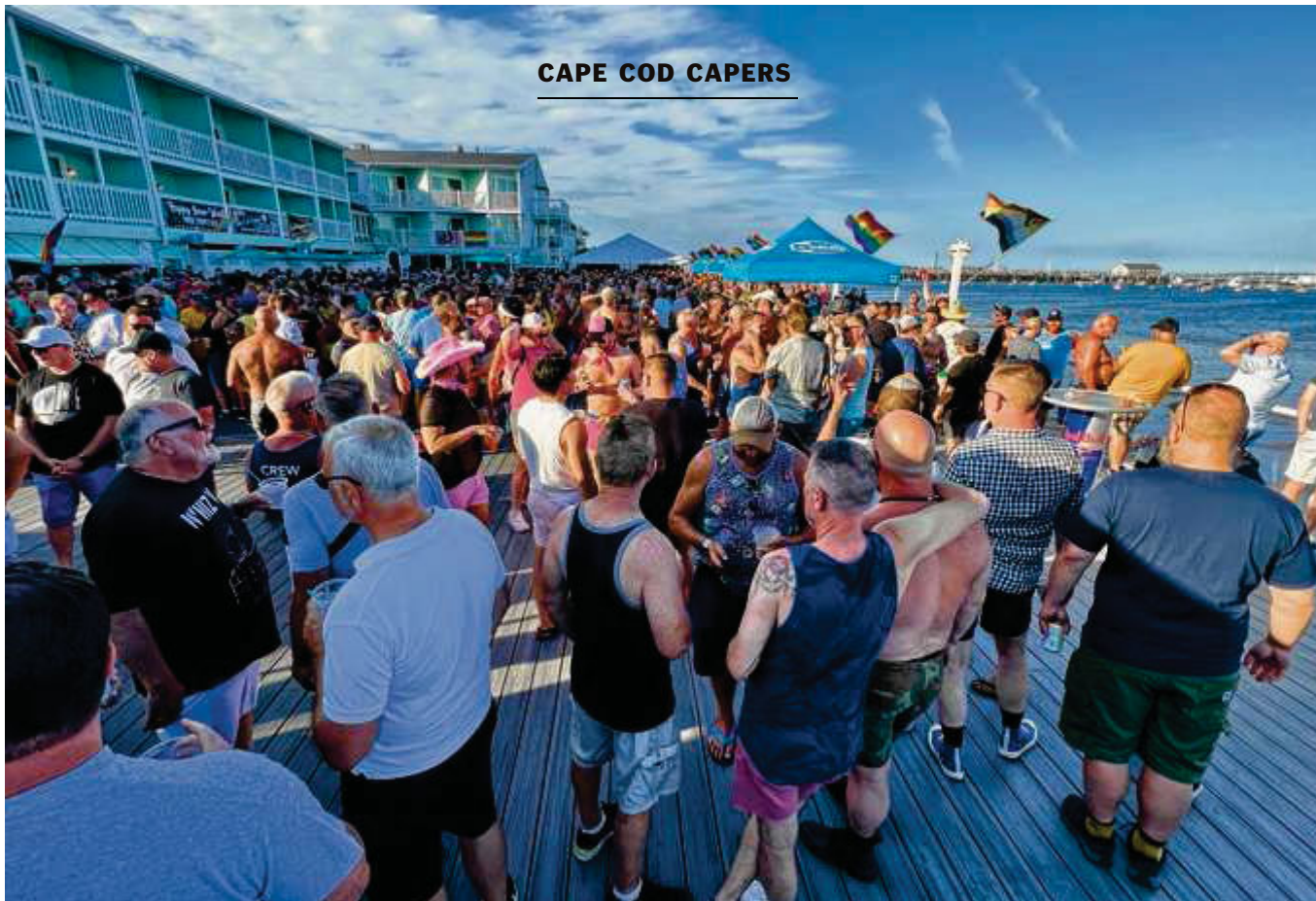


SundayTravel

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS

BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE JULY 24, 2022 | BOSTONGLOBE.COM/TRAVEL



CAPE COD CAPERS

PHOTOS BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER/GLOBE STAFF

A pack of bears congregate on the deck for tea dance at the Boatslip in Provincetown.



