

" Chinamaxxing" In Yiwu: Foreigners Find Home in China' s " **World Supermarket"**



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At the start of 2026, a new buzzword, "Chinamaxxing," has taken social media by storm. A blend of "China" and "maxxing" (meaning maximizing or taking something to the extreme), this internet neologism has become a trendy pursuit among foreign netizens, especially young people.

Known as the "World's Supermarket," Yiwu in east China's Zhejiang Province boasts the world's largest small commodities market, attracting over 500,000 foreign merchants annually from more than 200 countries and regions. This commercial magnetism has transformed the city into an unlikely crucible of cross-cultural exchange, where doing business naturally evolves into living locally.

Alex from Finland, first bonded with Yiwu through "Huang Di Nei Jing (Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon)."

Every Chinese New Year, Alex visits his wife's grandmother. He loves hugging, and each time he gives her a big embrace. "Grandma gets so happy, then pulls out a red envelope and says, 'Come, come, this is for you!'" Alex laughs. "It's so much fun. I love Grandma. I love Yiwu!"

Ehsen, a young man from Dubai, arrived in Yiwu with a backpack to do business after graduating in 2014. Unexpectedly, he fell in love with a local woman, Yang Qing, who is a few years older than him. He flooded her WeChat with messages and sang Persian love songs, turning their cross-border romance into a lifelong commitment. They held a belated wedding on New Year's Day this year.

Speaking of plans for the Year of the Horse, Yang Qing says she has opened a store at the Global Digital Trade Center and hopes to "embrace AI." Ehsen jokes that his dream for the new year is "for Yang Qing to embrace Ehsen more."

Ammar from Yemen has lived in China for 29 years. After earning his PhD from Zhejiang University School of Medicine, he chose Yiwu for its international atmosphere and began what he calls his journey of "Becoming Chinese."

Champion of the 2nd Chinese Language Competition[?] Ammar speaks fluent, standard Mandarin. He has even joined the Yiwu Quyi Artists Association and occasionally performs rhythmic oral skits. His three children, all born in Zhejiang, love hotpot and noodles and regard Yiwu as their first home.

Ammar's daily life is a vibrant East-West blend: a cup of Luckin Coffee in the morning, treating international patients in Yiwu during the day, and cooking steaming hotpot with his family at night. He describes Yiwu as "a small place with big dreams", a city where those without dreams can find direction, and those with dreams can realize them.

In Yiwu, "Chinamaxxing" is not deliberate imitation but natural integration; not a fleeting novelty but enduring affection.

Through commercial opportunity, cultural charm, and the warmth of daily life, this city allows foreign friends to embrace Chinese life wholeheartedly—becoming, in many ways, the most "Chinese" of foreigners.

Yiwu's charm lies in this ubiquitous Chinamaxxing. It is not only the " World Supermarket" connecting global trade, but also a melting pot of cultures and a haven for all who love life. No matter where they come from or what language they speak, those who arrive in Yiwu can always find their own version of Chinese happiness, living their days with flavor, warmth, and vitality.



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