



## AAC Publications

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### Chicamocha National Park, Sujetando Aire

Colombia

**In the winter of 2017-'18, I spent two months in Colombia exploring different areas and climbing a few new lines with various partners.** Since climbing has been banned in the popular El Cocuy National Park (see note below), climbers have been forced to explore smaller walls in outlying areas. The best of the new routes I did was in Chicamocha Canyon, a steep-sided sandstone canyon in the Santander Department, northeast of Bogotá.

Jorge Garzon and I opened this route on a southeast-facing wall 1km west of the entrance of Chicamocha National Park, near the Mesa de los Santos cable car site. Sujetando Aire ("Holding Air") is a 150m route that was established ground up, at a grade of 7a A1, with a mixture of bolts and traditional gear. The crux pitch is a 4m roof in bad rock that is expected to go at 7c+ but has yet to see a redpoint. There is lots of potential nearby for good, steep climbing on walls up to 300m, but access is via private land. Visitors must seek permission from the farmer who lives beneath the walls and speaks only Spanish.

– Jens Richter, Germany

**El Cocuy Access Issues:** The Sierra Nevada del Cocuy, rising to over 5,300m in northern Colombia, has a long climbing history on tropical glaciers and rock walls up to about 500m. But El Cocuy National Park was closed in February 2016 because the local indigenous people felt visitors had behaved disrespectfully on snowfields and glaciers they consider sacred. In April 2017, park officials reopened a few sections of the park, allowing a limited number of people per day, accompanied by a local guide. However, snow and glacier travel is still forbidden, limiting climbing opportunities. No solution for climber access had been reached as of the spring of 2018.

## Images



Sujetando Aire (150m, 7a A1), the first known multi-pitch route on Chicamocha Canyon's sandstone, takes the obvious dihedral in the center.

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