



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT  
**Down Duvets**



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## A Sense of History

St. Geneve began as a family business devoted to creating wonderful high quality duvets in the Vancouver area. Our duvets are now available at exclusive high quality bedding boutiques throughout the USA and Canada. Our reputation has led to orders from Germany, Switzerland and Great Britain. Our duvets and pillows are in the bedrooms of many celebrities.



*The founder's grandmother. Her sense of design was extraordinary.*

Our founder, Michael de la Place, started creating innovative prototypes and developing design features for duvets in the 1960's. His interest in textiles was originally inspired by his grandmother who worked in Paris researching fashion design trends. He now has the experience of over forty years of crafting fine duvets - longer than any other individual in Canada.

Today, St. Geneve remains faithful to the principles of hand making duvets that are the very finest in design, materials and workmanship. Duvets that will last for decades.

## The Nature of Sleep

It is well documented how vital good quality sleep is to your well-being. You should sleep about eight hours a night. That's a third of your life; so the choice of your bedding should be well-considered.

A down duvet is the softest, lightest, warmest, most comfortable bed covering there is. And of course there are many different qualities. A high quality duvet will be a pleasure to use each and every night. Light and airy, it will float over you like a warm cloud. It will be cozier in the winter and cooler in the summer.

There is virtually nothing that will serve you for so many hours in a day; every day, every week, every month, for decades. Given proper care, a high quality down duvet will last for 20 to 30 years or more. So that's about 75,000 hours of use. That's much more than a car. Be mindful that a low quality duvet will last perhaps three years or so, and will not be particularly comfortable. A low price is misleading - it is a very poor value if it has to be replaced.

## Traditions Endure at St. Geneve

There is an old Scandinavian tradition that when a woman married, her parents would give the couple a new down filled duvet and pillows which would have been made by her mother.

Part of this tradition had the mother sewing a new coin into the duvet, for good luck all of their days. When we make a duvet, we do the same thing. St. Geneve duvets all have a coin sewn into it, in the same spirit of good wishes for our patrons.



*An Old Danish Farmhouse*

## Ticking Talk

Ticking is the fabric cover of the duvet. It is as important to the quality of the duvet as the quality of the down fill. We match our different down proof fabrics carefully to the type of down filling, for the optimum duvet.



The very finest tickings are extremely light and airy and they are so soft that the duvet will settle much more closely around the sleeper, like being cuddled in a warm cloud. Yet they are completely down proof and remain that way for decades, even through several cleanings. The very best tickings are made in Germany and Switzerland out of Egyptian cotton. Our German mill has been producing tickings for over 125 years.



Our German fabrics are certified by Oeko-Tex to be the safest made anywhere in the world. They are actually approved to be safe for infants. [www.oeko-tex.com](http://www.oeko-tex.com)



**SanProCare** is a unique German milling process that doubles the breathability of down proof cotton.



All our luxury duvets are covered in our German tickings. We offer our traditional range of duvets in our classic downproof cottons. These are long staple cottons that are woven for us in Asia to our exact specifications. They are soft, light, washable and guaranteed downproof and dust mite proof. They drape beautifully.

Thread count does NOT necessarily indicate quality. The most important factor is the type of cotton used to make the threads and then the quality of the spinning, the quality of the weaving and the quality of the finishing. When these things are done well, then a high thread count makes the fabric exquisite.

A low quality ticking may have a high thread count, but it is made out of low grade cotton, which is inexpensive and totally unsuited to the weaving of down proof fabrics. It will be heavier, it may have a chemical coating to make it feather proof and it will not be as breathable. After a few months of use, it will become limp and lifeless because the weave has relaxed and loosened. This leads to leaking of down and feathers.



## Feathers or Down?

They are often confused, but there is a big difference. A bird grows feathers to fly with and they are stiff and flat. Feathers are a poor insulator.



Down is the soft under plumage that a bird grows to keep warm. It looks like a dandelion puff and is the finest insulator known. It is a miracle of nature.



Goose Feather

## Why Choose Down?

Ounce for ounce, nothing is as effective and comfortable as good quality down. Not even close.

