

Cerro Torre, Spiral Route. Since my first visit to Patagonia, in 1998, I dreamed of linking the Marsigny-Parkin to the Ferrari (Ragni di Lecco) to the top of Cerro Torre, which was first done by Kelly Cordes and Colin Haley. I never had the opportunity to return until 2007, and when we finally got a weather window it was too warm and dangerous for us. So we left the dream and tried other routes.

Every time I walked to Niponino I looked up at Cerro Torre, and soon a new dream built. What about climbing the first part of the Southeast Ridge (Compressor Route), and then traverse the west face to the Ferrari? I was not the first to have this dream—others had dubbed the possible line the “Spiral”—but it was new to me.

So there I was again, this time with Ole Ivar Lied. Finally a good weather window arrived. Time to go.

Around noon November 28 we started from Niponino and climbed to the Shoulder. The next day we left our bivy at 6 a.m. I had been on the Compressor Route 10 years before, so I led the “familiar” ground. We moved pretty fast, but when we arrived to where we wanted to go directly up—we’d wanted to avoid the bolt ladders—we found a huge, dangerous snowpatch where we needed dry rock, so we used the long bolt traverse. After the traverse, Ole did a new pitch that took us to the south face. From here we rapped twice (short raps, we only had a 70m rope), before traversing not-too-steep ice around to the west side. What a wild place! After the traverse an easy mixed pitch took us to the top of the Helmet around 6 p.m. (we’d done 300–400m of new ground), where, due to falling ice, we stopped for the night. Perfect place, perfect weather, perfect partner, and the climbing ahead looked amazing—can it be better?

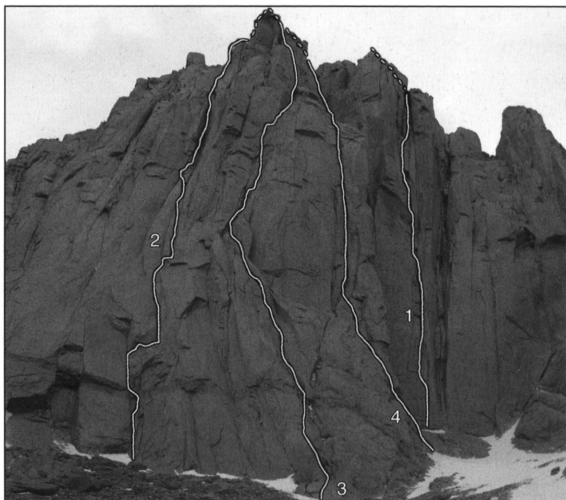
The next day gave us some of the most fantastic climbing we have been on, weaving through amazing features. The last pitch through the final mushroom was already opened by Rolo Garibotti and friends the day before, so it almost felt like cheating. Anyway, it was two very happy guys that topped out around noon that day. After a quick descent of the Compressor we returned to Niponino that night. We will never forget it.

TRYM ATLE SÆLAND, Norway



Ole Ivar Lied on the Spiral Route's new ground. Trym Atle Saeland

Aguja Guillaumet, Rayo de Luz and Disfrute de la Vida. Michal Pitelka (Czech) and I climbed two new routes on the west face of Guillaumet. On December 31, 2008, and January 1, 2009, on the right side of the face we established Rayo de Luz (450m, 11 pitches, 6b A1). It follows an obvious straight-up crack system in the steepest part of the right side of the wall. The route starts 50m right of Padrijo. Then on January 11–12 we did Disfrute de la Vida (550m, 13 pitches plus snow, 6b A0), which starts on the left side of the face, just right of the huge roofs near the ground. We placed three bolts to link cracks. On both routes we left bolted rappel



Aguja Guillaumet's west face: (1) Rayo de Luz (Pitelka-von Birckhahn, 2009). (2) Disfrute de la Vida (Pitelka-von Birckhahn, 2009). (3) Lost Men (Drummond-Wilkinson, 2008). (4) Padrijo (Gatt-Gatt, 1993). Carsten von Birckhahn

anchors and slings for an easy descent. The rock on both lines is solid and compact.

CARSTEN VON BIRCKHAHN,
Switzerland

Aguja Guillaumet, Hard Sayin' Not Knowing. On the morning of January 22, 2009, with a marginal weather report, Kate Rutherford and I left El Chalten and continued to the east face of Aguja Guillaumet. We looked at the Anker-Piola route, but it had too much snow and ice. However, I noticed a lower-angle ramp system cutting left across the lower part of the face; in those conditions, the ramps looked more climbable than anything else.

The first pitch led up a 5.9 icy squeeze chimney with no pro, followed by enjoyable mid-5.10 fingers and hands that trended up and left. A short ramp again led up and left to a spot where I tunneled behind a pillar. Kate then led straight up until we were forced left. A short face traverse across a gully led to a snow-filled corner system. Kate led a ramp to a splitter hand crack and then a pitch of snowy 5.8 corner, until she reached mixed terrain. I took over and led us up and left to an arête that looks down into the couloir of Terre de Hommes. I continued up to the base of a depression filled with nasty, steep, rotten water ice. After much contemplation, much cursing, thrashing, and chopping got me to the top of the horrendous A2 pitch, putting us at the bottom of the easternmost part of the huge snow ramp that leads to the summit ridge. After 180m of thin névé, devoid of protection and in the dark, we reached the summit ridge around midnight and promptly started descending. We returned to the base around 4 a.m.

When we started, we didn't have a picture of the face, nor did we know if it would be a new route. Hard Sayin' Not Knowing (550m, 5.10 A2 75°).

MICHAEL SCHAEFER

Hvit Linje and other ascents. On November 25 Marius Olsen and I climbed a new ice line below and northeast of Poincenot. Hvit Linje (600m, WI5 85/90°) is visible from way out on the pampas as you approach Chalten by bus, the line melting down from Glaciar Superior below Fitz Roy and Poincenot. It is thin, straight as a pencil, and sustained, no ledges, 85° throughout, with 20m and 40m vertical sections. We climbed it in a narrow little weather window, as it's sheltered from the wind, and might have been the only climbers out that day.

The approach via Lago de los Tres was easy this year, but it was important to rope up on the glacier above Lago Sucia. We branched left above Lago de los Tres and headed straight for the line. The serac might look scary, but it isn't. It overhangs to the left of our line, and if you're lucky it might rip while you are on the sharp end—while Marius was leading, a big load fell