

# Why are goods cheaper in the US than China?



Chinese tourists wait in line out of a shopping store in the U.S. [file photo]

Going shopping is a must-do thing for Chinese tourists travelling to the U.S. Thanks to low prices, they can always find something they badly need.

From t-shirts to sneakers, watches to iPhones, it seems that most consumer goods in the U.S. are cheaper than they are in China.

For example, the price of a pair of Levi's pants in a U.S. store is about 30 to 40 dollars, while the price may go as high as 600 to 700 yuan (US\$87.4-102.1) in China. An iPhone 7 (128G) is sold in the U.S. for 749 dollars, while in China you have to spend 6,188 yuan (US\$901.2) to get one.

Chart 1: Price comparison between the U.S. and China

	The U.S. (US\$)	China (US\$)
Pair of Levi's pants	30-40	87.4-102.1
iPhone 7 (128G)	749	901.2
hair cut	20-30	2.9-4.7
taxi starting price	10	1.5
per-capita annual income	40,000	7282.1

The per-capita annual income for an average American is about 40,000 dollars, but in China, people only earn 50,000 yuan (US\$7282.1) a year on average – which means the American per-capita annual income is five or six times than that of Chinese.

However, some overseas Chinese found that it's not cheap at all living in the U.S.

For example, if you want a haircut, you have to pay 20 to 30 dollars excluding tips in a Los Angeles salon; but in Beijing, it only costs you 20 to 30 yuan (US\$2.9-4.7). The starting price for a taxi in Chicago is 10 dollars, but in Beijing and many Chinese big cities, it's only 10 yuan (US\$1.5).

Generally speaking, the price of consumer goods in the U.S. is lower than in China, but the price of service is higher. In other words, the U.S. has cheap manufactured goods, while the Chinese advantage falls on lower labor costs.

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## **Press release: Record exports support Global Britain drive**

Global sales of the UK's food and drink have hit the £20 billion mark for the first time, Environment Secretary Andrea Leadsom will announce today.

New figures reveal exports grew by nearly 10 per cent in 2016, with food and drink sales to the USA – one of Britain's biggest markets – up 12 per cent. China is quickly becoming one of our fastest growing markets, with the export value of pork skyrocketing to £43 million, an increase of over 70 per cent.

Alongside these global heavy-hitters, newer markets also saw record growth last year – exports to Malaysia grew by a whopping 143 per cent, while India emerged as one of our priority markets thanks to growing demand for Scotch whisky.

The figures reveal exports show no sign of slowing following the decision to leave the EU, and come as the Environment Secretary vows to ramp up the focus on international trade.

With only one in five food producers currently exporting, a dedicated Government team has turned its attention to ensuring UK companies have the skills, knowledge and confidence to tap into new international markets and take advantage of the global demand for British food and drink.

Speaking ahead of the NFU Conference today, Environment Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

It's great to see the global appetite for British food and drink continues to grow – thanks to our well-established reputation for taste, quality and high animal health and welfare standards.

As we prepare to leave the EU, there has never been a better time to become more outward looking – developing new trading relationships and establishing our place as a truly Global Britain.

But the food and drink industry cannot do this alone – we need to give them the skills, knowledge and contacts to make the most of the opportunities ahead.

I want to see more companies taking advantage of these opportunities, which is why we're expanding our team of trade experts to support UK businesses, encouraging them to take the leap and share their quality produce with the world.

As well as opening up new markets around the globe, the Government will continue its focus on taking advantage of European markets – with exports of salmon to France growing by 31 per cent and all food and drink exports to Germany up by 12 per cent.

France and Germany are among the priority markets identified in the [UK International Action Plan for Food and Drink](#) launched last October.

Through this plan, the Government is focusing on forging stronger links with key markets including USA and Canada, China and India to generate an extra £2.9 billion in exports over the next five years.

Food and Drink Federation Director General Ian Wright CBE said:

Exports of food and drink reached record levels last year and we're committed to building on this success going forward.

We'll continue to work closely with Government to help existing and new food and drink exporters take advantage of the growing international demand for our produce.

Ministers are also continuing to fly the flag for British food abroad – the Environment Secretary visited China in November last year, while Food Minister George Eustice will be visiting the UAE and Kuwait next week to support nearly 100 UK firms exhibiting at Gulfood and agree market access for lamb.

Through the Government's [Food is GREAT](#) campaign Defra will continue its work to drive exports and increase global demand for the UK's top quality food and drink.

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## [Downtown Beijing to increase underground parking lots](#)

Dongcheng District and Xicheng District of downtown Beijing will build multi-floor car parking towers this year to help citizens park their cars more easily, as parking is often difficult in these densely populated areas.

