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Mag

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SAVEAMAN
Story of Keith Daddow

DANIELLE MURDOCH
Live to Ride

BRIANNA BEEHAN
100% focus, hard work, commitment

Break Up With Bad Nutrition

Choosing your ideal adventure company

Grampians: an Adventure Playground

ADVENTURE IS A PATH

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Edition 48

Welcome to Edition 48 of Outer Edge, complete with our NEW LOOK magazine and NEW LOOK logo!

Outer Edge has been around for many years and we thought it was time to give it something new, something fresh and something exciting, so we had our digital design team work their magic to create an amazing new iOS and Android magazine.

Having the magazine as a digital mag means you get Outer Edge delivered direct every edition; you can access it via your phone, tablet or computer and you don't have to wait for the mailman anymore!

The new look Outer Edge allows us to bring you into the world of adventure with you. No longer are you just reading about other people adventuring, you're a part of it yourself with amazing footage, images and more.

Step into the new Outer Edge with us and enjoy the ride.

And make sure you visit our Facebook page to tell us what you think of the new design: www.facebook.com/outeredge

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Brianna Beahan: 100% focus & physical commitment

By Mish Smith

While most of us force ourselves out of bed, unable to converse for an hour or so without coffee and shower, before heading into work for the daily grind, eagerly awaiting the weekend and talking ourselves into excuses as to why we can't possibly make it to the gym that day, 24 year old Commonwealth Games Athlete and USANA Health Sciences ambassador, Brianna Beahan is juggling university, work, a social life and working on her next 100 metre Hurdle PB.

When I think of hurdling, I'm taken back to a time in my childhood in my backyard, my dad has strung up a rope between the trampoline and a tree and is showing me the mechanics of the jump "Run, bend, then one leg extended to the front, the other hitched up like a weeing dog...." Thankfully, this is not how Brianna was taught.

"I've just started strength and conditioning training this year and have seen notable difference during track sessions. I feel stronger and my technical sessions have become more refined".

Currently training Monday-Saturday, her schedule includes 4 track sessions that incorporate sprint, technical, speed endurance and polymeric training; the other two she focuses on strength and conditioning.

As she looks back over her highlights reel, which is ever increasing, there are a number of moments: she was ranked second in the world and held the 100 metre hurdles record (76cm), her debut year in 2010 national in Perth, Australia she placed third, and she received silver in the 100m hurdles and in 2013.

She was chosen to represent her country in the 100 metre hurdles at the World Universiade Summer Games in Kazan, Russia where she placed 12th overall and came out with a personal best record. "I'd also say that World Relay Championships in Bahamas running in the 4 x 100 metre was awesome as well!"

From a young age, Brianna who was a self-proclaimed 'very hyperactive child' tried channeling that energy into Karate, Netball, Touch Rugby and Gymnastics before settling on Little Athletics at Joondalup Track Club as an U10.

"I chose athletics because it was fun and I guess I was good at it." Although her passion initially lay with the 100 meter sprint, her then coach, Alan Savage introduced her to hurdles during her transfer from Joondalup Little Athletics to Kingsway. Through the perseverance and encouragement of Alan and her parents and belief in her potential, Brianna made her mark on the world of hurdling.

"I certainly wasn't showing any talent from the get go, but I definitely knew I loved it and wanted to pursue it. I even wanted to quit at one stage and go back to sprinting but I was pushed and I am forever thankful for that. Now I'm in the position I am today and I love hurdling!"

It was the thought of progressing to an Olympic level (a qualifying time of 13 seconds) that made her stick it out. Through relentless training, the love and support of her family, coach and her partner, Jayden, Brianna pushed her boundaries and is ranked #3 nationally for 2015 as evidenced by her PB of 13.17 in Canberra just this year.

"I guess achieving the standards of second best in the world at the age of 16 is enough to encourage you to stay in the sport" she said.

As a testament to her success, Brianna relies not only on her strong will and determination to continually better her times and physical prowess, but her support network.

"If you don't have a support network it's very hard to perform successfully. People don't realise that the mental aspects of sport override the physical. Well, in my opinion. If I'm not happy I don't train well and if you don't train well then you certainly don't perform well. I have my parents to thank big time for what I've achieved I couldn't have done it without them.

"My coach and training partners are nothing but a close nit family that have positively supported me through thick and thin. My partner Jayden comes to all my competitions and puts up with all my needs that come with the sport."

Starting out in any industry and trying to make a name for your self is no easy game. When I picture a well renowned athlete, I picture Nike or Reebok sponsorships, their running attire slashed with names like PowerAde, Swiss, or Telstra, but what we don't realise is that athletics is a self-funded sport.

As well as conditioning oneself to a gruelling training schedule, one must fund all their own expenditure- from shoes, coaches, uniforms, travel and accommodation, entry fees, etc.



"Up until last year (2015), I never received any financial support besides what my parent could help me with". Brianna is now a proudly sponsored by, and an ambassador for USANA, vitamin supplements.

"USANA have been a massive support for me. They provide vitamin supplements that help fuel my body so I can train at an optimal level. I feel safe and have trust in their supplements."

Understanding the importance of what best fuels her body and the importance of a healthy diet ranks high on Brianna's menu,

"If you're not fuelling your body with the right foods and supplements then you're not going to train at an optimal level."





Firstly vitamins are a big thing for me and I trust US-ANA's products as they fuel my body with optimal amount of energy."

I'm a big fan of carbohydrates that are low in GI, simply because they provide sustained energy for training. I'm not a massive meat eater so my proteins come predominantly from chicken and USANA soy max protein supplement.

"But it's all about balance the body craves sugar so I allow myself a cheat meal here and there as long as I've got that correct balance."

When asked what advice she would give to go young athletes to guide them onto their path to success she offers: "Nothing comes easy or fast. Sometimes people have a gradual incline regarding completions and progression into elite training. Mine certainly wasn't. I excelled as a junior then suffered a few injuries that put a massive decline in my progression.

If you stick at it and follow your heart, you can achieve anything.

Remember 'what the mind believes the body achieves'. If you work hard and believe you can be the best then you'll do it. Hard work beats natural talent every time.

Hard work, determination, an unwavering support network, and a healthy and balanced diet crafted Brianna Beahan into the woman she is today, a Commonwealth Games ranking athlete who is but .17 seconds away from her Olympic dream.



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KEITH DADDOW: #SAVEAMAN

Majestically soaring above the rainforests of the East African plains, the rising peak of Kilimanjaro, the highest freestanding mountain in the world at 5895m, is absolutely breathtaking.

To stand at its summit is to literally stand on top of the world. For most adventurers, Kilimanjaro is an essential bucket list item, a must-do before I go destination. For some thought, it's not just the bucket list, in fact quite the opposite.

For one man, it serves a purpose; it serves as one of the largest podiums known to man. In November 2014 Kilimanjaro was the place for Keith Daddow to raise awareness of prostate cancer in men, and to stand and shout from the top of the world, that he was 3 years Cancer Free.

At 42, Keith was diagnosed with prostate cancer. "I knew what it was thanks to my father's advice to 'keep an eye on it' after he was diagnosed with prostate cancer at 66" he said. "The doctor said that if I had waited three years to come in, he would have been giving me just a couple of years to live. How lucky am I?"

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer diagnosed in Australia and the third most common cause of cancer death. 1 in 5 men will be diagnosed with it by age 85. Keith Daddow is a very loud voice for Prostate Cancer Awareness.

One Aussie bloke dies every three hours from prostate cancer.

Not that it's a competition, but that's more than breast cancer! Go figure. Anything I can do to be loud and proud about prostate cancer, and help in any way that I can, is my goal. I do some motivational speaking and always ask for the microphone to 'shout it out' wherever I am."

For Keith, the journey to climb Kilimanjaro was one he was compelled to commit to. The climb itself is rated a 5/5 as far as challenging climbs go, it can be a brutally physical challenge, but the fitter you are, the more enjoyable the experience will be. Leg strength and stamina

"In preparation for the trip, I simply got into going to boot camps as there are plenty of free ones out there. Plus, one of my good friends, Olympic and World Champion Rower Amber Bradley, became one of my personal trainers. She lives just around the corner" he said. "Amber was awesome. She made me do a spin classes, plenty of lunges and squats and stairs, oh god the stairs!"

Keith admits to having a habit of over training. His training schedules with Amber, combined with his two other trainers from CALO Health, ensured he was well looked after, and kept on his case so that he didn't burn out.

As you can imagine for an adventure as challenging as Kilimanjaro, you are faced with a lot of challenges along the way. Small mistakes and slip-ups can be devastating, and can jeopardise the whole journey. Keith's challenges were small in comparison to some, he says

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Because Keith had over trained in the months leading up to the trek, he was injured with Plantar Fasciitis in his foot, which meant he could only do upper body work for three of his training months.

"I ended up looking pretty good after that though" he laughs.

"The other thing which was a challenge was, on the first night of the Kilimanjaro Challenge I had forgotten to take my altitude medicine and was quite ill. The team was convinced that they'd have to leave me behind and the trip was over before it began. But I was right as rain in the morning and off we went".

Being on top of the world certainly has its perks, both visually and mentally.

For everyone that attempts the journey, each person takes home a different memory that will last forever.



The group of adventurers, who take on the 12 day #SaveAMan Kilimanjaro Challenge range in age from 16-70, are both male and female, and have a support staff of over 80 people.

Keith's wife Margot is taking on the challenge this year when the trek runs in November, to raise funds for Prostate Cancer awareness.

"Preparation wise, 'Magnificent Margot' is pretty fit and has a solid plan". Margot spends two days a week at the gym, and two days personal training with their neighbour, (and Keith's trainer) Amber Bradley.

"Amber takes no prisoners. It's amazing the people that come out to support and help you, whether it is with fitness or fundraising" Keith said. "On the fundraising track, she is doing quite well. Her goal is \$10,000 and she has a brilliant fundraising manager – me".

When a person is diagnosed with cancer, their lives and perspective on life change.

"One thing I've learnt about in the whole journey with climbing and cancer is the power of talking to people and getting help. I was always 10ft tall and bullet proof. I was a marathon runner, and then I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. The physical side of disease was tough, but the mental side was a hell of a lot tougher and I learnt to ask for and receive help".

"On the side, I've also realised that I'm not a bad public motivational speaker. I've done plenty of easy going talks to groups and jeez, it is so rewarding to help save people's lives".

"I encourage all blokes on the other side of 40 to get a prostate examination. I survived because I caught it early. If you find that you have some cancer issues there is plenty of help for yourself and your wife. You are not alone".

Keith said keeping mentally healthy was the hardest bit for him, but it also became the aspect that he concentrated on the most. "Get in touch with the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia (PCFA) immediately. They are there to help".

PCFA is a broad based community organisation and the peak national body for prostate cancer in Australia. They are dedicated to reducing the impact of prostate cancer on Australian men, their partners and families, and promoting and funding world leading, innovative research into prostate cancer.

Keith offers a last bit of advice for motivation.

"Do something awesome for yourself - like climbing the highest freestanding mountain in the world with the #SAVE A MAN Kilimanjaro Challenge 2016. It's never too late to sign up".

You can read about the challenge here, or if you are feeling ready for it, join the team, climb Kilimanjaro in November, and raise your own funds to raise awareness of Prostate Cancer.

<https://inspiredadventures.com.au/events/pcfa-kilimanjaro-2016/>



DANIELLE MURDOCH

Live To Ride

by Shane Downey

The taste for exploration can start anywhere, at any point in your life. From a photograph taken by friends on a trip overseas, a conversation with a stranger about a foreign land, researching for a high school geography project, or in Danielle Murdoch's case, a family trip through Europe in a bright orange camper van when she was 6 years old is where the travel bug was planted.

For most of us, the thought of travelling alone for a months on two wheels is well beyond our comfort levels to say the least, let alone through war-torn and third-world countries (for four years). For Danielle, it was the need to shake off the weight of being stuck behind a desk, a desire to explore how other people lived their lives across the globe that drove her to the decision to leave it all behind. She wanted to create her own style of living. Danielle Murdoch felt the great urge we ALL desire, the need to be free.

We recently caught up with Danielle, who had just been told that she will receive the Australian Geographic Society's 'Young Adventurer of the Year Award for 2015'. When asked about receiving the award, she admitted to getting the 'warm fuzzies' every time she thinks about it.

"I would never have ever expected to receive this amazing award. I've always admired adventurers, read their stories, let them inspire and guide me throughout my own adventures. I never thought I would be named Young Adventurer of the Year. I guess I hope that I too will be an inspiration to someone else" she said. In 2010 Danielle was the very first recipient of the Australian Geographic Society 'Nancy Bird Walton Grant for Female Adventurers.'

Growing up, Danielle was always interested in motorcycles but says she never really had the opportunity to learn how to ride one. "Most people are pretty shy about lending their baby to a learner rider," she said. By the time she was in her mid-twenties, Danielle had completely forgotten about her desire to learn to ride, until a trip with friends to Laos in 2006.

"We hired a couple of dirt bikes and travelled around the country on them. In that week we meet some amazing local people, learnt more about their culture and were involved in several major accidents. It was then I reconnected with motorcycles and decided I needed to learn how to ride". An idea started brewing in Danielle. Instead of flying to Europe for her big overseas experience, she would just ride there.

The fact that there was thousands of kilometres of ocean between home and her desired destination was not a deterrent, in fact it was just a small hurdle compared to some of the challenges she would face on her journey.

A few months after returning home from Laos, she bought her first motorcycle, a Honda XR 250. "I still had no idea how to ride it and didn't have a licence. In fact, I wasn't even sure I could touch the ground" she confessed.

Danielle parked the bike outside her bedroom window, so it was the last thing she saw before she went to sleep and the first thing she saw when she woke up. "It was the encouragement I needed to get my licence" she added.



"A few months later, I flew into Bangkok with my bike and set off on my first motorcycle trip. The only thing I knew was how to fix a flat tire, but even that took me hours "she explained. When Danielle landed in Bangkok, she retrieved her motorcycle from customs and rode off.

"I had no idea where I was going nor if I would still have the bike by the end of the day. My backup plan was to ditch the bike and just go backpacking if I felt it was all too much for me" she said.

But after a few days she had settled down into a routine. Very quickly, she had learnt how to ride on dirt roads, dodge around chickens and cautiously travel through rice paddy fields.

Ten months later she found herself in Moscow, and like most travellers, at some point in their journey, ended up with a bank account that read zero. "I didn't even have enough money to fly home. The economic crisis had just hit and all my leads for work quickly dried up" she explained. "My old job in Australia was still open to me, but first I needed to sell my motorcycle to be able to fly home".

Upon arriving home in Brisbane, Danielle quickly realised she wasn't finished, in fact she hadn't even made dent on what she wanted to do. "At least now I knew I could ride a motorcycle, and my mechanical skills had advanced from puncture repair to complete engine rebuilds".

So, to prepare for her second motorcycle adventure, this time from Australia to Africa she spent the next two years saving money, with which she bought a cheap motorcycle, rebuilt it, making pannier frames, tool boxes and anything else she thought she might need.

"The bike was a 1999 Suzuki DR 350, a relatively small dirt bike with a very hard seat. For a single woman riding alone a lot of the time, it was perfect size for me to be able to lift up off the ground when needed, but the main motivation – the 350CC engine is virtually bullet proof and very simple to fix".

During this period of preparation, she also tried to build awareness of her adventures with the hope of encouraging other people to get out there and follow their own dream. She started her website and grew her base of online followers.

Danielle's Australia to Africa journey took exactly four years to complete. She left Brisbane on the 4th of October, 2010 and surrendered her motorcycle to the Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe customs on the 4th of October, 2014. "When I left, I told everyone I will be gone for two years - I guess all good plans change!"

There were quite a few challenges she faced along the way. There were the obvious things like logistics of travelling with a motorcycle. "The bike was constantly breaking down forcing me to improvise, and finding ways to get it fixed wherever I was at the time, "she said. "There were times I was waiting months on end for parts to be shipped in".

Other more personal challenges started to set in, while travelling through India. "I was alone a lot of the time, and no one really spoke English. I found myself having to struggle with unwanted male attention.

"A few times I had to fight to protect myself or even run away while families who were picnicking just watched. This was heart breaking as it was the moment I realised that not everyone's morals are equal around the world".



A photograph of a female mountaineer, Alyssa Azar, climbing a steep, snowy mountain slope. She is wearing a blue and orange Mountain Designs jacket, a helmet, and goggles. She is secured by a rope and climbing gear. The background shows a vast, snowy mountain landscape under a clear blue sky.

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After India, Danielle spent 6 months living in Pakistan waiting for the war in Syria to come a natural end, but when her Pakistani visa ran out and it looked like an end wasn't coming anytime soon, she to get on with it, and proceed into the war-torn country.

"My biggest concern was just getting into the country. I had no visa and at the time they were considering people with laptops and cameras journalist and kicking them out of the country.

After almost a whole day at the border, with all my gear completely stripped down they didn't find my hidden laptop, or my camera and they finally let me through with a police escort to the nearest hotel".

"Once I was left alone, I was stopped occasionally by the military at checkpoints - they also asked if I had a laptop or a camera and let me through. After Pakistan, Iran, and Iraq, I was used to these military checkpoints and didn't really blink an eye. Oddly enough, it had become normal."

As she rode deeper into the country, Danielle could see people were interested in her, and when she stopped for fuel or a bite to eat, they would come over and try to interact with her.

"I absolutely loved it! They always invited me in for a cup of chai (tea), even if we don't understand each other's languages. Having a cup of tea is a language spoken by everyone".

She became lost in Damascus while riding towards the Jordan border. Without a guest house on sight, and no sign of good place to camp, it was well after dark when she found a pile of dirt that would shelter her from the busy road, and unwanted attention from opportunists.

"In the night I heard dogs barking and guns firing around me but it never sounded like it got too close. In the morning, when I was packing up my tent and move on, I could see a small village in the distance. Two local men walked over to me, again they didn't speak any English, but I knew what they were trying to tell me. "Why didn't you come and sleep in safety with us?"".

"In retrospect it would have been better to have asked if I could sleep there but it was too dark to even see the village. Later that day at the border the guards asked me where I slept that night. When I told them they were shocked I was still alive" she said.

Syria was an interesting country, but overall I didn't really experience it for what it could offer. The small connections I did make though, meant the world to me, and at no time did I feel unsafe - even if I was riding through a war zone".

For the everyday person, having a support team with you all the way on a journey like this, would be of the utmost importance. Danielle's support team included friends and family back home.





Preparing for this trip, meant she needed some help in the garage getting her bike ready. "My great uncle Len let me use his workshop and tool and even taught me the best practices. When time was running short, my Dad flew from New Zealand to Australia to help with the final push with getting my bike ready for the trip".

A few of her friends helped her get sponsorship applications together and proofread everything. During her adventure, they would also help arrange gear she needed sent over to remote parts of the world - especially when her bike broke down.

Other than that support from home, Danielle was alone, until she met the man of her dreams (Dutch Adventurer Mike Martel) who was also riding around Africa on his own motorcycle. "From the moment we met, we travelled together as I made him turn around and retrace some of his own steps" she joked.

Picking a favourite moment from a 4 year long journey can't be easy, but we asked anyway. "There are so many amazing moments to choose from, I don't think I can choose just one. I was in Pakistan and a family I had a close connection to, watched me making a sock-monkey for their children" she said. (A Sock Monkey is a toy fashioned from socks to the form of a monkey).

"A week after I had finished the monkey and given it to them to play with, I was asked to come to the local seamstress's house and teach all the mothers how to make a sock monkey for their children.

"It was an amazing experience, sitting on the floor crammed full of women and babies running around between us, while I took them step by step on how to make a sock monkey. None of them spoke English and I didn't speak Urdu.

By the end of the day everyone had a completed Sock Monkey and I had an amazing experience that could never be repeated".

It's no secret that you learn a great deal about yourself when you travel, when you are alone for long periods of time, you get to reflect on your past, plan for the future, and grow.

It's quite easy to have a few bad experiences, and quickly close yourself off to little interactions with the local people. After spending three months in India, Danielle was completely fed up with being pushed and pulled around, grabbed, and even groped at times. She grew tired of trying not to get herself killed on the roads, or being yelled at on the street for no reason. "By the time I got to Pakistan, I was completely empty and an emotional wreck" she said.

"I hadn't realised that I was shutting out people and refusing help" she explained. It wasn't until two young guys pulled up next to her on a busy street of Lahore and asked her if she needed some help.

"I shook my head and walked away. They called after me "don't be scared, we just wanted to help..." I felt so embarrassed of how I acted. I told myself this wasn't the point of travelling. I told myself that travelling is about interacting with people and learning about their culture - the good and the bad. From then onwards, I took everything in my stride and had the most amazing time in Pakistan - a far better one than in India."

You meet so many people and have so many different experiences on a daily basis... some people and some experiences will be bad. Just take it day by day and don't let yesterday's bad experience affect the next moment of your journey".

