

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

# ADVENTURE

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DREAM IT. PLAN IT. DO IT.

**SEBASTIAN JUNGER**  
Back in  
Afghanistan

**THE MYSTERY OF EVERETT RUSS: SOLVED**  
By David Roberts

**CATCHING UP WITH:**  
Aron Ralston  
The Whale Warriors Crew  
Tanya Streeter  
Mark Burnett  
Bob Ballard

**PLUS**  
More Amazing Survivors  
Shaman Therapy  
& One Killer Croc

## No. 4 America's Everest

>CLIMBING MOUNT RAINIER Washington

MOUNT RAINIER WON'T be taken lightly. Four other mountains in the lower 48 exceed it in height, yet each can be summited in what amounts to a long day hike while wearing trail shoes. Rainier, with a vertical prominence greater than K2's, is an entirely different beast, and the list of climbers who started their careers here reads like a *Who's Who* of American climbing: Lou and Jim Whittaker, Pete Athans, Ed Viesturs, Phil Ershler. Heavily glaciated, avalanche prone, and battered by intense storms, the 14,410-foot peak never lets down its guard. Roughly half of Rainier climbers are turned back, due mostly to severe weather and fatigue. Commercial outfitters simplify the process enormously, but in the end you climb your own mountain. The peak can be approached from any angle, and 42 official routes lead to the summit, but the vast majority of the 9,000 who attempt it every year funnel up two routes, Ingraham Glacier-Disappointment Cleaver on the south side and Emmons Glacier on the east. To experience less crowding and more excitement, try the Kautz Glacier route. The key difference between Kautz and the standard paths is that climbers actually climb. The route's crux, a steep chute sidestepping an ice cliff, demands that mountaineers belay and front-point their way upward for two pitches. It's exhilarating and nerve-racking, and you've got another 3,000 vertical feet still to go.

**NEED TO KNOW**

<Mount Rainier National Park issues climbing permits ([nps.gov/mora](http://nps.gov/mora)).

**NEED TO KNOW**

>The Adirondack Paddler's Guide and Map, by Dave Cilley (Paddle Sport Press, \$45), is essential reading.

## 50 BEST AMERICAN ADVENTURES

KAYAKING THE NA PALI COAST

BIKING THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

HIKING THE SIERRA

RAFTING THE GREEN RIVER

SURFING THE LOST COAST

TREKKING OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

CLIMBING AMERICA'S EVEREST

KITING THE KEYS

AND DOZENS MORE



APRIL/MAY 2009



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