

Exploring the “Personae” of Travel in Korea through Chinese Gen Z Tourists on *Xiao Hongshu* Social Platform

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How to cite this paper: Yin, M., & Sorokina, N. (2023). Exploring the “Personae” of Travel in Korea through Chinese Gen Z Tourists on *Xiao Hongshu* Social Platform. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 11, 768-793.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2023.112042>

Received: January 13, 2023

Accepted: March 27, 2023

Published: March 30, 2023

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Abstract

This research explores the destination persona of South Korea on *Xiao Hongshu*, a popular social media platform for Chinese Gen Z traveling. The posts from tourists as virtual communities recurring patterns of dramatic structure, textually and visually generated the personae of the destination. In this study, the concept of persona based on Bormann’s symbolic convergence theory is used to illustrate the fantastic theme of South Korea as destination. A qualitative research based on fantasy theme analysis was conducted using semi-structured interviews with 14 participants and images and narrative analysis of posts on *Xiao Hongshu*. Four fantasy themes were identified: 1) Landscape of ocean blue; 2) Stylish Café; 3) K-pop related culture and fashion; 4) Traditional Korean culture. Those themes create the destination persona of South Korea by and for Chinese Generation Z travellers. It contributes to the destination image discussion by applying SCT and fantasy theme, from the perspective of Chinese generation Z tourist. For practical contribution, this study helps destination marketers better communicate with Chinese Gen Z tourists, using discovered fantasy themes.

Keywords

Persona of Destination, Symbolic Convergence Theory, Fantastic Themes

1. Introduction

Social media and virtual communities are attractive important aspects of tourism consumption, it also supports organization creating an image to attract their customers (Abbasi et al., 2023). The amateur and celebrities accounts made *Xiao Hongshu* highly used, that it has better visibility in tourism industry, compared

to Bilibili, and Sina Weibo (Yun, 2022).

In this study, fantastic theme analysis is used to identify different fantasy themes in Korea in Chinese social media Xiao Hongshu, depicting their symbolic extensions in visualizing South Korea. Platform performance, fantastic themes, and the personae are debates for Xiao Hongshu as a social platform to answer what is the fantastic theme of South Korea as a tourism destination, and conclude the fantastic theme of Korea, which generated by plenty users on Xiao Hongshu.

Xiao Hongshu (Little Red Book) is a Chinese social media and e-commerce platform that has a similar function to Instagram, and a similar layout as Pinterest, see **Figure 1**. It was founded in 2013, as one of the fastest growing platforms in China, with 100 million registered active users.

The platform allows users to share videos and photos about fashion, beauty, brand products, food, and more. The company promotes authentic content among the Chinese community, especially Generation Z consumers, to influence lifestyle decisions (*XiaoHongShu-About*, n.d.). With the mission to “inspire lives”, Xiao Hongshu assumed their platform to be a lifestyle platform that provides a digital community that lets users discover and connect with a range of diverse lifestyles. The categories of this platform include cosmetics to fashion, food, travel, entertainment, fitness, and childcare, formats including photos, text, videos and live streaming. Food and travel sections are used by Chinese users the most.

Xiao Hongshu as one of the most popular Chinese e-commerce platforms, it has better performance in tourism industry, compared to Bilibili, and Sina Weibo (Yun, 2022). “Shopping until the last moment of life” is one of the slogans of Xiao Hongshu platform see **Figure 2**, presents the core concept of this company is commerce. Users generated contents on this platform target to selling and review the products in our daily life, it is more like a fashion magazine with fulfilled shopping guide.

Among Chinese social networking sites, information search and product review functions Weibo and Xiao Hongshu are more evident on and thus likely to influence a wide range of consumer purchases, including travel (Wang et al., 2022). Wang et al. (2022) examined Xiao hongshu was more influential while users choose destination compare to weibo, another popular platform in China. The vibe of each platform is different, Weibo fulfilled famous celebrities, however, the less professional and celebrities accounts made Xiaohongshu has higher user popularity of visitors.

100EC is one of biggest Chinese digital economic data institution, the online users who use Xiao Hongshu as travelling purpose are increased from 280 billion to 430 billion during 2015 to 2020, as **Figure 3**. Since 2019, Xiao Hongshu covered 20% of Chinese tourism marketing and becomes to the main access for tourists to make their decision for their trip (Yun, 2022).

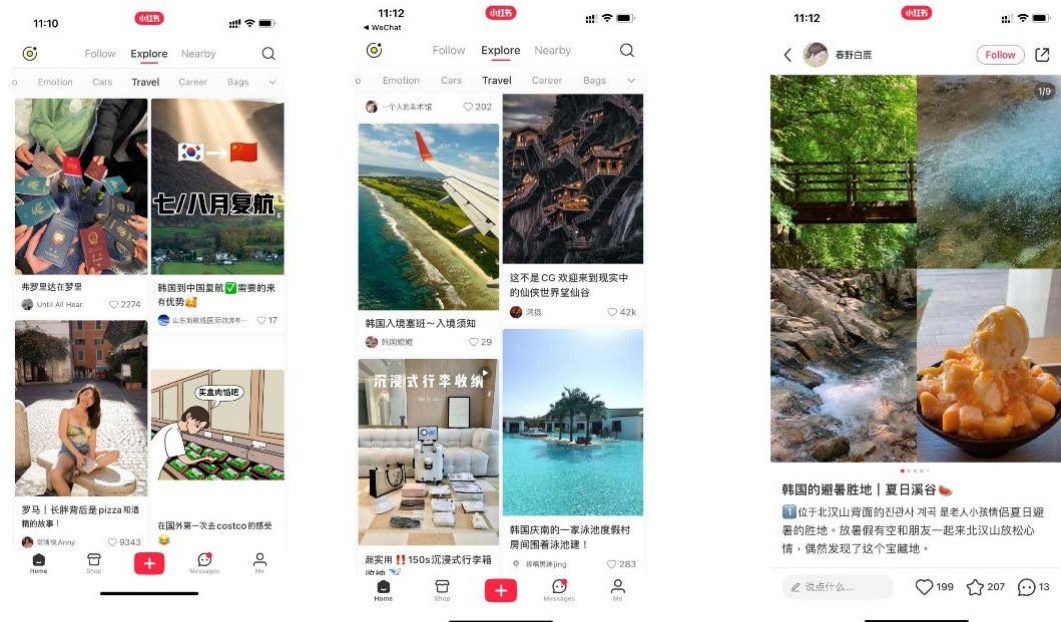


Figure 1. The layout of Xiao Hongshu.



Figure 2. Xiao Hongshu marketing campaign event.

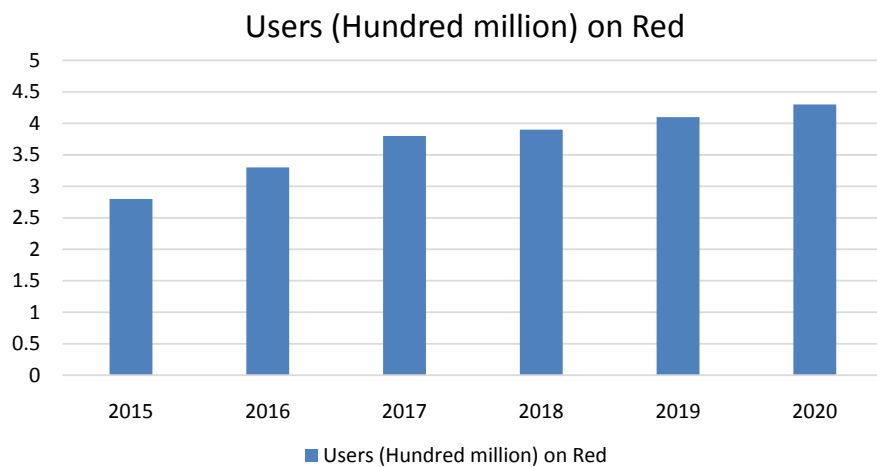


Figure 3. The popularity of online visitors in Xiao Hongshu during 2015-2020 (100EC Report, 2021).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Symbolic Convergence Theory and Tourism (SCT)

Social media and virtual communities are becoming significant aspects of tourism consumption, and they fundamentally change the way people select and consume tourism offerings. *Symbolic convergence and tourism (SCT)* is a general theory, combining socio-psychological and rhetorical (humanistic) traditions in communication studies, which offers a theoretical and analytical framework to study the process of group formation through communication (Gyimóthy, 2013; Nugraheni et al., 2020).

