

GEARED UP ▶▶▶

Primus Firestick Stove Ti, \$120

primus.us

A genuine highlight of being in Missoula is going on a “burritopacking” trip with a small collection of Adventure Cycling staff and friends. The purpose of these events is to be stove-free, i.e., stress-free, but I cannot function without Sleepytime tea at night and coffee in the morning. It’s a delicate balance. Lately, I’ve been taking Primus’s Firestick stove with me. I was amazed at how immediately the little flame kicked on with the lighter-free igniter — it worked on the first try without burning my fingers with a lighter or jumpy stove flame. The stove burned fast and steady with a lot of control, and it has a recessed burner to offer additional flame protection. What’s more, the plastic-free carrier is a simple wool carrying pouch that doubles as a potholder so grabbing the cup handle is a breeze to pour the boiled water into my drinking mug. I haven’t gotten the knack of the locking cap to keep the pot supports closed tight when in transport, but so far it seems like a matter of finesse rather than design. I didn’t think there was another stove that could take the place of my decade-old Pocket Rocket, but the Firestick Ti is lighter, smaller, more user friendly, safer, smarter, and doesn’t require a working lighter (too often a fatal flaw on last-minute or rainy bike trips). Is it pricey? Yes. Will you get your money’s worth? With a titanium stove and fuel-free igniter, definitely. However, if the \$120 stings too much, there is a stainless-steel model for \$90 (same size, same output, but weighs .6 oz more). —CW



Lezyne Pocket Torque, \$65

ride.lezyne.com

I’m pretty good at guestimating when a bolt is tight enough, but having a torque wrench on hand lets me confirm that my handlebar is tight, my derailleur is properly installed, my rotors are secure, and more. Lezyne’s Pocket Torque Drive is a phenomenal tool for building a bike on the road, or in your garage. It has a lot of the functionality of larger torque wrenches, but it’s a tool you can take with traveling, on the bike, or in your car. The CNC-machined aluminum Pocket Torque is beautiful and functional. It uses brass and composite parts with anti-corrosion tool bits. It’s pre-calibrated, adjustable between 2 and 6 Nm in 0.5 Nm increments with a magnetic bit holder. Packed, the wrench stores in a foam-lined, compact case with a sewn-in strap that lets you attach this tool under your seat if you want it close at hand. The wrench in its case is also small enough to tuck into a jersey pocket. To use the Torque, remove the wrench from its case and slip the wrench handle, which stores separately, through a machined opening. Screw in an end bolt to lock in the handle for use, then use the included Composite Matrix key to set the torque. With the torque set, choose your bit and get to torquing. The tool comes with six hardened-steel bits, including 2.5, 3, 4, and 5mm hex bits and T20 and T25 Torx bits. —BB



Roll Recovery R1, \$129

rollrecovery.com

If you experience quad pain, calf pain, sore shoulders, tight IT bands, or any other muscular discomfort, Roll Recovery's compact, long-lasting, percussive mini-massager can make you feel better. Since I got it, I've used it daily on my IT bands, lower back, calves, quads, feet, and more. The massager, which Roll Recovery says has seven hours of battery life, has four speeds from 1800rpm to 3200rpm, and four different heads to get into all the spots I get sore. The 40-watt massager is compact but large enough that it feels good to hold. The body is made from aircraft-grade aluminum, and it's powered by a 2200mAh lithium-ion battery. If you forget to turn it off, don't stress. The massager automatically shuts itself off in 15 minutes. A full recharge takes a little less than three hours, so it's ready to go when you need it next. At a little over a pound, it easily slips into my carry-on when I'm flying, or into my backpack for use before or after a workout. And slid into a pannier or seatbag, it's like having a massage therapist on tour. —BB

American Classic Mauka Tire, \$45

amclassic.com

American Classic is here with another bargain. The Mauka is their "downcountry" mountain bike tire, which is the kids' new term for aggressive XC. For our purposes, the Mauka serves as an excellent bikepacking tire: it's light with a claimed weight of 840g, it rolls quickly and efficiently, and it has very good traction on dirt roads and trails alike. I used it on the rear of my bikepacking bike for most of the season, but for the right application, I could see it on the front as well, especially if you prioritize rolling speed over cornering grip. The Mauka performed very well on the loose, rocky trails of the Wasatch Front and never suffered any damage or punctures. (Unfortunately, I can't say the same for all my tires.) Oh, and did I mention that it's \$45? That's a bargain if I ever saw one.

