

Mt. Inflexible, East Face Funfun. David Marra invited me on a secret mission on December 7, 2002. All I knew was that it was in Kananaskis Country and was unclimbed. We parked 2km up Mt. Fortress Road, 100 feet before the first “End of Avalanche Zone” sign. The approach was in great shape, as there was not much snow. We stayed right in open terrain, traversing right at the headwall into a snow bowl. I didn’t see the route, which was on the east face, until I was below the initial pitch at first light. This was Grade 3 thin ice, 50m, and did not require roping-up. Another 15 minutes or so of snow climbing brought us to the “Ice Pitch.” Dave did a grand lead on rotten, detached, hollow and unprotectable WI4+R (60m). We then simul-climbed 180 meters of low-angle ice with some easy mixed sections. A long section of snow climbing followed. Gear was obsolete. Fortunately the next crux pitch, at 5.9 and thin WI4 (60 meters), presented itself with adequate gear. More snow climbing, which we running-belayed, brought us to a 60-meter 5.6 mixed section, again, presenting great gear. This was followed by 20 meters of WI4 5.8, a 5-meter 5.9 roof, more snow, 15 meters of 5.7 mixed, and 45m of snow to the ridge. The descent was a walk off, southeast into a col, skier’s left into another bowl and east down a valley. We followed a game trail along a creek for three and a half hours to Smith-Dorrien Road (car shuttle)—200 meters prior to Smith-Dorrien, we crossed a service road for a water system.

This 1,000-meter route must be climbed early season with excellent snow conditions (and/or little snow), and climbers should be able to climb mixed terrain with runout gear. All anchors are on rock. Required rack: 7 short screws, 1-2 long screws, 6-7 pins (3-4 blades), 4-5 cams up to 1 inch, a handfull of nuts.

JIA CONDON, *Canada*

QUEBEC

Cran des Érables, Hot Salami and winter potential. At the end of December, Frédéric Maltais and I climbed a new route and probably made the first winter ascent of Cran des Érables, a cliff in the Hautes-Gorges Park, Quebec. To reach the cliff, we traveled by night with mountain bikes on a closed road. After about 27km and a couple of falls on the icy road, we went by foot and bivvied near the cliff base. We planned to try a winter ascent of an existing rock route, but in the morning we discovered that the wall was mostly covered by ice, so we changed our plans and headed for an aesthetic, arching ice strip. We named the route Hot Salami (210m, M5+WI5). The route offered excellent climbing on moderate to steep ice and on good granite with poor protection in some sections. Depending on ice condition, this unfrequented wall probably has other great winter routes to be discovered.

SACHA FRIEDLIN, *Quebec*