



# WILD SIDE

THE WILDERNESS SHOP NEWSLETTER

## Trip Review: by Richard

## Scufoneda Telemark Festival in Italy



*Descent of  
Pas De La Zigolade*

Moena is the picturesque town in the Dolomites where the *Scufons Telemark Club* runs the annual *Scufoneda Telemark Festival*. Held early March 2011 and now in its 14th year, it fitted perfectly in with my European ski trip, accompanied by friends Bill and Rob.

For one fun week we indulged in both on and off-piste tours, ski equipment testing, watching the Italian Freeride Cup and Telemark Cup, and eating and drinking. Italians seem to find the eating and drinking just as important as the skiing, but the high level of activity kept my waistline under control!

### Sellaronda Tour

The Sellaronda is a famous one day circuit tour of the Sella Group in the Dolomites. Cleverly linking lifts and downhill runs, it is about 38km long. Multiple lifts cover 16km uphill, so you can enjoy 22km and 3700m vertical of downhill! Being a circuit, you can start in any town and travel either clockwise or anticlockwise. Colour-coded signs at the top and bottom of each run help with route finding.

We started near Canazei, catching the first 2 lifts in the Passo Pordoi ski area. A long, gentle and winding descent took us to Arabba. Here we caught a cable-car up to Sasso Mezzodi 2727m for an add-on side run. Unfortunately, like much of the trip, views were hidden by the fog. However the steep black run had moguls to keep me occupied! Onwards through Passo Campolongo and Covara, I was learning that the Italian style of touring meant no rest stops. I also learnt to keep my eye on Felicio, who was leading the trip, to avoid getting lost. "Hey Australia, vamoose!", he would call out to me in his limited English when it was time to move on, but his English was better than my Italian!

Lunch was in a rifugio at Colfosco. While I munched on cheese and salami sandwiches the locals indulged in pasta, beer or red wine, and coffee (I did buy a coffee as I felt guilty). This was a different style of trips to those back home!

During the afternoon the fog began to clear giving us glimpses of the fantastic rock spires and cliffs the Dolomites are famous for, before our last descent back to Canazei.



*View from the Sella Group*

### Descent of Pas De La Zigolade

This was a backcountry tour, requiring each person to carry an avalanche beeper, shovel and probe. After putting skins on our skis, we first climbed and then traversed into an eerie landscape of cliffs, fallen blocks of rock and snow. Climbing steeply up to the base of a major cliffline, we passed under a massive fallen block the size of a two storey house leaning against the cliff.

Now the Zigolade Pass appeared in the fog. Steep climbing with many kick turns saw us at the top. Beneath us was a small cornice, then a steep snow slope with barely perceivable cliffs and rock bluffs. While the first professional guide Tato watched, the second guide skied across the slope while jumping up and down to see if it would avalanche. It didn't, so we all followed down carving deep telemarks in the fresh snow.

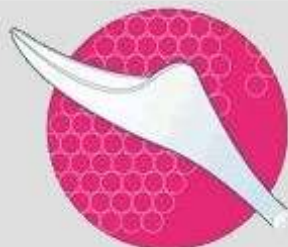
As the lead skiers disappeared into the fog and others trailed behind, I was left to follow tracks that would veer left then right through exciting bluffs, with clifflines above me rising into the murk. Suddenly we were below the fog, and could see the route continuing far into the valley below. Can you guess what was down there? A Rifugio with pasta, beer, red wine and coffee!



*Felicio:  
"Hey Australia Number 1!"*

*For information on  
Scufoneda in 2012 go to  
[www.scufons.com](http://www.scufons.com)*

## The Shewee: "for when you just have to go..."



Here's an exciting new product for us gals! The *Shewee* is a reusable, portable urinating device for women that allows you to pee easily and privately while standing up.

