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Chilean New Shopping List

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Report Highlights:

Report Highlights: Chileans are not buying the same products they used to in the supermarkets. Today they fill their carts with gourmet products, light food, and diet soft drinks. A survey carried out by UM media agency and “El Sabado” magazine reveals how the tastes, needs and the impulse purchases of Chilean consumers have changed over time.

General Information:

There was a time when going to the supermarket was an event, an exception instead of the rule, in which one could stop to compare calorie charts and tomato sauce cans without rushing, in which there were almost no other patrons to block the way with their carts.

Nowadays in Chile it is no longer like that. Today this trip is a duty with fairly clear patterns. Nowadays 86% of consumers shop in supermarkets, 61% of the clients are women, 42% go to the supermarket once a week, 58% take between one and two hours to get to the checkout and 43% prefers to go alone, without their children or their partners.

This information on the new Chilean consumer is according to the “Supermarket cart in Chile” study, developed by the UM media agency as requested by “El Sabado” magazine. The survey, which included 316 people over the age of 25, shows the new products with which Chileans are loading up their carts. Most of them are related to healthy food and gourmet products: whole meal bread, semi-skimmed milk or kefir/drinkable yogurt, cereals, olive oil and certain brands of mayonnaise. On the other hand fruits and vegetables are not in high demand because half of the people surveyed still prefer to buy them at a greengrocer’s or in the open air markets, due to lower prices.

As a result of internet access and the frequent exposure to the standards and norms in more developed countries, Chilean people have opened to the new taste for gourmet products and consumer-ready products which contains exotic ingredients, many of which were not available in Chile until a few years ago. Post predicts that this will be a growing trend.

We see the same trend with diet food; sugar free soft drinks have been displacing the sugared ones, diet mayonnaises the normal ones, and whole meal bread replaces the white bread in the shopping cart. This phenomenon is more noticeable among wealthy consumers, who prioritize quality over volume. This consumer is more demanding when there is more variety, they ask more as the range of things they can acquire broadens,” reports the Research Director of UM (a leading global media company), who adds that, in the future, she foresees an increase in the purchase of dairy products that accelerate the digestive process.

According to the survey, people who live alone or with their partner buy wines, different types of beer, mineral water and sugar free soft drinks more frequently, products that were formerly kept only for special occasions. Then, once they have children, these purchases are replaced by dairy products, cereals, juice and chocolates. Just like life, the shopping cart also changes with the arrival of children.

In spite of this trend, there are still products that are common both for those who have kids and those who do not, namely: rice, bread, milk, meat, toilet paper and yogurt.

Families with children buy more shoes, clothes and home décor objects in the supermarket; this relates to the fact that parents have less time to visit many stores and prefer to buy everything in the same place. Also, because of the price, they don't buy as many gourmet products. Meanwhile, other products have been disappearing from the shopping cart like floor wax.

Half the clients go to the supermarket with a shopping list; however, 60% doesn't keep to the list for two reasons: first, because of temptations of gourmet products, and second, because of special offers and promotions. In fact, only 60% of shoppers admit that special offers influence their decisions as to what to take home. Children are also a potential influence and they encourage purchases that were not previously considered. As a matter of fact, the biggest spenders in a supermarket are those who have children, but there is a solution: most parents avoid taking their kids with them when shopping; only the 11% of parents go with their children to the supermarket.

In the end, the shopping cart is much more than just a cart; it is the reflection of a person. If they throw in diet food it is because they are in a diet or watching their weight; if they take a lot of toilet paper packs it is because they have a big family. There are many things one can guess just by looking at the products people choose. A piece of information: one of the most frequent problems in supermarkets are the clients who fill their carts and then leave them in an aisle. "They just want people to see them buying certain products," a stock clerk says. That is how much a shopping cart means to some people.

In addition, the sight of people having lunch in the middle of a supermarket has long ceased to be strange. An interviewee remembers he went to a supermarket with a ready-made food section that stretched for at least 50 meters and where, in the end, there was a sushi chef wearing a black uniform and hat.

Nowadays, going to the supermarket is an unavoidable chore. While 50% of the survey takers assure they still go to the local grocery store, the opinions of some of the people surveyed reveal the reason why:

"These days you can buy things that are not strictly necessary; they are comfort items and treats."

"There are new packed products, ready-made or easy cook meals; they simplify everyday life."

"In the past supermarkets only sold food, now they even have plasma TVs."

According to the Chilean Supermarket Association (ASACH), there are 1,078 supermarkets in the country, which handle near US\$16 billion per year. So that you can compare, the free markets and grocery stores handle US\$2 billion.

The study was carried out by the UM agency between the 13th and the 18th of January, through the Internet and taking into account 316 people surveyed over the age of 25.

Shopping Cart Temptations:

Which products make you forget your original shopping list?

*Gourmet Products, 60%

*Special Offers/Promotions, 60%

*Home Décor, 43%

*Clothes/Shoes, 30%

*Light and Diet Food, 28%

Who has the “power of decision” over the supermarket purchase?

39% Men

61% Women

Children are a potential influence in supermarket shopping. In fact, those who spend most in a supermarket are those who have kids, even though only an 11% takes them with when shopping.

The essential food which cannot be absent from the shopping carts: Dairy products are the favorites and fruits and vegetables are mainly buy in produce stores and traditional outdoor “ferias” due to the price.

*49% Juices and refreshments

*82% Dairy products

*67% Bread

*48% Frozen products

*49% Cheese

*61% Cooking Oil

*67% Pastas

*53% Tomato sauces

*68% Rice

*53% Fruits and Vegetables

Which factor influences in the purchase decision?

*2% Kid’s opinion

*17% Partner’s opinion

5% Supermarket’s promotions and samplings.

40% Supermarket’s special offers

13% Discounts days

7% Advertising

17% Others.

Purchase Timing: People polled prefer to buy on Saturdays, 42% once a week and more than half of them take two hours of shopping.

*31% Less than and hour

*58% One or two hours

11% Two hours or more