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BACKPACKER

THE OUTDOORS AT YOUR DOORSTEP

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Therm-a-Rest® NeoAir™ Mattress Named *Backpacker* 2009 Editors' Choice Award Winner

The industry's most coveted award honors the best new gear and essentials for outdoor enthusiasts

SEATTLE, U.S.A. – The Therm-a-Rest NeoAir mattress has been honored as a recipient of a 2009 *Backpacker* magazine Editors' Choice Award, the most prestigious award in the outdoor industry, given annually to products in recognition of their outstanding innovation in design, materials and/or performance.

Backpacker Editor-In-Chief Jonathan Dorn and his staff of editors and testers presented the Therm-a-Rest NeoAir mattress with the award at the annual Outdoor Retailer Show in Salt Lake City, Utah on January 22nd, 2009.

The *Backpacker* Editors' Choice Awards, bestowed annually since 1993, honor the products that *Backpacker* editors have chosen as the best of the year based on months of trail testing by teams of highly experienced hikers and climbers. With no set categories for the awards and no set number of recipients, the products and the testing process drive the award categories.

The Therm-a-Rest NeoAir mattress was one of only 19 innovative products that have been honored with a 2009 *Backpacker* Editors' Choice Award. The NeoAir mattress packs to the size of a one liter bottle and weighs only 14 ounces for a regular size, making it the perfect choice for people with strict weight and space limitations. When inflated, the NeoAir mattress is warm to sleep on, thanks to a patent-pending Reflective Barrier that reflects heat back to the user's body and reduces convective heat loss to the ground. A second patent-pending technology, the Triangular Core Matrix, contributes to the warmth by creating a multitude of air cells that minimize air movement and convective cooling. This matrix also creates an internal truss system that virtually eliminates the instability generally found on large tube-based air mattresses and assures that the user will shift less while resting comfortably on a 2.5 inch-thick mattress.

"This year's winners withstood the most rigorous testing process yet," said Editor-In-Chief Jonathan Dorn. "Our test team started off with over 50 new products, narrowing them down to a final 25 after months of trail-testing. The finalists were then taken on extreme outdoor adventures both in the mountains and on the coast of Wales, enduring a streak of epic weather conditions from wind-whipped days to rain-soaked nights. In fact, three tents alone were destroyed on this trip. Those that survived have earned the distinction of becoming the 2009 Editors' Choice Award Winners."

“Receiving the Editors’ Choice Award for the new Therm-a-Rest NeoAir mattress is a true honor,” said Doug Jacot, Therm-a-Rest Business Director. “It’s a testament to the real benefits of this unique and innovative mattress design—we can talk about the innovations, but one needs to sleep on it to fully understand how different it is. We’re delighted that the Backpacker editors got to do that, and recognized it with this award as a result.”

The *Backpacker* Editors’ Choice Awards are the gold standard against which all outdoor products are measured, and are a seal of approval that can help put an outdoor company or product on the proverbial map. Each year at the Outdoor Retailer show, retail buyers use the awards announcements as a must-buy shopping list, knowing that their customers will be asking for these products in the spring.

Since their inception, the *Backpacker* Editors’ Choice Awards have come to be regarded as the most sought-after award for outdoor equipment and apparel found in the industry. The impeccable outdoor credentials and rigorous field-testing standards of the Backpacker staff guarantee that these awards are an undisputed mark of quality for the companies and products selected.

All winners must excel under extensive field-testing conducted by *Backpacker’s* team of editors, who take hundreds of new products every year into the backcountry to put them to the test. This rigorous process ensures that the performance of the winners is truly worthy of distinction and meets the guiding principle behind the program: gear that is of real value to the readers of *Backpacker* magazine, who are very active, long-term outdoor enthusiasts.

The complete list of *Backpacker* 2009 Editors’ Choice Award winners will be officially announced to the general public in the magazine’s April issue, on newsstands March 3rd.

About the Therm-a-Rest® Brand

Seattle-based Cascade Designs, Inc. has been the market leader in premium outdoor comfort for more than 35 years, designing the finest portable outdoor sleeping and seating solutions available under the Therm-a-Rest brand. The company’s commitment to quality manufacturing and innovation ensures that every product offers unrivaled comfort and reliability. All Therm-a-Rest mattresses are made in the Seattle, U.S.A. and Cork, Ireland manufacturing facilities. For more information on the Therm-a-Rest brand, visit www.thermarest.com.

About Backpacker:

[Backpacker](#) brings the outdoors straight to the reader’s doorstep, inspiring and enabling them to go more places and enjoy nature more often. The authority on active adventure, Backpacker is the world’s first GPS-enabled magazine and website, and the only outdoor media whose editors personally test the hiking trails, camping gear, and survival tips they publish. Backpacker’s Editors’ Choice Awards, an industry honor recognizing design, feature and product innovation, has become the gold standard against which all other outdoor-industry awards are measured. And the magazine recently launched mobile media applications that allow users to text-message hiking maps and directions to their phones. In 2008, Backpacker won the magazine industry highest honor, the National Magazine Award for General Excellence, joining The New Yorker, Mother Jones, GQ, and National Geographic as top winners in their respective size categories. It has won numerous other print, design, and digital awards, and its writers have been recognized in prestigious contests and best-of-the-year anthologies.

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