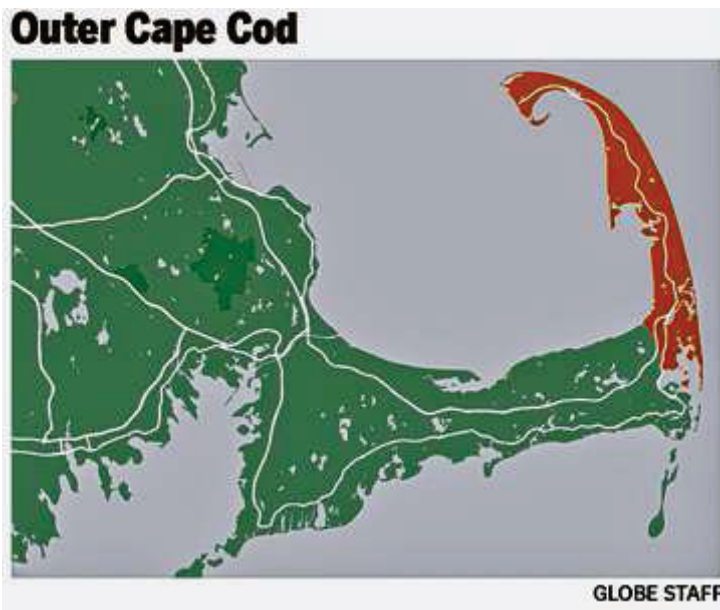
The lobby of the Mercury Hotel in Provincetown.



Wilbur the cat waits for attention (and a family to adopt him) at the Carrie A. Seaman Animal Shelter in Provincetown.



Drag performer Ginger Minj sings at the Art House in Provincetown.



GLOBE STAFF

The Outer Cape puts on a show

This is the fourth and final installment of our seaside summer exploration of Cape Cod, and we end with a bang. (And a shark sighting!)

BY CHRISTOPHER MUTHER AND DEVRA FIRST | GLOBE STAFF

The last in a series.

PROVINCETOWN — There was more fur on display than a 1970s game show prize package from Dicker and Dicker of Beverly Hills. Hirsute, barrel-chested, and beer-bellied gents doffed their tees to display hair sprouting from head-to-toe-to-back-to-front while packing dance floors, restaurants, and beaches.

This was Bear Week in Provincetown, where full-figured gentlemen and their admirers gathered to celebrate the wonders of their untamed shag carpets. For the uninitiated, a bear is slang for those in the LBGTQ+ community who embrace their hairier and heavier sides. During Bear Week, folks prowled the streets and bellied up to the bars. Also prowling the streets of Provincetown during Bear Week were the Boston Globe's food writer and travel writer. Neither of us can be considered a bear, or even any of the subcategories: otter, cub, chub, Ursula, wolf, or polar bear. Still, it was tough not to get caught up in the revelry, or snagged in a pelt or two.

This is the fourth and final installment of our seaside summer exploration of Cape Cod, and we end with a bang and a

shark sighting (!) on the Outer Cape. Provincetown may steal all the attention, but we also stumbled out of town a couple of times to see what else the Outer Cape has to offer. For Devra that meant ponds (so many ponds). For Christopher that meant carbs (so many carbs).

Before we hit the beach, this is the official disclaimer: It would be impossible to visit all of the restaurants, shops, and Outer Cape activities on our list. Eventually, we admitted defeat and simply tried our best.

Christopher: Shortly after Devra and I began writing this series, I received an e-mail with a subject line that read, "Don't write about us." It was from Ed Miller, editor of the Provincetown Independent. Miller said he had found my reporting "Sorely lacking in the past," citing a story I wrote two years ago that prominently featured Provincetown. With all due respect, Mr. Miller (please read this sentence as Dixie Carter would in a scene from "Designing Women"), the last time I checked, the First Amendment of the Constitution of these United States guarantees me the right to travel to Provincetown and do my job as a red-blooded, white trash, homosexual American journalist. So if you'll kindly stand aside, I *will* be turning left on

CAPE COD, Page N14

Need to replace some camping gear? Here's what's new and notable.

