

CUSTOMIZED

to fit you, naturally

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS THWAITES

Your body is unique. Shouldn't your mattress be, as well?

Imagine walking into an optometrist and buying a pair of glasses off the shelf without ever getting a prescription, or purchasing a suit from a tailor who didn't take your measurements or bother to ask your size. Customization is commonplace in many retail sectors, and for good reason. No two people are exactly the same – even twins have differences between them.

"We live in a world where you can just about customize anything," says Chris Whatley, owner of Unique Sleep Solutions in Barrie. "And yet traditional mattresses, where we spend one third of our life, are, for the most part, generic."

Mattress shopping can be particularly frustrating, especially for couples. Chris

stands six feet tall, while Irene is just over five feet in height and weighs 60 lbs less: like many couples, they struggled to find a mattress that was supportive and comfortable enough for both of them.

"Before we found our new mattress, I was suffering from back problems," says Chris. He connected with a chiropractor that helped with his overall posture and flexibility. However, Chris wanted to find the root cause of his pain, not just treat the symptoms.

"It wasn't long until we realized the culprit was our mattress," says Chris.

"Choosing a mattress often comes with compromise," says Irene. "One partner may enjoy

a softer mattress, while the other one needs a firmer one. Traditional mattresses are often built to feel the same across the entire sleep surface and rarely satisfy the comfort needs of both sleepers."

The result: mattress exchanges and returns, or enduring a poorly suited sleeping surface over the course of the life of the mattress.

This was one of the many reasons Chris and his wife, Irene, decided to design, manufacture and retail custom natural latex mattresses.

Customized comfort for life
Chris and Irene now work side by side in their showroom and manufacturing facility, on King Street in Barrie. Each mattress they make, whether shared or used alone, is custom designed and constructed. Multiple layers of latex, varying in firmness, are selected and stacked with the top layer cut into interchangeable custom-fit zones. Each side is uniquely crafted to suit the individual needs of each sleeper. Firmer latex is often placed under the lower back, or lumbar area, to provide support while softer latex placed under the shoulder and hip zones help relieve pressure points.

As we age, our lifestyles and bodies change and often our sleep comfort and support

requirements change, as well. Health issues, weight changes, pregnancy or many other reasons could affect the feel of your mattress. Traditional mattresses usually need to be replaced to meet these new needs.

"No one should ever feel stuck with their mattress," says Irene. "Any layer or zone, on either side of our mattresses, can be switched around or exchanged to accommodate the sleeper's changing comfort and support needs. The latex in each mattress is encased in a removable quilted zip-cover. If changes are ever required simply open up the mattress and adjust it, whether after the first night or years down the road."

Natural and safe

In a chemical-filled world, many families are looking for safe and natural alternatives for their homes.

"That's why we went with one hundred per-cent natural Talalay latex," says Irene. "Latex, which comes from the rubber tree, is a milky liquid and often makes people think of medical gloves and bandages. The natural latex we use is converted into a foam-like material and has been used in mattresses for over 60 years, gaining a reputation for outlasting traditional mattresses. It is inherently resistant to mold, mildew and

dust mites, and breathes seven times better than other foams, making for a cooler more comfortable sleep.

"Talalay latex, which undergoes a five stage washing process is also exposed to extremely high heat to eliminate all allergen-causing proteins," says Chris.

Each mattress zip-cover is made from organic cotton and wool. The wool is a natural flame retardant, is thermal regulating, absorbent, and resilient. Organic cotton is grown without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, or genetic engineering. People with allergies and chemical sensitivities especially benefit from organic cotton bedding components.

"We only use natural components," says Irene.

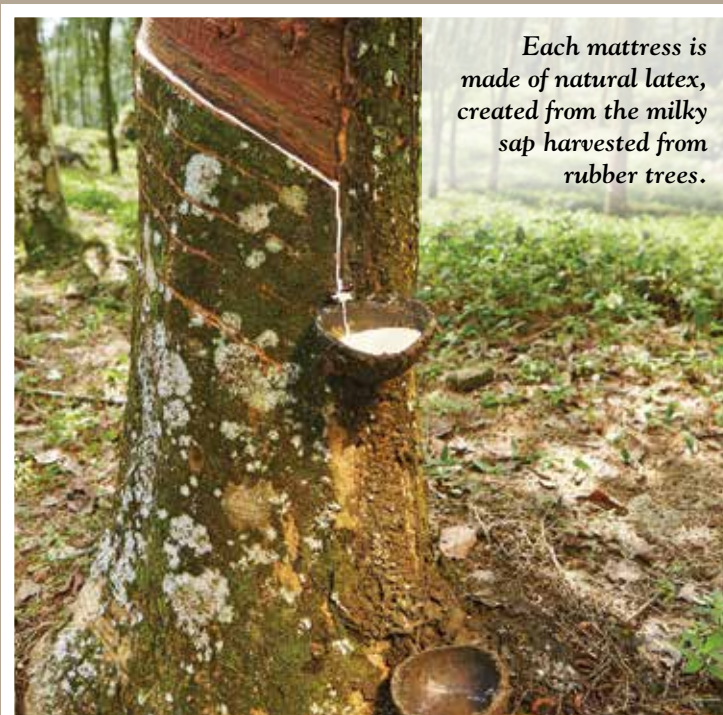
You are unique.

Unique Sleep's motto can be found around their showroom.

"You are unique. So shall you sleep," says Chris. "This statement drives our everyday focus while we are assisting clients. It is so important for us to remember that everybody deserves a great night's sleep and we will do everything we can to assist our clients in getting it, no matter how unique their situation is." **DS**

BY SHELANNE JENNINGS

Irene & Chris Whatley,
Owners of Unique Sleep



Each mattress is made of natural latex, created from the milky sap harvested from rubber trees.



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