



The Unconventional Medic
"Uncommon Tools for an Unconventional Trade"SM

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The versatile backpacks

[Shanti Gunaratnam](#)

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BACKPACKS are the new bags to be lugged around when travelling, domestically, internationally or even on a jungle trip.

It is a lot easier to pack a backpack and also carry it compared with conventional bags.



And backpacks come in many sizes — from five to 50 litres or even more — depending on what you are planning to use it for.

It is important to try out the backpacks before buying them.

According to Ng Hock Soon, director of Yellow Stone Sdn Bhd, the exclusive distributor of the Lafuma brand in Malaysia, the bigger backpacks come with rain covers and you can fit in more things, including your sleeping bags for your camping trips for two or three nights away from home.

The company offers everything for the outdoor enthusiast, whether for nature walking, travelling, camping or active pursuits such as trail running, hiking, trekking, climbing, adventure racing and cycling.

So how will one know what sort of backpack to buy?

Trying one is important, to see whether the backpacks come with good shoulder

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support. Liquid gel in the shoulder straps are comfortable.

Then check out the compartments and big backs that come with storage space at the bottom which can be used to put dirty laundry and also sleeping bags.

The big bags must have rain covers to protect the contents when one goes on long walks, trekking or spending time in the jungle.

The top part of the backpacks are usually for the more important things like snacks, first aid kit, jackets and other clothes.

When buying a backpack, Ng says always go for the one with internal frames as it will be more hardy. Always evaluate the things you need for a trip, be it hiking, trekking or camping.

Also, do not waste empty space and try to squeeze something in, like a tee-shirt or a small hand towel.

Ng also says it is important to distribute the weight evenly in your backpack to maintain good posture when you are carrying it.

The heaviest items should be in the middle, next to the frame and close to your back as it would be better for balance.

The bottom part is for the lightest things.

Ng says some sleeping bags are so light that they weigh only 580g and can be stuffed into the backpacks easily.


“Those travelling overseas and also within the country are opting for backpacks because they can be carried as hand luggage and need not be checked in. This cuts the waiting time at airports.

“Moreover, many find they can pack more stuff into a backpack compared with conventional luggage. Some of the backpacks also come with wheels or rollers and this makes it easier to move them around,” he adds.

The smaller backpacks are normally used to carry snacks, water, one or two pieces of clothing and other personal items.



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