped over 50,000 people contact clinics locally, nationally and internationally.



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## Medical & Dental Tourism

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## “

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# Avoid the Pitfalls

With medical tourism and the possible savings to be made a hot topic at the moment, it is easy to see why some people are rushing into the process without considering all of the implications involved.

Here are ten pitfalls to avoid when seeking dental treatment abroad.

## 01 You Want Accelerated Treatment

Your local dentist has told you that the work you want done will take four months. You have heard that dentists in other countries can do the job in a one week period. Why is this the case? It could simply be that your local dentist is busy and can't fit you in, however, normally it's because you are looking for a lot of work to be done in a short space of time. There are different opinions regarding the recommended time between treatments. If your local dentist has advised that your treatment should be spread over a 6 month period it is inadvisable to seek a dentist abroad to provide the same complicated work in what might be too short a time period.

## 02 You Need Orthodontics / Braces

Orthodontics require regular adjustments, sometimes as often as every two weeks to allow

the practitioner to tighten or loosen the braces according to the movement of your teeth. This must be a serious consideration when looking at treatment abroad.

## 03 You Are Afraid

The question that you have to ask yourself is: are you afraid of visiting the dentist? You may simply be afraid of your own dentist rather than the system in your home country. Look for another dentist locally. Ask your friends and family for a recommendation. Travelling abroad to escape your local dentist is ridiculous!

## 04 Small Savings

Traveling to a different country for dentistry, unless it is a short drive away, simply isn't worth the possible €500 saving. You have to factor in the travel and accommodation costs and consider your valuable time and holidays from work.

## 05 You Don't Want 'Unnecessary' Treatments

Your local dentist may want to do extensive preparatory work before starting on your treatment and you are concerned about the expense and pain. While it can be tempting to

think about traveling overseas to avoid this, it is normally inadvisable. The dentist overseas will more than likely agree with your local dentist and refuse to continue without the preparatory work. You should seek a second opinion locally or provide the overseas dentist with a panoramic x-ray before travelling.

## 06 Your Local Dentist Refuses To Treat You

Your local dentist has said that you are not suitable for a particular treatment. For example gum disease may make dental implants inadvisable. You think that if you travel abroad you will be able to pressure the dentist into doing the treatment because of time constraints. This is always a bad idea. Take the same steps as above, a second opinion or an x-ray may be the solution.

## 07 You Don't Like Travelling

For a lot of people travel is a bonus and the exposure to a foreign culture is its own reward. However, for some people it is simply harrowing, and the home sickness, communication problems and unfamiliarity make it an altogether unpleasant experience.

## 08 You Don't Like Responsibility

Dental tourism can offer terrific savings,

as much as 75%. However, it simply isn't suitable for people who are not prepared to take on some responsibility for their own health. You have to spend considerable time researching your options, reading about other patients' experiences and you must be prepared to return to the destination if follow up work is required.

## 09 You Want a Holiday

While it is perfectly feasible to combine minor dental work with a holiday, in general dentistry is not a lot of fun. If you are looking to have significant work done, an active holiday is probably unrealistic.

## 10 You Haven't Done Your Research

It is absolutely vital that you do your research thoroughly before you travel. Make sure you know exactly who your dentist is going to be, where and when they qualified, how many times they have performed the treatment you will be having, and what their success rate is. Ensure you know the total cost and any follow up requirements.

Research and questions are the key. If you are not happy with the answers don't travel!

# Dentaprim

*Bringing a smile to your face*

Picture this - you've just enjoyed a long walk along the coast of the Bulgarian Black Sea, having strolled through the market in the gorgeous town of Varna. Later on you'll have a relaxing massage back at the hotel. Who would have thought that going to the dentist could be this much fun?

The Dentaprim clinic in Bulgaria specialises in dental implants and aesthetic dentistry, combining dental holidays with great value for money. With Dentaprim - the most modern dental clinic in Europe - you can enjoy seven days soaking up the sun on the Black Sea coast and come back with a radiant smile.

Dentaprim offers a wide variety of services to its clients, providing everything from total reconstruction for a beautiful, natural smile, to veneers, to total intravenous anaesthesia, to high-quality dental implants. You won't have to grit your teeth about the cost either, as Dentaprim's prices are much less than here in Ireland.

