

9 cool pieces of clothing to keep you warm outside this winter

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Here's a look at some of the coolest new outdoor wear for the upcoming season, whether you're blazing your own tracks on snowshoes or skis, hitting the resorts, or just hanging with friends around a campfire.

HIGH-TECH BASE LAYERS FOR WARMTH

You don't need umpteen layers to stay warm come winter. Seirus's new HeatWave base layers — drawn from body-mapped heat studies — use reflective technology to warm key areas and incorporate a wicking material for drawing moisture away from your body. HeatWave tops and bottoms for men and women use a



Seirus HeatWave base layers warm key areas.

special fabric that boosts the warmth factor 4 to 5 degrees and reflects 20 percent of your body heat in your lower back, kidney, and glute areas, offering the warmth equivalent of a much heavier layer. Meanwhile, a lighter MaxWick ma-

terial promotes breathability where we tend to heat up: outside legs, belly, groin, and inner arms. The tops and bottoms also contain an anti-microbial mesh in high-perspiration areas to cut down on odor. The four-way-stretch fabric and flat seams add extra comfort when you're out adventuring. The base layers fit true to size, maintain their shape, and feel soft against the skin. \$119.99 bottoms; \$129.99 men's crew top; \$134.99 women's long-sleeve ¼ zip top. www.seirus.com

WHEN SKI PANTS MEET SKIRT

Mainer Cathy Streifel created Snowskants to fill a gap in women's ski wear: a comfortable pair of snow pants with a built-in skirt for the slopes, something that looks good, performs well, and helps keep wear-

CLOTHING, Page N14

Inside

SHIP OF OOHS PUTTING THE FUN IN 'FUN SHIP'

The wildest cruise ship coming in 2021 has a roller coaster on top.

N13



Cool ways to keep warm this winter

►CLOTHING
Continued from Page N11

ers warm on icy chairlifts. In other words, a product that’s fun, flattering, and functional. This one-woman company (called Pyxie) produces these snow skirts for purchase online and at the Kittery Trading Post in XXS to XXL. The four-way-stretch waterproof softshell fabric — made of poly-spandex with a soft microfleece layer on the inside — is machine washable and dryer friendly. Snowskants have a generous stretch-fabric waist, come with built-in snow gators and a small pocket on the front, and work for many winter adventures, from snowshoeing to downhill skiing. \$139.99. A portion of proceeds from Snowskants sales benefit suicide prevention. www.pyxie.co



Pyxie
Mainer Cathy Streifel created Snowskants to fill a gap in women’s ski wear.

LIGHTWEIGHT SHELLS FOR UPHILL TRAVEL
Lightweight and breathable outer layers prove key for aerobic backcountry adventures, from snowshoeing to backcountry touring. Unless the weather dictates otherwise, you can leave your heavy insulated ski jacket and pants at home and bring a selection of layers that help you regulate your temperature (and avoid overheating) — plus a puffy jacket for keeping warm during breaks and descents.

Outdoor Research’s new Carbiide jacket and bibs, which come in men’s and women’s versions, work great as a waterproof and breathable outer layer for skinning up a mountain or snowshoeing in the woods, or for resort days when you



don’t need a fully insulated kit. The soft and lightweight hard-shell jacket has pit zips, a powder skirt, a clever adjustable drawstring hood with a clip for “locking” the fit in place (with or without a helmet), and tons of pockets, including two chest and hand warmer pockets (all lined with mesh for breathability) and a zippered internal pocket. The matching bibs have snow gaiters, side zips for ventilation (and a longer zippered opening on the right for pit stops), two hand pockets (one with a clip and sleeve for your avalanche beacon), and reinforced nylon scuff guards on the inner calves to protect from boots. The company added easy-to-adjust stretch webbing made by California-based Arcade Belts for the suspender straps, featuring artwork leased from India’s Warli Tribe. \$299 jacket; \$299 bibs. www.outdoorresearch.com

