

Striving Towards a Modern Coastal Metropolis

# Ningbo Sees Robust Recovery as Consumption Soars

By Jin Lu

With the recent optimization of COVID-19 response measures and the adjustment of COVID-19 policies, China's fight against the epidemic is entering a new chapter.

Recently, the number of COVID infections throughout Ningbo has decreased sharply.

As restaurants resume indoor dining and shopping malls reopen following the implementation of China's optimized COVID response measures, Ningbo has returned to its usual hustle and bustle.

## Customers Start to Queue

The delicacies from all over the country have attracted many citizens.

"The worst moment is over. Now with the optimized COVID containment measures, we will see a smoother flow of people and logistics, and accelerated recovery in business and social activities," Yin Jiang, a citizen who took a meal in Hankyu department store told the reporter.

"On last Sunday, customers started to queue at noon," said the manager of a Tujia restaurant in Ningbo's Paradise Walk, a large-scale commercial complex that has just been launched in Yinzhou. "We received hundreds of indoor diners on that day, which gave us more confidence for our business."

The person in charge of the Asakusa Restaurant, a popular Japanese restaurant chain with nine shops in Ningbo, said he felt the same. "I thought it would take some time for the catering industry to recover. But, given the current situation, I believe this recovery process will surely be accelerated," he said.

Popular travel destinations like the resort city of Sanya or Zhangjiakou, where snow and ice



Consumers at a shopping center in Ningbo.

[Photo by Yan Long]

sports flourish, welcomed an influx of Ningbo tourists during the holiday, with many hotels fully booked. Staff at Pullman Resort Xishuangbanna in Yunnan Province said that popular rooms were booked out a week before the holiday kicked off.

## Traffic Jams Appear in Downtown

Traffic jams in downtown Ningbo indicated the city was returning to business as normal, amid the relaxed COVID-19 measures.

Vehicles crawled on roads between 7 am and 9 am. Li Yu, who took more than 50 minutes to reach his workplace, said it was the first time traffic jams in the city didn't cause frustration. "I felt a sense of relief to see so many people outdoors, getting

their lives back," he said.

In the past weeks, Ningbo has promoted New Year-themed activities to welcome the upcoming Spring Festival, which has attracted many people.

In the Drum Tower, a huge rabbit decorated with traditional lotus patterns appeared on the wall, attracting many citizens to stop and take pictures, adding a joyful atmosphere of the Spring Festival to the city.

Decorations, including rabbit statues, were recently put up around Tianyi Square, a commercial block in downtown Ningbo, to usher in the Chinese Year of the Rabbit.

"The parking lot has two floors, but you can't find a single parking space," Ms. Chen went to Sam's Supermarket last Sunday, and she said that Ningbo has

issued consumption coupons to attract shoppers. "This time I plan to buy some New Year goods, and I can add consumption coupons when paying, by which the discount can be as low as 40%."

## Economic Vitality been Demonstrated

Economic vitality has also been demonstrated in packed shopping centres and department stores. A monitoring system developed by Baidu Maps shows that the congestion index of shopping malls in Ningbo increased significantly.

According to the Big Data from the Ningbo Municipal Bureau of Commerce, Ningbo's total consumption of 50 sample companies hit 300 million yuan from Dec 31, 2022, to Jan 1, 2023.

Shanqing, a local shopping outlet logged a significant rise in customer flows during the New Year holiday. "We held a lot of promotions, and the coupons issued by the government also helped boost our sales," said the staff of Shanqing Outlets Plaza Ningbo.

"The city government has taken multiple measures to boost consumption, which has given us huge confidence. The soaring number of shoppers and diners in our malls has shown that those measures have been effective," he said.

A consumption rebound may contribute to more than half the nation's economic growth this year, which could rise to about 5 per cent year-on-year, up from about 3 per cent last year, said an expert.

