



## About Taobao Maker Festival 2023

Introduced in 2016, the Taobao Maker Festival has since evolved into an annual celebration of youth creativity. As Taobao welcomes its 20-year milestone, the 8th Taobao Maker Festival will take place in 10 bustling cities in China over the Labor Day holiday. For the first time ever, the event will be free for the general public to enjoy.

This year's Taobao Maker Festival, scheduled from April 29 to May 1, will revolve around the theme of "Uncovering Infinite Lifestyle Possibilities on Taobao." The festival will feature three distinctive themed exhibitions in Hangzhou, Shenzhen and Chongqing, each highlighting a different aspect of the Taobao platform: "Wonder," "Technology" and "Trends." Concurrently, a series of Taobao Maker fairs will be held in seven other cities, including Shanghai, Changsha, Xi'an and Xiamen, inviting both locals and tourists to visit and experience the festivities. At each of these events, attendees will have the opportunity to fully immerse themselves in the innovative products showcased by some of Taobao's most creative merchants, experiencing the youthful, energetic and imaginative lifestyles that are available on Taobao.

## The Highlights

**Exhibitions in 10 cities with free admission for the first time:** To mark its 20th anniversary, Taobao is dedicating this year's Taobao Maker Festival to its valued consumers. This year's festival is set to be the largest ever in terms of the number of participating cities and audience reach. The public will have free access to exhibitions in 10 cities to enjoy an innovative, trendy and diverse Taobao experience.

**Three distinctive main venues with livestreaming on Taobao:** The three uniquely themed venues in Hangzhou, Shenzhen and Chongqing will showcase creative new products and provide visitors with a diverse range of experiences. Apart from offline interactions, most merchants will also engage with online consumers in real time through Taobao's built-in livestream commerce channel Taobao Live, allowing online audiences to participate in the exhibition and experience the products wherever they are. The three themed venues include:

- "Wonder" in Hangzhou: The exhibition will bring together artisans, delicious food and products related to ACG (Anime, Comics, Games).
- "Technology" in Shenzhen: Visitors will be able to explore futuristic technologies in areas such as consumer electronics and intelligent manufacturing.
- "Trends" in Chongqing: Mesmerizing new trends in clothing, designer toys and home furnishings will be showcased onsite.

## The Makers

The annual Taobao Maker Festival serves as a bustling hub where a large number of “Maker Stores” on Taobao can gather and showcase their novel products. This year, the participating merchants will display innovative products in the 10 venues, reflecting four rapidly growing consumption trends of **interest, pleasure, health** and **family**, as well as the increasingly refined shopping preferences of young consumers.

- **Individuals driven by their niche interests embark on entrepreneurship on Taobao to attract like-minded consumers.** For example, a group of pen and ink enthusiasts in their 20s have started a business to develop eco-friendly color inks for consumers who enjoy calligraphy. Similarly, a jewelry designer who is passionate about Chinese folk crafts has infused modern vitality into traditional techniques, creating niche lantern designs that are loved by young people.
- **Products that facilitate an individual’s pursuit of a distinctive way of life can bring happiness to everyone involved.** For example, candle art paintings help people release stress and experience healing through artistic creations. Exquisitely designed pet skateboards highlight the personalities of pets and the tastes of their trendy young owners. Wearable and comfortable modern Hanfu garments designed with the use of technology appeal to those who appreciate traditional Chinese culture.
- **Healthy eating is made possible by high-quality ingredients matched with technology.** For example, the use of technology has allowed China’s Qiandao Lake, known for its quality water, to produce one of the best types of cultivated caviar loved by Michelin-starred restaurants and young consumers. Meanwhile, a growing health-consciousness among consumers continues to promote the application of material science technology in food production, leading to the emergence of 3D-printed food with high protein, low carbohydrate and precise nutrition.
- **Merchants and shoppers rediscover the beauty of family life, from home entertainment to recording fun moments.** Embodying the concept that “time is part of the scenery,” innovative home entertainment products incorporating magnetic technology have emerged on Taobao. On the other hand, there is a “flying camera” designed to meet the needs of families, especially female consumers, helping them capture moments during outdoor activities, travel and other social activities.

To discover even more creative ideas and entrepreneurial stories from the Taobao Makers, be sure to check out the attached profiles of representative merchants as well as the latest updates on [Alizila](#).



## Consumption Trends No.1: Interest



### Eco-friendly Cold Brew Ink - Starry Ink

Many people have heard of cold brew tea or coffee, but how about cold brew ink? The founder of Starry Ink, Harvey Yu, born to a family of engineers, is good at chemistry and has been passionate about fountain pen ink since childhood. Combining his interests and expertise, he founded Starry Ink in his university's chemical laboratory at the age of 18. Starry Ink means "ink that is as beautiful as the starry night." Besides the cold brew series, which is environmentally friendly, Starry Ink has also launched over 1,000 color-changing and multicolor inks, each with a unique story behind.

