

Spring Jackets

In many parts of Canada, early season mornings, can still be cool enough to require more insulation than a T-shirt. This year, innovative new offerings provide an extra insulating or protective layer appropriate to your needs, whether you are a rock climber or an alpinist, need something for pure function, or a piece that also looks good in town.

The North Face
Apex Bionic 2



Arc'teryx
Gamma



MEC
Obsession



The North Face

Apex Bionic 2 Jacket \$180

If you're looking for an extra layer of insulation for chilly belays or alpine routes that will also look good in town, this is the jacket for you. The exterior has an attractive texture, but is also water, wind and abrasion-resistant and stretches for climbing or strenuous approaches. The Apex offers enough insulation and protection for most alpine or early and late season rock climbing days, but the relaxed fit allows you to add a layer underneath if you need to.

Arc'teryx

Gamma Hoody \$400

This is part of the Gamma line of abrasion-resistant, softshell-stretch outwear. Arc'teryx pioneered the category and their experience shows in this sharp-looking, functional, highly-featured piece. Light insulation keeps it warm enough for belays in the alpine. The stretch material, flat seams, draw cords and a close fit at the waist mean you can wear it under your harness on days when the weather is poor. A helmet-sized hood come in handy in summer snow or rain showers. Laminated pockets come in handy for topo or cell phones. A terrific piece which will remain useful year-round.

MEC

Obsession Hoodie \$155

Your search for a great-looking, lightly insulated, breathable jacket that also looks great, has come to an end. By forgoing the heavy outer layer of most insulated jackets for a lightweight fabric, MEC had brought the weight down and made a more packable, breathable piece. Thumb loops for the hands, hand-warmer pockets, cold belays and a scuba-style under-the-helmet hood add to its range. A close fit and sophisticated cut make it good looking enough for town as well. A great choice for the alpine as well as early and late season rock climbing.

Patagonia

Nano-Air \$349

The Nano-Air uses a new generation stretching insulation layer that ventilates

while you move and keeps the heat in when you stop, so it would make a good choice for long summer alpine routes. The ventilating under-arm panels also contribute to ventilation. At just 354 g it's light enough to pack just in case you need for cold belays. Draw cords, hand-warmer pockets and a close-fitting collar boost its cold-weather protection, although it is sleek and flexible enough to wear while you climb.

Mountain Hardware

Super Chockstone Jacket \$150

If you're looking for lightweight wind protection that is water resistant, super durable and light, look no further than the Super Chockstone. The stretch material makes it a good summer layer for active climbing on its own, but it fits large enough to go on top of a fleece for colder conditions. A scuba hood fits under your helmet. Hand-warmer pockets that are above your harness line make it fully climbing compatible. Elastic sleeve cuffs and a waist drawstring keep out wind. A good piece for three seasons.

Black Diamond

Alpine Start Hoody \$179

A lean all-business shell of tough Schoeller fabric perfect for a summer alpine layer in case of mild precipitation, wind or cool belays. It stuffs in its own pocket that has a carabiner clip so it's easy to dangle from your harness, just in case. The Schoeller stretches and gussets under the arms make it comfortable to wear while climbing. A chest pocket is perfect for a topo or an energy bar. The drawcord hem on the waist and helmet-sized hood come in handy if a little extra weather protection is needed. A recommended light piece for moving fast on long routes or insurance against cool weather at the crag.

Outdoor Research

Helium II \$220

The Helium II is for those heading into the alpine and need a light layer to stay protected during a storm. It is 100 per cent waterproof and very breathable. It packs down small and can be clipped to your harness. Highly recommended, especially when there is a chance of rain.

the rack buyer's guide



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