



The Buzz for British Brands

英伦风尚席卷中国

撰文: Words: Zoey Goto (sent from London)
Images courtesy of the British Fashion Council

英国时尚界已经卯足了劲儿想要在中国市场踏上自己深深的脚印。2013年将会是里程碑式的一年，众多大牌设计师将在中国开设旗舰店以试水，而那些早年进驻的品牌也有进一步扩大与开设新店的打算。

2013 is the year that the British fashion industry hopes to make its mark in China. A crop of big name designers will be testing the water with their first flagship stores in China, while brands that have already established a presence will be looking to expand with new stores and concessions.

尽管近年来奢侈品行业受到金融危机的影响呈持续下跌走势，然而长远来看前景还是光明的。预计到2017年，中国将成为全球第二大奢侈品市场，仅次于美国。鉴于此，众多英国时尚品牌，如巴宝莉、薇薇恩·韦斯特伍德、吉凡克斯及玛百莉等品牌都有在中国几大城市开设新店的打算，这对于大牌粉来说无疑是一个天大的好消息。而这些品牌一旦在中国注册成功，带来的收效不仅仅会是在中国，也会促进在欧洲中国游客的购买欲望。据巴宝莉的内部统计，亚洲顾客的购买量现已达到了他们伦敦销售额的三成。

五年前曾从中国市场撤出的英国设计师品牌保罗·史密斯准备于今年东山再起，他的店去年底在天津开业，今年春天北京店也即将开业。在上海，一个5000平方英尺的保罗·史密斯旗舰店也将于今秋落成。这只是他们长期战略的开端，未来五年保罗·史密斯计划在中国开设超过20间店。而已经在上海有两个门店的薇薇恩·韦斯特伍德也计划要把门店扩展到20间。

负责在全球推动本土时装设计师的英国时装协会近期在香港开设了展会，推进像尼可拉斯·科克伍德、彼得·皮洛托和乔纳森·桑德斯这样的时尚界新星。

英国传统品牌也对中国奢品市场表现出极大的兴趣，以皮革手袋著名的英国“老字号”玛百莉，今年也将继续扩店。该品牌于1971年始于英国小镇萨默塞特，现如今已是闻名世界的英国品牌，源自于

捕鱼、狩猎和射击等英国传统项目，成就了其典型的英伦风格。

玛百莉于两年前进驻北京，今年该品牌已经在上海的百货商场生根，2013年将陆续有三家新店在京、沪闪亮登场。玛百莉的品牌首席执行官布鲁诺·吉永说，目前他们在中国最畅销的是Bayswater、Alexa和Del Rey系列包包。那么中国消费者已经认可了这个品牌吗？

“中国的消费者只会对放心的品牌掏腰包。玛百莉所坚持的英国传统工艺以及历史传承性正对中国消费者的胃口。我们至今仍然坚持保证每一个玛百莉都是正宗的英国产。”布鲁诺说。

他所言正中了两个在全球热门的关键词：传承与正宗。消费者更愿意为一个背后有着动人故事的品牌买单，正如英国巴宝莉的经典风衣，亦或伦敦著名的萨维尔街定制的英国传统贵族礼服。

另一个典型的例子就是曾为温斯顿·丘吉尔量身定做服装的品牌吉凡克斯。坚持他们一贯的绅士风格，他们从最初在著名的英式服装定制街萨维尔街的小小工作室，如今发展到了在中国拥有108家门店的大品牌，其影响力覆盖整个亚洲。该品牌在现今的市场中仍坚持自己的生财之道：他们还在提供传统的服装订制服务，为中国绅士们量身定做西装与衬衫。吉凡克斯正在努力迎合中国人的穿衣风格和消费习惯，“在保持纯正的英国风格的同时因地制宜”是他们的理念。近日吉凡克斯已被香港利邦公司引入中国，该公司旗下还同时拥有肯迪文等品牌。2011年，以雨衣而闻名的英国品牌雅格狮丹也被一家中国公司以一千五百万英镑买入中国。看来中国不单是在买这些奢侈品，同时也在购买这些品牌。

不管怎样，欧洲品牌正越来越深刻地意识到，在中国守株待兔这招行不通。他们必须迎合中国市场的需求，并积极吸引消费者。那些复杂抽象的广告语甚至品牌标志，都远不及品牌故事与历史在中国更能吸引消费者。

欧洲有几大品牌已捷足先登，法国巴黎品牌浪凡指派其创意总监阿尔伯·艾尔巴茨前年5月在北京举办了一个星光熠熠的盛会，题为“浪凡爱北京”；古奇也选择了李冰冰做他们的亚洲代言人；迪奥靠着奢华的VIP更衣休息室来吸引他们挥金如土的顾客；巴宝莉也一直在利用社交网站如开心网等来吸引更年轻的粉丝群；男装品牌登喜路去年也推出了限量版龙年袖扣。

纵观目前中国奢侈品市场的概况，第一步先是如何实现这些英国品牌的进驻，从而建立一个忠实的顾客基础。一旦实现了这一步计划，接下来最有趣的部分，就是看这些品牌怎样应对长期的挑战，做到站稳脚跟的同时又保持风格不变。（翻译：陈溪）



男装品牌登喜路去年推出了限量版龙年袖扣
Dunhill created limited edition cufflinks to celebrate 2012 as the year of the Dragon.



flagship store in Shanghai in the Fall of 2013. This is part of a wider attempt to reintroduce the brand in China, with the long-term strategy to open more than twenty stores over the next five years. Vivienne Westwood, who already has two outlets in Shanghai, is also aiming to open twenty stores throughout China.

