



Gear trends: 2015/16 Adventure travel gear

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Featuring: Ozone Convertible Series and Shuttle Series

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The differences between an adventure and luxury traveler are decreasing, thanks to efforts by apparel and gear companies to bridge the gap between the two groups.

During a trip to Mexico with his wife a few years ago, Neff had an epiphany. They were standing in the lobby of a high-end, luxury hotel, when he saw something that inspired his entire brand.

"A couple came with big Osprey rolling duffels," Neff said. "They weren't short on money and it was interesting to see them roll in with that instead of the traditional suitcase." So Neff returned to Chicago and asked himself, what other needs do luxury travelers have that an adventure travel brand can fill?

He wasn't the only one asking those questions. For 2015, outdoor brands Toad & Co., Osprey, Gregory and Granite Gear, to name a few, are carving more room in their businesses for adventure travelers. It's the crossover effect, and it's lucrative enough to get most companies to at least experiment with stepping over the line.

"Part of what motivates us into this space is our customers are using our traditional packs for all of these reasons," said Erik Hamerschlag, a product line manager for Osprey. "We try to build our gear to hold up to all sorts of levels of challenge.

Hamerschlag and a number of product line managers in the industry agreed on several important and required points that products must have to appeal to adventure and luxury travelers.

For starters, travel gear has to be versatile, like **Osprey's** Ozone Convertible and Shuttle series. The Ozone Convertible acts as a large backpack that can carry a load for multiple days, or it can break down into two smaller backpacks that work for day hikes and shorter missions. The Shuttle line, meanwhile, adds all-terrain wheels to a backpack for easy maneuvering in airports and gravel roads.