On the first day of your dental holiday, you will be seen by a Dentaprim dentist who will inform you of all the possible treatments. Upon deciding your preferred treatment method, treatment can begin on the second day.

When you're not having treatment, you can leave the clinic be-

hind and explore the beautiful city of Varna. Whether it's a trip to the Roman baths, an excursion to the enchanting museum city of Nessebar or a horseback ride across the country's wildly romantic interior, Varna is steeped in history and culture, making it the ideal place for rest and relaxation. Dentaprim can even provide you with a tour guide on request!

After a day's sightseeing, why not revel in one of Varna's fashionable clubs and bars or enjoy a roll of the dice at the casino? Or, if you'd prefer to take a little easier, Dentaprim can recommend The Grand Hotel Varna, excellent spa resort just minutes away from the clinic, where the clinic has special reservations for its patients at discount prices.

While some patients may need to return after a few months to complete their treatment, in most cases everything can be done over the course of your seven-day dental holiday. When you return home, a Dentaprim associate dentist will be available close to where you live for your aftercare and all work has a two-year guarantee.

Seven days in Varna will bring you not only beautiful teeth but also a thoroughly enjoyable holiday experience. So whether it's a filling or a facial, an extraction or an excursion you're after, you'll be sure to leave Dentaprim smiling.



For more information, visit

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# Dentistry abroad: something to chew over

Let's face it - we all want a lovely smile. Straight white teeth not only make biting and chewing easier, they improve our confidence. With dentistry costing a pretty penny here in Ireland, you might want to consider looking a little further afield. Hungarian dentistry has a very good reputation in Europe, with treatments typically costing one third to half of Irish prices. Some call Hungary the dentistry capital of Europe; Germans, Swiss and Austrians have been going there for decades. But what should Irish patients look out for when researching a doctor or clinic abroad?

"I would suggest going for bigger companies with a long-term reputation, as it is these companies that can continually invest in the latest technology," says Dr Ildiko Cservenyak, Marketing Director of Access Smile, an Irish Company with a dental clinic in Budapest. "An Irish base is a great advantage as it gives clients extra security when it comes to aftercare issues. It is also worth asking if they can talk to previous clients. Guarantee provisions are also very important and they also need to be careful of 'virtual clinics' who have a webpage and then, when problems arise, just change the web appearance." Be also careful when the price is suspiciously low.

Hungary is an EU country, meaning that its standards are in line with the EU. Dentistry is a closely regulated business and in some cases, rules are even more stringent than in Ireland. For example, in Hungary, IV (intravenous) sedation can only be administered by a qualified anaesthetist.

Cservenyak stresses the importance of pre-consultation before going abroad for dental work. "It allows the client to meet a dentist from the clinic, ask any questions and receive a treatment plan in advance of travelling for treatment," she says. "Aftercare is also very important as are guarantee provisions. It is with these that the patient can feel fully comfortable with the decision to have extensive work done overseas."

Nichola Nolan is the Irish Account Manager of Access Smile's Irish base. Once an Access patient herself, she overcame her fear of dentists after receiving treatment in Hungary. Irish and based in Dublin, she has first-hand experience of being a patient and understands the fears that Irish people have when it comes to dentistry abroad.

"People often think that because the price difference is so significant, there has to be a catch somewhere," says Nolan. "The reason is not because the materials are not up to standard but because the cost of running the clinic, i.e. staff, rent etc is not as expensive as it is in Ireland. All materials and equipment used are of the highest standard."

The language barrier is also a big concern for people, who worry that they might not understand what the dentist is saying or what is happening around them. Nolan explains how the process works at Access Smile. "The first call the client receives from the company is from me, so that helps. Then they meet with the dentist who can speak to them in English. We provide an English-speaking customer rep who will meet them on their arrival and help in any way she can. Clients are also given a mobile phone with her number keyed into



*Dental treatment at the Access Smile clinic*

it so that they always have someone at the end of the phone. All staff at the clinic can speak good English, so communication is never an issue," she says.

While for some people, dentistry abroad is simply about saving money, for many it can be an emotional experience that changes their lives. "One client sent us a thank-you postcard written in Hungarian with the use of a dictionary," says Cservenyak. "We also received a text message from a patient saying she had just bitten into an apple for the first time in years."

Now that's definitely worth smiling about.

