

TERRA NOVA Superlite Voyager

At last the classic Voyager tent has lightened up. Terra Nova's new version, the Superlite Voyager, brings a much-admired tent into the 21st century, pitching it competitively against many other lighter weight tent brands.

The Superlite Voyager is made from modern materials and is said to be 15% lighter than the original. While the Voyager has always been sold as a two-person tent, I prefer to use it as a solo model, finding it rather cramped with two. But at 2.6 kg, the standard model is too heavy for any solo trip where weight matters.

The new version, however, weighs in at 1.86kg and is light enough for solo use and very light for two people.

The Voyager is a three-pole, free-standing, semi-geodesic design that pitches inner first. Where the original has sleeves for the poles, the Superlite has clips, which are quicker and easier to use. They allow better airflow between the inner and outer too, helping to reduce condensation.

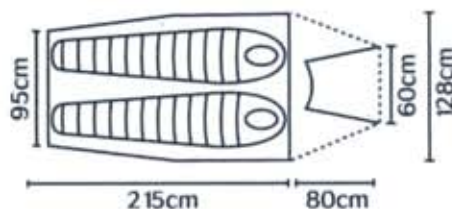
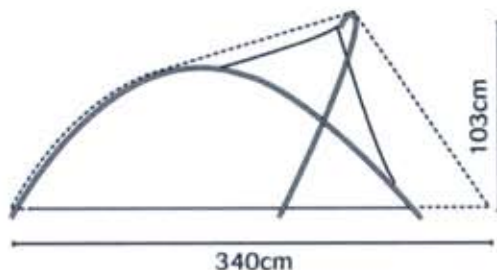
The Superlite can be pitched in just a few minutes, which is useful because you need to be fast when it's raining to stop the inner getting wet. The tent comes with ultralight titanium pegs that weigh just 6g each, yet they are stronger and less likely to bend than thicker, heavier aluminium ones.

In hard ground, I found the pegs to be very secure. In soft ground, wider pegs would probably be better and I suggest carrying at

least a couple as spares. To save further weight, the inner tent has a single door with a mesh top half rather than a double door.

There's also a mesh panel at the rear to allow airflow. This must make the tent cooler than one without mesh panels but on sub-zero nights with cold winds I didn't notice any cold air flowing through the mesh.

The Voyager has a roomy porch



with ample space for safe cooking and storage. If I'm on my own, I keep the pack in the inner. With two, packs have to stay in the porch. There's room to sit up at the front of the inner and, for solo use, the tent is spacious. The central porch panel can be rolled up or down. There's also a cover over the top of the door so the top of the zips can be left open for ventilation.

In calm and humid conditions condensation still forms and I woke one morning to a soaked flysheet. No moisture dripped through though, and I stayed dry

inside the inner. The tent is quite small when packed, less than half the size of the supplied stuff sack. The latter is longer than required for the tent but it will also hold the poles, which are 51 cms when folded.

The clever semi-geodesic design means the Superlite stands up well to fierce winds. Pitched rear into the wind, it feels extremely secure and moves far less than tunnel or single hoop tents. As far as wind is concerned, this is a four-season tent. The roof is almost flat and does catch snow so care is needed in winter. However, snow does slide easily off the slick silicone-nylon flysheet.

The Superlite Voyager is an excellent upgrade of an already great design. It's well-made and the reduction in weight has no disadvantages that I can see.

In my opinion, backpackers who require a little more than the average minimalist tent would do well to look at the new Voyager.

Chris Townsend



SPEC

£330

Weight: 1.86kg with pegs and stuffsacks

Fabric: Silicone coated nylon flysheet, nylon inner and groundsheet

Poles: DAC Featherlite 7001 aluminium alloy

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