Less study applied SCT in tourism social media. Gyimóthy (2013) explored a fraction of the symbolic converging practices of an established Scandinavian rock festival in cyberspace. Derrien and Stokowski (2020) explained symbolic and narrative functions; Nugraheni et al. (2020) built a framework for understanding community involvement in tourism; Gyimóthy et al. (2015) used symbolic consumption conclude with an integrative model (pop-cultural placemaking loop) in tourism; and Mei and Ying (2017) identified 11 fantasy themes of Macau that represented different in various media types.

Fantasy theme is “the oral, written, or mediated discourse of an organization or collectivity looking for recurring patterns of dramatic structure” (Duffy, 1997). When a number of people come to share a cluster of fantasy themes and types, they may integrate them into a coherent rhetorical vision of some aspect of their social reality (Bormann, 1985). And the trait of this social reality, called *persona* of the social media platform in a cyberspace. Persona is the results of the fantasies develop (Ciurel, 2022), is a final figure of the shared reality.

2.2. Digital Persona

The term persona is applied in analytical psychology by Carl Jung, which portrays a part of self who we want to show to others. From Jung, the persona is a social representation of the self, but denied by the self, opposite to the shadow, the persona is the true personality for the public (Jung, 1991), which can only be a compromise between the individual and society, yielding an illusion of individuality (Hockley & Fadina, 2015).

Digital persona, the term that consists of persona and digital, is changed by technology (information communication technology). The persona which applies in the digital world and transcribes into data is different from what we know in the physical world. Thus, the post of travel in Korea can also generate the persona differed than reality.

Digital persona at the beginning, is an agent, or a transcribed data, not directly generating or occupying one’s attention. Until more and more scholars and businesses pay attention to studying and using persona in business, people start to manage their digital profile, care for their self-presentation through SNS. Moreover, people are following these popular digital personae and putting them

into daily life.

The term **digital persona** was first used by Clarke (Clarke, 1994) as *a model of an individual's public personality based on data and maintained by transactions and intended for use as a proxy for the individual*. Although purpose of the article is to apply digital persona in data surveillance usage, he distinguished terms of “projected persona” verse “imposed persona”, that latter one is created by others, “informal digital persona” verse “formal digital persona” from computer science aspect, later one is which can present by structured data. It also assumes a **passive digital persona** which includes structural data of representation, and subjective outlooks from others. Active digital persona has all the characteristics of the passive but is long-standing and represented through an objective agent.

According to a definition provided by Clarke (1994), de Kerckhove & de Almeida (2013) conceive digital persona as an essential part of individual identity that generates a structure that allows for different kinds of action upon digital identities categorized, which involves persona, social, institution, legal scientific and technological aspects (de Kerckhove & de Almeida, 2013).

Based on the above reference, we can formulate that the digital persona is a result of digital identity. Individuals may accept and create several personae after they identify themselves through ICTs (information communication technology) among other internet users.

3. Methodology

Symbolic convergence theory (SCT) offers a framework that more appropriate for delving deeper into the social dynamics of tourism social media to this study. Fantasy theme analysis as one of the methodologies of SCT provides an approach to dramatist rhetorical criticism.

A qualitative study was thus conducted in this study. According to **Table 1**, “travel Korea” is the most popular topics among other topics which related key words of “travel Korea” on Xiao Hongshu platform. From 1st of January to 31st of Decembe, 2022, there are 56,357 posts upload on “travel Korea” topics, with 178,886,417 viewed (XH The Database Platform of Xiaohongshu, 2022).

Thus, one hundreds most popular posts, in the topics of “travel Korea” a from January 1st to December 31st, 2022, were saved by screenshots. After duplicated photos cleaned by program Gemini 2, all the posts classified. The ten categories are animals; cultural; food & drink; historical places; house (indoor) & hotel; houses (outdoor) and garden; mountains & desert; shopping; selfies and personal portrait, borrowed from Bruschi (2022). Until there are no more posts out of these classifications, and the engagement (includes comments, likes, shares and bookmarks) of the posts more than one hundred were selected. Therefore, forty-seven posts are selected to study the fantasy theme of travel in Korea, shown in **Appendix 1**.

Table 1. Five most popular topics related key words of “travel Korea” on Xiao Hongshu platform in 2022 (XH The Database Platform of Xiaohongshu, 2022).

Topics name	Topics creation time	Total views	Total posts
韩国旅行 (Travel Korea)	2017-06-14	178,886,417	56,357
韩国旅行攻略 (Korean travel tips)	2016-06-13	90,378,250	17,612
韩国旅行种草 (Recommends of Korean travel)	2021-05-05	422,000	144
釜山韩国旅行 (Busan Korea trip)	2022-04-08	24,955	14
去韩国旅行 (Trip to Korea)	2022-08-16	26,671	10

The participants were sending invitation letters to Xiao Hongshu users, who are actively post and collected the related posts. Among 27 responded participants, 14 participants are followed a semi-structured interview method, 10 female and 4 male (aged around 21 to 31). The participants selected through Self-evaluate of use frequency, 14 participants score passed 15 points (maximum is 30 points), **Table 2** shown the criterion of sample chosen.

The interview took place online, each of the 14 interviews record lasted 15 m to 30 m. Research offers a Korean travel advice as ice break and talk with participants what’s their travel plan or how’s the experience of travel in Korea. Interview was conducting in the participants’ mother language Chinese, while two of them are convenient to use English. To explore the persona of the tourists through the posts, participants followed the interview guide to discuss how do they use Xiao Hongshu as an information collected platform, discuss about the perspective and responses of each post and their interest.

The screenshot of post was archived and the interviews was transcribed and annotated. Additionally, analysis was following the procedure of fantasy theme analysis which allows the understanding of the overall rhetorical vision of the groups as demonstrated in the sites, and the resulting implications for persuasion (Duffy, 2003). The next section summarizes collected data as embodied in five factors.

4. Findings

“When a number of people come to share a cluster of fantasy themes and types, they may integrate them into a coherent rhetorical visive of some aspect of their social reality. Ernest G. Bormann

The fantasy theme constitutes the means through which the creative and imaginative interpretation of events is accomplished in communication (Ciurel,

Table 2. The criterion of sample chosen.

Question	check	Score
Plan the trip through the mobile apps, such as social media posts		5
Using online booking service		5
It's necessary to post digital content about the trip (attitude)		5
Share trip thing, keeping in touch with friends during the trip		5
Write review, comment or blog, vlog, photo posts about the trip, and published it.		10
Total score		

2022). Except the advertisements, when applied to discussions about the travel in Korea, symbolic convergence theory reveals a rich number of fantasy themes and visions. This section identified four distinct fantasy themes and types associated with the travel in Korea, each with their own different dramatics' personae, along with recurring symbolic cues and a collective rhetorical vision, that constitutes through contents on social media.