GLOVES AND MITTS WITH HIGH-TECH ROOTS
About 20 minutes from Acadia National Park, a company that makes gloves for handling cryogenic materials has decided to create the ultimate winter glove and mitt. Trenton-based Tempshield launches its **Mainers** brand this month, drawing on the technology used to make gloves for NASA and the US Army. The Mainers glove and mitt work great whether you’re shoveling your driveway, snowmobiling, or skiing. They have a



mix of four-way-stretch nylon and soft durable leather on the outside and layers of 3M Thinsulate, Polartec grid fleece, and microfleece on the inside, with a Gore-tex membrane to ensure waterproofness. The strategically placed grid fleece and Thinsulate on the back of gloves add warmth, while the thinner microfleece and leather on the fingertips add a nimble touch, giving you the dexterity to grasp zipper pulls and finer objects, no problem, and provide warmth. The gloves and mitts come in dark blue with splashes of lobster-red embroidery and stitching. \$195. www.mymainers.com

LEATHER GLOVES FOR THE SLOPES
Randolph-based Vermont Glove has been hand-stitching leather gloves for the past 100 years and sourcing its materials from the Northeast. The company, known for its workhorse glove The Vermonter, has created a new **Uphill Skier** glove this year that blends the ruggedness of a leather work



glove with the comfort and function of a ski glove. The soft goat leather makes the gloves comfortable on first wear and will conform to your hands as you break them in. Outer seams add to inner comfort. Remove and wear the merino wool glove liners when climbing uphill, then slip on the leather gloves for your descent. A 3¾-inch canvas powder cuff helps shed snow and cinches shut to keep your wrists warm and dry. The Uphill Skier comes in 24 different sizes — yes, 24 — including customized kids’ gloves based on a tracing of your child’s hand. Another company kudo: Its factory is powered by solar energy and a wood pellet boiler. \$140. vermontglove.com



ADAPTABLE GOGGLES FOR ALL CONDITIONS
Conditions on the slopes can change quickly, making it essential to swap your goggle lens in a flash. Dragon’s new **Swiftlock 2.0 Lens Change System** incorporates a quick-release lever that lets you release one lens and clip another one in place even with gloves on. You’ll find this technology on the new RVX OTG goggles, which also let skiers and snowboarders fit prescription glasses underneath. For those with smaller faces, try the NFX2 goggles, which have the original Swiftlock system with a quick-release lever on each side of the goggle, and come in new colors this year. Both goggles have an anti-fog coating, excellent venting, foam topping with a hypoallergenic micro-fleece lining, and Lumalens color optimizing, which punches up colors and improves depth perception to make navigating a breeze in shifting weather conditions. \$230 RVX OTG, \$190 NFX2. www.dragonalliance.com

HIGH-TECH HELMETS A MUST
Protecting your head proves crucial, whether you’re pushing your limits inbounds or venturing into the wilderness. Smith’s new **Altus** (men’s) and **Vida** (women’s) helmets straddle both worlds, providing super lightweight, breathable shells that prevent overheating while climbing uphill and superior safety features for the descent. The helmets feature an impact technology called Ko-



royd, in which hundreds of lightweight cylinders are molded together so they instantly collapse in a crash to absorb the impact and protect your head. The (optional) MIPS technology further protects your brain from the rotational forces of a crash. The helmets also breathe well, look cool, have a one-handed vent adjustment on top, and come with removable ear flaps. The fleecy interior and mesh add extra comfort and venting. \$150/\$180 without/with MIPS. smithoptics.com

STYLISH HATS FOR TRAIL AND APRÈS
Northern California-based artist **Tommy Breeze** has launched new winter beanies that work great whether you’re out for a snowshoe adventure or enjoying an après-ski drink



around a campfire. Breeze looks to nature for inspiration for his original designs, drawing on the colors, lines, and balance found outdoors near his home in Marin County. The serene scenes depict birds, mountains, and a cypress tree in inspiring colors. With help from a growing staff, he hand-sews each patch onto every knit hat. The warm



beanies, made by Milani, have a folded brim and faux-fur pompom, and come in black, maroon, and white. \$32. tommybreeze.com

