

Backcountry

The Gear Closet » **Read, scan, shop!**



2011 HOLIDAY Gift Guide

The very coolest gear for all of the outdoor enthusiasts on your shopping list

Summer's blooms have gone to seed, the larches' needles have blown off in the wind, and snow is just around the corner. Yep, it's time to start thinking about your loved ones, and maybe a little about yourself, as the holiday season approaches. WTA's gear team has spent hours consulting elves, in-laws, your loved ones and your favorite gear companies to generate a broad list of holiday season gift picks. From stocking stuffers to pure gear bling, our 2011 Holiday Gift Guide gives you a cheat sheet for all the best gear out there.



Keep 'em toasty with Sherpa head gear and Mountain Hardwear Gloves.



Better Than Coal

These useful items make great stocking stuffers and small gifts.

Help keep their noggins warm on chilly hiking days with a **Sherpa Adventure Hat**. Hand-knit using 100 percent lambswool and lined with cozy Polarfleece, these stylish hats not only make great gifts, they also support the local home knitters of Nepal where they're made. Available in a variety of styles and colors. \$25

Mountain Hardwear Bandito Fingerless Gloves provide for supreme dexterity, while the convertible mitt quickly adds warmth and protection from the elements. When using your fingers is critical to the success of your mission, this glove-mitt combo is the answer. \$45

No more broken fingernails from coaxing out the tools in your multitool. Forward Action Spring Technology make opening the **Gerber Crucial F.A.S.T. Multitool** easy. With a bottle

opener, Phillips screwdriver, standard screwdriver and wire cutter, this is a handy tool for camp or home. \$50

Exped Shrink Bags are an amazing storage solution. These watertight, compressible, come in a variety of sizes from 20 to 80 liters. They are specifically shaped to fit better in a pack, so they keep your goods dry without creating extra bulk. \$32 - \$39

Drop some natural protection from the sun into their stocking with **Beyond Coastal Face Stick and Lip Balm**. The Facestick sunscreen offers non-mineral UVA/UVB, water- and sweat-resistant protection in a clean-hands applicator, while the Active Lip Balm keeps lips hydrated and provides SPF 15 sun protection in a variety of natural flavors. \$3 - \$7

Take That, Jack Frost

These apparel solutions will keep ol' Jack at bay during the long Pacific Northwest winter.

The **Isis PDO Hoodie** is a fashionable and functional layer to add to your collection. Its medium weight adds a lot of insulation without a lot of bulk and will keep you dry in a light drizzle. With a snug hood and thumb loops on the sleeves, this comfy hoodie is perfect for trail running and short hikes. \$115

The **Ibex Woolie Zip T** is a lightweight 100 percent Merino wool baselayer. It's not bulky under your layers—you can move freely! The ability to unzip the neck adds breathability to this excellent base layer. Mens and womens versions available. \$85

Keep them warm, and make them feel good about what they're wearing with an **Icebreaker Sweater**. Made of sustainably-produced Merino Wool instead of synthetic materials, these lightweight sweaters are cool in summer, warm in winter and naturally odor-resistant. Available in men's and women's sizes. \$150 - \$225

Loot Luggers

Your special someone might need a new bag to carry all this new gear. These small packs and sacks will make shouldering the load an easy job.

For short day hikes or just wandering around town, give your friend or loved one an **OverLand Equipment Shasta Sling Pack**. With multiple storage compartments, a water bottle pocket and a front pocket organizer, this low-profile pack is perfect to grab and go. \$75

The summit-bagger on your list will love the **North Face Verto 26 Pack**. This roomy 11-ounce backpack is constructed of ultratough, ultralight 100-denier rip-stop cargo chute fabric that compresses into its own pocket! Features include two zippered pockets, a water bottle pocket and a hydration port. \$69

The all-new **Mountainsmith Swift FX Camera Pack** might just be the perfect lightweight solution for the day hiker who wants to carry a digital SLR



Ibex Woolie Zip T



GSI Crossover Kitchen Kit



OverLand Equipment's Shasta Sling Pack

camera kit. This comfy lumbar-style pack has a padded, customizable main compartment and two additional pockets for memory cards, filters and other items. \$69

The **CamelBak Highwire 25** incorporates their tried-and-true hydration system with technical and comfort features for a perfect pack for ultralighters and weekend dayhikers alike. Features include hip belt stash pockets, a ventilated back panel, and ice axe loops. \$115

It's a Wonderful Life

There's really nothing better than a sweet, sweet camp setup. Here are a few items to enhance the base camping experience.

