



## Backpacker – Gear Guide

Fall/Winter 2014

Equipment – Packs – Most Versatile

Featuring: Variant 52

Circulation: 340,000

Readership: 1,069,000



► **CAPACITY** The comfortable, practical pack performed superbly on four- to five-day trips throughout the Rockies. "It's easy to pack and felt roomier than other 52-liter packs," says one tester who packed a bear canister, food for three people, and sleeping supplies on a four-day hut-skiing tour in the Big Horns, and still found room for a growler of home brew. The top opening is extra-wide and a 6-inch extendable collar allows for overstuffing.

► **COMPRESSION** Shed the lid, hipbelt, and framesheet to save 1.5 pounds, then crank down the four compression straps to shrink the bag from big-load hauler to summit pack. While his hiking partners lugged their heavy packs up Mt. Shasta, our tester carried his slimmed down Variant. During exposed scrambling he appreciated the pack's narrow silhouette.

► **COMFORT** The suspension is robust and effective. "I carried 60 pounds in New Zealand," reports one tester. "I needed help to hoist it, but, once on my back, it was surprisingly comfortable with excellent load transfer."

► **GRIPE** Side pouches are too shallow for bottles.

\$200; 3 lbs. 7 oz.; 52 liters;  
[ospreypacks.com](http://ospreypacks.com)

### [MOST VERSATILE] Osprey Variant 52



**WHY WE LIKE IT** Capable of carrying heavy loads on a weeklong trip, it also strips cleanly down for light-and-fast summit bids.