CHILL OUT IN THESE TOASTY LAYERS
You’ll probably spend more time hanging around outdoor firepits and tailgating in parking lots this ski season. Obermeyer’s Sojourner (for women) and Caldera (for men) work perfectly as après pieces, helping you stay warm outside when the temps dip. The longer-length Sojourner has a slim stylish cut with tailored front pockets, an adjustable waist, and a slit in the back for greater range of movement (snap it shut for warmth). It comes with a high fleece-lined collar for extra warmth, fleece-lined handwarmer pockets, and a detachable faux-fur hood with two adjustments for keeping it off your face. The Sojourner has a coated waterproof and stain-resistant fabric and 600-fill down — and comes in sizes 2-20. The men’s Caldera jacket has a sleek, tailored cut but can hold its own on the slopes, too. As a performance piece, it offers stretch fabric for great range of motion and a removable hood, goggle pouch, ski pass pocket, and built-in snow skirt that snaps out of the way. It’s filled with cozy 800-fill goose down and has a waterproof yet breathable soft outer fabric. \$329 Sojourner, \$339 Caldera. obermeyer.com

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Have fun tromping atop the white stuff

►HIKES
Continued from Page N11

Blue Hill is no Matterhorn, but it’s the tallest of the Blue Hills, and the surrounding area offers plenty of options for snowshoe trekking. The reservation comprises 7,000 acres, ranging from Quincy to Dedham, and Milton to Randolph, so there’s plenty of territory to explore! This urban escape is laced with 125 miles of trails. Cross-country skiing is allowed, although trails are not groomed for that. So, as always, do the polite thing and plop your big feet alongside any ski tracks, not on top of them. It’s more fun to break your own trail anyway. Before heading out, download a trail map at www.mass.gov/doc/blue-hills-trail-map-guide/download. To make it easy to navigate, they’ve placed white wooden markers on trees at trail intersections. The four-digit number on the marker corresponds to an intersection number on the DCR Blue Hills trail map.

Here are a couple of worthy options, both reachable via the parking lot at Houghton’s Pond on Hillside Street in Milton: Follow the yellow dot trail, Houghton’s Pond Loop, and enjoy piney woods and pond views. With its gentle hills and mostly flat terrain, this 1-mile loop is great for families and beginners. Head counter-clockwise around the pond, and the trail will lead you back to the entrance. For a longer trek — 2 miles, about two hours, with some long, gradual slopes — consider the green dot loop trail around Tucker Hill. From the visitor center, follow the green dots up the paved hill to intersection #2070. Turn left onto Tucker Hill Path (green dots) and follow the loop clockwise around the base of Tucker Hill amid stands of spruce and beech trees. Keep right at intersection #2096 to stay on the green dot trail. At intersection #2070, retrace your steps downhill and past the bathhouse to return to the parking lot. *840 Hillside St., Milton; 617-698-1802; www.mass.gov/locations/blue-hills-reservation.*

HAROLD PARKER STATE FOREST
Located 25 miles north of Boston, this 3,000-acre state forest is arguably prettier in winter than in summer. Draped in a blanket of snow, the forest is a hushed wonderland of towering white pines, scampering mammals, and frozen ponds. It’s tempting to meander off the trail, following deer tracks and the long, loping prints of the snowshoe hare. You’ll likely see more animal tracks than footprints, evidence that this is a great place for a peaceful winter ramble. The forest offers 35 miles of trails and fire roads, but going off-road is half the fun — you can trek around the park’s 11 ponds amid forests of central hardwood, hemlock, and pine. Make sure you’ve got a map handy while exploring this sprawling property: www.mass.gov/doc/harold-parker-state-forest-trail-map/download.