SPOTLIGHT

## Soon We Serve Local Oysters!

By Xu Zhuowei

As the saying goes, oysters are eaten in winter and clams in summer.

At noon on January 8, in Tangtou Village, Chunhu Street, Fenghua District, the farmers were busy collecting and processing oysters. Rows of oyster racks are floating on the sea, creating a spectacular scene.

At the wharf, Wang, an oyster farmer, returned with a boat, which was loaded with newly harvested oysters, some of which were shelled for meat and transported to the market for sale. Most of them were seed oysters, which were glued to the breeding tire, ready to be loaded and transported to Sanmenwan for breeding. It takes a year for oysters to grow and harvest from seedling release.

Tangtou Village is renowned for oyster farming. There are more than 140 households in the village, and nearly 70% of them are engaged in oyster farming. Many farmers breed oysters in the offshore contracted waters around Xiangshan and Sanmen, Taizhou. For large-scale farmers, the area of one farming family reaches hundreds of mu. Wang Chenghan, a villager, said that only a few oysters from Tangtou Village sold oyster meat, most of which were shipped to Fujian Province in shells and sold tens of thousands of kilograms at a time.

In the processing cabin at the seaside, with a special knife, farmers skillfully pry open the oyster shell and take out the oyster meat inside. This job requires patience. In peak season, a farmer works more than 10 hours a day and can pry up about 10 kg of oyster meat.

Oysters are a must-have dish for Ningbo people during the Spring Festival. At present, the price of oysters sold in Tangtou Village is 50-60 yuan per kg, the same as that in previous years. However, affected by the epidemic, the number of vendors coming to the village for purchase has dropped sharply recently, which is only 30% to 40% in normal years. The farmers hope that the epidemic will pass soon, and the market will recover too, so that the year's hard work will have a good return.

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双语汇 Different Tongues

## 四明茅篷：一步一景，古木参天

By Dong Na

Hidden in the Siming Mountain, the Maohuo Park has more than 100 ancient trees of nearly 1,000 years old, such as Pseudolarix amabilis, ginkgo, and maple.

茅篷古树公园藏于四明山深处，拥有金钱松、银杏、枫香等树龄近千年的古树百余棵。 There is a lush and shady group of ancient trees at the entrance to the Maohuo. Although the oldest has been growing for more than 600 years, they still branch out and are well preserved. The trees can reach a height of about 40 or 50 meters, each tree requires three or four adult men to hold together. The most amazing is an unknown ancient tree near the village entrance,

whose diameter of about 1 meter. Though the middle of the trunk has all rotten empty - when you poke your head through the hole at the bottom of the tree can even faintly see the light of the sky - the canopy still has dense branches and leaves.

公园内有一片郁郁葱葱、荫可蔽日的参天古树群，虽说年龄最大的已经风吹日晒了600余年，可依然枝繁叶茂、保存完好，树高均可达到四五十米左右，每棵树都需要三四名成年男子才能抱拢。最神奇的当属一株不知名的古树，树直径大约1米，虽然树干中间已经全部烂空，从树底部的洞探进头可以隐约望见天空的光亮，可树冠依旧枝叶茂密，生命力还很旺盛。

The park is rich in natural resources, with ancient trees all over, including the rare species of Pseudolarix amabilis, which is protected by the state, the



The Maohuo Park. / 茅篷古树公园。

[Photo by Tang Yan] 唐严 摄

ginkgo tree, which is known as a "living fossil" in the plant world, and the Torreya tree, known as the "longevity tree". Among them, one of the most famous trees of Pseudolarix

amabilis, called "the king of all trees", is about 500 years old, whose tree circumference and wood volume are the most in China. 古树公园自然资源丰富，参天古

树遍布，其中包括国家重点保护的稀有树种金钱松、有植物界“活化石”之称的银杏树、被称为“寿星树”的香榧树等。其中最著名的一棵被称为“万木之冠”的金钱松，树龄约500年，其树围和立木蓄积量为全国之最。

