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Is your holiday souvenir a bargain or a fake?

It's summer at last. Holiday time! We love to bring attractive keepsakes back from our summer break. But sometimes our souvenirs are counterfeit products. This can cast a dark cloud over our memories of sunny days abroad.

The sea is lapping the shores, the sand is warm, and you're lying in your deckchair happy and relaxed. Suddenly, a figure obscures the sunlight. A hawk has stopped by to peddle ridiculously cheap designer products. His range encompasses everything from handbags and sunglasses to your favourite football team's top and children's toys. Every conceivable brand is on offer, and the articles seem enticingly genuine at first sight. However, these products are rarely originals. In this kind of situation, most people will have alarm bells ringing in their heads. They know all too well that they are buying a counterfeit. But they are often unaware of the issues underlying the fake product.

What you need to know about buying counterfeit goods:

Importing counterfeit goods into Switzerland is prohibited. Customs can confiscate and destroy counterfeit goods, even if they're 'only' a small souvenir for your own personal use.

The counterfeiting industry is run by organised crime groups. If you buy counterfeits, you are supporting criminals who don't care about providing good working conditions or protecting people's jobs.

Fake goods are of inferior quality. Counterfeiters aren't concerned about your health or safety.

They don't invest in research and development. Instead, they steal ideas and pay neither taxes nor social security contributions on their illegally earned money. This places a burden on the economy and thus destroys jobs.

You can't exercise guarantee or liability claims against counterfeiters because their identity is unknown.

Moreover, different penalties apply in different countries. For example, it is forbidden to buy counterfeit goods in Italy. You can face a hefty fine merely by buying a fake product there.

So STOP PIRACY offers the following advice for your holidays:

Don't ever buy counterfeit goods. It's better to invest your money in traditional souvenirs from local markets and to check in advance where you can buy original products. You can thus support legal, domestic businesses, rather than criminal networks, and avoid any risk to your health or safety.

You can find tips on recognising counterfeits at <https://www.stop-piracy.ch/en>

STOP PIRACY is the Swiss anti-counterfeiting and piracy platform. The non-profit organisation works to educate and raise awareness among consumers as well as promote cooperation between the business community and the authorities. STOP PIRACY provides the general public with facts, analyses and information about the risks of counterfeiting and piracy, and what lies behind them.

Contact for enquiries: STOP PIRACY Swiss Anti-Counterfeiting and Piracy Platform

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