

Packs

MULTIDAY



Weather champ

MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR Ozonic 70

→ **Our take** We dubbed this watertight packbag “the vault” after one tester carried it through five soggy days of backpacking during Colombia’s rainy season without so much as a drip getting inside. Testers loved the original Ozonic’s OutDry waterproofing but wanted more organization. This redesign delivers with a roomy two-pocket lid that you can detach and then flip over for added water resistance (this keeps the pocket zippers covered) and a spacious front pocket that held raingear and snacks. The kangaroo pouch between the front pocket and packbag is deep enough for a tent fly and poles. The tradeoff for built-in rain protection: There’s no side zipper or sleeping bag access, but the mouth is 40 inches in circumference, the widest of any pack we tested. Caveat: Testers wished the kangaroo pouch had stretch for overloading.

→ **The details** Most packs that ride this close to your back lack breathability. But raised foam and mesh pods, two at the shoulder blades and two just above the lumbar pad, provided adequate ventilation and cushioning, which we appreciated on long, sweaty hikes through California’s Sierra Nevada in summer.

→ **Trail cred** “My number one priority in Colombia was keeping my sleeping bag and spare clothes dry,” says a tester. “The seam-sealed OutDry construction and foolproof roll-top closure didn’t leak when it was pouring rain or when I set my pack down as a seat in marshy tundra.”
\$280 (w’s \$270); 4 lbs. 1 oz.; 70 liters; (w’s 60 liters); mountainhardwear.com



Best for big loads

OSPREY Aether AG 85 (w’s Ariel AG 75)

→ **Our take** Whether you’re doing a gear-intensive trip or going far without resupply, sometimes you just need to carry a lot of stuff. When you do, you want a pack like this, with big-load comfort and organization. This behemoth held 60-plus pounds on an eight-day John Muir Wilderness trek, including a few luxuries like a chair, single malt, and deluxe sleeping pad. A butterfly-shaped perimeter wire and horizontal stay (to prevent barreling) tamed the load, and the pack’s seamless mesh backpanel delivered even weight distribution. Pre-curved, dual-density foam and plastic hipbelt wings wrap the iliac crest like a firm hug. We loved the access options when the pack was crammed full. There are three ways to enter the packbag: from the top, through the bottom sleeping bag compartment, or via an inverted, L-shaped zippered front panel. “I didn’t need to dump everything out to get the tent,” our tester says. Nitpick: Inch-wide flaps protecting the zippers on the front access panel and sleeping bag compartment make finding the zipper pulls awkward.

→ **The details** The removable toplid converts to a 17-liter daypack—one of the best we’ve seen in terms of features. The daypack has a dedicated (exterior) hydration sleeve, tuck-away trekking pole attachment straps, and zippered front pocket. Custom fit: The shoulder straps and hipbelt can be heat molded and come in four sizes.

→ **Trail cred** “Packs this size can punish your bones,” says our JMT tester. “But this one made my 60-pound load feel more like 40.”
\$330; 5 lbs. 6 oz.; 85 liters (w’s 75 liters); 3 sizes each, m and w; ospreypacks.com

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