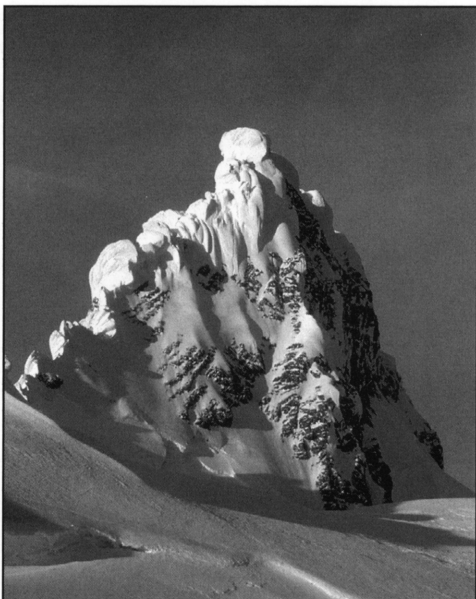


Cerro Paine Grande, Second Ascent and New Route. Bruno Sourzac (France) and I completed the second ascent of this beautiful peak on October 28, 2000. After countless trips to the Fitz Roy and Cerro Torre massifs, tired of what was starting to feel repetitive and craving a beginner's mind, we decided to visit Paine, a place where neither of us had ever been. Driving down empty and endless dirt roads from Bariloche, we arrived there faster than we could devise a plan. Upon completing the elaborate formalities of the permit, we couldn't quite decide on an objective. After seeing a few slides that head ranger Guillermo Santana and Nino kindly showed us, we were both captivated by the highest peak of the massif, Paine Grande. The beauty of the snow mushroom formations in the upper portions of the peak attracted Bruno; I myself was under the spell of a story I had once read, but had almost forgotten.

The story involved the founders and early members of my hometown's mountaineering club, Club Andino Bariloche, to which I owe much of who I am today. It was these mountaineers who had, over several expeditions in the early to mid-1950s that cost two of them their lives, found the route to the summit. In the spring of 1957, they had managed to organize yet another expedition to Paine Grande with high hopes of finally reaching the summit. However, as they were getting ready to leave Bariloche, they were notified that the Chilean government had reserved the whole Paine Massif for an Italian expedition organized by Alberto Maria de Agostini and led by Guido Monzino, and that they were forbidden to attempt the mountain. Nevertheless, they made an unsupported illegal attempt, with Sonntag and Jereb turning around at a point 50 meters from the summit because, due to the surreptitious character of the expedition, they lacked the necessary manpower. Soon after, on December 27, 1957, Italian mountain guides Jean Bich, Leonardo Carrel, Toni Gobbi, Camillo Pelissier, and Pierino Pession reached the summit following the very same route. Theirs was a commercial expedition, with helicopter support and all guides hired under contract.

Forty-two years have gone by since, and in spite of many attempts, including a valiant one on the east face by a group of climbers from New Zealand, the mountain had not received a second ascent. Once the complicated permit was taken care off, we entered the park on October 26. That same day, we walked to a point halfway between Refugio Pehoe and Refugio Grey, on the west side of the mountain, to establish a camp at 400 meters at the edge of the treeline. The following day, we carried most of our equipment to a cirque between



The south-southwest face of the summit pyramid of Cerro Paine Grande as seen from the mountain's upper plateau. The first ascent route takes a line on the far right side of the face (in shade), surmounting the face where it's shorter to gain the east ridge of the summit pyramid, along which it weaves to access the summit. Ice recession since the mountain's first ascent appears to have changed this line considerably.

ROLANDO GARIBOTTI



Bruno Sourzac climbing steep terrain on pitch 5 during the second ascent of Cerro Paine Grande.

ROLANDO GARIBOTTI

Punta Bariloche and the central summit, where the technical difficulties start. On the 28th, we left our camp just before 5 a.m., collected the equipment stashed the day before and, following a line different from that used by previous parties, climbed an easy snow ramp (55°) that slashes right across the base of the central summit's steep wall, to reach a large plateau at the base of the summit pyramid.

At a little past noon, we crossed the bergschrund of the main summit's south flank, and climbed a fairly direct line that leads to a recess just left of the final snow mushroom, which we contoured by its south side to reach the summit (3050m) just past 5 p.m. In all, we climbed six interesting pitches with difficulties to WI5 in rather porous ice. A few rappels, much down climbing, and a race with the fading light brought us back to our tent by 10:30 p.m. The views from the summit were indescribably beautiful, from Fitz Roy, to the steppe, to the sea—countless lakes, valleys and an infinity of dreams. Special thanks go to Sergio Echeverria and Hernan Jofre for their unconditional support.

ROLANDO GARIBOTTI, *Club Andino Bariloche*

Ascencio Valley

Cerro Escudo, The Dream, Attempt. At the end of January, our party arrived at the Japanese camp. There was nobody else there, except a group of three Basques and two Chileans. Our plan was to climb a new route on Fortaleza. After a typical few-day wait for better weather, we started carrying our stuff to the base of Fortaleza. Once over the glacier, we dug a cave just below the wall. We spent an entire week waiting for improvement, but it never