

CHARLOTTE URBAN

# HOME

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CELEBRATING INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN AND PERSONAL STYLE

LIFESTYLES



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THE LOWDOWN ON  
**DOWN**

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By Brandy Snow

The average person spends one-third of their life sleeping. Why spend that time in anything else but the most comfortable and luxurious of settings?

If you ask Tanda Jarest at Opulence of Southern Pines, she'll tell you that nothing quite says indulgence like snuggling underneath a down comforter in a freshly made bed or laying your head upon a fluffy down pillow in anticipation of a tranquil sleep. However, while high-quality down is considered a measuring stick by which luxury bedding is rated, there are also a few misconceptions about selecting the perfect down products to complete your bedding ensemble. Will a down comforter be too hot or heavy for peaceful sleep? Can I avoid the discomfort of feather quills? Can the care of my down bedding be tedious and problematic? Will I be able to sleep without sneezing?

Many of these common questions by consumers are due to a lack of information, and the best way to make a long-term decision about your bedding is to enter the selection process fully armed with correct information. All down products are not created equal!

Jarest says that while "fill power" and "weight" are key terms to look for in selecting the perfect duvet, many customers are perplexed by determining what best suits their needs. "Down quality is rated by fill power, which is the space one ounce of down occupies. Larger down clusters equal higher quality down. Weights are available in three choices, Southern, Classic and Arctic, and I recommend the Southern weight for our climate because it's suitable year-round."

She also advises customers to pay close attention to labels and percentages of down clusters in each product. "Down comes from underneath the bird's feathers, and does not have quills. The law requires that anything dubbed as 'down' must be composed of at least 75-percent down cluster, and this must be reflected on the label. If goose down is not specified, there is a good probability that the down is duck. A high-quality down duvet with a thread count above 230 should not have problems with prickly quills."

Contrary to common belief, allergic reactions are not caused by down but by down that has not been cleaned properly. Jarest says Hypodown blends 80-percent goose down with 20-percent Syriaca clusters to create a hypoallergenic product. "Always select your down from a reputable source that is knowledgeable about the composition and the quality of the product itself."

As for proper care and cleaning, Jarest says though the longevity of your down duvet depends on as little cleaning as possible, it is necessary to do a thorough cleaning annually to eliminate skin and oils. Depending upon the product, many duvets must be dry-cleaned while some can be washed at home with a specifically formulated cleaner. ♦

For more information on selecting the perfect down for your bedroom sanctuary, contact Tanda Jarest, Owner of Opulence at Southern Pines at The Mews, 280 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines. Call 910-692-2744 or visit [www.opulenceofsouthernpines.com](http://www.opulenceofsouthernpines.com).



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