Danielle Murdoch's journey spanned 27 countries, learnt about other cultures and shared hers, touching the lives of many along the way. She owes it to an early life wake up call.

"My mum died quite young. It was hard for me, as she was only 16 years older than me.

I thought, if I was going to get anything out of this life, I had better stop waiting for it to happen and seek it myself.

"I hear of people saying they wish they could do what I do, my advice to them is to just do it - there isn't a reason out there that should stop you. If you have children, take them with you.

"If you have a job, arrange leave. If you have a mortgage, rent the house out. As my Dad said to me once "If you really want to do this, you will make it happen."

Danielle is in the process of writing a book about her adventures, and can be found blogging regularly at motomonkeyadventures.com



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ULTRA MARATHON RUNNING TIPS

by Caine Warburton

Ultra distance running events are not for everybody. The dedicated few who take on the challenge commit to months of early mornings, late nights, blood, sweat and tears to get ready for race day. However, all that hard work can come undone on the day if you don't take care of yourself and plan effectively.

Here are my top Ultra Marathon race day tips.

RELAX!

Come race week all the hard work has been done, so rest up, fuel up and enjoy a few days of quiet before the big dance on the weekend. There is no point trying to cram in last minute hard sessions, any running you do should be easy.

FUEL UP!

The day before the event and morning of make sure you get enough carbohydrates to help replace and load the glycogen stores in your muscles and liver ready to race. If you struggle to eat carbohydrates then a good carbohydrate & protein drink can be a good option.

START OUT EASY

Come race morning it is hard to resist the excitement and control the adrenalin, but if you go too hard at the start you'll use up too much energy, hit the wall sooner and struggle to run consistently towards the end of the race. Consistency in pace is the key

EAT EARLY AND OFTEN

With Ultra marathon finishing times ranging from 3 to 24+ hours, it's important to start your nutrition plan and fuelling routine early. To ensure you maintain a consistent energy level no matter how long you are out there, set an interval timer on your watch to remind you to take your nutrition (be it gels, bars or hydration drinks) on a regular basis. That way you won't forget even when you're tired or working hard!

BEWARE OF THE CHECKPOINT

Checkpoints are like an oasis in the desert during Ultra marathon races. You will be dreaming about them and waiting constantly for the next to arrive. However, don't hang around in them - get in grab what you need and get out. Linger in checkpoints not only wastes time, but can also cause you to second guess your drive to continue. A good strategy is to grab your supplies in hand and walk out of the checkpoint as you put them in your pack and organize your gear, this way you are still moving forward on the course and wasting as little time as possible.

RUN IF YOU CAN, WALK IF YOU HAVE TO, CRAWL IF YOU MUST

It's going to be hard, if it wasn't you probably wouldn't be doing it, so expect that there are going to be some very tough times. Everyone, elites and amateurs alike, will have low patches during the race, however you need to back yourself, trust your training and keep moving forward. You can lower the intensity a little, but keep on moving and you'll find your way to the finish in no time.

5 TIPS TO PREVENT BURN OUT

by Andrew "Pap" Papadopoulos

IsoWhey® Sports ambassador + endurance athlete

With any endurance race comes preparation and research to ensure that you not only complete the event, but also prevent a burnout in the lead up to the race.

Whether you are looking to participate in a 9km run, cycle, marathon or ultra-endurance event, it is imperative that you know what your body can handle and what it needs in order to get through the event, particularly if this is new territory for you.

Listen to your body and train smart. Too often I hear of athletes ending up with chronic fatigue because they burn their adrenal glands from working too hard. Remember, it takes more discipline to recover than it does to push yourself.

Here is my advice on how to prevent a burnout before the big race.

HAVE YOUR NUTITION SORTED



In the weeks leading up to the event, make sure that you are consuming enough calories and the right types of food including protein, whole grain carbohydrates, fats and vegetables.

The types of food that you consume are very important, as you don't want to upset your stomach or have too many fluctuations in your energy levels. Knowing what is right for you can come down to experience, trial and error, and perhaps consulting a sports dietitian.

If you want to experiment with different foods and supplements, make sure that you do this a few weeks ahead of the event. The last thing that you want to do is change your diet and supplements the day before, only to find that it has affected you and therefore your performance.

Your nutrition practises on the day of the event will depend on the distance you are completing. If I am competing in an ultra-endurance event, for example, I would carry an array of energy gels, sandwiches, fats and salt tablets with me as well as a bladder of water and a second bladder containing a mix of electrolytes and magnesium, which has a specialised mineral delivery system that enhances absorption of magnesium.

For a marathon or half marathon, I would most likely just need the water, electrolyte formula and magnesium. However, if you are new to these events, you may consider bringing gels and salt tablets with you too. Some of my favourites are the IsoWhey Sports Electrolyte Formula and Bio-Ceuticals Ultra Muscleze.

GRADUALLY WORK TOWARDS YOUR GOAL



Don't jump straight into the deep end with your training. Your training needs to be gradual, particularly if you are new to this type of event. Pushing yourself too hard, too fast, is a great way to sustain an injury, so I wouldn't advise it.

Engage the help of a coach to create a suitable training program for you, or do your research if you prefer to create a plan yourself.

For an amateur looking to participate in a half marathon, spend your first week running no more than 5km per day; break that up into hill sprints, easy jogs and running on different terrains. From there, gradually work your way up to completing more kilometres each day.

Make sure you change the terrain you are training on. Don't only train on the road - do some work on the sand, grass and on a running track to minimise the impact on your joints.

IDENTIFY YOUR WEAK AREAS AND WORK ON THEM!



Making sure that you identify your weak areas is important both for your training program as well as for your rest and recovery.

Areas that you may need to work on include sleep, nutrition, training and recovery practises.

If you find you have been sleeping badly, that is going to affect both your performance and your recovery. This will be something that you will need to work on if you want to prevent burn out.

If you are finding that your iliotibial band (ITB) is tight, invest in a foam roller. If you are really tight in this area, odds are that your feet won't be tracking correctly and your inner thighs may be weak. This can lead to soreness in your knees and hips, which is not something you want to have happen before your race.

As mentioned above, correct nutrition is imperative so make sure you identify what fuel sources your body needs well ahead of time.

If you start the race and find you're feeling exhausted or thirsty, this usually means you have left your supplements, food or hydration practises too late.

ADVENTURE GUIDES

SAFETY IN OUTDOOR ADVENTURES



Exploring the great outdoors with all the adventures, experiences and amazing scenery, is not only great recreation, it is an essential part of our being healthy, both mentally and physically. There is huge personal and societal value in having healthy work life balance and as our cities and towns become crowded and busier; escaping to the Australian bush with all its forests, mountains, snowfields and waterways have to offer is a simple to access.

While there are amazing places further away to visit and experience, there are also numerous walking and riding trails, urban bushland, cliffs etc. quite close to all major cities and towns, so short “micro” adventures are available to us all, from a few hours to a full day. We just need to make the time.

There are also many skiing, caving, climbing, bushwalking and other activity based clubs to join for those that do not have close friends who adventure. Many outdoor clubs have State or Federal “peak” bodies that liaise with land managers to ensure safe access to public land etc but who also run activity and safety training.

For the young, scouting, guides, lifesaving clubs and many other youth organization's are great options for learning bushcraft, safety in the bush, plus the amazing life skills and social aspects of these clubs and groups.

The great outdoors is just at our doorstep and while it is easily accessible we need to take care to ensure that we minimise risks when we experience its wonders.

Ensuring your safety when adventuring is important, not only from a personal point of view but to reduce the community and tax payer cost of mounting extensive and costly search and rescue operations.

Safety in the outdoors is primarily a personal and group responsibility so the key to managing personal, family and group risks are simple. Always ensure that the leader and the groups skills and level of experience is commensurate with the isolation, level of difficulty of the terrain, complexity of the activity, identifiable risks, available communications, weather and any other relevant issues.

Ensuring that personal and group equipment, clothes, vehicles and communications are appropriate for the adventure that you are undertaking is also critical as this will not only impact on safety but will affect the level of enjoyment for the participants.

Visiting easily accessible locations where communications are good and where the adventure or experience is easy to manage is a good starting point for adventuring and you can then raise the level of difficulty and isolation as your skills and experience improve. An activity plan might be developed informally as a chat amongst mates or be a detailed written list for more complex trips or expeditions but some level of planning should occur for all activities.

The following is a list of factors that could be considered when developing your plan, this is only a short guide and there will be many other issues that you may need to consider:-

- > What the group and individuals want to achieve or experience. Make sure that this is similar for all.
- > The expected duration and extent of the activity or adventure
- > Age, experience, fitness, skill level of participants
- > Any medical issues that need to be considered
- > The group size
- > The level of difficulty of the adventure or activity
- > The ease of access and egress for the group
- > The skill and leadership levels of any leaders
- > The ease of communications
- > Expected weather and effects on the adventure

Group size is a major consideration as a large group often has a wider range of experience levels, fitness and expectations. This can make it harder for the group to achieve objectives.

Severe weather is an increasing cause of accidents and incidents in the outdoors, in particular with water based activities or in the snow. The Bureau of Meteorology and the many weather forecasting "apps" available for our smart phone make obtaining weather warnings and information extremely accessible.

Severe weather that might affect safe outdoor activities in winter can include storms, flooding, snow storms, extreme cold, high winds or a combination of a number of these. Including weather considerations in our activity planning can be critical.

Weather considerations and warnings can include:-

Physical environment - Know the landscape of your activity area and how it relates to weather events.

Severe Weather Warning - These warnings are provided when severe weather is expected that is not directly related to severe thunderstorms, tropical cyclones or bushfires.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning - These warnings are provided by the BOM when thunderstorms are expected to produce dangerous or damaging conditions.

Blizzards - The Bureau of Meteorology defines a blizzard as a violent and very cold wind that is laden with snow, some part, at least, of which has been raised from snow covered ground.

For all sorts of weather information and warnings for both the land and sea go to - <http://www.bom.gov.au/>

Adventuring in snow conditions requires additional care in particular if you are travelling out "off Resort" but even in the resorts one needs to take care and there is safety information available at the various snow resort entries and information centre's. Carriage and fitting of snow chains may be required (NSW and Victoria have different laws in this regards so check before you travel)

Two useful location definitions for use when planning a snow trip are:-

Well supported areas-This includes areas where there may be resort, lift company leased areas, groomed trails and patrols, there is reliable communication and emergency services can readily reach the site within one hour.

Back country areas- This includes areas where professional medical care is more than one hour away, communication is unreliable and there is no patrols or support. Leaders should understand that it is possible to inadvertently move out of well supported areas and on to public land where no support exists.

Adventure Activity Standards – Most states and territories have adventure activity standards that have been designed to assist with provision of safe dependent group adventures and these can be found by a quick internet search. For example the Victorian standards are at <http://outdoorsvictoria.org.au/aas-list-of-standards/>. There is now a move to develop national outdoor safety standards and information on this project can be found at <http://australianaas.org.au/>. While designed and intended for lead dependent groups, these standards have useful information for all adventures and so are a good and easy to access resource.

Winter adventures (and all outdoor activities) should be fun and with some planning and care can be safe as well. Start with easy locations and challenges, and then extend the levels of difficulty as you gain experience. Have a great time in the great outdoors!



QUEENSTOWN RAFTING

A week in the life of a grade 5 guide, New Zealand



As we sat on the bank of the Landsborough River we looked over a large, well-known rapid called "Hell Fire". The river was high and we had just scouted the rapid to find the line we wanted to take. We had just finished discussing about 1 or 2 swimmers (people falling out of the boat in the rapid) with Gabby (the Safety Kayaker who stays out in front of the rafts in case there are swimmers) and Jarrod (the gear boat rafter who follows the kayaker down the rapids).

We discussed the paddle boat flipping, which is the boat I'm in charge of, and the possibility of the boat filled with paying clients, flipping. This is the true challenge of Grade 5 Rafting. There is always a discussion of "What if?" and if it's not taken serious it can be fatal.

To give you a better understanding, the paddle boat runs at the back so the safety is there. If anyone was to fall in during the ride through "Hell Fire", they would go a fair bit faster down the river than the raft, as there is less resistance.

As a trip leader I always take the clients in the paddle boat, we do an extensive amount of training and talking about rafting techniques before leaving on the river. A safety talk is followed by a paddle talk, including techniques for swimming aggressively and positively, throw bagging, T-grip rescues, forward paddling, over left/right, and the crowd favourite "Get Down" (which is when you get down in the bottom of the raft as low as you can and hold on very tight).

Once we left the bank, and got back into the rafts, re-joining the clients, we talked about where we wanted to run, and what to do if Plan A turned to Plan B. This was followed by a quick practice of paddle commands before setting off.

Pulling into the current above 'Hell Fire', I have to admit I was confident in getting on the right line (which is being in the easier part of the river, in between the hard bits). The clients had been paddling well; they were quick responding to my commands and had some urgency. They were a good high water crew. We paddled hard into the top of 'Hell Fire' and through the maze of big waves and rocks before we got down into the next big one called "Brimstone".

It was a great run - water was exploding over the raft, and the clients faces buried in the walls of water, and bearing grins from ear to ear, knowing they'd made it! They loved it, they deserved it. They had paddled hard and listened well.

Remembering they are novices that have never been rafting before, they were very humbled in regards to the power of the water. When trying to explain what it is like when you get 'smashed' in the raft by a big wave, it comes across like a big ocean wave dumping on you; or 25 buckets of icy cold water hitting you all at once.

This water is melted glacier snow, from the stunning mountains that surround us. It's the greatest feeling as a tour leader to show people a real time, and you will know it's real when the waters hits you, and you definitely know when you've experienced the raft almost flipping for the first time.



The most nerve wracking part of the week for me, is the day you get the client information. This information refers to their ages, sex, size, medical conditions, dietary requirements, and drinking requirements – the last one is very important for the Aussie and Kiwi clients - believe me you don't want to run out of beer or wine!

We take everyone. As the trip leader I'm responsible for everything in regards to the whole trip; from buying and packing food and packing all the equipment for the 3 days. Safety decisions on the river and timing of activities are all my responsibility.

Once I'd had 10 years under my belt of grade 5 rafting, the nerves in regards to running these trips relaxed a bit, and I realised that for me, this was the ultimate job. 20 years later I am still doing it, and this passion isn't stopping any time soon.

I mean, who gets to spend a day buying food and drinks, packing all the gear into a trailer and getting it readied for a helicopter flight to work? Yes that's right we fly to work. This flight takes us to Top Camp – or 'Toi Toi Flat'.

Rafts, kayak, food, equipment, clients and everything we need for the adventure join us, packed in tight on the 50 kilometres flight through south Westland, where there are no tracks or roads. In our job, we hardly even see other humans. That's pretty rare now-a-days! How cool's that? We spend a night at top camp, followed by a big day of rafting, and then again the 3rd day includes rafting out and then travelling back to Queenstown.

Multiday guides are excellent cooks, but you only get one chance. If you were to burn the Venison hors d'oeuvres - there's no replacements. Dropping the chocolate cake could cause uproar, and you certainly can't risk putting butter in the lactose intolerant scramble eggs.

There is so much to think about, but it's awesome! We have such a good time and the clients are generally amazed by this. After 3 days the clients and guides create a great team.

In regards to learning to raft and kayak, here in New Zealand, we have the Polytechnic – "ITP" Institutes of Technology Polytechnics (similar to TAFE in Australia). They provide a course for Adventure Tourism. You are able to do a 2 year course which involves all sorts of outdoor activities, which you can then specialise in your 2nd year. You can choose to specialise in white water rafting and or kayaking. You generally come away with a Grade 2 or 3 New Zealand Rafting licence. (This is an internationally recognised licence, which has a high standard). Otherwise you can do an advanced white water course of 6 weeks. Both of these courses send you out to work experience. This allows you to show yourself to the companies for future employment.

Once you have done either of these courses there are an amazing amount of rafting operators around NZ. All rivers have their differences of technicality so it takes time to learn the river/rivers, before you are guiding with your own clients. However, everyone's ability and personal drive is different. This is a huge determining factor. Some new guides take 2 -3 weeks before they're signed off, others can take up to 4 months or more. Not everyone is meant to be a white water guide. Most companies take on a trainee with the expectation they will be working with them for the next half year, to secure their skill development.

In Australia it is different. Each company will do an in-house training course every 1 or 2 years. It is an in-depth intense course, and at the end of it they will take the best of the group. You then will stay on to finish your in-house training. With the expectation you will be around for a couple of years.

Rafting and safety kayaking is a lifestyle job, which entails an incredible amount of fun, excitement, adrenaline, stress and heart thumping enjoyment. You can use it to travel to many amazing countries for work. The longer you are in the industry the easier it is to be selective of the type of rafting you love. In some countries, their rafting seasons are only short 2-4 months, some 6-8 months, and then there are places which raft all year.

Rivers also change. The water flow determines the technicality; generally the higher the river in volume the more power. The seasons change your river.

Rivers and clients are like a box of chocolates. Always good, but you just don't know what you're going to get! Give us a call, come a long – we're waiting – can't wait to meet ya!
 "KC" Gareth Wilson
 – senior Trip Leader @ Queenstown Rafting.

DYNAMIC MOTIVATION

Why do we ride?



For most Mountain Biking is a way to get out and have some adventure and just enjoy the way it makes you feel. There is the factor of being out in nature with the endorphins of doing some exercise and adrenaline from speed and risk. Put it together into a great flowing ride and it's the perfect escape from the mundane and the chance to do something really cool.

Each of these factors combine in different ways to provide the amazing individual experience for each of us that is mountain biking and with the increase in ride venues its easy to see why mountain biking is growing so fast as a great participation sport.

The only things that can lessen the experience are not having the skill or fitness to be able to make the most of it. This can be a cruise on your local trail or during a trip to your dream destination. You want to be able to ride at a level that you can safely make the most of the trail in front of you and be fit enough that you are not hurting to the point that the ride is no longer enjoyable. That's where we can help, and over the next few months we will be providing tips on how to get the most from your riding.

It doesn't matter what type of riding you do or what level you are at, the number one thing that will increase your enjoyment is improving stability on the bike.

The more stable you are, the more in control you feel, and the more you can do. Whether it be an easy social ride, smashing down extreme terrain or anywhere in between. To increase stability on the bike we need to look at body position. For most of our clients this is the place we start with all training, and it provides the biggest improvement in riding. To be stable on the bike you need to have your weight low, centred and even across both wheels.

Most people ride too tall and too far back on their bike which raises the centre of gravity and reduces traction on the front wheel.





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There are perfectly valid reasons for this:

1. Comfort
2. Poor bike setup
3. Concern about going over the bars (OTB)

Comfort

Normally the most comfortable position, especially for those new to mountain biking, is to ride in what we call the "riding to the pub position"; where you are sitting reasonably upright with arms fairly straight. This is the most comfortable position to cruise on fire trails but isn't great for stability, as your weight is mainly on your rear wheel.

Poor Bike Setup

Often brake position and bar height are set for a comfortable ride to the pub position rather than stable riding. This will once again move your weight backwards, impacting ride stability.

OTB

Most people are concerned about going OTB and tend to move back to avoid it. Unfortunately, not weighting the front wheel properly actually increases the chances of an OTB. There is a culture that came from old bikes with road geometry that said you need to ride back on the bike on anything bumpy or downhill. With modern bikes these days are over.

So how do we get into this more stable position?

The key to body position is to lean to a forward position where your chin is over your stem with your wrists rotated forward and elbows high with your back flattening out. You can keep your bum over or on the seat.



A common mistake when initially learning to move your weight forward is the tendency to tuck your elbows in and your wrists low. This puts you in an unstable position as all your upper body movement is controlled and held with the triceps (small muscle group at the back of your upper arm), which doesn't allow for a good range of movement and fatigue quite easily.

Rotating your wrists forward and moving your elbows forward stabilises this position as it moves the weight and control up to the chest, which is made up of stronger muscle groups. This position can be maintained sitting in flowing smoother trails or standing when the trails are rougher or speed increases. If standing you can stand with arms and legs a little straighter to make it more comfortable and easier to maintain and then sink a little lower for short periods when you need that little extra stability.

Bike setup can make getting into a forward table position easier if you try lowering your brake levers a bit so that in a forward position you have a straight line down your forearm through your wrists and into your fingers. This will help promote that natural forward position and take a lot of strain off your wrists compared to having levers in a higher position.

To confirm you are in a more balanced position there are a couple of things you can do. If you are on a dual suspension bike and it is set up well, when you bounce up and down the suspension should react evenly at both ends. The other thing you can do is move forward 'til you feel pressure on your thumbs on the handlebars, and back til you feel pressure on your fingers on the handlebars - you are looking for that sweet spot in the middle where you feel relaxed. Try this: Put the magazine down, grab your bike and go cruise around and get the feel of this position, if it's new to you start on easy terrain until it feels natural and progress onto harder terrain.

