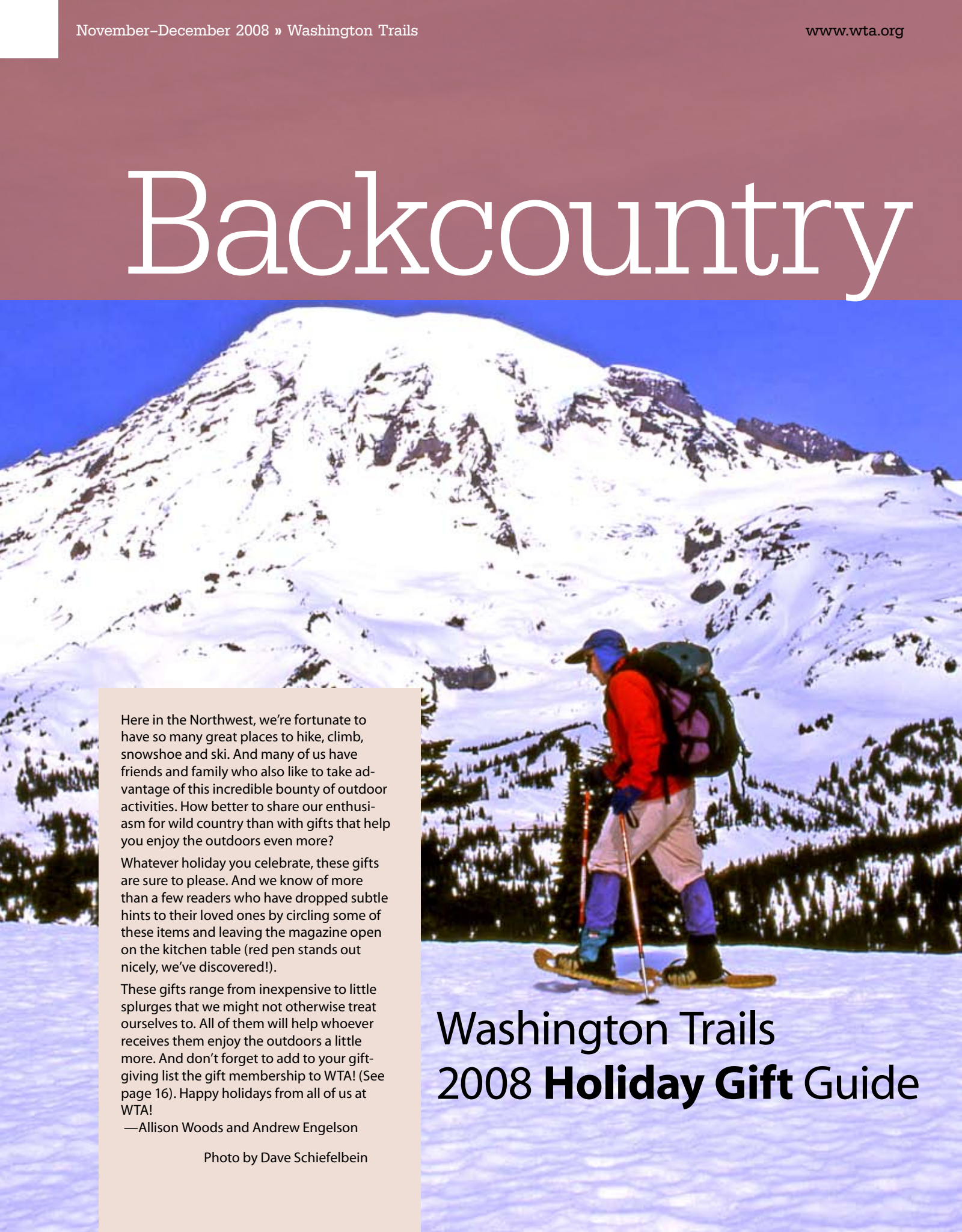


Backcountry



Here in the Northwest, we're fortunate to have so many great places to hike, climb, snowshoe and ski. And many of us have friends and family who also like to take advantage of this incredible bounty of outdoor activities. How better to share our enthusiasm for wild country than with gifts that help you enjoy the outdoors even more?

Whatever holiday you celebrate, these gifts are sure to please. And we know of more than a few readers who have dropped subtle hints to their loved ones by circling some of these items and leaving the magazine open on the kitchen table (red pen stands out nicely, we've discovered!).

These gifts range from inexpensive to little splurges that we might not otherwise treat ourselves to. All of them will help whoever receives them enjoy the outdoors a little more. And don't forget to add to your gift-giving list the gift membership to WTA! (See page 16). Happy holidays from all of us at WTA!

—Allison Woods and Andrew Engelson

Photo by Dave Schiefelbein

Washington Trails 2008 **Holiday Gift** Guide

Night Ize Flashflight Dog Discuit

\$13

Any pet owner knows that the holiday gift giving frenzy's not complete without a little something for Rover. Expect her to enjoy hours of enjoyment from the Dog Discuit, a dog-friendly soft flyer with an ingenious LED light inside. It's designed to withstand bites, and it floats!

Mountain Hardware Quark Jacket

\$200, available in men's or women's

This is a serious piece of gear for hikers serious about lightweight gear. Faces will light up when they receive this state-of-the-art, waterproof, breathable jacket with full features that weighs in at a mere ten ounces.

