

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gen Z keep their cool with China's new sunwear trend

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Demand for protection from heatwaves has given rise to the Gen-Z pursuit of all things sun-related. Image credit: Xiaohongshu

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Traditional sun protection gear such as sunblock, umbrellas and hats have long been popular in China, where the beauty standard [leans toward fair skin](#).

Now, new market offerings of fashion-conscious apparel think light yet impenetrable jackets, dresses, sleeves, masks and wide-brimmed visors are taking over.

Like any other activity and lifestyle trend, local Gen Zers and millennials have taken to social platforms to share their outfits, with the hashtag for "sun protection clothing" (#) gaining more than 102 million Xiaohongshu views and 96 million-plus Weibo mentions.

The Jing Take: Given the mainland's [scorching heat wave](#) and increased enthusiasm for [outdoor activities](#), consumer demand for sun protection gear is fiercer than ever. This is especially true for young folk, with their pursuit of fair skin and [anti-aging beauty habits](#).

Though previous versions of sun-shielding accompaniments appeared drastic or absurd for example, the [viral "face-kini"](#) sometimes seen on middle-aged women at the beach this generation will not settle for just any old design when it comes to warding off harmful UV rays.

Modern-day ["hard sun protection"](#) referring to clothing and accessories as opposed to sunblocks and lotions is much more palatable to the fashion-forward, often featuring high-quality fabrics, innovative technology design, and a range of pastel shades.

Domestic players like Ohsunny and Bananaunder have long been in the sun-protection game, but have recently begun pivoting towards clothing. And their diversified and "refashioned" products are certainly yielding bright results.

Bananaunder's revenue for 2021 reached [more than \\$375 million](#) (2.4 billion RMB). The Sequoia China-backed group [recently filed to list](#) on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

OhSunny saw a three-fold increase in sales by the end of the same year.

Pale-skinned beauty standards and the means young demographics take to maintain them are unlikely to change in China, which might be a boon for local names.

Companies could start to incorporate UV protection into their products: see, for instance, [domestic lingerie brand Banaian's recent campaign](#) that featured actor Wang Yibo in a sun-coat and hat. If labels can make this work for them, then the future looks bright.

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