## Testimonial Ann Conway

"I'm the worst patient in the world; I've no threshold for pain and I was petrified of the dentist - even of booking a consultation. But when I went for my initial consultation in Dublin, they spent a full hour-and-a-half explaining all the details of the work I was getting done and the price. Because I was so nervous, they even gave me a number of another patient who had been over to Hungary, and she reassured me.

When I arrived in the airport, there was someone there to collect me. When I saw my name 'Ann Conway' written in English, it was very reassuring. The clinic was gorgeous and the equipment is excellent. Everything is clinically clean, even the waiting area.

The aftercare is fantastic too. A month after I had work done, I got a toothache in one of the teeth and I didn't know what was going to happen. I phoned them with the issue. Dr. Nyiri, my dentist rang me back that evening with my x-ray in front of her and explained what the problem could be and what I should do; she didn't dismiss me. I was also assured that if this did not work, they would either carry out further treatment in Dublin or fly me back for remedial treatment straight away. But there was no need as the recommended solution did solve the problem.

I met so many Irish people over there too. In fact, some of us are going to meet up after all our treatment is done. I'm thrilled with everything. I've recommended it to my sister and to my cousin."

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# Operator, Operator



**Erika Ladányi**

Managing Director of Beauty Hungary  
www.beautyhungary.com

Over the past few years, more and more people have been travelling to Hungary for medical care. Hungarian doctors and nurses have a highly respected reputation all over the world, and private healthcare facilities are modern, efficient and extremely cost-effective.

There are a vast range of medical procedures available, from cosmetic surgery to eye vision correction, aesthetic dentistry to general or specialised healthcare. Patients from Ireland and the UK can make huge savings on their medical care when compared to the costs in their home country; between 50 and 80% savings can be made.

There is no doubt that there are many benefits to travelling abroad for medical treatment, however it can be a stressful and demanding experience. Patients must carefully research both the destination and the various clinics at this location. This can be a difficult task considering the language barriers and cultural differences that exist.

Medical tour operators can help to make the experience as stress free as possible. As they know the local environment better than anyone they can be a valuable source of information about clinics and doctors. They can organise your schedule and arrange all appointments for you. The tour operators can also assist with arranging the best accommodation for your needs. Most tour operators will provide free transportation between the airport and the clinic, and many will even organise programmes for your leisure time.

One such operator, Beauty Hungary can make your trip to Hungary a smooth and comfortable experience. Beauty Hungary is the only medical tour operator in Hungary that provides a complete service on dental treatment, plastic and cosmetic surgery as well as eye vision correction with no hidden fees and highly qualified and board certified surgeons.

Having a local contact that speaks your language will prevent any sort of unpleasant misunderstandings. It is always a bonus to be clearly understood when abroad, but when it comes to health matters it is essential. Medical terms can be difficult to translate and explaining one's condition in detail may prove difficult. Medical tour operators employ qualified professional interpreters so that nothing gets lost in translation.

"We make sure that patients are looked after from the day they arrive in the country to their departure", says Erika Ladányi from Beauty Hungary in Budapest. "For instance, we give them a mobile phone with the number of our 24-hour emergency service. If patients don't feel well after the surgery, if any problem occurs, they can call this number and we will send one of our assistants to help. Patients find this very soothing and, on our part, we are more than happy to make them feel safe."

Knowing that somebody is caring about your safety and comfort while you are in a hospital abroad is probably the greatest benefit of using the services of a medical tour operator.

## Testimonial

Paul O'Mahony

"Tibor Dental was recommended to me by someone who'd had their teeth done there. I didn't know anything about Hungary as I'd never been there before, but the practice was similar to anything you'd find here in Ireland. There was no problem with communication as everyone spoke very good English.

I needed an awful lot of work done. I had three bridges done and all my fillings redone, so I had every tooth done basically. I didn't need any after care, but it's there if I want it and I know that. The dentist told me that if I have any problems that he'd get it sorted out.

I would definitely recommend it. After me, three of my sisters went over there to have their teeth done and they're very happy. My sister says she looks 10 years younger now; she's delighted with the results.

If I'd had the work done here, it would have cost me a lot more. They're very professional in Hungary and I have no problem in recommending them. I'm very happy with the end results. It's a year and three months on and my teeth are perfect. I have no complaints whatsoever."

