



## Cerro Coricampana, South Face Ascent and History

Bolivia, Cordillera Quimsa Cruz

(A) Huayna Cuno Collo (5,640m). (B) Huallatani or Huayna Cuno Collo East (ca 5,600m). (C) Coricampana (5,550m) and route of 2019 ascent. (D) Anco Collo (5,460m). (E) San Luis (5,620m). Photo by Roman Siegl

**Jeff Sandifort (a guide with Climbing South America), my wife Dagmar, and I spent five days during August in the southern Quimsa Cruz. We had hoped to first visit the Santa Vera Cruz Massif, further southeast, but the final section of road to our planned camp was not passable due to numerous landslides.**

We then drove to the Huallatani Valley, accessible by 4WD from the Konani-Quime road via Rodeo. At the ruins of miners' houses, about 100m above the northwest tip of Lake Huallatani, there is another tiny lake, and there we established base camp at 5,050m. The end of the valley is framed by Huayna Cuno Collo to the north and San Luis to the southeast, with three other peaks in between. We decided to climb the unnamed peak on the IGM map at 16.9866889°S, 67.3374281°W, lying at the end of the east ridge of Huayna Cuno Collo.

On August 25, Jeff and I reached the Huallatani Glacier via a narrow gully at the northern end of the valley and followed it to a col at its head, four hours from camp. On the far side a rocky face fell very steeply toward the valley to the northeast.

Above lay the south face of our unnamed peak. We crossed the bergschrund and Jeff led two 60m pitches (55° and 50°, with snow stake belays) on good hard snow, to a point close to the summit. The ridge to the summit appeared corniced, but turned out to be a narrow band of rock. There was no cairn on the top, so we built one. Our altimeter recorded 5,550m, and the overall ascent had been AD-. We descended to the col, retrieved our cached rucksacks, and went down to base camp, where our Aymara cook Valeria was waiting with a delicious dinner. There has been considerable glacier retreat in this area, as shown in the accompanying photos.

– Roman Siegl, Czech Republic

**Earlier Ascents:** After discussion with climbing historian Evelio Echevarria, it is most likely this peak is Cerro Coricampana (a.k.a. Coricampana Alto, approximately 5,500m). The peak's name is a hybrid: "cori" is Aymara for golden, and "campana" is Spanish for bell; on some maps a lake in the valley east of this peak is named Laguna Khorí Campana). This peak was climbed in 1926 by Dr. Friedrich Ahlfeld, a celebrated geologist, explorer of Bolivia, and founder of the Club Andino Boliviano, together with L. Partmuss and Robert Gerstmann, a well-known German photographer from that era. Photos from that trip show it's likely they climbed from the Huallatani Glacier, as did the 2019 team.

In May 1991, Evelio Echevarria attempted the peak from the mining community of Bajaderias in the valley to the northeast, but did not find snow, only very steep, rotten rock. He retreated 200m from the summit. Echevarria went on to climb Huayna Cuno Collo East, a.k.a. Huallatani (5,620m) from the north. His motivation for reaching the summit of Cerro Coricampana was to see if he could discover documents that were supposedly left by Ahlfeld on top.

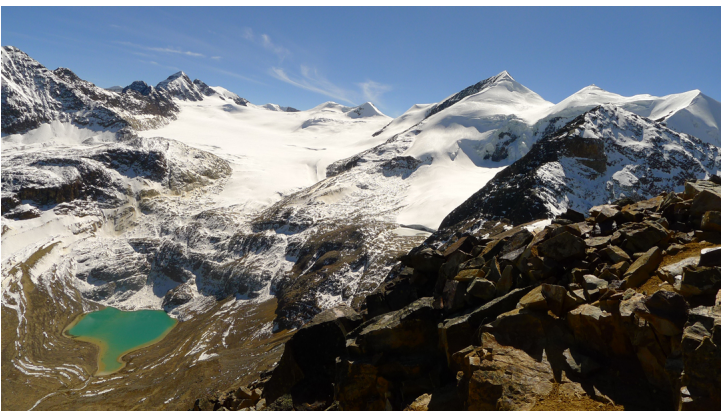
## Images



A camp by the Huallatani Lake in July 2013. The background peaks from left to right are: Coricampana, Anco Collo, and San Luis. Note there is more glaciation than in a similar photo from 2019, also available on this page.



A photo thought to be taken by the German Robert Gerstmann in 1926 and reproduced in Evelio Echevarria's book *The Andes*. (A) Foresummit of Huayna Cuno Collo. (B) Huallatani or Huayna Cuno Collo East. (C) Cerro Coricampana. (D) Anco Collo. Echevarria climbed Huallatani from the north in May 1991 and Anco Collo in July 1989 from the south. However, it is likely these peaks were first climbed in the 1970s by resident foreign climbers, such as Barry Webb; see AAJ 2014.



Lago Congelada and the upper Chojnacota Valley seen in 2013. This is one valley west of the Huallatani. The fine snow pyramid on the right is Jacha Cuna Collo, at 5,800m the highest peak of the Quimsa Cruz, while the more rocky pyramid at distant left is Cerro Gigante Grande (5,748m). Compare



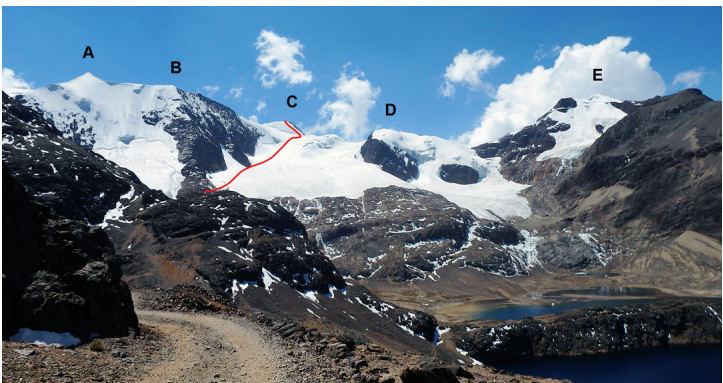
this photo with the accompanying photo taken in 2019.



Lago Congelada and the upper Chojnacota Valley seen in 2019.



Roman Siegl on the south face of Coricampana. Two rucksacks are visible on the col below.



Looking northeast from the upper Huallatani Valley in 2019. (A) Huayna Cuno Collo (5,640m). (B) Huallatani or Huayna Cuno Collo East (ca 5,600m). (C) Coricampana (5,550m) and route of 2019 ascent. (D) Anco Collo (5,460m). (E) San Luis (5,620m).



Looking at first west and then northwest along the watershed ridge of the Quimsa Cruz from Cerro Coricampana. There are four tops visible. Where the ridge changes direction is Huallatani. The next top to the right, with a steep rock wall below, is Huayna Cuno Collo. The next top is unnamed, and the final and highest top, to the right, is Jacha Cuno Collo, the highest summit of the Quimsa Cruz. The glacier on the right flows down toward the Bajaderias mine.

## Article Details

Author	Roman Siegl
Publication	AAJ
Volume	62
Issue	94
Page	0
Copyright Date	2020
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions