

Getaway Bags

OUR APPETITE for adventure is as varied as our taste in food. No one wants to eat mac and cheese every night or march down the same trail every Saturday. So gear makers have developed weekend packs versatile enough to handle a full menu of outings – long day hikes, mountain-bike rides, or overnight camping trips. If stuffed judiciously, the lightweight haulers here will hold a couple days' worth of provisions. Best of all, one of these do-it-all bags can save scratch (and closet space). – GINA DeMILLO WAGNER

HOW WE TESTED

Comfort: We loaded each pack with 20 pounds of gear and wore it for four hours straight.

Fit: Testers of all waistlines and torso lengths evaluated adjustability.

Durability: We bashed stuffed packs against rocks and brambles and soaked them with a garden hose.

Versatility: We took the packs hiking, biking, and boulder hopping.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Size: Torso length (not a person's overall height) determines sizing. Always test-drive a loaded pack before you buy.

Suspension system: Well-designed packs focus the load on the hips.

Volume: Weekend trippers should stick to models with capacities under 3,500 cubic inches – extra space encourages overpacking.

Pockets: Compartments for maps and snacks are useful, but too many pockets can be cumbersome and snag on branches.

OSPREY STRATOS 34

If you're a high-energy multitasker – hiking one day, pedaling single-track the next – the Stratos is for you. Built around a fiberglass-strut suspension system, this superlight pack hauls 30 pounds of gear with ease, and its egg shape helps distribute weight comfortably across the hips and shoulders. A mesh panel lifts the pack slightly away from your body to funnel breezes down your back, and honeycomb foam in the shoulder straps and hip belt offer additional ventilation. Belt pockets and elastic compartments on the front store a rain jacket, GPS unit, or guidebook.

WIRED Most versatile weekender tested. Ventilating back panel for cool summer adventures. Excellent water resistance. Featherlight (2 pounds, 10 ounces). Hydration port.

TIRED 2,100 cubic inches too small for longer trips. Redundant external pockets could be overkill for no-frills fastpackers.

\$139 www.ospreypacks.com



Arc'teryx AC2 Acrux 40 →

WIRED Waterproof zippers and a roll-top closure help this 2,320-cubic-inch pack withstand a deluge. Welded components contribute to svelte look, though it's still a touch heavy (3 pounds, 8 ounces). Contoured hip belt moves with your body. **TIRED** Shoulder straps too lightly padded for some testers. One of the priciest packs out there. No exterior side pockets.

\$329 www.arcteryx.com



← Gregory G Pack

WIRED Lightweight (2 pounds, 12 ounces) yet generously sized (2,700 cubic inches), the G is big on design and comfort. Clever side-strap setup stabilizes any load. Thermo-molded back panel feels custom-fit. Large mesh pockets. **TIRED** Thin nylon not as durable as others we tested. Water leaked through seams.

\$149 www.gregorypacks.com



↑ Macpac Weka 30

WIRED Cotton fibers in scuff-proof AzTec fabric expand when wet to block out moisture. Useful pocket configuration.

TIRED Heavy (over 3 pounds) for its petite 1,830 cubic inches, and even heavier when soaked. Style won't wash with fashion plates.

\$100 www.macpac.co.nz

