



AAC Publications

Pan de Azúcar, Para Que Te Enamores; Toti, Aun Queda el Alma; Cóncavo, Conspiración Ecuatoriana

Colombia, Sierra Nevada Del Cocuy

In January 2014, Felipe Guarderas, Nicolas Navarrete, and I put up three new routes in the Cordillera del Cocuy. The park service had closed the east side of the range, forcing us to camp on the west, so we had to do long approaches to most of the walls.

The east face of Pan de Azúcar (ca 5,120m) was our first objective. The wall appeared to have lots of face climbing, but without a power drill any new line might be contrived. After analyzing our options we chose the right side, following nice cracks for the most part, with some runouts. After a day and a half we had completed the route, freeing all the pitches and fixing anchors at every belay. We named it Para Que Te Enamores (450m, V 5.11d). The 10-pitch route is to the right of the previously established routes La Sonrisa (550m, 5.10d), Matando Bacterias (450m 5.10d), and others.

Not wanting to repeat the long approach, we decided to bivy at the base and try free climbing Guerreros de Terracota the next day. We were still tired from the day before, and starting to climb at ca 4,000m on 5.12b, 5.12d, and 5.13b pitches was not easy. After the first three pitches, the sun started to warm up the wall and we were able to move more efficiently. We reached the summit at sunset. Many rappels and a long hike back to base camp kept us busy for the next few hours.

After a couple of days' rest, we focused on the northeast face of Pico el Toti (4,875m). When we got to the base after the long approach from the west, we knew we were in trouble. Huge roofs and a long blank section loomed. Our hand drill and handful of bolts did not seem enough for this objective. We decided to go for an adventure nonetheless and took off on the first pitch.

We found discontinuous cracks through big roofs for the first third of the face. The middle section was a beautiful face with intermittent horizontal cracks. Felipe had to place a bolt on lead on one of the pitches, but managed to free it after a long struggle. On the last section the roofs continued but cracks also showed up, allowing us to enjoy really hard pitches with good protection.

After a few hundred feet of scrambling we reached the summit in the dark. In all we placed one lead bolt and some anchors to encourage repeat ascents. We called the 10-pitch route Aun Queda el Alma ("There's Still the Soul Left," 400m, V 5.12d A0) because our single rope had three core shots, but with tape it remained intact. We freed every pitch but one.

After this climb we took many rest days eating and enjoying the sun. Fully recovered, we decided to try one more climb. This time it was the southeast face of Cóncavo. The wall was not as high as our previous climbs but very aesthetic and vertical the whole way. We climbed a mostly independent and free variation to Conspiración Cósmica (200m, IV 5.12b, Gonzalez-Wilke), first climbing left of the previous route, then crossing it three-quarters of the way up and climbing right of that line, directly to the summit.

The first pitch was the hardest, a long and vertical face protected by bolts and pins (5.13a); the second one was easier, with a beautiful dihedral that crossed the previous route high up. The last two pitches climbed slightly overhanging cracks directly to the summit. (5.12+). We called the route Conspiración Ecuatoriana (200m, IV 5.13a). [Editor's note: Also in January, climber Sebastián Muñoz

climbed a 40m variation to the final pitch of Conspiración Cósmica. It ascends a line directly between the two routes mentioned above.]

Exploration, remote big walls, no other climbers, and lots of uncertainty made this trip a unique adventure.

Roberto Morales, Ecuador

Images



The Sierra Nevada del Cocuy from the northeast, showing select routes. (A) Pico el Diamante. (1) Licantropos (350m, 5.10a, Gomez-Pardo). (B) Pico Campanillas Blanco. (2) Operación Oriente (350m, 5.10c, Hilarion-Macias-Liebert, partially shown). (C) Pan de Azúcar. (3) Five routes ascend this part of the wall, see detail on p. 192. (4) Para Que Te Enamores (450m, 5.11d, Guarderas-Morales-Navarrete). (5) Corredor Tropical (450m, TD 5.9 A14, Bermúdez-Zuluaga, to main summit). (D) Pico el Toti. (6) Chikara (400m, 5.10b, Bravo-Torres). (7) Aun Queda el Alma (400m, 5.12d A0, Guarderas-Morales-Navarrete).



The east side of Pan de Azúcar. (1) South by Southeast (250m, 5.10a, Curletto-McCalley-Restrepo). (2) Cinco Días de Soledad (450m, 5.10c, Anderson-Guzman). (3) Guerreros de Terracota (450m, 5.12d A2, Contreras-Cortes-Rodriguez). (4) Matando Bacterias (450m, 5.10d, Arias-Bernal-Moreno-Wilke). (5) La Sonrisa (450m, 5.10c, Morales-Vallejo). (6) Para Que Te Enamores (450m, 5.11d, Guarderas-Morales-Navarrete).



Enjoying a leisurely bivy at the base of a wall.



Climbing steep terrain on the southeast face of Cóncavo.



Steep, clean crack climbing in the Cocuy.



Approaching Concavo.

CONCAVO SOUTH EAST FACE



Route "Conspiracion Cosmica" IV, 5.12b (red line)
(FA) Fernando gonzalez, herman wilke.
(FFA) Roberto Morales, Nicolas Navarrete, Felipe Guarderas
Route "Conspiracion Ecuatoriana" IV, 5.13a, 200m (yellow line)

The new route on the southeast face of Concavo shown by the yellow line.

TOTI NORTH EAST SIDE



Route "aun queda el alma" V, 5.12d, 10 pitches (January 2013)
(FA) Roberto Morales, Nicolás Navarrete, Felipe Guárdaras
We fixed all the pitches but one.

A closeup of the new route on Toti's northeast face.

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