

CROSSOVER LUGGAGE AND GEAR FROM EVERGOODS | Review by Brian Clark

It seems that most mature gear-focused outdoorsy niches – say, fly fishing or mountain biking or rock climbing – seem to spawn a number of mainstream brands that cover a broad range of price points. Examples in those particular niches might include, respectively, Simms or Orvis, Trek or Cannondale, and Petzl or Prana or Black Diamond. A few brands eventually bubble up to fill out the top end of the price spectrum, although whether they’re selling premium quality or just aspirational clout remains debatable. Patagonia (aka “Patagucci” in some circles) attracts both love and hate, but woe be unto the outdoorsy market segment unlucky enough to be invaded by the likes of Gucci!

Eventually another coterie of boutique manufacturers emerges to serve the needs (or just the magpie idiosyncrasies) of the “enthusiast” segment, a small but avid group of customers who broadly eschew well-known name brands and desire to push design and materials to their limits. Sometimes these enthusiastic customers influence products directly via collaborations with the manufacturers, and some even participate as “makers” themselves. A wildly disproportionate number of clever innovations arise from those curious little corners, which can become thriving sub-communities of their own.

Such has been the case over the past 5-10 years in the “Carry Universe” that focuses mostly on backpacks, bags, slings, and other luggage, but which regularly leaks into the adjacent “Everyday Carry” (EDC) world of premium pocket knives, wallets, watches (and more), and occasionally even into mainstream fashion culture. An online magazine called Carryology (www.carryology.com) lies at the center of this odd little galaxy; it’s a vibrant community that obsesses over the intersections between utility, design, craftsmanship, materials science, performance, style, and innovation, and it regularly sponsors collaborations with a handful of manufacturers.

It can be argued fairly that a Bozeman-based startup called Evergoods is the current apex embodiment of this ethos. Started in 2016 by founders with experience at Patagonia and Goruck, a tactical backpack maker (also a Carryology darling), EG is a small shop making some of the best luggage on the planet. “Crossover equipment” is a useful term to describe their

products; they’re aiming to blend technical designs tested in the world’s harshest environments with an understated, street-ready aesthetic. Premium modern materials are used to cut weight while enhancing weather resistance and durability. The resulting products are urbane but not flashy; the sleek exteriors camouflage sophisticated ergonomics and pragmatic design elements that are equally effective in the backcountry, the city, and everywhere between.

I’m picky about my travel gear, and flying roughly twice a week for most of several decades really ran my luggage through the wringer. To complicate matters, it’s rare that I go anywhere without a fly rod and at least a light carping rig, so I’ve always looked for new and clever ways to sneak fishing gear into my professional paraphernalia. Crossover luggage hits the sweet spot for me, and the 26L Civic Travel Bag (CTB26) from Evergoods might be my last-ever laptop backpack. Not only is it a proper backpack with hydration-compatible contoured straps, a breathable back panel, and numerous adjustment and attachment points, the exterior pocket layout is perfect – just the right sizes in all the right places. The laptop compartment is padded, inconspicuous, and weather-tight. The interior is spacious but smart; with the help of a few pouches and packing cubes, it can be crammed full of gear in a way that stays organized and can be accessed quickly. Very similar models are available in 16L, 20L, 24L, and 35L sizes, and it’s been made in a number of materials and colors. The bag pictured here was a limited edition collaboration with Carryology (the “Phoenix 2”) that featured an orange interior and used the X-Pac material for the exterior, making it almost waterproof (though not submersible).

The Transit Duffel (TD35) boasts the same design DNA: subtle, streamlined, and spacious, with a rich feature set that includes a reinforced laptop sleeve, a padded bottom panel, internal end pockets, and comfortable, easily grabbed handles that stay together and raised without a connector wrap. Again, multiple colors and materials are available; pictured here is the special limited edition “Griffin” model in black waxed canvas with the blaze orange interior for visibility.



MSRP CTB26: US\$299
MSRP TD35: US\$199

www.evergoods.com