Once you are comfortable with this new body position, the next step is to work on relaxing and letting the bike move around under you. If your bike is moving your body around you are a passenger. If your body remains stable and it's your bike that moves as you go over rough ground, then you are a rider. As the main time we fall off a bike is when our body moves in an uncontrolled direction, if we can get to the point where going into rough ground our body position is set and stable and the bike doesn't buck us around, we are going to be safer, more stable, faster and much smoother.

Time to go and put this together. Spend some time, slow down, think about your position and how you are moving on and with the bike. It may take a bit of time to get comfortable with all this, but it's worth the time. Once you have it dialled, your flow will improve and that feeling we spoke about at the beginning of this article will only get better! Want some help with your riding? Visit our website www.dynamicmotivation.com.au

FOUR KEY MOVES



In edition 47 – we looked at run training “the right way” and how you could improve your running to make it a real weapon in your chosen pursuit. This edition we are going to look at what else you really need to do to run well. Specifically, how do you become stronger, more aware, and less prone to injury and over time an even more efficient runner?

Firstly though, a brief update on my own recent running experiences. Sadly no updates to my PB list here. In April I competed in the London Marathon, this was a relatively quick decision due to my disappointing Tokyo Marathon and my last chance to make the Olympics in Rio.

Here is an extract from my race report “Between here and 21 kilometres the wind was ferocious – It was definitely the worst running conditions I'd been in for a major race. We were unlucky and fact is that hour was the worst hour of weather in my entire 10 days in London day or night! Even an hour later it had improved and when walking home watching the latter stages of the run it was actually ideal running weather. As I neared London Bridge I was confident I was still on schedule and after the very tough running in that first 20 kilometres I was happy enough with that, I was now again in a pack and we crossed the bridge, about 10 of us, all seemingly in relative control. Once we made the right turn for quite a long out and back section including Canary Wharf we hit the halfway point and it was here I found out that I was in fact about a minute behind where I wanted to be.

Now that's really not much, but everything fell apart right there and then. I knew because of how hard I'd worked a negative split was impossible and it was still very gusty and cold. An immense disappointment attacked me from every possible direction, some point soon after, a few tears likely, the reality was, I would not make a time good enough to make the Olympics.

The last 15 kilometres of this race was a flood of emotions, vivid flashes of parts of my last 12 months came in and out of my thoughts and I just ran. I ran only for me and with a sense of dogged determination and in that last few kilometres still a sense of pride and achievement too. I had managed to start to gain strength too running a 3:06/ kilometres in the last few kilometres but I didn't care for the time at all, just to finish.

So that's that! I was on a flight that night back home to my beautiful wife and two furbabies. I landed in Sydney the day after Anzac day, driving a further 3 hours to my home in Newcastle. Dealing with the disappointment was difficult enough – I really felt that in those last two races I wasn't able to achieve what I'm capable of and what I had. The fire still burns though and after a number of weeks of less training, a bit of a break and some time to catch up on other aspects of my daily life, I'm back doing some great training with the goal still firmly set on the World Athletics Championships in London in 2017.

My focus too is expanded and over the next 12 months I'm really excited about not only taking part in some major road running events but also some large off-road running events.

Amongst all of that, I've been fortunate enough to be a part of the team that has created the upcoming iTrail Run Glenrock, in October whilst with Runlab we are continuing to evolve and provide the leading training to our running groups. Next edition I'll be sharing the key training tips required for running to your potential off-road and how you train to be your best for this. But now let's focus on the strength and awareness tips that will help any runner.

Becoming a more efficient runner!

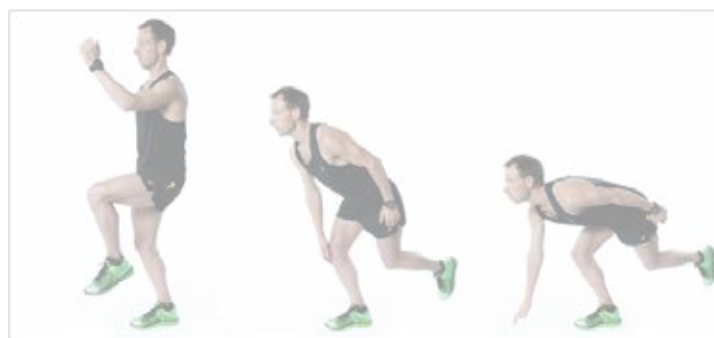
What does this mean? Well, breaking it down you are trying to get from point A to point B in the shortest time possible. BUT as a runner you want to do that time and time again – meaning you are not injured and hopefully you eventually run between those points faster. Last edition we looked at the actual running you can do to get faster – Now let's look at 4 Key exercises to become a more efficient runner. The first three of these exercises are part of our regular RUNSTRONG program – a dynamic functional strength class for runners, which I have developed with leading strength and conditioning coach Adam Clarke from Up N Adam Performance Training

4 key moves to master

Runners Touch

This is a great exercise to do within any strength routing as a runner. It allows you to work one side of the body at a time and makes you aware of any possible imbalances between one side and the other.

- Look forward and balance on one leg ensuring your core is switched on.
- Bend at the hip and touch the toe that's on the ground with the opposite hand whilst the leg in the air rotates under and back.
- Come back to the starting position remaining balanced,
- Pause for 1-2 seconds and repeat up to 15 repetitions on each side aim for 3 sets.



Bosu Twist/Twist Touch

Similar but more advanced than "Twist Twist Touch" because of the instability • creating better awareness of deep core muscles Develops and engages core muscle group critical for maintaining good running posture and form allows ability to re-align (good for trail runners). To perform this exercise:

- Start seated on bosu approximately 2 inches from black rim on the edge
- Lean back onto ball (should feel comfortable)
- Keep chest parallel to ceiling
- Arms crossed across chest
- Raise legs to 90 degrees

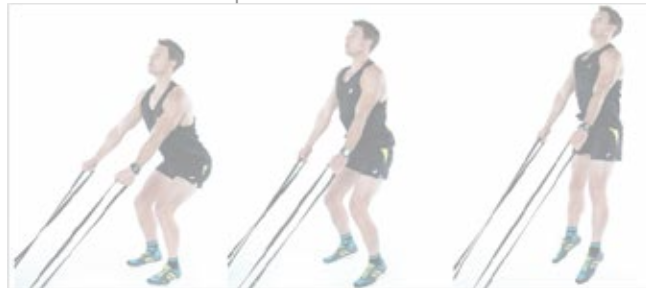
- Rotate both hands across to touch bosu on the left side and return to centre, pause and repeat across to the left, continue using a ratio of 1:1



Band Power Jump

This exercise is extremely beneficial in increasing both the awareness and ability of runners to remain upright whilst running and not "bent" at the hips. It forces you to engage your core under serious loading and makes you aware of good posture for upright running, forcing you to work against resistance

- Walk back to ensure resistance on band
- squat position
- Shoulder blades back
- Arms in front
- Complete explosive power jump
- Return to start position with soft knees



A Skip March

The aim over time is that this will help you transition towards being nice and upright, having a nice even and relaxed arm swing, being nice and light on your feet and more aware of where your foot lands in relation to your hips. The key to performing the drill correctly is to ensure that you are hitting the ground under hips with forefoot whilst the point of impact is also in a scraping motion. Start this drill in a march driving up, out and back. More advanced runners can add a bound into the motion making it more dynamic.



Incorporate the first 3 key moves into a weekly strength routing and the A Skip March as part of your dynamic warm-up before one of your harder weekly runs and see the difference. You will become more aware about your body's strengths and weaknesses and the important cues that you can begin focussing on in your running like being even, relaxed and upright. The whole focus = becoming more efficient.



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BREAK UP WITH BAD NUTRITION AND FEEL THE DIFFERENCE!



I have a real problem when it comes to choosing what cereal to buy at the supermarket. I'm constantly stuck in the breakfast aisle trying to make sense of what solution is actually good for me. I feel like I'm almost getting yelled at... 'HIGH FIBRE!', 'CONTAINS VITAMINS!', 'WHO-LEGRAINS!', and 'LOW FAT!' I don't know about you but it's a constant battle to fathom which one is best for me, and if these claims are in fact true. The nutritional panel on the back often makes me feel like I'm cracking the Da Vinci Code. I just want a cereal that I know is ACTUALLY good for me!

Apparently I'm not the only one. According to a survey by Nielson, (global provider of insights and analytics) 59% of consumers have difficulty understanding nutritional labels on food packaging.

I consider myself an active person as I'm always on the go! I enjoy going on adventures on the weekends and find happiness when I'm on the move. Being active means heaps of energy; therefore I want a breakfast that will give me energy and be truly satisfying.

For active people like ourselves, we need breakfasts that don't drag us down, but instead make us feel energised and ready to take on the day. We want something that is going to sustain and provide us with the right nutrition.

With so many health claims made by companies how are we supposed to know what a good, wholesome and filling cereal really is? How do we know we can trust a company? Do they have science based research to prove their nutritional claims? It's often we hear about companies making health claims on their products, but when looking at the nutritional label it proves different in reality. We all know that most cereal choices available on the market contain next to no nutrition, are bulked with fillers and sugar... As a consumer we deserve to have truthful food labelling to ensure we are getting the right nutrition. It is also known that we must have a higher nutritional intake to gain a more active, happy lifestyle.

Morlife, a Gold Coast company creates functional foods which enable consumers to have simple, nutritionally dense solutions which will vastly improve their dietary intake and allow them to gain 'more out of life'. Extensive research and testing is undergone to make sure they develop the utmost nutritious breakfast solutions are offered to consumers.

Morlife conducts a lot of research and product testing so that every one of their functional foods are nutritionally valued; and this is expressed on their packaging. It's vital to provide clear labelling and to link evidence to claims; like antioxidant capacity which is proved through the ORAC measurement. Morlife goes beyond the standard quota for delivering nutritionally dense ingredients; this is proved through the addition of digestive enzymes and also 'good' bacteria to assist with a healthy digestive system.

The number one muesli that is the perfect start to your day is Gluten Free Tropical Digest Wholegrain Muesli. It's the perfect way to maintain a healthy, happy digestive system and is a natural, nutrient driving force which addresses the dietary needs of gluten intolerant individuals (but can be enjoyed by everyone). Each ingredient has been carefully selected for its digestive functionality and is free from any artificial sweeteners, colours or flavours. This functional food will significantly boost your nutritional intake of vitamins, minerals, pre and probiotics, omega-3 fatty acids, fibre and enzymes. I feel the passion of Morlife when I read their packaging. So, let's break-up with bad nutrition and focus towards a happy relationship with not good... but GREAT nutrition! By Bianca van Elteren

THE ULTIMATE ALKALISING GREENS FORMULA TO HELP YOU REACH YOUR FULL POTENTIAL!

Diet and lifestyle can affect the acid-alkaline balance in our body. A diet that is high in protein and low in vegetables can build up an 'acid-load' in our body which may lead to problems like fatigue, stress and energy loss. These issues may mean that you aren't at the top of your game, why risk that? By increasing your intake of alkalising foods you can push your body towards a more alkaline state, allowing the body to function optimally!

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GOOD FOOD IS FAR FROM WHAT YOU THINK...

This Will Change The Way You Think About NUTRITION!

It may come as a shock to you, but we really don't know 'food' as well as we think... We see food everyday. It rides with you on the way to work. It waits for you on the shelves of grocery stores. It lives in your fridge and in your pantry. Food may even be in your garden. I mean, if we see food this much, you would expect to know it pretty well, right? Unfortunately we have it very wrong, and our relationship with food isn't as tight as it would seem. Real food... GOOD food is what we had many years ago. We must go back to basics with our diet and understand certain foods have reactions with our bodies. This reaction causes us to feel and be a certain way; and it all starts in our digestive system.

We are misunderstood about food and what foods are good for our health; to really understand it we need a major nutritional overhaul. We should be focused on foods which leave us feeling full of vitality, life and wellness. Instead, we are consuming foods which we assume are doing us good, but in fact they leave us feeling fatigued, unfocused and are making us sick. We should be focusing on foods that after digestion, give us the fuel we need to feel and look our best.

When we eat food, it has been revealed that it either leaves an acid or an alkaline residue. In our hectic everyday schedules it is hard to maintain a healthy, balanced diet and we are likely to indulge in foods which leave an acidic residue. This acidic residue exposes us to stress, weight gain, energy loss, sickness and disease, and also influences sleep quality. An increase in heart disease and obesity has revealed that we are eating too many acid forming foods and not enough alkalising ones. Acid forming foods are any processed foods, sugars, red meats, dairy products, alcohol and even prescription drugs. Alkalising foods are being neglected, even though they should be eaten with every meal.

At the moment, our typical diet consists of 70% acidic foods and 30% alkaline foods, this diet must be reversed completely in order for us to function properly... and the secret to transforming our diet towards wellness lies in green foods.

A simple and effective way to achieve a more alkaline state has been developed by a Gold Coast Functional Food Company called Morlife. This product is a high potency food supplement called Alkalising Greens pH7.3 which helps the body move to a more alkaline state. Known as the company's 'hero product', Alkalising Greens pH7.3 is packed with potent nutrient dense green super foods, alkalising minerals and L- glutamine to facilitate an alkalising environment. It also contains specialised herbs which are beneficial for promoting balance. This is the perfect way to maintain a slightly alkaline state.



To prove the functional basis of the alkalising greens it has been measured using a PRAL, which indicates its alkalising potency. A positive PRAL reading indicates an acidifying food and in contrast a negative PRAL reading indicates an alkalising measurement; therefore -54 for alkalising greens specifies that it is highly alkalising. After taking the supplement consumers were reporting that they feel more energetic, are less stressed, felt trim and curiously don't crave chocolate biscuits! Alkalising Greens certainly meets the greens market trend which is currently taking the world by storm and provides the unique answer to wellness.

Alkalising Greens pH7.3 is packed with potent nutrient dense green super foods, alkalising minerals and L- glutamine to facilitate an alkalising environment. It also contains specialised herbs which are beneficial for promoting balance. Morlife encourages people who wish to gain a more energetic lifestyle to try Alkalising Greens pH7.3 in conjunction with the 30 Day Alkalising Challenge. The Challenge provides participants with all of the tools they need to move towards a more alkaline diet and lifestyle, in particular specifying which foods are acidifying and which ones are alkalising. The program provides an eating plan, range of recipes, shopping lists, ongoing support from a Naturopath and Nutritionist and a dedicated website www.alkalisinggreens.com.

Alkalising Greens pH7.3 comes in a delicious lemon/ lime flavour and is so simple to use! Just pop a tablespoon into a glass of water, juice, smoothie and even foods to gain an alkalising rich source. This highly alkalising greens supplement can be taken twice daily and won't take long until you feel the difference, we promise!

Alkalising makes sense, as the foods fit the need for the body to be alkaline at pH7.3 where the body was built to function optimally. You will now be empowered to make the right food choices every day and feel energised, trim and to fulfil the activities you love. - Bianca van Elteren

WORLD EXPEDITIONS

How to choose your ideal adventure company



If you're looking to embark on an adventure overseas, one of the hardest decisions to make (outside of where to go and what to do!) is who to do it with! With literally hundreds of adventure tour operators around the world offering more adventures and itineraries than you know what to do with, how do you go about picking one particular tour operator to provide an adventure holiday experience that is "just right" for you?

While there's no hard and fast formula, there are a number of things you should take into consideration before choosing an adventure tour company. We've narrowed down the top XX things to consider when choosing a small tour adventure tour company!

Cost

If you're a price conscious traveller, you might think that trips labeled as "budget" or "basic" automatically means "cheaper". But, these "cheaper" versions often cut costs by reducing the quality of their transport, accommodation or types of activities. Other tour operators are able to cut the costs on their tour packages by excluding important additional expenses such as meals, park fees, internal transport etc, and can end up costing a pretty penny by the end of your trip. While you may save a couple of dollars, that cheap tour won't be so cheap if you have to pay for everything while there.

When comparing tour operators and reviewing providers, take note of what inclusions they have on their trips. If you're looking at cycling trips, do they include bicycles and back up vehicles? Are your meals, sightseeing and national park fees included in the trip cost? Having these fees included allows you to better budget for your big adventure and eliminates the risk of having to carry large sums of money around with you on your journey.

Responsible Tourism

There's a growing trend in the travel industry called ecotourism, which focuses on responsible travel not only towards the environments that we visit, but also towards the locals in an area. When thinking about adventure tour operators, choose a company that has a responsible travel philosophy and has initiatives in place around the world to ensure you minimise your impact and leave behind positive impressions. This could mean using local guides, hotels and restaurants, and minimising your waste and footprint in the local habitat.

World Expeditions is a leading Australian small group company that employs a responsible travel philosophy at the heart of all of their tours. From employing local porters and ensuring porter welfare and using semi-permanent campsites in Nepal to give back to the local community and minimise the impact of deforestation, to partnering with 10 Pieces in Australia, Peru and Nepal and encouraging travellers to pick up 10 pieces of litter each day, to advocating for animal welfare and removing activities from itineraries that harm and endanger wildlife. Travelling with a company that has a responsible travel ethos means you leave behind footprints — not waste.

Itineraries

If you're going to spend the time travelling overseas on an adventure, you'll want to make sure that the company you choose has a wide range of itineraries that you can choose from, and the travel style that appeals to you most. Think about how the itineraries fill your day. Do they have a lot of activities planned, or do you have a lot of free-time during the day? Do you have a chance to see the off-the-beaten path destinations of a country, or are you being taken along the typical tourist route, don't turn away from itineraries that take you to some of the smaller or lesser known destinations; it's often the unexpected places, the ones you'd never even heard of before, that end up being the most memorable. Spend some time reading the trip notes of the trips before you book, and if you have any questions, contact the company and clarify them before you book on!



Types of adventures

If you're the type of person who is looking for new and unique experiences to get off the well-trodden tourist trails, align yourself with a company that does just that! Companies such as World Expeditions offer a range of active adventures including trekking, cycling, rafting, kayaking and mountain biking, allowing you to travel under your own steam. Think about whether you want to explore a country from a bus window, or on an active adventure. Although both are fine depending on your interests, the latter is an incredibly rewarding way to explore the hidden gems of the world!

Expert Guides

Expert guides in the field guides can make your international experiences so special. Travelling with a company that uses local guides often gives you access to their extensive knowledge covering the long and varied history of the region. They may know the local language, understand the tapestry of cultures that occupy the land, the best walking trails and most authentic restaurants to eat at. In a nutshell, local guides can be the difference between a good and an excellent adventure.

Companies such as World Expeditions employ local guides on their trip, however also work with elite adventurers over the world, whether they be world-class photographers, mountaineers or authors. These leaders' passion and experience can take adventure to new heights as they bring their experience and talents to the fore on your trip.

Target Market

As much as we all feel like we were as fit as we were when we were in our 20's, it's wise to look into what age group and type of people your preferred tour operator has on their trips. Are the tours geared towards older couples, families, or young people? When you're on a trip with others for 10-20 days, the people you travel with can make or break a trip, and booking on a loud Contiki tour when all you wanted was a peaceful exploration of a country can really be a drag. Not to worry - there are enough tour companies out there that there's sure to be one that suits you perfectly. Jump on the Facebook page, website and twitter pages of companies you're thinking about to get an idea of the type of person on their tours.

Group size

Unless you've been on a large "group trip" before, your best bet is to look at companies that have a small group policy. This is because the small groups allow for flexibility, instill close-knit friendships amongst travellers and importantly, ensure minimum impact travel to the areas in which you visit.

The Right Fit

Once you find a company that you align with and offers everything you want, ensure the trip you book on is the right fit. Choose adventures that match your fitness level, whether it's an introductory trek or advanced mountaineering expedition. Carefully look at how active the adventure you are planning on taking is, and ensure you train so that you are able to meet the requirements of the trip.



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WORLD
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Getting Started in Saltwater Flyfishing



Gavin Platz has been a saltwater angler since before he could walk. His grandmother was born on the Grassy Hill Lighthouse in North Queensland's Cooktown, and his grandfather was related to the first Lighthouse Keeper, Captain Thomas George Rookesby, who manned the light from 1865.

Leaving school at an early age, Gavin became a commercial fisherman and with love for the ocean and angling, he progressed to flyfishing. He now specialises in catching Tuna on a fly rod.

What is saltwater flyfishing?

Saltwater Flyfishing is like freshwater flyfishing; it's the active art of presenting an artificial copy of particular baits that predator fish are most likely going to want to eat. It's a craft, and your success relies on the knowledge you have learned, and your proficiency to use that knowledge. It's a game for thinkers.

A successful flyfisher will use their knowledge in the planning before they start. The type of fish that live where you are heading, what they eat, and how deep they swim is some things to take into consideration.

Gavin owns and runs Tie'n'Fly Outfitters, (flyfishing supplies and guided flyfishing tours) and has been guiding for saltwater flyfishers from all over the world for the last 20yrs.

Where to go?

