



DOWNPASS STARS

Bettenhaus Thönig: Flaum & Feder
With heart and soul and craftsmanship



Flaum
& Feder

At Bettenhaus Thönig in St. Gallen, everything revolves around dreamy sleep. Sleep advice, sleep service and even a sleep guarantee are offered by the team led by Markus Thönig, Christoph and Patrick Rütter, who are the second and, since 2023, third generation of the family to run the company. The cornerstone of the traditional company was laid in 1978 with a bed feather cleaning service. Animal welfare, consideration for natural resources and the highest quality are a matter of course for the company in eastern Switzerland, which as a down manufacturer is passionately dedicated to this long-lasting and sustainable natural product.



Downpass interviewed Patrick Rütter, one of the managing directors of Thönig AG.

Flaum & Feder is the only DOWNPASS-certified down manufacturer in Switzerland. You have been manufacturing duvets and pillows for around 45 years and are now in the third generation. What fascinates you about down products, and why do you put so much heart and soul and craftsmanship into your production?

Down is an excellent natural product. There is hardly a better feeling for me than snuggling up in a fluffy down duvet - especially during the cooler winter months. The countless filaments of down ensure that this is probably the lightest filling material for duvets. This means that we can produce extremely light duvets which

nevertheless provide excellent insulation. But down is also very suitable for summer quilts thanks to its climate-regulating properties.

Another advantage is the longevity of high-quality down. We have many customers who have kept the same down duvet for more than 20 years. Thus, with the corresponding care, the investment pays off in the long term, both financially and in terms of sustainability.

In contrast to traditional bedding factories, we do a lot of manual work. We fill each chamber of a quilt by hand - to the exact gram. This laborious work ensures that our down duvets are filled more evenly and thus provide constant insulation. Manual production also means continuous quality assurance. With every product that leaves our factory, we can guarantee that only the best materials have been used. The heart and soul that we have put into our products for three generations can be seen in the careful processing and manufacture.



For the production of the cotton shells in which you fill the down and feathers, cotton certified according to the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) is processed. What makes your atelier exceptional and what challenges in terms of sustainability and climate do you pay particular attention to?

There is probably no perfect way to achieve more sustainability, because wherever products are produced and consumed, natural resources are used. Our approach to sustainability is based on both fairly sourced raw materials and highly durable products. As you mentioned, our fabrics, which are

produced in a traditional family business in Vorarlberg, Austria, are GOTS certified. We also source most of our down from Germany, which results in short transport routes and thus less emissions. Only our premium quality is currently sourced from the Canadian Labrador Province, as we have not yet been able to find down of this excellent quality in countries nearby. However, we are very keen to source this quality from DOWNPASS-certified farms closer to home in the future.

Flaum & Feder is one of the down manufacturers in Switzerland that sells its down duvets exclusively online. What is driving this idea and how would you like to expand the portfolio in the future?

