

BY BARBARA THORNBURG

The once recession-proof bedding industry has been forced to reevaluate itself. The International Sleep Products Assn., which measures sales of leading manufacturers, said 2008 was “the worst year in the modern history of the mattress industry.” So far, 2009 hasn’t been better. First-quarter sales were down 17% compared with the year before, and mattress companies are counting on creativity and innovation to save them.

In an attempt to boost business, manufacturers have introduced a slew of unusual offerings: a temperature-regulating and anti-sweat bed, updates to the old futon and even a Tonino Lamborghini bed.

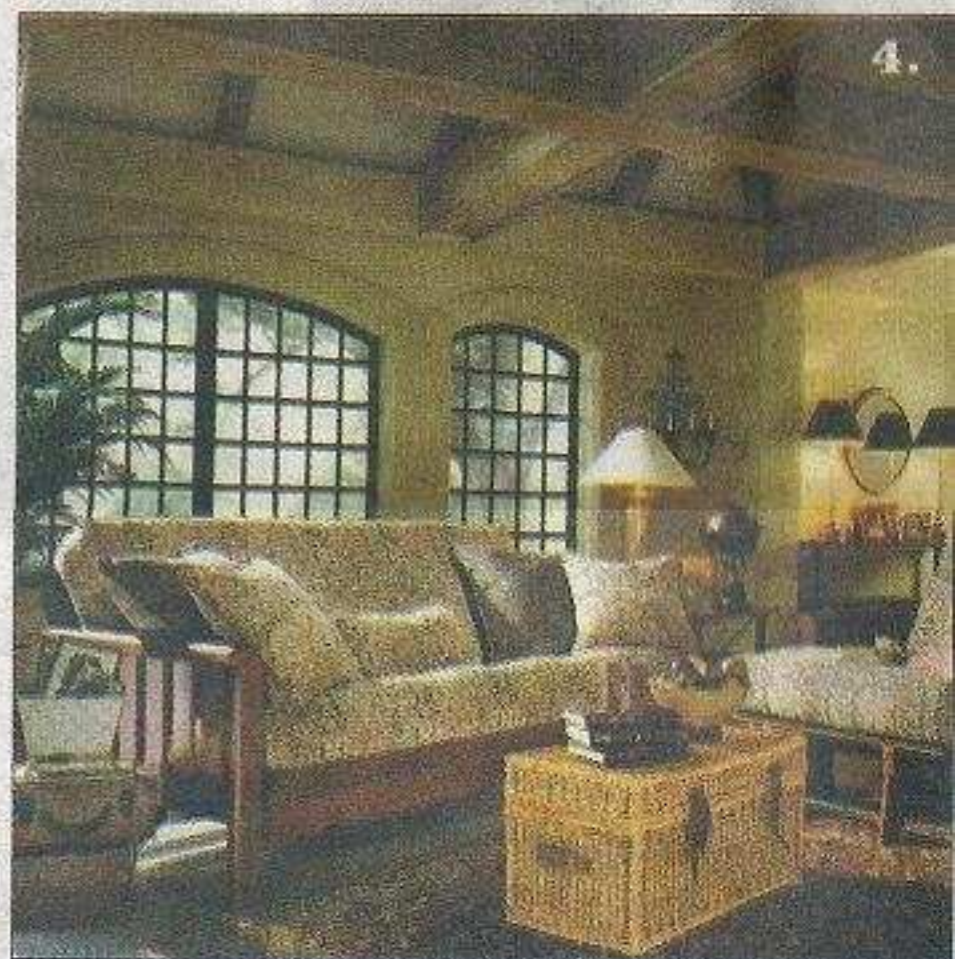
1. First, there’s the aromatherapy Lavender Comfort mattress by Magniflex (queen size is \$1,899), which promises to release a calming scent while you sleep. Who knew the bland old mattress had so many possibilities?

2. This design by Magniflex is directed at the guy who likes his automobiles and his beds fast. You get the Tonino Lamborghini logo, the color and the name — if not the car (queen, \$1,999).

3. A real hottie in bed? This 3-D bed by Hollandia International regulates temperature and reduces sweat, the manufacturer says. The fabric’s raised fibers allow air to circulate better, keeping you cooler — or so the pitch goes. Made of recycled wool, it’s also touted as eco-friendly. Better yet, the cover is machine washable (queen, \$2,000).

4. The futon has returned in many forms. The version pictured here is promoted as lighter, plusher and more durable. Gold Bond Mattress’ FeatherTouch queen-size futon weighs 45 pounds, as opposed to the 90 to 100 pounds of former incarnations (queen, \$299).

Science of sleep



Photographs by STEINREICH COMMUNICATIONS