## Testimonial

Mary Wilkins

"Everything was made very easy for us. We were accommodated very well, from being collected at the airport and brought to the clinical practice which was small but friendly. There was great patience taken to make sure that we were happy with everything that was happening. I got a crown and fillings done and had my teeth polished, whereas my daughter had quite a lot of work done: three bridges, nine crowns and fillings. There was no language barrier as both dentists spoke English extremely well.

The accommodation was organised for us and we were facilitated in everything we asked for. They made us feel very at ease and went above and beyond what could be expected. We actually bumped into someone from Cork who said how they'd like to go to a ballet and the practice arranged the tickets and a taxi to and from.

They didn't push us to do anything, so we didn't feel that we were being coerced into spending money. For the amount of work that my daughter had done, the prices were very reasonable.

All the work was done in ten days but they stand by it for five years. From beginning to end, we were dealt with in a very friendly and approachable way. We were never made to feel that any question was a stupid question. I would certainly recommend it to others."



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# What the experts say



**Dr Alexander Schreiner**  
CEO of Sanco Dental

**What, in your opinion, is the future of medical tourism?**

In my opinion, medical tourism will continue to grow because of high prices in Ireland.

**Will the number of people travelling abroad for treatments increase in the future?**

Yes, I believe that the numbers availing of treatment abroad will increase continuously.

**What are some of the fears that people still have when it comes to treatments abroad? What would you tell them to dissolve these fears?**

The biggest fear that people have is "What if something goes wrong after I've come home?" We ask patients to stay long enough in Budapest to make sure that nothing goes wrong, but if a problem does occur, we have a partner clinic in Dublin that will take care of you straight away.

**Are there any positive side effects of medical tourism for the local population and local businesses?**

Yes, of course. There are many positive side effect for the local population and local businesses because of the fact that patients are staying in hotels, spending money in restaurants, shops etc. This generates jobs and means income to the local economy.

**Do you see any negative aspects attached to it? I don't see any negative aspects to it at all.**

**How has medical tourism changed over the years? What did it involve when you started off?**

It has changed a lot since we started. Nowadays you have to organise regular consultations in Ireland in order to be ahead of the competition. As well as excellent customer care, you also need representatives in Ireland, which was not the case a few years ago.

**What do healthcare providers have to concentrate on if they want to guarantee their future success?**

Basically, they have to provide good value for money with outstanding customer care, both in Hungary and in Ireland.

“ If a problem does occur, we have a partner clinic in Dublin that will take care of you straight away.



**Dr. Gábor Nagy**  
Dentist and implantologist at Diamant-Dent Dental Clinic and Implantology Centre.

**What, in your opinion, is the future of medical tourism?**

We can't make a statement on behalf of other countries, but we can declare that medical tourism is prospering in Hungary at present. It's a chance to combine medical treatments with sightseeing and recreation, so the range of possibilities is very wide.

**Will the number of people travelling abroad for treatments increase in the future?**

I'm certain that the number of people seeking medical treatments abroad will increase, as Hungary offers a more reasonable price for patients than they get in their own countries. The number of dental patients from Western Europe coming here is continuously growing. Hungarian dentistry has been acknowledged for decades; it boasts outstandingly well-trained dentists who update their knowledge through

continuous further education. In addition, patients can save a considerable amount on treatment costs.

**What are some of the fears that people still have when it comes to treatments abroad? What would you tell them to dissolve these fears?**

Travelling costs may cause some fears, but with the number of airlines offering low price tickets, this is not an issue anymore. People also worry about quality. We provide certificates and guarantee letters to prove that our treatments and applied materials are of the highest quality.

**Are there any positive side effects of medical tourism for the local population and local businesses?**

Being a patient means being a visitor as well. Medical tourism has had a huge effect on city life, with patients visiting our restaurants, beauty salons and thermal spas.

**How has medical tourism changed over the years? What did it involve when you started off?**

When we started off, medical tourism was localised to neighbouring Austria. Over the years, we have extended our relations not only to Germany but across Europe.

**What do healthcare providers have to concentrate on if they want to guarantee their future success?**

To guarantee certain future success, the following are necessary: permanent high quality, affordable prices, no waiting lists, patience and the taking of individual requirements into consideration. We provide these for our patients under any circumstances.

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# Hungary for a holiday?

Deciding to travel abroad for a medical procedure is a daunting decision for anyone to make. However, more and more Irish people are becoming aware of the financial and medical benefits of doing so. This is particularly true of dentistry.

