

Savoring Summertime

My husband's idea of being prepared for a day hike is taking enough Oreos to enjoy at the summit. This has always been a point of debate for Ty and I, or at least since a winter camping trip from which we, quite literally, almost never returned. He and I were first dating and had more passion than wisdom, more zeal than experience. We packed the Kahlua and the skis but no dry clothes. Really. Now, as a mom, I am as cautious as they come. I read about encounters with Hantavirus, Giardia, hypothermia, mountain lions, bears, avalanches, mushrooms, mine shafts, wet rocks, flash floods, altitude sickness, and, the ever present but hidden hill dwelling kooks. But since our daughter was born, we have largely left the backcountry days behind us. Until now. Hiking and backpacking are the things I miss most about my pre mommy days. So, for Mothers Day, I decided to open myself up to the best of both worlds by ordering myself the backpack of all baby backpacks. This thing has room for everything: enough pockets and storage space that we could leave for days at a time. Now, there is no limit to the number of things I can take along. I start making a list. A prepared backpacker should have: ponchos, freeze dried food, blankets, flashlights, two changes of clothes, trail maps, a snake bite kit, jugs of water... Then I think back to our first car camping trip with our daughter. It was one year ago. Memorial Day weekend. I was so concerned that our baby, who was not yet six months old, would be too cold sleeping in the tent, so I piled the car with blankets upon blankets, her baby Patagonias, gloves, mittens, hats, the stroller, the Snuggli, and nine or ten changes of clothes. On the second day, I came back from a mini hike in the woods to see Cassie in a state of bliss. She was sitting on her daddy's lap in a filthy Onesie. Both of her hands were wrapped squarely around a giant, juicy peach, just a fraction of its circumference nudged between her lips. Her daddy had taken a bite to get her started. She sucked hard to free the juice, which now dripped from her chin. She released the peach just long enough to grin. Then she nestled her mouth against it once again. It was more than an hour before she retired the fruit for another pursuit. As I remember her sticky face that day, I cross items from my list. On our day hikes this year, we will be fine with a diaper or two, the cell phone, the sunblock, and, of course, a few Oreos. Whether it is your backpack or your to do list that needs paring down, let us savor this season, presented to us now like a summer peach to a child. Enjoy its fullness and its flavor, for it will be out of season in no time.

About the Author

Susie Cortright is the founder of several popular websites, including <http://www.susies-coupons.com> , <http://www.bestselfhelp.com> and <http://www.momscape.com> where you can register to win gift cards from top online merchants.

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