When searching the “Korea” on Xiao Hongshu, there are several popular genres such as travel, food, Seoul, life, fashion, sighting view, study aboard, travel tips. The travel, sighting view and travel tips chose to analysis. There are half of posts are advertisements, because the account is obviously belonging to some destination organization, and the content is company details, not too relevant with Korean journey.

More specifically, this section found 1) theme of ocean blue that the posts of landscape in Korea mostly are seaside with very blue view; 2) a theme of stylish Café; 3) K-pop related culture including fashion; 4) Korean traditional culture through food and Hanbok (clothes).

4.1. Café with Stylish Furnish—Fantasy Theme 1

By far the most popular theme depicted was that a café with a stylish decoration, especially for the people who just enjoy their leisure time on weekends.

Coffee is big lifestyle in Korea, compare to China. Even the coffee segment will generate US\$15.34 billion in revenue, the consumption patterns showed 22.4% is for social life, and 75% consumption of coffee is instant coffee (Giulia, 2022). However, over 13 billion cups drunk in Korea, fresh coffee ranked in second place with 4.8 billion cups. Additionally, South Korea boasts 49,000 coffee shops across the country, more than 18,000 of which are estimated to be in Seoul (Jobst, n.d.). According to the Food Information Statistics System, 2.154 trillion dollars contributed from Korean coffee marketing (2020). And the high fresh coffee selling showed the different consumption patterns than Chinese marketing. Korean consumers prefer dinning more, and treat the café as a “social drug” (Topik, 2009). Furthermore, coffee also provides increasing sale value in past decade, shown in Figure 4.

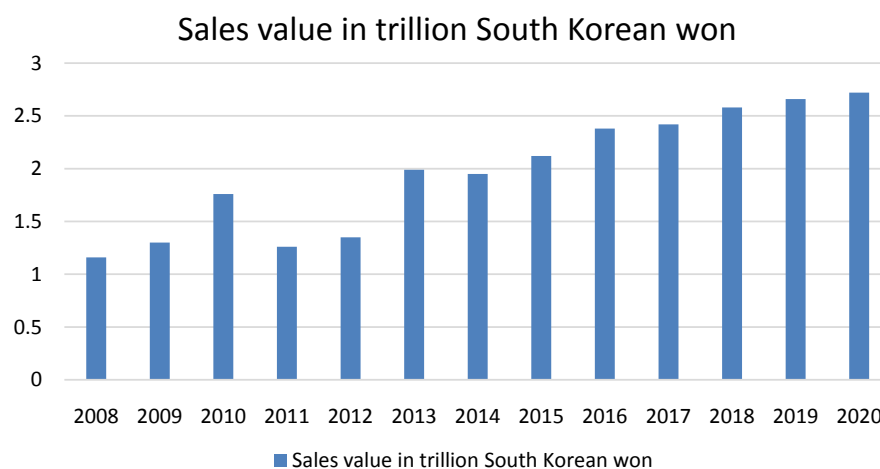


Figure 4. Sales value of coffee products in South Korea from 2008 to 2020 (Jobst, n.d.).

Coffee joined Korean people's daily life was developed earlier than China. In the past 70s century, young people become the main consumer of café shopping in Korea, students and young couples often saw in café, and it present a freedom that they may talk freely and listen to new age music. Coffee also began to expand outside of the traditional drinking store. In the 1970s, the coffee vending machine appeared in offices and universities. This proved to be a profitable business into the '80s and '90s (Pipunic, 2015). Nestlé joined Chinses café market since 1988, bring the instant coffee to Chinese customer initially, Chain coffee shop Starbucks has led the way in the emergence of China's coffee culture in 1999. Compare to Korea where is not cultivating coffee, it has become a nation known for its unique coffee culture. Many cafés have their home roastery. While coffee itself has become important for Koreans, it only plays an ancillary role. The café culture that has arisen from this beverage has shaped the modern Korean culture and became a unique part of South Korea's identity (NeleAE, 2021).

(Figure 5)

Café with a fancy decorating is such an important travel photo to visitors who spend their time in Korea. Even coffee is a small thing, still can be a destination for visitors driving miles away to enjoy. Most coffee shops were located in Seoul in 2019, there were around 76.15 thousand coffee shops operating in Korea (South Korea, 2021). Yu & Sun (2019) examined a case study in Macau, that Taiwanese cuisine, food from local café, and local snacks appear to be the most Instagrammable on social media (Instagram), that can be a factor of growth market of café industry. Go to coffee is a new lifestyle of young people. The reason is quite obviously, that go to café is a very low cost and high profit activity.

Café is not just about coffee and desert, it is an upgraded living room, where visitors take a rest from heavily schedule, grab some fresh to recover from works, transfer online stranger to offline friends.

Café stores also combine usual and unusual together, which provide a shortcut for visitors experience different. A cup of coffee is a very normal life habit,

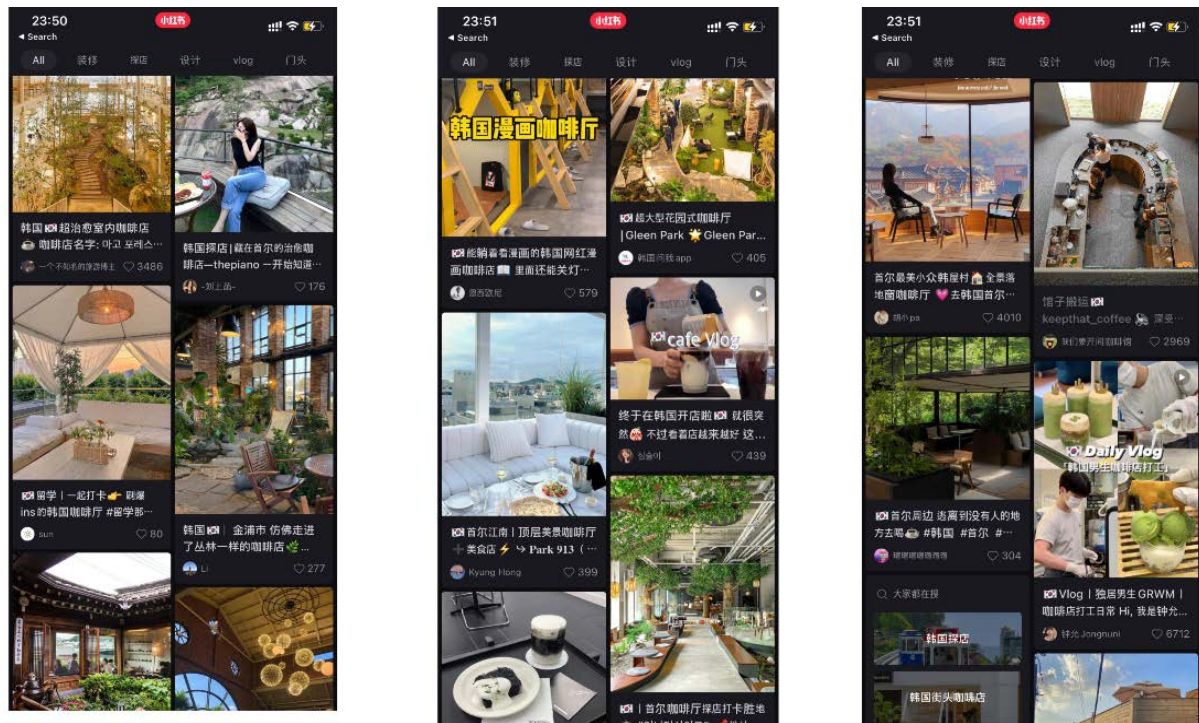


Figure 5. Posts about café store in Korea.

but the coffee store as destination has its extraordinary decoration an unusual thing. Visitors experience living in a fancy zone with a cup of coffee cost, which including the price, time. (Figure 6)

Café, take photos, it's mostly how I spent weekends. Travel aboard needs too much time and money, we just drive to some café, even it takes 1 hours, 2 hours. As long as I could have good photo to posts.

