2013 Editors’ Choice Awards - Skis

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2013 Editors' Choice Awards: Skis, Bindings, Boots, Snowboards

Backcountry Magazine is ecstatic to announce the 2013 Editors’ Choice Awards. These are next year’s best backcountry skis and we, the editors at Backcountry Magazine should know. Last spring, our team of 50 testers evaluated some 300 skis at Powder Mountain, Ut. over more than 1,800 runs. We’ve boiled the beta for the last four months and narrowed the field—the top 70 skis are featured in the 2013 Gear Guide and among them are 14 Editors’ Choice standouts. Highlighted here are the best of the best, but for more skis (and more about these products), pick up the 2013 Gear Guide, on newsstands August 28.

G3 EMPIRE

$800 - GENUINEGUIDEGEAR.COM | SIZES (cm): 183, 193

DIMENSIONS (mm): 153/127/139 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 9 lbs. 8 oz. (183)

+ “Spring, bounce, smear and laugh all over the place in pow.”

- “Not super damp and has less personality than other pow-specific skis.”

= A freeride ski that can handle the resort and the skintrack with equal aplomb.

BLACK DIAMOND CARBON MEGAWATT

$929 - BLACKDIAMONDEQUIPMENT.COM | SIZES (cm): 178, 188

DIMENSIONS (mm): 151/125/131 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 9 lbs. 4 oz. (188)

+ “In perfect conditions, it’s as fun as beer.”

- “Tinny and chattery on frozen crud and hard groomers.”

= Less an all-arounder than the original but perfect for all-day bc blower.

VOILE BUSTER

$625 - VOILE-USA.COM | SIZES (cm): 176, 186

DIMENSIONS (mm): 142/120/129 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 9 lbs. (186)

+ “Truly the ultimate backcountry ski.”

- “On hardpack or ice its construction degrades it to an erratic ride.”

= A light ski with an extended range of noteworthy performance.

ATOMIC AUTOMATIC

$929 - ATOMIC.COM | SIZES (cm): 179, 186, 193

DIMENSIONS (mm): 140.5/117/129.5 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 9 lbs. 11 oz. (186)

+ "It's all in the name. Could be too easy."

- "Feels like it has a turn it likes."

= Playful, rockered beast with plenty of camber underfoot to ski just about anything.

LINE INFLUENCE 115

$940 - LINESKIS.COM | SIZES (cm): 179, 186, 192

DIMENSIONS (mm): 145/115/131 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 9 lbs. 14 oz. (186)

+ “Turns easily for its size—a true powder ski that can rip on hard snow.”

- “Tip and tail aren’t skin friendly.”

= An energetic and stable ride well suited in all conditions.

NORDICA LA NIÑA

$949 - NORDICAUSA.COM | SIZES (cm): 169, 177, 185

DIMENSIONS (mm): 143/113/132 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 9 lbs. (177)

*women’s specific

+ “Sounds cheesy, but these suckers do it all and do it gracefully.”

- “There’s alotta tail on this lady. Gotta work it a little.”

= An everyday ski for resort-based missions and day tours. Makes all snow condition fun.

K2 BACKDROP

$880 - K2SKIS.COM | SIZES (cm): 174, 181

DIMENSIONS (mm): 142/112/131 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 8 lbs. (174)

+ “Floats like a cork while requiring minimal driver input.”

- “Slow edge to edge and dislikes shorter turns.”

= A solid, light, soft-snow ski wide enough to stay on top all day.

PRIOR HUSUME XTC

$1,099 - PRIORSNOW.COM | SIZES (cm): 175, 181, 188, 193

DIMENSIONS (mm): 137/109/123 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 8 lbs. 12 oz. (188)

+ “The perfect combo of progressive shape, rocker, camber, dimension and weight.”

- “Soft and forgiving but not very responsive. Lots of deflection.”

= A light, damp, forgiving ski that suits a wide range of skiers

DYNASTAR CHAM 107 HM

$800 - DYNASTAR.COM | SIZES (cm): 166, 175, 184, 190

DIMENSIONS (mm): 137/107/122 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 8 lbs. 11 oz. (184)

+ “Made for variable, high-mountain conditions.”

- “The tail is too stiff and unforgiving.”

= “There are better powder skis available but when you’re in no-compromise situations this is THE ski.”

MOMENT BELLA

$830 - MOMENTSKIS.COM | SIZES (cm): 152, 162, 172

DIMENSIONS (mm): 134/106/126 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 7 lbs. 4 oz. (162)

*women’s specific

+ “Made me feel unstoppable. You really can’t do anything wrong on these.”

- “Very turny, and they tend to ski shorter than length might imply.”

= An ultra-fun, forgiving ride for any resort, sidecountry or backcountry mission.

DPS WAILER 99 PURE

$1,249 - DPSSKIS.COM | SIZES (cm): 168, 176, 184, 192

DIMENSIONS (mm): 126/99/110 | WEIGHT/PAIR: , 7 lbs. 8 oz. (176)

+ “Could be the single best ski for back/sidecountry. I could get by with this ski almost anywhere, any snow.”

- “Wouldn’t want to pound these skis on hardpack and bumps.”

= Talk with your banker, then get these impressive skis in the right length.

BLIZZARD KABOOKIE

$850 - BLIZZARDSPORTUSA.COM | SIZES (cm): 166, 173, 180, 187

DIMENSIONS (mm): 133/98/118 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 7 lbs. 13 oz. (173)

+ “A greater worker ski. Once you get a handle on them, they will never quit you.”

- “Make sure you rock a [tele] binding with some chutzpah or you won’t stand a chance at maneuverability.”

= An open-throttle ski with adaptability.

BLACK DIAMOND REVERT

$749 - BLACKDIAMONDEQUIPMENT.COM | SIZES (cm): 165, 173, 181, 189

DIMENSIONS (mm): 121/95/109 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 7 lbs. 11 oz. (181)

+ ”Just the right mix of tip and tail rocker with buttery sidewall camber.”

- “Would not match well with a rail binding due to its softness.”

= An all-day touring ace adept in an impossibly wide range of conditions.

VÖLKL NANUQ

$825 - VOLKL.COM | SIZES (cm): 163, 170, 177, 184

DIMENSIONS (mm): 130/94/113 | WEIGHT/PAIR: 7 lbs. 1 oz. (177)

+ “Light, versatile, and pretty darn fun in almost all conditions.”

- “Flotation isn’t like a dedicated powder ski, and turn initiation took some work.”

= A great ski that’s ready to run up and down—if you have the legs for it.

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