MEN'S HEALTH

BUYER'S GUIDE

337 BEST NEW PRODUCTS
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO HAVE MORE FUN NOW!

TESTED, TORTURED, USED, ABUSED...
OUR EXPERTS PICK THE BEST GEAR

FAST SHOES, TOUGH TENTS, LIGHT BIKES, HOT BOARDS, HUGE TVS & COOL CAMERAS
+ MORE TOYS, TECH AND SPEC THAN YOU CAN HANDLE!
GET OUT THERE
Shoulder your pack and head for the wilds

LARGE FRONT POCKET
Like all good packs, this one has extra, easily accessible space for storing those items you might need in a jiffy. Look for zips at the top of these pockets, that give you main pack access – so you can get to the bottom easily, without having to open the entire thing from the top.

NORTH FACE
CRESTONE 75-LITRE
Expect to pay R1699
Duesouth
www.duesouth.co.za

REMovable Hood
Greatly increases the pack’s volume, and can be removed to use as a lumbar hip pack on a short day hike.

Hydration System Pocket
Designed to hold a two-litre pouch and fit snugly in the centre to keep the pack balanced.

X-FRAME Suspension System
A great design that absorbs shock and helps prevent the pack from kicking you in the spine.

SIDE POCKETS
The elasticised pockets are designed to take water bottles for “quick draw” hydration.

DUAL DAISY-CHAIN SYSTEM
With the help of a few karabiners, you can clip on all your climbing gear or wet clothing – and keep that drinking mug handy.

HARNESS AND HIP BELT
The fit of your pack is all-important, so get help with this on purchase. This one has a fully adjustable system that can be extended to fit all back lengths, and the hip belt incorporates fit-zone technology that can be angled for proper comfort and fit.

SLEEPING-BAG COMPARTMENT
Situated at the bottom of the pack, and separate from the top compartment, this dedicated pocket makes packing logical and organised.

[ IN THE FIELD ]

Sibusiso Vilane, 34, Swazi mountaineer and game ranger, began by summitting a number of peaks in the Drakensberg in 1996. Kilimanjaro was next in 1999, and in 2002, Pokalde, Lobuje and Island Peak in the Himalayas formed part of his training for his next goal: to become the first black African to summit Everest, which he achieved in March 2003. But on his most recent ascent, bad weather and dehydration nearly prevented him from making it back alive.

Essential equipment “A map for direction and location.”
Top tip “To perform well at altitude, keep well hydrated.”
Five favourites
A wind and waterproof jacket “In case the weather changes for the worse.”
Energy foods “A lack of energy is a major concern to a climber. So sustenance is a must have.”

South African flag “It’s part of my identity and reminds me why I climb.”
Sony digital camera in housing “My teammates laughed, but it took beautiful pictures. Even at the summit where most digitals fail, it worked perfectly.”
Down suits and jackets “These should have hardy zips, and pockets big enough to hold one-litre water bottles.”
**BEST BUY**

**KARRIMOR ALPINIST 55-LITRE**
This sackbag-style pack fits snugly on your back and has no external pockets to snag in tight spots. With loads of gear loops and a large top pocket, it's a good lightweight expedition bag, which doubles as a day pack.

**Expect to pay** R649
Drifters, Outdoor Escape, Mountain Mail Order
www.karrimorsa.co.za

**Value for money** Definitely a good buy from one of the top names in outdoors equipment – it's versatile and affordable.

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**DUESOUTH ANDES 70-LITRE**
The design and features that have gone into this pack are awesome. It's made from polyester ripstop nylon, and features an adjustable ladder harness system, compression straps, expandable side pockets, built-in rain cover and a hydration-pack holder on the side, as well as reflective strips that pick up at night with torchlight.

