

When wanderlust strikes

Me, my backpack and nature. That liberating feeling of discovering the world under your own steam is what Kathrin Heckmann, outdoor blogger and author, loves about hiking. And she's not the only one – “German Wanderlust” is currently undergoing something of a revival.

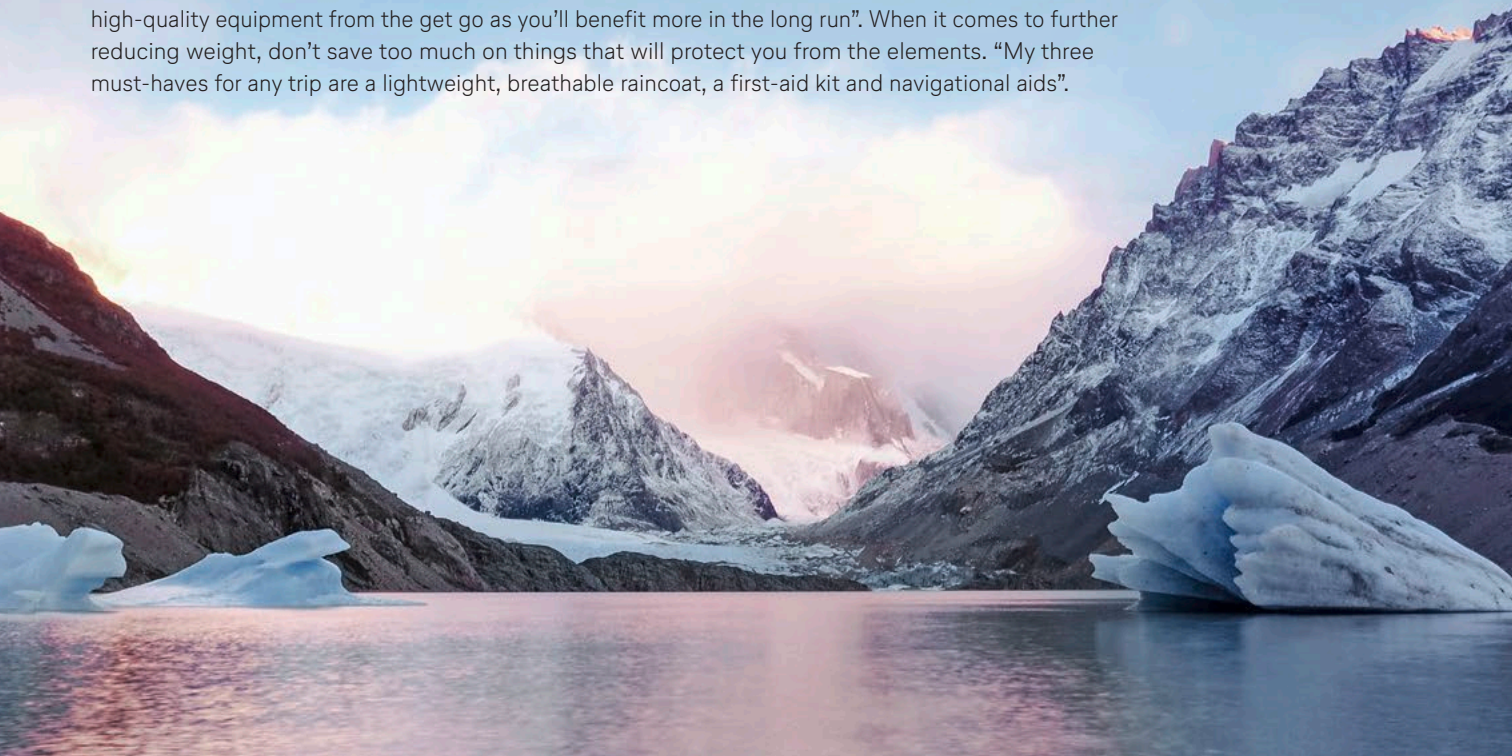
The blogger known as “Fräulein Draußen” (Little Miss Outdoors) discovered her love of hiking while climbing the foothills of the Alps with a group of friends. She soon realised that she wanted to do more of it. After getting to know the mountains on short trips, she planned her first long-distance hike: a 1,500 kilometre hike through Great Britain in three months. Since then, she has hiked numerous routes in every continent in the world and shares her experiences on her blog as well as in two books.

Hike right!

“To begin with, I recommend starting local”, says the adventurous Kathrin. “This allows you to take time trying out equipment and getting a taste for it before going for more long-distance destinations”. After all, the right gear is essential for the quality of the hike – as the saying goes: take as much as necessary and as little as possible. “The best thing to do is to make a list of everything you might need, including what it all weighs. This will make you consider each and every item”, advises Kathrin.

Hiking backpack must-haves

When it comes to the Big Four – backpack, tent, sleeping bag and camping mat – this is where you can save the most weight. The experienced long-distance hiker recommends investing in “lightweight, high-quality equipment from the get go as you'll benefit more in the long run”. When it comes to further reducing weight, don't save too much on things that will protect you from the elements. “My three must-haves for any trip are a lightweight, breathable raincoat, a first-aid kit and navigational aids”.



Kathrin's worldwide hiking tips

Europe: South West Coast Path (Great Britain)

Originally created as a coastguard patrolling route, this long-distance footpath stretches for just over 1,000 kilometres and always follows the coastline. Despite its proximity to the sea, there is no lack of climbs and peaks due to the many cliffs along the way.

North America: Pacific Crest Trail (USA)

The trail that has it all – from lonely deserts to high peaks and extensive forests. Suitable for both day trips and overnight excursions.

South America: the famous peaks of the Andes

Patagonia is a veritable mecca for trekking enthusiasts. It's also great for beginners. For example, in three days you can get up close to the famous mountains Fitz Roy and Cerro Torre.

Africa: Drakensberg Mountains (South Africa)

Profound solitude, circling vultures, impressive cloud formations and a unique mountain landscape that advanced hikers will love. Apart from a few shepherd's pathways, hiking trails and infrastructure are seldom found here.

Asia: Tien-Shan Mountains (Kyrgyzstan)

One of the highest mountain ranges in the world with lots of high plateaus and crystal clear lakes. There are hardly any actual hiking trails here. But that's exactly what makes the "Mountains of Heaven" so alluring.

Oceania: Bibbulmun Track (Australia)

This not-too-challenging long-distance hiking route has a surprise in store at the end... After weeks of hiking through eucalyptus forest, hikers are rewarded by the brilliant blue of the Antarctic Ocean.

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You can find more tips and travel stories from Kathrin on her blog fraeulein-draussen.de and on Instagram [@fraeulein.draussen](https://www.instagram.com/fraeulein.draussen)