Starry Ink has brought together a group of Gen Z consumers who, like the brand's founding team, love to explore different writing experiences and hope to add colors and inspirations to their lives. The brand has also expanded to overseas markets such as Japan, the United States and Southeast Asia. In the current paperless and fast-paced era, Yu hopes to facilitate a return to the authentic writing experience for young consumers. On top of this mission, Starry Ink continuously raises public awareness of the needs of the autistic children community through activities such as art workshops.



### Handmade Crafts from Mountain Regions - Handmade Creation of Wang

Offering a mix of rural and urban product styles produced by artisans and designers, Handmade Creation of Wang aims to unlock the commercial value of traditional Chinese handicrafts through productization and marketing. Having traveled to most parts of China, Danqing Wang, the brand's founder, has developed a strong interest in Chinese folk handicrafts from remote mountain areas. As a jewelry designer, she later started her own business and sell a range of products that blend traditional craftsmanship and modern designs through Taobao. In Wang's opinion, the inclusive environment available on Taobao enables niche-product brands like hers to grow with ample freedom and opportunities, which allows more young consumers to appreciate cultural heritage. As her products became more popular, she established over 10 handicraft bases in Southwest China, collaborating with skilled embroiderers living in the mountains with the aim of helping increase their income.

The movable handmade wooden fish lantern by Handmade Creation of Wang to be featured at this year's Taobao Maker Festival adopts various handicraft techniques including fabric crafts and embroidery, making it different from lanterns made with traditional paper pasting craft. Its three-section design allows the fish lantern to swing flexibly.



### Refreshing Moss Wool Felt Handbag - Kreator

Ke Zheng, the founder of Kreator, is an art college graduate born in the 80s. Her experience of meeting various artisans during her graduation trip deeply fascinated her with the craftsmanship spirit and the warmth of the handmade process. In 2015, Zheng founded her design studio named Kreator with a focus on wool felt craft, which has nearly 8,000 years of history.

Zheng believes the uniqueness of the brand lies in its research into the traditional wool felt knitting process and its knitting technique, based on which it is able to constantly explore new materials and creative styles. The brand's original fresh moss wool felt handbag incorporates a preservation technique that makes the moss appear faintly on the bag's surface, as if it were growing from the soil, to present a natural feel. Through her wool felt designs, Zheng hopes to explore the relationships between people and the world and those among people, and attract consumers who value individuality and uniqueness and care for environmental protection and sustainability.



### Consumption Trends No.2 : Pleasure



### Art Therapy Candle Art Painting - 94oC

The fast-paced and stressful nature of city life has led more and more people to search for ways to relax and unwind. Hamlein Wang and Fuqing Liu, two art school graduates, co-founded an independent design brand named 94oC to address the emotional needs of Gen Z consumers. Through niche handicrafts and music, the brand creates stress-relieving items that bring people joy and achieve the healing effects of art therapy. By launching a candle art painting product, 94oC hopes to encourage its customers to participate in wax art creation, immersing themselves in unique aesthetic works formed by the flowing lines and colors of melted wax, while subverting people's traditional perceptions of the function of candles. Established in 2019, the brand operates a Taobao store as its official online sales channel.



### **Pet Skateboards - Torist Pet**

The pet economy is unstoppable. Many pet owners treat their pets as family members, with pet products being a reflection of the owner's personality. With over 14 years of online shopping experience on Taobao, and more than a decade of working experience in the e-commerce industry, Xulong Yang decided to open a Taobao store in 2019 when he struggled to find suitable pet products for his small French bulldog. The brand focuses on pet products with strong social attributes and eye-catching designs, emphasizing chic appearance, high quality and personality to provide more choices for young pet owners. Yang hopes to build a successful pet product brand in the next five years and looks forward to opportunities to expand overseas.



### **Hanfu You Can Wear to Enjoy Hotpot - Zhizaosi**

Founded in 2020, Zhizaosi (meaning weaving workshop) made its debut on Taobao in the same year. With the mission to create "Hanfu you can wear to enjoy hotpot," Zhizaosi specializes in contemporary Hanfu that combines elegance and comfort, and incorporates modern fashion concepts to make Hanfu more practical and wearable for daily life. Through this approach, the brand hopes to enable more consumers to experience and appreciate Hanfu. It is also committed to restoring China's traditional intangible cultural heritage skills with modern technology and industrializing their application by researching and developing textile machinery and printing and dyeing techniques. According to Zhizaosi's co-founder Christopher Xie, his brand's customers are individuals who identify with traditional Chinese culture, regardless of their origin, profession or age. It has customers who choose to wear its products as their wedding attire on their special day, and teachers who wear its items on campus. The brand has expanded to overseas markets through Lazada, a leading Southeast Asian e-commerce platform, to reach ethnic Chinese consumers beyond its home market.



