

**Press Release
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Struve bedding store in Lübeck relies on laundry technology from Miele

How duvets and pillows are thoroughly cleaned – and last a lifetime

Gütersloh/Lübeck, March 5, 2018. – It is a known fact that we spend a third of our time snuggling under blankets and duvets. The inlet of a duvet containing down, feathers or synthetic fibres is generally only washed once a year – as it is a complicated, time-consuming process and a science in its own right. And that is precisely the reason why the Struve specialist bedding store in the northern German town of Lübeck not only offers its customers pillows and duvets in outstanding quality but also runs a service to gently and hygienically clean these delicate products. The technology comes from Miele.

Leif and Ole Ginap took over the tradition-steeped specialist store which has customers from as far afield as Kiel and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania from their father in 2006. Ten years later, the two brothers decided to send their 'old Miele' purchased in 2003 into well-earned retirement. The old machine had clocked up some 60,000 hours of operation – around twice what would be expected of a commercial machine. For Leif Ginap, this was reason enough to remain loyal to the brand. As one of the first users, he was able to test a model from the new 'Benchmark' generation which has only been on the market since March 2017. 'With a load capacity of 14 kg, this machine is just the right size for us', says Ginap. It is far more versatile than a domestic machine and is considerably quieter than its predecessor.

'Domestic appliances are simply too small to cope with duvets, down-filled sleeping bags or mattress toppers', says Struve employee Ulrike Schramm, who loads the new washing machine once or twice a day. Even an ultra-light inlet can become extremely heavy when soaked in water. So even the drum on the 14 kg machine can only accommodate one or two duvets, depending on their size.

Special process technology prevents the filling from clumping

Problems are further exacerbated by the fact that duvets and pillows contain a considerable amount of body fats through prolonged use and skin contact. This prevents items from absorbing water. 'That's why an extended pre-rinse cycle is needed which wouldn't have the

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same effect in the drum of a much smaller domestic appliance', the bedding expert Schramm continues. When washing down and feathers, she always goes for a 60°C programme which was specially compiled by Miele for reprocessing duvets. Automatic liquid dispensing ensures the correct quantity of detergent.

Even after washing, Ulrike Schramm takes consideration of the inlet's characteristic properties. 'To stop the filling from clumping together, the duvets are transferred to the dryer for just one cycle. After that they are hung on a rack for one to two hours'. At peak times of the year such as the start of the summer or winter seasons, the cellar laundry is full. At times like these, the racks are reminiscent of trestle tables covered with long, white tablecloths. After that, the duvets return to the dryer with a matching capacity to the washing machine for a second or even a third time – always for 20 minutes in each case. The results are checked by hand as only a properly dried duvet has that feel-good quality.

Handcraftsmanship for high-quality natural products

Down-filled duvets require special care and attention. Down is also more expensive than feathers or synthetic fillings. 'Here, have a look', says Leif Ginap to a customer, opening the palm of his hand. In it is hidden a tiny wad of down which fluffs up to the size of a child's football within a fraction of a second. 'This is eiderdown from a type of duck which only lives in Iceland and Greenland'. These soft, fluffy feathers protect the main contour feathers against moisture and, once wet, only release water slowly.

Ginap has clear memories of his father once having a feather cleaning machine for such natural products. 'During my childhood it was usual to open every inlet to remove the feathers, and a good down duvet could easily cost a month's wages'. Thanks to modern technology, it is no longer necessary to go to such lengths, although washing duvets and pillows is still a challenge, including the manual work it involves. The inlets are filled as required with down and feathers. Leif Ginap: 'With the right care, a good duvet can last a lifetime'.

(716 words, 4,231 characters incl. spaces)

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Company profile: Miele is the world's leading manufacturer of premium domestic appliances including cooking, baking and steam-cooking appliances, refrigeration products, coffee makers, dishwashers and laundry and floor care products. This line-up is augmented by dishwashers, washer-extractors and tumble dryers for commercial use as well as washer-disinfectors and sterilisers for use in medical and laboratory applications (Business Unit Professional). The Miele company, founded in 1899, has eight production plants in Germany as well as one plant each in Austria, the Czech Republic, China and Romania. 2016/17 turnover amounted to approx. EUR 3.93 bn with sales outside Germany accounting for 70%. Miele is represented with its own sales subsidiaries and via importers in almost 100 countries. The Miele company, now in the fourth generation of family ownership, employs a workforce of around 19,500, 10,900 thereof in Germany. The company headquarters are located in Gütersloh/Westphalia, Germany.

There are eight photographs with this text

Photo 1: Everything clean: Ulrike Schramm, employee of Struve Bedding in Lübeck, removes duvets from the Miele washing machine. Next to her, quilted blankets are draped over racks to dry. They will later be transferred to the tumble dryer. (Photo: Miele)

Photo 2: Leif Ginap, proprietor of the Struve bedding store, and his employee Ulrike Schramm are a well-rehearsed team. (Photo: Miele)

Photo 3: As big as a child's football: a tiny wad of feather-light down used to fill high-quality duvets. Leif Ginap explains the key to good care to a customer. (Photo: Miele)

Photo 4: Quality determines the price – not least when it comes to down: The smallest feathers are considerably more expensive than the larger ones, but insulate particularly well. (Photo: Miele)

Photo 5: Like a huge bedroom: The sales premises at the Struve bedding store in Lübeck. (Photo: Miele)

Photo 6: An old wooden staircase links the three floors of the store. (Photo: Miele)

Photo 7: Bed feathers and down in a variety of sizes and blends: This is what the feather cleaner looked like up to 2003. (Photo: Betten Struve)

Photo 8: The Struwe bedding store, opened in 1906, is located right in the heart of Lübeck's historic town centre. (Photo: Resulted Design und Marketing)

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