

My Polycarbonate Vacation



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Most people try very hard to not take their work with them on vacation. Vacations are supposed be refreshing and a good way to do that is to leave it all behind, at least for a while.

I fully subscribe to that theory and at least once a year I'll disappear into the wilderness for a week-long backpacking trip with a couple of old friends. With no cell phone, no internet, and no computer, I couldn't do much work even if I wanted to, and no one can track me down. What's not to like about that?

This year, in September, we completed an 8-day hike in the southeastern quadrant of Yosemite National Park and the adjoining Sierra National Forest. The scenery was spectacular, the weather was good, and I came back physically tired but mentally recharged.



But I didn't completely leave my work behind, nor would I want to. When you're isolated in the wilderness and carrying everything on your back, "durable" and "lightweight" are two very important words, and that's why I go hiking every year with polycarbonate plastic. After more than 20 years, it has never failed me.

Menu planning probably takes the most time in preparation for every hike. We've got to have enough food to sustain us for a week, but we don't want to carry the weight of extra food. Since there are no grocery stores in the wilderness, we've got to get our staples right and make sure we don't lose any food along the way.

In particular, we've got to be sure that we protect our food supply from wild animals that would happily enjoy our meals if we let them. The biggest problem in this regard, literally, are black bears. If they get into your food, there's no stopping them and you'll be going hungry.

The easy way I stop them is to carry all of my food in a bear-resistant food container. The one I use is made from polycarbonate and is virtually indestructible. If any bears come by, they may see my food through the transparent container, but they'll be the ones going hungry. The container also works as a sturdy stool if there's nothing else to sit on.



Once the food comes out of the container, not a meal goes by without help from polycarbonate. Every cup of coffee in the morning, every cup of hot soup in the evening, and every entrée is served up in my old polycarbonate cup. It's more than 20 years old, and looks well-aged with so many scratches that it's hardly transparent anymore.

Every bite of food served in the cup then gets into my mouth with the help of a polycarbonate spoon and fork. And, it's all washed down with cold, crystal clear water from a polycarbonate sports bottle.

I buy some new camping equipment items almost every year to replace something that's old and worn out, but after 20 years of good use, I'm confident that my lightweight and durable polycarbonate products will outlive me. If only I could say the same thing about my knees!

