



AAC Publications

Tsaranoro Atsimo, Rivotra Mahery

Madagascar, Andringitra Mountains, Tsaranoro Massif

Our adventure in Madagascar started as many adventures begin: a spark in a climber's eyes and a picture to start the dreams of a new trip to explore the world. It did not take long to convince Dimitri Anghileri, Marco Maggioni, and me that the walls of Tsaranoro were an ideal goal, and soon we three members of the Gruppo Ragni di Lecco found ourselves weighing luggage for our flights.

The walls of the Tsaranoro Valley are certainly not a new discovery, and we were well aware of the dozens of routes already crossing the steep, smooth walls of dark granite. Our hope was to open a new route and leave our signature; however, on formations so famous we were prepared to give up this goal if forcing a new route between existing lines would seem contrived. We left with light hearts around the middle of July and landed at Antananarivo, a disorganized city sprawling on Africa's largest island.

On our third day in the country we found ourselves on the Malagasy plateau, taking in the immensity of the walls we'd so often dreamed of. We spent an afternoon wandering the base of the cliffs, studying the cliffs and appreciating their beauty. Dimitri identified a possible line on a steep slice of wall on Tsaranoro Atsimo; it seemed to us the ideal place to attempt a route. Feeling bold, we started to climb the next day. Route-finding proved to be difficult; sometimes we stalled for most of a day as we tried to find a logical line of holds, some so small we couldn't really notice them until they were right in front of us. We alternated climbing and rest days, which gave us time to appreciate the valley and get to know the Malagasy people, who were always laughing and smiling.

There were many moments of discomfort in our effort, but fortunately morale remained high and we tackled the adversities together, reaching the top of Tsaranoro Atsimo after 12 days, having established 16 independent pitches, all on beautiful, compact rock. We took turns tackling the hardest free climbing sections and were able to solve the final 8a+ cruxes a few hours before the end of our trip. However, we did not have time to free the full route in a push. We named the route Rivotra Mahery (700m climbing distance, 16 pitches, 8a+ A0). The name is Malagasy for "strong wind," as the wind was our silent and faithful companion for the duration of our climb.

—Matteo de Zaiacomo, Italy

Editor's note: The new Italian route rises between La Vía de las Rubías on the left and Dreams of Youth on the right. Neither route was reported previously in the AAJ. Dreams of Youth (700m, 18 pitches, 7c A0) was climbed in August 2011 by Tobias Baur, Lukas Binder, Philipp Hofmann, and Martin Schindele from Germany. Most of the hard pitches were not redpointed—the climbers estimated 11 of the pitches would range from 7c+ to 8c if free climbed. La Vía de las Rubías (450m, 9 pitches, 7b+) was climbed by Ramón Pérez de Ayala, Jordi Barrachina, and Ernesto Navarro over six days in July 2016 and was redpointed by Barrachina and Navarro on July 18.

Images



Marco Maggioni on the fourth pitch (7a+) of Rivotra Mahery, a new route on Tsaranoro Atsimo.



Marco Maggioni leads the eighth pitch (7c) of Rivotra Mahery, a new route on Tsaranoro Atsimo.



Matteo de Zaiacomio stretches for a hold on the sixth pitch (8a+) of Rivotra Mahery, a new route on Tsaranoro Atsimo.



The route line for Rivotra Mahery (700m, 8a+), a new route on Tsaranoro Atsimo. The 2017 route rises between La Vía de las Rubías (Ayala-Barrachina-Navarro, 2016) on the left and Dreams of Youth (Baur-Binder-Hofmann-Schindele, 2011) on the right.

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