

# WIN OUR EXPERTS' FAVOURITE GEAR

**Country Walking** gear testers **Tom Hutton** and **Steph Duits** tested more than 45 pairs of walking boots and shoes, more than 35 waterproof jackets, more than 40 fleeces, and hundreds of other essential items of walking gear during 2005 – their rigorous tests on hills, mountains and moors, and in all weathers, identifying the best gear for *you* to buy. Tom and Steph are passionately keen walkers, and adopt the kit that wins their prestigious 'Best in Test' accolades for their own gear wardrobes. To discover how well their selections have fared long-term, read on, then turn to page 107 for a chance to win these fabulous walking outfits.



Based in the Brecon Beacons, keen walker, climber and mountaineer Tom Hutton has been testing walking gear for **Country Walking** for more than five years.

## WATERPROOF JACKET

**Karrimor Ridge II £150**

**Tested:** November 2005

At 825g, the Ridge was one of the heavier waterproofs tested, but this has worked in its favour in the long run and it still looks as good as new. It keeps the rain out well and I haven't been too bothered by its slightly bigger pack size. The eVENT fabric is highly breathable and I haven't forgotten to pack the removable hood yet, either!

**Tel:** 01372 377713 or visit [www.karrimor.com](http://www.karrimor.com)

## BOOTS

**Scarpa ZG10 £140**

**Tested:** October 2005

The instant comfort of the ZG10 quickly evolved into slipper-like bliss and my biggest concern has been not to use them too often for fear of wearing them out! I shouldn't worry too much, though. The tough nubuck leather is well protected by a chunky rubber rand. If they have a weakness, it is grip on soft and boggy ground. In fairness, though, only really deep cleats would remedy, and that would mean they wouldn't grip so well on other surfaces.

**Tel:** 0191 296 0212 or visit [www.mountainboot.co.uk](http://www.mountainboot.co.uk)

## WALKING POLES

**Leki Makalu Ultralite Air Ergo Long £65**

**Tested:** July 2005

These poles still look as good as new, which is amazing considering the pounding I've given them. They've crossed all the major Snowdonia massifs several times, and even spent a long weekend on Ireland's rugged and rocky Twelve Bens. The locking system continues to work well and I still consider the poles light enough to carry anywhere, even when there's a chance I won't actually use them.

**Tel:** 01250 873863 or visit [www.ardblairsports.com](http://www.ardblairsports.com)



