



## Geared Up **Holiday Edition**

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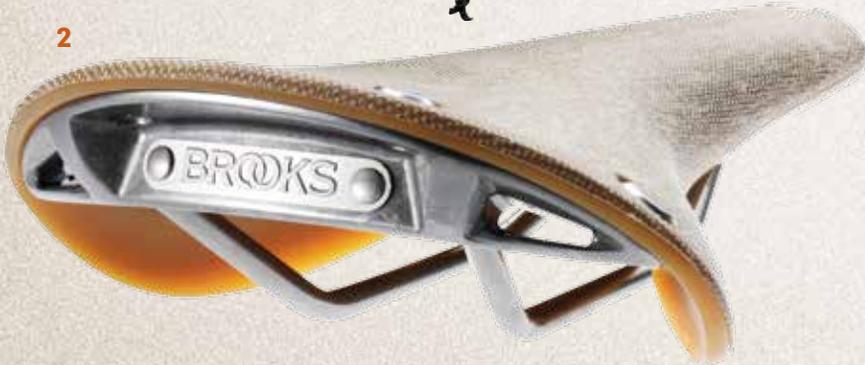
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## GIFT IDEAS FOR THE CYCLISTS IN YOUR LIFE

by MIKE DEME AND ALISON RILEY

### 1. ALPS MOUNTAINEERING CHAOS

(\$250, [alpsmountaineering.com/alps/products/tents/backpacking-tents/chaos](http://alpsmountaineering.com/alps/products/tents/backpacking-tents/chaos), 800-344-2577)

If you're looking for a great tent for bike touring or bikepacking, look no further than the Alps Mountaineering Chaos. This tent features 7,000 series aluminum poles, 8-inch zipper, mesh

walls, entrances on both sides, a rainfly with 2 vestibules, 3,000-millimeter-coating waterproof floors, sealed floor seams, mesh roof vents, 2 mesh storage pockets, and extra guy-outs for fly stabilization. It weighs in at 4 lbs. 14 oz.

The Chaos is the easiest full-size, free-standing tent I've ever set up. The main pole is like a double-ended T and connects to the grommets at the four corners. The other pole is much smaller and provides extra stability. The Chaos uses external pole clips, not sleeves, eliminating the hassle of pole snagging or fabric tearing.

All of these features came in handy the first night I used the Chaos in Denton, Montana. As I rolled into town, it was getting dark, and a major summer storm was gathering. I was able to set

the tent up in just a few minutes, throw my sleeping bag, pad, and pillow inside just as the rain began to fall, and then duck inside. I pulled my panniers under the closest vestibule and waited for the storm. It soon hit full force with winds upwards of 40 MPH which blew large raindrops that pelted the Chaos. The storm lasted for over 2 hours, and all the while I was safe, warm, and dry inside. It was trial by storm for the Chaos and it passed with flying colors.

To learn more about the Chaos, check out the videos on the Alps Mountaineering website.

### 2. BROOKS CAMBIUM C17 (€145, [brooksgotland.com](http://brooksgotland.com), +44 121 565 2992)

Brooks saddles are legendary in bike-travel circles, and for good reason.

The Brooks brand is renowned for handmade quality but not everyone wants to put in the effort to properly break in their leather saddles. Well, now you can get all of the quality without the effort. The Cambium C17 is Brooks' only non-leather saddle and it's a very different experience out of the box than any other Brooks saddle I've ridden. It's constructed of vulcanized rubber with a thin organic cotton cover and, according to Brooks, "To the eye, the C17 may appear quite racy in its shape and lines ..." Compared to many racing saddles, I wouldn't go that far, but it is slimmer and more slender than a typical Brooks. It felt good under the old bum and I could feel the flexibility of the rubber while pedaling, particularly when cranking hard. At first look, I was concerned that the cotton covering would be a bit slippery when wet but it wasn't the case, whether with cycling shorts when I was out for a 20 mile ride or with jeans when I rode to work.