KIHAN

I'm pretty enjoy it, you know, it's very chill, it not like travel, but sort of feels like a trip. I mean, you gona go very far away, different than your home and workplace.

ZHAO, male, 23

A nice photo in café is a necessary self-portrait material for modern young people.

In additional, a study room, provides an environment different to home that giving you more possibility of self-improvement leading a different future.

4.2. Landscape of Ocean Blue—Fantasy Theme 2

The second fantasy theme articulated by majority posts on Xiaohongshu is the color of sky blue. The theme is touted repeatedly in the posts on this application, whether it is from a personal social account or a company promotion, because shortages in mainland China was blamed the sky is not blue because of pollution (Díaz & Romero, 2016), or blue sky represent a nice weather with nice mood, and a famous poem of “Hai Zi” says “Facing the Sea (面朝大海)”. (Figure 7)



Figure 6. A post from presents written “the aim is hang out all the nearby café, before I go back to my home country”.

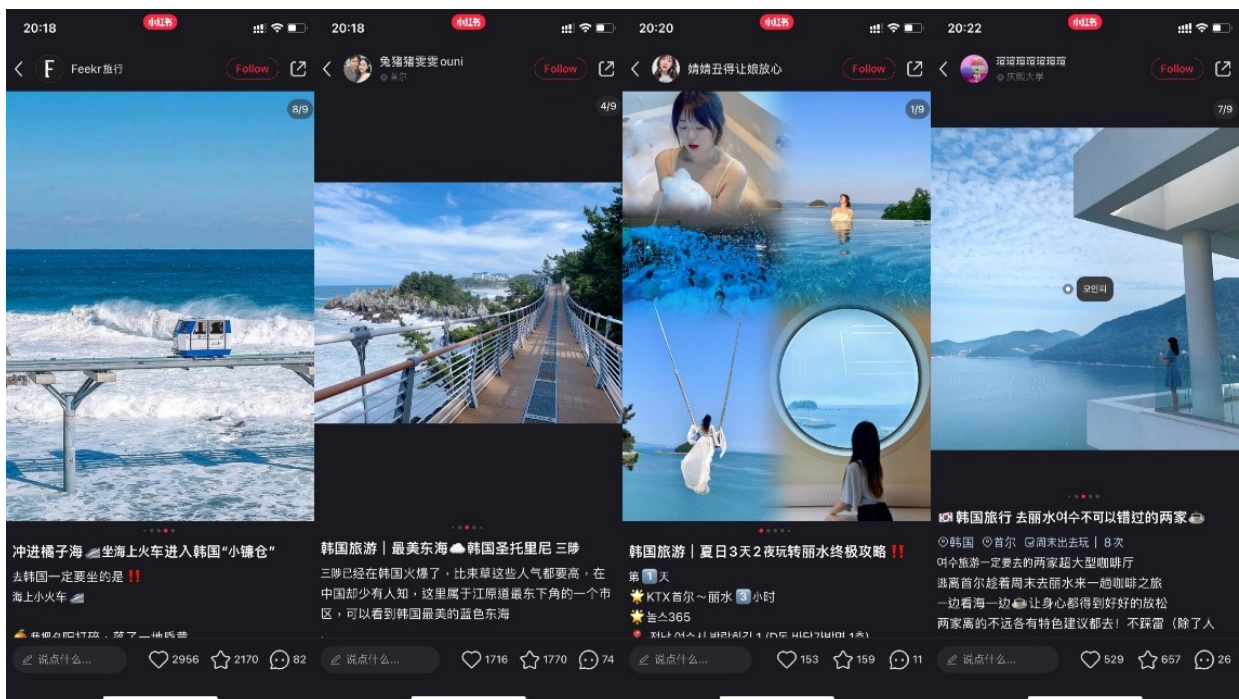


Figure 7. Posts of theme “ocean blue”.

Since Chinese APEC grey sky blamed by international journalists, blue sky become to a key performance indicator of environments. The Beijing city gov-

ernment issued the results of stricter air pollution standards, and followed public outcry that authorities are understating the extent of smog that often shrouds the capital (Taylor, 2013). The color blue becomes to a symbol of less pollution environment than the color of green, in majority Chinese people.

In additional, a clear sky presents a clear mind and a good mood, which is important for Chinese visitors. The sky is clear and boundless (晴空万里 in Chinese) has a meaning of the person may spread the wings like a big bird, hover in the sky, to explore the magnificent of the world, and infinite possibilities of own's future achievement.

And the oceanside are famous by a poem from Haizi that hits the Chinese social media buzzwords for years (Chinese Daily Overseas Edition, 2019), which says "Facing the Sea With Spring Blossoms (面朝大海春暖花开)". This buzzword including two parts, the first part facing the sea, represent a positive attitude towards life, that the Haizi (poet) wish own a openminded just wide as ocean, to face his life. The second part Spring Blossoms represent a warm relationship, just like the season when spring flowers blossoms, and there is Haizi last warm, last comfort. Based on "Facing the Sea With Spring Blossoms" goes virus on social media, go to seaside (去看海 in Chinese) stimulate the people travel to ocean, where have the warm comfort from the urban hustle works (CGTN Opinions, n.d.).

4.3. K-Pop/Fashion

One theme, K-pop related culture, applies to every county, this could be the internet let K-pop culture expended widely. Tourists motivation are highly effected by pop culture (Whang et al., 2016). K-pop affecting to artists and songs contributed a positive national image of Korea (Bang et al., 2021), provides the K-pop related culture recommends destination where is some films/epoxides shotting spot, how to meet the idle, and also some fashion clothes store, resemble to k-fashion, and some beauty clinics can also become a "destination" for mainland Chinese visitors. (Figure 8)

Dress like a show. On XiaoHongShu, lots of posts show how they find a resemble shirts of an influencer/celebrates from the dress store, and the key words called Tong Kuan (同款: same shirt). A directly translate showed be same style, however, Chinese consumer prefer the exactly same shirt, the color which one are on the celebrates, would be hard to buy or expensive compare to other same style shirts. There are plenty of business news to show how these Tong Kuan products won the market (Hu & Zhong, 2014). However such a fantasy chain also based on traditional thought about dress, which said "人靠衣装", means you are what you dress. (Figure 9)

Looks like a show. Plastic surgery is popular through the internet, and social media are also blamed by this consequence, known as Appearance-related social media consciousness (ASMC) (Choukas-Bradley et al., 2020). And Korea is the leader of the cosmetic surgery where occupied 25% global market portion. There

