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Featuring: Karve Series

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The new Karve Series from Osprey includes three low profile packs built especially for side country adventures. For those of you looking to ride, the day packs can accommodate your skis, snowboard, and avalanche safety equipment, with insulated hydration and ample storage space for all other winter side country sports.

I took a Karve 11 side country backpack with me to Colorado for use when snow shoeing and multi-pitch ice climbing. The thermoformed back panel and EVA foam harness with adjustable sternum straps make the pack light and comfortable to wear all day. The sternum strap buckle integrates a whistle in case of emergency, while the minimalist hip belt can be neatly tucked behind your back if not required. Both upper and lower strap systems enable you to diagonally carry your skis or vertically carry your snowboard. The vertical snowboard straps are also super convenient for stowing your snow shoes when not in use. The Karve also enables you to carry snowboard horizontally between your back and the pack. The main pack compartment features a hydration pocket with fully insulated, zippered hose sleeves on either shoulder strap. Your avalanche probe and shovel handle can be stowed in the two side sleeves for quick access, with the blade in the main compartment or front pocket. The Karve features a vertical zippered front pocket with goggle pouch, also a good place to stash your skins. A small zippered front panel is lined with a non-scratching heat embossed fabric, just big enough for storing your electronics, wallet, keys, or other personal items.

For ice climbing, The Karve 11 makes a great multi-pitch pack with enough room for a belay jacket, thermos, headlamp, and some snacks. The top of the pack sits low enough on your back that you never bash into it with your helmet when looking up for your next tool placement. The shoulder straps do not get in the way of your swings either.

Bottom Line: With three different sizes (6L, 11L, 16L) to suit your adventure, the Osprey Karve series has just enough storage space and gear stowage options to help you have a great day in the side country, without adding any unnecessary weight or bulk. The Osprey Karve side country backpack series retails for \$80-\$100 and is available now.