**Insulation.** The tiny air pockets trapped by the down fibers do the insulation. The smaller and more numerous the air pockets, the better the insulation. Nothing does this better than down.

**Resiliency.** The ability to be compressed and then spring back to the original volume. No other material regains its loft like down.

**Breathability.** Down allows water vapor to pass through without letting warmth escape. This is why a down duvet is cooler in the summer than in the winter.

**Longevity.** With proper care, down will outlast any other insulating material. We recovered a quilt that was over a hundred years old and the filling was still in good condition.

**High Quality Down** will be warmer in winter, cooler in the summer and last decades longer. High quality down fills a larger space and has more insulating power than the same weight of a lower quality. Small down clusters have poor filling power and tend to collapse after two or three years because the filaments are small and fragile. What makes one down better than another? There are different reasons but mostly it is the maturity of the bird. A more mature bird is larger and has larger down clusters.

High quality, mature White Goose Down will look like the large down cluster in this image in actual size. It has an extraordinary high warmth to weight ratio. A duvet filled with this down will be very light and warm and will last for decades.

On the other hand, an immature White Goose Down will look like the small down cluster in this image in actual size. It will not fill a duvet well. Even if there is a lot more of this down by weight, it won't be as warm.

Mature down traps more air, puffs up more and breathes better than lower quality immature down. Since it takes less of a high quality down to fill a duvet, the best duvets are also the lightest and puffiest.



Actual Size Down Clusters



The best down is mature down and it comes from mature birds.

This down not only grows larger, but the filaments in the down grow stronger and will be longer lasting. They improve in structure and become very dense at their center. The most mature down clusters will actually cling to each other.

Mature geese are snobs about this.



**Loft or Fill Power** is the number of cubic inches one ounce of down will fill. The higher the number - the higher the quality.

## How Can You Recognize Quality?

When you pick up a duvet, it should feel wonderful. It should feel puffy and lively - something that you will love to cuddle up with. It should feel light and airy and cozy. The cover should feel soft and smooth, but not limp. If a duvet feels drab and lifeless, would you really want it?

(Note: when a duvet comes out of its package, it can take a couple of days for it to puff up completely.)

Many duvets look and feel the same when new, but after three or four years some are falling apart, while others will last for decades. Look for a solid guarantee from a reputable company.



## Choose the Right Construction

1. Unless it's for summer use, a duvet should never be sewn straight through, as this lets warmth escape. A duvet should be baffled.

2. Baffles must be high enough to allow the down to loft up to its full capacity. Short baffles make the duvet look puffy, because there are thin and thick spots. This looks pretty, but it's not as comfortable.

3. A duvet must be made with chambers, or the down will drift to the corners. The baffle box is one of the most traditional and in fact is the best of all designs. St. Geneve duvets have rectangular boxes to make it easy to see which edge is the top of the duvet.

4. The chambers must be sealed off from each other, or the down will drift between the chambers. This is a hidden feature and most manufacturers leave open gaps between the chambers to make it easy to fill with down. And after three or four years most duvets are thin in the middle. Make sure the manufacturer guarantees **in writing** that the down will not shift from one chamber to another.

5. A duvet must have internal seams. The fabric should never be stitched straight through, but rather it should be tucked inside and sewn with no stitches visible on the surface of the duvet except for the edges.



Antique Sewing Machine from the St. Geneve Collection

## Duvets Have Always Been Green

A duvet is made out of natural materials. Down is a completely renewable material that can be re-used by recovering a worn duvet into a new cover, or converting into pillows. Given reasonable care, down will last literally for generations. We actually recovered a quilt that had down and feathers that were from the time of the US Civil War. At the very end, down is completely biodegradable. Polyester is a kind of plastic. It is made from crude oil and never, ever goes away.

The best covers for duvets are made of cotton or silk, which are also renewable materials and are completely biodegradable.



## Choose the Right Weight

### Regular

For average sleepers in cooler bedrooms



### Lightweight

For warm sleepers or for heated bedrooms



### Ultralight

For warm sleepers in heated bedrooms



### Dual Zone

"He's hot, she's not"

We are happy to make a duvet with different weights on the two sides.



