

LUXURIOUS LINENS



TREAT YOURSELF
LIKE ROYALTY
WITH A BED
WRAPPED
IN LINENS FIT
FOR A KING
OR QUEEN

BY DEBI BRYANT

Homeowners express their individuality and confidence with many luxurious choices today. For instance, with high-end linens. And why not buy the best for the room where we spend almost half of each day?

COLORS GALORE

At the August 2007 Home Fashions Market in New York, it was apparent that colorful linens are making a comeback, reports Virginia Peale, director of marketing for Yves Delorme. "Strong hues were on exhibit in all categories. Shades of brown — from beige to chocolate — are still popular to mix with other colors," she says.

Be that as it may, white sheets always are in style. Not only are they never passé, they remain top sellers even in an age when the array of colors is almost endless. "They are rather like the white shirt or little black dress of the apparel industry," Peale says.

ABOVE: *Satin-stitched color against 210-thread-count cotton percale creates bedding that's smooth, crisp and sumptuous. Prices range from \$49 for standard cases to about \$230 for a king-sized duvet cover. Available through Restoration Hardware*

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ABOVE: "Draper Stripe" from dwell is yard-dyed, not printed, meaning the yarns are dyed and then woven to create a pattern, giving the fabric a rich, soft feel. In 100-percent cotton sateen (320 thread count), the full queen duvet and cases set costs about \$250, with the king duvet and cases set is about \$290. Sheet sets run from about \$230 to \$290.

ABOVE RIGHT: "Brilliant" accurately describes Home Treasures' colorful line, available at Plush Home. The quilted coverlet in queen size is \$455 and is available in 22 different patterns with each pattern having six colorways. The Euro shams are \$125 each and the bordered standard cases are \$110 each. All pieces are 100 percent Egyptian cotton.

BELOW: Sweet dreams are yours for sure with this stunning design by Pierre Frey for Yves Delorme. The Shan Collection features majestic white dahlia blooms and graphic butterflies — all on a juicy raspberry background. Prices range from \$120 for the boudoir sham to \$530 for the king-sized duvet.



CLASSIC THEMES

Yves Delorme's new bedding collection for fall 2007 plays with some of the great themes in the history of textiles — damask, ottoman stripes and toile. "Burano" strikes a note somewhere between vintage and avant-garde. Its printed damask motif has a flatly tinted découpage treatment; an Ottoman stripe on the reverse of the duvet cover and shams balances the stylized floral pattern.

Matteo Home's Autumn/Winter 2007 Collection introduces "Vintage Jacquards" in Acorn, Medallion, Oak and Twines. Stefanie Phan, spokesperson for Matteo, says, "Each intricately decorated pattern is inspired by lost designs we found in vintage fabrics bought at flea markets across Europe. We took these designs to our weaving mill in Italy where they worked to recreate the Old World designs and yet, maintain Matteo's luxury standard of exceptional quality."

Designer and owner of Area Inc., Anki Spet says, "I love the refined technique of our new 'Day' pattern and also the very soft cotton blankets we offer in navy. We also have a heather gray in the line that is amazing and perfectly fashionable and classic. White, gray and navy — school uniform chic."



EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE

Across the Atlantic, people have been fine-tuning the concept of "high-end" for centuries. In fact, the word "luxury" comes to us from the French.

"Europeans represent the height of luxury in fine linens. They take a very artisan approach to linens," says Mary Kate Erwin, purveyor of European bed linens in the Dallas Design Center. "Mills there have been in families for generations. They pay attention to the finest details of construction."

As an example, Erwin recommends the Italian company Bagni Volpi Noemi, which is marketed in the states under the name N.C. Souther.

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ABOVE: Scrolls of Tuscan vines add delicate flourish to the smooth 210-thread-count cotton percale of Italian Embroidered Scroll Bedding from Restoration Hardware. Made in Italy of 100 percent Egyptian cotton. Prices range from about \$90 for pillowcases to about \$430 for the duvet cover.



ABOVE: In 100 percent silk, a queen-sized duvet cover by Kumi Kookoon can transform your bed from boring to beautiful. About \$790 at Plush Home. Adding to the appeal are 100 percent Egyptian cotton lace sheets and pillowcases from Home Treasures. Queen-sized sheeting is about \$450, while standard pillowcases are \$250 a pair.

RESOURCES

ANTHROPOLOGIE
4066 Westheimer Road
713.840.9428
www.anthropologie.com

KUHL-LINSCOMB
2424 W. Alabama St.
713.520.7691
www.kuhl-linscomb.com

L.L.BEAN
www.llbean.com

LIGNE ROSET
5600 Kirby Drive
713.629.7722
www.ligne-roset-usa.com

PLUSH HOME
2233 Westheimer Road
713.522.5230

PRATESI
1801 Post Oak Blvd.
713.840.8882
www.pratesi.com

RESTORATION HARDWARE
4091 Westheimer Road
713.850.8838
12850 W. Sam Houston
Parkway North
713.365.0073
www.restorationhardware.com

COUNTING THREADS

Thread count is only one factor in determining the softness of sheets, according to Jennifer Benevides, product line manager for L.L.Bean. "The other factor is finish, which is something done at the factory level and is inherent to the product," she explains.

From Yves Delorme, Virginia Peale, director of marketing, offers, "A 200-thread count fine cotton sheet can have a softer 'hand,' or feel, than a 400-thread count sheet that uses an inferior grade of cotton."

How then to know the finish? Two clues:

- Buy from sources you trust because there will be little information other than thread count on the label.
- Unzip the packaging and handle the material. It should feel good to the touch.