**Expect to pay** R799
Duesouth
www.duesouth.co.za

**Value for money** Great – you're getting all those features without the import premium

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**KARRIMOR JAGUAR 80-LITRE**
Perfect for a long expedition, it will take the vast amount of gear necessary for a self-sufficient South American jungle trek or a long 'Berg traverse. This 80-litre rucksack has a fully adjustable harness with Supercool system to combat those hot, humid days. Made of rugged 9000D (derrie) polyester fabric, it's sturdy and will stand you in good stead for years.

**Expect to pay** R979
Drifters, Outdoor Escape, Cape Union Mart
www.karrimorsa.co.za

**Value for money** A well-priced pack that will last you at least a decade

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**TIPS**

1. When buying gear with a zip, like a sleeping bag, pack or jacket, check it's a YKK zip. This is the only zip that can handle the beating of a good outdoor session, yet many manufacturers are cutting costs by using cheaper ones.

2. Consider buying local outdoor products – they're on the up and you don't pay the heavy import premiums.

3. When buying a product, think further than your next trip and buy for the future. Otherwise you'll be in for an expensive but inevitable upgrade.

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**SALOMON PROTERMIC BOOT**
This high-altitude boot is fully insulated and has a rigid sole that is crampon-compliant. Great for Mount Elbrus, Europe's highest peak, and Aconcagua, the highest mountain in South America – the removable inner boot will prevent you from losing your toes to frostbite.

**Expect to pay** R1 899
Cape Union Mart
www.salomonsports.com

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**CAPESTORM PAKDOWN JACKET**
Down jacket with a better and longer cut than previous models. This masterpiece folds up into the internal storage pocket, and has a non-snag zip baffle. YKK zips and weighs a mere 575g. Gram for gram, it's worth every penny for the warmth.

**Expect to pay** R995
Capestorm Retail
www.capestorm.co.za
CAPESTORM FIREFLY
A great all-round sleeping bag. Dual zips mean you can stick your legs out in the desert if you’re too hot, or zip up to stay warm in the Berg. As a middle-of-the-range bag, comfortable from 10°C to -7°C, it weighs in at 1.24kg, with YKK zips and a hood to keep your head out of the wind. It comes in two sizes, but Capestorm can custom-make a bigger bag if you’re a big guy.
Expect to pay R1 695
Capestorm Retail, Drifters
www.capestorm.co.za
Value for money These guys are developing excellent equipment for the serious adventure enthusiast. Tried and tested – a great buy

FIRST ASCENT FUSION 900
Get really cosy in this... even if it’s brass-monkey weather. A mummy bag with boxed foot and ripstop fabric that feels smooth, even when you’re a bit rough. This -15°C all-round bag has matt grip on the outside to stop you sliding off your mat, as well as full zip baffles. It’s 1.8kg of comfortable sleep coupled with a cowl hood.
Expect to pay R1 999
Cape Union Mart, Drifters
www.firstascent.co.za
Value for money You’re paying for quality here. Look after this puppy, and it will last a long time

DUESOUTH TETON -5°C
If you’re going to get wet, opt for a synthetic – rather than down – sleeping bag. It might be bulkier, and weight for weight not as warm, but at least it will keep you snug if it rains, and then dry out quickly. This hollow-fibre bag with nylon outer is not the lightest at 1.8kg, but it’s a fantastic best-buy option with a -5°C rating.
Expect to pay R2 999
Duesouth
www.duesouth.co.za
Value for money An affordable bag which is ideal for warmer conditions

BIBLER STANDARD BIVVY BAG
This top-of-the-range bivvy bag, with fully breathable fabric, and fully sealable zips and cowl, is designed for lightweight, rainy and snowy ascents. Also comes in handy for those nights on the lawn when your wife won’t let you in after an evening at the pub.
Expect to pay R1 999
Mountain Mail Order, Drifters
www.mountainmailorder.co.za

