



### Refined and bombproof tents

#### Crux X2 Storm.

I checked out the Crux X2 first in the summer of 2008 and was impressed with it in many ways. Like all Crux gear it is sensible and strong rather than being flimsy and full of gimmicks. It is very stable in high winds and is made from high quality materials. The price for the stability is that it is not the swiftest tent to pitch, but once up it stays there. It is of the tapered semi-geodesic style. Crux are very proud of the venting system but for me I would rather have some adjustment. Whilst I'm keen on ventilation, I like it on my own terms. Velcro flaps would be good. Weight about 3kg.



Crux X2 Storm. £460

#### The North Face Mountain 25

This tent is the latest evolution of a long line of geodesic mountain and semi-geodesic other tents by the much loved and much copied tent designs from TNF. In fact it was TNF who first developed the idea of geodesic (self-supporting) tents. The current Mountain 25 is a two person, five pole design (2-5, get it?). It is snug and not very high so feels cosy and safe once you are in it. On the down side it is a little bit like getting in and out of a dog kennel (not that I have much experience of being in the dog house you understand). It has good vents, is fine to brew up inside the extended porch (given the normal precautions) and has two doors so is safer and easier to escape from and store gear. It even has a window from which to check the weather from a recumbent position in your pit. You may therefore be quite resistant to getting out of it when you should. You might also be depressed when you do as it's bright yellow, so you even think that the weather is great outside when it isn't. It's an optimist's tent. It weighs in at a slither below 4kg which, being optimistic, is not bad for such a tough two-person tent.



The North Face Mountain 25 £539



Terra Nova Quasar £450

### Long established, bombproof but a little heavier

#### Mountain Hardwear Trango 2

I used to say that Mountain Hardwear (MH) were one of the new kids on the block (est. 1993) but these days the block is getting ever more crowded and MH are now a well established but still highly innovative brand.

As I've also said many times before mountain tents are one of the best things that Mountain Hardwear make. Many of the ideas that originally appeared in the Trango range have now been copied by other manufacturers. There's no finer compliment. The Trango range consists of three models, the Trango 4 which sleeps 4, the Trango 2 which sleeps 2 and the Trango 3.1 which I suppose must sleep 3.1 people! They



Mountain Hardwear Trango 2 £550

are all on the big side, perhaps designed for chunky Americans. Anyway are geodesic designs with the poles clipping into hooks and mini karabiner type things at the crossovers. They have a door at both ends. I've used Trangos everywhere from sea level to over 7000m and even in the extreme of Borrowdale in July.

Four not-vital-but-nice features that I like are the zip roof vents, lots of pockets to store bits and pieces, windows and reflective guy rope tabs which reduce the otherwise certainty of falling over them when answering a call of nature in the night. These things all add a bit of weight but do make life a little easier. Trango 2 weighs 4.60kg.

One recent improvement is the front porch pole arrangement which is just as stable as before but much easier to assemble (wish my five-year-old 3.1 were like this.)



Terra Nova Quasar Superlight £390

### Terra Nova Quasar and Quasar Superlight

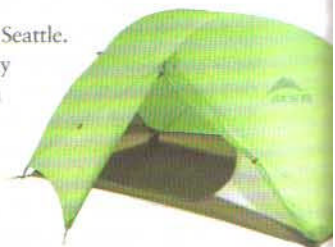
The Quasar design is a long-established two person classic from Terra Nova. Like the Voyager, they pitch inner first. My friend Dick Turnbull claims responsibility for the original design from when he worked at Wild Country (who then made these tents) about 25 years ago. They are both a four pole geodesic construction with a door at either end and due to the four cross points of the poles they are very stable in high winds. It is tempting to go for the Superlight but the weight saving is at a price and the price is durability both in terms of withstanding mountain conditions and length of life. The price is also ...the price! Less costs more. I'd go for their standard Quasar and in this case adopt the previously mentioned technique of sharing the weight between you. The tent can be easily split between three into inner and poles and pegs and OK it's not luxury but it is a not-too-heavy storm shelter for up to three people.

The standard Quasar weighs about 4.3kg.

### Light and weatherproof

#### MSR Hubba Hubba

MSR is an American brand based in Seattle. The name stands for Mountain Safety Research, which seems reassuring. In my experience they only make different, radical, innovative products intended to solve particular problems encountered by climbers, mountaineers and adventurers. In this case very lightweight weatherproof three season tents. The Hubba Hubba HP is a daft name but the HP bit is important as the standard non-HP Hubba Hubba has an inner tent made entirely from mesh which is unsuitable in my view in Britain. The HP is an ultra-light, freestanding two-person tent that weighs 1.9kg. Unlike other tents discussed here it has a single main pole but because the pole splits at each end (a bit like joining two letter Ys together at the bottom) it is fairly stable. Another short pole makes a sort of ridge. T shape sheds wind and rain well and it has two good vestibules/porches for storage and cooking. My friends Matt and Nicky took one with them when they emigrated to British Columbia – which is a bit like taking coals to Newcastle I guess.



MSR Hubba Hubba HP £390

### The Light but not fantastic

Kathmandu is of course a warm place, but this brand is not from the capital of Nepal. The company is based in Australia. For a backpacking or road rock trip in that great country the Kathmandu Lansan Light would do



Kathmandu Lansan Light £190