Gavin's favourite place to flyfish is Buchanan Bank (near Islamorada Key, Florida), a world famous Atlantic Tarpon (aka poon) bank.

"So I'm at home planning... well, dreaming is probably closer, and I sit at my Fly Tying Vice, tie some Tarpon Patterns that I have previously tested at Buchanan Bank, and they're beautiful. They have to be; or I will not tie them on my leader. I'm now the apex predator, so my tools must be perfect to work. My flies are tied, I've made my leaders, my rods and reels are serviced and I'm ready to hunt".

Guided by the flyfishing famous Billy Pate and his wife Jodi, they soon arrive at the bank, ready to be the next Apex Poon Predator.

"We're not there long before Billy points to the pocket, and mentions really quietly that there is Poon coming. He points out a faint shadow of one swimming down the flat towards me. I'm shaking in anticipation. Thoughts shoot through my brain. Is the fly right? Is the leader long enough so as not to spook the Tarpon? "Billy calls ever so softly "90FT ... 2 o'clock ... left to right". I drop the fly and make my cast. He's so close now how could I miss? This Tarpon is MINE for the taking".

And just as he thought he had locked the Tarpon into his sights, the wind changed slightly and he caught the fly in the back of his head. Time and again Billy and Jodi pointed out Big Tarpon well within casting range... but each time; Gavin's fly was either blown off target or hit him.

Tie 'N' Fly Outfitters

Let Us Take You There



Phone: 07 5444 0611

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www.tienfly.com





What makes a good flyfisher?

To become a good flyfisher, a change of mind set needs to happen. As a flyfisher you need to be a predator. You need to study and know what your prey eats.

"That day, fishing the Buchanan Bank, a simple change in the way I was thinking was in order. Firstly my casting was ok, I was making the cast but only just, so my accuracy was not flash. Secondly I needed to present the fly so the tarpon could see it, but more importantly I'd realised the fly was pulled away from the tarpon, not into him."

Think about it this way ... If you were a bait fish no larger than 4 inches long; and a 6 foot long tarpon with a mouth the size of a bucket was swimming towards you, would you swim a) toward death or b) away from it? Natural instinct shows what a real fish would do, but mimicking this takes concentration, knowledge and practise. Presenting a perfect fly to a large predator, and having him think it's real enough to eat is what Flyfishing is all about.

How to get started

Flyfishing can be a lot of fun. Learning to cast, tying the flies and especially the first catch on your own tied fly is an excellent feeling.

To get started you need a decent rod. In Freshwater flyfishing the demands on the rod are not as high as in Saltwater Flyfishing, so get the best you can afford. The size of the rod will depend on the fish you intend to chase. A good reel with a decent drag that will hold at least 200 metres of backing is equally as important as the rod. Your choice of flyline is the most important part of the whole outfit however.

Flylines are made not only for a purpose, but also for temperature. A flyline made for the tropics will be like a piece of barbed wire in a cold water trout stream and a cold water fly line in the tropics will probably melt, or at least get sticky & not cast properly.

It's great to have all the right gear, but you also need to know how to use it properly.

A true predator knows everything there is to now about his gear. Like a lot of disciplines, it's only a matter of learning the physics of the cast.

Here's the basic physics of casting terminology:

Power Stroke - the path the "Rod Hand" takes while casting. Your Power Stroke must be straight, horizontally and vertically. The Length of the Power Stroke is directly proportionate to how much fly line is in the air (this means if you only have a small amount of line in the air the distance the hand move is only short).

False Casting - the act of moving the flyline in the air (this is what sets flyfishing apart from other forms of fishing).

Loop - The shape made by the flyline in the air when false casting correctly

Pausing - opposite to what you would do in cracking a whip

Once you have your rod ready to go, thread the flyline through the rod so that you have about 20 foot of line laid on the ground in front of you. Use the hands of a clock to show where you need to stop the rod on both the back stroke and the fore stroke of the cast. 12 o'clock is 90 degrees to the ground; 3 o'clock is horizontal to the ground.

From a position with the flyline on the ground, accelerate the rod back to a position beside your ear, stopping the rod near the vertical position (11 o'clock position).

Pause the rod in this position until the flyline lays out straight in the air behind you. From this position you need to accelerate the rod forward and stop the rod at a position in front that is about 1/2 way between 3 o'clock & 12 o'clock.

A good tip from Gavin is once you have your flyline run, head to a local park & play with your new setup, and do some research on the fish you hope to catch soon.

Fly fishing, like most other fishing styles, is a great way to release stress. Whether you are hitting the local streams, rivers, on the open ocean or waterways, picking the right fly for the job can be the real stress reliever you need.

Tie 'N' Fly Outfitters are the first saltwater fly fishing shop in Australia and are currently the only specialist Salt Water Fly Fishing Outfitter in Australia. If you want to learn some of the finer points of fly fishing in the surf Gavin and his team run workshops, which is a great way to sharpen your skills for the coming beach and rock fishing season.

RHINORACK

The Right Accessories Make The Journey



For an adventurer, having the right accessories on your vehicle to suit your purpose is a pretty important decision to make. Roof racks, luggage boxes, bike carriers, kayak carriers and load securing accessories need to be durable and easy-to-use. Whether you are a skier, kayaker, surfer, cyclist or keen camper, Rhino-Rack is an all Australian name that you can trust. With customised products and the latest in carrier technology, you can rely on Rhino-Rack to transform your vehicle for work, play, or anything in between.

Roof Racks come in different shapes and sizes so it's important to select a roof rack that suits your load carrying needs. In order to meet as many different customer requirements as possible, Rhino-Rack have developed a wide product range that has been rigorously tested and designed to suit any situation.

The Rhino-Rack streamline Vortex range of racks is a prime example of this, as it is designed for recreational applications such as carrying a kayak, Skis, Roof Boxes and bikes. On top of this Rhino Rack offer a range of load securing accessories such as ladder locks, tie down straps and ratchet straps which are great for for both recreational and professional use.

If you are keen on fishing, Rhino-Rack even offer fishing rod carriers! If your aquatic needs are more demanding, don't sweat it as you can get your hands on their SUP and kayak loaders which ensure ease of use when loading and unloading your gear.

Alongside its vast range of products, Rhino-Rack are committed to test and measurement as well as keeping their staff happy and motivated. CEO of Rhino-Rack, Richard Cropley, has been the driving force behind this ethos - he has also found a way to integrate these two principles.

Annually, for six weeks at a time, Richard will take his Rhino-Rack team deep in the Northern Territory to put a range of new products through their paces in order to fulfill their promise of 'Australian made and Australian tested'.

Each day comprises of 4-Wheel Driving, Barra fishing and mud crabbing. Every night around the campfire, tales of the day unfold over an espresso or a tasty red and a feed of fresh muddies and barra fillets.

The campfire is also the relaxed boardroom where the team brainstorm ideas for new designs and modifications. Coming from all different departments and areas of the business, for some it is their first opportunity to get hands on with the Rhino-Rack products in the tough environment they are built for, leading to new product ideas that Richard is pushing to be released within the near future.

The staff also get a chance to see their work in action, taking the product from ideation all the way to the outback to put the Rhino-Rack range to the test.

However, Rhino-Rack are not only about catering to those who love getting amongst the outback. If you were looking to take advantage of the winter months and carve some powder, Rhino-Rack can accommodate with their large selection of ski and snowboard carriers.

This winter range was so successful that Rhino-Rack and Uber ended up plenty of gear to haul, but are visiting Salt Lake City without their own transport.



Rhino-Rack is an Australian manufacturing company that has been operating since 1992 and remains proudly Australian.

Today they operate manufacturing and warehousing departments in Australia, USA and New Zealand. They export to 25 other countries, and have hundreds of fitting outlets across Australia. CEO of Rhino-Rack, Richard Cropley, founded the business with the knowledge that he could build a superior product to the competition that was being flown in from inferior manufacturers.

Now Rhino-Rack roof racks are available in over 30 countries and are celebrated for their simple, ergonomic and reliable designs.

While Australians love to know that they are supporting Australian manufacturing and jobs, the Aussie Spirit is having an even larger impact overseas. To international companies and buyers, the branding of 'Australian Made' is a new benchmark to seek out, and Rhino-Rack's 'tried and tested' philosophy has made them one of the most reputable and sought-after brands in their field.

American shoppers in particular have been highly receptive to Rhino-Rack, with more than \$5 million USD in sales in the last financial year, making it the third most popular brand in the market. Stocked in over 100 physical outlets and almost every online outdoor equipment dealer, Rhino-Rack are moving their American HQ to a new modern facility in Denver that is triple the size of their current warehouses just so they can keep up with demand.

For more information or find out where you can get your Rhino-Racks and accessories fitted, visit the website <http://www.rhinorack.com.au/>

UberSki drivers offer their clients the ability to transport skis, snowboards and other gear thanks to freshly fitted Rhino-Rack Ski & Snowboard Carriers, base rack systems and cargo boxes, all over Salt Lake City. An initial fleet of 40+ vehicles have been fitted with Rhino-Rack products, with the number likely to increase with demand.

UberSki works just like any other Uber mode. Simply open the Uber app, and tap the Uber Ski icon at the bottom of the screen to request a vehicle equipped with Rhino-Racks and accessories. Currently, UberSki is available exclusively in Salt Lake City but if the new service is well received, mountains across the globe could be set to benefit from the partnership.

If you're not a big fan of winter sports, the Rhino-Rack Heavy Duty range of roof racks is designed for tradies and 4WD enthusiasts.

Able to carry commercial gear such as ladders, conduits & timber, the Heavy Duty range of roof racks is for the man/woman who takes transporting their gear seriously. This is due to their heavy load carrying capacity and massive range of compatible 4WD accessories including Trays, Shovel holders and Jerry Can holders - just to name a few.

Aside from the massive range of carriers and accessories, Rhino-Rack also supply a great range of camping products. Their range includes awnings that mount to your vehicle, and tents that attach to the awnings, camping chairs & beds, LED lighting kits and a variety of other accessories.





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LIVE ADVENTURE

Get set for your first adventure race



Are you ready for a challenge? Do you want a reason to get fit? Do you love fun adventures with friends? Adventure racing could be just what you need!

Adventure races are multi-discipline events, usually in a team, where you navigate through the bush to find checkpoints. Most races include trekking (or running for the faster teams), mountain biking and kayaking. Some races include extra 'mystery' disciplines like canoeing or a mini-obstacle course.

Adventure races are gaining popularity, and for good reason. The events are well organised with safety in mind, but there is still the thrill of doing something exciting in the great outdoors. An integral part of adventure racing is the camaraderie with team-mates as you support and push each other to be your best. Not many colleagues will come to work on Monday having ridden, trekked, paddled and navigated through the wilderness the day before!

Embarking on your very first adventure race can be daunting. You probably have many questions and there may seem like a lot to organise, but don't be overwhelmed. Anyone can do it. Following this step-by-step process and you'll cross that finish line in no time!

1) Find a Race

Pick a race in advance to give yourself time to train. Depending on your current fitness level, this could be anywhere between one and three months. Six weeks is enough time for most people to get in shape to complete an adventure race.

If you are not confident about completing the full course, many races have a novice option which is a shortened course, often avoiding the more difficult sections. Check out <http://adventurerace.com.au/> for a calendar of off-road and multisport events in Australia.

2) How fit do I need to be?

Even if the course description sounds challenging, there is no pressure to 'race' (despite being called adventure 'races'). Whilst the top teams are highly competitive, for a large part of the field, the challenge is to finish, learn and enjoy the experience. Starting at a steady pace is a good tactical move. Many teams charge off from the start line, but tire out and struggle towards the end. I'm sure we've all done that once or twice before!

For the shortest events, if you're generally active you could even just turn up and finish if you pace yourself well. For events taking 3-6hrs, I suggest being able to ride for an hour, walk for an hour (or run for half an hour), and having a practice kayak or two. Strength or interval training in the leadup will allow you to 'race' instead of 'survive', and make it much more enjoyable.

3) Team

Now that you've chosen a race, the next most important thing to do is find a racing buddy. Most shorter events are done in a team of two. Preparing, training and racing with a partner is much more fun. It's also very motivating when you have to keep training 'appointments' on cold, winter mornings! Don't worry if you can't twist your friend's arm, many race organisers have forums or can put you in touch with other people who are looking for a team.

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4) Training Plan

Now you know who you're racing with and what the event involves so it's time to start training. Communicate with your race partner about the team's goals very clearly before you begin. If you find out later you have different goals, it can be very frustrating. There's nothing like training your guts out to find your team mate hasn't trained all year – or exhausting yourself in the first hour of the race trying to maintain their frenetic pace!

If you can train together, all the better. Following a well-structured training plan will give you maximum benefit for your training time. Include a mix of all disciplines plus strength and mobility training to achieve your best performance and minimise the risk of injury.

5) What to wear

Wear something you can use for the whole race. There are quite a few transitions so don't waste time changing clothes at each one. I suggest a merino or synthetic t-shirt (not cotton), bike pants and a hat. Use bike pants with thin padding as they may get wet in the kayak - nobody wants to feel like they're running around in a wet nappy all day! If you live in a colder climate, you may also need a jumper or leggings. Depending on the length of the race, it may be quicker to wear running shoes even while riding (ie no cleats) because of the time you save in transitions.

6) Food

Lots! The most common mistake is to get carried away with the race and find hours into it that your food is still in your pockets and you've hit a wall. Try to remember to eat a small amount frequently, around every half hour, even if it's just a dried fig or two. Fat and protein are difficult to digest when you're exercising, so carbohydrate rich foods are the way to go. Try muesli bars, bananas, energy bars or dried fruit (don't go overboard with this or your team mate won't want to walk behind you!).

7) Equipment

Next, consider the gear you need. Races have a mandatory gear list (on their website) which is the place to start. Ontop of that, think about the climate and the length of the race (in longer races comfort is more important). Test your race clothing and equipment in training so you don't get any nasty surprises on race day. Also practice eating your race food in training too so you know it is palatable, portable and easy to eat on the go.

8) Navigation

A lot of people worry about navigation if they have not had much experience. But there's only one way to improve, and that's to practice - so just get in there and give it a go. The navigation in shorter events is not that difficult. As a guide, if you can read a street map, you will be fine. If you aren't confident, just take your time and consult your team mate. Other teams on course are also (usually) very willing to help if you are stuck. Even if you take a wrong turn, it just gives you a good story!

9) Final preparation

Go through your gear list and pack everything the night before. Don't forget to check your bike is working properly, especially if you have to dismantle it to get it in the car. I took off on the bike in one race, only to find my team mate's brakes were stuck on and he could hardly pedal! I wasn't very impressed at having to do mid race repairs.

10) Race Day

It's the big day and it's time to put your preparation into action. In your first race, finishing is already a big achievement. Take your time, particularly in navigation - going fast is no help if it's in the wrong direction! Soak up the beautiful natural surroundings, the feeling of being fit, and spending time in the great outdoors with a bunch of like-minded people. After all, you've earned it!



NO WORRIES INSURANCE

Insurance: do you know what you're covered for?



Travelling is an amazing experience. Most of us spend a long time saving for, planning and looking forward to our holidays and the last thing any of us want is problems while abroad. If chosen wisely, travel insurance can take all of these worries away and frequently comes at just a tiny fraction of the cost of your trip.

When on our travels we often do things we wouldn't do in our normal lives! We seem to let our guard down and take risks. Sadly, some dream holidays very quickly turn into a nightmare when we find ourselves in a foreign country realising we do not have the right cover.

As with your travel plans, you need to do your homework when it comes to choosing your travel insurance. All over the world people seem to be very relaxed when it comes to travel insurance. Travellers are being tempted into taking cheap or complimentary insurance deals and when things go wrong they find they are not covered for the most basic of mishaps.

People often don't read the fine print for their travel insurance and can get caught out when something happens. Some policies are so basic they even fail to protect families against things like missed flights, lost bags and medical bills.

Tony Venning, Managing Director of NoWorries Insurance has experienced firsthand the horror of being involved in an accident that required urgent medical attention while overseas, only to find out his insurance did not cover the accident.

Tony was travelling with his wife in Vietnam and they decided to throw caution to the wind and hire a motor-scooter. On the way back from a beautiful day of sight-seeing they lost control of the bike and both he and his wife fell off.

Their injuries were frightening! Tony had lost most of the skin on his left hand side, his ankle was broken and he had severed an artery in his ankle which led to blood spurting out about a foot high in the air.

They were rescued by a local and driven in a local banana truck, which doubled as an ambulance, to a very basic medical clinic with questionable hygiene standards and an even more questionable medical experience.

After requesting some crutches, one of the locals got a band saw and literally cut two wooden sticks out of the forest and presented them to Tony. It was then that they decided they needed to get off the island to receive proper medical treatment.

Tony and his wife travelled back to Australia only to discover their wounds were horribly infected as a result of sub-par medical care and they spent the following two weeks in Flinders Hospital in Adelaide receiving skin grafts, undergoing plastic surgery and having their broken limbs set.

Unfortunately, Tony's insurance didn't cover any of the medical costs as it did not provide cover for the operation of a motor-scooter unless you had a valid motorcycle licence in your resident country. It was an expensive and very stressful oversight.

Tony says he always dreamt of one day owning his own company but it was the scary experience in Vietnam that made him realise life is too short and after months of brain storming and planning, NoWorries Insurance was born.



With a bit of research Tony noticed that many travel insurance policies did not include common sporting and adventure activities. Being a keen sports person, bike rider and winter sports enthusiast himself Tony's decided to design a specialty travel product for the adventure traveller.

With NoWorries Travel Cover you can travel the world and be free to enjoy your holiday knowing you have comprehensive cover. Below is a list of adventure sports that NoWorries Insurance covers as standard.

- Skiing & Snowboarding (including off piste)
- Surfing
- Cycle Touring
- Scuba Diving (up to 30m for qualified divers or where accompanied by qualified instructor)
- Canoeing (up to grade 5 water rapids)
- Kayaking (up to grade 5 water rapids)
- Rafting (up to grade 5 water rapids)
- Plus cover for all motorcycles under 125cc if the driver has an internationally recognised licence.

You're probably wondering how much a comprehensive travel policy like this costs. Well rest assured, NoWorries Insurance is so confident that their prices are competitive they offer their customers a price beat guarantee for that extra no worries feeling.

In addition to NoWorries Travel Cover, Tony also designed NoWorries Bike Cover to provide cyclists with a comprehensive bike insurance product. Tony knows how expensive race bikes and mountain bikes can be, and through his connections within the sport he realised there wasn't really any insurance products out there that properly understood this market so he decided to

create a product that caters for the serious bike enthusiast.

Tony believes he has developed the broadest specialist bicycle insurance in the Australian market. He has carefully designed this product to give NoWorries customers the freedom to enjoy their bikes not only in Australia but all over the world.

As standard, NoWorries Bike Cover includes Worldwide Theft and Accidental damage including whilst in use, Bike and Cycle Touring, Racing Risk, Competition and whilst in Transit.

For extra peace of mind NoWorries Bike Cover also provides you with Personal Accident protection whilst riding your bicycle and, as an added bonus, if your bicycle is under 12 months old NoWorries offer New for Old Replacement.

They even cover custom parts and accessories - you simply have to tell NoWorries Insurance about them when you apply or when adding new parts to your bicycle.

So whether your thing is road bikes, mountain bikes, electric bikes, recumbent bikes or custom builds the NoWorries Bike Policy has got your covered!

Insurance is supposed to make us feel safe and secure if something were to happen. Consumers really should make sure they read and fully understand what is included in the cover and more importantly what isn't! Do your homework and make sure the cover is right for you.

For a quick quote on your travel or bike insurance please go to www.noworriesinsurance.com.au. Live more worry less!

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- Rental Vehicle Excess Reimbursement Cover up to \$3,000
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- We cover against lift closure if you can't ski due to adverse weather conditions up to \$5000
 - a. We will pay the additional costs to travel to the nearest ski resort with an open piste
 - b. We will pay the additional costs to buy a daily ski pass at the nearest resort with an open piste

Any advice provided is general advice only. NoWorries Insurance does not provide any advice based on your objectives, financial needs or situation. You should carefully read the relevant Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) to ensure the product is right for you. A copy of each PDS is available on our website or by contacting us. NoWorries Insurance is a trading name of

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CARINTHIA: PREMIER DEFENSE

Choosing the right sleep system



Getting away from everyday life comes in many forms, and camping is one of those great adventure activities many of us do, to escape. Even though you are camping with the intention of getting back to nature in the outback, the bush, or by the beach, it doesn't mean you need to sacrifice a good night's sleep. The options for sleep systems are endless, and choosing the right one for you is not something you need to "lose sleep" over.