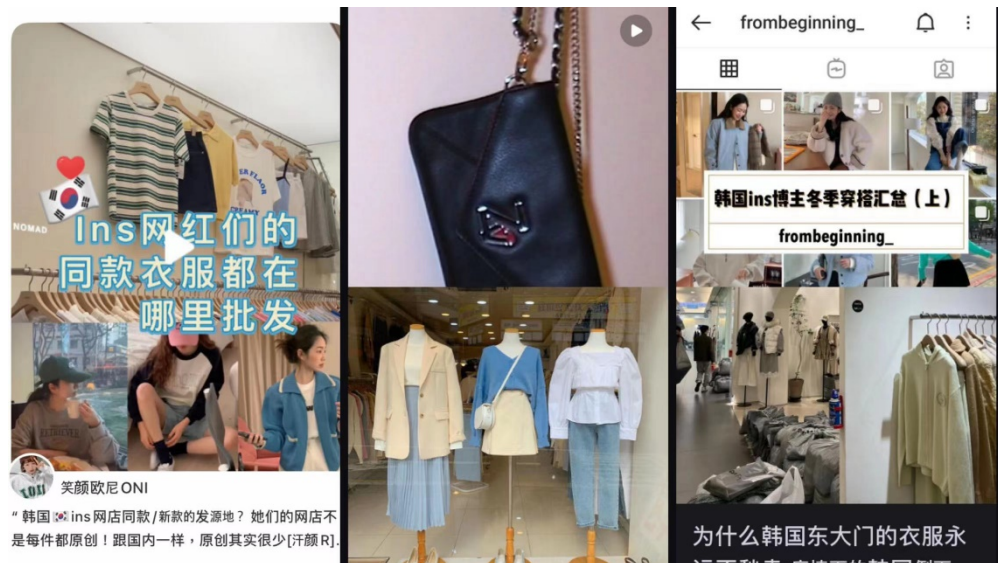
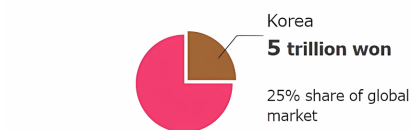


Figure 8. The recommendation posts of clothes shop in Korea.

Size of the Korean cosmetic surgery market

No. of foreign patients who visited the plastic surgery department in 2019



90,404 people

Hana Financial Investment, Cosmetic Surgery Overweight

Figure 9. The cosmetic surgery in tourism industry (*Plastic Surgery: Visit Korea Plastic Surgery*, n.d.).

are plenty of contents on social media shared about the tips and vlog by visitors about K-beauty related culture. And become to quite popular theme of visit Korea.

Live (background) like a show. The generalizability of much published research on the impacts of drama to our daily life is problematic, especially to children age, it has critical affects in language, perspective-talking and imagination aspects (Mages, 2018). However, a very superficial phenomenon is that a commonplace become to famous destination because of K-pop culture, a well-known example is a bus stop near the ocean from BTS, 22,272 fans over 137 countries been to that remote east coast for visiting according to a poll. (Yonhap, 2019)

On Korean official tourism websites, there are recommends places where film pupular Korean drama (*K-Drama*, visitKorea), such as home town ocean chahca (갯마을 차차차); Vincenzo (빈손조); secret royal inspector & Joy (어사와조이).

Additionally, amounts of posts share the film shooting spot, users put the slot shooting from the drama together with the real spot outlooks, see Figure 10 visitors would like to find an exactly the same position, that can make an almost

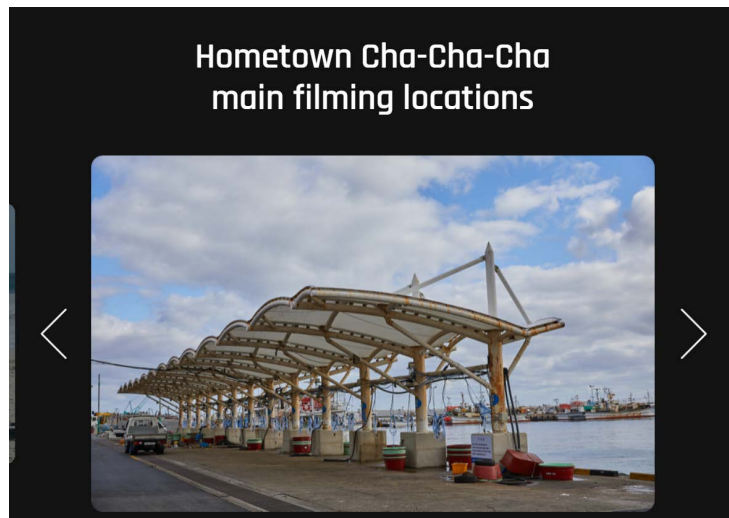


Figure 10. Filming spot of K-drama (*K-Drama*, visit Korea).

similar photos, that make them feel they are in the drama. The posts which including the detail information of the popular drama are easy go virus, people like to know more about those places, and even plan to go visit it one day.

Even though everything relates to show, but visitors are more like pilgrims but not a “do it for show” actor. In other words, the fiction work finds the shortest path to touching the emotions parts. (Figure 11)

4.4. Traditional Experience: Hansik and Hanbok

Another fantastic theme travel in Korea should be taste “traditional” in modern city. Gastronomy is not only about food, but it is a combination of experience, culture, and landscape (Mason & Paggiaro, 2012). This theme combines the “modern convenient” with “traditional ritual” gives visitors an extraordinary experience.

Though Korea is a modern country, but the traditional food and clothes also hit in modern culture. This theme provides you a tool as time machine, once you put on the traditional shirts and experience the thousand years of history of Korea through the traditional food.

Hanbok played a key moderating role between four dimensions and festival satisfaction (Lee & Lee, 2019) in tourism. Although “traditional costume,” is rare debated in the tourism field, the amounts of posts on social media still can show wear traditional costume is a necessary and worth try experience for visitors travel in Korea.

The posts of traditional Costume and Photography Experience on Xiaohongshu, shared tips about where to find photography stores, nice spot to take photos, how to make nice photos, the angle and the posture.

I will save some photos on xiaohongshu, and when I was there, I would show my friend directly what kind of photo I want... Mostly, I'd like exactly the same photos on social media.



Figure 11. Posts on Xiao Hongshu of Visit a Film Spots (Participates of Xu).

Xu

The posts illustrated an atmosphere about when you wear the Hanbok and stand ahead the traditional building, you are a royal family at the old age, or a character from history story or drama. It provides rich experience than without wearing the customer according to the interviewers.

Once you put the dress on, you are immersed as one of them of the traditional architecture sort of smoothly.

Andy

Costume also effects the Time spending. According to the field note, two group of people went to Gyeongbokgung Palace (경복궁), and the group with costume rent, take another 2 hours for photography and lie on garden. Apparently, visitors would like to spent more time in that location with costume (Lee & Lee, 2019), until the rent time over, if they do not have the costume on, they leave there earlier.

Traditional Korean food, named as “Hansik” (한식) has its typical layout see **Figure 12** Hansik mostly plates in specific way that the centered-on rice, served alongside a bowl of soup and a variety of side dishes (반찬). Most dishes use meat and vegetables as the main ingredients, hansik’s most owning feature is the number of enflamed foods. The most well-known are kimchi (김치), ganjang (soy sauce, 간장), doenjang (soybean paste, 된장), and gochujang (Korean chili paste, 고추장) (*Traditional Korean Food: VisitKorea, n.d.*).

Hansik represents Korea more than other dishes as foreign tourists. **Gotham (2007)** assumed that the image of a place is important people’s perceptions towards the place is formed based on their understanding through the pictures. Posts Hansik on social media is not a theme but also evidence that you have been experience the local, on favors dimension. Plenty of posts on Xiao Hongshu lists the store for Hansik, and other kind of Korean food, and even they would prefer some store capable for Chinese taste.

The plenty of food posts are also reshaping the taste of visitors itself. Social media is one place where visual and social cues meet. There is certainly evidence that if friends in your social network post regularly about particular types of food, it could lead you to copy them, for better or for worse. And research indicates that social media might be changing our relationship with food, making us think differently about what we eat (**Brown, 2021**).

