

REVIEWED

OUR SWEET 16: REVIEWED'S MARCH PRODUCT MADNESS

The Sweet 16 is full of surprises, and a good sign of what's next



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Reviewed Product Madness Sweet 16

Well, this wasn't the update we thought we'd be making today. When we launched Reviewed's Product Madness **last week**, we thought the novel was destined to take down the normal. Turns out, the **Always Pan** is mightier than the **Nerf gun**. The **toaster oven** is hotter than the **underwear**. The Croots are silicone-ier than the vibra...you get what we're saying.

While it's not the Sweet 16 we thought it would be, the people have spoken. Each of our fearless editors are down to four products, competing in head-to-head votes to see which of their nominations will make it into the Elite 8. They'll be one step closer to the throne, when we name Reviewed's 2024 Product Madness champion in April.

Vote below to help us name the Elite 8, and read on for our breakdown of the products that survived to the Sweet 16.

Reviewed Product Madness 2024 - Sweet 16

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The kitchen versus the living room



Credit: Breville

The Breville Smart Oven Pro is pre-heated and fired up for a matchup with LG's C3 TV.

In the first round, the **Breville Smart Oven Pro** crushed the **MeUndies membership** like a bug. We can only guess what happened, but the prevailing theory is that people just really like bagels. On the other hand, the **LG C3 TV** showed the door to the **Outer Rim board game**. The end result: the Breville will take on the LG and we'll see which one gets cooked. Only in the intended chaos of Product Madness would you see a toaster oven competing with an OLED TV.

Here's what John Higgins, our Managing Editor of Tech, said about each:

Breville Smart Oven Pro

We bought a Breville Smart Oven Pro years ago, and it's been the workhorse of our kitchen ever since. Living in LA, our apartment can get hot during the summer, so the last thing we want to do is start preheating a conventional gas oven if we can avoid it. The Breville gets to temp quickly while keeping the rest of the kitchen cool. There are

settings specific to toast, bagels, pizza (with an included pizza stone), reheating, general baking, and more, with two different rack positions. It's also capable of convection cooking.

LG C3 TV

As the managing editor of tech, I'd be remiss to not include an excellent TV. Because of its ability for perfect blacks and incredible contrast, OLED has long been the epitome of picture quality for TVs, and LG has been leading the way for years. The LG C3 is the best combination of performance and value you can find in an OLED TV. Color accuracy is near perfect without calibration (just make sure to put it in Cinema or Filmmaker mode for the best accuracy), and the contrast delivers impressive depth to the picture. It's an absolute treat for the eyes.

Food versus music



Sony's WH-1000XM4 headphones side-by-side with their new WH-1000XM5 headset

MalloMe is a wildcard. It had a soft matchup in the first round with the amazing, but lesser-known, **Decorum graphic novel**. It's going to have a much harder time putting the **Sony WH-1000XM5** headphones out to pasture. Give John his due credit, though: he knows very few things come between a person and their music. The Sony headset may be a sneaky-genius choice to sweep the board.

From John:

MalloMe Camping Cookware set

Last summer, I took a solo excursion up the West Coast from Los Angeles to Seattle, camping along the way. Sure, an **easy-to-set-up tent**, **warm sleeping bag**, and **portable stove** are major necessities, but don't forget some cookware for that stove or you'll be grabbing take-out every day. The 10-piece MalloMe cooking set served me incredibly well during my trip, and includes a pot and pan with foldable handles and a cover (I opted for the 2-liter pot version), two bowls, a folding spork (what's camping without a spork?), soup spoon, wooden spatula, and cleaning sponge that all fit together in a compact package that slides easily into a carrying bag. Functionality and mobility are of utmost importance when packing light, and the MalloMe set has both in spades.

Sony WH-1000XM5 noise-cancelling headphones

With two music degrees and a past life as a professional musician and sound editor, audio quality is of utmost importance to me. When I want to sit back and enjoy my music, I reach for my Sony WH-1000XM5 noise-cancelling headphones every time. Its out-of-the-box sound is some of the best you can get, and if you want to make some tweaks to it (as I do with every pair of headphones), it's easy with the EQ settings in the app. Plus, the plush ear pads are super comfortable for long listening sessions.

