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# Black-Owned Bedding Brands That Will Elevate Your Sleep Space

From department store shelves to global online retailers, these companies are diversifying the bedding industry in more ways than one

By Tanya A. Christian

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Clockwise, from top left: Clean Design Home's Robin Wilson; Clean Design Home x Martex Allergen Cotton Sheets; AphroChic's Bryan Mason and Jeanine Hays; AphroChic's Jumping the Broom sheet set; Pampered by Porsha's Porsha Williams Guobadia; Pampered by Porsha sheets.

Photos: Courtesy of subjects

**My family has a thing with bedding. “I may have grown**

up in a shack,” my Caribbean father often says, “but no matter what, we always had fresh linens for Christmas and Easter.” He scrutinizes sheets and comforters like he has a master’s degree in textiles. As a child, I vividly remember him and my mother looking for bargain buys on bedding during Macy’s One Day Sales.

What they knew then and I know now, is that good bedding helps to lay the foundation for a restful slumber. It also plays a role in our growing awareness of the importance of self-care and sleep and why the bedding industry continues to expand, despite being a long-established market. As a 2022 Grand View Research trend analysis report puts it: “The critical link between good sleep and a healthy mind and body has increased the need for high-quality bedding.” The report also predicts that the global home bedding market will see a compound annual growth rate of nearly 8 percent between 2022 and 2030.

The rest revolution is here. And while big brands broaden their offerings to capitalize on our evolving appreciation for rest, I’ve noticed few Black-owned brands have emerged in this space since my family’s shopping trips more than 20 years ago. Though African Americans made possible the success of a now multibillion-dollar bedding industry through more than a century of toiling in cotton fields, few have landed on department store shelves alongside the brands I’ve known since childhood.

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The paradox is not lost on Robin Wilson, the founder of Clean Design Home, and one of just a

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few Black bedding entrepreneurs who have successfully made it into stores. “My paternal grandfather was a sharecropper who picked cotton in Texas,” Wilson says. “I am three generations later selling luxury cotton items in department stores where my grandfather wouldn’t have been able to walk in the front door.”

Wilson is a rarity, but more retailers are hoping to change that. Last year Macy’s announced it would invest \$30 million over the next five years to support financing needs for underrepresented groups. This comes on the heels of the retailer—and nearly 30 others, including Nordstrom, Bloomingdale’s, Crate & Barrel, and West Elm, taking the Fifteen Percent Pledge, an initiative that calls on major retailers and corporations to commit a minimum of 15 percent of their annual purchasing power and shelf space to Black-owned businesses.

Still, Black entrepreneurs face challenges even before they reach retailers. As a 2021 McKinsey study notes, small businesses have two primary types of capital needs. The first, working capital, supports the organization’s expenses from production to sales to payment. The second, innovation and growth capital, is cash to invest in new products, strategic organizational roles, and exponential growth.

But many Black entrepreneurs run into systemic barriers to capital (PDF). And so, while African American women, in particular, make up the fastest-

growing demographic of entrepreneurs, many of them are self-funded. That can be said for Black-owned businesses as a whole, as the lack of sufficient capital makes the kind of rapid growth needed to command a significant market share (or keep up with the demand of being in stores nationwide) extremely difficult—even when the business is profitable.

So what does it take to break through, particularly in the world of bedding? Whether it's landing in a department store or a global online retailer, we talked to three Black owners of successful bedding brands to find out—all of them are disrupting the sleep space on their own terms while gaining loyal followers in the process.

## Clean Design Home

Creating an allergen-free oasis has been Robin Wilson's mission for more than 20 years. As the founder of what was once known as Robin Wilson Home, the interior designer and lifestyle expert has established herself as an authority on hypoallergenic and eco-friendly design.

"I suffered from asthma and allergies as a child growing up in Austin, Texas," says Wilson, who was moved by the turbulence of 2020 to refocus her design business on wellness. "So when my mentor told me to carve out a niche that mattered to me, I chose to focus on clean design." She says she even implements "clean-design protocols" for her work sites. Her book, "Clean Design: Wellness for Your Lifestyle" (Greenleaf Book Group Press), was published in 2015.

An ambassador to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America since 2010, Wilson's products serve not only those who desire a clean design aesthetic but also a real medical need that she and many African Americans understand firsthand. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, non-Hispanic Blacks were 30 percent more likely to have asthma in 2019 than non-Hispanic whites; and in 2020, they were almost three times more likely to die from asthma-related causes.

Potential sources of allergens that can lead to asthma include feathers, synthetic materials, and dyes, as well as dust mites, dander, and mold. Clean Design Home bedding is made from 100 percent Supima cotton, produced in the U.S. and then specially woven to keep mold and dust at bay.