One to try: The blue-blazed 3.1-mile Stearns Pond Trail. This loop begins and ends at the park’s headquarters. Start at Gate 3, and heading counterclockwise, follow Beach Road to Gate 4 and turn left. Trek around Stearns Pond on Stearns Pond Road, and leave the pond, turning left on the trail, and proceed to Harold Parker Road. Cross the road at NA30 and continue straight at NA31. At this point, you can walk back along Harold Parker Road to the park headquarters. *305 Middleton Road, North Andover; 978-686-3391; www.mass.gov/locations/harold-parker-state-forest.*

OXBOW NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Here, beavers rule. You’ll see evidence of their activity everywhere, including beaver lodges, felled trees, and tree stumps gnawed to sharp-

ness by these toothy critters. Any kids in your party will want to see the animals, but that’s not likely — in addition to stick lodges, beavers live in tunnels they dig in the banks of lakes and rivers. But looking for beaver signs will keep things lively on this kid-friendly hike.



Set 40 miles west of Boston, this 1,700-acre refuge lies along about 8 miles of the Nashua River. For decades, one family owned and farmed the land; later, the refuge was part of Camp Devens (later, Fort Devens), an army base. In 1974, the land was turned over to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The 2-mile interpretive trail offers an overview of highlights. It begins at the parking area and then follows the riverbank, crossing two oxbow ponds, and returns along Tank Road. Allow about two hours to cover it on snowshoes, taking in views of the 56-mile Nashua River, forest and wetland habitats, and a beaver pond.

As mentioned, this is a fun one for kids, but changeable Massachusetts weather can make it hazardous; the loop is sometimes impassable due to flooding, or icy in melt-freeze conditions, so you may need to adjust your route. The highlight — besides the beaver’s handiwork — will be the portion of trail along the river and the mosaic-like pattern of ice crystals that add sparkle to the winter scene. *The parking lot is at the end of Still Water Depot Road, Harvard; 978-443-4661; www.fws.gov/refuge/Oxbow/.*

RAVENSWOOD PARK
Literature mavens might recall the Lord of Ravenswood, in Sir Walter Scott’s 1819 novel “The Bride of Lammermoor.” Perhaps landowner Samuel Sawyer, who preserved the land in the late 1800s, thought this part of Gloucester resembled the hills of southern Scotland. Hard to say, but it’s an enchanting landscape nonetheless.

Giant boulders dot this 600-acre property, deposited by retreating glaciers thousands of years ago. In winter, they look like giant snowballs. Other elements include kettle ponds and Great Magnolia Swamp (a glacial bog). Fernwood Lake is technically on city land, not part of the park, but it adds to the scenery. Also notable is the variety of trees at Ravenswood — you’ll tromp past oak, birch, beech, maple, white pine, mountain laurel, and even sweetbay magnolia (uncommon here.)

Among the 10 miles of carriage paths, the 2-mile orange-blazed Ledge Hill Trail is a favorite of families. To reach it, you’ll head down Old Salem Road from the parking lot and then take a right. To make a longer route, head left off Old Salem Road to yellow-blazed Magnolia Swamp Trail to Fernwood Lake Trail (blue blazes), heading back along Old Salem Road. That 4.8-mile, porkchop-shaped loop will probably take you 2½ hours or so, and offers open views of a small lake.

An intriguing landmark here is Hermit’s Plaque, a verdigris plate mounted on a boulder along Old Salem Road and Fernwood Lake Trail at junction #23. This marker honors Mason A. Walton (1838-1917), who built a cabin here and was an expert on the park’s flora and fauna. Over the years Walton communed with local wildlife, including red squirrels, catbirds, white-foot mice, and raccoons. Some became his pets, and were the subjects of Walton’s nature studies. Given his unique lifestyle, visitors began to seek out the romantic “Hermit of Ravenswood.” His 1903 memoir was called “A Hermit’s Wild Friends or Eighteen Years in the Woods.” *481 Western Ave., Gloucester; 978-526-8687; thetrustees.org/place/ravenswood-park/.*

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