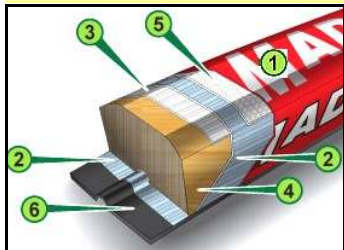
Here are some of the reasons women mention when they come in to buy one: "I'm going to a festival and I don't like lining up for ages for the skanky port-a-loos." "I snow camp a lot and don't want to have to get out of the tent and bare my bottom to freezing winds just for a pee in the night." "I have bad knees and can't squat." "When I'm working in a bush regeneration team wearing overalls the *Shewee* saves time and embarrassment".

It's a little funnel-shaped thing that comes in a discreet case. It has been trialled with some curiosity by shop staff and reportedly works well!

Jump on their website for tips at [www.shewee.com.au](http://www.shewee.com.au). The *Shewee* retails for \$29.95.

# Product Review: **MADSHUS** Skis,

by Nick



**Cap construction** provides a structural cap to seal the top and sides of the ski over the core & surrounding materials.

- 1) Cap
- 2) Fiberglass
- 3) Linear Fiberglass
- 4) Core
- 5) Triaxial Woven Fibreglass
- 6) Base

Drawing on 100 years of cross country and alpine ski manufacturing experience, Norwegian ski manufacturer *Madshus* have released a range of four new skis that we believe are perfectly tuned to the Australian terrain and snow conditions.

The *Madshus* range represent four different approaches to what I refer to as, the touring-turning continuum. That is, the wider the ski, the more resistance against gliding it will provide when touring, but conversely it will provide more 'float' and turning ability in soft or deep snow.

All our *Madshus* skis that we stock have metal edges for better control and a base pattern composed of five distinct zones to provide optimal climbing versatility and a smooth turn on firmer snow.

**Voss MGV:** The *Voss MGV* is the ski for those who like to mix up a day on the trails at Lake Mountain, Falls and Dinner Plain, with the occasional foray off the groomed trails. The ski is relatively narrow and straight, so provides great glide and therefore conserves energy. A great ski for beginners and seasoned skiers. *RRP \$399.*

**Eon:** The *Eon* is a little wider than the *Voss MGV*, so it is more comfortable off the groomed trails and has increased turning ability. The extra width over the *Voss MGV* makes it *the* ski for overnight pack carry touring. *RRP \$595.*

**Epoch:** The *Epoch* is a similar ski to the *Eon*, except it has wider tip and tail, with a deep side-cut. The side-cut will help with quick turn initiation and importantly helps link turns together. This is the ski for those who approach touring as a means to get out onto the backcountry slopes. *RRP \$625.*

**Annum:** The *Annum* takes the basic shape of the *Epoch* and beefs it up. Increased width for greater stability when bombing gullies, and for flotation in soft or cruddy snow. What you have here is a ski built for going downhill with control and purpose. Think of the *Annum* as a downhill telemark ski with a patterned base. *RRP \$649.*

Ever the optimist, I am predicting a bumper ski season this year. Come in and have a chat to the experienced staff at The Wilderness Shop and we will give you the attention required to help choose the right ski for your purposes.

## Thermals: What Our Staff Wear!!!



**Elke in Intertrek Polypro on the Nymbodia River (above) and Richard in Lowe Alpine Powerstretch on the Bogong High Plains**



**Anthony: Silkbody / Lowe** OK, I use a couple of different types of thermals for different functions, but I have to say that my favourites is my *Silkbody*. Silk is a fantastic fabric; very strong, dries quickly, super light weight, more thermally efficient than wool (and much finer, so it goes under anything), non-stink and feels awesome: so basically the best of all worlds. And about the same price as a set of merino wool these days. Particularly useful are the glove liners and neck scarf as an almost unnoticeable extra layer when you really need it.

If I'm likely to get wet (ok, so I'm not the world's best skier) then I go for my *Lowe Alpine* full weight thermals: top of the line polyester, super tough and really warm. Also, they're not at all bad-looking for those times when you're being active and have your layers off. I've also been known to wear Merino occasionally, or frequently when I'm off hiking the remote corners of Chapel Street in search of wild coffee in its natural habitat!

