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GEAR Outdoor survival
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STAYIN' ALIVE

Don't let a bit of bad weather keep you indoors. Pack this lot and take the fight to nature...

1 Canon 10x30 15 binoculars £250
www.canon.co.uk
Survival isn't all about staying rabbits and being as yesterday's waste food for breakfast. Sometimes it's about scanning the horizon for signs of life – or remote, pulsating lava and a great first for £4.99, perhaps. Thanks to digital-style image stabilisation technology that holds down the little button on top to activate it, these rubberised bins can scope out an unshakeable canopy deal from miles away.

2 Blacks Triple Jet Flame lighter £7.99
www.blacks.co.uk
Anyone can start a fire by rotating a sharpened stick pointed into a notch cut into another bit of wood, then breathing life into the embers. But it does make your hands a bit raw. And your wrists ache after a while. And if it's raining, you're f*cking that. Hot handle with cold water. Good job you packed this wind-resistant, rugged lighter that virtually guarantees to get only fire going with its bit of tinder-loading gas flames.

3 Magellan Triton 2000 £340
www.magellan.com
Handheld GPS used to be gloriously clunky, but no more. Operated by an intuitive 8.4-inch screen, the Triton 2000 handles navigation duties with colour topography that maps and a three-axis electronic compass. On top of that, you can tag locations with pics and sounds from its 2MP camera and audio recorder. There's also an LED torch, a bassometer for Michael Fish types and an SD card-based MP3 player for listening entertainment.

4 Gerber Suspension E35 £35
www.gerbergear.com/uk
If you've ever had a pocket full of Gerber Suspension in his pocket during The Great Escape, that turned would not have come up short of the woods, but he'd have had no trouble keeping his knife in good running order and getting traps for the bears, armed with pliers, three screwdrivers, wire stripper and wire cutters. Come night time, he could hold up in a deserted ski lodge, pop the lid off a few beers, open a tin of beans and low the end off a predatory cub on a single. If only.

5 O'Neill H4 Campack £200
www.oneill-europe.com/H4
http://uk.oneilleurope.com/H4
The things you get up to on your adventures, eh? Like the time snowboarding when you pulled off to a chicken salad over a head of mountain goats. Of course, nobody believes you. Next time, take an H4 Campack, which houses its own portable media player and reader with integrated controls and headsets. The price you pay for convenience is YouTube-based iQVIA videos recorded to 512MB of internal memory at 2MB/30 casts.

6 EX 18 The Inspector £40
08707 555 333
www.extremepie.com
Why do nurses wear upside-down watches? Email purchases to stuff@travellers.com. Meanwhile, it's ponder why a survivalist might have one dangling from his belt loop. Well, freed from the wrist, the turnback Inspector is as handy to brandish as Rip-out compass, magnifying crystal and LED light, and will even turn down to 30%. Probably best if you don't touch. At least, not in those heavy hiking boots.

7 Rigel X2 tent £60
www.coleman-eur.com
If we're honest, you'd probably want a bigger tent for primary sleeping duties, but at just 980g, the two-man X2 is a light you could afford to take along as an emergency backup. As well as double-layer ventilation, it features our favourite kind of tent poles: Scandinavian Air Hercules aluminium bend ones. The elements are kept at bay with a raincoat and a Forest Flysheet, and it all falls up into a pocket in the groundsheet.

SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE
So you've got the gear, now get out there and use it...

Survival training
Learn how to make fire, build a shelter, collect and purify drinking water and live off the land and your wits. Trainers Survival School instructor Lofty Wilmann reckons "a week in the woods is the best education you can have." Prices start at £128 for a one-day taster.
www.survival-school.org

Bulgarian winter escapes
There's more to winter sports than snowboarding and skiing. The Adventure Company offers an alternative tour of Bulgaria that'll also have you snowshoeing, tracking wild animals and exploring caves. Prices start at £670 (low ref. 196).
www.adventurecompany.co.uk

South African walking safari
If you really want to bond with Mother Nature, try a 17-day South African walking safari, exploring the spectacular scenery of Swaziland and Mpumalanga on foot, sniffing out big game (quite literally) and hiking through the mountains. Prices start at £1800 (tripcode: T25).
www.woods.co.uk