

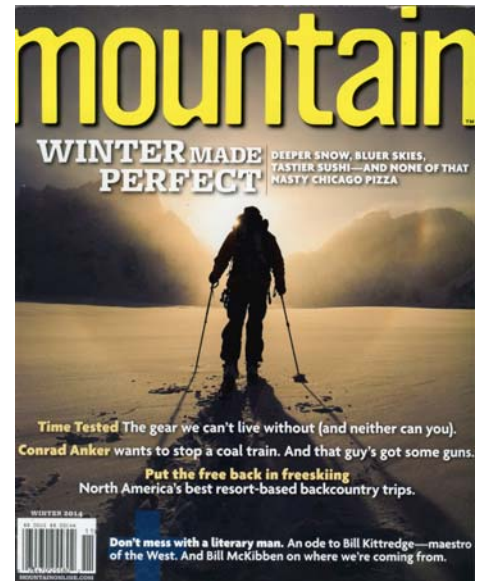


mountain

Winter 2014

Gear We Just Can't Live Without

Featuring: Kode 42  
Circulation: 125,000  
Readership: 550,000



**WE JUST CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT**

## Efficient Tools for Backcountry Tours

Look here for ski mountaineering, hut trips, and multi-day forays. *By Matt Hart*

**Ski:** Fat alpine skis bog you down on long approaches. The Voile Vector BC measures 121/96/110 and weighs in at six pounds, 14 ounces per pair—with a wood core. It's technically a midfat ski, but feels lighter on the skin track. Cooler still, on a tour in Washington's Cascades, the waxless, fish-scaled bases let me maintain momentum on rolling terrain that would normally require multiple transitions. You don't have to put your skins on till it gets steep. On the way down, tip rocker keeps you afloat in deep powder, and has a responsive feel in tight couloirs. **\$550; voile.com**

**Boot:** Most manufacturers struggle to build a boot that merges downhill performance and uphill efficiency. The code with mass. At just over 11.6 lbs, it's stiff enough to make it improved shell—more power transfer and heat reflective layer. To operate, slip top two steel cables into walk mode; close them with variable tongue. **\$400; dynafit.com**

**Binding:** Even though the patent expired a few years ago, Dynafit maintained dominance in the market. The engineer Speed Radical proves the skin track pitches the pole increases heel turns, turn bulletproof, engage the reliable speed crampon. And at just 340 grams per binding, weight weenies rejoice. Dynafit ditched the traditional ski brake from this model to shave another 200 grams per binding. (They ship with leashes.) It's the easiest tech binding yet to step into thanks to a bumper and guide groove. **\$400; dynafit.com**

**Skins:** A nylon skin delivers durability but won't pack down well. Mohair skins break down faster, but offer noticeably enhanced glide. Split the difference on long ski tours with the Black Diamond Glide-Line Mohair Lite STS skins. **\$165; blackdiamondequipment.com**

**Harness:** No hyperbole here. The CAMP Alp 95 is the lightest harness in the world. It also compacts to the size of a lemon. A single tie-in point and two

small gear loops slash weight to about a third of a traditional harness. Fixed leg loops mean fewer moving parts. **\$50; camp-usa.com**

**Shovel:** The blade of the Voile T6 Tech Avalanche shovel is made with heat-treated aluminum to prevent flaking and chipping. A snow saw hidden in the handle helps when cutting test columns in a pit. **\$65; voile.com**

**Gloves:** I've retired from chasing dudes in tights up mountains, but I still love the ski mountaineering racing, or "skimo"-inspired, Camp G Comp Wind gloves. They're made from a blend of

**Backpack:** The Osprey Kode 42 keeps specialized gear handy with loops for ice tools and a helmet compartment. Load the main cavity from the top or through a zippered back panel. **\$169; ospreypacks.com**

quickly snaps it intact. Clear markings every 5mm make it an invaluable tool for snow pit analysis. **\$78; genuinegear.com**

**Snow Study Kit:** Carry the BCA Snow Study Kit, and use it. The right tools to decode the snowpack aid decision-making. A lightweight case holds a slope meter for assessing terrain, an analog thermometer for snowpack analysis, and a magnifying loupe and crystal ID card to get up close with the snow. **\$95; bcaccess.com**

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