*RRP Silkbody top \$129.95, leggings \$134.95, Lowe FW from \$79.95, LW from \$59.95.*

**Mark: Merino Wool** While Anthony may see merino wool as best suited to Chapel Street, I find that its strengths are better suited for the traveller, hiker or climber that spends more time exploring and less time in the bathroom and laundry. The natural odour-repellent qualities of wool are unsurpassed, a good merino wool thermal will last many days of wear without a build up of body odour. In my opinion the ability of your base layer to go many more days between washes puts merino wool well ahead of the competition. And of course like any good thermal, merino wool is warm and comfortable. The one drawback of merino is that it holds more water, and thus takes longer to dry than other alternatives. It still keeps you warm when damp, but if you expect to get soaking wet then wool might not be the best choice.

*RRP Drizabone \$99, Midweight leggings \$129 & top \$179, Icebreaker range from \$89.95.*

**Elke: Polypropylene** These are the delightfully daggy thermals with stripey legs that climbers and co wear under their shorts and t-shirts (they do also come in plain black if you want to be more subtle). We wear them for two reasons: cheap and quick-drying. If I am going on a canoe trip where I know I will be getting wet and want thermals that will keep me warm while soaking and then dry quickly: I go polypro. They come in two weights; *Standard* and *Winter-weight* for the real cold-wimps (that's me!). Because they are lowest price thing on the market they are great for kids on school camp or people who are just dipping their toes into the whole outdoor thing and not wanting to invest too much. Yet!

*RRP Intertrek Standard \$39.95, Winter \$49.95.*

**Richard: Powerstretch** I only had to try on the *Lowe Alpine Powerstretch* top once to decide it was a fantastic power-packet of warmth! The unbelievably soft feel is next to none. Worn next to the skin as either the warmest thermal available, or over another light thermal as a close fitting fleece top, my *Powerstretch* top is my best cold and wet weather friend. Weighing in at only 290 grams is another important factor when packing for long trips. Available from *Mont* and *Lowe Alpine* and *Outdoor Research*, a *Powerstretch* top is a worthwhile addition to your winter wardrobe.

*RRP Outdoor Research \$149, Mont \$169, Lowe Alpine \$179.*

## Tips:

# How to Sleep Warm,

by Elke



*Exped Syn Mat*

Being one of those poor people who feel the cold I have had to learn lots of tricks to stay warm outdoors. Here's a few easy ways I have discovered to have a cosy night, besides the obvious ones like getting yourself into an appropriate bag and tent. Or even more obvious, getting someone in with you!

Firstly, many people try not to drink before going to bed as they don't want to have to get up, but your body actually needs to be properly hydrated to maintain body temperature. A hot drink before bed can be particularly good. The same goes for food: without it your body has to work harder to keep you warm.

The other thing you can do *just* before getting into your bag is a dozen star jumps. No kidding! It gets your body warm, you jump into the bag and all that warmth immediately fills the inner insulating layers.

My other favourite is a hot water bottle. You need a good solid lexan plastic or stainless steel bottle, such as from *LifeVenture*, that takes hot water: fill it up, stick it in a sock and into your sleeping bag. Heaven. I have used this to warm cold kids on many programs (though **not** recommended for seriously hypothermic patients).

Looking after extremities helps retain more warmth than you might expect. So wearing socks, gloves and a beanie to bed can make a big difference.

Then you can start to look at ways to boost the insulation around you. You can use a thermal liner instead of the normal silk inside

your sleeping bag. We have the *Mont Thermolite* which can add up to 7 degrees to the rating of your bag. If it's really cold I will sleep in both my normal bag and a *Mont Nitro* booster bag (which doubles as a super light sleeping bag in summer).

