

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Why is "Princess Style" trending with China's Gen-Zers?

August 24, 2020



*Disney princesses have inspired girls around the globe for years, but now Chinese Gen Zers are obsessed with them, and they've taken the trend online. Image credit: Shushutong*

By [Jennifer Zhuang](#)

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Term/phrase: Escaped Disney Princess (0)

About the trend

For decades, Disney princesses have been an inspiration to young girls around the world. But now, young adults in China have become obsessed with these feminine archetypes thanks to a new Internet trend.

Lately, China's **Gen-Z** netizens are proclaiming themselves to be "escaped Disney princesses" and are showing off their princess-style fashions oversized bubble sleeves, ruffle skirts, and princess-style makeup looks in social media posts.

On the Chinese lifestyle app **Little Red Book** alone, there are more than 10,000 posts tagged with this newly invented phrase.

According to the Chinese news platform Sohu, brands such as **Miu Miu**, JW Anderson and **Simone Rocha** have conjured up dreamy princess-like designs in recent seasons.

But it is Danish designer brand Cecilie Bahnsen that has been nominated as the most popular princess brand by domestic fashion bloggers.

Why Gen-Z consumers like it

Replicating the look of a Disney princess in real life requires a lot of creativity, especially on China's top short video platform, **Douyin**, where the hashtag **#EscapedDisneyPrincess#** has been trending.

For videos to go viral, "not only do young women need to physically resemble the look of a Disney princess, but they must mimic the mannerisms and vivid expressions as well," said Olivia Plotnick, a China marketing specialist.

"**Social media** is a breeding ground for competition and creativity, and when you mix the two, you can get trends that

snowball very quickly," she said.



Danish designer brand Cecilie Bahnsen has been the most popular brand seen to encapsulate the "Escaped Disney Princess" style. Image credit: Sohu.com

### The Gen Z verdict

Many female Gen-Zers in China have had their clothing, makeup and even photo filters influenced by the "Kawaii" style Japan's culture of cuteness.

Mandy Liu, a 22-year-old makeup enthusiast, told *Jing Daily* that one of the most common travel destinations for young Chinese women these days is Disneyland, because they can dress up in feminine clothing and take pictures of themselves.

So, it is not surprising that this trend took off with this digitally-native generation.

"Many Chinese girls love delicate and girly styles, and brands like Miu Miu are especially popular," Ms. Liu said.



Replicating the Disney princess aesthetic requires great creativity. Image credit: Sohu.com

### How luxury brands should approach the trend

As the concept of "womanhood" becomes an increasingly heated discussion topic in China, many Gen-Zers are reinterpreting what it means to be a powerful woman while embracing femininity through their fashion tastes.

And unlike the adoption of marketing strategies in the West, beauty brands should quickly utilize culture-specific feminine trends in China.

As Ms. Plotnick pointed out, **Perfect Diary** is popular because it can quickly pump out new campaigns and special-edition products, thanks to its Chinese social media-savvy marketing teams. Foreign brands, on the other hand, take considerably longer.

In May, Perfect Diary broke the Internet with products such as the Fancy Carp Lucky Eyeshadow Set and the animal-themed eye palettes it created in collaboration with the Discovery Channel, both of which inspired tens of thousands

of online posts.

The brand smartly leveraged Gen Z's love of cuteness and its trend-following tendencies through a series of **Weibo** hashtag campaigns.

Far too often, Western luxury brands' decision-makers are many times removed from China, and even though these brands may understand current market trends, they have a hard time quickly capturing their cultural intricacies from the outside.

Gen Zers now make up roughly 20 percent of China's 1.4 billion people, and they are developing new online personas every minute.

Considering the powerful social media influence of this demographic, brands must have a China team that feels empowered to make quick decisions and execute trends that cater to this group's growing spending potential.

*Published with permission from **Jing Daily**. Adapted for clarity and style.*

---

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.