

# When Chinese Brands Go Global, *Travel Retail* *Becomes the Stage.*

---

*A new narrative for Chinese brands going global.*

# Brandstar

*A leading brand-building research media in China.*

FOUNDED

2018

BRANDS COVERED

5,000+

READERS

*Founders · CMOs · Brand Strategists · Investors · Business Professionals*



消费电子  
酒店文旅

Chinese brands used to be suppliers.

Now they want to be destinations.



Urban Revivo @ Changi Jewel, Singapore

Chinese brands used to be suppliers.

Now they want to be destinations.



Urban Revivo @ Changi Jewel, Singapore



ICICLE @ Paris





Florasis @ Ginza Six, Tokyo

Chinese brands used to be suppliers.

Now they want to be destinations.



LAOPU GOLD @ Marina Bay Sands, Singapore

*A first wave of Chinese brands is already going global.*

*But for most emerging brands, the journey offline and overseas is just beginning.*



## *What Chinese brands face — and what they bring.*

### THREE CHALLENGES

---

01 **Low recognition baseline**

Overseas consumers lack cultural priors for Chinese brands.

02 **High channel barriers**

Travel retail's buying logic and shelf allocation differ fundamentally.

03 **Short dwell time**

Airport and duty-free contexts leave little room to tell a story.

### THREE ADVANTAGES

---

01 **A pre-seeded audience**

Outbound Chinese travellers carry brands abroad before locals discover them.

02 **Cultural narrative over manufacturing**

"Made in China" is upgrading to "Designed in China, told by Chinese brands."

03 **Content infrastructure travels with them**

Xiaohongshu, Douyin, TikTok Shop — brands arrive with an audience already in place.



Romain Raimbault, Events Director at NEZ, noted: "*Few French audiences knew Chinese perfume brands before, yet they were struck by the quality of their packaging, design, ingredients, and storytelling.*"



For Chinese brands,  
travel retail is not where *the story begins*  
— *it's where the story lands.*

# Why?

# For Chinese consumers, travel and shopping are *the same story*.

*Purchase decisions are formed on the feed — long before the boarding gate.*

---

## XIAOHONGSHU (RED)

*Where intent is formed.*

Search · Save · Decide

Pre-trip: research destinations  
and build shopping lists.

## DOUYIN

*Where attention is captured.*

Short video · Livestream · Emotion

Pre-trip: discover new products,  
new stores, new moments.

# Strategy?

# Store-as-Destination Destination-as-Content

*In China, the store IS the content — built to be visited, photographed, and shared.*

---



## THE IMPLICATION

*The store is not a counter.  
For Chinese brands,  
**it's the content  
itself.***

# The Three Pillars of Chinese Brands

---

01

## **Cultural depth replaces product difference.**

Products can be copied. Craftsmanship can be caught up to. What cannot be copied is a brand's cultural language, built over years of narrative.

02

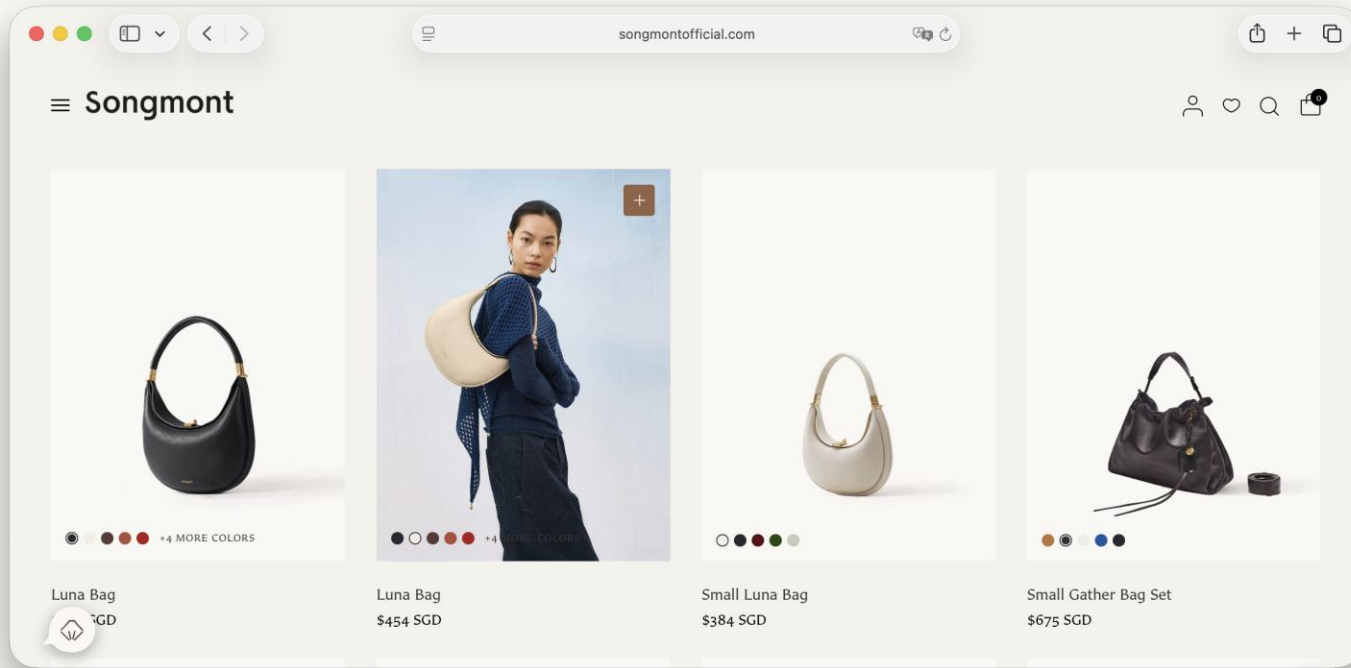
## **Premium quality, without the premium price.**

Between global luxury and mass retail lies a pricing gap. Chinese brands fill it with material and craft, not with logos.

03

## **Social content is the infrastructure.**

Douyin, Xiaohongshu, TikTok — Chinese brands are native to all of them.  
Content isn't marketing support. It's how the brand lives. Travellers arrive already in the brand's feed — before they arrive at the store.



*For Chinese brands, travel retail  
is not a sales channel —  
it's a cultural handshake.*

# Thank you.

---

CONTACT

**Brian Lai**

*Founder, Brandstar*

brian@brandstar.com.cn

brandstar.com.cn

BRANDSTAR GROUP

Brandstar Media

Kontext

Korto