



Crack fiend Majka Burhardt sinking a cam on *The Calling* (5.12a), Zodiac Wall, Squamish, British Columbia.

GEAR

Apparel:

Patagonia

Packs:

Osprey

Rock shoes:

Scarpa

Rope and hardware:

Petzl

Various:

Adventure Medical Kits,

Julbo, MSR, Trango

candy bonus—Burhardt in her teens signed on with NOLS and Outward Bound. Today, she’s an AMGA-certified rock guide, the American Alpine Club’s Central Rockies Section Chair, and the author of *Vertical Ethiopia: Climbing Toward Possibility in the Horn of Africa*.

As a self-proclaimed gear wonk, do you have a favorite piece of pro?

Hands down, micronuts. Better yet, micronuts you know how to place. They’re small, you can load up to 20 onto a carabiner, and when you need them, nothing else will do. I like the brass ones—they slot into oddly sized cracks better and set perfectly in granite, sandstone, and quartzite. I got hooked on them at Lumpy Ridge and Eldorado Springs Canyon—two areas known for fiddly gear.

Do you ever tweak your gear?

When I carry big cams (4 inches on up), I’ll jam a length of coat hanger or, in a pinch, a stick through the lobe holes when the cam is retracted, to make the piece smaller on my harness.

Any secrets for setting a piece?

I almost always try my pieces one way, and then rotate them 180 degrees to see if they’re better. Checking out all options (narrow versus wide lobes on each side of the

crack; a nut’s reverse position) lets you better understand the micro-structure of the rock surrounding the placement.

How was the pro on Ethiopia’s super-soft sandstone?

It was equally fascinating and frightening to see the gear settle into the rock—not so desirable when placing trad protection.

Scariest pro, bolt, or anchor you’ve trusted?

Probably most of the gear I placed when I was 17 and teaching myself to trad-climb. 🛠️

MAJKA BURHARDT

International trad technician

“TRAD CLIMBING is the perfect merger of brain, body, and heart,” says Majka Burhardt, 32, of Colorado. Her love of that trifecta has lead Burhardt to develop new routes in Ethiopia, South Africa, and Colorado. But the first cliff at which Burhardt climbed was Taylor’s Falls, Minnesota, during her summer camp’s Adventure Day when she was only 8. “Picture a 30-foot cliff, a bowline, and a swami belt...and the camp director braced behind a boulder on top belaying off his waist,” Burhardt says. After that initial exposure—which ended with a cotton-