

**TREND REPORTS**

Expert news & views:  
from packs to paddles

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

10 tips to navigate  
digital marketing

**TOP SHOPS**

Could your favorite  
win our contest?

**RETAIL TOOLS**

Calculate markdowns  
for maximum profits

# SNEWS

▶ **OUTDOOR**

2009  
Readers'  
Choice

Your Top 25  
Gear Picks

Special  
Anniversary  
Issue

25  
Years

of industry

movers and shakers,  
forgettable events,  
and products we love



The future of design



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## Eco Update

Creating environmentally conscious initiatives is fast becoming a mantra embraced by manufacturers and consumers alike. Companies making a difference:

- “Reduce, repurpose, make a difference” advised Merle O'Brien, CEO of O'LovesM Bags ([www.olvesm.com](http://www.olvesm.com)), which turns yoga mat scraps into zero-waste bags and accessories. “Thus far, we've kept 3,000 mats out of landfills.”

- Yoga-gear maker Manduka ([www.manduka.com](http://www.manduka.com)) upcycles old donated mats into bolster-type products through the Recycle Your Mat ([www.recycle-yourmat.com](http://www.recycle-yourmat.com)) program. Goal: to collect 1 million mats this year.

- Patagonia ([www.patagonia.com](http://www.patagonia.com)) wants your old underwear for its Common Threads Recycling Program, having already collected and recycled 12,000 pounds since 2005. By 2010, its entire line will contain recyclable materials.

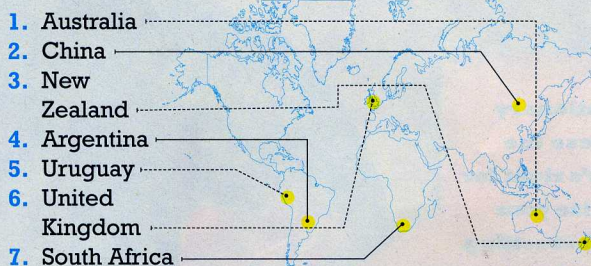
- Outdoor gear specialist Klattermüsen of Sweden ([www.klattermusen.se](http://www.klattermusen.se)) has labeled its products with a refund value—a deposit of EUR 1-20 (USD \$1.30-\$26) a consumer can earn upon trade-in of the used garments to apply to a new purchase. The company pays the retailer and collects the apparel to recycle, repair or donate. —*Hilary Lane*

## Shear Delight



Mankind has been spinning wool into yarn since about 4000 B.C., and wool of all types represents about 2.3 percent of the global textile market. Although the breeding and production processes have evolved, wool garments continue to be prized for their functionality, comfort and eco-friendliness. By the mid-1990s, new designs and refinements by manufacturers such as Icebreaker, SmartWool and Ibex came onto the scene, and their use of merino wool in particular, known for its luxurious feel and high-end performance characteristics, resonated with outdoor enthusiasts. Merino fiber can hold up to 30 percent of its weight in moisture without feeling damp. Today, about 250,000 tons of merino wool for apparel and accessories are produced globally each year. Typically, one sheep produces seven fleeces in its lifetime—enough for about 35 garments. —*Judy Leand*

### Top wool-producing countries in 2005-06



**Eco Impact**  
Producing merino fiber uses a third of the energy of producing polyester, and takes much less water to produce than cotton.

## For What it's Worth...

Have gear prices changed much?

### 1984

- Osprey Ariel Pack  
MSRP \$138
- Merrell Wilderness Boot  
MSRP \$135
- Sierra Designs Flashlight 2-person Tent  
MSRP \$179
- The North Face Cat's Meow Sleeping Bag  
MSRP \$112.50

### 2009

- Osprey Exos 46 Pack  
MSRP \$179
- Merrell Outbound Mid Light Gore-Tex Boot  
MSRP \$185
- Sierra Designs Clip Flashlight 2-person Tent  
MSRP \$199
- The North Face Cat's Meow Sleeping Bag  
MSRP \$169

**But wait: Gear is actually “cheaper” today**

**\$1 in 1984 has the same buying power as \$2.05 in 2009, considering the rate of inflation. Prices twice as high? Not hardly.**