



Cerro Mangiafuoco, East Ridge

Chile, Northern Patagonia, Aysén Region

Paolo Marazzi and I set off from Italy on December 24, 2018. Once at Puerto Bertrand, we waited in vain for a gaucho to help transport our gear up the Rio Soler valley. In order not to waste the first window of good weather, we crossed Lake Bertrand by boat and then continued autonomously on foot up the Rio Soler.

After three days of walking across a maze of crevasses and battling against strong winds, we established camp on the Northern Patagonian Icefield (Campo de Hielo Norte) at an altitude of about 1,600m. From there, we returned to the forest to gather more gear, which a gaucho had brought in the meantime, and to sit out five days of bad weather. By early January, we'd already walked almost a hundred kilometers. Our lips were so swollen that we couldn't close our mouths, and the skin on our faces was so dry that removing the dead layers became a good pastime for rainy days.

Finally, with a good weather forecast, we set off on January 12 with minimal equipment to climb the east ridge of an unnamed rock spire halfway between Punta Pantagruel and Cerro Cachet (see AAJ 2018 for more background and reports on these peaks). After a night in a snow hole on the Nef Glacier, we started climbing at 6 a.m. on January 13. We quickly reached the col where the east ridge begins. From there, we climbed rock and snow, dispatching with the lower section of the climb in just a few hours. The central section, which we believed would be easy, turned out to be somewhat delicate, with difficult route-finding on snow ridges and around gendarmes. Breaching this terrain with mountaineering boots and our rucksacks was tough.

We reached the final section in the early afternoon: two wide cracks running with water, along with a third crack that was narrower but drier. At a ledge we put on our climbing shoes, and, after an initial run-out, we climbed the final cracks in one pitch, reaching the summit at 2 p.m. The day was perfect, with an endless horizon of mountains, snow, and ice. We immediately started the abseils, picked up our bivy gear, and reached our camp before midnight, finally enjoying a peaceful, windless night. On January 14 we began our return to civilization. Despite strong winds and rainfall, we descended the Rio Soler in our packrafts.

By our measure, the mountain is ca 2,000m. We've named it Cerro Mangiafuoco, to be consistent with the other peaks in the area, and our route is called L'appel du Vide (400m, 6c M4).

– Luca Schiera, Italy

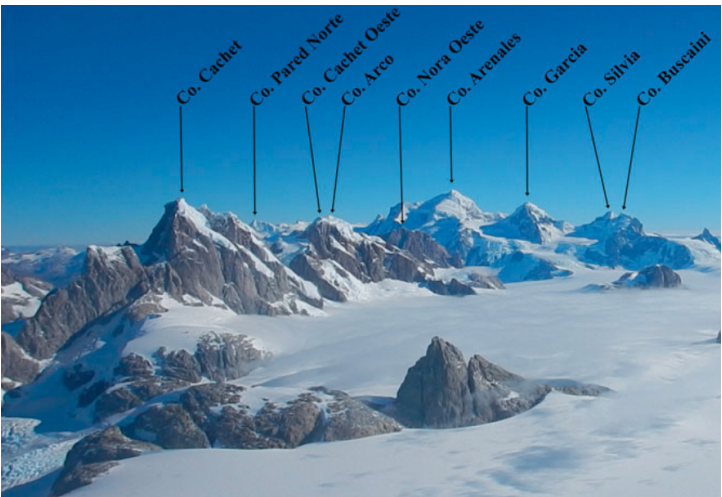
Images



Paolo Marazzi crossing Rio Claro, which joins Rio Soler halfway up the valley, on the approach to the Nef Glacier.



As seen from the Nef Glacier, Cerro Mangiafuocoa is the previously unnamed rock spire located halfway between Punta Pantagruel and Cerro Cachet. The east ridge route climbed the left skyline.



Looking south and west across the Northern Patagonian Icefield from the summit of Pantagruel in 2018. Cerro Mangiafuocoa is the large unlabeled spire in the glacial foreground.



Luca Schiera at the snow hole bivy.



Luca Schiera leading the final pitch of L'appel du Vide (400m, 6c M4) on the east ridge of Cerro Mangiafuoco.



Paolo Marazzi on the summit of Cerro Mangiafuoco with a view to the south and west. Cerro Arenales is the snowy peak in the back left, Cerro Alfil is above Marazzi's helmet, Cerro De Geer is next to his left fist, and Cerro Margarita is the final, snowy peak visible on the right. A comprehensive, annotated panoramic photo looking in this direction (taken from the summit of Pantagruel) can be seen here: <http://publications.americanalpineclub.org/articles/13201214737/Northern-Patagonian-Icefield-Punta-Pantagruel-and-Cerro-Fantasma>.



Paolo Marazzi on the east ridge of Cerro Mangiafuoco, with a view north to Cerro Fantasma (left), Punta Pantagruel (central spire), and a long, glacial, rock escarpment located east-northeast of Cerro Gargantua.



Making preparations for the descent of the Rio Soler.



The arrow on the map indicates Cerro Mangiafuoco.



Cerro Mangiafucio

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