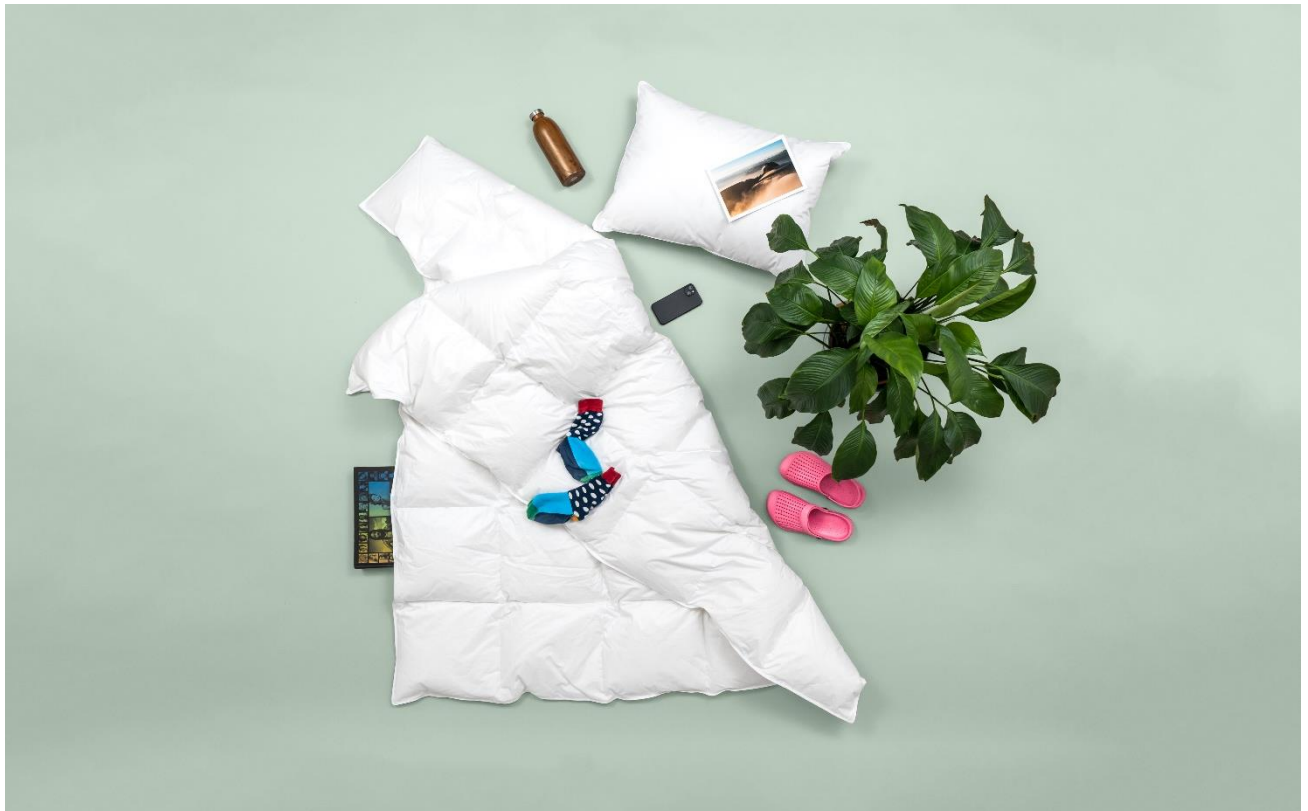


The decision to offer our products exclusively in our in-house online shop was taken about a year ago. We noticed that the inhibition threshold to buy even higher-priced products online is decreasing the longer - the more. As a small manufacturer, we reach a much larger target group online and can offer our elaborately produced products at a fair price. Since we don't rely on intermediaries, our clients are always in direct contact with us, and we can guide them through the information and buying process very well thanks to detailed informa-



tion and detailed product photos. And should any questions arise, our competent team is always happy to help by phone and e-mail.

We are already planning to offer bed feather cleaning and ecological wet cleaning online. In the future, you can conveniently send us your duvet and we will return it freshly washed and hygienically prepared within a few days.



Patrick Rütter
Marketing & IT
Thönig AG / Flaum & Feder

How important are independent certifications for your success and why do you rely on the DOWNPASS seal as a label for animal welfare & quality?

The fact that down and feathers from animal cruelty can still be used in some down duvets without trustworthy labels is, in my view, not a tenable state of affairs. The debates about animal welfare that have been increasingly initiated in recent years - also thanks to the efforts of animal welfare organisations - have led a large part of the population to take a detailed look at this issue. Renowned labels such as DOWNPASS are ideally suited to provide consumers with credible proof of the origin of down and feathers.

For many years, we have been exclusively sourcing down and feathers that are certified with the DOWNPASS. In order to demonstrate this added value even more clearly to our customers, we decided last year to get our production certified as well. Since this year, we have been proud to label our products with the DOWNPASS label. For us as a small



company, the associated audits and inspections are very time-consuming and costly, but in terms of transparency and traceability, this is a matter of course for us..

Source: Downpass e.V.