

China is a nation of tea-drinkers, but coffee is taking off

Until the 1990s coffee was rarely served in China except at luxury hotels aimed at foreigners. When Starbucks opened its first outlet there in 1999 it was far from clear that the country's **avid** tea-drinkers would take to such a different — and usually more costly — source of caffeine.

avid 渴望的; 贪婪的

roast 烘; 烤

But coffee has become fashionable among the middle class in China. Starbucks now has about 3,800 outlets in China — more than in any other country outside America. Statista, a business-intelligence portal, says the **roast** coffee market in China is growing by more than 10% a year. Starbucks and its rivals see big scope for expanding there.

So too, however, do **home-grown** competitors. A major new presence is Luckin Coffee. On May 17th Luckin's initial public offering on the Nasdaq stockmarket raised more than \$570m, giving it a value of about \$4bn.

home-grown 本土的

striking 显著的; 惊人的; 打击的

Luckin's remarkable growth is a sign of change. No longer do Chinese consumers see coffee as such a luxury. The growth is **striking** given the country's **renown** for its tea-drinking culture. Many residents like to relax in teahouses, **sipping** tea served gracefully by waiters from **brass** pots with long **spouts**.

renown 声誉

sip 小口抿

brass 黄铜

spout 嘴; 出水管

But the two markets are different. The teahouses tend to cater to older people who like to spend long hours playing **mahjong** and gossiping. At the coffee shops it is rare to see anyone over 40. Young people use them for socialising, but much of their interaction is online — sharing photos of their drinks. An option on the Chinese rating app Dianping allows users to search for wanghong (“internet viral”) coffee houses: ones with particularly **photogenic decor**. Where better to sip and WeChat?

mahjong 麻将

photogenic 适于拍照的

décor 装饰