

WHAT THE PRO TAKES:
alpine trekking



£105

Sportiva Raptors

Whenever possible I guide in walking shoes, rather than boots. I find they save my knees. The Raptors are brilliant: a technical shoe with great grip, precise on rocks and rough trails, and super-comfortable. I can't fault them. Strictly speaking these are trail-running shoes, but they cross over to hiking beautifully. www.sportiva.com



£110 Pair

Leki Anti-shock Cressida Poles

Lightweight with a cork handle for comfort and a flick-lock for speed of adjusting, these cope with all kinds of terrain. For me the anti-shock system is important, given the amount of hiking I do, which is from mid-June until October. Springiness is important to avoid sore wrists on steep ground. www.leki.co.uk



£29.99

Black Diamond Cosmo Headtorch

It rarely gets used, but somewhere at the bottom of my sack is a Cosmo head torch. When it is used in anger it gives good performance at a good price. It has various lighting options, and a red LED for night vision. eu.blackdiamondequipment.com

Millet Axon GTX Jacket

A quality Gore-tex jacket with waterproof zips. It's lightweight, but does the job and keeps me warm and dry. In the Alps I don't encounter lots of wet weather, so it often lives in my rucksack, but when it does rain and I'm outside all day, I need to know my jacket will work. The Millet waterproof trousers complete the combo. www.millet.fr

£284



£50



Arc'teryx Solita Skort

If the weather is good I always hike in a 'skort'. It looks like a skirt, but is stitched in lightweight stretchy shorts underneath, definitely the most comfortable way to walk in the mountains. Keeps you cool, covers your modesty and looks feminine. What's wrong with being girly? Also seems to be showerproof, and dries very quickly. On every trip there is at least one female client who heads to the shops to buy the same. www.arcteryx.com



£32.99

Silva 4 Compass

I've never used anything else, and it serves me well. It has multiple map measuring scales, a good magnifier, and luminous markings. It's a very popular model and apparently it's an extreme sport and defence forces' favourite. www.silvacompass.com

Osprey Talon 33 Rucksack

For comfort it's proving a winner. I bought it at the beginning of last season, as I was fed up with a rucksack feeling heavy before I put anything in it. Enough space for multi-day hiking and light enough as a day pack. Plenty of pockets, including one on each side which are useful for items like gloves and hats. There are also two pockets on the belt for small items; perfect. www.ospreyeurope.com

£84.99



PHOTO: LINDSAY CANNON COLLECTION



IN THE BAG

Lindsay Cannon, International Mountain Leader

Former BBC TV presenter Lindsay Cannon was once asked to complete a climb for the camera. Frankly, she told them where to put their wide-angle lens, as she preferred her feet firmly on the ground. But curiosity got the better of her and eventually she agreed. A passion for climbing was born, and she discovered the French Alps. Eventually Lindsay jumped off the BBC career path and onto the mountain trails, working as an alpine hiking guide.

Why did you become an alpine trekking guide?

I was asked by an inspirational 70 year-old friend, 'Mave the Rave', to join her on the Chamonix to Zermatt Haute Route. She'd never done any hill-walking and my role was to advise, guide, and encourage. Mave needed some blunt explanations: don't carry the kitchen sink, don't expect a café to appear in the middle of nowhere and never lurk near metal objects in a lightning storm. The experience of helping someone achieve their mountain goal encouraged me to embark on the International Mountain Leader scheme.

What's the toughest long-distance route you guide?

One of the toughest is the Tour de Monte Rosa, which starts in Saas Grund in Switzerland, then passes into Italy, the remote valleys of Macugnaga and Alanga, before heading across the Theodule Pass into Zermatt. It has ten long days with ascents and descents of up to 1,300m each day. The passes are stunning but committing. I love it.

What's your dream trek?

I have a rather bland answer, as I love them all! If the sun is shining, the ibex are playing, the flowers are blooming, and the views are stunning then each day is the best. I can walk the popular Tour du Mont Blanc four times a season and still revel in the mountain scenery. The Haute Route, the Tour de Monte

Rosa, the Traverse of the Verdon Gorge; they all offer something different and I never tire of the thrill of arriving at a col and seeing what's on the other side.

What's the best way to start alpine trekking?

Get some walking experience in the UK and do a navigation skills course to gain general mountain sense, and then think about exploring further afield. I guide many people who do a lot of walking, but don't want the hassle of organising a long-distance hike in the Alps. If you have a guide, it's a real holiday.

What are the best locations for trekking?

The Alps are top of my list: nothing beats the scenery for variety and sheer jaw-dropping beauty. I've guided in the Himalayas and Nepal, and have travelled around the world, but the Alps just keep bringing me back.

What gear do you take?

I try and hike light, but as we say "light is right, until it's wrong". In other words, go as lightweight, compact and efficient as you can, but don't cut corners on safety. There's no point lugging around a rucksack as big as yourself if you don't need to, unless you want to wreck your ankles, knees and hips well before pensionable age! But always take the basic minimum of waterproofs, warm layers, gloves, hat, water, first-aid kit, head torch, sunglasses, and sunscreen. ☑

ROOM TO BREATHE

The perfect hiking pack. AirZone is a unique suspended mesh back system that offers unparalleled comfort and airflow. It maximises breathability and always remains contoured to your back.



LEAVE YOUR CARES BEHIND AND EMBRACE ADVENTURE AND NATURE IN ALL HER GLORY™

Find more about Lindsay Cannon on www.tracks-and-trails.com. She offers hiking, trail running, mountain biking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

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