

GEAR GONE GLOBAL

Where does your gear come from? by Amy Marwick

In an age when local is hip, skiing has never been more global. From where wood cores are sourced to where the assembly takes place to where a designer conjures ideas, ski and board manufacturers are spread across the planet. And even the smallest companies have ties around the world. So where does your gear come from? The answer isn't simple.

Bozeman, Montana •

Rocky Mountain Underground's Blue Light Special isn't named for a Kmart sale, but the blue light that glows atop Bozeman, **Montana's Baxter Hotel** when more than six inches of snow has fallen at Bridger Bowl. RMU built their first skis in a garage in Breckenridge, Colo.

Salt Lake City, Utah •

SLC is where the idea for **Rome's Double Agent snowboard** was born. Dan Sullivan, head of sales, was at the bar with an employee from Salty Peaks (a shop in Salt Lake) having a few beers, when the shop kid said to Sully, "You guys should make a more freestyle splitboard. It could be the same shape as the Agent, and you could call it the Double Agent." Sully said, "Holy Shit. That's a sick idea..." and now it's in the Gear Guide.

Reno, Nevada •

As well as manufacturing skis out of their 15-person factory in Reno, Nev., **Moment** has teamed up with **Basin Brewery** to create their own custom beer. Also keeping après-ski alive during office hours are **Liberty** (their in-office bar keeps local beers on tap) and **RMU**, who's collaborated (conveniently) with the **New Belgium Brewery** to promote environmental responsibility, while keeping their beer supply topped off.

Las Vegas, Nevada

In 2003 a pair of budding ski designers showed up at the SIA show in Las Vegas looking for someone to manufacture their ski designs. Instead, they stumbled across a craps table and after an incredibly lucky streak earned themselves almost \$27,000—enough to set up by themselves. These days, **Liberty** manufactures their skis in southern China near the source of the bamboo they use throughout their line. They also source edges and composites from Germany, bases from France, adhesives from the U.S., topsheets from Austria and plastics from Japan.

Denver, Colorado

Never Summer's 75-person Denver, Colo. operation also produces skis for **Icelandic, Fatypus and Rocky Mountain Underground.**

Morristown, Vermont

Former *Backcountry Magazine* Art Director, Tim Clayton designs graphics for **Atomic** (which builds their skis in Austria). Clayton sources designs from many **Atomic** athletes—the Editors' Choice winning Automatic was designed in part by Sage Cattabriga-Alosa. (*Editor's Note: Tim, Howie wants his nail gun back.*)

Albany, New York

In the spring of '95, **Line Skis** was born in a one-car garage in the suburbs of Albany, N.Y. on Ableman Avenue. They now produce tens of thousands of skis per year out of their factory in China.

Silverton, Colorado

Venture Snowboards has run their entire operation off wind power since 2004. Their designer, California-based Dorn Roberts, incorporates images by **Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley** of Jericho, Vt., who, in 1885, was the first person to photograph snowflakes using a microscope.

**Black Diamond's
200-person SLC office
human-to-dog ratio**

10:1



**Backcountry's 16-person
Jeffersonville, VT office
human-to-dog ratio**

2:1



• Norway

In 1927 at a ski race in Norway, then Crown Prince Olav stood by beside Bror With, a mechanical engineer, and asked, "What on earth is on your feet?" "Oh, just a couple of rattraps I picked up at the hardware store," the engineer replied. The binding was a success and the name, Rat Trap, or "**Rottefella**" in Norwegian, became a reality.



• Swiss Alps

Fibers for **La Sportiva's** mohair skins are sheared from angora goats that freely range the Swiss Alps.



• Slovenia

Germany-based **Dynafit** sources their paulownia wood cores from Slovenia, a central-European nation half covered in forest. In its un-forested acreage, the two-million-person country is home to **Elan**, where they produce skis, yachts and a portion of **4FRNT's** line.



• Montebelluna, Italy

In their 150-person factory in Asolo, Italy, **Dalbello** produced their 10-millionth boot in 2011. Asolo is just 12 km from Montebelluna, where most of the world's ski boots are produced, including **Dynafit, Lange, Tecnica, Garmont** and **Scarpa** boots.

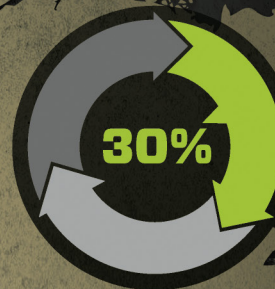


• Tunisia

La Sportiva, whose international headquarters are in the Italian Dolomites, manufactures their skis in **Movement Skis'** factory in Tunisia, Africa's smallest and northern-most country.

• South Africa

Mohair, the fleece of an angora goat, has long been the preferred fiber for skins due to its natural water repellency and superior glide. **Black Diamond** sources theirs from a goat herder cooperative here.



Companies featured in this issue that use recycled, reused or sustainably harvested materials when building their skis, boots, bindings and snowboards.

• Guangzhou, China

K2 and **Line** skis are built in the same factory located in Guangzhou, China, the largest city in southern China and a key hub for national transportation and trading. Also built in China are skis by **Black Diamond, G3, Hart, Liberty** and **Klint**.

• Hainan, China

Skilogik's factory is on Hainan Island, China. Founder David Mazarella moved production to the South China Sea to allow Skilogik more opportunity with custom designs. He now lives there with his two kids and wife, Mariella, their in-house graphics designer. Their 50-person factory builds 15 pairs of skis per day.