

**TERRA NOVA** £250**Laser Competition**

- ★ **Design:** single hoop
- ★ **Flysheet:** silicone nylon
- ★ **Inner:** nylon
- ★ **Poles:** 8.55mm DAC Featherlite
- Porches:** one (50cm deep in centre)
- Pitching:** as unit
- Dimensions (L x W x H):** 220cm x 93cm x 95cm
- Manufacturer's weight:** 940g
- TGO weight:** 999g including stuffsacks and 12 pegs (26g)
- Likes:** ultralight, good headroom
- Dislikes:** fiddly pole cover, no high vent, porch size, inadequate pegs

The amazingly low weight of the Laser Competition – less than half that of the similar sized Akto – makes this a very attractive choice for ultralight backpacking, especially as there is room to sit up inside and store gear and cook under cover. Terra Nova

has achieved this astonishing low weight by careful design and the use of ultralight materials and components. There are short poles at each end that raise the tent a little to give space above your head when lying down. The inner is roomy for one but I think Terra Nova's claim that it will sleep two if you're good friends only applies if you're also not very big. I wouldn't want to share this tent!

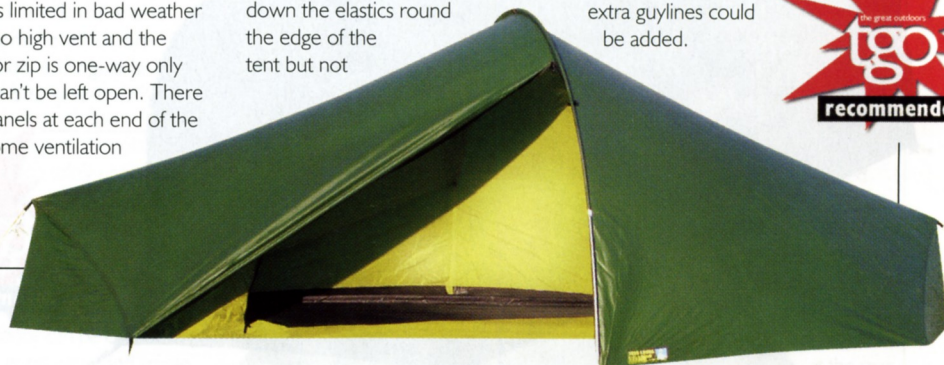
The porch has good storage room but isn't very deep, which means cooking with the doors closed requires a low profile stove and great care. I'd rather have a slightly smaller inner and more porch depth. There is good headroom in the centre of the tent and taller people than me will be able to sit up. Ventilation is limited in bad weather as there is no high vent and the flysheet door zip is one-way only so the top can't be left open. There are mesh panels at each end of the inner but some ventilation high on the flysheet would

help to reduce condensation. However separation between inner and outer are good so transferring condensation through the inner hasn't been a problem.

The Laser Competition is quick and easy to pitch apart from the pole cover, which is fiddly to attach. As I've never had any leakage through seams in silicone nylon I'd be inclined to ditch this cover. However the front and back guylines are attached to the cover and I wouldn't want to do without these. They could be tied to the pole cover attachment points instead. The tent is supplied with 12 extremely thin 13.2cm-long titanium skewers that weigh just over 2 grams each, which is very light. These seem fine for pegging down the elastics round the edge of the tent but not

for the guylines. I had two pegs pull out several times from soft ground in windy weather, one of them eventually disappearing. I replaced them with curved pegs that held well. Care needs to be taken that guys and elastics don't come off the tiny curved ends of the pegs too, which happened a few times when I was pitching the tent. As the only pegs I don't think these are adequate; they need supplementing with something more substantial.

Stability is good for a tent of this weight and although the tent thrashed around a bit more than heavier ones with more guylines I had no concerns about it collapsing in 40mph winds. For more stability extra guylines could be added.

**GOLITE** £100**Shangri-La I**

- ★ **Design:** tapered ridge
- ★ **Flysheet:** 30D silicone nylon
- ★ **Inner:** optional mesh
- ★ **Poles:** n/a
- Porches:** none
- Pitching:** with trekking poles
- Dimensions:** 2.14m<sup>2</sup> capacity
- Manufacturer's weight:** tent 538g, pegs 84.9g
- TGO weight:** 645g including stuffsacks and 6 pegs (86g)
- Likes:** ultralight, pitches with trekking poles
- Dislikes:** needs extra pegs and guylines

The Shangri-La I is a ridge tent that pitches with trekking poles, making it very light. The basic model is just a flysheet with no

inner tent or groundsheet. It tapers in both height and width. There is plenty of room for one inside and I can sit up at the front. I used it with a separate groundsheet weighing 234 grams and had plenty of room for gear storage and cooking. A floor with side walls that clips to the edges of the tent weighing 280 grams and costing £25 is available and this would give more protection against damp when camping on wet ground. For midge season a netting inner is available, weighing 600 grams and costing £60. That makes a total of 1245 grams, still pretty light. There are big covered vents at each end of the tent for airflow, though condensation still occurs in humid conditions of course.

The Shangri-La I is easy to pitch. Six pegs are supplied – hefty Y-shaped ones weighing 14.3

grams each. These held firm in soft ground when 40mph winds shook the tent. The unsupported sidewalls of the tent did deform however. I improved the stability by adding short guylines to the loops halfway along each side and long ones to each end. I think these, with the four pegs needed, should be provided as standard, given that the tent is described as a four-season shelter. Guylines attached to the centre of each side would improve stability too. As it is, the sides tend to blow inwards in strong winds. The tent was pitched in heavy snow and although the sides sagged a little it stood up to snow better

than most of the others tested.

There's nothing particularly innovative about the Shangri-La I but it is a good choice if you use trekking poles – why carry tent poles as well?



lightest  
in test

