



Cerro Vallecitos, Recent Routes

Argentina, Andes, Cordón del Plata

Located west of Mendoza, the Cordón del Plata offers easy access for climbers and a great training ground for nearby Aconcagua. Cerro Vallecitos (5,475m) is one of the highest and most climbed peaks in the range, with an easy ascent via the normal route (south ridge), which was first completed in 1946 by Francisco Ibañez, Ricardo López Susso, and Luis Vila. The east side is much steeper, and a number of long routes have been established.

In September 2016, Diego Cofone, Matías Hidalgo Nicosia, and Agustín Piccolo opened a line on the east face of Vallecitos, naming it Divina Providencia (1,200m, D+ WI2/3 70°). They made their base camp at El Salto (4,200m) and departed at 11:30 p.m. Their route begins to the right of De Paso Canazo (1,000m, AD WI4 M3, Fiorenza–Pontoriero, 2011) and the Original Route, established in 1953 by Boucher, Memelsdorff, and Waltz.

They began up a couloir, encountering mostly 40° to 50° névé until reaching a short (3m) section of 90° ice. A long rightward traverse brought them to more moderate couloirs and a section of waterfall ice halfway up the face. After a pitch of WI2/3, they continued up mixed terrain, which proved difficult to navigate in the dark. Eight hours after they began climbing, they reached the summit and began their descent via the normal route.

Matías Hidalgo returned the following year with Chicho Fracchia and Matías Sindoni, and in October 2017 they opened a route on the southeast face of Vallecitos, left of previously established climbs, calling it Cascadas del Viento (600m, MD WI5). They left their camp at El Salto around 5 a.m. and crossed the glacier to the base of the face. The crux of the route came in the first few pitches: difficult ice climbing, including a 15m section of 90° to 95° ice. In total, 100m of steep waterfall ice deposited them about halfway up the route. From there, the difficulties eased and they ascended moderate snow couloirs to the south ridge, encountering good névé up to 70°. They reached the summit nine hours after they began climbing.

– Marcelo Scanu, Argentina

Images



Chicho Fracchia climbing the first pitch of Cascadas del Viento on the southeast face of Cerro Vallecitos.



Route overlay of Divina Providencia on the east face of Cerro Vallecitos. Other routes are not shown.



Chicho Fracchia on the second pitch of Cascadas del Viento on the southeast face of Cerro Vallecitos.



The line of Cascadas del Viento on the southeast face of Cerro Vallecitos.



Matías Sindoni and Chicho Fracchia on the last few meters of Cascadas del Viento on the southeast face of Cerro Vallecitos before reaching the summit ridge.

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