By Kari Bodnarchuk

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

You don't need the latest gear to hit the trail or head to the campground, but here's a look at what's new or notable this year in case your favorite items need replacing.

A tent for tall campers

If you're someone who can see on top of the fridge, you're going to love NEMO's new Aurora Highrise six-person tent. This freestanding dome has a peak height of 77 inches and steep walls that create a palatial feel and let you easily move around. It offers 83.3 square feet of floor space and two large vestibules — each 23.6 square feet — for stashing gear or hanging out. I'm 5'3" and could pitch the tent myself, though slipping on the fly took a few tries. The Highrise has a fun design on the floor, an all-mesh ceiling for stargazing and ventilation, and four handy corner pockets. Two large mesh windows help boost airflow, while the rain cover over each window prevents droplets from getting inside. You'll appreciate NEMO's clever Nightlight Pocket, an orange mesh pocket on the ceiling that diffuses your headlamp's brightness.



JUSTIN KEENA

NEMO's new Aurora Highrise six-person tent (at right).

The Highrise also comes in a four-person version, which offers 62.5 square feet of room to sprawl, two 19.5-square-foot vestibules, and a peak height of 75 inches. \$399.99-\$499.99. www.nemo-equipment.com.

One mattress for two campers

Big Agnes's new Rapide SL Insulated Floor Pad works well for couples looking to minimize hiking gear or a parent camping with a child (helping prevent

the kiddo from slipping off the mattresses during the night). The inflatable mattress has a tapered design — 50 inches wide at the head and 40 inches wide at the feet — so it fits perfectly in most two-person tents. At 78 inches long, it suits tall campers, too. The three-season mattress measures 3.5 inches thick and has an R-value of 4.2 (a rating of how well it "resists" heat flow). Its PrimaLoft Silver Insulation allows

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A family goes looking for moose in New Hampshire

By Jim Morrison

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

My family likes to hike in Northern New England, and though we spend a fair bit of time in a log cabin in the woods of southwestern Maine, collectively, we've only seen a handful of moose. Until recently, my 8-year-old daughter had never seen one. So one day in May, I proposed that we spend Father's Day weekend at the cabin and take a moose tour. To my surprise, they were all-in.

After loading the car up we soon found ourselves heading north on Route 128 in busy Friday afternoon traffic. About 15 minutes into the trip, we saw a bald eagle overhead and traveling in the same direction we were. It was about 40 or 50 feet ahead of us when it took a hard left turn and descended — talons first — into Waltham's Cambridge Reservoir. It was an unusual sight and I interpreted it as a sign that nature might be willing to reveal itself to us this weekend.

Pemi Valley Moose Tours in Lincoln

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Inside

VIP LOUNGE

Grammy-winning musician John Jorgenson talks about his current tour, love of Italy, and 'quite long legs'

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TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

An Airbnb host canceled, and now I have to pay \$1,300 more

N12

On a moose tour, patience is rewarded

► **MOOSE**
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coln, N.H., is a little over an hour from the cabin. Larry Hartle, the owner, has been conducting these tours from May to September since 1999 and claims to have found at least one moose on about 96 percent of his trips. I liked our chances.

Hartle was working as a police officer in his hometown of Lincoln when a tourist asked him where they should go to see a moose. He suggested a location and told them to be careful, but a couple hours later a call came in to check out a vehicle that had collided with a moose. The tourists weren't hurt, but it gave him an idea.

"To be a police officer, you have to be a little bit of a hard ass and that just isn't me," he said. "I figured there had to be a better way, so I bought a 21-passenger van and started doing moose tours. Now I've graduated to a 51-passenger van."

As instructed, we arrived 45 minutes before the scheduled 8 p.m. departure time, checked in, and got our boarding passes. Larry described the tour and

managed our expectations before he filled his bus and set off in search of the largest land mammal in New England.

New Hampshire's moose herd is estimated to be about 3,300, down from about 8,000 in 2000. Warmer, less snowy winters have led to an increase in deer ticks and brainworm, which are killing a lot of moose. Hartle said he's been having an increasingly hard time finding moose on his tours over the last decade.

"The population is just going to continue to go down until we start getting colder winters," he said.

