

a very beautiful 23-pitch route of moderate difficulty with only a few 6a sections. However, protection is scarce.

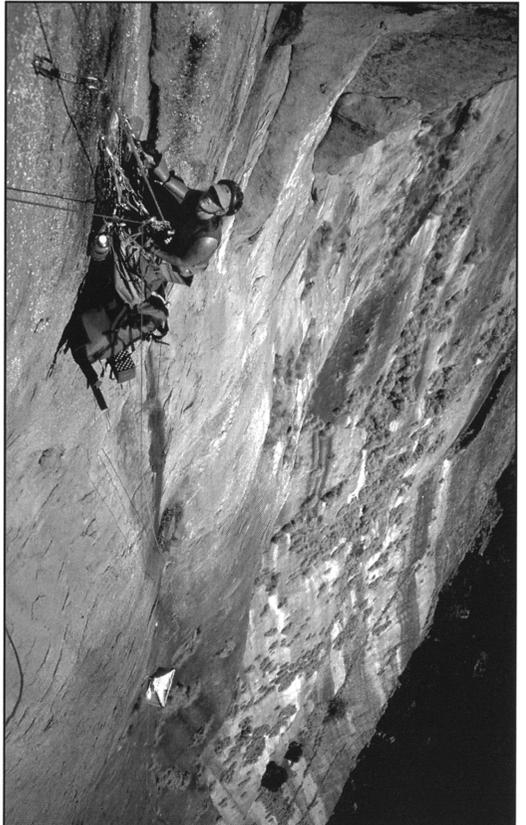
In 1998, with my daughter, Badria (Baba), I put up *Baba Kely* to the right of *Alien I*. The route has four pitches up to V+.

GILLES GAUTIER, *France*

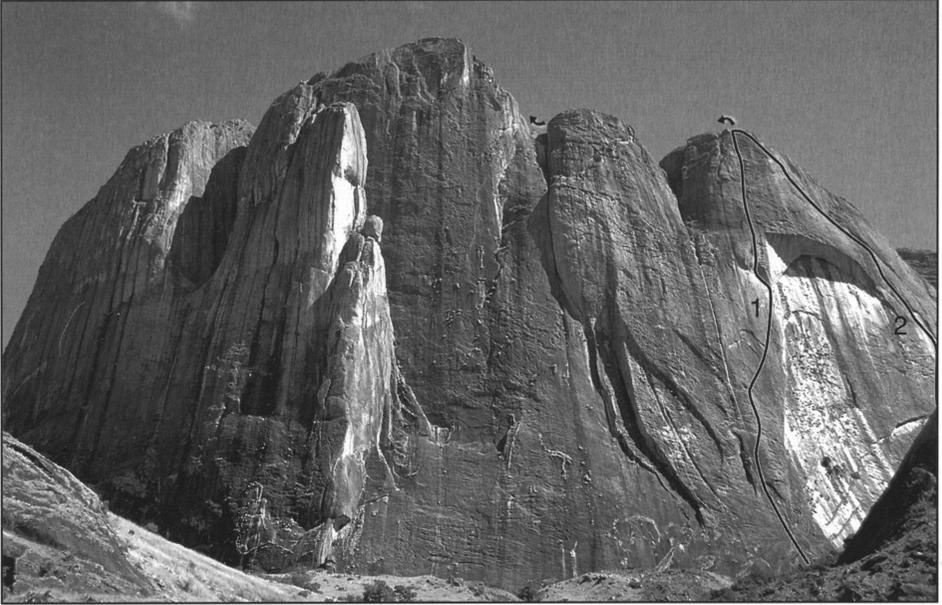
*Tsaronoro, Bravo Les Filles.* Nancy Feagin, Kath Pyke, Beth Rodden (who had never placed a piece of pro or climbed a big wall) and I, along with Greg Epperson (photographer) and Kevin Thaw (film team rigger) and Michael Brown and Rob Raker as the film team arrived at our base camp, located within an hour's walk of the Tsaronoro massif, on June 23. We noticed one particularly nice-looking wall with a separate summit to the right of the main formation that didn't have a single route up it, so we set our sights on climbing this wall. On June 24, we began the first pitch of the route. Since we were four climbers, we split up into two teams of two. Kath and I formed one team and Nancy and Beth formed the other. The lower part of the wall started out fairly low angle, but after the first few pitches, the angle of the wall gradually became steeper and the climbing more difficult. Since there were very few cracks in which to place natural protection, our main forms of protection were bolts placed on the lead.

By the time we reached pitch 6, the climbing went from 5.10d to 5.11c. Pitch 7 (5.12c) was even steeper, the climbing was more difficult and it was harder to find edges of rock to hang my sky-hooks on and drill the protection bolts. By the time we had reached pitch 8, Beth had to leave for a competition back in the States, so Kath, Nancy and I continued to equip the last five pitches to the top. Our goal was to climb the entire route from the ground up while placing all the protection bolts on the lead. Once the route was equipped, we would try to free climb the entire route from ground to top.

As it turned out, we finished equipping the route with only one day left before leaving the Tsaronoro area. Up to that point, I had free climbed every pitch of the route except pitch 8. On the last day, Nancy and I rappelled down to pitch 8 and I began the process of working out a complicated sequence of moves. This pitch starts out on thin face holds, then follows up a finger crack until the crack peters out into a steep, shallow groove. After



*Nancy Feagin on pitch 7, Bravo Les Filles. KATH PYKE*



*The Tsaranaro Massif, showing 1. Bravo Les Filles (Feagin-Hill-Pyke, 1999). 2. The Zoze Wall (Haden-Koyogagi-Libecki, 1999). Life in a Fairy Tale (Luebben-Luebben, 1999) takes the left-hand skyline. MIKE LIBECKI*

trying every possible solution I could imagine to get past this blank section of rock for over two hours, I finally found a way to free climb past the crux. After working out each move on the pitch, I tried to link the whole sequence together twice, but both times, I ran out of strength on the last few moves before the end. After having spent nearly 15 days climbing, hauling, jumaring, rappelling and drilling more than 50 protection bolts, my body was thrashed. Nonetheless, during the remaining hours of daylight, Nancy and I continued free climbing up the last five pitches of the route (5.12b, 5.11b, 5.10c, 5.10d, 5.10a). At the end of the day, Nancy, Kath, Rob and I free-soloed up the last 300 feet to the summit of the Tsaranoro formation. While watching the sun set over the vast desert highlands of the Andringitra mountains, we all felt a great sense of peace and satisfaction at having climbed such a superb route, *Bravo Les Filles* (5.12c/AO or 5.13d, 13 pitches), probably the most difficult rock climb ever put up by a team of women.

LYNN HILL

*Karambony, Sakay, Tsaranoro, The Zoze Wall, and Other New Routes.* On July 8, Jim Haden and I arrived in Antananarivo, Madagascar. Within 20 minutes we were slapped in the face with the fact that we had no agenda or local contact. I had planned to have us take on the improvised adventure to add some spice; it started the moment we stepped through the Customs doors. We thought about contacting Tana Des Lezards, a local outfitter and guide service (partly owned by climber Gilles Gautier in Madagascar) who had taken most climbers to the destined climbing areas. Instead, we thought we would find a local with a nice 4 x 4 vehicle to take us there. After several days driving south and getting a local's point of view (amazing), we arrived in the last civilized town of Ambavalao, where we stayed for a couple