Reading



Backpacking—Now and Then

Backpacking became very popular in the 1960s, especially in Europe and the United States. It is an inexpensive way to travel. It is usually associated with adventure and a search for new experiences. You find backpackers everywhere you travel: from the tea-growing slopes in Sri Lanka to the steep cliffs of Machu Picchu in Peru. Backpackers have one thing in common—they all look exhausted.

It's not surprising they are tired because backpacks can be huge! The backpacks of the 1960s were actually about the size of one's back. They had a large metal frame outside. Nowadays, people choose more comfortable backpacks, with a size that varies to meet their needs.

The original idea behind backpacking was to travel light and to pack as little as possible:
a change of clothes, a map, some food and medicine, a roll mattress, and maybe a Swiss knife. Nowadays, people ask, "How much can I carry with me?"

Do you know how else backpacking has changed? What has changed the most is the use of technology. In the past, backpackers' contact with their families was limited to the occasional postcard or spending a lot of money on a telephone call. Nowadays, backpackers can talk to family and friends on their cell phone from the middle of the Amazon jungle, or get connected at an Internet caf.



However, some destinations have not changed. For example, the old Silk Road is still very popular for trekking.
It connected Europe with Central Asia and China for centuries. Nepal is another popular route to this day. Hundreds of backpackers trek along the Kathmandu Valley, carrying their homes on their backs.

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Questions

1. Backpacking originally became popular in _____.

a. Europe b. US c. Asia d. Europe and US

2. Backpacking is NOT _____.

a. expensive b. inexpensive
c. adventurous d. common throughout the world today

3. The passage mentions that you might find backpackers in these countries: _____.

a. Sri Lanka b. Peru
b. Nepal d. All of the above

4. Backpackers go to Peru to see _____.

a. tea growing b. Amazon jungle
c. the Silk Road d. Machu Picchu

5. How do today's backpacks differ from the old ones in the 1960's?

a. Today's backpacks are bigger.
b. Today's backpacks are heavier.
c. Today's backpacks are more comfortable.
d. Today's backpacks are stronger.

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