Chill vibes versus java

When Jen, our Managing Editor of Commerce Content, named the **Flexzilla hose** as one of her contenders, very few of us would've bet against it in the first round. Turns out, people love massages more than they love gardening. This sets up a curious matchup to find out whether coffee, in the form of the **Takeya cold brew pitcher**, is adored more than the Renpho.

Here's what Jen said about each of these contenders:

Renpho Eyeris massaging eye mask

We've lost count of how many staffers own **this massaging eye mask** (yes, I'm one of them), but they all say the same thing: You gotta get it. A potent combination of heat, circular massage, adjustable compression, and a soothing tune (or use Bluetooth to play your own tunes) makes the Eyeris our staff's go-to tool to ease a migraine, soothe tired eyes, or just fall asleep faster. Take it from a former unbeliever: This is the product of the year.

Takeya cold brew iced coffee maker

As a hot coffee drinker, would I call the zealous allegiance most cold brew fans have to their over-ice-always beverage ... uncompromising? Unhinged? Obsessive? Yes, I would—but while I don't understand it, I do appreciate it. And that is why I think the Takeya cold brew iced coffee maker is such a star. We all know that true iced coffee fans are going to get their bev no matter what, so this under-\$30 (Yes it's under \$30) buy is a game-changer. As the reviewer pointed out, "You'd likely spend more purchasing cold brews in a café over a week than on the maker, which you can keep for years." It's our kitchen testers' top pick for cold brew makers because it's easy to use, easy to clean, and critically, makes the tastiest brew—all the reasons that cold brew fans need this maker stat.

Going out versus staying in

In our round of 32, the **Ooni Karu pizza oven** sent the Dagne Dover bag packing. Does it have the oomph to take down another bag? Thanks to a devastating quash of the **Owala FreeSip bottle**, we get to see the Ooni face off against the **lululemon Everywhere belt bag**. Can the Everywhere bag turn the tables on the Karu? Or does #PizzaGate continue?

A quick reminder on what Jen thinks:

Lululemon Everywhere belt bag

To call the Lululemon Everywhere belt bag ubiquitous is probably underselling it: In a trend-obsessed world, the yoga brand's instantly recognizable sling bag is still a covetable must for any athleisure enthusiast. It's surprisingly roomy given its low profile, it's comfy to wear, it goes with everything, and there's a color for every fan. Our tester said it best: "Not a flaw comes to mind. It ticks every box I could hope for from a bag this size. I can't remember my life before I owned this bag." Case closed.

Ooni Karu 12 pizza oven

I love pizza. My family loves pizza. You probably love pizza, because, well, pizza is incredible. Ooni makes pizza ovens that Reviewed loves—the brand's Koda oven is our favorite value pizza oven, the **Karu 16** is our favorite large-scale pizza oven, and the Volt is our pick for the best indoor-friendly oven. I bought the Ooni Karu 12 pizza oven for my husband in 2022 and have been enjoying incredible charred crust pies that blow most takeout pizzas out of the water ever since. Small footprint, easy set-up, absolutely massive life upgrade—can't recommend it enough.

Beauty versus the beast



Credit: Reviewed / Camryn Rabideau

Crocs boots, also known as Croots, have been incredibly popular. Are they popular enough to outwit the Omnilux mask?

Both the **Omnilux mask** and **Crocs boots** had the buzz they needed to hand sex toys their hat, cutting the **Starsi!** and **Emojibator** down to size. If they thought that was easy, there's unfortunately no more silicone they can give a drubbing to. They'll square off against each other in the Sweet 16. Can the Crocs fans overpower the Crocs critics?

Here are Executive Editor Kate Ellsworth's thoughts:

Omnilux mask

The **Omnilux red-light therapy mask** is the perfect addition to your beauty routine if you've felt that the only thing missing from your beauty routine is the ability to scare neighborhood children. As terrifying as it looks, it turns out this FDA-cleared device is

actually effective in making your skin look and feel more youthful. Any product that can work magic while also sparking fear in the hearts of young ones is a winner in my book.

Crocs boots

I remember exactly where I was when I read the email from Crocs saying they released a line of **worker's boots** (I was at my computer, which honestly now that I describe it isn't very exciting). We shipped out a pair to our tester immediately, and by the time our review went live, the boots were sold out (we're talking days here). The Crocs boots—or Croots—flew off the shelves at their debut, and this review remained one of our most popular for weeks. They're comfy, they're functional, and they're still sold out (sorry).

Comfy versus chic



The Plufl is a fantastic product, but is it cool enough to beat out the super-chic TUMS bag?

