

MARKS JERKINS
On the Future
of Adventure

Surfing's
13-Year-Old
Enfant Terrible

Yanks vs.
Euros: Who's
the Coolest?

Outside

THE TRAVEL ISSUE

The NEW Trips of a Lifetime

40 Perfect Journeys NOW

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THE YEAR WINNERS

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• Antarctica and More

SPECIAL REPORT
THE ULTIMATE
TRAVEL
PLANNING GUIDE



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• Next-Gen Travel Electronics // Superfast Fixes for 6 Common
Sports Injuries // No More Lift Lines! Your Own Private Powder

Taming the Grid ★ by Jason Stevenson

Bad news for trees: The digital revolution has not killed the paper map. It remains the ideal format for large-scale overviews and has the advantage of being immune to computer crashes and fading batteries. Yet digital cartography is radically improving travel navigation by inspiring new breeds of printable maps and onscreen atlases that can be tailored to match your itinerary. The only drawback? Now there's no excuse for getting lost.



The Whole World in Your Hand

With GPS receivers in some cell phones and PDAs, you might never ask for directions again. Spot software (\$19; www.skylab-mobilesystems.com), for all Java-enabled devices, passes your coordinates to a Web map to pinpoint your position onscreen. MapQuest Find Me (\$4/month, findme.mapquest.com), for BlackBerry and Motorola iDen phones, adds icons for services like ATMs. Both systems require cell and sat signals.

Street Wiser

When Google publicly released the source code behind its popular online street maps last June, it set off a cartographic stampede. Hordes of grassroots geeks began producing digital atlases annotated with icons linked to location-specific information. The resulting mash-ups present a striking way to interpret data through the lens of geography. Spend a few minutes exploring a local mash-up displaying recent crimes, or pubs offering \$2 beers, and long-held habits might instantly change. For travelers, mash-ups provide a treasure trove of planning beta. You can now quickly plan a road trip to U.S. hot springs (www.acme.com/jef/hotsprings), confirm that your hotel is *right* on the beach (www.mapsofhotels.com), and find a triathlon almost anywhere (www.trimapper.com). The best hub for mash-ups is the independent Google Maps Mania (www.gmapsmania.com).

Custom Contouring

Say so long to the pesky USGS quadrant system, which often meant ordering multiple topographic maps to get coverage for even short outings. Select REI and EMS stores, plus a number of travel shops, are now outfitted with specialized software that can zoom in on any area in the U.S.—and printers that can churn out waterproof, high-resolution topos of select spots in the size and scale you need (about \$10 per 11-by-17-inch sheet). Exploring a large area over a long period? Buy a National Geographic TOPO! CD set (\$100 per state/region; www.ngmapstore.com), which offers home printing at a range of scales and the ability to upload waypoints to a GPS. Add the expansion pack (\$20) for onscreen 3-D and animated fly-throughs.

Soviet Intel // Mark Jenkins, *Outside* Reconnaissance Agent

"To navigate in remote regions of countries like Uganda and Tibet, I use Cold War-era Russian topos, which have tons more detail than available American equivalents. You can get them online at WWW.OMNIMAP.COM or WWW.CARTOGRAPHIC.COM for about \$50 to \$150 per sheet. Of course, the names are in Cyrillic, so take along English maps, too, for cross-referencing."