

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

From bed to bath, Vegas hotels sell the dream

By Aleza Freeman
Vegas.com

From high-end to outlet stores, Las Vegas is a shopper's paradise. Just about everything is for sale here — everything but the kitchen sink.

Or is it?

Well, maybe not the kitchen sink, but at least one guest at Wynn Las Vegas has gone home with the bathtub.

"People love what they see here at Wynn and they want it," said Frank Schipano, buyer for Wynn LVNV and Homestore at Encore. "We've had people that wanted the bathtub ... the wallpaper and rugs. Some of these are obscure things I can't possibly get because they're industrial and they're made for hotels, not for retail. But if I can get it for them, I will."

W Hotels Worldwide pioneered the initiative to help tourists take their vacation home by offering its signature bedding and bath amenities as retail items, said Schipano. Now more and more Las Vegas hotels are jumping on the bandwagon.

While most hotels don't offer as comprehensive or exclusive a catalog as the Wynn Resorts, several hotels have put price tags on items including bedding, bath products and more.

"It's a great take-home," said Schipano. "It's better than buying a shot glass or a T-shirt or a mug."

With a price point of \$25 to \$25,000, Wynn and Encore tries to accommodate any request that will help guests relive their hotel experience. Along with unique items selected from around the world by Schipano, shoppers at



Photo courtesy Wynn Resorts

Wynn LVNV, above, and Homestore at Encore sell an array of items to help guests re-create their resort experience, including the Wynn Dream Bed.

Wynn LVNV and Homestore can buy just about anything found in their suite, such as the custom-made Wynn Dream Bed, sheets, towels, duvet, comforter, slippers, scale, make-up mirror, robes, bath products and, in some cases, some of the actual decorations like lamps, end tables, sofas, cocktail tables and the alarm clock/music system.

A Wynn or Encore guest could essentially re-create their hotel room at home if they wanted to.

The Wynn Resorts' 100 percent organic cotton sheets are a popular buy among hotel guests. Made in Israel, the 370-thread count sheets even have a thumbs-up from Oprah. Not only did she buy them, but she endorsed them on her talk show.

"Sheiks come in, princesses and a lot of celebrities," said Schipano. "Sharon Osborne was here and she bought

one of our smaller mirrors for about \$5,000. She almost bought one of our blinged-out mirrors for \$15,000, but, she was kind of carrying on with the staff, and said 'I don't think Ozzy would let me put this in the bedroom.'"

At \$3,100, the Wynn Dream Bed is the most popular item, with more than 5,000 sold since Wynn's opening in 2005. Manufactured by Sealy, the bed has been tested from the top; Wynn Resorts Chairman and CEO Steve Wynn and his wife, Elaine Wynn, "spent about a year traveling around the world trying different mattresses to develop this one," said Schipano.

A vacation is one of the few times a consumer can actually sleep in a bed before buying it, pointed out Jennifer McCuskey, director of logo retail at Bellagio hotel. Bellagio sells thousands of products each year, including the

pillow-top Serta by Bellagio mattress, robes, pillows, towels, signature body products and bath accessories.

"Ever since Bellagio opened, guests have requested to purchase items they fell in love with during their stay," said McCuskey. "We receive the most compliments on our beds with remarks ranging from 'best night's sleep they've ever had' to 'most comfortable bed they've ever slept in.'"

Over the years, guests of Bellagio have inquired about many items, including the carpet, wallpaper and shower heads. They can learn about the amenities available for purchase from brochures placed in each room. Orders range from \$2 to \$2,500, and can be made by phone, online or in the retail shop, Tutto.

At Treasure Island, The TI Elite Sensational Pillow-Top Bed, made by

Sealy, is a popular item. The bed costs between \$1,400 and \$2,400 depending on the size. It is so popular, in fact, that Treasure Island receives inquiries from people as far away as Belgium, the UK and France.

Treasure Island began its retail program three years ago due to positive feedback from guests. The hotel places brochures and ads regarding the program in each of its rooms, and guests may contact the TI Gift Shop to purchase items.

"Guests can purchase a wide-range of merchandise including our signature TI Elite Sensational Pillow-Top Bed, pillows and bathroom amenities from shampoo and conditioner to lotion and shower gel," said Vice President of Hotel Operations Catherine Siefert. "Everything we sell is specially made for TI - you cannot get it anywhere else."

Other hotels offer beds for sale as well, including the slightly more affordable pillow-tops at Hooters, which range from \$699 to \$954.

At the Mirage, amenities can be purchased, including the blankets, pillows and spa products. Prices range from \$2 to \$1,895 per item.

Skylofts at MGM Grand offers a program called SKYLOFTS@Home, offering everything from signature pre-Columbian figurines to a polished nickel towel warmer. These purchases, ranging from \$100 to \$2,000, are only available to guests of Skylofts.

Typically, any items purchased at a hotel can be shipped straight to a vacationer's house.

"You may be thinking, 'You're on vacation, you're at a resort, why would you want to buy anything for your house?'" said Schipano. "But they do. And they do it in droves."

Sure there is no place like home. But it's hard to deny it would be nice to wake up on vacation every day.