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THE Big Baby ISSUE

Bump to bundle ... everything
for your new arrival

10 most popular
names for baby
Is your child's
on the list?

OC's Top
Pediatricians
& OB/GYNs

What's the **real cost**
of raising a child?

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OUR FAVORITE GEAR
for newborns

Plus: An inside look at
Disney's Aulani Resort

Feature Story



15 favorite finds for baby

New mom (again) Debbie Lavdas set out to find the latest gear for little ones.

What's a new parent to do? The baby marketplace is filled with an overload of "now" and "next" and "latest and greatest." It can be overwhelming when trying to sort through it all. I know this all too well, as I'm the exact demographic that all these new products are targeting. A mom (again) and six years out of the new-baby scene (we have two other children), I was on the hunt for the smartest, most stylish and most ingenious baby must-haves. So, if you have a baby due soon, here's my list: everything from a 360-degree orbital stroller with engraved skateboards to a space-age-looking swing/bouncer hybrid to the latest green line of lotions for babe and mum. Enjoy the gadgetry and sophisticated products of all things baby for the lucky newbie parents and newborns of 2012.

We just gave birth to our little guy, Fox, who helped us try out all of the items.



STROLLERS

Among the biggest must-haves for new parents is the stroller. It's the item that will be used virtually every day for the next few years. Here are my three favorites:

Another "it stroller" is the Stokke Xplory, a Norwegian brand. It is built to lift your child closer to you, so you can "explore together." The elevated ergonomics makes you wonder, "Why didn't anyone think of this before?" All things about it are sophisticated and seamless. An available Carry Cot is a dream for infants up to age 6 months. When not using the Cot, the Xplory grows with your child with a sleek, adjustable seat. And the Stokke is easy to maneuver.

Stokke Xplory; \$1,260 with Cot
stokke.com and Bel Bambini in O.C.



The Quinny Buzz, a European "designer pushchair," unfolds automatically (say what?). A clever hydraulic system completely unfolds it. I had to try it, since I've fought with strollers for years; I've even stopped strangers to help me flip some open. And easy it is! An extra-comfy molded seat sets this one apart, too, as does its modern, beefy frame.

Quinny Buzz; \$550
quinny.com and Bel Bambini in O.C.



I love the Orbit Baby stroller with skateboards, or "sidekicks." My older kids adore the Orbit, because they get to ride along, too. It has an extreme look that begs attention! The Orbit Baby stroller Travel System G2 has a 360-degree rotating base that docks and swivels your baby's car seat from any angle. The seat effortlessly loads onto the stroller. One easy twist and lift of the frame makes for one-hand folding.

Stroller Travel System G2
\$1,180 with sidekicks;
orbitbaby.com

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► HOSPITAL DUDS

Why settle for drafty and drab when you can don designer hospital gowns? My dearjohnnies gown and robe were a new-mommy godsend in the hospital. I felt prettier at a not-so-glam time. I got many compliments and actually felt covered. Kelly Preston, Jennifer Garner and Nina Garcia, among other celebs, have worn dearjohnnies.

dearjohnnies;

gowns from \$68; robes from \$78

dearjohnnies.com and at O.C.'s Xpecting Maternity

And why should only moms get the designer new-baby attire? My husband was outfitted in Daddy Scrubs and had all the delivery staff turning heads. Everyone asking where he got them.

Daddy Scrubs; \$39.95

daddyscrubs.com

► SWINGS

Friends walk in my house perplexed when they see the mamaRoo in motion. The new-age machine, which resembles an egg, moves robotically, unlike any gizmo you've seen. And I'm mamaRoo-addicted; I can sit our baby in it for hours while I get loads of work done. The infant seat moves the way moms do when we scoop up our babies and bounce and sway them. Choose from settings of "Kangaroo" to "Tree Swing." It offers white-noise sounds, and there's even an MP3 hookup. It's baby cozy, quiet and plugs in (no batteries!). I also love its modern design and streamlined base. (I loathed all the swings with bases that I'd trip over on a daily basis.)

mamaRoo; \$199

4moms.com/mamaroo and Living Textiles in O.C.

FOLLOW UP!

Go to: **OCFAMILY.COM**, click on our digital magazine and link to products.



► VIDEO MONITORS

The MobiCam Digital DXR A/V monitoring system is just out and is already winning awards. Its large hi-res screen makes viewing a snap. It's wireless and has a wide camera angle and infrared night vision.