Black Diamond Trail Trekking Poles

\$80

If you've heard grumbles of sore knees on descents or maybe watched one of your companions stumble their way across a creek, get them a pair of Black Diamond's Trail trekking poles. They're sturdy enough for year-round use and sport padded webbing wrist straps and BD's patented FlickLock locking system, which ensures poles don't collapse, even under heavy use.

Eagle's Nest Outfitters Double Nest Hammock

\$65

Imagine taking a nice relaxing day hike with your loved one, and upon reaching your destination, breaking out this lightweight, compact hammock, perfect for a picnic for two. To make this dream come true give them the Eagle's Nest Outfitters Double Nest Hammock, made especially for two to sit or recline. It packs down to the size of a grapefruit and will provide hours of relaxation.

Bilt Decal Fresco Stainless Steel Bottle

\$18

Your intended will love Bilt's slick stainless steel water bottle. It's BPA-free, dishwasher safe, and sports the familiar wide-mouth design. The threads and mouth size are compatible with many water filters, and the loop top ensures the bottle's easy to carry. Best feature: a whopping 29-ounce capacity.





Tech4o Outdoor Data Center

\$99

Here's a hip bit of technology for the hiker in your family who refuses to wear a watch. Johnson Outdoors has taken all of the features of your basic outdoor watch and packed them into a handheld data center. Besides keeping time, the Outdoor Data Center also contains an altimeter/barometer, thermometer, digital compass (with adjustable declination) dual time zone time/date, and alarm. The rugged rubberized housing protects it from the elements.

Outdoor Research Verglas Gaiters

\$40, in men's or women's styles

OR's Verglas gaiters are a nice compromise for hikers who don't need mountaineering-type protection. These full-length gaiters have a rugged Cordura bottom section but are lightened up with a heavy rip-stop upper section. A full-length front Velcro closure makes for easy donning and doffing, and a lace hook and burly rubber instep strap keep them secure.

Katadyn Vario

\$90

Nothing says "I love you" like a filter to keep *Giardia* out of your water. Okay, maybe there are more romantic gifts, but whomever you give this excellent, lightweight filter to will thank you for keeping the little buggies out of their mountain stream water. The Vario uses a two-part system of glass fiber filter and ceramic filter to clean up to 2 quarts of water per minute. Dual-piston technology makes it a snap to use.

Exped DownMat 7

\$155

What gift can you give a longtime backpacker you really want to spoil? The Exped DownMat 7 is definitely high on the list. If you're used to standard backpacking mats, you're in for a treat—this extra-long pad inflates for maximum comfort and is filled with 700-fill-power goose down to ensure you're insulated from the cold ground. These pads are lightweight, pack down small and include a nifty pump-sack for easy inflation.



GSI Milk Frother

\$20

Your latte-sipping hiking friends will appreciate this little gadget for getting the perfect foam in their backcountry cappuccinos. No steaming is required, and this gizmo can be used with either warm or cold milk. Add this to a backpacking espresso maker and your friend will be a bona fide backcountry barista.

Oboz Teton Suede

\$95, in men's or women's styles

She'll love this excellent pair of shoes from upstart Montana gear company Oboz. These suede cross-trainers are stylish enough for town, yet sturdy enough for day hiking. They're remarkably comfortable and have excellent torsional stability. Leather uppers are moderately water-resistant, while nylon mesh linings wick moisture and dry quickly.

Kelty Starfish

\$47

Some kids prefer to have Mom and Dad carry their gear for them, while others prefer to be more independent and take care of themselves. The Kelty Starfish is made for these kids who aspire to haul their own gear. Grownup features like a waist belt and sternum strap make for a comfortable ride, and a built-in water bladder will keep Junior nicely hydrated.

America the Beautiful Pass

\$80

What a great gift for anyone who spends time outdoors—the America The Beautiful Pass. This one-year pass is good for entrance to most National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Bureau of Reclamation sites that require an entry fee. It truly is a gift that keeps on giving.

Byer Tri-Lite Stool

\$19

Does your hiker love to hike, but hate to sit in the dirt? Byer of Maine has an excellent solution. The Tri-Lite stool provides comfort in a portable, sturdy package. The stool is rated to hold 200 pounds and is made with a canvas seat, aluminum frame and grippy feet. In its folded state, it's just 3 inches by 13 inches and weighs just 22 ounces.





Solio Classic Solar Charger

\$99

Do you know someone who takes a lot of gadgets into the backcountry? Cell phones, iPods or other units with built-in batteries can be difficult or impossible to recharge on long backcountry trips. Until now. The Solio Classic Solar Charger can keep devices charged as long as the sun is shining. The unit takes about 6 to 8 hours to charge a standard phone or electronic music player and includes standard adapters for USB and mini USB ports.

Excalibur 5-Tray Dehydrator

\$200

There are a lot of dehydrators out there, but many hikers consider Excalibur to be the standard-bearer. These fully-featured dehydrators come in five- or nine-tray models and include a thermostat and timer. Backcountry gourmets will love the ease of use and cleaning, as well as the quality dried goods produced by this awesome machine.



Icebreaker Men's Tech T

\$65

Here's a gift to spoil your favorite hiker. You may ask yourself, \$65 for a T-shirt? But this is, quite possibly, the greatest hiking T-shirt we've ever encountered. It's made from superfine 190 merino wool—yes, wool. Itchy it is definitely *not*. It's soft and amazingly versatile: breathable for summer hiking, plus well-insulating enough to serve as a winter base layer.

Where to Buy Them

You'll find a list of on-line and brick-and-mortar gear stores on WTA's website at

www.wta.org/trail-news/magazine/outdoor-gear-retailers