

Government initiatives, including 19 more duty-free shops nationwide, come as sales of the types of luxury goods that line duty-free shelves fell 2 percent last year. Market watchers pin the blame on a campaign against demonstrations of wealth among public officials, as well as a slowdown in economic growth.

????????????2%????????????19??

As things stand, the Chinese buy close to 80 percent of their luxury goods abroad in cities such as Paris, London and Tokyo, Bain Consultancy estimated.

????????Bain Consultancy????????????????????80%????????????????????

"Whether it is Burberry or Richemont recently, many brands in the space have noted that the future of luxury demand will be about the Chinese and incrementally at home," said HSBC analyst Erwan Rambourg in Hong Kong.

????????????-????(Erwan Rambourg)??"????????????Burberry????????????????????????Richemont??"

LESS CHOICE

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In Hainan, which is closer to Hanoi than Beijing, duty-free shops offering products priced as much as 30 percent less than the mainland have been operating since 2011, under a trial program aimed at developing the island as a tourist destination.

????????????????????????????????2011????????????????????????30%?

Customers could initially only buy up to 8,000 yuan (\$1,220) worth of duty-free goods, twice a year. From Feb. 1, they have been able to make purchases any time of the year provided the total does not exceed 16,000 yuan. At the same time, stores have also been able to sell goods online for collection at airports.

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In Hainan's provincial capital Haikou in the north of the island, HNA's duty-free sales have since rocketed.

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In the island's city of Sanya, state-controlled CITS opened the country's first duty-free shopping center in 2014. The skylit, flower-shaped edifice is about nine soccer pitches in size and filled with shops stocking over 300 brands including from Burberry Group PLC