Moose, he explained, don't graze in open fields like deer. They prefer browsing in roadside wallows, which are depressed areas between the side of the road and the trees. The vegetation in the wallows pick up the minerals from road salt and make up an important part of a moose's diet.

It was 44 degrees and windy and a pelting rain was coming down, but Hartle said he didn't expect that would hurt our chances of seeing a moose. Later,



SANDY MACYS/FILE

New Hampshire's moose herd is estimated to be about 3,300.

we learned it had snowed and sleeted on the top of Mount Washington that night.

"Welcome to Junetober," said guide Eric Pyra.

The bus is equipped with a sound system, three TV monitors, and, of course, a disco ball. While driving between wallows, Hartle and Pyre played moose music, gave out prizes, showed a moose documentary, an episode of "Rocky and Bullwinkle," and some moose video shot on previous tours. They also gave an engaging and detailed history of the area and told moose jokes. It feels a bit like a well-rehearsed, folksy vaudeville act. You could tell they were enjoying themselves.

They scan the roadsides in Franconia Notch and Crawford Notch for moose and deer with spotlights, one of which has a camera mounted on its top. The

camera not only records moose sightings, it's also connected to the monitors in the bus, so tourists can see what the guide sees in real time. This is especially helpful for people on the opposite side of the bus from the animals.

After about an hour and half we stopped at the White Mountain General Store at the Twin Mountain Campground for a bathroom break and the chance to buy some snacks and souvenirs. We hadn't seen a single moose yet and nobody seemed bothered. In fact, if we had gone home without seeing a moose, we'd have been disappointed, but would still have considered it an interesting and entertaining night out.

Pyra reassured my fellow "mooseketeers" and I that it is very common for him not to spot any moose in the earlier part of a

tour as we loaded back into the bus for the second half.

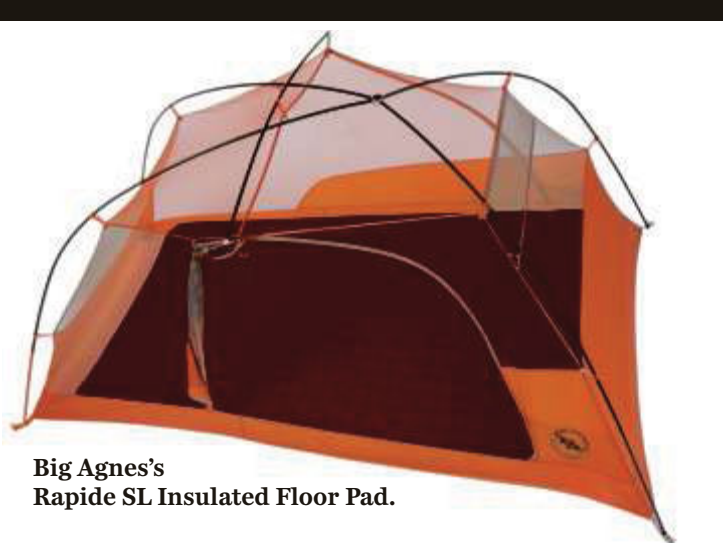
And it didn't take long. At 10:08 p.m. we saw a cow and her recently born calf — the first new calf sighting of the year, Hartle told us. It was just a few moments, but it was gratifying and off into the woods they trotted.

Hartle said the most moose he has ever seen in a single trip is 25 and that was about 15 years ago when the herd was much larger. He said he's careful to keep the bus at a distance to keep from bothering the moose. Over the years, he's seen bulls sparring and lots of cute babies, but by and large, they just ignore him and keep browsing on

twigs, leaves, bark, and new buds.

We did not see another moose that night, but it wasn't for lack of effort. Hartle and Pyre scoured the wallows in the North Country hills where they commonly find them, but there were none to be found. The tour concluded back in Lincoln and we began the hour plus ride home down winding roads in the pouring rain at midnight, this time hoping we didn't run into any moose now that it was our turn behind the wheel.

James Andrew Morrison can be reached at jamesandrew.morrison@gmail.com.



Big Agnes's Rapide SL Insulated Floor Pad.

