

SOUTH AMERICA

Venezuela

Pico Bolívar, First All Women Ascent. An all-women local team attempted to climb the highest mountain in Venezuela but failed the first time due to unseasonal weather. The second attempt was successful and took place on April 27 at the end of the Venezuelan climbing season. The summit (5002 meters, 16,410 feet) was reached via the Bourgoin route by Ana María Díaz, Leida Matheus, Dora Ocanto and me, leader.

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Pico Vértigo, South Face and Other Climbs. Attempting to gain experience in all kinds of weather and all kinds of terrain, Venezuelan mountaineers based in Mérida accomplished during 1985 the following climbs of note. Pico Abanico was ascended by a woman, Dora Ocanto, and me on May 25, introducing a new variant on its southwest face; in July (our winter or rainy season) its southwest wall was climbed in difficult conditions by M. Afonso and J. Albarrán and its south face by N. Rojas and me. Pico Vértigo (4950 meters, 16,240 feet) was climbed on February 2 by its difficult south face by J. Albarrán and S. Villafañe, members of the Club Escalada Libre, a new route. These two peaks are located in the Sierra Nevada de Mérida. On June 23, J. Zambrano and I made on loose rock and on a windy day the first ascent of the south buttress of Pico Agua Blanca (4671 meters, 15,325 feet), which is located in the center of the Sierra de la Culata, north of Mérida.

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Colombia

Pico del Castillo, Southwest Ridge. Our party of six made on December 26 the first Venezuelan ascent of this very fine peak located east of the divide in the Sierra Nevada de Cocuy. We used a combination of routes to reach the southwest ridge, which had been previously used by Colombians. We descended by rappels and reached our camp after 17 hours of effort with almost no rest. Two women, Dora Ocanto and Ana María Díaz, participated, together with C. Perlaete, N. Rojas, J. Zambrano and me.

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