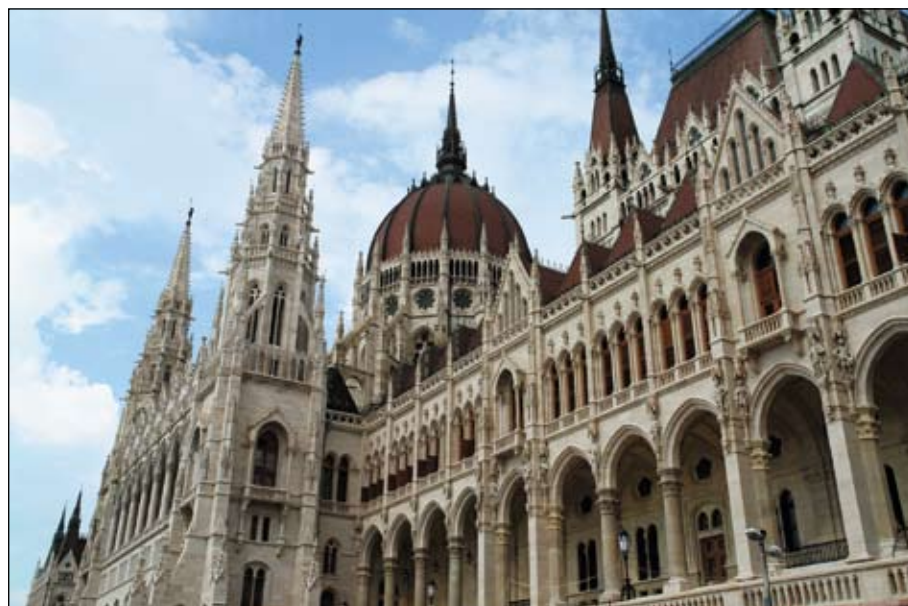


Photo by Narvikk / iStock

One of the most popular destinations that Irish people choose for dental treatment is Hungary. The country has a long tradition of treating foreign patients, particularly those from Austria and Germany. The level of care that can be found here is overwhelmingly apparent when one considers that over 1,000,000 dental trips to Hungary each year are taken by Austrians alone, from a country with a population of just over 8,000,000.

These trends have been reflected by a new survey that has revealed that dental treatment in Hungary is the cheapest in Europe. The survey, undertaken by the Institute for Medical Technology Assessment at Erasmus Rotterdam, is likely to increase the large number of Irish

and UK health tourists who already visit Hungary for dental treatment. According to Michael O'Farrell, Managing Director of Denteast.ie, customers can expect prices that are, on average, half of what they would pay in Ireland.

Some patients might feel that there are obvious risks with seeking a medical procedure in a foreign country. In recognition of this, there are now a number of agencies who act as a middle man for the potential patient, providing them with reputable practitioners that have the best possible credentials in their field. However, it is important to shop around for this service, because as with any other business, quality and value for money can vary.

Certainly there have been stories in the media about the dangers involved, citing cases where unfortunate Irish patients have received less than satisfactory treatment with consultations conducted in hotel rooms in the city centre prior to their journey. Like any true professional, O'Farrell is wary of such practitioners, which is why Denteast.ie has become the first (and to date, the only) such agency to set up a clinic in Ireland to care for patients before and after they receive their treatment. "The news has been full of horror stories of people who have gone abroad, which is why the aftercare service is free of charge in Dublin, if there is a problem with what they've had done," says O'Farrell.

It would seem that their clients approve of

this set-up, according to Ailish, a teacher from Clare. "The hospitality in Budapest was very good. I thought it was all very professional and I wouldn't have any hesitation in recommending it. When I had a small issue and wanted some help afterwards, I was delighted with the reception I got when I rang up the Dublin surgery. They took care of all the aftercare in Ireland as they promised they would."

It is encouraging to see that we are increasingly taking advantage of the benefits available to us throughout the free EU market for services that impact every facet of our lives. Dental tourism may be new to us, but no doubt in time, it is a trend that will continue to grow. With savings like these, who could resist?



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# Poland

## Healthcare

## Destination



**W**hy should you travel to Poland for dental or medical treatment? In short, for a high level of treatment at a low price. **Alison Hope of StatMedica** takes you through the options step by step.

