



The Complete Walker IV

Colin Fletcher, Chip Rawlins

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For the first time since 1984, we have a new edition of the classic book that *Field & Stream* called “the Hiker’s Bible.” For this version, the celebrated writer and hiker Colin Fletcher has taken on a coauthor, Chip Rawlins, himself an avid outdoorsman and a poet from Wyoming. Together, they have made this fourth edition of *The Complete Walker* the most informative, entertaining, and thorough version yet.

The eighteen years since the publication of *The Complete Walker III* have seen revolutionary changes in hiking and camping equipment: developments in waterproofing technology, smaller and more durable stoves, lighter boots, more manageable tents, and a wider array of food options. The equipment recommendations are therefore not merely revised and tweaked, but completely revamped. During these two decades we have also seen a deepening of environmental consciousness. Not only has backpacking become more popular, but a whole ethic of responsible outdoorsmanship has emerged. In this book the authors confidently lead us through these technological, ethical, and spiritual changes.

Fletcher and Rawlins’s thorough appraisal and recommendation of equipment begins with a “Ground Plan,” a discussion of general hiking preparedness. How much to bring? What are the ideal clothes, food, boots, and tents for your trip? They evaluate each of these variables in detail—including open, honest critiques and endorsements of brand-name equipment. Their equipment searches are exhaustive; they talk in detail about everything from socks to freeze-dried trail curries.

They end as they began, with a philosophical and literary disquisition on the reasons to walk, capped off with a delightful collection of quotes about walking and the outdoor life. After a thoughtful and painstaking analysis of hiking gear from hats to boots, from longjohns to tent flaps, they remind us that ultimately hiking is about the experience of being outdoors and seeing the green world anew.

Like its predecessors, *The Complete Walker IV* is an essential purchase for anyone captivated by the outdoor life.

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