The Cambium C17 is 283 mm long, 162 mm wide, 52 mm deep, and, with chromoly rails, weighs 415 grams. It's not the lightest saddle on the market, but it's one of the coolest. And because it's a Brooks saddle handmade in Italy, I'll bet it'll last as long as I do, maybe longer.

**3. PALE SPRUCE STAYOUTTHERE SAFETY KIT** (\$36, [palespruce.com/store/safety-kits/stayoutthere-kit](http://palespruce.com/store/safety-kits/stayoutthere-kit), [aamick@palespruce.com](mailto:aamick@palespruce.com))

This safety kit was designed specifically for bike touring and bikepacking. It contains all of the necessities and then some. Contents are as follows:

First Aid: ID card, bandages (1" x 3" knuckle, butterfly closures), antiseptic wipes, 2" x 2" gauze pads, triple-antibiotic ointment single use packets, 200 mg Ibuprofen tablets (in packets of 2), 25 mg antihistamine (Diphen) tablets, antacid tablets (in packets of 2), electrolyte tablets (in packets of 2), blister treatment (Band-Aid Advanced Healing Blister pads)

Personal Care: SPF 30 sunscreen (1 oz. tube), SPF 15 lip balm, a micro towel (expands to 8" x 10" when moistened with a small amount of water), DEET free insect repellent towelettes, Friction Freedom chamois cream (each packet contains enough chamois cream for 1-2 days), toilet paper packet (MRE style), short-handle toothbrush with container, toothpaste.

Emergency Gear: Duct tape (18"), small aluminum whistle, razor blade with folding handle, LED light with replaceable batteries, Krazy super glue, safety pins.

Survival Add-on Kit (\$10; in a 4" x 5" waterproof ALOKSACK bag): Quik fire-starting tabs (waterproof, easy to light, and with a burn time of 2 to 3 minutes), mini Bic lighter, 10 ft. length of orange paracord, Katadyn Micropur water purification tablets, 54" x 82" emergency blanket (the reflective mylar material can also be used as a signal mirror), 20 mm button compass.

With the StayOutThere kit, you can rest assured you'll have everything you need for just about any emergency.

**4. LIGHT & MOTION URBAN 700** (\$159, [lightandmotion.com/bike/urban700.html](http://lightandmotion.com/bike/urban700.html), 831-645-1538)

The USB-rechargeable Li-ion Urban 700 is the brightest bicycle light in the smallest package that I've yet seen. On its brightest setting, it lights up everything everywhere with a wide, consistently-uniform round pattern while its bright amber side lights allow others to see the light from either side. The Urban 700 weighs 112 grams and offers 4 settings: 700 lumens (1:30 runtime); 300 lumens (3:00 runtime); 175 lumens (6:00 runtime); 175 lumens (pulse, 12:00 runtime). From a completely-drained state, it takes 6 hours to fully charge the light. The Urban 700 mounts on a handlebar or a helmet. Wherever you mount it, the Urban 700 allows you to see anything in your path and allows anyone else to easily see you. It's nice to know that all Light & Motion products

are designed and built in California. Plus, Adventure Cycling members receive a 15 percent discount on select Light & Motion products. Just log in to your account at [adventurecycling.org](http://adventurecycling.org) and click on Affiliate Benefits Information.

**5. SKS X-BLADE II** (\$30, [sks-germany.com](http://sks-germany.com))

Fenders are terrific, but sometimes they're not on your bike. If you need temporary relief from rear-tire splatter, SKS offers the X-Blade II (239 grams), which connects to your seatpost and is long enough to cover a 29 inch or 700C tire.

The tool-free connection mechanism is constructed of heavy-duty plastic that clamps a cinch strap tight around the post. Once connected, the X-Blade can then be adjusted with a 4 mm hex key at 2 points — one 2 inches from the main connection point with the seatpost, and another where the fender body and clamping mechanism meet. Adjusting these 2 pivot points will allow you to use the X-Blade with just about any 29er or 700C bike.

**6. SOUND DEFENSE K9 WARNING DEVICE** (\$45, [sounddefense.com](http://sounddefense.com))

Afraid of dogs while riding? K9 to the rescue! The K9 warning device emits sound in a frequency range specifically designed for dogs, and, best of all, its effects are non detrimental and non permanent.