In recent years, Poland has emerged as a popular destination for patients from Ireland seeking a broad range of treatment, including cosmetic surgery, dental treatment, eye surgery, fertility treatment and orthopaedic surgery.

Finding the most suitable clinic for your treatment in Poland really is a matter of personal preference. Some patients may feel overwhelmed at the thought of being in a country with an unfamiliar language. Many private clinics in Poland have therefore teamed up with travel agents and tour operators to provide inclusive packages – complete with sightseeing tours and an English speaking representative.

More independent minded patients can search from hundreds of clinics that promote their services on dedicated portals like [www.statmedica.com](http://www.statmedica.com), where they can compare the profiles of various clinics.

The next step is selecting a clinic. Does a clinic's website provide you with the information that you need? Is it easy to find out about the dentist's qualifications and experience? Be wary of a clinic that places a greater emphasis on the sight-seeing excursions over and above the skill and expertise of the surgeons.

When it comes to deciding on a clinic, the golden rule is not to make any decisions based on price alone. Sometimes it is worth spending a little bit extra on seeing a more experienced surgeon, or investing more in certain brands of dental implant. Cast a cynical eye over any promotional offers that sound too good to be true.

To really test a clinic and find out if it lives up to the claims that it makes on its website, you need to get in contact. There are some clinics in Poland that are trying to attract patients from the United Kingdom and Ireland, yet they let themselves down by employing a receptionist who does not speak English – simply cross them off your list and move on. Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions regarding your treatment, and do not agree to any procedure unless you feel 100% comfortable with the information given.

The next step is to consider the travel arrangements. An important difference between a trip to Poland for dental treatment and a regular city break is the travel insurance. Few insurance policies will provide cover in instances where a patient is travelling for the purpose of receiving dental or medical treatment. It is important to shop around for the right policy. If in any doubt, always refer to your insurance provider.

With careful planning, arranging dental or medical treatment in Poland can be stress free. Whether you take advantage of a package deal or you prefer to take a more independent approach, as long as you are thorough in researching your options, you could find yourself in the hands of some of Europe's most skilled surgeons and specialists, and saving money at the same time.

*Alison Hope is the Managing Partner of StatMedica, an information portal that provides the latest news and information for patients from the United Kingdom and Ireland travelling to Poland for dental and medical treatment.*

*For further information, please visit [www.statmedica.com](http://www.statmedica.com) or e-mail [enquiries@statmedica.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@statmedica.co.uk).*

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# MEDI + TOURS

## MAKEOVER HOLIDAYS





# SingaporeMedicine



*Singapore has established itself as Asia's leading medical hub, serving medical travellers from all over the world.*

*Photo: Daniel Tang / iStock*

**A** dynamic and multi-cultural city rich in contrast and colour with strategic location, excellent infrastructure and great attractions, Singapore is a leading destination, not only for business and leisure, but also for world-class, affordable and safe healthcare.

With well-respected doctors trained in the best centres around the world, internationally-accredited hospitals, a global reputation as a medical convention and training centre, Singapore has established itself as Asia's leading medical hub, serving medical travellers from all over the world.

From basic screening and cosmetic surgery, to high-end surgical procedures and complex specialty care, Singapore works to deliver the best healthcare experience.

SingaporeMedicine is a government-industry partnership committed to strengthening Singapore's position as Asia's leading medical hub for international healthcare services. Led by Singapore's Ministry of Health, SingaporeMedicine is supported by three government agencies: the Economic Development Board, International Enterprise Singapore and Singapore Tourism Board.

Increasingly international patients are drawn to Singapore for its internationally-accredited world-class healthcare with the assurance of competitive pricing, shorter wait-

ing periods and wider treatment options. Each year, more than 400,000 international patients travel to Singapore for its excellent, safe and trustworthy healthcare. Singapore's healthcare system was ranked as the sixth best in the world and the best in Asia by the World Health Organization in 2000. 13 hospitals and medical centres in Singapore are Joint Commission International (JCI) accredited, an affirmation of the nation's high standard of healthcare services.

Most healthcare facilities in Singapore have dedicated International Patient Service Centres to attend to international patients' needs, from their first enquiry and "meet and greet" at the airport, to interpreter services and support for accompanying persons, to the final send-off and post-treatment follow-up when patients are back in their home country.