The Hansik resembles as another tourism phenomenon in mainland China called “Nong Jia Le” (农家乐) known as farm restaurant, they both presenting their food service with food industry processes in traditional ritualized imagine. Traditional packaging gives customers a high-quality imagine, which can sell the products with a low cost but high price by appearance.

The fantastic theme of traditional experience represents a body of literature (**Lee et al., 2019**), that increased spiritual consciousness, and impacts on culture



Figure 12. Hansik, 한식 (*Traditional Korean Food: Visit Korea, n.d.*).

heritage, especially when visitors in historic inner-city places and found that those who derived a higher level of satisfaction (Yoon et al., 2010).

5. Conclusion

The fantasy theme constitutes the means through which the creative and imaginative interpretation of events is accomplished in communication. Through the digital persona that tourists pursued on social media, it generated the four themes of traveling in Korea: landscape of ocean blue; stylish Café; K-pop related culture and fashion; traditional Korean culture. Fantasy themes let destination management organization understand the intentions of tourists travel to Korea. Also, the trend of themes can easily be changed by online community, concerning the change of trend may let the destination organization adjust their strategy. The contribution of this study is improving the communication between destination and tourism, and implied the term of “persona” into tourism study. Moreover, Xiao Hongshu is one of the Chinese social platforms, there still some other travel related platforms such as Sina Weibo, moment of WeChat, TikTok, Bilibili. Further studies could examine these platforms which also are popular among Gen Z tourists, to understand the intention behind the market.

However, the content not submitted in topic of “travel Korea” was failed to be collected. Additionally, the posts were only collected during the year of 2022. For longer deeper interview, convenience sample was chosen for depth interview, time and financial limited cannot reach the influencers who have million followers.

In conclusion, this study brings the term of persona into tourism study, and narrates four fantasy themes on social media of South Korea, as a destination. Online posts from Xiao Hongshu generate multiple personae, which gather together as fantasy themes to present South Korea. Those themes lead the tourism marketing while reshaping it.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Appendix 1

Number	Screenshots of posts	Engagement (likes, comments, shares, bookmarks)	views
1	 <p>kk逛选洞 分享4家可赛治愈系宝藏文具店</p> <p>逛选洞嘛当然是越多越好买，又好逛，又出片的文具精品店，小到贴纸、餐垫，大到纸杯、文件夹、包包，相信有一颗少女心的你一定抵挡不住这些小东西的诱惑，就算不买，也能找回童心，超级治愈吧！</p> <p>交通方式：6号线“梨泰院站(梨泰院)下车”</p> <p>Forest Company (포레스트 컴퍼니) 这家文具店的外观简直太棒了！刚走进去就会忍不住拍买买买，各种贴纸、明信片、</p>	1141	3.74w
2	 <p>首尔探店kk可以眺望宫阙的漂亮咖啡厅</p> <p>咖啡너루 서울 동대문 구 경복궁길 35 3층 周二-周日 10:30-23:00 地铁3号线安国站 3号口步行9分钟</p> <p>这家咖啡厅在景福宫隔壁，坐在窗边可以俯瞰整个首尔，夕阳西下的时候简直不要太美！下雨天的时候就更美了！</p> <p>店里的咖啡没有特别的，但是种类还是蛮多的</p>	1208	3991
3	 <p>首尔探店kk一定要去龙山Approach吃brunch</p> <p>Approach 이프루치커리 서울 동대문 구 경복궁길 40길 18-3 10:00-22:00 地铁4号线新龙山站 1号口步行5分钟</p> <p>虽然Approach已经很难订了，但是我还是要推荐它的，真的！工作到11:00左右也是排了一会队才有位置（一楼有取号机）他家brunch真的太绝了，整体感觉特别有感觉，随处可见小设计小惊喜，如果天气好就在庭院</p>	2649	3310
4	 <p>首尔探店kk第一次吃就爱上的炸猪蹄 그릇족발 사료수업점</p> <p>서울 관악구 관악로14길 101 周四周五 16:00-21:00 周六周日 15:00-21:00 地铁2号线首尔大入口站 1号口步行十分钟</p> <p>本身完全不要吃猪蹄的我，真的爱上了这家的炸猪蹄，一包3kg，两个人吃会稍微有点多，之前觉得猪蹄和那一部分吃着很奇怪，油炸完之后就变得特别香，尤其那外皮脆脆的，也不腻</p>	385	967
5	 <p>韩国生活 济州岛一周旅行之不可错过的牛岛</p> <p>不能实现的安心岸，却可以实现的安心岛。指了很久的济州岛旅行计划到今天才有空来整理一下。</p> <p>每次去济州岛都是度假比忙，总是得呆2天就走了，又觉得不开心，这次，索性决定性上一周，来一次深度旅行。</p> <p>去年夏天的时候看了一个综艺叫半牛岛，当时就想着无论怎么样一定要去一次牛岛，所以这次去济州岛就想着要去牛岛上呆2天，然后在牛岛上度假半周，看看，自然</p>	279	12
6	 <p>kk济州岛 韩国海岛旅行度假超详细攻略</p> <p>— Jeju —</p> <p>交通： 飞机 釜山机场—济州机场 时长1小时左右</p> <p>住宿： 第一次去住的酒店叫HOTEL WITH JEJU，民宿比较多一些，可以选个风景好点</p>	164	701
7	 <p>首尔探店kk延南洞工业风咖啡厅 JAM JAM</p> <p>延南洞 서울 마포구 성미산로29길 24 지점1층 11:00-23:00 地铁2号线弘大入口站 3号口步行15分钟</p> <p>前几年去过延南洞看烟花的时候，被这家咖啡厅吸引了，好吧其实是被Crow Canyon的装置吸引了，咖啡厅本身的装饰也是超酷的工业风，尤其是那外立面那几个露天位置特别适合看烟花</p>	257	248