Damien Ewin from Premier Defence Agencies (Carinthia distributor) has a few pointers:

WHY YOU NEED THE RIGHT "SLEEP SYSTEM" WHEN ADVENTURING

Oddly enough, it's the same reason that you have a good bed and coverings at home in order to be rested for our best performance. Sleep recharges us and it requires being physically comfortable and temperature stable so that there is no disturbance or waking during the sleep period. Yes, you can get by on four hours of rough sleep, but every day will get worse and your performance and enjoyment will suffer, until you crash.

Getting your full period of undisturbed rest is the key to how you enjoy your adventure and this is where your choice of sleep system comes into play. If you can get the quality rest you require, you can run yourself ragged all day and be ready to do it again the next day, without much of a penalty. This is where your choice of sleeping bag, insulation mat and shelter come into play, and this system can vary depending on the activity you're engaged in. Whatever you're doing, your system still needs to get you the required rest.

THE TOP 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD TAKE WHEN CAMPING FOR A GREAT NIGHT'S SLEEP

The easy ones are a quality insulating sleeping mat, and a well-designed tent or bivouac bag. You can't put your bag directly onto the ground or a tent floor as where your body flattens the insulation; it stops working, so you need some form of effective insulation. An external shelter allows for more insulation and creates a microclimate around you.

Food is a must as it provides the energy to heat your body and the sleeping bag. Remember that the bag only traps your body heat, it can't generate heat, and food, hot or cold, is what generates your body heat.

If you are going somewhere cold, an insulation jacket and trousers can keep you out of your bag for longer as well as boost your bag rating if you wear them to bed. They can also act as a pillow if you're not wearing them.

Lastly, take a book. The paperback is not dead and it's nice to escape into a good story while you wait for sleep to overcome you!



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WHAT SLEEPING BAG SHOULD YOU CHOOSE FOR SUMMER?

In Australia, Summer is relatively easy, although I have used a winter bag in the tropics! Lot's of humidity, sweating and temperature variations with a dew-point that can make you think it's raining so, obviously, something light, but with reserve warmth. Here I would suggest a two part system of a +5 to +10 comfort rated back with a fleece liner.

Use the fleece only if it's really hot, the bag for the normal temps and combine both keep you warm on those odd nights where the temp really drops. And in this humid environment, it has to be synthetic. Why? You're also going to be pretty dirty and oily and this can quickly degrade a down bag.

BEST SLEEPING BAG STYLE FOR THE SNOW

You've chosen the environment with narrowest margin for error here! Unlike temperate or tropical climates, your margin for error has almost evaporated when you go into the snow and even getting sweaty can be terminal in these temperature ranges. This is also where your tested temperature rating is at its most important. So, to choose your sleeping bag, first research the historical temperature range for your destination.

Your bag should be Comfort Rated to the average lowest temperature at your destination, with the Extreme Limit being around the worst temperatures ever recorded there. This means that if the weather goes bad, you'll have enough thermal protection to survive.

Next, you need to decide on down or synthetic and this depends on your exposure to moisture. We have a "wet" kind of snow here that quickly dampens gear so if you're expecting to be carrying a lot of moisture into the bag at night or there's a risk of you getting wet, you'll need a synthetic despite the weight and bulk penalty. If you can keep fairly dry, then down is best.

I know people will point out the treated downs, but these only go so far and if wet enough, it stops working and you're dead. With good technical synthetic, you can get into it wet, as in I've just fallen through the ice wet, and create a temperature inversion that will dry you and the bag out! Don't forget that the bag is only one part of your sleep system and in snow, your shelter and ground insulation are also very important, as is your calorific intake.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SLEEPING BAG TYPES: G-Loft vs Down

Obviously, one is a natural, sustainable fill and the other a man-made creation, but the real difference is performance. Carinthia uses the highest quality selected down from cultivated suppliers in the cold north of Europe, but despite innovations like Carinthia's DISCover system and new treatments, down is still not as robust or impervious to moisture as a high quality synthetic like G-Loft. And that is why G-Loft was developed.

Carinthia wanted a synthetic fill that was as close to the properties of down as possible, but durable and robust. Down is still best in warmth for weight, but if you're adventure racing or some other hard-use activity, you want to know that if you and your gear gets wet and dirty, you can still sleep warm that night and at the end, throw your bag into the washing machine and be ready for the next adventure with your bag still performing.

Down just doesn't respond well to that treatment, whatever the type. But remember, Synthetics are of different qualities, just like down and you need a high quality synthetic for the best performance.





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GRAMPIANS: AN ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

by Paul Gruber

I imagine the term “Adventure Playground” would conjure images for the general public of kiddie swings, bridges and monkey bars. For most outdoor enthusiasts, this is more likely to have us salivating over the prospect of the Australian bush at it finest. Steep and mighty escarpments to explore by foot, endless lakes to paddle or swim and a scattering of tracks to enable exploration by bike. The Grampians is sure to qualify for “Adventure Playground” status, and when Victorian based Adventure Junkie announced they were holding their annual Winter Challenge Adventure Race there, most of the local Adventure racing teams were sold straight away.

Now a winter challenge normally requires me packing thermals and a beanie, however during last September's event, blue skies and sunshine created perfect conditions for racing. The course format was a stage event, which comprised running, kayaking, abseiling and mountain biking for approximately 8 hours on the Saturday and 6 hours on the Sunday, allowing teams to rest and recuperate and then front up to the start line on the Sunday morning - if they were still game!

Set within some of the recent fire affected parts of the northern Grampians, it was a great opportunity to support some of the local businesses that had suffered through national park closures and even loss of property during the fires. The caravan park owners where we stayed had lost their house and were still living out of one of the cabins. It was a great reminder to us that supporting fire affected communities by visiting is so important to keep the tourism industry alive.

Since 2012, power prices have increased by \$300 a year.

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The first day of competition saw the race start from Zumstein Picnic Ground with teams of four running along the MacKenzie Creek up to MacKenzie Falls and ending up at Wartook Reservoir where they then had to paddle the length of the lake to reach more checkpoints.

Team ThoughtSports/Shotz nutrition lead from the start with an all star lineup including the likes of Rob Preston, Hugh Stodart, Josh Street and Kim Willocks. The sun broke through the clouds as Team Dynamite and Peak Adventure chased hard on their bikes north along the Mt Difficult Range using undulating fire trails and dirt roads. This section presented novice teams with the most problems from a navigation perspective with some "not so obvious" route choices to consider and also a couple of off track checkpoints requiring teams to abandon their bikes and head bush on foot. When they found their way to Mt Stapylton car park, teams made their way up the rocks to an abseiling location. Once all of the teams had safely descended the ropes, they then faced a long scrambling climb up to the Mount Stapylton summit. The final mountain bike involved finding their way to Laharum Grove along mostly flat, but occasionally sandy vehicle tracks.

With day one complete, racers gathered at Deirdrie's nestled beneath the dramatic western escarpment of the Mt Difficult Range to enjoy a much deserved meal at and to recount the days adventure. The next morning the starting line was again at Zumstein Picnic Ground. The numbers were bolstered by a large contingent of one day two person teams who came with fresh legs having entered the life course. The overall win was still there to be fought out, with Team Dynamite's Paul Gruber, Angus Rodwell, Karina Vitiritti and Tim Boote ready to pounce on any opportunity.

Biking through dirt tracks and attempting to find checkpoints hidden in trees, wood piles and next to dams, they again ended up at Lake Wartook. With conditions windier than the previous day the paddle was slightly more challenging, but there were many smiling faces all the same. With a "downhill" ride to get to the base of the Asses Ears, they were then faced with a lung-busting trek up to the top of the unique rock formation.

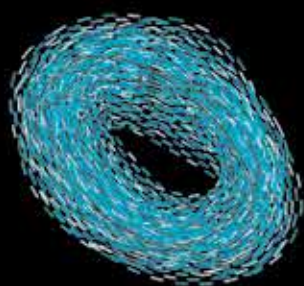


The reward was magnificent views in every direction, but especially from one checkpoint location hanging just off the highest rock ledge and needing some clever thought about how to approach it safely. With only a relatively short ride left to go, teams raced (or coasted) back to the Wander Inn where they enjoyed another great meal and some glorious afternoon sunshine.

Adventure racing is a sport for those individuals who want a mental and physical challenge in an event where finishing is not necessarily guaranteed, and getting lost is really just part of the attraction. I can truly say this sport has taken me places, I would have no reason to venture to... from waist deep stagnant swamps to exposed hilltop cliffs, it provides no end of beautiful landscapes permanently etched into my mind and both wonderful and terrifying experiences to relive with the mates that I race with. One race that will definitely be on our race calendar this year is the winter challenge.

Serge and Maria are the owners of the Victorian based event management company Adventure Junkie and they are experts at putting on events that give the best possible experience for both world class athletes wanting to race hard and first timers just looking to finish. In a world where sport now seems to be dominated by corporate outfits aiming to maximise profits, these two demonstrate their pure love for this unique sport by sinking immense amounts of time and effort into creating new diverse and exciting courses for each and every race they organise.

Team ThoughtSports/Shotz nutrition secured their win during the trekking leg and won the two day pro course, with Dynamite Adventure coming in second.



jenolan caves
explore marvel stay



AN ALL AUSSIE ADVENTURE 6FT TRACK, JENKAT46 CHALLENGE

by [Mark Henderson](#)

Often, when we consider the word adventure, we think of far off places; places yet to be explored or discovered.

Rarely, do we consider that we, in Australia, live in one of the most beautiful and unique places on the planet.

However, Australia offers many opportunities for adventure. We have oceans, desert, rainforests, and vast landscapes, often untouched by people. Recently, I was privileged to join an adventure, here in our own backyard.

The challenge, dubbed the JENKAT46, based on the fact that the trek runs for 46 kilometres from the Jenolan Caves, through to Katoomba, took place in the historic Blue Mountain's, located one and a half hours from Sydney CBD, which makes it fairly accessible to anyone interested in tackling it.

Let by expedition leaders, Shane Pophfer and Darren Wise of Peak Potential Adventures, the JENKAT46 challenge took myself and a small group of adventurers along a trail blazed by Gregory Blaxland, William Lawson, and William Charles Wentworth in 1813, as part of their journey across the Blue Mountains.

The trail itself was beautiful. There was lush scenery, as we carved our way up the mountains, and down into valleys, travelling from the magnificent Jenolan Caves right through to Katoomba. We saw little rivers, and were captivated by the wildlife, with birds, wallabies and even wild cows making their homes in the mountains.

Despite the beauty, 46 kilometres is a tough ol' slog, even across two days.



On day one, myself and five other wannabe adventurers arrived at Katoomba to meet our guides and the team. We were bright eyed and bushy tailed, despite arriving at Katoomba for 6am.

From Katoomba, we drove across to the beginning of the Six-Foot Trek at the Jenolan Caves. Arriving at Jenolan, I was in awe of the place. The natural land formations, and the way the morning light broke through and lit up inside of the caves was fairly breath-taking, as was the beginning of our hike, albeit in a very different way.

We started on the trek, leaving from Jenolan Caves at around 7:45–8am on Saturday morning, getting on our way to an Eco Lodge rest stop at Coxs River, about 30 kilometres away.

Day one was intriguing. We got to see so much, and everyone chatted away, happy to be out on an adventure.

Like every adventure, the trek had its challenges. It wasn't quite a stroll in the park, as at points along the trail, we were forced to walk up hills, and then down again into valleys. Early on in the piece, it was nice when the downhill sections came up.

They'd give you a chance to catch your breath and to enjoy some of the scenery. However, as the journey continued and the aches and pains began to set in, I started to detest the downhill parts. However, I pushed through, and I'm glad I did.

On, that first day, we worked hard, pushing ourselves close to our limits, until at one point, around 20 kilometres into the trek, we came upon what our expedition leaders called Heartbreak Hill.

It was a series of steep hills, that never seemed to have an end. We just walked up, and then up, and then up, and it truly did break your heart.

However, upon reaching the peak of heartbreak hill, the views were glorious, and I was awash with an overwhelming feeling of achievement. It was brilliant. From Heartbreak Hill, we continued, mostly downhill, until we came to the Edo Lodge at Coxs River at around 4pm, and I tell you what, the Eco Lodge was certainly a sight for sore eyes. At around \$35 per person, per night, it is very much worth it.

There are bunk beds with all blankets and pillows provided, and believe me after a 30-kilometre hike through the mountains, a bed is a very welcome sight. There is also a pit toilet, and after having to hold on all day, unless you were some of our team, who were happy to dig a hole while on the trek, a pit toilet (despite the smell) is an absolute luxury.



Near the Eco Lodge, there were a few private pools, and being the nice guy that I am, and being part of a nice team of adventurers, the young couple who run the lodge took us down to a secret spot, and allowed us the opportunity to relax and clean the dirt and pain from the day off. The rocks, made of a naturally occurring granite also trap some of the heat from the sun, so we were able to relax, and take full advantage of a sneaky, naturally occurring hot rock treatment, which was really well received.

After day one, the Eco Lodge helped heal and relax the body, bringing me back to life and after a great night sleep, I was ready for day two.

We were up early on day two, and hit the trek at around 8am, with the knowledge that there was only around 16 kilometres left.

About one kilometre or so into day two, we came to our first real challenge of the day, a swing bridge, which was situated around 15-20metres above the flowing water beneath.

Personally, I'm fine with heights, and was keen to tackle the bridge. In fact, it was one of my favourite parts of the trek. It bounced and swung ever so slightly, and for the avid photographers on the team, it made for some great pictures.

However, not everyone was quite as okay with heights as I was, and we had a few worried faces crossing over. For some of the team, the bridge was one of the realest challenges on JENKAT46.



From there, we moved on, eventually coming into the beautiful Megalong Valley. Now, if you ever travel to the Blue Mountains, I vigorously recommend acquainting yourself with the Megalong Valley – it is mesmerising. An open valley among mountains, littered with gorgeous fields and open spaces, as well as naturally occurring small creeks and river systems, it is a wonderful place.

As the name might suggest, Megalong, is just that, "mega long" and we trekked through it for quite some time on day two. In fact, after Megalong, we only had a few kilometres until our final destination, and Katoomba.

As with many challenges, the hardest part of the journey is right at the end, and JENKAT46 was no exception. Darren and Shane had both warned me throughout the journey about "Dummy Spit Hill", which basically made up the last kilometre of the trek.

The name is a little deceptive, as "Dummy Spit Hill" is not really a hill, but rather a ridiculously steep set of stairs that climbs up the side of a mountain. It was by far the hardest part of the trek. My legs wanted to give up, and I must have drank close to three litres of water making my way up that staircase. It was tough.

However, I don't often get to feel the sort of elation I was thrilled to experience once I reached the top of those stairs, and made my way to the end of the trek. It was a fantastic feeling.

JENKAT46 was definitely a challenge that pushed me. I felt uncomfortable and worn out along the journey, but I also felt excitement and life. It was an awesome adventure and something that I will remember for a long time yet, and it was in my own backyard, which is really just an added bonus.

Next time, you feel as though you need an adventure, but need something close, and attainable, I would highly recommend pushing yourself and tackling the full Six-Foot Track, right here in Australia's beautiful Blue Mountains.

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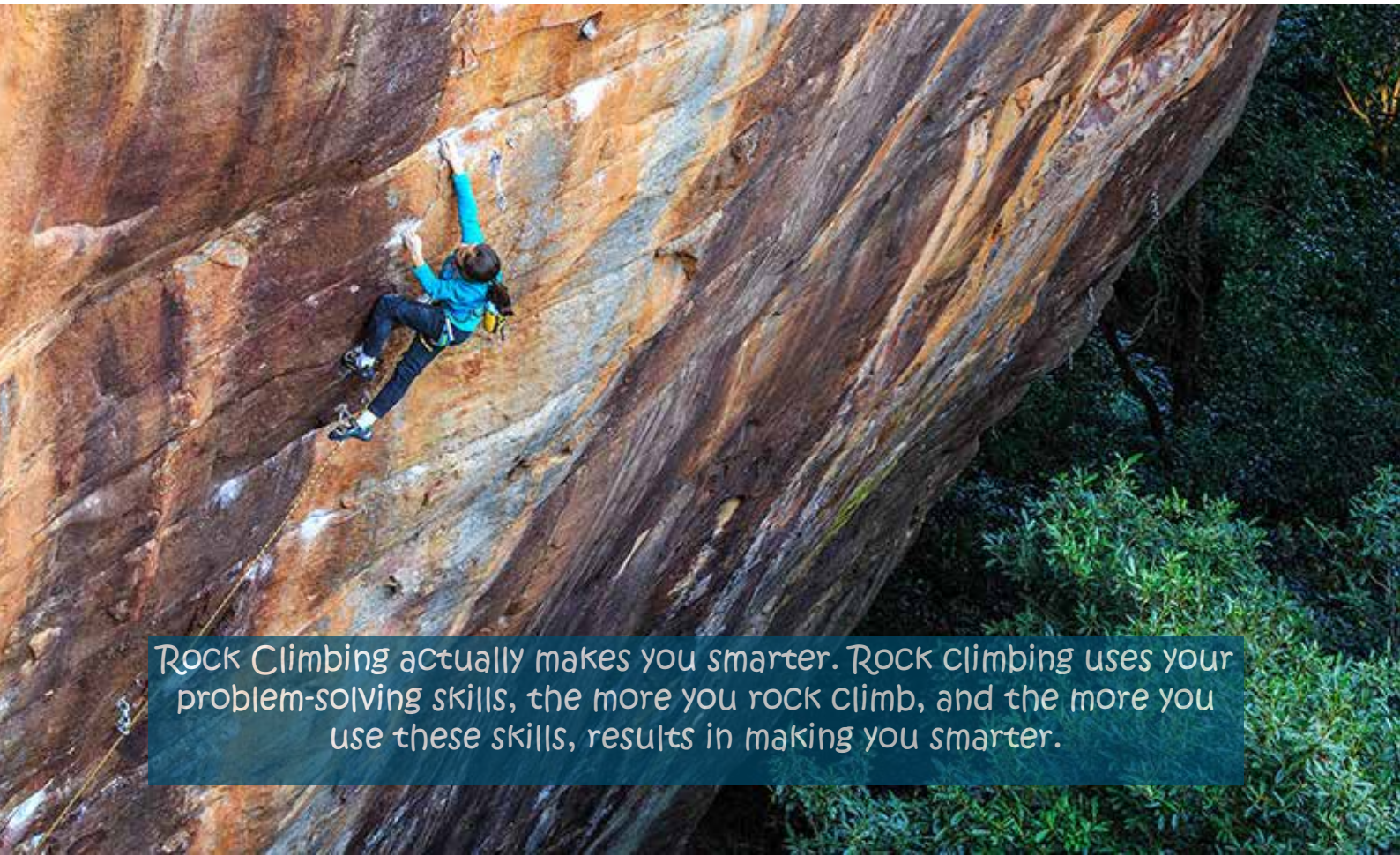
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WEIRD & WONDERFUL FACTS ABOUT ROCK CLIMBING



Rock Climbing actually makes you smarter. Rock climbing uses your problem-solving skills, the more you rock climb, and the more you use these skills, results in making you smarter.



The first artificial climbing wall was built in 1939.