Dongcheng District announced on Feb.15 that it would build 13 parking towers this year. The district is home to a huge number of cars but limited parking spaces, often resulting in difficulty parking. The parking lots will be built in Nanluoguxiang, Dongsu and other sub districts, with parking space both on the ground and underground. The district also decided to scrap parking locks in hutongs, or narrow alleyways.

The downtown area in Beijing also plans to create more space in its bypasses. The Xicheng District will smooth Shoubi Street, a narrow road which often impedes traffic as it links two main streets, and build an underground parking lot there which can provide 500 parking units.

Moreover, Dongcheng District is also drafting an agreement which enables residents to park their cars at night in the parking lots nearby office buildings, in order to make more use of the parking space. A total of 2,800 such parking units are expected to be open to the public this year.

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## [Press release: Jo Johnson demands tough penalties on student plagiarism](#)

Universities Minister Jo Johnson is today (Tuesday 21 February) calling on university and student bodies to do more to deal with the spread of 'essay mills' – websites which provide custom written essays for students to submit as part of their degree.

The Universities Minister has asked for guidance aimed at universities and information for students to help combat the use of these websites, as well as other forms of plagiarism. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) has also been tasked to take action against the online advertising of these services and to work with international agencies to deal with this problem.

The Minister is calling for the guidance to include tough new penalties for those who make use of essay mills websites, as well as the need to educate students about the potentially significant negative impacts on their future

career if they are caught cheating.

Universities Minister Jo Johnson said:

“This form of cheating is unacceptable and every university should have strong policies and sanctions in place to detect and deal with it.

“Essay mill websites threaten to undermine the high quality reputation of a UK degree so it is vital that the sector works together to address this in a consistent and robust way.”

The spread of essay mill websites was uncovered in a QAA report, commissioned by the government, which was published last year. It found that the websites often advertise their services to students for a fee and many promote “plagiarism-free guarantees”, or essays tested against plagiarism detection software.

Further work by QAA has confirmed that there are now over 100 essay mills websites currently in operation. Prices charged by these sites vary depending on the complexity of essay and tightness of deadline. They can range from a couple of hundred pounds for a single essay to as high as £6,750 for a PhD dissertation.

Ian Kimber, QAA’s Director of Universities, Quality Enhancement and Standards said:

“Essay mills are a major challenge for universities and colleges because, unlike other forms of cheating, the practice is notoriously difficult to detect. We look forward to continuing our work with the government and sector colleagues in addressing an issue potentially damaging to students and the reputation of UK higher education.”

The new sector guidance and student information is expected to be made available for the beginning of the 2017/18 teaching year.

Following a request by the government to investigate the use of essay mills in the UK, the QAA published a report on this issue in August 2016 titled ‘Plagiarism in Higher Education – Custom essay writing services: an exploration and next steps for the UK higher education sector’. This report confirmed that essays mills are a “growing threat to UK higher education”.

Sector guidance on plagiarism has not been updated for some time. It is currently left to individual institutions to develop their own plagiarism policies in accordance with the requirements and indicators of sound practice set out in the [UK Quality Code](#).

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# Green Light for Porthcawl Maritime Centre

The £5.5 million Porthcawl Maritime Centre is part of the Welsh Government's wider Tourism Attractor Destination programme which aims to create 11 must visit destinations across Wales.

Also, backed with funds from the Big Lottery, the Welsh Government as well as private and third sector funds, the Maritime Centre is the first phase of the Porthcawl Resort Investment Focus programme which aims to transform Porthcawl into a high quality signature destination within Wales that will attract new visitors to the area.

The development has the potential to accommodate 55 jobs as well as supporting jobs during the construction phase, providing employment opportunities for local people.

The Minister said:

"The coast is the county's Unique Selling Point and the reason why most visitors come to the area. But to attract more visitors to the area we need to provide more exemplary facilities and services for residents and visitors. Porthcawl Maritime Centre will fulfil this need by providing an exciting and innovative 'year round' family centred attraction right on the waterfront.

"Our aim through the Tourism Attractor Destination programme is to focus efforts and investment on key projects in each region so we have a real impact on Wales' profile in this globally competitive market.

"The Seaquest Coastal Science and Discovery Centre is a very exciting project which will inspire young people to engage with science and consider careers in science. Congratulations to everybody who has been involved in bringing the project to this point and I wish you all the very best for the delivery phase."

Welcoming the decision, Mike Clarke, Chairman of Porthcawl Harbourside CIC said:

"It is impossible to fully describe how excited and proud the Porthcawl Harbourside CIC team are to receive the go-ahead for this project. This huge vote of confidence in our team and in the community of Porthcawl is tremendous. We believe this is possibly the biggest community-conceived and led tourism project in the UK, and we are now able to tender for the construction and get started."

Construction on the Maritime Centre is expected to begin in mid-2017. Over the next five years, the Tourism Attractor Destinations programme will see more than £85 million of EU, Welsh Government, Private and Charitable funds invested in tourism projects across Wales.