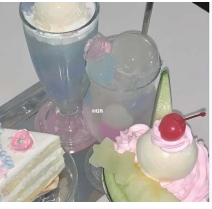

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8		<p>首尔探店 #终于找到了我的人生贝果 은웨이빙</p> <p>● 品牌介绍 韩国网红店 首尔网红店 ● 营业时间 11:30-20:00 休息日10:30-20:30 ● 地址 2号线三益站 5号出口步行5分钟</p> <p>这家贝果店在江南现代百货的地下二楼 我真的太太太太爱了 像可以拒绝这样贝果+奶酥的神仙组合 贝果有原味、芝麻、芝士、地瓜、蓝莓、抹茶六种口味 2.2-3.5一个 夹心的用料真的好足 面粉也是那种滑滑的</p>	339	170
9		<p>韩国小吃街攻略 通仁市场</p> <p>@吃货薯 @墨队长 @吃货薯</p> <p>#这一年美食给我力量 #留学韩国 #吃货好评 #韩国美食 #韩国必吃的地道韩式料理 #韩国旅行攻略 #炒年糕 #烤肉串</p> <p>2022.12.30</p> <p>共 76 条评论</p> <p>点赞 5864 评论 508 转发 76</p>	740	3122
10		<p>KR韩国江陵 太美啦</p> <p>房间采光 晚上享受温泉浴喝葡萄酒, 自己给自己小浪漫</p> <p>#韩国 #江陵 #韩国江陵 #江陵旅行 #首尔旅行 #韩国旅行攻略 #青雉房 #酒店</p> <p>01:16</p> <p>共 21 条评论</p> <p>点赞 104 评论 68 转发 21</p>	7411	17.5w
11		<p>韩国6天5夜自由行攻略#1 廣濟市場 東大門</p> <p>安姐 我来分享这次做了好多功课的攻略 大家拿去韩国记得收藏起来(分给) 给送前篇给大家给我加油的功德无量在此!!</p> <p>韩国最想拥有超豪华超棒的商家 所以在11月特等奖抽中指定好饭店韩国游 12/21-12/26六天五夜带家人一起去韩国 12月21日 07:50AM 从首尔出发 11:15AM 到釜山(仁川) (转机因为下雪的原因有延误10分钟再飞)</p>	251	7614
12		<p>KR釜山 三天两夜旅行攻略</p> <p>第一天 甘川文化村 松岛海上缆车</p> <p>早上9点50的KT从首尔站出发, 下午1点到 达釜山站, 直奔甘川文化村, 有那栋的小村庄, 众多咖啡馆, 一定和咖啡王子的福, 时间够的话还可以去松岛海上缆车 看夕阳</p> <p>第二天 广安里海水浴场 民乐水产市场</p> <p>早上一定要来看日出 太震撼! 太美了!! 可以参考我前篇的笔记, 看看油油的广安里大桥升起, 真的治愈! 白天可以打卡这边的民乐水产市场吃海鲜和各种小吃, 晚上</p> <p>407 380 0</p>	295	9396
13		<p>韩国首尔线路推荐 首尔周边旅游攻略</p> <p>吃喝玩乐一站体验, 带闺蜜玩转首尔, 今天来给大家分享一下【韩国首尔4日别样攻略】。首尔游的必备你一样都不能少~</p> <p>【韩国首尔4日别样攻略】</p> <p>D1 明洞(3小时) - N首尔塔(2小时)</p> <p>D2 北村韩屋村(3小时) - 三清洞(1.5小时) - 景福宫(1.5小时) - 仁寺洞(2小时) - 清溪川(1小时)</p> <p>D3 特展AR美术馆(2小时) - 弘益大学(2小时) - 梨花女子大学(2小时) - 东大门(3小时)</p>	708	2.24w
14		<p>济州岛 济州岛Snoopy Garden 打几分?</p> <p>就在这海边的自然风光与遍地的snoopy我就打</p> <p>济州岛 Snoopy Garden 位于济州市旧左邑, 是最近在济州很火的地方 这家花园分为内部 庭院还有野外花园</p> <p>入口就是snoopy商店和咖啡店, 内部展览后, 能转到外花园, 坐花园专用巴士一转, 享受济州美丽的环境, 而且花园内也有Rucy柠檬汽水专门店, 一边喝</p>	124	4968
15		<p>济州行 途遇最美咖啡馆</p> <p>真的很美 打算去济州岛的 一定要去 白天 傍晚 夜晚 都很美</p> <p>旁边有超绝绝景的地方 海边都是火山岩 拍照也很有济州特色</p> <p>还有很多海边咖啡馆 值得一去 离机场 半小时左右车程 交通便捷</p> <p>地址: 제주도 济州岛 1日 25</p>	198	4032

Continued

16	 <p>韩国女生去江南地下商业街买货就 这里的衣服种类设计颜色也多种多样 @日常薯 @时尚薯 @时髦小姐姐 @生活薯 @视频薯 @小红书视频薯 #韩国探店 #韩国留学日常 #韩国旅行 #留学韩国 #韩国衣服 #江南站 #首尔江南地下商业街 #韩国人穿什么 #韩国逛街 #韩国购物分享 #韩国生活 #韩国穿搭 #韩国买买买 2022-06-16 共 40 条评论</p>	1177	4951
17	 <p>韩国小众打卡地-比景福宫好玩百倍 在韩国190元体验【韩国民俗风情建筑+欣赏各种韩国传统公演+中型游乐园】，建议先点踩收藏！实在是太太太太划算了！沉浸式体验韩国传统文化，比景福宫和北村韩屋村更小众，更地道——景福宫弘文馆民俗村！ 弘文馆可以全方位体验韩国古代风土人情，现代娱乐设施和古代传统建筑交相辉映，让你分不清自己是身处都市还是穿越到朝鲜时代。韩国历史博物馆取景地，拍照特别美！ 2022-08-07 共 14 条评论</p>	962	2.95w
18	 <p>黑沙滩 #济州岛 #黑沙滩 #济州岛旅行 #韩国旅行攻略 #韩国旅行 #海边拍照 #海边穿搭 #旅行 2022-08-07 共 14 条评论 Vive 最大 2022-08-08 ACBBB 662 97 14</p>	955	5022
19	 <p>2022韩国旅行攻略—东大门 大家最熟悉的东大门其实是东大门站附近的服装批发市场，由免税店等一种商业区。当然广义上的东大门是指整个东大门区。然而，平常所说吃喝玩乐的东大门站实际上是在东大门区而是在中区。今天简单介绍一下东大门攻略。 DOP 东大门设计广场 (必去) DOP是世界规模最大的3D打印博物馆，由英国著名建筑师扎哈·哈迪德操刀设计。DOP由</p>	307	1372
20	 <p>韩国女生早秋包包穿搭 高级感拉满! 来#跟着薯的姐妹们@韩国欧尼(yuan)的日常 @韩国上知珠 知仁一起来到了vunque 说是最有人气哦。韩国女生穿搭多都超好看的呀 #韩国旅行 #每日穿搭 #包包分享 #秋季穿搭 #时尚博主 #穿搭穿搭 #vunque 2022-09-20</p>	760	2.65w
21	 <p>来明洞必逛的三家店 1.HBAF蜂蜜吉仁店 2.olive young 总店 3.Aland副牌集合店 #在韩国 #韩国生活 #购物 #韩国旅行 #韩国影 2022-09-21 共 15 条评论 小小妮妮 oliveyoung 逛街有说明一定要去这家! 963 1025 15</p>	226	1128
22	 <p>vlog 韩国南浦洞逛街整理 外套试穿 *如果有机会来韩国旅行，来首尔一定第一天给汉南洞！因为这里聚集了许许多多特色的专卖店、咖啡厅、而且超好看，随便在哪家店买衣服包包，每个店家都能帮你拍出超好看大片！*每天都不会腻！*而且这里汇集了当下最火的设计师品牌的线下店，depound, grove, emis, lookast, manon等 还有一些包包设计师品牌等。对了，还有很多中法二半店也很好！推荐 Possi, pejuellkaet~</p>	566	1.76w