The ridiculously lightweight (8.5 ounces!) titanium **Jetboil Sol Ti** will thrill any ultralight backpacker. Their new Thermo-Regulate Burner Technology and push-button igniter offers reliable four-season use in one of the smallest fully contained cook systems available. \$149

The camp gourmet on your gift list will be singing your praises when you give them a **GSI Crossover Kitchen Kit**. All tucked inside a lightweight tote, this kit includes all the items one needs to prepare—and clean up after—delicious backcountry meals. It is compatible with GSI's nFORM Crossover Cooksets. \$35

They'll be comfy in a new **Nemo Obi Two-Person Tent**. This finely tuned backpacking tent offers ample headroom and vestibule storage space while keeping pack weight down to a mere 3 pounds! Also features GREEN anodized DAC Featherlite NSL poles and a dry bag stuff sack. \$389

Cuddle with your honey and enjoy a good night's sleep with the **Therm-a-Rest Down Coupler**. This 650-fill quilted down sleeve connects two Therm-a-Rest mattresses into the ultimate backcountry feather bed. Available in three sizes and lightweight enough for base camping or backpacking. \$99 - \$129

Ask the Experts

What should my next pack be? Will I be happier with a down bag or a synthetic bag? How do I get this peanut butter stain out of my trekking pants? You have questions about gear. WTA's gear team has answers—or we'll find them.

Send your gear question to gear@wta.org and one of our experienced gear team members will answer. Every issue, we'll select one "Question of the Month" to appear in *Washington Trails*. If we run your question, you'll get a piece of expert-tested* gear.

*By this, we mean literally. Gear prizes will be used products field-tested by the WTA gear team.

Give the gift of a holiday feast with a **gift card from Packit Gourmet**. With a wide variety of trail breakfasts, lunches and dinners—as well as bulk ingredients to create your own menu, Packit Gourmet's products offer natural and organic alternatives to store-bought packaged meals. \$10+

Bling for the Holidays

These pieces may be on the spendy side, but they will certainly put a smile on a gear hound's face.

Toast the New Year with a **Snow Peak Titanium Flask**. Constructed of über-strong, über-lightweight nonallergenic titanium, these pocket-sized flasks won't add a metallic taste to their favorite spirit and will appeal to even the most critical ounce-counters. Available in three sizes, gift packaging includes suede carrying case and a filling funnel. \$140 - \$160

The **Suunto Core Altimeter Watch** is so much more than an altimeter watch, your giftee will feel lost without it. Quality and function are paired perfectly with rugged, yet stylish presentation to make this an instant favorite. \$249

Are the lights of the New Year's fireworks burning your eyes? Try the **Julbo Nomad Photochromic Glacier Sunglasses**. Their lenses rapidly adjust to light conditions, so you no longer need to manually swap out lenses, and their anti-fog technology and abrasion-resistant lenses make these glasses well-suited for outdoor adventures. \$130

There are less expensive poles out there, but there aren't many better poles than the lightweight **Black Diamond Alpine Carbon**



Cork Trekking Poles. These are a great bet for those with knee and back issues. \$140

Winter Break

Do your loved ones get more out of an experience? Try getting them these unique gifts.

What better gift for your loved ones—and yourself—than the joys and thrills of visiting the most beautiful places in the country with a new **America the Beautiful National Parks Pass, Northwest Forest Pass, or Washington Discover Pass**. And best of all, these are gifts that keep on giving for a whole year! \$30 - \$80

Got a hiker on your shopping list that loves the outdoors but doesn't need anything? Then make a **donation to their favorite conservation organization**—The Wilderness Society, National Parks Conservation Association, Pacific Crest Trail Association or, might we humbly add, Washington Trails Association. \$ANY

Encourage your loved one to cozy up to the fireplace—or campfire—with the new **Pacific Crest Trailside Readers** from The Mountaineers Books. These two new anthologies—one for California, one for Oregon and Washington—explore the history, people, places, humor, traditions and myths of the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail. \$20.

We hope our list makes your holiday shopping a little easier, leaving you more time to run, ski, hike, snowshoe and drink cocoa this winter. Good luck!♦



Your Bling, Our Ca-Ching

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