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"Because the Mouth Bone is Connected to the Body Bone"

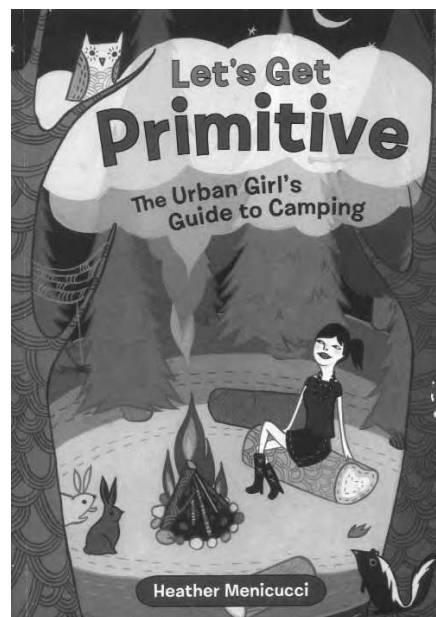
OUTDOORS

LEAVE THE GORE-TEX BEHIND

A camping guide for city mice

Molly Templeton

LET'S GET PRIMITIVE: The Urban Girl's Guide to Camping by Heather Menicucci. Ten Speed Press, 2007. Paperback, \$14.95



OK, so Eugene isn't exactly the first thing I think of when I think "urban." But for a former city dweller who still, as the back of *Let's Get Primitive* says, "appreciates sidewalks and all-night sushi bars," I gravitated toward Heather Menicucci's sweet little handbook all the same. See, camping always *sounds* like a good idea; last time I went, the night involved Body Boggle and whiskey shots

hearted and encouraging; it's advice for non-campers by a former non-camper who believes in the importance of lugging a good bottle of wine to your campsite. She recommends assorted movies and records to encourage readers' camping spirits, gives illustrated examples of important knots and offers up her own experiences to illustrate both the highs and lows of outdoor adventures. Throughout the book, a series of tidbits

The wilderness is a great place to throw a tantrum.

(and hangovers and dark stumbles toward the bathroom tree, but whatever). But then reality sets in: You need things for camping. Like tents. And stoves. And a willingness to stomp around with a heavy pack — not to mention be stuck in the wilderness for a set amount of time with your fellow campers.

But here's where Menicucci comes in. In sassy, friendly, occasionally self-deprecating anecdotes, examples and explanations, she breaks down camping into a few key segments: what you really need and how to get it cheaper, how to pack, how to cook and why to go out there in the first place. She lists campfire games and offers suggestions for what to do in the wild (for example, you could just sit. That's all. Enjoy sitting). She also points out that if things don't go perfectly, the wilderness is a great place to throw a tantrum.

Menicucci's approach is refreshing, light-

from her "GLOK" (Glorious Ladies of Kentucky) camping trip with friends serve as testaments and warnings: Sometimes they're cheery with camaraderie, and sometimes the good times give way to muddy paths and bug bites.

Occasionally, Menicucci does take a little too much for granted. When she suggests making a sheath for a kitchen knife with a couple strips of duct tape, my eyes boggle a little. How, exactly? Maybe it's one of those things that becomes obvious when you actually do it. Otherwise, her crafty tips — for making things like a daypack out of a pair of jeans — add a layer of at-home fun to *Let's Get Primitive*, as does her last chapter, which offers playful suggestions for how to get away for a few hours without actually leaving town. I might be most likely to take those into consideration — or then again, you might find me in the woods next week. **EW**

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