Unfortunately, to test the K9 device, I had to sucker some dogs into chasing me. As a dog liker, I felt a bit bad about it, but if by doing so some cyclists will go unbiten and the would-be biters unethanized, it was worth it. The poor buggers really were affected by the piercing sound, and so was I when I used it on the first unsuspecting dog, a hapless German Shepherd. Not all the dogs that I sound blasted reacted the same way; some ran away, others just jerked to a halt, but a couple of stubborn pooches decided that they needed

a second blast. All for the good of the cause.

The K9 is available with a bicycle attachment, is easily operated, runs on a 9-volt battery, weighs 7 oz., and measures 6.6" x 4.2."

## 7. OUTDOOR TECH BUCKSHOT

**WIRELESS SPEAKER** (\$50, [outdoortechology.com/Shop/buckshot-compact-wireless-speaker.html](http://outdoortechology.com/Shop/buckshot-compact-wireless-speaker.html), 310-677-0190)

Depending on who you speak to about the subject, listening to music while riding a bicycle is either awesome or stupid. To each their own, but I'll gladly join the side that says riding with covered ears isn't too bright; that's why the Buckshot may be for you. It's a wireless speaker that mounts to your bike (or anything small enough for the strap to wrap around) and allows you to listen to music, or books on tape, and still hear what's happening around you. It pairs with any device that is Bluetooth capable and sounds great. I've used other portable speakers that were larger and more expensive, and the Buckshot has most of them sonically beat by a long shot. The Buckshot is rubberized and is shock, dust, and water resistant (IPX5 rated), and is about the size of a roll of quarters — if the quarters were half dollars. It's simple to use and has 3 buttons: 1 for on/off/pairing and 2 to control volume (up and down). It weighs 5.2 oz. and will play for 16 hours before it needs recharging. Even if you don't want to use it when riding your bike, it can be used while in camp and to make hands-free phone calls when you're truing a wheel in the shop.

## 8. TERRY BICYCLES BREAKAWAY

**AND BELLA SHORTS** (\$79/\$105, [terrybicycles.com/Apparel/Cycling-Bottoms](http://terrybicycles.com/Apparel/Cycling-Bottoms), 800-289-8379)

Terry's Breakaway shorts are mid-rise with a wide elastic-free waistband and elastic-free leg bands for a flattering fit — no muffin top or sausage legs. The shorts are fitted with Terry's Comfort chamois which is meant for short rides as it offers minimal padding. The Bella shorts are mid-rise with a narrower waist and elastic leg bands and are fitted with Terry's seamless-mold Flex Air chamois which is designed for all-day

movement and increased breathability. Between the Breakaway and the Bella shorts, the Breakaways fit me better and were more comfortable. That said, I'd be happy wearing either of these all day on a tour. Both the Bella shorts and the Breakaways are made in the U.S., and are really affordable for their quality. The Breakaways are shorter than the Bellas, and are solid black, while the Bellas are accented with pink seams. — AR

## 9. CLUB RIDE QUEEN BEE

**JERSEY** (\$60, [clubrideapparel.com/collections/women/products/queen-bee](http://clubrideapparel.com/collections/women/products/queen-bee), 208-726-2582)

Club Ride's Queen Bee jersey is inspired by vintage, cotton, cap-sleeve blouses. The poly-blend knit looks and feels exactly like cotton but performs well, keeping you dry and cool. The cap sleeves are long and roomy enough that in a low position on your handlebars you do not feel tension or pulling from the sleeves. The shirt falls low on the waist to stay over your cycling shorts. The scooped neckline makes the small zipper at the front more for aesthetics than anything else, and the back of the jersey features two open pockets for small essentials. Overall, this is a jersey that you could wear to work or into a restaurant without anyone noticing it's a cycling jersey, and it's comfortable enough that I have been tempted to do so. The subtle honeybee print is lovely, and as far as a women's jersey goes, the fit and design of this one makes it very flattering and versatile — perfect for a bike tour. — AR

