



## TrailSpace.com

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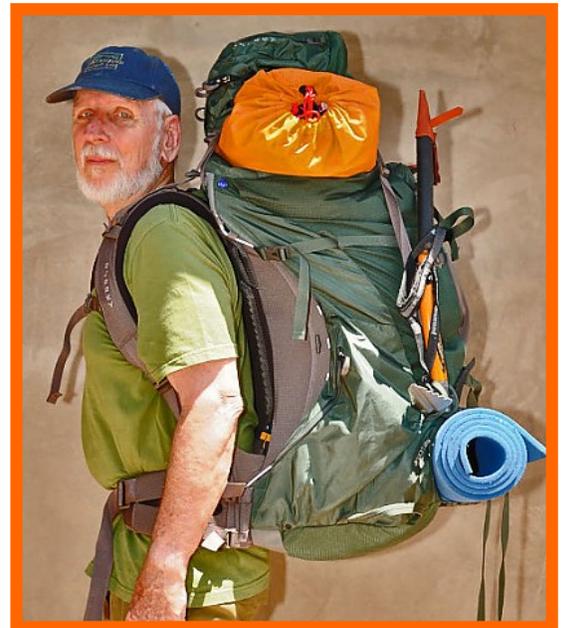
Featuring: Argon 85

Monthly Traffic: 137,407

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/4b872og>

Described by Osprey as "a favorite of weekend warriors to elite mountaineers," I tested a 2010 Argon 85 expedition pack. The 2010 model is the third generation version of this pack.

The Argon 85 (loaned by Osprey for the duration of the test) comes in three frame sizes: medium, large, and extra large, with the two larger frames having slightly bigger capacities. I tested a medium frame, which has a 5,100-cubic inch capacity. Hip belts are available in small, medium, large, and extra large. The Argon 85 is the middle size in the Argon pack series. The other Argon packs are the 70 and the 110 (the numbers indicating the nominal capacity in liters of a medium frame). The Xenon 70 and 85 are the comparable women's versions.



My testing included multi-day backcountry ski and snowshoe trips, shorter "dry-weather" trips, and a number of day hikes, all with large loads. A sled with a large load was hauled during one ski tour. As with the three Osprey packs Barbara (my wife and frequent backcountry companion) and I own, the Argon proved well made with an excellent fit and was very comfortable under load. The Argon's fit is due to its well-designed adjustability and, most important, the thermoformable hip belt, which allows you to custom heat mold the BioForm CM hip belt.

The Argon does very well for hauling big loads for long distances, with a few minor quibbles. With the three capacity ranges, three frame sizes for each capacity range, and readily adjustable waist and shoulder strap positioning, plus thermoformed belt, the Argon should prove very comfortable for most men needing an expedition-sized pack. I expect the women's version, the Xenon 85, which is anatomically designed for women, would also serve well for most women. Just be sure you match the capacity of the pack to what you will actually be carrying.