New gear to try out

► **CAMPING**
Continued from Page N11

heat and moisture to escape, helping you keep dry, while the heat-reflective technology directs heat back toward your body, boosting warmth when the temps drop. Major bonus: The mattress's nylon ripstop fabric doesn't create an annoying crinkly sound when you shift position so you won't disturb your tentmate. The included inflation sack makes blowing up the mattress a breeze. \$299. www.big-agnes.com.



Gregory's updated backpack.



HOKA's Anacapa Mid Gore-Tex hikers.

hiking and running adventures yet sturdy enough to help propel you up steep slopes, provide stability on uneven or tricky terrain, and dampen the impact on descents (your knees will thank you). The poles have a super-narrow carbon shaft to shave weight — just 8.8 ounces per pair for the 100cm poles — and, for the women's version, slim foam handles to accommodate smaller hands. The Z-style design lets you quickly fold up the poles and stash them on the side of your pack. The poles come with carbide tips, non-scraping rubber Tech Tips, and snow baskets for winter excursions. \$179.95. www.blackdiamondequipment.com.

A green pillow

Traveling light doesn't mean leaving comfort behind. Therm-a-Rest's newly designed Compressible Pillow weighs just 10

ounces (medium size) and packs down small, so you can justify taking it on your adventures. The pillow stuffs into the attached cover for packing. Come bedtime, you can customize the pillow's firmness using the new cinch cord to loosen or tighten the cover. Therm-a-Rest uses excess scraps from foam mattress production inside the pillow and 60 percent recycled polyester for the super-soft cover. It also comes in small (7 ounces) and large (15 ounces). \$34.95. www.thermarest.com.

Updated backpacks

Forget emptying your backpack to fish out a buried item. Gregory's newly updated Baltoro (men's) and Deva (women's) backpacks have a large, zippered panel on the front so you can lay the pack on its back, unzip, and access its contents from top to bottom. The packs still offer traditional access to the main compartment through the top cinched opening and a lower front zipper. Both packs have Gregory's clever new FreeFloat A3 suspension system, which includes a hip belt and an auto-rotating shoulder harness that move independently from the frame to significantly increase comfort while hiking. The back panel is made from 3D mesh and a honeycomb structure that boosts breathability to keep you cool. The packs have three pockets on the lid, including one for sunglasses or small items, two handy pockets on the hip belt, and two long, narrow pockets on the front for sandals or rain gear. The Baltoro comes in 65 or 75 liters, while the Deva comes in 60 or 70 liters. \$319.95-\$349.95. <https://www.gregorypacks.com>.

Keeping critters at bay

If you've ever backpacked in bear country, you know how tricky it is stuffing all food and scented items in a rigid bear-proof container — and then fitting that into your backpack. Protect your supplies from opportunistic creatures big and small with Ursack's AllMitey Bear and Critter Sack. This ultralightweight bag is made from a ballistic-weave (Kevlar) laminated fabric, making it so durable it's been certified by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee. Ideally, pack your dehydrated food, snacks, and other aromatic items into an odor-proof bag (check out Opsak) and then stuff it into the Ursack and hang it from a tree branch using the 6-foot-long high-tensile cord. The AllMitey comes in three sizes: the 10.65-liter original version (\$154.95), 20-liter Grizzly (\$209.95), and 30-liter Kodiak. <https://www.ursack.com>.

A supportive, waterproof hiker

You may know HOKA as the brand that makes top cushiony running shoes — so popular, they're worn by marathoners and nurses (on their feet all day). The California-based company has incorporated its winning technology into super-lightweight and comfy yet supportive hiking shoes. The women's and men's new Anacapa Mid Gore-Tex hikers offer waterproof pro-

tection, excellent ankle support for light to moderate loads, and a Vibram Megagrip sole for good traction on rugged and uneven terrain. The gusseted tongue helps keep out pebbles and other trail debris while the flexible, padded pull tab helps you slip on the boot and supports your ankle without cutting into your Achilles area. The boots have a wide toe box and a pronounced supportive heel that helps cushion each step from walking trail to rocky summit. \$180. www.hoka.com.

Enjoy your summer camping and hiking adventures — whether you're taking snazzy new gear or your trusty old standbys.