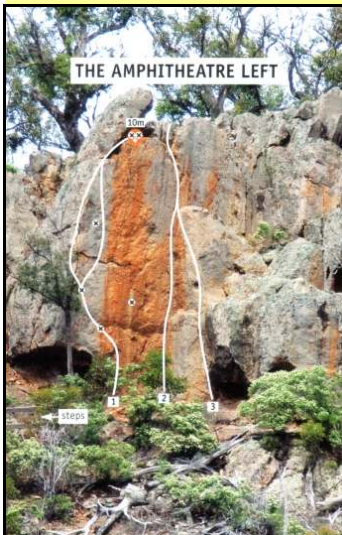


*Follow These Tips To Keep Warm !*

Cold ground is the other thing that will make your night miserable if you are not properly insulated. Most sleeping mats come with an "R" rating which refers to how much of your body heat it will transfer away into the ground. The cosiest one is *Exped Downmat 9* (R-rating 8), then the *Exped Synmat 9* (R-rating 6). Mont has the *Warmlite* with an R-rating of 4.1 which is cooler but significantly lighter. Your old closed-cell foam mat will do much the same thing but is bulky and uncomfortable.

So here are my ideas. Snug sleeping!

## Book Review: Rockclimbs Around Melbourne, by Anthony



*Excellent Colour Photos with Routes Clearly Marked are a Feature of this Guide*

*Rockclimbs Around Melbourne* is an attractive, well set out and easy to read guide book full of great climbs and locations. Glenn Tempest has put together an excellent guide with an enthusiasm and a love of climbing.

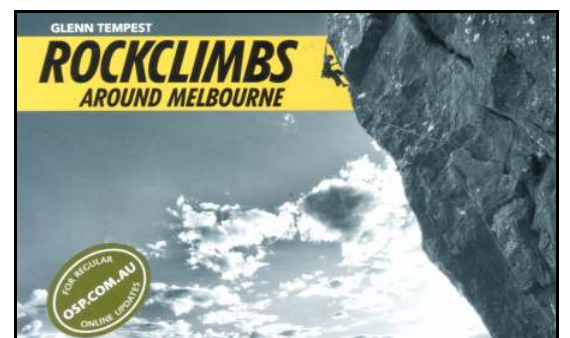
This is the climbing guide for busy climbers, for people mired in the 'real' world (like me) who find it hard to scrounge up much more than the odd day free to rush out and put a little rock under their feet. Containing Melbourne's closest climbing venues, none much more than two hours from the CBD, this is the ultimate guide for the single (or half) day out. Oh, and it's pretty good for you fanatics out there too.

Detailing a rich variety of climbing surfaces such as glorious granite boulders of the You Yangs or Black Hill, sandstone escarpments in the Cathedrals, Camel's Hump's gothic volcanic rock, or the conglomerate of Falcon's Lookout (at least one of which is sure to be just perfect for your own personal climbing style), this guide is guaranteed to entertain all but the most jaded climber amongst us.

Each section begins with a set of accurate directions to the crag (always useful, assuming you read them), and a short description showing a little of the character and history of the local climbs (including a brief set of relevant gear notes), before moving into an extremely well photographed and detailed set of route descriptions.

Wall chapters begin with a clear, colour coded indication of the general route difficulties of each area, and the individual routes are each

labeled with specific difficulty, length, bolts (if any), and original attributions. Additionally, there are notes describing sport routes, potential long runoffs (or poor protection), and route quality for those classic climbs.



Area maps are clear and easy to read, making navigation a breeze and include dozens of awesome photos that you can hold up against reality and say "Yup, that's the wall we're looking for, and that's the route we want," with absolute confidence.

And it's constantly kept updated (and details corrected) via the publisher *Open Spaces* website ([osp.com.au](http://osp.com.au)).

My copy is already looking well loved: dog eared pages, scratches all over the covers, and plenty of ticks and notes all through it bearing mute testament to its frequent outings. Let's face it, climbing guides have a much harder life than any other book (except, perhaps, the poor mistreated *Melways*). RRP \$29.95.

### WIN A BOOK !!!

Be the first into *The Wilderness Shop* and tell us your favourite climbing area near Melbourne, and win a copy of *Rockclimbs Around Melbourne*, kindly donated by *Open Spaces*.