The Mauka did, however, give me a little trouble on installation. The bead had a very loose fit on the rim, and I couldn't get it to set for the life of me (I was attempting to set it up tubeless). I had to ask my local bike shop to do it for me. To be fair, tire and rim fitment is a problem across the board regardless of brand or price, and going tubeless can make a poor tire/rim combo more troublesome. But even if you have to gift your local shop a six-pack for helping you out, you're still saving a bundle. My other gripe with the Mauka is that American Classic's claimed width of 2.4in. didn't pan out. My digital caliper read 2.3in. on a 30mm internal width rim. But again, actual vs. claimed tire width is another across-the-board issue, so I can't pick on American Classic too much for that. I'll stand by my initial claim that the Mauka is a great tire for an even better price. —DM





Enlightened Equipment Enigma, starting at \$260 enlightenedequipment.com

A good night's sleep is often the key to a great day on the bike. And Enlightened Equipment's Enigma quilt has helped me get good rest night after night, whether I was in a tent, a hostel, or sleeping on a friend's couch. Warm, light, and with plenty of freedom of movement, not only is the quilt made from a deliciously soft and ultralight DWR-treated nylon that feels silky on my skin, it's also filled with ethically sourced, RDS-certified, 850-fill-power down. The Enigma is a quilt, but it has a sewn foot box, which significantly reduces its draftiness compared to a flat quilt. The neck cinches for additional draft control, though the quilt doesn't have a hood. The Enigma comes with an attachment system that uses elastic straps and clips on each side of the quilt to keep it secure on a sleeping pad, further helping to keep out drafts. It also has snaps that connect the sides of the quilt and make it feel more like a partially vented sleeping bag. When I'm using it as a quilt, I pay attention to what sleeping pad I bring along. More so than with a sleeping bag, your pad matters when sleeping with a quilt. The Enigma is the lightest quilt that Enlightened Equipment makes, and it comes in multiple temperature ratings as well as short, regular, and long lengths. A custom option is also available. I tested the 850-fill, 20°F bag in regular, which goes for \$335, and I love it. –BB



Tifosi Sizzle Sunglasses, \$35 tifosioptics.com

I tend to lose sunglasses pretty often, and luckily my detective dad trained my eye to find stuff so I always have a rotating stack of sunglasses to choose from. Still, these Tifosi Sizzle glasses are the ones I most often reach for when I go for a long ride, especially somewhere hot and with striated light. The shatterproof gold mirror lens is stylish and blocks sharp sunlight without overly dimming spots when I get into the shade, so they're perfect for early morning and late afternoon rides with long shadows. Plus, the nose grip is made of a hydrophilic rubber, meaning it gets grippier as your nose gets slippery with sweat. The polycarbonate lens is a single piece, giving off a sleek, sporty look without being too aggressive. Finally, the fit is small-medium with a weight of only 24g, perfect for my small head and tender ears. The best part though, in my opinion, is the price. At \$35, these durable glasses get past precious pretention so I can have fun, kick up dust, and splash in puddles without ruining an investment. If I do lose them, it won't be shattering, but I plan on holding onto these ones as best I can. –CW

Specialized/Fjällräven Saddle to Table Dress, \$160 specialized.com

Of the three garments Specialized/Fjällräven sent me to test, this tastefully designed dress is by far the most universally recommendable garment — I give it a solid 10/10. I've tested a few cycling-specific dresses over the years and the Saddle to Table Dress gets the highest marks in both form and function. Made of recycled polyamide and elastane, the lightweight, quick-drying fabric is perfect for summer commutes and is truly sophisticated in a professional environment. The 10 percent elastane allows the fabric to stretch and flow whether I'm cruising around town or sprinting to get to a meeting on time. I would happily wear this on a 100°F day or a 60°F day. I love the attention to detail, such as the drawstring cinches hidden in the pockets to adjust the length of the dress, and the reflective patch on the back of the belt. I even find the collar to be notably, subtly fashionable. While wearing low-profile cycling shorts beneath the dress, shortening the length with the drawstrings ensures the fabric won't get caught on my saddle when I'm pedaling around. The napoleon pocket is positioned perfectly to not be a floppy nuisance when it holds my phone or wallet while I'm tucked over dropbars. I haven't had the opportunity to bring it with me on a bike tour yet, but the next time I'm packing my bags, this dress will certainly go in them. I'm five feet, eight inches tall and about 150 pounds, so I opted for a medium; the fit is good with the belt, but if I wanted to wear the dress primarily without the belt, I'd probably try a small. The Saddle to Table Dress comes in black and pomegranate. —AM



Specialized ADV SWAT Bibs, \$180 specialized.com

I'm on record as being a fan of pockets on cycling bibs and shorts. I may not always use them, but it's nice to know that I can carry extra bottles, snacks, tubes, tools, my phone, and whatever else I can jam into them without resorting to strapping on a backpack or hip pack. Having pockets on your bibs, such as on these from Specialized, also means you can carry the stuff you normally would in your jersey pockets but have more flexibility in what kind of top you can wear. Sometimes it's nice to wear a looser, more casual-looking top when cycling.

The ADV SWAT bibs have a plethora of pockets, including one on each outside thigh, two in the back, one on each side of the torso, and a bonus zip pocket on the back. The fit is generous and comfy, which is a nice contrast to the tighter, more constricting bibs I own. The ADV bibs are very comfortable on long rides, and everything I kept in the pockets stayed in place, even in rough terrain. I also appreciate the little details, like the stretchy frontal area for when you need to use the facilities, and the reflective strips on the back of the thighs for a little extra visibility. The only room for improvement I noticed is in the straps: they work well enough, but I wish they stayed in place better and didn't fold in on themselves. At \$180, the ADV SWAT bibs are on the upper end of "affordable" for bibs, or on the lower end of premium, depending on how you look at it. Either way, it's a fair chunk of change to shell out for some nylon and spandex, but it's hard to argue with the utility they offer. —DM