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10 Santa Cruz Inventions That Spread All Over –  
and Even Changed – the World

Featuring: Osprey Packs and Mike Pfotenhauer

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*10 Santa Cruz inventions that spread all over—and even  
changed—the world*

When it comes to innovations that have changed the world, Santa Cruz gets sold short. Silicon Valley gets all the hype for being at the cutting edge of technology—but next time you take a selfie, hear a bad singer sound good, use a wireless headset, or stand in front of a baseball pitching machine, you should think about our side of the hill. Here are 10 things you might not know were invented here.

### 9. Osprey Packs

In the 1970s, Mike Pfotenhauer made a name for himself in Santa Cruz with a company called Santa Cruz Recreational Packs. It was a backpack company run out of the front of his house that produced custom-fitted, made-to-order backpacks. Word of mouth about the business kept a line of travelers coming to his door and waiting for days to have their packs made.

Eventually, he began designing his own line of packs, based on what he'd learned from customer requests, and called it Osprey Packs. The company was a pioneer of the breathable mesh that is now ubiquitous on outdoor gear. Pfotenhauer and partner Diane Wren moved the company to Colorado in 1987, and later to Vietnam, but the respected brand of packs with a lifetime warranty lives on.

**JAM COLLECTIVE**