Kari Bodnarchuk can be reached at travelwriter@karib.us.



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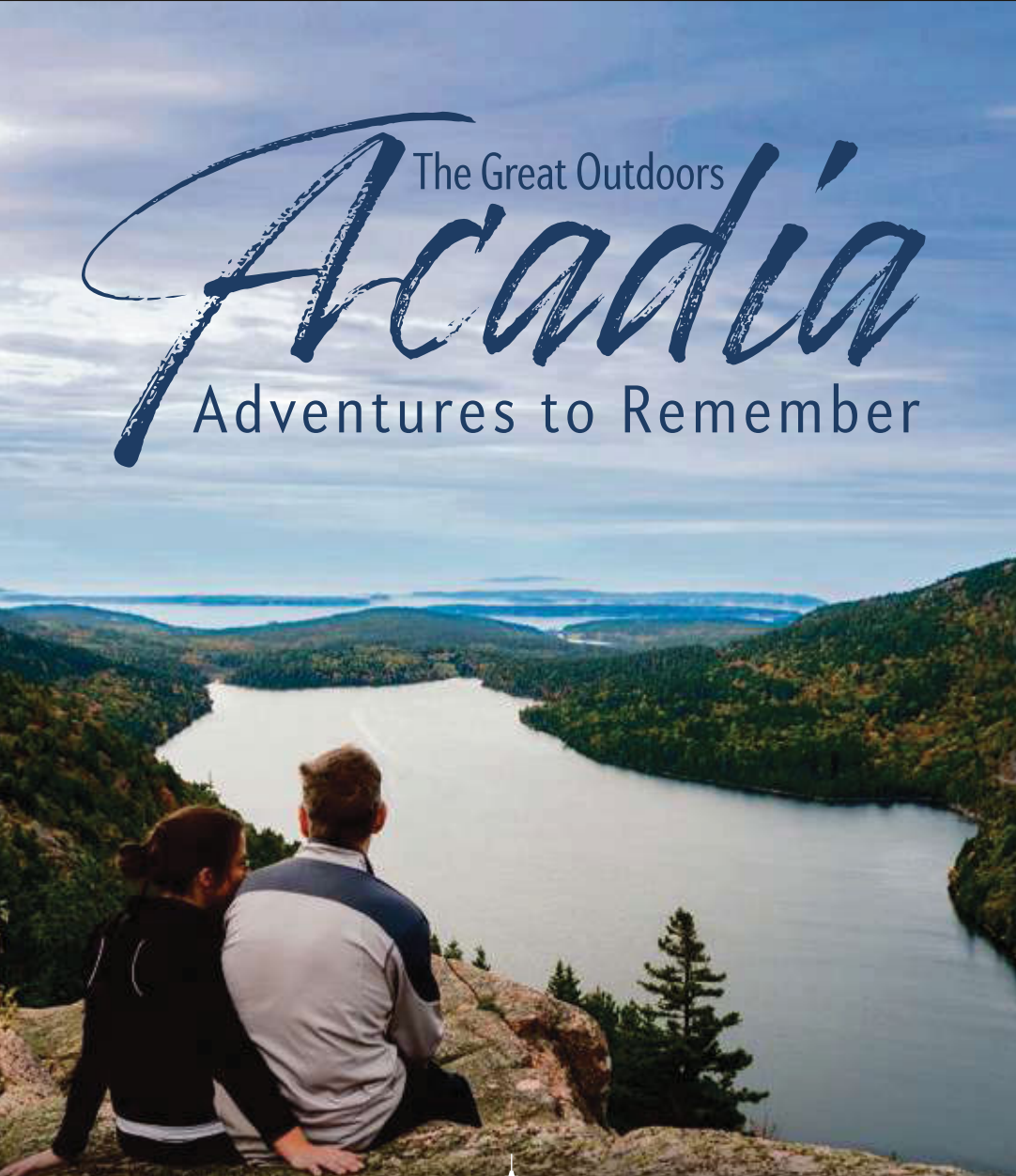
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RIO Gear Smart XXL Camping Cot (above) and Black Diamond's new Distance Carbon Z trekking poles.