Connected to 180 cities in the world, Singapore is highly accessible. Transport and accessibility within the country is equally easy and convenient. English is the first language of education and business and patients will not find it difficult to make themselves understood.

Ultimately, the medical traveler seeks peace of mind. Singapore is one destination where medical travelers can receive medical care of the highest quality in an environment that is safe, welcoming and stress free.

## Tax back & dental benefits

According to current Irish tax law, dentistry work carried out by qualified dentists in any EU country can qualify for tax relief

Those looking to travel to Hungary for dental treatment should be aware that if they are currently paying tax in Ireland, they are entitled - regardless of their income - to claim tax relief back on qualifying dental procedures in Hungary in the same manner that they do here. This is a valuable tax allowance that can increase the savings of their dentist bills to an even greater extent.

According to current Irish tax law, dentistry work carried out by qualified dentists in any EU country qualifies for tax relief, once the dentist carrying out the work is entitled to practice dentistry in that country. This generally applies to non-cosmetic procedures.

Michael O'Farrell, Managing Director of Denteast.ie advises that the process is quite simple. "Simply complete a Form MED 1 at the end of the tax year and send it to your Regional Revenue office. You should also send in evidence of payment of tax for that year (Form P60 in the case of a PAYE employee - both Forms P60 in the case of both spouses working and taxed under Joint Assessment).

There is no need to submit receipts with your claim, but only expenditure for which you hold receipts can be claimed. These receipts must be retained for a period of six years, as you may be asked to produce them if your claim is chosen for detailed examination. Where the claim includes dental treatment, a Form MED 2 should be sent with the Form MED 1. You should ask your dentist to complete this Form MED 2 and give it to you."

Further information regarding your entitlement and the relevant forms can be downloaded from the Revenue website at [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie)

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# European Dental prices

The biggest single reason that people are interested in travelling abroad for dentistry is that they know that they can save substantial amounts of money if they do so. A person in Ireland looking to have two implants and two crowns fitted can expect treatment costs to start at €5,750, and that excludes any preparatory work that is needed such as extractions, root canals, or treatment for gum disease.

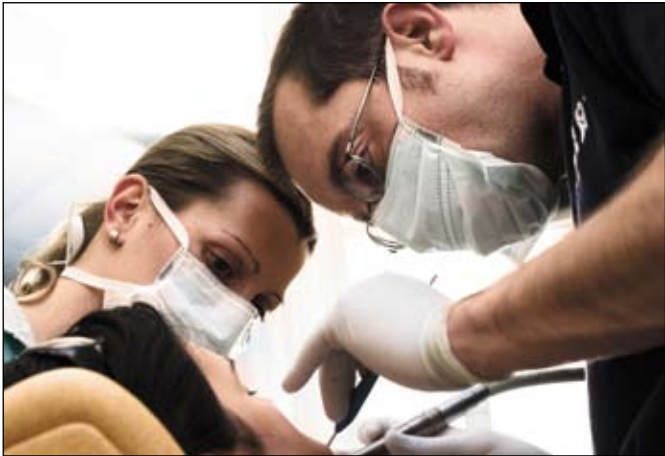
A person travelling to Hungary on the other hand can expect treatment to cost from €2,050. Similarly, this figure doesn't cover any preparatory work, and travel, accommodation and living expenses need to be added onto this. However, even with the two trips needed for dental implants the total starting price could be as little €3,000.

Dentists in Ireland will often say that when you travel abroad for treatment you are not comparing like with like when it comes to prices, and they have a point. This is where you need to do your own homework. Different brands of dental implants cost different amounts. The type and quality of crowns and implants can vary wildly.

However, the same is true here in Ireland. The key is to know what you are being quoted for right down to the smallest detail, and then to compare it with what you are being quoted for abroad. If the brands don't match, ask why not. If you're suspicious of the answers you receive, check them out either with another dentist or with previous patients.

An important point to make is that choosing where to go purely on the price is a big mistake. You really need to be satisfied that you trust the dentist and their clinic, and that they are going to be using a quality of material that you will be happy with. One thing to bear in mind is that you don't have to choose the cheapest option to still save a lot of money. Travelling abroad can also give you the chance to get a better quality of treatment for the same price as basic treatment at home.

The table on the right is a look at the average starting prices quoted for common dental treatments in clinics around Europe.



