



AAC Publications

Picacho Kasiri, South Face

Bolivia, Cordillera Real

Picacho Kasiri (as defined by the IMG map 5945-II) had looked full of promise when Roberto Gomez and I saw it in mid-July during a traverse of neighboring Pucusani. With unusually dry conditions and warm temperatures prevailing at the start of December, Juan Gabriel Estellano and I decided to investigate Kasiri's south face.

On December 10 we descended Ruta Nacional 3 from Cumbre Pass to the base of Picacho Kasiri. We walked up a pleasant abandoned mine trail and only needed to ascend scree for the last 50m of altitude gain to reach the foot of the slabby south face.

We climbed toward the left side of the face via an enjoyable corner and reached a large ledge. The cracks further right looked flared, with few opportunities for good protection, so we played it safe and went left again, following another corner toward the west-southwest ridge. Once there we switched to the northwest flank, climbed one more pitch, and then moved together to the summit. On this section we were a little surprised to find three ancient pitons. They were close together and really rusted, probably originating from the 1980s. On top we were greeted by wooden sticks and a rusted tin can. We measured the height at 5,160m.

We climbed nine pitches, and although the difficulties never rose above 6a+, the real challenge was the length of the undertaking: The vertical rise from car to summit had been 950m, and we arrived on top at sunset. We decided to call the route Arajpacha, an Aymara word roughly translating as the world from above, the sky, the future, life.

After enjoying a beautiful view, we then had to make an interesting descent over unknown terrain in the dark, first scrambling down a ridge to the north, then making one rappel to the west, and finally a lot of hiking and scrambling down and around the mountain to reach the Kasiri-Pucusani col. From there we descended south to the car, reaching it at midnight, 16 hours after leaving.

– Alexander von Ungern, *Andean Ascents*, Bolivia

Images



Juan Gabriel Estellano follows the first pitch of the south face of Picacho Kasiri, a steep, clean slab with little protection.



Juan Gabriel Estellano halfway up Picacho Kasiri's slabby south face during the first known ascent.



The south face of Picacho Kasiri (5,160m GPS), showing part of the new route Arajpacha (Estellano-von Ungern, December 2018).



Juan Gabriel Estellano following pitch five in the upper corner on the south face of Picacho Kasiri.



Picacho Kasiri seen from Picacho Pucusani. The top part of the 2018 route is shown on the right; below this the route climbed the shaded south face. To descend, the climbers at first scrambled down north (left), made one rappel to the west (toward the camera), and then scrambled back to the col below Pucusani to continue down to the car.



Juan Gabriel Estellano on the last pitch before the summit of Picacho Kasiri. The climbers had to descend to the scree slopes below in the dark and then traverse left toward the col between Kasiri and Picacho Pucusani, the twin-summitted peak seen behind in shadow. In the distance is Huayna Potosí.

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