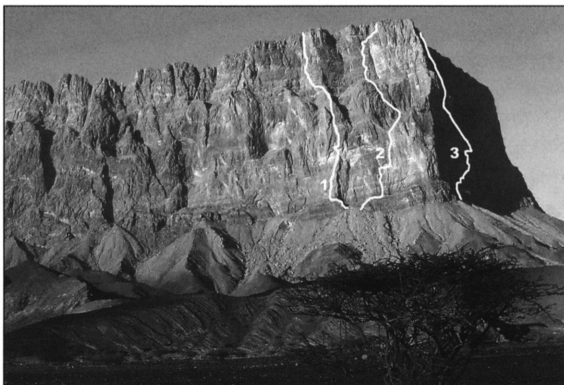


three) to the summit in 18 hours. We used traditional removable protection on both routes. Though we brought hammers and a few pitons, they proved unnecessary.

Oman has much potential for climbers of all interests: bouldering, DWS (deep water soloing), sport climbing, and the big faces of the Hajar. The locals are friendly too. We tried a bit of everything and promised to come back. Logistics for climbing in Oman are simple: all you need is some Internet action and money.

DEJAN MISKOVIC, *Slovenia*



The south (left) and southeast faces of Jabal Misht (2,090m), showing the three new routes climbed in 2008. (1) Flying Pegs (900m, VIII+). (2) Kabir Hajar (1,000m, UIAA VIII-). (3) Yel-la Sadike (1,000m, UIAA VII-). Heiko Wilhelm

*Western Hajar, Jabal Misht (2,090m), south face, Flying Pegs; various short routes.* Barbara Bacher, Jakob Oberhauser, Thomas Scheiber, Heiko Wilhelm, and I, all from Austria, established a series of new routes in Oman. We kicked off our winter season with the first ascent of 40 Räuber, a technical 8b in Little Gourgette, a crag close to the idyllic oasis of Balad Seet in Wadi Bhani Awf. After establishing a series of easier multi-pitch routes in various wadis, we traveled to the immense Jabal Sham Plateau where, awestruck by the canyon overhangs, we found a line through the easiest sections of the upper canyon to establish the three-pitch Al Hamar (8b, 8a, 7a). This bold 110m route overhangs by 50m, with protection from a mixture of bolts, threads, and cams. This may be the most demanding route in the country.

No journey to Oman is complete without a trip to Jabal Misht, and before heading home, Scheiber and I made a swift repeat (a little over five hours, probable third ascent) of Shukran (Gargitter-Trenkwalder, 2006) on the southeast face, which we thought to be VII-. With Oberhauser, we completed a seven-hour first ascent of Flying Pegs, which lies on the south face, one of the most beautiful in Oman, and is comparable to the south face of the Marmolada in the Dolomites. We completed the 900m (16 pitches, VIII+) route on January 4, using traditional removable gear and a few pitons, some of which we dropped. [Editor's note: In 2003 Oberhauser attempted this line with Sepp Joechler but retreated after six pitches of excellent climbing due to technical difficulties and loose, unprotectable rock. They tried again in 2005, but just 5m above the 2003 high point, Oberhauser fell, and the pair had to descend. In 2007 a four-man Italian team attempted the line and left bolted belays during their retreat. The Austrians found the bolts in 2008 and thought the line had been completed but not reported. However, when they got to the start of the hard section, the bolts stopped. Auer led the difficult, loose, unprotected middle section to reach much better rock.]

HANSJÖRG AUER, *Austria*