## 10. ORTLIEB ULTIMATE 6 PLUS

**HANDLEBAR BAG** (\$125, [ortliebusa.com/prodInfo.asp?pid=374&cid=2](http://ortliebusa.com/prodInfo.asp?pid=374&cid=2), 800-649-1763)

This seven-liter handlebar bag, like all Ortlieb products, is waterproof, made in Germany, and sports a nice large reflector. The mounting mechanism consists of a heavy-duty plastic fastener that sits against the handlebars and is secured by cable threaded through the mount and around the handlebars. The bag snaps against the mount and fastens with a very satisfyingly loud click. The Ultimate 6 Plus is made of a matte cordura fabric that makes it a bit lighter and more waterproof than its

Classic counterpart, and, in my opinion, more handsome. It also sports two small exterior pockets large enough for a granola bar or "dumb" phone. Like the Ortlieb Classic, this bag includes a large, waterproof plastic map pouch that is detachable from the top of the bag. While the Ultimate 6 includes a shoulder strap, I found their attachment mechanism to render it almost useless. That said, the bag can be locked securely to the handlebar mount with a key, so you can feel comfortable leaving the bag locked onto your bike and use a pannier as your shoulder bag instead. Warning: while a six-pack fits perfectly in this bag, do not be tempted — the way the bag rests against the mounting mechanism will cause two of the cans to puncture. Believe me, I tried twice.

Buy the classic version from *Cyclosource* online: [adventurecycling.org/cyclosource-store/search-results/sp/ortlieb-ultimate-6-m-classic-handlebar-bag](http://adventurecycling.org/cyclosource-store/search-results/sp/ortlieb-ultimate-6-m-classic-handlebar-bag). — AR

## 11. TIGRA BIKECONSOLE POWER

**PLUS SYSTEM** ([ibikeconsole.com](http://ibikeconsole.com), [info@ibikeconsole.com](mailto:info@ibikeconsole.com))

It's become fairly common these days for people to use their mobile phones for navigating while on a bike tour, and there are many products on the market that mount to your handlebar that will protect your mobile device while still making it available for use. One of the better ones is the BikeConsole Power Plus (\$90). It's easy to attach to the your handlebar and the removable Li-ion 1100mAh battery pack provides a 50% backup charge for your device.

The compartment hinges open so you can easily place your device inside and connect the proper cord. The BikeConsole is designed for iPhone, Samsung, HTC, LG, Motorola, and Sony, and there's also a universal version for other devices up to 4.8." All device functions are available while in the waterproof protective case, including the camera.

If the additional 50% burn is not enough, you can boost your BikeConsole with the weatherproof Bike-Charge Power Pack (\$60, 145 grams). This attaches to your downtube and connects to the Power Plus 2600mAh Li-ion battery which provides an ad-



ditional 200% charge. This amount of juice should get you at least a couple of days down the road, depending on what you're using your device for and what model it is. If this still isn't enough, you may want to consider adding the BikeCharge Dynamo (\$120). The Dynamo attaches between the front fork and hub — no dynamo hub necessary. The BikeCharge is a clutch-system dynamo but offers very little resistance while providing a front and rear light and unlimited power to your favorite gizmo. You'll never be without power again!

**12. CRAFT HYBRID WEATHER GLOVES** (\$35, [shop.craftsports.us/hybrid-weather-glove-43704.html](http://shop.craftsports.us/hybrid-weather-glove-43704.html), 877-622-7238)

We just began stocking these in

*Cyclosource* and almost everyone at Adventure Cycling who rolls up to work on a bike is wearing a pair. These gloves are hi-vis, covered in reflectors, lightweight, and not bulky at all. They've got a nice plush lining on the inside and a waterproof rain-cover mitten of sorts that folds out of a secret pocket on their exterior for added warmth and wind protection. The thumb and index fingers are smartphone-friendly and a silicone handprint across the palms provides a secure grip. They come in Xsmall through large. Size small fits me well with enough room to add a thin glove underneath for winter commuting. I'd say these are ideal for rainy, low-visibility conditions where clear hand signals and dry fingers could really come in *handy*. You can purchase the

