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Women's Health MAGAZINE

JULY/AUGUST 2008

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» Pack the hottest high-tech gear for your hike to keep your knees, back, and feet happy

1 | Made of lightweight nylon twill, the **Gregory Jade 25 daypack** practically carries itself. Its comfy waist belt (which features two handy pockets), contoured shoulder straps, and taut mesh suspension on the rear panel keep your load perfectly balanced. (\$129, gregorypacks.com for stores)

3 | Able to record ascent and descent rates as well as elevation gain and loss, the **Highgear Axio Mini Altimeter watch** also happens to be cute enough to wear to the office. (\$125, highgear.com for stores)

4 | Before snacking, zap germs with a spritz from a lemon-scented **Atwater Carey PocketPak hand sanitizing spray pen**. Filled with ethyl alcohol, the sprayer stashes in your pack and is good for about 70 squirts. (\$2.50, atwater-carey.com for stores)

2 | WHO THE HELL HIKES IN TIGHTS?

Though high on the dork scale, these space-age **CW-X Conditioning Wear Ventilator tights** are a hit on the adventure-racing circuit, where athletes scamper up and down mountains for hundreds of miles. These stretchy extra-thick leg savers, made of a Lycra blend, really shine on the descent: A web of elastic fabric lends sports bra-like support to cushion your kneecaps when you slam down the trail. (\$96, cw-x.com)

5 | Waterproof yet ventilated, the mostly mesh upper of **The North Face W Hedgehog Mid GTX XCR** boots keep air circulating and tootsies as fresh-smelling as when you laced up. The light boot also features antimicrobial footbeds and four-wheel-drive traction in the soles and hits above the ankle for extra support. (\$115, thenorthface.com) —*Dimity McDowell*

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Sunday morning breaks as clear and sunny as promised. By 7:30, I'm on New York State Route 73 driving five miles southeast toward **Adirondak Loj**, a rustic, 40-guest lodge at the center of several trailheads. The parking lot is bustling with day-trippers on their way into the park and campers on their way out. I weave through the crowds to meet my cheery **Adirondack Mountain Club** guide, Thea Moruzzi.

For my inaugural ascent, Thea has selected a personal favorite: the 8.8-mile out-and-back on 4,161-foot Phelps Mountain. She says it's the ideal intro: a five-hour hike that's relatively flat for the first three miles

and then hits a sharp incline for the last mile or so. We strap on daypacks (mine's crammed with a dozen granola bars) and start walking.

Winding along the trail through thick stands of paper birches and aspens, I hear the waterfalls along Phelps Brook. It's too chilly for a dip, but in the summer, Thea says, the stream's deep pockets make perfect après-hike swimming holes. Within an hour, we've fallen into a steady pace—though as I

navigate the rocky path I wish my boots had more ankle support.

Soon we're at the trailhead; from the looks of things, the last part of the trail shoots straight into the sky. Time to crank into high gear. Thanks to my kickboxing habit, I'm in decent

SUNDAY



At least one local has participated in every Winter Olympics since the first, in 1924.

MONDAY

hungry as a bear, so I walk downtown to the **Lake Placid Pub & Brewery**. I'm about to order a pint when the waitress tells me that the goateed guy with glasses down the bar wants to buy me a shot. I'm shocked when I glance over: He's cute! I accept a beer and happily challenge him to a round of darts. (My thank-you: I let him win.)

Morning glory

I'm up early for a four-mile run (more like a shuffle) that includes a loop around Mirror Lake to help my sore legs recover. Grandma Saunderson had told me it's popular with joggers, and a mile in, I can see why: The rising sun glistens off the water, reflecting the surrounding peaks. After breakfast, I hug Grandma goodbye and start the long drive home. One High Peak bagged, 45 to go. **WH**



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