## Energy Savings

The Energy Information Administration in the USA has determined that if you turn down your thermostat down by only 3°F for the eight hours you are in bed, you will save about five percent off your heating bill. Imagine the saving if you turn it down by 10°F or more. The cost of your duvet will be offset within two or three years. Not to mention being more environmentally responsible.



## Quality = Savings = Green

If you choose items based on their price, you will have the experience of living with cheap goods. While they last, you won't enjoy them very much and they won't last very long. When you invest in quality, it will last much longer and be much more enjoyable. Often, spending the extra once on a quality item will work out to be less money than replacing low quality over and over. Without having to constantly replace an item, you are keeping the Earth better.

So, please don't throw this folder away. Pass it on.

## Quality Assurance

The Down Association of Canada **downmark.com** is a non profit organization devoted to maintaining quality standards for down and feather products. Members are obliged to adhere to strict standards under government labeling and advertising regulations.

Members products meet these standards and are entitled to carry this hang tag. St. Geneve strongly supports the work that Downmark® does and has been a member since the company started.



## Hypo Allergenic

All St. Geneve down is cleaned according to the ZURGUARD® standard. Our down is so clean that we confidently guarantee our down products to be hypoallergenic or the item can be returned up to a period of three months after the date of purchase. (The return period is for three months as we have no control over the ongoing household environment.)



### Guarantees

**Warmth.** St. Geneve regular weight duvets are guaranteed for a period of 10 years to be warm enough, or St. Geneve will add down at no charge. Please note that down cannot be removed from a duvet.

**Workmanship.** Most St. Geneve duvets are guaranteed 20 years against any defect in materials and/or workmanship. The filling is guaranteed to stay in place and never shift to another compartment for the life of the duvet.

**Conditions.** Guarantees are subject to the duvet having being reasonably cared for, that a duvet cover has been used at all times and the duvet labels are still attached.

## Questions & Answers

### Where does down come from?

- Q. Down comes only from water birds such as geese and ducks. Land birds such as chickens don't grow down.

### Does the cover of the duvet matter?

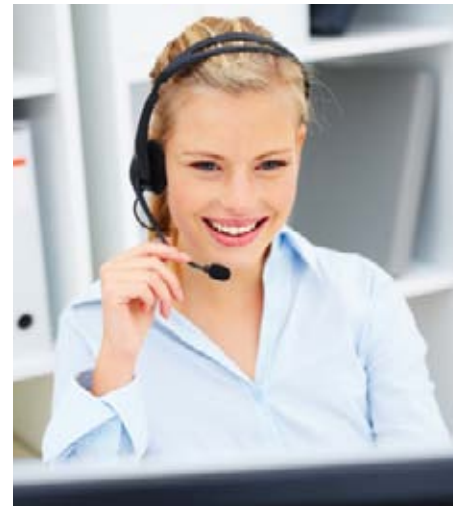
- Q. The quality of the cover is as important as the quality of the fill.

### How long will a duvet last?

- Q. A low quality duvet will last three years or so. A high quality duvet will last 20 years or more and then the down can be recovered, for years more use.

### How should I store my duvet?

- Q. Store it in a breathable fabric bag - never in plastic.



### Q. Is the guarantee important?

- A. Many duvets look and feel the same when new, but after three or four years some are falling apart, while others will last for decades. Look for a solid guarantee from a reputable company.

### Q. Does the brand name matter?

- A. If you ever have questions, you'll need to know who made the duvet. Would you trust a company that changes it's name every year?

### Q. What is a duvet cover?

- A. This is a cover that goes completely over your duvet. Most are washable. Always use one to protect your duvet.

### Q. What is "Loft"?

- A. It's the number of cubic inches one ounce of down will fill. 600 is good. 800 is exceptional.

### Q. What is eiderdown?

- A. Eiderdown is the very best of all down. It is hand collected from eider duck nests without disturbing the birds, which are a protected species. Please see our Eiderdown brochure.

### Q. How do I clean my duvet?

- A. Only clean your duvet if it is soiled. Depending on the marks, a reputable professional cleaner may wash or dry clean your duvet. Don't try it at home.