

The Rest of Your Life

By Danielle Sonnenberg

TheStreet.com Staff Reporter

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Who doesn't relish the thought of a good night's sleep?

We all know the importance of rest -- sleep deprivation can lead to serious health problems such as a weakened immune system, depression and high-blood pressure.

But just imagine getting in your eight hours on a luxury mattress. You'll be so comfortable, the only problem will be getting out of bed.

A major misconception some people have when choosing a mattress is confusing "firm" with supportive. A bed that's too firm can hinder circulation. And swinging too far the other way can pose problems as well -- a mattress that's too soft does not offer adequate support. A tour of high-end bed companies, however, shows that well-balanced comfort can be obtained -- but at a price.



Deluxe Dreams

Swedish company Duxiana prides itself on making beds that let the body lie naturally, for an anatomically correct sleeping posture.

In an apt analogy, a Duxiana representative compares its beds to a dessert: The frame is the cake, and the icing is the lush pillow-top mattress.

Each bed contains two miles of Swedish steel as part of the company's unique spring system, which is made of the thinnest springs available. Pine trees from the northernmost part of Sweden are used for the frame of the bed; the latex used on the mattress pillow top is all-natural and harvested from rubber trees.

The newest version of the bed is the Dux 8888 (\$10,480 for king-size), which debuted in September.

This model features an adjustable lumbar support system and interchangeable personal comfort zones for the hips, shoulders and feet. The lumbar support system allows one person's preference to be firm while the other's is soft. A removable crank allows for simple and accurate fine-tuning.

Duxiana also sells the Dux 8888 in a fully adjustable version (\$13,000 for king-size).

This entire bed slides backward (your night table will never be out of reach) with the help of glow-in-the-dark buttons. It also comes with a special power reserve system, which will adjust the mattress to the flat position in case of a power outage.

The bed frame should last for generations, but the pillow-top needs to be replaced every 12-15 years, according to a salesperson, which will run you around \$1900.

Rock-a-Bye Your Way

Have trouble relaxing once you get into bed? Perhaps a bed with a built-in massager is what's needed to soothe you to sleep.

Hollandia features the "Gravity Zero" bed, which has two German-made massage motors, one for the head and one for the feet, with twelve adjustable massage programs. It differs from the Duxiana line in that there is no spring system at all in the bed.

Each Hollandia mattress comes with a flexible upper area to prevent shoulder numbness. "Your shoulder will sink in, so you're not cutting off circulation," says Aimee Barber, manager of the Philadelphia showroom at the Marketplace Design Center.

The Israeli company has showrooms in nine countries around the world, and its well-earned motto is "let's stay in bed." Its customers agree: Last year, Hollandia sold 30,000 units worldwide. Hollandia mattresses are all made of natural latex, called vita talalay latex, which comes from the sap of rubber trees in Kuala Lumpur.

Tempur-Pedic mattresses -- a top competitor -- can hold heat in, and customers often complain that they perspire too much in them, says Barber. The material used in Hollandia's, however, allows the sleeper to stay comfortable -- warmer in the winter, and cooler in the summer.

The bed also has a backslide feature, which allows you to maintain eye contact with your partner no matter where your side is.

The king-size version, which is made of two parts, is recommended for couples -- each person has control over how he or she wants to adjust the bed.

Another unique feature lies in the mattresses -- one side is firm and the other side is flexible, so each side can choose a sturdy or soft mattress.

If you have children and pets, the Gravity Zero bed has an innovative built-in safety feature. If something touches the frame underneath, sensors will halt any adjustments in process. The bed needs to be manually restarted for it to resume motion, says Barber.

Hollandia beds start at \$10,000, and can go up to \$50,000. The average model sells for \$15,000, Barber notes.

Built to Last

Hastens, a 150-year-old Swedish company, is another pick for superior slumber.

It takes a week just to construct the Vividus (around \$50,000), the company's new super-luxury bed frame, which is made of solid pine sourced from the Arctic Circle.

The main section of the bed, the mattress, is made of a combination of horsehair, cotton and wool; Hastens doesn't use any kind of latex or foam. The company believes these all-natural, tried-and-true materials are better for sleepers than chemically produced synthetic components. The spring system is also uniquely designed to align to a sleeper's body weight. The individually wrapped springs are bell shaped, as opposed to the usual cylinder shape, which makes them more pliable.

An average king-size Hastens bed sells for about \$11,000, and is guaranteed to last for 25 years.

"It is the Lamborghini of beds," explains Hastens sales associate Karin Javidi.

If you want to try before investing, all of these beds are in deluxe hotels worldwide, including the Peninsula Hotel in Chicago, Hotel Duxiana in Helsingborg, Sweden, and Hiltons throughout Israel and Iceland.

So if you're finding yourself tossing and turning every night, think about upgrading your bed -- you'll soon have sweet dreams.