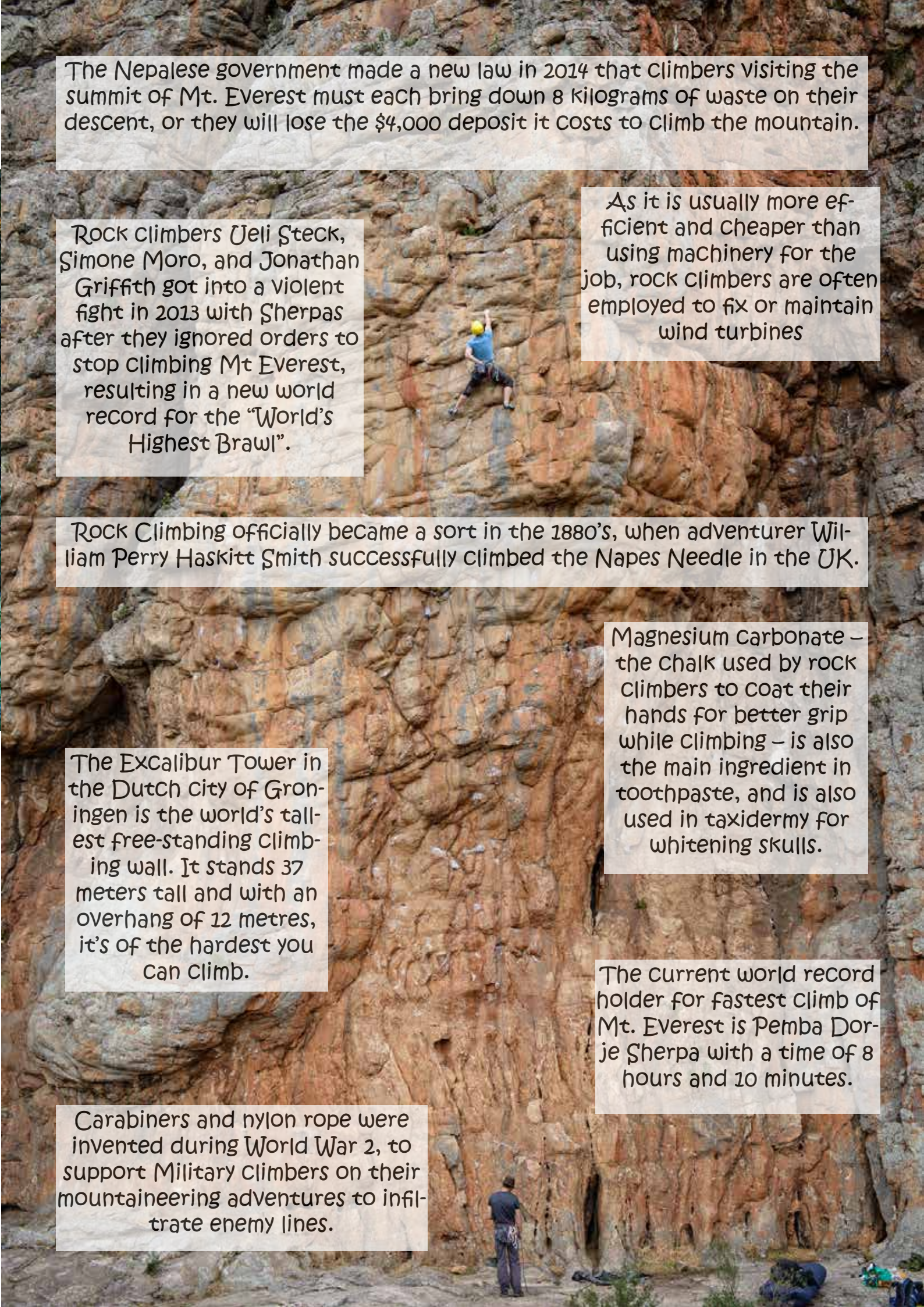
Goats are better rock climbers than humans - they have evolutionary modified toenails that allow flexible grip, and soft inner pads (like climbing shoes for humans).

Paintings dated around 200 BC show Chinese men rock climbing, meaning rock climbing has been documented for thousands of years.

One third of children who attended hospital Emergency Departments in Australia last year had injuries which were related to monkey bars or other climbing equipment.

Rock climbing can burn anywhere from 500 to 900 calories per hour

The highest mountain climbed on stilts was Mount Baden-Powell at an elevation of 2,864.8 metres by Ashrita Furman in 2011.



The Nepalese government made a new law in 2014 that climbers visiting the summit of Mt. Everest must each bring down 8 kilograms of waste on their descent, or they will lose the \$4,000 deposit it costs to climb the mountain.

Rock climbers Ueli Steck, Simone Moro, and Jonathan Griffith got into a violent fight in 2013 with Sherpas after they ignored orders to stop climbing Mt Everest, resulting in a new world record for the "World's Highest Brawl".

As it is usually more efficient and cheaper than using machinery for the job, rock climbers are often employed to fix or maintain wind turbines

Rock Climbing officially became a sport in the 1880's, when adventurer William Perry Haskitt Smith successfully climbed the Napes Needle in the UK.

The Excalibur Tower in the Dutch city of Groningen is the world's tallest free-standing climbing wall. It stands 37 meters tall and with an overhang of 12 metres, it's one of the hardest you can climb.

Magnesium Carbonate – the chalk used by rock climbers to coat their hands for better grip while climbing – is also the main ingredient in toothpaste, and is also used in taxidermy for whitening skulls.

The current world record holder for fastest climb of Mt. Everest is Pemba Dorje Sherpa with a time of 8 hours and 10 minutes.

Carabiners and nylon rope were invented during World War 2, to support Military climbers on their mountaineering adventures to infiltrate enemy lines.

Gear Reviews



Merrell Moab Shoes

This is the new generation of the Moab shoe. Designed to have the same comfort, fit and versatility of the Moab shoes before it, but with a sleek and modern look, plus 3D printed upper for protection and support. These shoes are comfortable, lightweight and they look great! They're versatile for all kinds of weather, with waterproof technology and great traction on wet surfaces. Whether you're running on the road, dirt, the beach, or just taking a leisurely walk; these new design Moab shoes will be your new best friend.

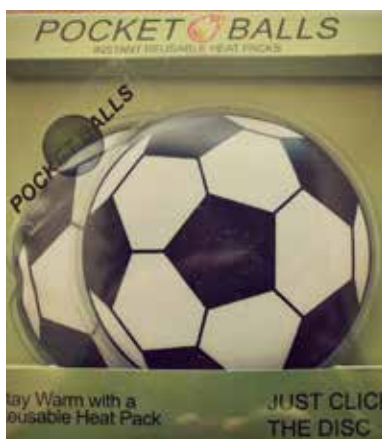


Cool Xchange

The Cool Xchange is designed to help you recover from sprains and strains faster by combining cooling and compression in one. With an ongoing shoulder injury it was a little bit awkward trying to find the right way to wear it to suit, but with a little testing I was able to find a happy medium and the relief was almost instant. The Cool Xchange is reusable, doesn't need to be put in the fridge and can be used anywhere, anytime. It cools for around 2 hours and comes in a range of sizes to suit various ailments.

Osprey Kode 32

Comfortable, stable and accessible: the Osprey Kode 32 backpack is the ideal companion for winter sports! If you're heading to the snow, this backpack has straps designed to hold skis and snowboards, glove friendly buckles and zips, a helmet carry system, scratch-free goggle pocket, back pocket for a water reservoir and so much more. It even has a place to put your shovel if you're heading backcountry skiing! You can take everything you need for a day in the snow in one simple backpack. It holds up to 13 kilos, but is lightweight so you'll barely notice.



Pocket Balls

You can never be too careful when you're out adventuring, and one great way to prepare is with Pocket Balls. Pocket Balls mini instant heat packs are re-usable and non-toxic. Pocket Balls are fantastic if you don't have a lot of space but want to be prepared in case of a minor injury. They are easy to use (you simply click the metal button) and they start to work instantly. And if you aren't injured and the weather is getting cold, they are also great warmers! Available in Football/Rugby, Soccer Ball, Golf Ball, Cricket Ball, Tennis Ball, Basketball and Magic 8 Ball.



Vigilante Men's Supersonic Tee

If you're looking for a great gym shirt or something to wear when you're heading out on the bike, into the hinterland for a walk – any activity indoors or out, the Vigilante Men's Supersonic Tee. This is by far one of the most comfortable t-shirts on the market. Its light, quick drying and doesn't irritate your skin. In fact, sometimes it feels as though you're not wearing any shirt at all – that's how light it is! Part of the Quick Wick Elite series, this shirt is a mix of technicity and comfort.

Scarpa Shoes

Scarpa are well known as one of the best trail running shoes available, and recently we had the chance to test run a pair of the new Proton GT-X Alpine Runners. As an amateur trail runner, I have discovered that shoe choice can make a big difference when running rugged trails. These shoes have been test run on hard and soft sand, grass, concrete, bitumen, and rugged trail through the Gold Coast Hinterland. Through mud and flowing creeks, along some very rough track surfaces with exposed roots and rocks, steep grades and steps, these shoes certainly copped a lot of hard surfaces, and I need to say how impressed I am with the amount of support they give.

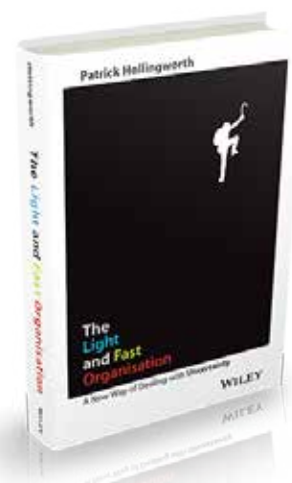


Fix n zip

Remember when you were travelling, your backpack full to the brim and you just wanted to squeeze that one extra shirt in, just in case? Then you did you zip up --- only to have it snap on you! So you're about to head to the airport, and your bag is busted. What to do? That's exactly the kind of situation the Fix N Zip was designed for! Not only bags, but tents, handbags, jackets, and more. It's easy to attach (no needle and thread needed), eco friendly, available in three sizes; and definitely worth adding as a must-have travel companion.

Light and Fast Organisation

Business versus mountaineering: you might think you wouldn't find too much in common between these two very different aspects of life – but you'd be wrong. Written by experienced mountaineer, an in-demand international speaker, mentor and consultant, and a TEDx presenter – Patrick Hollingworth, the Light and Fast Organisation is a blueprint for organisations, showing you how to become comfortable with the uncomfortable and the benefits of becoming light, fast and agile in business. Its an interesting way of looking at the business model and one that certainly gets you thinking.



Gear Reviews SPECIAL

Charles tests into Antarctica

So you want to really test a product in surroundings that the manufacturer has claimed it works in: what could be more extreme than taking the gear to Antarctica?

In this edition, I have done all of the relevant gear reviews based on my experience with the product during the Outer Edge Polar Challenge Ride for Leukemia.

CARINTHIA D400M LIGHTWEIGHT BAG

The newly developed D400M combines a high-end sleeping bag with minimum weight and excellent heat output. This unique relationship is achieved through the use of Shelltex Superlight 25g/m² and industry best European Snow Goose down 95/5 ratio.

This bag was perfect and kept me warm when confined to my tent and during sleep hours. Packs down perfectly and used minimal space in my storage box.

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Tested to EN 1357

Filling: European snow goose down 95/5

Outer Shell: Shelltex Superlight (100% PA, 25g/m²)

Inner Lining: Shelltex Superlight (100% PA, 25g/m²)

Size: L

Inner dimensions (cm): 230/80/50

Weight (g): 735

Size (cm): 200

Pack Size (cm): 16 x 17



Rescue Swag

Ok so most of us have seen this product in magazines or on TV, think their successful pitch on Shark Tank.....

Let me say that the Rescue Swag seems to be a comprehensive and portable first aid kit at first glance especially when I added my specific requirements for Antarctica to it.

BUT it is a 1st Aid Kit that does so much more. Sure, you can use the waterproof Rescue Swag to store all your first aid needs, safe and secure from the elements. However, you can also use the Rescue Swag as a sling, splint, compression device, communications pocket and water-carrying device.

The inventors of the Rescue Swag rightfully claim this is the perfect safety partner for anyone who enjoys adventure. By carrying a Rescue Swag on trips, you are better preparing yourself for anything Mother Nature throws at you – from minor accidents to snakebites and burns. In a nutshell, a great Australian product which is a must for all.



GERBER EVO TOOL

The manufacturer has developed a Multi Tool with the following features:

Aluminum handles – extremely lightweight.
Designed to reduce the hand fatigue during extended use.
Safety locking design precisely matches the suspension elements.
14-in-1 function meets all your needs.



Pliers heads are design featuring a spring action

This is a multi tool that combines rugged toughness with finesse, so it can suit your daily needs. The components open independently. You can use it for almost every situation: in construction, keep it in your glove box, when travelling, at home or outdoor.

You will find the same number of tools offered for a cheaper price, but this one will last longer and you can be sure that it will actually get the job done. There is a lifetime warranty, and as it turns out, you rarely need it.

Great value for money.

Force Ten XPD Tent



Force Ten is a brand name synonymous with quality expedition tents and the Force Ten XPD carries on the tradition with aplomb. With a pack size of just 56cm x 20cm diameter and weighing in at 4.45kg this 3 man tent is a serious bit of gear.

The recommended pitch time is 12 minutes and that seems a little long. Initially confused about which poles went where, but once I had worked it out (the instructions are not that clear and could do with a diagram) I was able to pitch the tent on my own in about 9 minutes.

With more practice I'm sure I could have done it quicker still.

Once pitched, the Force Ten XPD is a self-supporting geodesic structure that needed only a few pegs and ice screws to keep it securely positioned on the ground. The front porch has its own pole complementing the immensely strong structure that will no doubt stand firm in many a storm.

Inside there is room to sleep three snugly or two with comfort. Being on my own this space was a luxury I can recommend. For ventilation there are two meshed sections in the roof and both end 'doors' have a zipped mesh flaps. Now whilst I did not need this in Antarctica I am sure that whilst out camping you can have both 'doors' open to create a through draught whilst still keeping the flies and mosquitoes at bay.

All around the inner walls are plenty of pockets for all your essentials and there are at least 10 Karabiner Hanging Points for hanging a light, keys, setting up an internal guy rope system for even greater strength and stability ... or simply drying your gear.

At either end is a spacious porch to stow all your gear and both porches have snow valances - unlike the main body of the tent which does not have a snow valance.

Overall the build quality and finish are excellent.



Helinox LBB135 Walking Poles

The Helinox website states that The Helinox LBB135 walking poles are the most technically advanced adjustable length walking poles available in the world. The LBB135 poles are ultra lightweight, compact, immensely strong, reliable and the most easily adjustable. Well after using them in Antarctica I can certainly attest to that claim. The LBB135 can be adjusted in length to suit persons of height range 130 – 205 cm and no doubt would be great for bushwalking, walking and trekking in all conditions with or without a pack. I chose the LBB135as I was after a light weight but stiff pole with adjustable length that needs to be compacted shorter to fit easier into my limited space.

The LBB135 features super strength DAC TH72M alloy, the world's best. Fast and simple length adjustment/assembly – just one action and a lever “rest zone” (unique to Helinox) which maintains constant locking effectiveness because the locking mechanism is not under pressure when the pole is compacted for storage Vertical lever system operates two locking “cams” for substantially increased locking effectiveness without increased operator effort. Ball bearing button lock mechanism for superior durability and reliability. Quality foam grips with “wicking” wrist straps. Solidly mounted tungsten carbide tips. Rubber tip covers supplied – suited for pavement use or storage. Supplied with operating instructions and walking pole guidebook. Optional larger baskets available for snow walking, which really helped when I was away. Adjustable length flexibility.

DREAM-POT

I'll let you in on just a little secret.... it's really important that when I was in Antarctica meals had to be nutritious but also really easy to prepare. Introducing the Dream-Pot! Probably the first time this product has been to Antarctica but if weight is not an issue, will not be the last.

I first came across the Dream-Pot at a Caravan and Camping Show and had never really seen anything like it and at first was not sure if it would work on my adventure. I was however assured that this, indeed would work and in fact developed a system whereby using my Dream-Pot I was able to only have to cook twice a day not three.

What is the Dream-Pot? The Dream-Pot is a thermal cooker. This means that it is highly insulated and allows food to continue to cook (or to be kept cold) for extended periods of time without the need for external heating. Depending on the size, your Dream-Pot will have either one or two internal metal saucepans, these are used to start the cooking process, and then transferred into the thermal capsule with the lid closed. Your food will continue too cook itself without risk of overcooking, burning or drying out.

Benefits of the Dream-Pot

Convenient – Prepare and start dinner in the morning, and leave in the Dream-Pot to re heat during the day, my meals ready to eat as soon as I needed refuelling. The Dream-Pot is environmentally sound, reduced time needed to initially cook food means using less gas and electricity. It's a great way to be eco conscious while being convenient. I am determined to work with the guys from Dream-Pot to deliver a range of gear that can be used by the adventurer/expeditioner that will take into account the weight factor we all experience.





Iridium GO satellite wifi

The Iridium GO satellite wifi device is an appealing alternative to a satellite phone. It's a compact device that functions in much the same way as a MiFi hub for terrestrial mobile data, but with the addition of a facility for voice calls, SMS text messaging and an SOS facility.

The unit is easy to set up and activated simply by rotating the antenna 90 degrees into the upright position. Communication with tablets or smartphones is via wifi. I found the unit produced a consistently strong signal. The interface is then via two free apps that need to be downloaded in advance – Iridium GO! for voice and SMS text messaging, and Iridium Mail for email and web browsing. I used the Iridium GO! With my iPhone6, which functioned flawlessly. As default the system is set such that only emails of less than 50kb are downloaded, along with the headers of larger ones, which allowed me to select which (if any) of the bigger ones I needed to download.

There is also an SOS button on the unit that will send your position, plus an emergency message, to a user-defined group of contacts. In addition there's a tracking function that automatically sends regular position updates to anyone you chose. Finally, there's a growing list of third party apps designed to integrate with the system, such as Predict Wind Offshore. All in all a fantastic device that will accompany me on all trips and future expeditions. Again thanks to the crew at the Satphone Shop for providing the units and air time.



Yakima Rocketbox Pro 14

Ok so I bet that the Chris and the crew at Yakima would have been shocked when I contacted them about taking a Skybox to Antarctica. Even more so when I showed them how it would be used..... I needed a storage system to fit under my snow sailer and this was the ideal choice. It was installed as if it was on roof racks and the system is incredibly easy to use. Its large hooks slide under your crossbars, and you simply tighten big red knobs until they are snug. It also has a button to push to open the latches after you have turned the key.

With its limited length this box is best suited for general camping and cargo hauling. Oh and how did it perform, well pictures tell a 1000 words, after the storm, I dug it out after 3 days, turned the lock and popped the lid. There was minimal snow on the inside even after the battering it took.



DeLorme InReach Explorer

I decided to choose the InReach Explorer over the InReach SE Satellite Messenger as it has the ability to create and view routes on the device whereas the InReach SE requires you pair the device with a smartphone. I believed that this would be a huge advantage during my expedition. The built-in navigation capabilities allows you to create or view routes (including distance and bearing information), use the built-in digital compass, and access your elevation, speed, and moving average using the barometric altimeter and accelerometer sensors. In addition, you're able to mark important locations with waypoints and navigate a route to your waypoint or back to where you started. The Explorer also lets you view key trip statistics and detailed track logging, as well as plan your route and waypoints ahead of time; you can even share your experiences with your friends and family using a special portal.

Oh and did I mention the ability to communicate through SMS daily. Overall my suggestion, if you don't have a personal communicator yet, get the InReach Explorer.



A trip should never start with a question... it should start with lots of them. Strangely, contradictions increase my desire for adventure. When I thought about travelling to Verbier, Switzerland, I never imagined I would touch ground in Autumn, when the weather becomes uncertain and the mountains become white; as skiing is really not my strongest skill. I also would not have imagined that it would be the best time to explore some of the best single tracks right in the middle of Europe. But I am soon to realize that there's never a bad day in Verbier.

As a mountain biker I'm always searching for the next big adventure; all over the world. Ten years ago I did my first mountain bike trip when I was fourteen, to Portes du Soleil. Since then my hunger for new trails, countries and cultures grew. I define this passion as a personal fascination to break down boundaries and add another country to the bucket list; the bike is just the way I do it.

When I arrive to Geneva airport with my 'rides-way-better-than-me-friend', Rui, I was excited about not crossing the border to France again, and staying for the first time in Switzerland.

We'd be sharing the Bike Verbier chalet with other guests, all from the United Kingdom, which directly translates into good times on the trails, lifts and pubs. "Is it your first time here?" - I ask one Steve, of the British;

He smiles back at me and says, "Actually, it's my eighth time". "What the hell makes this guy come back to Verbier for eight years straight?!" I ask myself, after getting a bit off-guard with his response. "What keeps you coming back?" - he smiles again - "we'll talk in the end of the week" - he says.



VERBIER

VERTIGO KEEPS US MOTIVATED

by António Abreu

"Shoes off boys, socks and loose feet inside the chalet please" says Lucy, Bike Verbier owner, welcoming us with three kisses, French style as she says. Sixteen years ago Lucy visited Verbier region in the course of winter holidays and ended up falling in love with Phil, her boyfriend and business partner. We soon understand that they complement each other. Lucy is the true organiser but Phil... well "it's just like working with a naughty kid at school", says James, one of the guides. Even so, that's what makes this week so special. It shows during breakfast, uplifts and riding some serious singletrack delightfulness.

All ways lead to the front yard garden where mountains emerge massively in front of the chalet. I feel small in the middle of these mountains but I feel freedom as well, that's all I care. A round just-baked cake is on top of a huge kitchen table - "is that all for us Lucy? We have some pedalling tomorrow", she smiles and cuts a big slice of fluffy blueberry high calorie cake for me and Rui, with a big cup of warm coffee. I've never felt so welcome.

Wine, cheese and brake pads

Cold Autumn mornings mix perfectly with the mysterious massive peaks that surround us.

As soon as the first rays of sun directly strike my chest, face and legs, I feel alive once again, thankful for beginning another week of riding, curious about the unknown. 15 minutes warm-up pedalling from Etiez to the first lift, Le Châble, takes us from 800 meters to 1500 meters, Verbier city centre. From Verbier we go up again to Croix-des-Ruinettes, at 2200 meters high, which perfectly places us where action takes place. We soon realise that there are so many options for all different tastes and riding styles. During Summer you can go even higher by lift, but in Autumn pedalling is your only option from 2200 metres up. Verbier Bike Park offers a lift-base system where we can drop down some serious downhill tracks and the surrounding mountains gives us the chance of starting fresh singletrack adventures.

