



# The Big Outside

## GEAR REVIEW: OSPREY MANTA 28 DAYPACK

**TheBigOutside.com**

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Gear Review

Featuring: Manta 28

URL: <http://tinyurl.com/pwud74h>

For multi-hour day hikes, when you need to carry a fair bit of extra clothing, food, and water, I like a pack with at least 20 liters of capacity, good organization, easy access, and that carries a load efficiently. It's just a bonus if your back stays cool, too. With those two sentences, I've just summed up the Manta 28.

Carrying it on a two-day, June hut trek in New Hampshire's White Mountains, I found it excels at that last attribute: keeping me cool in sweaty conditions. The reason? A trampoline-style, taut mesh back panel that creates a gap between your back and the pack, letting air flow across my sweaty back on hot uphill slogs. The mesh-covered, perforated foam hipbelt—which is mounted directly onto the mesh back panel, so that it wraps cleanly around my waist—and perforated mesh shoulder straps also breathe remarkably well. But unlike some packs with a similar trampoline design, the Manta does not sit so far off your back that the weight pulls on your shoulders, thanks to a supportive, peripheral wire frame that carried 15 pounds or more very comfortably for me over 12-mile days. Plus, the pack rides low on your back, making it versatile for longer mountain bike rides as well.

The Manta 28 had space for two days' worth of trail food (I ate breakfast and dinner in the hut), plus all the clothes I needed for two days in the mountains, incidentals like sunglasses and cell phone, a sleeping bag liner, and a full three-liter bladder. I really like the organization. The panel-loading design provides quick access to the main compartment. There are three zippered front pockets—one of them lined with an embossed fabric for delicate objects like sunglasses and electronics—two stretchy side pockets large enough to hold a liter bottle, and two spacious hipbelt pockets. The Hydraulics three-liter bladder—which comes with the Manta 28, a \$30 value—nests inside a dedicated slot at the back of the pack, so I could remove and refill the bladder without unloading the pack.

Lastly, I like other details from the stretch cord on the left shoulder strap that allows you to stow trekking poles on the go, to the built-in rain cover, the front tab for attaching a bike helmet, and the big grab handle at the top. If you want a hydration pack for trail running or really lightweight day hiking, there are better choices (read: lighter and smaller). But for big day hikes, long trail spins, or bike commuting, this is a versatile and comfortable daypack and a good value.



### **Osprey Manta 28**

\$140

Sizes: S/M (26L/1,587 c.i.), M/L (28L/1,709 c.i.)

[ospreypacks.com](http://ospreypacks.com)