European Dental Prices Comparison

	Implants	Crowns	Veneers	Whitening	Root Canal
Hungary	€779	€250	€300	€272	€103
Poland	€739	€192	€201	€232	€91
Turkey	€826	€178	€180	€224	€129
Spain	€707	€360	€440	€300	€142
Ireland	€2,125	€750	€738	€340	€418

Source: [www.RevaHealth.com](http://www.RevaHealth.com)  
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## KG Dental

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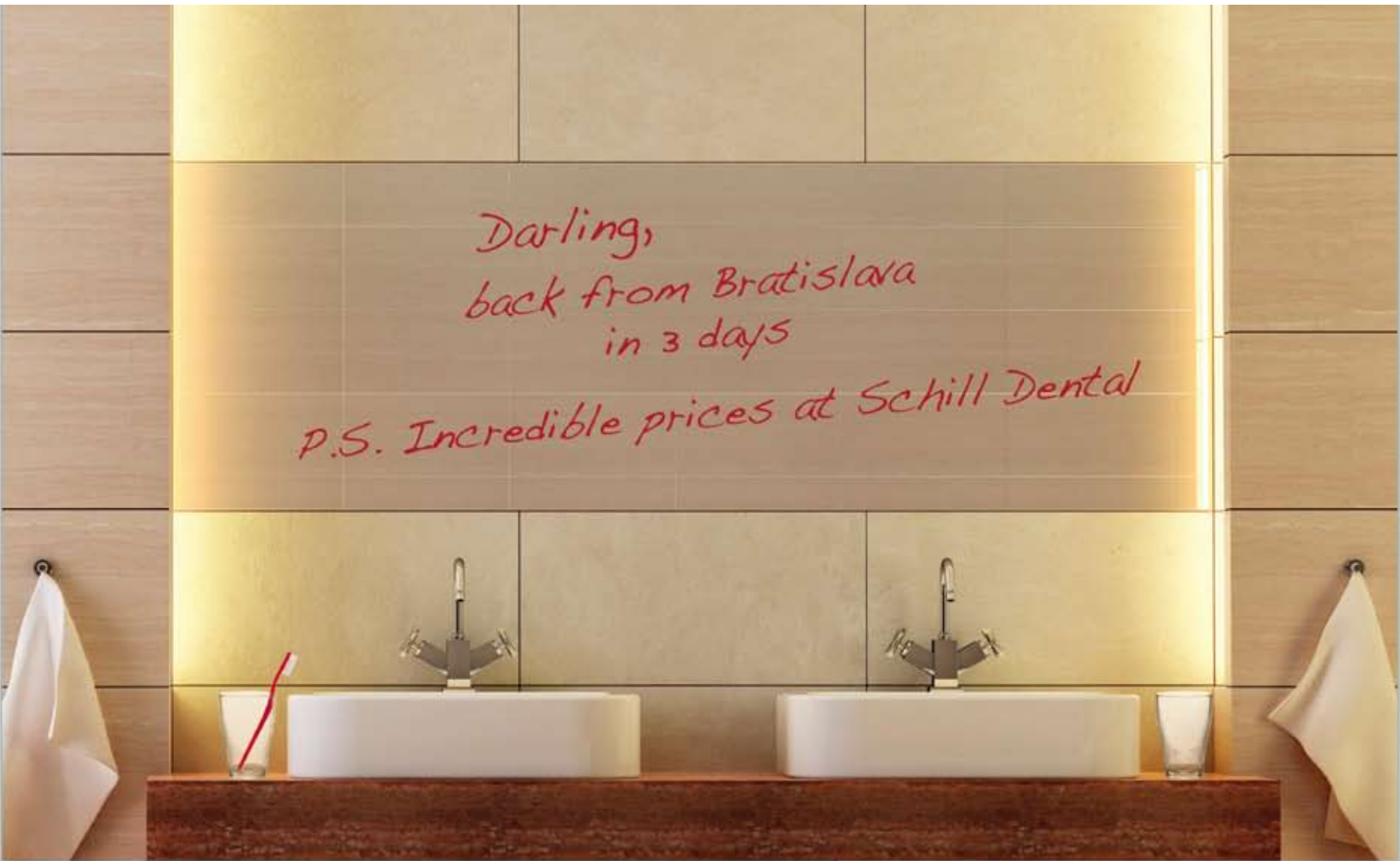
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