After a couple of downhill runs, Phil takes us to one of his favourite trails, Vertigo, a 1400 meter vertical descent from the top of Croix-des-Ruinettes back to Le Châble, on the edge of steep switchbacks and technical rock sections. As I struggle and put all my focus on making it to the next corner, Phil pops his back wheel side to side. "Did we bring extra brake pads for this trip?" - asks Rui while hitting another sharp switchback - "Yes, just one set as we usually do" - "I don't think it will be enough..." - he says.

As we stop to breathe and restore confidence for the next challenging couple hundred meters, Phil reminds us that during this season he used about forty brake pads total. "I told you it was steep boys!" - says Phil laughing at us. "I knew it was steep but this is just another level of riding", says Rui.

Vertigo keeps us motivated at each new corner. Excited, curious and never bored, it keeps us awake and aware for the danger. It also keeps us encouraged as we cross yet another daunting obstacle. The biggest challenge is to keep your eyes on the trail, your fingers on the brakes and your feet on the pedals; well, that's usually the plan. The right amount of braking will keep you on pace for the next corner. As we arrive to the bottom of Le Châble again, the worn out brake pads smell impeccably mixes with the essence of a local cheese and wine festival. "When you're in Switzerland you always find good reasons to have loads of wine and cheese, while watching cows fighting" - says Phil.

The Canton of Valais is famous for its ski slopes but cow fighting is just the next big thing for the Swiss. Unlike bulls, cows do their business in a queenly manner. After mooing a couple of nasty 'words' to their opponents the battle is mostly a push and shove with little harm to the animals, where the loser quickly runs away when realises that there's no winning. All of this makes perfect sense if you add a bit of wine, music, good weather and cheese... and more wine.

After finishing a full stock of brake pads, the next days are a roller coaster of emotions, especially when we leave our comfort zone near Verbier Bike Park and experience another singletrack adventure near Emosson dam, at 1970 meters high. "This trail is just like a 50 year old wife, nagging you all the time" says our guide for the day, James. "Well, that will be a challenge then!" answers Rui. Riding should be about the perfect balance between a bit of pain and a bit of enjoyment. Finding that balance should be a constant challenge for yourself.

The purpose of the Emosson dam is power generation, sending water through a headrace tunnel to a power station down in Martigny at 470 meters altitude. The vertical drop between the dam and the power station is roughly 1400 meters, which is the same vertical distance for our ride. Singletracks in Switzerland prove once more why you have to be physically and mentally prepared for a ride.

"Are you wild enough?"



Do you have what it takes to ride this whole section blind without stopping? Do you have the power and balance to get to the top of that?" - these are the thoughts that cross my mind at each new rock feature.

The first part of the trail is mainly a perfect alignment of big rocks, in an up and down maze but always with enough speed to get yourself to the next section. "Change gear, pedal, pedal, pedal. Sit down and relax, pedal more, brake!" - my mind is challenged at each new corner. You kind of get upset with it, giving every bit of yourself to get to the top, finding the perfect gear, playing with your verb system, changing gears again, swearing a bit, then flow again. The second part of the trail is pure flow, riding through loamy sections and natural features, mostly surrounded by huge pine trees and oaks. Getting to the bottom is a challenge, an epic journey, a lifetime path that you have to experience and survive. Is that what marriage is all about too?

Col du Mille

After riding pretty much the whole time on Verbier, my mind couldn't forget the high mountains on the other side, filled with fresh snow and red bushes. No bike parks, one or two fire roads and a couple of little houses makes it the complete opposite of Verbier surface. "Can we go to that side?" - I ask Phil during our first day while reaching the top of Verbier Bike Park.

"Of course! It's called Col du Mille and it's quite epic... if you feel that you want to go on an adventure!" - says Phil pointing and explaining every bit of the trail at long distance range. He clearly knows the area like a dog knows his owner, but I can't honestly distinguish the singletrack at that distance. I believe it when he says that it's better just to go there and let us experience it.

I was definitely feeling the need to 'get a bit lost' in Switzerland and I really couldn't sleep right the night before climbing up Col du Mille.



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The big baguette, the extra chocolate bar, two bananas, two litters of water and a 'small' slice of blueberry cake from the day before didn't leave much space in my backpack for all my photography gear.

"Civilisation ends here, adventure starts now boys" - says Phil, putting some rhythm up the fire road, clearly over excited to ride this trail once more. The uphill is mostly open fire road, zigzagging old barns with no one on sight. The climb starts around 1600 meters high and goes up to 2500 meters on a perfect mix of pedalling and hike-a-bike, though not directly to the top. The riding also leaves you breathless at each new step, making your body struggle and desire particles of O₂ and H₂O.

Reaching 2000 meters altitude we come to an intersection above Etiez, a transition between large fire road to singletrack wonderland. It goes up and down into blueberry territory. Right, left, right, left, left. There's never a 90 degrees corner where you need to slow down or almost stop - instead, there's enough flow to keep you on pace on the uphill sections and maintaining on the downhill. Of course, all of this makes your breathing even more dense, and your heart beat out of the comfort zone. I feel the need to ride this trail without stopping but I also feel the need of slowing down, to look around - and look up - to the next 500 meters of hike-a-bike to the top of Col du Mille cabane. "Is that where we're going Phil?" - I ask. "Yes and I promise you a delicious coffee when we arrive on top" - he answers.

With a pocket full of wild delicious blueberries I manage to find the perfect balance on the next hike-a-bike section. One hand on the crank-set and the other hand just doing 'pocket-to-mouth' movements. As everyone knows, blueberries help reduce muscle damage after strenuous exercises and help in improving memory, two things that I surely need for the next day of riding, and for the years to come.

Riding this flat singletrack, the epic traverse gets even more special when we find a couple of horses trotting at fast pace. They stop by our side on the edge of the singletrack, smell our clothes, backpacks and bicycles. After two minutes of petting in an unknown scenario, the curious horses proceed on their way, running freely in the same singletrack, not looking back. We lost their track in the enormous mountains.

As we arrive to the very windy and super cold Col du Mille peak, I start pedaling faster and faster to get the much deserved coffee that Phil promised me, soon to realise that the hut closed the day before for winter season maintenance, a week prior to normal date. I just laid on the floor in fetal position, smashing a handful of fruits that were still in my pocket. Damn! As you can imagine for an adventure as challenging as Kilimanjaro, you are faced with a lot of challenges along the way. Small mistakes and slip-ups can be devastating, and can jeopardise the whole journey. Keith's challenges were small in comparison to some, he says



The wind cuts my skin and my lips, as Autumn transitions to Winter. "I can't feel my hands... but I love it", sings Rui in a very low shivering tone, which makes it hilarious. Warming up our hands just became a new mission for everyone before dropping 1800 metres descent to Liddes.



When you go for a normal weekend ride, freedom is merely an illusion. You have to get home on time for something; put the kids in piano lessons; appear at another boring corporate lunch. Starting from there, your ride is already compromised by the day to day action, scheduling and planning. Freedom is truly an illusion.

When I set off pedaling behind Phil and Rui I understand what really frees my mind. I don't really know where I'm going, how much uphill or downhill I'll get on my tired legs... I don't really care. I just get my head up, breath the thin air once again at 2500 meters above sea level, and follow the only trail to the bottom of the valley: a singletrack. Natural features, huge ridges and gorgeous landscape makes the riding unique and worth the uphill struggle. My hands are not cold anymore but I have loads of moments that I just can't handle the bars. My legs are tired. My eyes are crying due to excess of speed (I don't want to be too emotional); but my heart is filled with joy once again.

his 'under control' kind of experience simply increases my passion and desire for adventure; I'm just looking for freedom in these colossal mountains. At the end, I kind of understand why Steve comes back every single year to ride in Verbier.

*Is it for adventure? Friendship?
Singletracks? Food? Freedom?
You just need to find the right
answer and go for it!*



THE INS AND OUTS OF BULLRIDING

with TROY WILKINSON

Troy Wilkinson is your average hard working diesel fitter who lives in a small country town somewhere in between Tamworth and Moree as the crow flies. As a young boy, his father did a lot of cattle work on properties, and encouraged Troy and his brothers to ride on calves, as he went about his work. For Troy, this turned into a passion for riding cattle.

At 12, Wilkinson (currently ranked #49 in the world of Professional Bull Riders) competed in the steer ride for his first full season, where he qualified for the ABCRA Finals. He went on to win the first two open bull rides he ever entered at the age of 17 and received the ABCRA Rookie Bull Rider that same year.

When we caught up with Troy recently, he was currently sitting at 3rd on the Australian Touring Pro Division ladder.

When asked about getting into Professional Bull Riding, and how he got into it, his hard work and determination to be the best comes out. He explains how he got his start in bull riding.

"Any up and coming bull rider can become a professional, but you have to be 18 and break through your novice rankings until you qualify as an open competitor" he said. "You can't enter a PBR event until you turn 18, so when I turned 18 I entered my first PBR event and loved it. I won my 3rd ever PBR event at Penrith NSW".


Being a Pro Bull Rider has its share of injuries, and Troy is no exception. He has experienced a number of injuries, but to his luck they all have only been short time injuries like broken ribs, concussion, fractured fingers, torn groin, sprains, and strains.

"The fact is, it's not when I get hurt it's a matter of how bad!" he told us. "The best way to overcome an injury is giving it time to completely heal".

Troy tells us he likes to stay up to scratch on his skills by riding his practice bulls at the family farm in Upper Horton. On top of riding bulls to keep his skills honed, he also needs to keep a solid fitness regime, and has training sessions 4-5 days a week at the gym. "On a weekly basis, I focus a lot on flexibility and strength. For this I do plyometric and explosive cardio activities". Keeping mental focus is the key in a sport like Professional Bull Riding, and Troy uses visualization techniques to improve his mental game.

Troy spent some time in the United States in 2011 and throughout 2013 and 2014 competing in the Built Ford Tough Series and Touring Pro events in the USA and Canada. "To be number 1, you definitely have to be living in the United States competing in the Built Ford Tough PBR tour" said Troy.

"I competed overseas for almost 2 years, our events here in Australia are definitely some of the best events I have ever competed in, but there is a lot more riders over there which makes competition tough. There's a wider range of great bucking stock as well, though Australia is not far behind."



"The best thing about being a pro bull rider is travelling around the world and seeing so many cool places, and meeting new people. Knowing that the only person who can let me down is me, my eyes are on winning an Australian title and one day becoming a world champion bull rider".

Troy's future plans involve travelling back over to compete in the Built Ford Tough Series and Touring Pro events. Over the last decade only a few Aussies have qualified for the world finals, but more recently (in the last 2 years) there are greater opportunities for good Australian riders to qualify for the world finals. "There were 5 Australians competing at the world finals last year out of a total of 35 from the Professional Bull Riding Australia Tour" he said.

There are quite a few Australians in the world rankings, and Troy told us that competition is always fierce for Australian riders to make it to the world championships. "It's not about beating the guy next to you, it's about beating the bull" he explained. "If you fall off you get no score, so the only real competition is the bull".

Every bull seems to have its own legend and story attached to it, Chainsaw was one of Australia's most famous bucking bulls. Only nine riders ever scored on him and he won the Australian national title of Bull of the Year a world record eight times during 1987 to 1994.

We asked if there was a particular favourite bull for Troy. "I honestly don't have one, only because there are so many challenging Bulls. If they brought Bushwacker out of retirement I would give him a crack, every bull rider wants to ride the best bull!" Bushwacker the Bull (who has over 41,000 fans on Facebook) owns the longest streak of consecutive buck-offs, (42), in PBR history. The lone man to remain aboard Bushwacker for eight ticks was J.B. Mauney in August 2013.

Being a professional Bull Rider might not be a fulltime job for Troy Wilkinson, but he has certainly dedicated his life to it.

LEVISON WOOD

WALKING THE HIMALAYAS

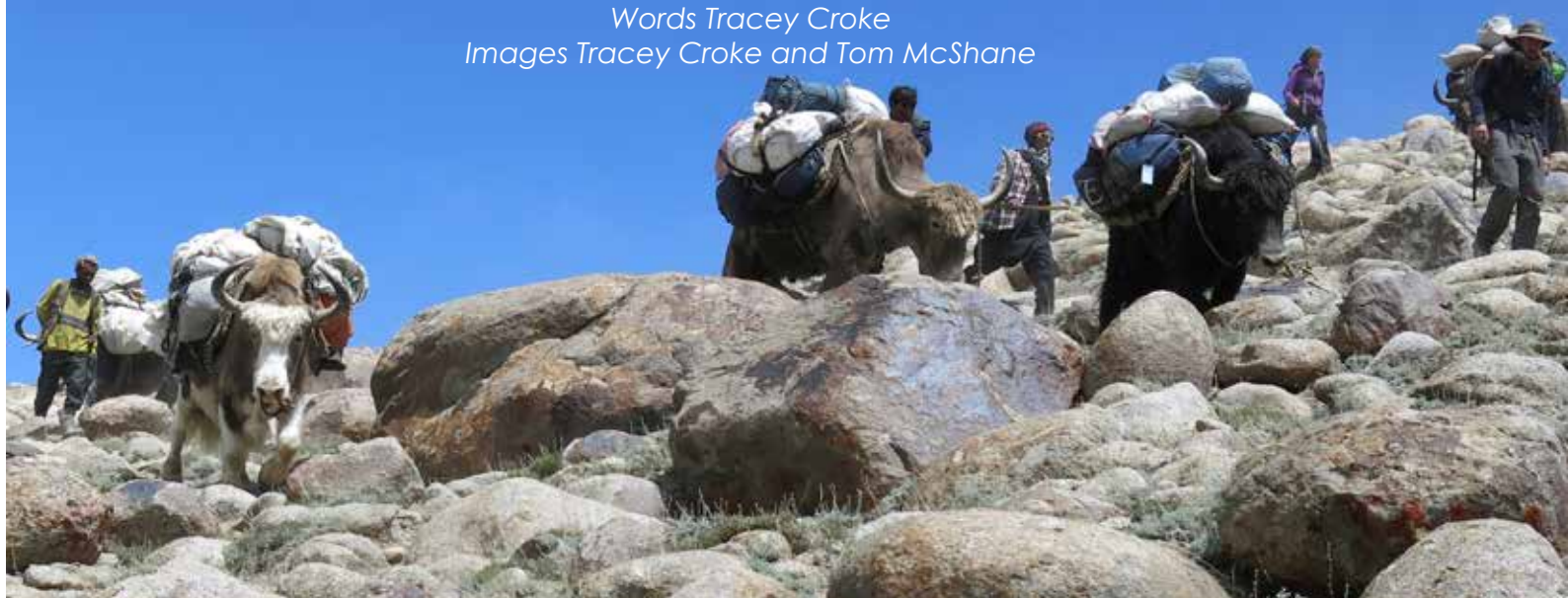


LEVISON WOOD

WALKING IN WOOD'S FOOTSTEPS

Words Tracey Croke

Images Tracey Croke and Tom McShane



Levison Wood of "Walking the Nile" fame is back with his new four-part series "Walking The Himalayas."

We only have to look in our own outback yard to know that tens of thousands of years before a chap in a safari shirt dreamt up a pioneering expedition in the rooms of the Royal Geographic Society, nomadic tribes were there, doing it without the maps, compasses and survival gear. It's a point modern-day explorer, Levison Wood (Lev to his mates) has lauded to packed audiences on his speaking tours.

The ex British Parachute Regiment Officer shot to fame in 2014 after he became the first person to attempt to walk the whole length of the River Nile. But Lev, who was forced to skip a 400-mile section of South Sudan after conflict broke out, insists, "It's not about firsts, it's about the journey and the people".

It's not the only time Lev put himself in the line of fire during his nine-month expedition of almost 4,000 miles to walk the world's longest river. He introduced us to the lighter side of himself and the so-called dark continent by joining in local customs such as a hair-rinse ritual, which involved shoving his head under a peeing cow.

In his new series "Walking The Himalayas" Lev returns with his handheld camera and continues with his mix of confronting and quirky commentary. "The aim of this new expedition was not to climb or break any records, but instead to meet the people who call the Himalayas their home".

"There is a unique bond that unites walkers everywhere," Lev recounts of his latest feat of endurance, which began in Afghanistan and travelled through the foothills of Pakistan, India and Nepal before finishing in the Secret Kingdom of Bhutan. "Travelling on foot is the only way to really explore the backcountry and villages hidden from the main trails and roads."

The 1,700-mile Himalayan epic wasn't entirely exploratory. Fourteen years earlier, Lev was a teenage backpacker escaping an insurgency in Pokhara. A Nepali guide – Binod – gave Lev food and shelter, despite having little himself and a young family to support. Lev didn't forget his longtime friend when it came to hiring local guides for his Himalayan documentary.

His mischievous Afghan guide, Malang, is a natural entertainer who enjoys a good joke – sometimes at Lev's expense. Lev is happy with Malang stealing the limelight. He's often said it's not about him, "it's about the people you meet along the way." On meeting Malang, Lev said at first glance he sensed "intelligence, humour and an indefinable madness". He was referring to the hardiness of Malang, a shepherd and Wakhi tribesman, who was the first Afghan to summit Mount Noshag (7492m), Afghanistan's highest peak.

It's not all heart-warming though. Walking The Nile viewers were shocked by the sudden and tragic death of Matt Power – a journalist covering part of the expedition – who suffered a severe heatstroke and died just two hours after feeling unwell.

The danger is real

– there is no rescue helicopter hovering and a great deal of soul-searching ensued. Tragedy almost strikes again in *Walking The Himalayas* when Lev and Binod are involved in an accident. They miraculously escape, but it's not without its consequences.

As the layers of foot blisters build, we are moved between waves of light entertainment and deep emotion. At times, you feel like you're in the journey with him and moreover he makes it feel like anyone can do it – to a degree.

Modern day exploring doesn't have to be a mammoth journey. "It can be about current affairs, scientific data, mapping new areas, current culture and sharing knowledge," defines Lev.

He believes many of us have an inner-explorer and science agrees.

According to studies, twenty percent of us have a mutation of the gene associated with feel-good dopamine levels in the brain. Known as the "wanderlust gene", it drives us to explore new places, take more risks, embrace change, and adventure.

Along with the thousands who enjoyed Wood's first hit series, *Walking The Himalayas* will appeal to those who dream of taking a remarkable journey they never thought possible - particularly if you pack the wanderlust gene and enjoy experimenting with unusual shampoos.

Walking The Himalayas will screen later this year. The Book to accompany the four-part series, *Walking the Himalayas* by Levison Wood is published by Hachette Australia, RRP \$35.00



Remarkable Rambles - in Wood's Footsteps

Wander through Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor.

In the first episode, Wood meets the nomadic people of the Wakhan Corridor, a peaceful region of Afghanistan never captured by the Taliban. Those few who have made the journey deep into the Pamir Mountains only speak of hospitable and generous people who welcome the intrepid into their cozy family yurts for warm freshly baked flatbread and mugs of hot yak-milk tea. It's a way of life that hasn't changed in a thousand years. UK based Secret Compass will take you there, but don't forget to set your watch to one thousand years ago. This is the closest you'll get to time travel.

www.Secretcompass.com

Hike the Hunza Valley, Pakistan.

In his book, which accompanies the series, Lev writes, "We followed footpaths through orchards of apricots, cherries and walnuts. Malang helped himself to dangling peaches, pears and plums as we walked, waving at farmers in knitted jumpers." They are in the fabled Hunza Valley, which is thought to be the inspiration of the Shrangri-La - an earthly paradise isolated from the outside world. Melbourne based Snow Leopard Tours owner, Imran Rahim, is originally from the Hunza and specializes in custom treks www.snowleopardtours.com



Wander through Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor.

A Spiritual Pilgrimage in India

In his book, Lev speaks of Binod's emotional reaction on reaching the Ganges for the first time. "Thank you brother...I never imagined I could see this river." Hindus have long made pilgrimages to the source of the Ganga, which starts from the Gangotri Glacier glaciers high in the Himalayas. Often called the "Land of the Gods" roads less travelled from glaciers to the Ganges can be found at www.himachaltourism.gov.in and www.himalayanwonders.com

Explore Less-known Nepal

In Nepal, Lev returns to Pokhara and is reunited with Binod's family. Afterwards he ventures into "quiet valleys with villages virtually untouched by modernity." He notes that Trekkers went there before the earthquake, but not anymore. If you want to help the continued recovery of Nepal and discover the raw landscape in its original environment, the Upper Dolpo and Makalu region are two examples of many, say The Nepal Trekking Team. "The people in this region have preserved their ancient culture, tradition and lifestyle." Browse through their treks at www.nepalhikingteam.com

Experience mystical Bhutan

Even in today's hyper-connected world, Bhutan retains its mystical status. "Take your pick," said Lev's Bhutan guide, Jamyang. "All the peaks are unclimbed here." Lev winds up his six month expedition by scaling an unclimbed peak in the shadow of the world's highest unclimbed mountain, Gangkhar Puensum (7570 m), which he describes as "a sheer wall of glistening crystal." A ten-day expedition by Secret Compass traces Lev's route through Bhutan's rugged and remote valleys to the conclusion of his Himalayan journey. To go where few have been and summit an unnamed 5,400m peak register for the 2017 team at www.secretcompass.com



Image Tom McShane

HAWAII



Indigo skies and crystal clear waters are what you can expect from America's most southern state, Hawaii. Set amongst an exotic natural landscape with a temperate tropical climate and heralded as the surfing Mecca of the world, Hawaii is a multi-faceted destination, and an adventure playground like no other.