Hybrid Weather Gloves from Cyclosource online: [adventurecycling.org/cyclosource-store/search-results/sp/craft-hybrid-glove](http://adventurecycling.org/cyclosource-store/search-results/sp/craft-hybrid-glove) or by calling (800-721-8719) . - AR

**13. LIMAR ULTRALIGHT PLUS** (\$150, [limar.com](http://limar.com))

I'm often asked what bike helmet I'm wearing in the photo on the Editor Letter page (p. 3). The helmet is apparently intriguing to many so I chased down the latest version of it while at Interbike in September. The pictured helmet is the Limar Ultralight Pro 104. The current model is called the Ultralight+ and weighs in at a silly 175 grams for the medium and 210 grams for the large. It offers 22 air vents, a bug screen to keep the little nasties out of your hair,

adjustable anti-bacterial pads, the Ultrafit+ system to snug it to your particular pumpkin, and a very small profile, which is what seems to catch most peoples' eye. If you're in the market for a new lightweight helmet with a small profile, you should check out the Limar Ultralight+. In addition to these other factors, it's a very comfortable helmet and comes in color schemes that should suit just about anyone.

#### 14. THULE PACK 'N PEDAL COMMUTER PANNIER

(\$120, [thule.com/en-us/us/products/luggage-and-bags/bike-bags-and-racks/pannier-bags](http://thule.com/en-us/us/products/luggage-and-bags/bike-bags-and-racks/pannier-bags))

At Interbike, I'm always on the lookout for anything bike-travel related. I'll admit, I was a bit surprised to see panniers on a bike in the Thule booth



in September of 2012, but after talking with Thule's Karl Wiedemann for a bit, I could tell they were serious about the new product. As he began showing me the pannier and rack system, I couldn't help but think that Thule had copied their rack design from the New Zealand-

ers who invented the Freeload system. Not to worry, though. As it turned out, Thule purchased the rack system from them. Since the purchase, Thule has changed the name to Tour Rack but the product remains the same. Some of you might remember that we included a review of them in "Geared Up" in the October/November 2011 issue, and you can find that review by going to [adventurecycling.org/adventure-cyclist/publications-archive](http://adventurecycling.org/adventure-cyclist/publications-archive) and searching for Freeload. The first sentence of that review is, "Every once in a while, someone takes an old idea and puts a new twist on it. That's what the guys at Freeload have done with the trusty old bicycle rack. While it's true that there are a fairly wide variety of shapes and sizes available, the Freeload system is a totally new approach that allows the basic rack structure to mount on nearly any bike and on both the front and the rear." This is as accurate now as it was then.

A pannier is a pannier is a pannier, right? The form basically follows function, so what new twists has Thule put on the old nag? Well, to start, the connection system is pretty cool. When you look at the back of the bag, you don't immediately see how it would connect to a rack at all, but you do see a silver bar at the top that says Thule. When you push down with your thumbs at each end of the base of the bar, it rotates and, voilà, the attachment system reveals itself and you clip it on by pulling up on a connected tab, placing the connection points on the Tour Rack rail, then release. But why? Well, when you carry it off the bike, there's no attachment hardware to get snagged on your clothes. Pretty cool.



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What about the bottom? It's all magnets these days. Connect the included magnet to the Tour Rack and the bottom of the bag, which contains a metal plate, is immediately attracted to it, and quite forcefully. Also cool.

And there are other features to like about Thule's Commuter Pannier. It's a roll top that's made of non-PVC high-tenacity air-textured nylon tarpaulin with reflective accents. It's got a zippered top pocket for quick-access items which also sports comfy handle that makes carrying it pleasant. This pocket covers the roll top and also has a loop strap that is the connection point to a cool thumb-activated clip. Synch it down, and the top is covered. There's also a large open compartment on the front of the pannier and a small one on the side, which doubles as a place to hang a rear taillight. Also included are a raincover and shoulder strap. All in all, it's a nice package. Thule also offers touring panniers that we'll cover in an upcoming issue. **AC**



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