MSR FURY TENT
This two-man, bombproof tent is fully waterproof, four-season-expedition rated, and weighs 3.6kg (an average-weight tent if two are sharing the load). The flysheet clips to the inner and has a large spacious bell for cooking and storing backpacks.
Expect to pay R4 399
Mountain Mail Order, Drifters
www.mountainmailorder.com
PETZL MYO XP
When it comes to lighting up adventure, Petzl leads the pack. Their newest offering – a single light source with multiple uses – has LED technology, batteries lasting up to 150 hours and a powerful, even and adjustable white light. The only downside is the somewhat fiddly controls – not easy if you’ve got sausages for fingers.
Expect to pay R499
Cape Union Mart, Mountain Mail Order, Ventures For Africa
www.petzl.com

WXTEX PNMNNU MECH
25-LITRE DRY BAG
This rubberised storage expedition bag is durable and fully waterproof, with an easy-to-use, foolproof sealing system. Use to keep your electronic equipment, food and clothing dry and clean on those wet and humid, or dusty trips.
Expect to pay R220
Duesouth, Drifters, Cape Union Mart
www.rammountain.co.za

ASPIVENIN
The last thing you need on an expedition is to get bitten by a scorpion. But it can happen. A snake/scorpion bite kit is a mandatory piece of safety equipment on most desert expeditions. This mini-pump, with its piston and four different sized suckers, gives full instructions for use, but if you do get bitten, seek medical help as soon as possible.
Expect to pay R229
Drifters
(011) 783-9200

PETZL CHARLET
SARKEN SL CRAMPONS
Secure your passage over snow or glaciers by strapping a pair of these scary-looking, sharp-toothed crampons to your boots.
Expect to pay R199
Cape Union Mart
www.petzl.com

KOMPAREDDE TREQKKING POLES
Lightweight and telescopic so you can pack them in your duffel bag or backpack when travelling. These are adjustable and have shock absorbers for an easier ride.
Expect to pay R350 each
Cape Union Mart
www.capeunionmart.co.za
MSR DRAGONFLY STOVE
This state-of-the-art, expedition tested and designed multi-fuel stove works on eight recognised fuels, including vodka. Perfect for those sub-zero expeditions, economical on fuel, and melts snow for water at a rapid rate. Equally at home on the Hartbeespoort Dam and at 6 000m on Everest.
Expect to pay R1 350 (excluding bottle)
Mountain Mail Order, Drifters, Cape Union Mart
www.mountainsafetyresearch.com

GARMIN 60CS GPS
This hand-held unit has a barometric altimeter, electronic compass, 96MB of downloadable mapping with auto routing, and 1 000 waypoints, so you’ll never get lost again.
Expect to pay R6 099
Cape Union Mart, Duesouth, Ventures for Africa
www.garmin.com

FIRST ASCENT QWIKWIK THERMALS
These comfortable, polypropylene base layers have full wicking capabilities, which dry quickly and move the sweat away from the skin. Essential for keeping you warm in Arctic conditions.
Expect to pay R129 each
Drifters, Mountain Mail Order
www.firstascent.co.za

THERMAREST PROLITE 4 REG
The best mat on the market, this lass is designed to protect you from the cold ground, whether on ice, in the desert, or in the jungle. This sleeping mat has a grip to stop you sliding off in your sleeping bag. It’s partially self-inflating, lightweight and rolls up into a neat storage bag.
Expect to pay R995
Outdoor Escape, Ventures for Africa
www.thermarest.com

POLAR AXN 700
This top-of-the-range altimeter watch has heart rate technology for your mountain training at the gym, on your bike, or running up and down the stairs. It also has download capabilities, and all the latest barometric altimeter functions.
 Tried-and-tested on Everest.
Expect to pay R3 399
Duesouth, Sportsmans Warehouse
www.polar.fi

BLACK DIAMOND GLISSADE GLOVES
Fingered gloves for -10°C. With these ergonomic hand savers, you can untie knots and pitch a tent in the coldest conditions. They’re lined with thermal fabric and are water-resistant, with a breathable outer shell, and a leather palm for working those ropes in the cold.
Expect to pay R399
Drifters, Mountain Mail Order
www.randimountain.co.za