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## The international health landscape of Cozumel Island, Mexico

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**Abstract:**

Cozumel Island is the largest of Mexico's eastern islands. It is the Western Caribbean's most popular cruise destination, and is well-known for its crystalline waters and mosaic reefs that attract dive enthusiasts from around the globe. Joining the millions of international tourists that set foot upon the island each year, Cozumel is also home to a significant community of lifestyle and retirement migrants. Recognising this conglomeration of global bodies, and that some will inevitably require medical assistance, this dissertation presents an exploratory case study of Cozumel Island's health landscape as an international phenomenon. It is driven by three primary objectives that seek to unpack the aesthetic nature of Cozumel Island's international care settings, determine the intersecting mobilities at play within the island's international health landscape, and understand both the provision and reception of care for international patients on Cozumel Island. Analysing field experiences, photographs, and semi-structured interviews with international lifestyle and retirement migrants, as well as health care providers working within the island's private hospitals and medical clinics, three discrete analyses provide insight into Cozumel Island's international health landscape. First, the aesthetics of pharmaceutical signage are explored and unpacked within the sociolinguistic framework of the linguistic landscape to consider how tourists visiting Cozumel Island might interpret such markers of medicinal merchandise, revealing imagery that positions pharmaceuticals as both souvenirs and suggestions of personal health autonomy. Second, international lifestyle and retirement migrants' perceptions and beliefs about Cozumel's pharmacy sector are analysed, revealing a number of concerns that exist in relation to participants' spatial mobilities. Finally, health care workers' experiences of treating international tourists are unpacked and found to entail multiple challenges that can preclude effective and safe treatment. When taken together, and as products of this dissertation's objectives, these analyses situate Cozumel Island's international health landscape as component within a complex archipelago of tourism, health and other mobilities, that produce it as connected, dynamic, and a continuously emergent setting of transnational health processes.


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