

Toiletries make a difference with travelers

By Bee-Shyuan Chang, New York Times

Since she's been hopscotching hotels across the country for the last six years, touring as the violinist for the Brooklyn-based band Ra Ra Riot, Rebecca Zeller has had ample opportunity to inspect in-room skin care amenities. "It definitely matters what's on the sink," said Zeller, 28. "It's always a little bit of a reward, especially after a long flight."

Zeller particularly enjoyed the full-size Cowshed products lining the showers at the Soho House's High Road House in London. And in remote Marfa, Tex., an insider brand made an impression. "They have a cool hotel there called Thunderbird that has Malin & Goetz products," she said. "We were bowled over."

But she was disappointed by one so-called boutique hotel owned by a national chain. "They had this generic shampoo and body wash all-in-one dispenser literally installed in the shower, like at a bad gym," Zeller said.

As Americans and Europeans head into prime travel season, the hospitality industry has been upgrading soaps, shampoos and conditioners, switching hotel-branded bottles for the kind of fancy names you might find in a department store or newfangled apothecary.

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