Even if it loses the next round, the **Plufl** is already a winner. It managed to get the **Big Blanket** to throw in the towel. Sadly, we're going to see how those comfy vibes handle a tough toe-to-toe with the fashionistas who love the limited-edition **TUMS bag by Nik Bentel**. These two products are equally novel, but are they equally useful? We're going to find out.

Kate's thoughts:

Plufl

The Plufl is a dog bed made for humans. "Oh, so like a bed?" you may be thinking. No, it's not a bed, it's a very large dog bed ... for humans. This one went viral last year (which isn't surprising due to the incredible photo opps it presents), and when we tested it, we determined it's a pretty fun addition to any space. Our tester put it best: "If you don't understand the Plufl, it's not for you. However, if you find the idea strangely appealing, I'm willing to bet you'll love it."

Tums Bag

My best friend, our style editor Anthony Palliparambil, reviewed the Tums Bag last year and I've never **loved a TikTok** quite as much. This \$200 bag is made to hold your Tums, keys, wallet, and so much more. The bag itself is kind of adorable, especially if you survive on Tums. When I was pregnant, I ate my weight in Tums every night, so this piece speaks to me and my special relationship with Tums on a primal level.

Clean floors versus cute birds

The **iRobot Roomba j7+** combo robot vacuum and mop took the **Samsung Bespoke refrigerator** to the cleaners. Back in from the cold, it's ready for a matchup with the **Bird Buddy** video bird feeder. The Bird Buddy just held a whistle to a Reviewed favorite: the **Bosch 800 series dishwasher**. The question is, will the j7+ be able to mop the floors with the Bird Buddy? Or will this epic video bird feeder dust the robot?

Leigh Harrington, our Executive Editor of Home says:

iRobot Roomba j7+ Combo robot vacuum and mop

I've got a kid, a job, a dog, and a husband who works nights. What I don't have is free time. So, when there's a product that can get some house cleaning done for me without me having to do it, I'm all in. The iRobot Roomba j7+ is essentially the best one on the market—run it every day and it's equitable with a weekly vacuuming. Bonus: It can and will avoid venturing through pet messes, like a post-dinner and TV remote vomit. I can set custom routines and modes from its app or by shouting at Alexa. Hand's off—I love it.

Bird Buddy

Pandemic-imposed seclusion and my ambition to find a hobby outside of work and parenting led me to discover this adorable backyard video bird feeder. Grab some popcorn because screentime at BB's is as hilarious as watching the Three Stooges' slapstick, complete with bird fights, sweet song calls, and the occasional squirrel invader. Not only can you catch the action live on Bird Buddy's app, you can also return for video footage and snapshots of visitors (with accurate identification) who arrive while you're otherwise engaged.

Wizarding world versus stove-top magic



The Our Place Always Pan 2.0 is taking on the LEGO Harry Potter Hogwarts Castle for the Sweet 16 round of Product Madness

Think of this as a matchup of the parents against the kids. The **LEGO Harry Potter Hogwarts Castle** pulled the rug out from under the **Barbie Pink Ombre** and is now set to go against the **Our Place Always Pan 2.0**, which is fresh off making mincemeat of the **Nerf Pro Stryfe**. If anything, parents may vote for the Always Pan just to avoid stepping on more LEGOs.

Leigh's thoughts:

LEGO Harry Potter Hogwarts Castle

Drop into the Hogwarts dining hall for a sorting ceremony or venture into the Chamber of Secrets where Harry battles the fearsome giant snake Nagini. **Fans of Lego** and JK Rowling's fabled book series can spend days constructing this elaborate castle that rings true to the films with touches like the bridge, the dragon, and the magical Whomping Willow that attacked Ron and Harry when they flew the car into it in. More than 6,000 pieces mean there's a lot to build, overseen, of course, by figurines of the original keepers of the four houses.

Our Place Always Pan 2.0

At a dinner party recently, my Always Pan and Always Pot got oohs and ahhs and "this is so pretty" from guests—and yep, this cookware sure is! Its soft sage green color even matches my statement wallpaper. But aside from good looks, what makes the Always Pan 2.0 so great is its nonstick ceramic coating that can even keep up with my husband's, er, skills, in the kitchen. Plus, you can move this fry pan from the stove straight into the oven when cooking your favorite sear-to-bake recipe.

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