

Cold Comfort

Forget layering as much fleece on your body as possible. High-tech materials and innovative designs make winter camping not only doable but even pleasant.

by CLINT CARTER

THE SHELTERS



BEST FOR VALUE

Slumberjack In-Season 2

First-time snow campers will appreciate a heavy, warm polyester tent with a sub-\$300 price tag. They'll also appreciate its spacious floor plan: 37 square feet of ground coverage. The tent is rated to fit two sleeping bags, but we found that if you store your gear outside, under a vestibule, it could handle three. And packing in shoulder-to-shoulder will help keep you just that much warmer. slumberjack.com \$270

BEST FOR HIKING IN

MSR Access 2

With its newest tent, MSR replaced traditional aluminum poles with ones built from a stiff aerospace-grade composite that's 80 percent less likely to bend. As a result, the structure can withstand wintery gusts despite its simple geometry. We set it up in about three minutes (no instructions required), and at just over 3.5 pounds, it packs up easily for a long snowshoe hike in. msrgear.com \$600



BEST FOR

GROUP ADVENTURES

The North Face Bastion 4

At 13 pounds, this isn't a tent for overnight hikes. But if you plan to set up a base camp and spend a few days, you won't find a better shelter. The ripstop-nylon fly is twice as strong as on previous models, and the water-resistant windows — typically a weak point in winter tents — can withstand -60 degrees. thenorthface.com \$849



The preference is usually a spacious tent, but smaller spaces will warm up faster at night, thanks to body heat.

BEST FOR CAR CAMPING

Tepui Kukenam Sky with Weatherhood

Tepui's rooftop shelter saves the discomfort of the cold ground and provides a stable 56- by 96-inch area to spend the night when campsites are closed for the season. The waterproof ripstop polyester is heavy enough to endure most cold fronts, but the optional Weatherhood (\$225, not shown) will survive a blizzard. tepuitent.com \$1,425

2



BEST FOR BRIEF EXCURSIONS

2 | Flowfold Stormproof Duffel

At 40 liters, the Stormproof Duffel provides plenty of storage for a serious weekend kit yet keeps everything compact enough for an overhead bin. We found the end pocket ideal for stashing tickets and snacks en route, and once we arrived, the stiff sailcloth and waterproof zips held up well during a scramble over sharp volcanic rock to a secret swimming hole. **\$98; flowfold.com**

BEST FOR ROAD TRIPS

3 | Tepui Expedition Series Gear Container

The boxy design allows Tepui's 120-liter gear locker to stack efficiently on a roof rack; internal dividers organize your wardrobe or camp kitchen; and dirt and spills wipe away easily from the resin-coated poly-canvas body. Meanwhile, the rugged wheels smoothly ferried our heavy load to campsites. **\$190; tepuintents.com**



4



BEST FOR ROLLING OR CARRYING

4 | Osprey Meridian Convertible 75L

If you hit a rough trail when rolling this bag, simply unzip the back pocket to convert it into a backpack. The Meridian features the most comfortable shoulder harness we've ever used with a conversion pack, and the removable day bag was perfectly sized for short hikes in the Chilean Atacama. **\$380; ospreypacks.com**

3

BEST FOR ORGANIZED TRAVEL

5 | Dakine Split Roller

To ensure neatly partitioned packing, Dakine put four zippered mesh compartments inside its heavy-duty recycled-polyester split roller. On a recent trip from Vermont to Qatar and on to Kathmandu, we felt totally orderly despite traveling with a mess of cycling and après-trek equipment. The bag comes in two sizes: 85 and 110 liters. **\$200, \$210; dakine.com**



5

6



BEST FOR PORTABLE POWER

6 | Lander Timp 25 Plus 7800 mAh Charger

Any backpack can carry a power bank, but what makes this Lander exceptional (aside from its water-resistant ripstop nylon) is the dedicated pocket that keeps the power handy just inside the main hull. And with 7,800 mAh of capacity, you'll have enough juice to charge a GoPro five times. **\$199; lander.com**

7



BEST FOR BACKUP STORAGE

7 | Eagle Creek Cargo Hauler Duffel

Sometimes you come home with more stuff than you left with. The Cargo Hauler is great backup: When collapsed, it fits in the side pocket of a suitcase. We packed one for an excursion to Greenland, giving us a hearty duffel on location and extra storage for the trip home. It comes in four sizes, but even the XL model (120 liters) weighs less than three pounds. **\$89-\$119; eaglecreek.com**