And its two-way talk capability lets me soothe the baby. Overall, it has great clarity and is easy to use room to room. (Techies will like the MobiCam's software to see the baby on mobile devices and PC laptops, as well as its built-in recordability.)

MobiCam; \$229.99

getmobi.com, Bel Bambini in O.C.

► BATH & BODY

Have you hit Melvita, France's No. 1 organic beauty brand, at Fashion Island? Melvita has only three stores in the U.S., and it now offers a Melvita 'Mum & Baby' line. I love the baby massage oil, shampoo, Cleansing Milk, Nappy Change Milk and more. Moms will appreciate the stretch-mark creams and other goods. All of these products come with ECOCERT-certified peace of mind.

Melvita products; \$8-\$40

usa.melvita.com and at Fashion Island

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► DESIGNER DIAPER BAGS

Diaper bags keep getting swankier and smarter. Two top sellers include the Ju-Ju-Be line and the sophisticated OiOi brand. The Ju-Ju-Be B.F.F. is compartment-crazy, with pods for your shades, keys, wallet, cellphone, bottle, diapers, etc. It's hip and quirky, converts to wear in three positions and has a fab Teflon fabric. Ju-Ju-Be is an O.C. company, too.

B.F.F.; \$165

ju-ju-be.com and at O.C.'s Living Textiles

Eco, high-style moms will love the vibrant new red Ikat tote, from OiOi. I've received many compliments on this Aussie-brand bag (mostly because it surprises, I think, with its non-diaper-bag look). It also has ample room and places for all your necessities, but I imagine fashionistas are buying it for its style statement.

Ikat; \$179

oioi.com and Living Textiles in O.C.



► DIAPERS

Did you know cloth is now the chic way to diaper your baby? Many (beyond the Earthy Mama types) are doing it. FuzziBunz diapers are modern, super cute and soft. It has pioneered the cloth movement and is said to be the gold standard. I was wooed by the fun styles and hooked by the savings versus disposables (more than \$2,500 over three years). Plus, they say it takes 500 years for a disposable diaper to disintegrate (gross!). The fleece inserts of these pocket diapers are easy to stuff, and you'll like the fresh new colors: Everything from Spearmint to Watermelon.

One Size Elite diapers; \$19.95

fuzzibunz.com, O.C.'s Rosie Posie Baby

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Top 10 baby names

While the official list of top baby names for 2012 won't be released by the Social Security Administration until next month, here's a peek at the current list of names deemed "most popular" at press time.

COMPILED BY KYLIE MALSTROM
Source: babycenter.com

Sophia
Emma
Isabella
Olivia
Ava
Lily
Chloe
Madison
Emily
Abigail

Aiden
Jackson
Mason
Liam
Jacob
Jayden
Ethan
Noah
Lucas
Logan



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► BASSINETS

There are some wildly expensive bassinets out there, but for something that you'll use for three months, the Contours Classique bassinet offers modern style and convenience. It's elegant, with a dark wood frame, and offers 3-in-1 functionality: a full-size bassinet, a Moses basket (my favorite feature) and a changing table. The basket is especially handy to move your sleeping babe from room to room.

Contours Classique bassinet; \$199
kolcraft.com (click the Contours brand link)



► CARRIERS

If simple is your style and on-the-go is your lifestyle, check out the new Gemini 4-in-1 by Beco Baby Carrier, an O.C.-based company. The Gemini trends with current patterns, is made of organic cotton and has little hardware. Its versatility lets you carry your child (newborn to toddler) front-facing in, front-facing out, in-hip carry or back-carry configurations. Dads look good in it, and moms can multitask more.

Gemini 4-in-1; \$130
becobabycarrier.com and O.C.'s Granola Babies



► CLOTHING

Two great names to know are L'oved Baby and Kicky Pants. L'oved Baby designs a fashionable nursing shawl (versus those that look like aprons). The cover is silky, travels well (folds to almost nothing) and hardly wrinkles.

Loved Baby nursing shawl; \$32.95
lovedbaby.com

Kicky Pants kicks baby booty in the area of

chic bamboo attire. It's soft (the hospital nurses ooh'd and ahh'd over our baby's gown), and the line is perfectly playful.

Kicky Pants attire; \$20-\$35
kickypants.com and Bel Bambini in O.C.



DEBBIE LAVDAS is a SoCal writer and now a mom of three. Keep up with her on her OC Family blog at **'Debbie in the OC'** or on twitter at **@deblavdas**.