Snorkelling, scuba, surfing, hiking, kayaking and horseback riding; ethereal beaches, culinary and cultural sensations are just some of the highlights in this amazing adventure destination.

A Hawaiian experience will inspire your imagination, awaken your senses, invigorate your soul and leave you with memories that last a lifetime.

THE ISLANDS OF HAWAII

Hawaii is a volcanic archipelago, with 6 completely unique islands providing adventurers with an abundance of excitement and activity, along with culture and astounding natural beauty.

The islands are a haven of cliffs, waterfalls, beaches, rainforests and crystal waters; where activity abounds.



Hawaii Island

Hawaii Island is a volcanic island, in the North Pacific Ocean on the most eastern and southern ends of the Hawaiian islands chain. It is the youngest and largest island in the United States and is larger than all the other islands of Hawaii combined. The island is made up of five separate shield volcanoes and is home to Kilauea – one of the world's most active volcanies, Maunakea – the tallest sea mountain in the world, and Maunaloa – the world's largest shield volcano.

Hawaii Island is known for its many nicknames which help to avoid confusion between the island itself and the state of Hawaii. These include The Big Island, The Orchid Island, and Hawaii's Island of Adventure but a favourite is "Hawaii's Island of Adventure" because that is precisely what this island radiates and the kind of holiday most dream about. Any of these descriptions, however, do not begin to touch the essence that lies within the heart of this land as you explore Hawaii Island - The Island of Secrets.

Hawaii Island offers an adventure of a lifetime as you travel via moped or motorcycle, riding at speed, head towards the east of the island for some day time fun.

Visit the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, home to two active volcanoes. The park spans over 133,500 hectares, with 240 kilometres of hiking trails through sights like volcanic craters, desserts and beautiful tropical rainforests. Duck your head as you take an excursion underground through a five hundred year old lava tube in this impressive world heritage site. You might also like to visit Maunakea Mountain, the highest sea mountain in the world at 4,205 metres above sea level.

If that wasn't enough excitement for you, grab your snorkelling gear and go swimming with the Manta Rays along the Kona Coast. This thrilling activity is perfectly safe and accessible to scuba divers and snorkelers alike. Board a craft to see the Kilauea Volcano, the world's most active, and watch as lava pours into the sea.

Maui

With eighty one accessible beaches and a land area of 1,173 kilometres, Maui is a traveller's playground. Haleakala Volcano is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Maui and is the largest dormant volcano in the world. Situated in Haleakala National Park, her highest peak soars around 3,055 metres.

Maui is the whale-watching hub of Hawaii due to the whales sheltering in Au'au Channel to mate and give birth in the temperate waters. You can expect to see the whales swimming in pods during the winter months between December and March.

Maui is also a well known windsurfing destination. Kanaha Beach Park and Ho'okipa is where it's at. Many pro-surfers flock to this idyllic island to test their skills each year.

Oahu

The island of O'ahu is best known as, "The Heart of Hawaii". There are extraordinary experiences here to suit even the most scrupulous of traveller. It's no wonder O'ahu is Hawaii's most visited island. Waikiki Beach is the premier beachfront suburb of Honolulu. It lies on the south shore of the island, which extends from the Ala Wai Canal on the west and all the way to Diamond Head on the east. Taking in deep breaths of fresh air whilst surfing the azure waters is what life is all about in Waikiki.

Dolphin watching, snorkelling adventures and Eco forest walks off the beaten path will show you a Hawaii that is the substance of dreams. The dense natural rainforests located throughout the island are teeming with an abundance of birdlife which includes the brightly coloured Red-Cardinal and the gentle Spotted Dove. Travel eight kilometres northeast from Honolulu, to Nuuanu Pali Lookout on the Windward Coast and experience stunning panoramic views. Watching the waves lap at the magnificent Koolau cliffs basking in the incandescent rays, are all part of this awesome scene.

Helicopters, Seaplanes, Parasailing and Gliding, showcase a once in a life time bird's eye view of the island.



Credit: Hawaii Tourism Authority/ Kawiha Singson

Kauai

Kauai is the oldest island in the state of Hawaii (5.8 million years) with a small population of around 62,640. It is 51 kilometres across and boasts 178 kilometres of spectacular coastline. Almost 50% of the Kauai coastline is white sandy beach so you'll never run out of somewhere new to surf, swim and explore.

Kauai is home to pro-surfers like Bethany Hamilton and the location of movies such as Avatar, Jurassic Park and George of the Jungle. This amazing island is known for its botanic gardens, tall cliffs, and grassy peaks. This is why the locals call it, "The Garden Isle". Princeville and Paipu are the most popular beach towns in Kauai, where you can enjoy a range of water sports.

Helicopter rides, cave exploring, hiking, jet skiing, deep sea fishing, tubing, and zip lining high above the tree tops are among some other adventure activities on Kauai Island.



Credit: Hawaii Tourism Authority/ Kirk Lee Aeder

Lanai

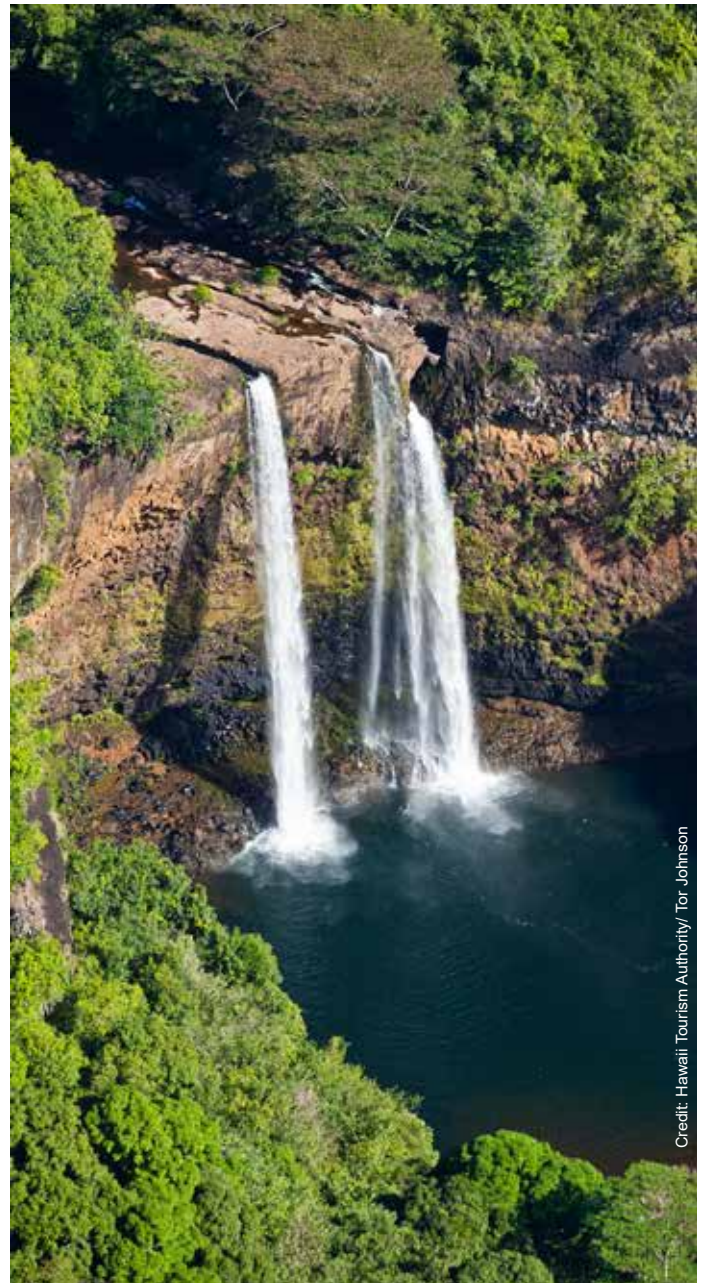
The island of Lanai is a picturesque island which boasts awe-inspiring landscapes and coastlines which were hand crafted by the divine. Lanai is situated between the island of Maui and Molokai and is often called, "The Pineapple Island" as it was once just a pineapple plantation.

Most attractions located outside of Lanai city are only accessed by dirt roads so bicycles and off-road vehicles are the main forms of transport. Take the most awesome drive of your life up the Munro trail that begins just north of the city. This trail will take you through a forest of evergreens and stunning rainforests teeming with wildlife. Further along the trail you have the chance to take some incredible snapshots of canyons, cliffs and scenic views to Maui and Molokai islands from the lookout.

The Garden of the Gods is another sight to behold on Lanai. Visiting this rustic landscape is like being on another planet. A four-wheel drive will get you there but to really appreciate this ancient land get out and take a walk around to breathe in the history of this place.

This island is a true getaway from the everyday hustle and bustle for those who seek a more laid back vacation. Swap your high heels and your suits for thongs, board shorts and bikini's and allow this amazing island to melt away your woes.

Horseback riding is another way to experience Lanai. From beginners to advanced riders this island offers you the chance to see its majesty at a more slow and relaxed pace. Pineapple picking, hiking, swimming, golfing, snorkelling, and dining on fresh produce is all a part of the Lanai experience.



Credit: Hawaii Tourism Authority/ Tor Johnson



Credit: Hawaii Tourism Authority/ Tor Johnson

Molokai

Step back in time to the laid back, Molokai Island. This is an island where the rat race, hustle and bustle are nonexistent and a hammock is found on every veranda.

When you're after adventure, there is an abundance of activities waiting for you. Ocean kayaking and stand up paddling on the south shore will allow you to explore the longest fringing reef in the US. Choose from a guided adventure or hire the equipment and take yourself out exploring.

Try your hand at deep sea fishing on some of the best fishing grounds in Hawaii. There are half day, $\frac{3}{4}$ day or full day trips available. If you want to get IN the water with the fish, head on a snorkel or scuba diving trip to the 30 mile Molokai Barrier Reef.

If you want to stay dry, you'll find a range of hiking tours. The Halawa Cultural hike will introduce you to East Molokai's Halawa valley; or take to one of the beaches for an exciting beach hike, followed by some swimming.

Hawaii's Best Ocean Activities



Credit: Hawaii Tourism Authority/ Dana Edmunds

Kauai

The oldest and northernmost island in the Hawaiian chain, Kauai is known for the breathtaking cliffs of the Napali Coast. Take a boat tour and don't forget your camera as you witness this spectacular natural wonder. While you're there, don't forget to spend some time relaxing on the picturesque beaches of the North Shore. And while Kauai may be best known for kayaking along the tranquil Wailua River, the truly adventurous should try mountain tubing in the irrigation ditches of Lihue.

Oahu

Oahu is the metropolitan heart of Hawaii. It's also known as a mecca for the sport of surfing. The legendary North Shore is home to Waimea Bay, the birthplace of big wave surfing and every winter, the best surfers from around the world compete along the North Shore at the Vans Triple Crown of Surfing. You can also learn how to surf yourself or go on a canoe ride on the gentle waves of historic Waikiki Beach. And for snorkelers, the Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve is one of the most popular snorkeling spots in the islands.

Maui

From Kaanapali Beach to Makena Beach (Big Beach), Maui is famous for its many idyllic beaches. Hookipa Beach is also known as the windsurfing capital of the world. But Maui is probably best known as being one of the best places in the world to see humpback whales. Go on a whale watching tour from December to May departing from Lahaina or Maa-laea Harbor for an unforgettable whale encounter.

Lanai

Just across the channel from Maui, Lanai is a secluded getaway known for its resorts and 4-wheel drive adventures. But for scuba divers, the lovely lava caverns off the south coast called the Lanai Cathedrals, cannot be missed.

Molokai

Also a short ferry ride across the channel from Maui, Molokai is an island firmly rooted in Hawaiian culture. Molokai is best known for fantastic sports fishing. Fishing enthusiasts can take a charter boat from the charming town of Kaunakakai for the catch of a lifetime.

Hawaii Island

The calm, clear waters along the Kona Coast make Hawaii Island a special place for snorkeling and scuba divers. Kona is also known as a great place for deep-sea sports fishing, with many fishing tournaments held throughout the year.

But one of the most unique water adventures the island has to offer is manta ray diving. Take a charter boat off the Kona coast at sunset and scuba or snorkel with friendly mantas. Having an otherworldly manta ray glide within inches of you is an experience you'll never forget.

*information source: Hawaii Tourism

Snorkelling



If you want to get underwater when you're visiting Hawaii, you've definitely chosen the perfect backdrop to an amazing snorkel or scuba diving experience. Here are some of Hawaii Tourism's most popular scuba and snorkel destinations:

Maui

Explore the unseen side of Maui under the sea. Snorkel off of Maui's most pristine beaches or scuba dive around Maui's most popular reefs to see colorful fish, sea turtles and coral formations. Most resort beaches along West Maui and South Maui offer opportunities for snorkelers. The northernmost part of Kaanapali Beach near Black Rock is known for great snorkeling. The small, crescent shaped island of Molokini off the southwestern coast of Maui is a popular destination for snorkeling and diving. In fact, the waters and colorful reefs here are so rich with life, Molokini was named a State Marine Life and Bird Conservation District. Molokini is only accessible by boat tour. Tours are available from nearby Maalaea Harbor in Kihei and Lahaina Harbor on Maui's western shores.

Kealahou Bay, Hawaii's Big Island

Located 40 minutes south of Kailua-Kona in Kona, this historic bay is a remarkable place for snorkeling and scuba diving. Shielded by cliffs, the waters here are calm and rich with marine life. Within the bay you can also kayak or take a boat ride to the seaside memorial of Captain James Cook where you'll find more snorkeling.

Honaunau Bay (Two-steps), Hawaii's Big Island South Kona is shielded by the mountainous Maunaloa, making the waters on the southwest side of Hawaii's Big Island calm and clear. A perfect example of this is at beautiful Honaunau Bay, also called Two-steps. "Two-steps" refers to a spot on the shoreline where the volcanic rock has been neatly worn away into a convenient "two-step" entry point for snorkelers and divers. Abundant fish and honu (Hawaiian green sea turtles) can be seen in Honaunau's warm waters.

Hanauma Bay, Oahu

Hanauma Bay is located on Oahu's southeastern tip and is the island's most popular snorkeling destination. Accessible and family-friendly, the bay's clear waters are rich with reefs and colorful fish. Because this is Hawaii's first Marine Life Conservation District, it is very important for visitors to help preserve the bay's fragile ecosystem by reducing their impact on the environment.

Hulopoe Bay, Lanai

Located on Lanai's southern coast, Hulopoe Bay's idyllic golden sands leave a lasting impression. Spend a day at this secluded beach and you'll see why it was once named America's best beach. Excellent snorkeling can be found near the bay's beautiful tide pools.

Kee Beach, Kauai

Located at the end of the road on North Kauai, this popular and scenic beach features a protected lagoon ideal for snorkeling in the calmer summer months (winter brings rough and dangerous conditions). Off-shore reefs also provide a great setting for advanced scuba divers.



Land Adventures

Kauai

Kauai offers unique adventures, such as mountain tubing in the miles of water flumes of Lihue, ziplining above Kauai's lush rainforests, off-road exploring by 4x4 or ATV on Kauai's South Shore, horseback riding in the pastures of Princeville, or hiking the trails of Kokee State Park and Waimea Canyon. Since 90% of Kauai is inaccessible by road, hiking is a great way to see the island's natural splendor first-hand.

There are numerous trails to explore but the most famous hike on Kauai is the challenging 11-mile Kalalau trail along the Napali Coast. Beginning at the end of the road at Kee Beach, most people hike in and stay at least one night before returning. Others limit their hike to the first two miles, which leads to Hanakapiai Beach. Permits are required for camping and day hikes past Hanakapiai Valley in the park and may be obtained through the Hawaii State Parks Division.

On the West Side, Waimea Canyon and Kokee State Park offer some of the best hiking trails on the island. Spread over 4,325 acres, Kokee State Park features trails leading to scenic lookouts (like the Awaawapuhi Trail) and hikes for the family (Cliff Canyon and Black Pipe Trail).

Molokai

Molokai is only small, but there is still plenty of adventure available. You might like to take a hike to Mo-oula Falls through the natural wilderness of historic Halawa Valley. Explore Molokai's south shore by bike, touring Molokai's historic places. Or saddle up a mule and head down Kalaupapa's scenic, switch-backs.



Credit: Hawaii Tourism Authority/ Max Wanger



Credit: Hawaii Tourism Authority/ Tor Johnson

Oahu

The waves at Waimea Bay roar and watching the surfer's take on some of the biggest sets in the world is one way to spend your days on shore.

Or you might choose to feel the exhilaration of riding down a trail on a mountain bike, off-roading on an ATV, or hiking one of Oahu's thirty-five trails. For the truly fearless, take a 17,000 foot skydive and marvel at a North Shore view few have seen.

Maui

On Maui, horseback ride atop Haleakala, Maui's highest peak; take an ATV tour; or enjoy your first helicopter ride to see breathtaking views of Maui's pristine valleys and waterfalls. Maui's hiking trails allow you to experience the beauty of the Magic Isle. For an easy hike, visit historic Iao Valley State Park. This paved trail offers fantastic valley views. For a more difficult hike try the Pipiwai trail to 400-foot Waimoku Falls in the lush Kipahulu section of Haleakala National Park. Visit the Kipahulu Visitor's Center for more information.

Or you can hike atop the scenic summit of Haleakala, Maui's highest peak. Take the Halemau Trail or the Keeneheehie (sliding sands) trail down from the crater and see volcanic landscapes, mountainous wilderness and rare endemic plants like the ahinahina (silversword).

And on Maui, you can experience the longest downhill bike tour anywhere in the world! You'll be taken to 10,000 feet to the summit of Haleakala National Park, before the ride down the mountain commences (at an elevation of 6,700 feet).



Hawaii Island

Taking a helicopter tour for a bird's-eye view of Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and the rest of the island's hidden waterfalls, lush valleys and balmy beaches is one adventure on Hawaii Island you'll never forget.

Lanai

Lanai offers 400 miles of road to explore by 4-wheel drive. North Lanai has the bulk of off-road paths to explore. The Kanepuu Preserve is 4.8 miles and 20 minutes away from Lanai City on a dirt path. Continue down the road for another five minutes and you'll arrive at the lunar landscape of Keahiakawelo (Garden of the Gods). For the truly adventurous, travel about 35 minutes and 4.7 miles even further to reach the remote white sands of Polihua Beach. Or head northeast from Lanai City on another rocky road to explore the isolated shores of Kaiolohia (Shipwreck Beach). It takes about 30 minutes to get to this beach after an exhilarating, bumpy ride. Just avoid driving too far onto the beach — visitors have been known to get their vehicles stuck in the sand. South Lanai offers an off-road adventure to the historic Kaunolu, home to King Kamehameha's favorite summer fishing retreat overlooking Lanai's southern cliffs.

If you're headed hiking, for a quick, 15-20 minute hike with a beautiful pay-off, head southeast from Hulopoe Bay to the cliffs overlooking Puu Pehe, or Sweetheart Rock. For a much more challenging hike, set off on the Munro Trail. Winding its way from the Four Seasons Resort Lanai, The Lodge at Koele through mountain grasslands and rainforests filled with Cook pine trees, eucalyptus and native ohia lehua, you'll eventually reach the 3,370-foot peak of Lanaihale.

With surroundings ranging from lava-strewn deserts to tropical plantations and gardens, you can engage in every imaginable outdoor activity here.

Hawaii Island is heaven for hikers. Whether you're looking for a challenging trail on fields of lava or short, scenic hikes through historic sites, you'll find just what you're looking for on Hawaii Island.

Most hiking adventures begin in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, which offers more than 150-miles of trails. Stroll through Nahuku (Thurston Lava Tube), take a day hike along Chain of Craters Road or walk over volcanic fields to witness the power of creation as lava flows into the sea in Kalapana. For the well-equipped and experienced backpackers, hike overnight in the park's backcountry. See a ranger at the Kilauea Visitor Center to get trail information, maps and permits.

Other famous hikes can be found on the Kona Coast on the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail, also known as the King's Trail. This 175-mile trail weaves through hundreds of important cultural sites including sacred heiau (temples), Hawaiian fishponds, petroglyphs and other historic sites. You'll also find a variety of other amazing hikes including the Pololu Valley Lookout in North Kohala which leads to a black sand beach and guided hikes into lush Waipio Valley, known as the Valley of Kings.

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