The British Fashion Council, responsible for promoting British fashion designers internationally, recently set up a showroom in Hong Kong to showcase rising stars such as Nicholas Kirkwood, Peter Pilotto and Jonathan Saunders.

British heritage brands are also receiving great interest within the Chinese luxury market. Mulberry, famed for their crafted leather handbags, will continue to expand in China this year. The company, which started in rural Somerset in 1971, has gained popularity both in the UK and internationally by presenting a quintessentially-British style that is inspired by the country pursuits of fishing, hunting and shooting.

Mulberry initially ventured into China two years ago with a store in Beijing. The brand was recently introduced into a large department store in Shanghai and 2013 will see three new stores pop up in Shanghai and Beijing.

Mulberry's Chief Executive, Bruno Guillon, says that the best sellers in China at the moment are iconic products such as the Bayswater,



The recent decline in designer purchases has sent shock waves through the luxury sector. However, the long-term forecast is more optimistic, with predictions that China will be the world's second largest luxury market after the U.S. by 2017. In light of this, British fashion brands such as Burberry, Vivienne Westwood, Gieves & Hawkes and Mulberry are continuing to expand in major cities throughout China, keen to showcase a comprehensive message about their brands to the consumer. If the labels can get it right, they will see not only increased sales in their Chinese stores, but also from Chinese visitors in Europe. Burberry recently reported that a staggering 30% of their London customers are from Asia.

Having withdrawn from the Chinese market five years ago, British designer Paul Smith is set to make a comeback in 2013. His store in Tianjin opened towards the end of 2012 and will be followed by a Beijing store opening in the Spring of 2013, then a 5,000 square foot

Alexa and Del Rey bags. So why does he think Chinese customers will connect with Mulberry as a brand? "Our Chinese customers want to invest in a piece of luxury that they feel confident about. Mulberry has a strong sense of its British heritage and history of craftsmanship and our customers appreciate this - our dedication to the craft behind handbag-making and the fact that we still produce many of our bags in the UK."

He hit on key themes that are being echoed elsewhere in the luxury market - heritage and authenticity. Consumers are more willing to invest in established brands that have an engaging story to tell. There is a genuine interest in British brands with a rich history, from Burberry's classic trench coat, to Savile Row tailors who have traditionally dressed the British aristocracy.

One such brand is the gentlemen's tailors Gieves & Hawkes, whose previous clients have included Sir Winston Churchill. From their workshop in Savile Row, London, an address that is associated with quintessentially-British tailoring, they have expanded throughout Asia and now have 108 stores and concessions in China. The company has successfully carved out a niche in the market by offering a traditional tailoring service in a modern environment, selling suits, blazers and dress shirts to Chinese gentlemen, although Gieves & Hawkes do localize with respect to Chinese taste, consumer behavior and styles. As the company says, it is striving to create "the balance between upholding the British authenticity and allowing regional adaptations." Gieves & Hawkes were recently bought by the Hong Kong group Trinity, who also own the gentlemen's outfitters Kent and Curwen. In 2011, the British label Aquascutum, famed for its raincoats, entered administration and was bought by a Chinese trading company for £15 million. China is not only buying the products from these luxury brands, but also buying the brands themselves.

However, European brands are becoming increasingly aware that their luxury goods will not sell themselves in China. The brands that will forge ahead in the current climate need to actively engage the customer and attempt to understand the cultural landscape. There is a higher interest in fashion brands that use a sophisticated and symbolic language, rather than those that rely on logos to do the talking. Fashion houses that have traditionally relied on Western cultural associations will now need to work harder to communicate their brand story to the Chinese audience.

European brands that have recognised this and are wooing the Chinese public include the Parisian fashion house Lanvin, who sent its creative director Alber Elbaz to China last May to host a star-studded event entitled 'Lanvin Loves Beijing'. Gucci has chosen the actress Li Bingbing to model for its Asia campaign, and French label Dior is luring the big spenders into its Chinese stores with glamorous VIP rooms for shoppers. Burberry has also been utilising social media sites such as Kaixin to attract a younger crowd of fans and the luxury menswear label Dunhill created limited edition cufflinks to celebrate 2012 as the year of the Dragon.

As China's retail scene evolves, the short-term challenge for these British brands will be how to engage the Chinese market and establish a loyal fan base. Once that is achieved, it will be interesting to see how they tackle the long-term challenge of ensuring availability, whilst maintaining that all-important exclusivity. ▣

