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2008 Gear Guide

269 Reviews + BONUS! GEAR LISTS FOR EVERY REGION



PACKS

The Ultimate Fix-It Guide

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TRAIL-TESTED BARGAINS

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SHOCKINGLY SMALL

years to come. Our testers used the Bora (the women's version is called the Briza) to schlep 50-pound loads on Teton ski tours, Sawtooth backpacks, and hardware-laden climbing approaches. "Great fit with a beefy hipbelt and nice shoulder harness wrap," said one tester. Everyone praised the clean design, tough 420-denier fabric, and wide-mouth top-loading access. The capacity is underrated; you can cram in two weeks of traditionalist gear and grub, and the suspension won't sag. There's no hydration sleeve or port, but the retractable bottle pockets make up for that. We just wish it was a tad lighter. And cheaper. \$350; 4,640 cu. in.; 6 lbs., 10 oz.

Top Ultralight

GoLite Quest

This top-loader is ideal for ultralighters who want a featherweight pack that can handle occasional big loads. It has the capacity for long treks between resupply, thanks to a floating lid, roomy packbag, and supportive backpanel. Even bulky items drop smoothly into the roomy main compartment, and a cavernous front pocket with waterproof zip can fit storm shells or avalanche shovels. The packbag compresses flat for big-day use, and minimalist fittings let you carry tech tools and toys. Caveat: Testers wished the padded hipbelt wings wrapped farther forward for more comfort; as is, it's easy to overload the Quest



GoLite Quest



JanSport Whittaker LR



Millet TrekLite 60+10

with more weight than it can comfortably carry (about 35 pounds). Best for narrow hips. \$175; 4,400 cu. in.; 3 lbs., 3 oz.



JanSport Whittaker LR

This mountain-oriented pack won an Editor's Choice (4/07) for its combination of stability, comfort, and a cavernous ultralight packbag. After another year of family outings in Colorado, winter climbs in the Sierra Nevada, and ski trips in Utah's Wasatch Range, all testers remain stoked. "It's got awesome load capacity, and it's totally stable on sketchy sidehills," said one after humping 60-pound loads on Whitney. "You can put most of the weight on your hips, yet the belt is streamlined enough that you can still high-step on the steeps." Lightweight compression straps run across the front and sides of the pack, so lashing on tools, skis, or snowshoes is hassle-free. Torso length and shoulder width adjust quickly with nylon pegs and slots, and there's no sway from the shoulder yoke. \$270; 4,400 cu. in.; 5 lbs.

Millet TrekLite 60+10

This high-tech top loader offers great trail comfort in a full-featured package with amazing bells and whistles. The hipbelt rotates directly off the stiff backpanel, the harness yoke slides up and down as a unit, and each shoulder strap pivots independently. The result? Said one tester, who pushed the pack