## Consumption Trends No.3 : Health



### 3D-printed Super Food - Moodles

Moodles, a smart food manufacturing brand, aspires to apply high-end smart manufacturing and materials science technology in the food industry to create food that is both delicious and healthy. Founded in 2021, the company has received multiple rounds of funding and established a 3D printing smart food factory late last year. Its founder Ryan Zhu, who comes from an engineering background, has been passionate about the research of 3D printing for years and decided to start his own business when he noticed the growing health-consciousness among consumers in recent years. By integrating 3D printing technology, molecular cuisine techniques and modern nutrition knowledge, his brand seeks to address consumers' common issue of high carbohydrate, low protein and low nutrition intake from staple food without changing their dietary habits. In March 2023, Moodles opened its flagship store on Tmall to build its brand image through the platform.



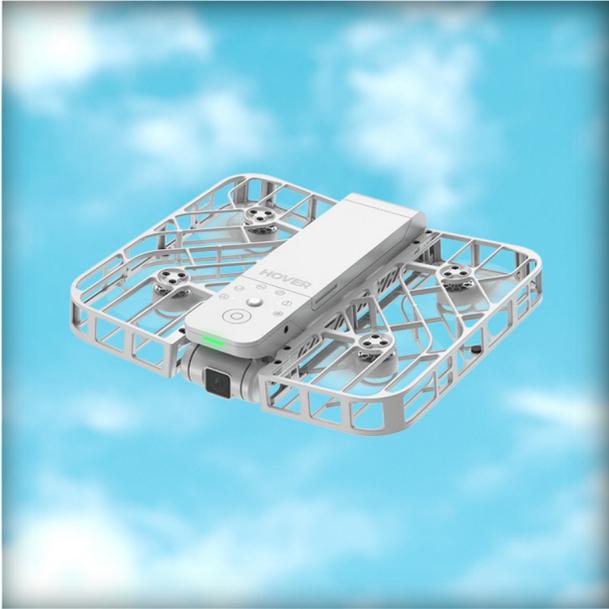
### Experiencing the Culture of Caviar - Kaluga Queen

Caviar, along with foie gras and truffles, is considered one of the top three luxury ingredients on the Western dining table. Based in Qiandao Lake in Zhejiang, China, a place known for its quality water, Kaluga Queen is a pioneer of artificial sturgeon breeding in the country. Its founder Bin Wang studied marine science and participated in a sturgeon breeding and conservation project in 1998, which led to his passion for this endangered and protected species that is known as "underwater living fossils." He subsequently researched and successfully developed a fully artificial sturgeon-breeding technology. Currently, Kaluga Queen exports cultivated caviar products to the United States, France, Japan, Germany and Denmark, among other countries.

Kaluga Queen has established a presence on Tmall for 10 years. Leveraging the Taobao Maker Festival, the brand aims to reach a wider audience of adventurous young consumers to make the caviar culture accessible to and even fashionable among this demographic.



## Consumption Trends No.4 : Family



### A Camera that Can Fly and Follow You - Hover Camera

ZeroZero Technology launched a lightweight, portable and foldable camera named “Hover Camera X1” in 2022. The camera features three-second takeoff and palm-landing as well as multiple modes including hovering, following, circling, zooming out and overhead shooting. Designed for scenarios such as outdoor excursions, short trips, gatherings and sports events, it is convenient for users to carry around and meets their needs for instant photo sharing on social media. The company launched the X1 on Tmall with the aim of leveraging the platform’s huge user base and strong image as a go-to shopping destination.

ZeroZero Technology was founded in 2014 by two Stanford PhDs, Mengqiu Wang and Tong Zhang, with a focus on innovating consumer drone products. The company has a comprehensive technology layout in the field of civilian drones and holds over 120 core industry patents. It is headquartered in Hangzhou, China with offices in Beijing, Shenzhen and San Francisco.



### Creative Magnetic Home Decorations - MULU

MULU, a creative home brand, was established in 2016 by a group of designers who graduated from China Academy of Art. Its designs revolve around the concept that “time is part of the scenery,” aiming to break the conventional design perspective by integrating unique experiences and understanding of life into its products. The brand specializes in applying magnetic technology in creative household products to encourage its consumers to discover the beautiful and interesting details of life.

According to Mingqiang Li, co-founder of MULU, Taobao is the friendliest entrepreneurial platform for design studios with no sales experience or resources. MULU opened a Taobao store in 2017 to realize the commercial value of its creative design products. In 2019, it won the first prize in the China Design Intelligence Awards (DIA). For this year’s Taobao Maker Festival, MULU will showcase its magnetic fluid pickup speaker, which sports a visually captivating design.