



DUMBELLS COURTESY FOREMOST FITNESS, TORONTO

THE HEAVY WEIGHTS

How is a new style of luxe enhancing women's beauty rituals?

TEXT: ALISON GARWOOD-JONES PHOTO: NORBERT MAYER

The vanity table has staged a comeback. No longer just a foible of fashionable society, more women are looking for luxury items to fondle and display in their boudoir. In past eras it was lightweight powder-puffs, tortoiseshell combs and precious bibelots. Today it's a treasure trove of prodigious perfume decanters and moisturizers packaged in daunting yet elegant glass containers, as well as powder boxes designed to mimic the look and feel of polished ebony.

"The mantra today is all about quality," says Marc Rosen, a New York-based cosmetic packaging designer and president of Marc Rosen Associates. "The consumer subliminally responds to weight and they think, 'This feels great, it must mean it's quality.' It all goes back to buying a glass vase at Tiffany; perfume bottles are supposed to be works of art."

David MacDonald, vice-president of Environics Research Group, agrees. "There has been an evolution away from utilitarianism and a move toward objects that are fun to look at

and show off." Canadians, he says, may feel more secure in their jobs, but they are less secure about the state of the world, all of which translates into a willingness to spend more money on singular objects.

Looking back, Rosen credits Michael Kors' fragrance Michael, which debuted in 2000, with starting the trend. "It was the heaviest glass

about being good to yourself and feeling good about the world."

What really tells the tale, says Rosen, is the fact that mass-market fragrances are now spending big dollars on heavy glass *flacons*.

According to syndicated home decoration columnist Cheryl Gillespie, housing these special collections has led to a boom in master

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bottle I had ever seen at the time. It has a V-shaped wedge of glass at the bottom of the bottle, which, back then, was really hard to achieve."

The heavyweight trend only intensified after the World Trade Center bombings in 2001. "Right after 9/11, people shunned anything frivolous," says Rosen. "They wanted less things in their life, but what they did have had to be beautiful and of quality. It was all about something aspirational,

bedroom renovations as beauty loot is cleared from bathroom counters to a spot in the bedroom. "People want to include space for luxuries like a vanity table, whirlpool, even fish tanks in their bedrooms," says Gillespie. It's all about emphasizing our private spaces and creating luxurious, self-indulgent rooms. And why not? As Gillespie so wisely reminds us, "Don't even think about feeling guilty—you deserve it!" □

Clockwise, from top left: Prada Intense Edition Eau de Parfum Spray (\$158 for 50 mL); Lancôme Absolu Body Absolute Replenishing Body Cream (\$127); Boucheron Trouble Eau de Parfum (\$115 for 100 mL); Chanel No. 5 Intense Bath Oil, Collection Seduction (\$100 for 400 mL); Elixir des Glaciers Body Cream (\$520); Limited Edition Boss in Motion Silver Edition Eau de Toilette Spray by Hugo Boss (\$80 for 90 mL); Shiseido Bio-Performance Super Restoring Cream (\$140); Kiss Kiss Lipstick by Guerlain in Envie de Beige (\$31). For details, see Shopping Guide.