Zeroing in on a wellness area that she's passionate about helped her break through the crowded category.

Wilson's commitment to hypoallergenic environments has landed her in hotel chains, and on department store shelves like Macy's, where she sells sheets, comforters, and other anti-allergen bedding.



Clean Design Home owner Robin Wilson and the Clean Design Home x Martex anti-allergen cotton sheets

Photos: Clean Design Home

**“60 million Americans suffer from asthma allergies, [including] one in three people of color. Clean Design Home wants to be the brand that provides them some relief.”**



ROBIN WILSON  
[@cleandesignhome](https://www.instagram.com/cleandesignhome)

## AphroChic

Interior designers Bryan Mason and Jeanine Hays launched AphroChic in 2007, and eventually added a line of bedding after recognizing there was a gap in the

market for linens that would allow people to truly represent themselves within their homes. “Whether it’s a great pillow or a lovely duvet, everything that we do at AphroChic is about the intersection of interior design and culture,” says Hays.

That specific design sensibility, while celebrated today, once presented a challenge for the couple. When they approached corporations for licensing deals, they were often told that their bedding wouldn’t work in a mainstream context. “We tried for years,” says Hays, “and found that there wasn’t really a space for us.” But they remained persistent, eventually landing a partnership with Perigold, and subsequently [Wayfair](#).

AphroChic’s very distinct cultural lens of the African diaspora encompasses the essence of not only African Americans but also cultures of the Caribbean, the African continent, South America, Europe, and the Middle East. “It’s really a very global perspective on its own, and yet, it’s not one that we see presented very often,” Mason tells CR.

Partners in business and marriage, the entrepreneurs say their bedding connects cultural elements to modern design—evident in a collection that Mason describes as “not specifically batik, but our take on it.”

The design firm’s Jumping the Broom collection, named after the African American wedding tradition, features colorful geometric broomsticks merging into a diamond-like pattern (shown below). They also play with watercolor, as seen in their “Hustle” print that draws inspiration from their home of New York City and their

“Sisters Floral” that shows the profiles of Black women in head wraps. One of their most popular patterns includes repeated silhouettes of Black women with afros.

The duo, who released the book "[AphroChic: Celebrating the Legacy of the Black Family Home](#)" (Clarkson Potter, 2022) last November, says that their designs are inspired by people and being able to give others the ability to tell their stories and represent their cultures in a way that is meaningful and more comfortable to them. “Our bedding is physically comfortable and helps people feel good,” says Hays. AphroChic sheets are a sateen weave, with a silky and smooth texture that feels different from traditional cotton.



AphroChic owners Bryan Mason and Jeanine Hays and the company's Jumping the Broom sheet set

Photos: AphroChic

**“People can be very limited in their ideas of**

**what Black settings should look like. They're often married to this idea of a safari. So we've been intentional in saying through our designs that there is more diversity. That is important to us and central to who we are as a brand."**

BRYAN MASON AND JEANINE HAYS

[@aphrochic](#)

## Pampered by Porsha

Porsha Williams entered the bedding and linen space in 2018 knowing just how important a good night's rest is. "No matter what you do throughout the day, I wanted to create a sheet set that would make getting into bed the best feeling in the world," says Williams.

When the entrepreneur and media personality started contemplating the idea of starting her own brand and then doing the research to accompany her pursuits, she noticed that the bedding space was filled with soft, luxurious-feeling sheets with extremely large price tags. She, instead, wanted to offer a luxury product that everyone can afford. It took Williams a while to find the

right manufacturer, but once she did, she chose to sell directly to consumers on her own retail platform, PamperedbyPorsha.com, and on [Amazon](#).

While cotton is the most common fiber used in bedding, Williams' sheets are a double-brushed microfiber. This material is breathable, much like cotton, but costs much less due to its synthetic nature. It also means it is softer to the touch at a fraction of the cost. Pampered by Porsha's minimalist monochrome sheets start at \$59 for a queen-size set, compared with \$100 or more for brands that also consider themselves "affordable luxury." That luxurious feel with a truly more-affordable price tag is what Williams believes makes Pampered by Porsha one of the most unique sets out there.



Pampered by Porsha owner Porsha Williams Guobadia and the Pampered by Porsha sheets in white

Photos: Pampered by Porsha

**“Being a Black-owned  
business in a  
predominantly white**

**industry comes with its challenges. But I went in determined to find the right manufacturer that understood my vision, and now I'm able to offer the quality product that I was hoping for at a price that most people can afford.”**

PORSHA WILLIAMS

[@pamperedbyporsha](https://www.instagram.com/pamperedbyporsha)