



PLASTIC CITIES

Singaporeans head to Seoul and Bangkok for cheaper procedures and the different looks that doctors in both cities specialise in

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SEATTLE ON ORIGINAL DEMAND
The plastic surgery market in Singapore is growing rapidly. Demand for cosmetic procedures is increasing, and many patients are looking for more affordable options overseas.

PROACTIVE PUSH
Singaporeans are increasingly turning to Seoul and Bangkok for plastic surgery. The reasons are varied, from cost to the desire for different aesthetic results.

KOREAN LOOK V THAI LOOK
There are distinct differences in the aesthetic preferences of patients from different regions. Korean patients often seek a more refined, youthful look, while Thai patients may prefer more dramatic changes.

Dr Tan Ying Chien, consultant plastic surgeon at The Sloane Clinic Plastic Surgery Centre at Novena Medical Center, says to a certain extent, local plastic surgeons may be losing both foreign and local patients to those countries, "just some more than others, myself included".

He says: "Certain patients will seek treatments in these countries either due to cost or the perception that the services provided there are better. "Thailand has been a popular destination for patients who are cost-conscious and it seems to remain so."

He adds: "Cosmetic surgery in South Korea is definitely becoming popular in recent years as K-pop and K-dramas have exposed more to South Korean aesthetics, services and products; and because many South Korean surgeons venture out of Korea to get business as competition in Seoul is fierce."

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HOW TO FIND A GOOD SURGEON OVERSEAS

- 1. Do your research thoroughly**
The first step is to research the surgeon and the clinic. Look for reviews, testimonials, and information about the surgeon's qualifications and experience.
- 2. Do your homework**
Check the surgeon's credentials, including their medical degree, board certification, and any awards or recognitions. Also, look into the clinic's reputation and facilities.
- 3. Get a second opinion**
It's always a good idea to consult with another plastic surgeon before making a decision. This can help you understand the risks and benefits of the procedure and ensure you're making the best choice for yourself.

CORRECTIVE SURGERIES UP

Now that more people are travelling to Seoul for surgery, Dr Tan of The Sloane Clinic Plastic Surgery Centre says he has seen more patients in the last year who need corrections after getting work done there, up from one every three months to one every three weeks. Add to that the risk of infections and having to make return trips for follow-ups and corrections, and it is no wonder why some Singaporeans such as Ms C. Chen would never consider going abroad for surgery.

"I picked my local plastic surgeon only because he was referred to me by a trusted aesthetics doctor," says the 30-year-old housewife, who declined to give her full name. She has spent more than \$50,000 in the last five years on Botox injections and breast implants that were all done locally at the Sloane Clinic Plastic Surgery Centre and Nu.Reflections Medical Aesthetics.

"I'm more assured by our local medical regulations than the ones overseas which I'm not familiar with," she adds.