

# WHAT I MISS... A WELL MADE BED

DUVET, SCHMUVET! WE'RE  
LOVING THE FABRIC  
MILLEFEUILLE THAT IS CRISP  
COTTON SHEETS, COSY  
BLANKETS AND BEDSPREADS

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**T**hese days, the only time I get to enjoy the pleasure of a 'properly' made bed – all cool, crisp cotton sheets – is in a hotel. In our homes, most of us have long since given up on sheets and blankets in favour of their rather more laidback, liberated – and liberating – continental cousin, the quilt, or duvet if you prefer.

Five seconds is all you need to make your bed when all that's involved is chucking a quilt over it. Even the most undomesticated can make a bed without a second thought. But for me, the continental quilt has always carried an air of disappointment: when you turn over in bed, you catch a draught, or the annoyingly contented sleeper next to you turns over taking your share with them. It's all just a bit too casually reckless for me.

Summer fairs no better, as nightly battles to keep cool ensue. I get too warm so I kick off my quilt, then I get

*“After a long SUMMER'S DAY outdoors, climbing into the COOLNESS of fresh cotton sheets was ALWAYS sheer BLISS”*

too cold so I pull it back up again. This never used to happen in the days before the duvet.

Compared with the continental quilt's crude on/off, hot/cold control, sheets and blankets offer a far more flexible thermostat with combinations of layers to suit all temperatures. Setting 1 – 'cool': sheet. Setting 2 – 'a bit warmer': sheet and blanket. Settings 3 upwards would involve a bedspread.

Getting into a properly made bed is equivalent to getting into a time machine. Instantly, I am back at my grandparents' house in South Yorkshire with the smell of coal fire in my nostrils and crumbs from a night-time Breakaway biscuit tickling my neck.

My grandma was the master of the sheets and blankets combo. The covers on a bed made by Grandma were always so well secured under the mattress that I didn't have a hope of trying to pull them up to cover even my shoulders, so I

would have to shuffle downwards, pulling the pillow down with me. Being tucked in at night involved military levels of precision – hemmed in neatly by hospital corners as you might tuck a sweet into your pocket for later. Once in, there was no escape without a lot of prising and wriggling.

Even on a sultry summer's night, the sides of the perfectly ironed, crisp cotton sheet would be tucked in tightly with only the end folded back creating an opening just wide enough to slide into. A lightly quilted cotton bedspread would be carefully folded at the bottom of the bed ready to be pulled up over the sheet in the chillier hours just before dawn. Mind you, the chances of being able to release enough of the sheet tucking to reach the bedspread were pretty slim. But, coming home overheated, sticky and grubby from a long summer's day of playing outdoors and climbing into the coolness of fresh, crisp cotton sheets was always sheer bliss.

With summer upon us again, I have decided that it's time to dump my duvet and reclaim the sheet – at least until the weather turns cooler. Why wait for a stay in a hotel to sleep

There's a neat cosiness to traditional tucked-in beds, made with high thread-count sheets and layers for warmth

in a properly made bed when with a few extra minutes in the morning, I can make my very own at home. One thing I will always miss, though, is being tucked in at night. **S**

