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Featuring: Karve 16

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/6oc6w6u>

Many places like Jackson Hole, Silverton, and other ski areas allow skiing above the lifts and outside the boundaries, accessed by hiking or skinning beyond the regular runs or exiting the area boundaries through gates. Packs like those in the Osprey Karve series are designed to carry skis and boards and enough equipment to get you safely and comfortably into, and out of, wilder terrain. The Karve 16 liter pack volume is a good size for extended sidecountry trips with the possibility of skinning or bad weather.



I used the Karve over 12 days of sidecountry and inbounds skiing, skinning and hiking with it, and wearing it at work on patrol avalanche control routes. During the testing, the pack carried gear very well while skiing, staying close against my back without noticeable movement or interference with my pole plants. The biggest load I carried included my shovel, probe, snow saw, skins, three liter water reservoir, a light shell pullover, a light synthetic puffy pullover, gloves, headlamp, and a small bag of sundry items and avalanche pit tools (see picture). That all came to just under twelve and a half pounds, including the pack, and it was very comfortable. The real test came when I strapped my skis on for hiking. The Karve is rigged for diagonal ski carrying only which tends to place the skis farther from your center of mass than A-frame carrying, so I expected some sway or to feel unbalanced. But the pack was still very stable and kept the skis steady, and the ski tails stayed well clear of the backs of my legs when I was hiking. Setting up the carry system required a little bit of tricky attachment maneuvering, but once the skis were on there was very little movement.

Construction-wise the Karve is put together very well, and there weren't any problems with the materials, fittings, or the stitching. I didn't experience any soaking or leaking during storms. The Karve 16, the largest in Osprey's Karve line of ski and snowboard packs, is a stable and intelligently designed slackcountry and inbounds tool, with just enough volume for an extended sidecountry trip. The attention to quality and craftsmanship are clear, and the price is fair.