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23	 <p>染黑发了 #留学韩国 #韩国生活 #黑发 #每日穿搭 #韩国旅行 #韩风搭配 2022-10-24 共 17 条评论 70% 点赞 681 123 17</p>	1117	3.56w
24	 <p>总要来趟【韩国首尔】最美小众韩屋村 这韩屋村也太美了把 有机会总得来趟！ 比起超火的北韩屋村 这在我心目中的 除了韩屋村 还有韩北韩山呢 最后这里还有家庭咖啡馆 观望全村美景 【TINJUAN】永杯咖啡吃豆甜品 把脚步放慢 享受美好悠长的下午茶啦 📍 悠平韩屋村 서울특별시 은평구 진관동 127-25</p>	879	2.73w
25	 <p>韩国首尔 弘大超好逛的服装店 这家avenstudio之前屋主打理的从偏白灰色系 ● 装修风格从门头到店内布置 衣服风格 完全大换血 更偏向学院风 款式也都是最新大的 ● 我很喜欢现在的陈列 色彩搭配的很舒服 看起来也更方便 喜欢的款式一目了然 ● 他家除了自制款&买大 爱好者还会进一些韩系小众品牌的衣服 常grow在逛的时候就有看到 总之逛一下下来+最近大的款式</p>	1450	4.81w
26	 <p>韩国 今年大热韩国本土品牌购物分享 1.emis - 大热的配饰品牌 (汉南洞) 样子简单, 很多副牌都是最新! 不得不说不说版型不错, 配饰就比如包包, 买了紫色还是很显白的 - 感觉这款棕色也蛮好看 2.Mardi Mercredi - 韩国超h品牌 (汉南洞) 铺面造型是招牌, 蛮有辨识度 - 卫衣有不少配色, 逛了家面以为可以光脚脚能买白鞋 朋友买了粉色鞋款也很特别, 除此之外小清新的 ❤️ 3078 🌟 2479 💬 34</p>	493	1.7w
27	 <p>mini vlog 釜山也太懂恋爱了吧! 两天一夜的釜山行一直在感叹 真是太美了! 每日更新的海边日出和夕阳, 沿海而开的电车小火车, 各种美味海鲜大餐, 还有巨可爱的免费小酒店, 整个城市的氛围都, 太适合谈恋爱了! #釜山 #海云台天空胶囊 #韩国旅行 2022-11-08 共 32 条评论 765 346 32</p>	1027	3.21w
28	 <p>韩国 INS复古甜美式饮品 在ins看到这家店就立马打卡了! 咱们是来尝尝和甜品真的超好看! 点的蓝莓草莓和两款 点的饮料也太好看了! 这颜值和甜品不过味甜确实不会令人失望! 贵吗它真的好贵! 只想去拍闺蜜们可以追求味蕾的姐妹们快冲! 📍 LINGLING (仁川) 👉 424 🌟 277 💬 204</p>	840	2.62w
29	 <p>韩国首尔 我们住在这里好吗? 看看就懂! 最近在逛韩国首尔yom的店, 感觉自己一家一家逛, 去了以后发现都是超好看! @白茉莉 @韩国首尔 @生活家 @VLOG @漂亮精 @时髦小地球 #首尔生活 @首尔生活Vlog #韩国旅行 #韩国生活 #首尔生活 #首尔生活</p>	2394	5.25w

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37		<p>韩国江南富人的衣服/便宜好看的淑女风</p> <p>这是在韩国通过Z便宜的地下南街一逛就停不下来根本停不下来(相对于月收入)但是...江南的地下南街了我的认知夏天一看也不超过80了哈哈哈哈哈(15000/80RMB)夏天一看也不超过80了哈哈哈哈哈(15000/80RMB)夏天一看也不超过80了哈哈哈哈哈(15000/80RMB)夏天一看也不超过80了哈哈哈哈哈(15000/80RMB)夏天一看也不超过80了哈哈哈哈哈(15000/80RMB)</p>	12769	126.55w
38		<p>韩国旅行vlog 全州-开启韩剧穿越之旅</p> <p>樱花灿烂, 春风渐暖, 恰好全州樱花盛开, 和同仁馆开了第一口次家庭之旅- 此次的旅行清单请各位准备好!</p> <p>全州韩屋村 전북 전주시 완산구 기림대로 99 韩剧, 开启韩剧穿越之旅: 一天2w韩币</p> <p>全州韩屋: 고궁수라간 한옥마을길 전북 전주시 완산구 순향로 31</p>	17182	7.28w
39		<p>首尔景点 景福宫韩服打卡全攻略</p> <p>衣服租赁: ABC韩服店, 价格5000krw起, 9000可以租到特别好看的! 有现代款也有传统款, 男生也有, 老板炒鸡心, 我特心! 请发超仔细! 租衣不限时, 六点前还都OK!</p> <p>景福宫攻略: 几个地方是最佳取景地: 景福宫 包括旁边的红色柱子 炒鸡出片! 景福宫大门, 可以一起拍到景福宫的景! 景福宫前的景福宫! 景福宫前的景福宫! 景福宫前的景福宫!</p>	10034	5.38w
40		<p>韩国咖啡 首尔周边居然可以这么好玩!!</p> <p>동당역 수우커피 경기 양평군 양서면 북관강로89번길 16 之前去寿州都是开车去的 这次被朋友带去骑自行车 没有体验过的真的非常推荐去! 坐地铁从양서면站出来打车出来就很有用的 这里要一定选电动的 一天是5000韩元左右的</p>	353	298
41		<p>韩国圣水洞Reve咖啡馆探秘</p> <p>韩国圣水洞Reve咖啡馆 (咖啡致歉版) 2022年2月13号 (2月1号不营业) 12pm-8pm</p> <p>#探店 #韩国咖啡 #韩国生活 #圣水洞 #首尔探店</p>	4705	2.44w
42		<p>首尔探店 一不小心get了周雨彤同款</p> <p>BAD BLOOD 서울특별시 마포구 한강동 412-28</p> <p>这个牌子在韩国还是蛮火的, 像很多有名的dancer都穿过他家他家风格比国内流行的潮流品牌日常一点的就是美式复古校园风准确的说是美式和韩式相结合的风格--版型颜色都超赞</p>	1064	5761
43		<p>首尔近郊好去处合集 夏日出游玩水必备!</p> <p>一到夏天, 必不可少的就是水上活动了! 上次给大家推荐了泳池露营地, 这次来给大家盘点4个夏日玩水好去处, 每个都非常值得一去!</p> <p>快快一起来, 准备夏日出游吧! 巨幕川 Bal376 (自驾376) 这里原本是小众私人的泳池露营地, 从7月开始升级成一个水上乐园, 即使不露营地也可以玩一整天! 巨幕川 Bal376 (自驾376) 巨幕川 Bal376 (自驾376) 巨幕川 Bal376 (自驾376)</p>	942	2.91w

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44		<p>韩国全州 建于1970年的韩屋民宿·闲眠</p> <p>2022的旅行在全州打起了头阵~</p> <p>全州是一个适合两天一夜的城市 虽然韩屋村有点商业化 但整体氛围不错,美食咖啡店距离也很近 适合没有车的朋友 韩屋民宿在宜室宜家的人也很多,韩国真好~</p> <p>我们住的民宿也位于韩屋村附近 徒步不到10分钟可以到韩屋村,可以自驾,骑行</p> <p>118 224 6</p>	192	714
46		<p>韩国网红店 海洋主题咖啡厅</p> <p>韩国首尔近郊超超超好看的海洋主题咖啡厅</p> <p>看这这这这这有多美吧!</p> <p>这间咖啡厅位于韩国京畿道的金浦市,来到这里,首先映入眼帘的是一头巨大的鲸鱼~</p> <p>会让人以为这是一间水族馆,但实际上这是一间以海洋文化以及浪漫氛围为主题,透着一股海洋气息的咖啡厅,正如这间咖啡厅名字“水产公园”一样!</p> <p>这间咖啡厅总共分为三层,每一层都会带给人不一样的体验~</p> <p>顶层一层则以白色海洋为主题,进入后会有</p> <p>18 18 10</p>	25478	58465
47		<p>坐地铁去看海~四个首尔近郊海边</p> <p>还在苦恼周末去哪儿吗?挑个天气好的日子坐地铁去~西海岸看日落吧!</p> <p>小编给大家整理了四个首尔近郊,并且坐大众交通就可以到达的海边看海胜地!超级适合周末悠闲地坐在窗边喝着咖啡每天看着美景,叫上好友们一起闲逛拍照,享受周末的悠闲有余~</p> <p>1月 月尾岛</p> <p>月尾岛位于首尔地铁一号线尾站,不仅可以看到海,还有好玩游乐场!</p>	1675	65987