



AAC Publications

Cerro Cuerno de Plata, Second Known Ascent

Chile, Northern Patagonia, Aysén Region

In December 2017, Australian climbers Colin Barton, Callum Hawkins, Paul Plank, Geoff Robb, Annette Skirka, Raymond Alfred Smith, Neil Thomas, and mountain guides Sören Kruse, Carlos Vasquez, and Steffen Welsch made the second known ascent of Cerro Cuerno de Plata (3,725m; sometimes called Cuerno del Plata, Tararua, or Silberhorn). The peak is just southeast of Monte San Valentín (4,058m) and is considered the second- or third-highest summit in Patagonia, alongside Valentín and Cerro San Lorenzo (3,706m). It was first ascended by a New Zealand expedition in 1969 from the south (see AAJ 1971).

We ascended the south side, passing through a crevasse field, and the maximum steepness was 35°. While the ascent of Cerro Cuerno de Plata is technically straightforward, access to the peak is epic, the landscape on the Northern Patagonian Icefield is just magnificent, and the fact that we had this wilderness all to ourselves was an added bonus. The exposed summit provided a tremendous view of the east face of Monte San Valentín and Lago General Carrera and was a friendly reminder that we have more business there—simply brilliant!

– Steffen Welsch, Germany, and Sören Kruse, Denmark

A wide-angle photograph of a majestic, snow-capped mountain range under a clear blue sky. The foreground shows a rocky, snow-dusted slope, while the background features towering peaks with patches of dark rock and white snow.

Map of the Cordillera Occidental in the Andes of Argentina, showing the Nevado de San Valentín and Pico Sur. The map highlights seven ascent routes (1-7) with colored lines. A legend box on the left lists the routes and their ascenders:

- 1.- Bertonej, Lantschner, Pangerc, 1952
- 2.- Ezquerro, Sonntag, 1952
- 3.- Neumayer, Maelling, 1952
- 4.- New Zealand, 1970
- 5.- Chilenos, 1981
- 6.- Ferrari, 1986
- 7.- Primera ascension desconocida

Labels on the map include 'San Valentín', 'Pico Sur', and 'Cuerno de Plata'.

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An overview map of the San Valentin massif and upper Exploradores Valley (which lies to the north

and east).

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