

Changes in Consumer Behavior in China, 2010

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The unprecedented expansion of consumer markets in China over the past ten years has not reached all sectors with the same degree of impact. There is wide variation across and within cities, regions, and demographic groups. There is also variation among those who choose to live lifestyles consistent with ancient cultural norms and among those who are more likely to be early adapters and more westernized. The result is a country of new and old, ancient and modern, with economic and cultural diversity.

Alice Simon traveled to China during the summer of 2009, visiting families in large cities such as Chongqing, Shanghai, and Beijing. She also traveled to smaller cities including Chengdu, Xi'an, Lhasa and Wuhan, and stayed with a farm family in a small village. Her talk will integrate Chinese cultural themes, current Chinese consumer taste and preferences, income distribution and generational variations.