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April, 2012

Gear Guide 2012

Featuring: Atmos 65

Monthly Traffic: 128,500

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GEAR GUIDE 2012: OSPREY ATMOS 65 BACKPACK

This best all-around pack offers plenty of easy to access pockets and compartments, making organization a cinch.

[best all-around]

Some backpackers like to have a designated spot for every little item. The Atmos (and the women's Aura) is ideal for the hyper-organized. After a five-day trip through the mountains of central Chile, our tester reported, "The big, top-loading main compartment swallowed my bag, clothes, food, and tent, while tons of pockets let me lay out everything for quick access during the day. Two lid pockets held my headlamp and beanie; the stretchy shove-it pouch fit my big puffy jacket; a pair of long, zippered pockets stashed my mini-crampons and gloves; and two hipbelt pockets held lip balm and sunscreen."

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There's also an accessible sleeping bag compartment and two stretchy side pockets for water bottles. The suspension (adjustable from 17 to 21 inches), with an alloy frame, cross struts, and a tensioned mesh trampoline, negates pack sway with up to 50 pounds and kept testers' backs cool during heavy exertion in hot weather. The hipbelt has strategically placed cutouts that create exceptional wrap around the hips and lower back for great load transfer and stability. The effective compression—two V-shaped straps on either side of the pack—adds extra stability. \$239; 3 lbs. 9 oz.; 65 liters; ospreypacks.com

