



Chomotang Group, Spang Nala Kangri, Spang Nala Dome, Sum Nomo Kangri, Amloca Kangri

India, Ladakh

Looking more or less south up the western arm of the Spang Nala Glacier from Chomotang at the three peaks climbed by a French party in August 2019: Spang Nala Dome, Spang Nala Kangri, and Sum Nomo Kangri. Photo by Laurent Lafforgue

The combination of a virtual tour on Google Earth, suggesting the existence of several straightforward summits, and the Chomotang report in AAJ 2016 showing the picture of a beautiful, unnamed snowy summit of 5,720m, led Fabrice le Bobinec and me to visit the Spang Nala in August. This is the valley that ascends southwest beneath the Chomotang Group from just west of the Sirsir La.

Using the road from Hanupata, a vehicle dropped us near the bridge crossing the Spang Nala at 4,500m. From there we walked southwest up the valley, with all the food and gear necessary for 15 days, to a base camp at 4,900m, where the valley divides into two glaciated arms. The one to the east holds a pretty, emerald-blue lake. We chose to explore the western glacier, and on August 20 we climbed the most elegant summit, which we named Spang Nala Kangri (5,750m, 34°1'4.16"N, 76°41'32.81"E). It lies on the southern rim of the Spang Nala Glacier and offered little in the way of difficulties besides several seracs and large crevasses.

On August 22, we climbed the west face of the "5,720m" peak featured in AAJ 2016. It lies on the watershed ridge between the two Spang Nala glacier basins at 34° 2'13.22"N, 76°42'23.50"E. We named it Spang Nala Dome, and the altimeter recorded 5,850m. It offers a perfect 360° panorama, with the most captivating peaks being Nun and Kun.

Two days later we reached the western top (5,700m, approximately 34°1'45.47"N, 76°40'40.01"E) of an elegant peak that we named Sum Nomo Kangri ("Three Sisters" in Ladakhi). An east-west crossing of all three summits would be spectacular. On all the peaks climbed we found no evidence of previous passage. We also experienced excellent snow conditions; earlier in the season, Spang Nala Kangri and Spang Nala Dome would be perfect on skis.

In September, I returned to the Spang Nala with Amandine Gau and Camille Turries. We climbed the main summit of Chomotang (6,065m) by the glacier that rises below the northwest face of the mountain, then the west slope. [This is likely different from the Australian route climbed in 2015.] The direct exit to the summit, all on ice, was fairly sustained at 55–60°. For a more homogeneous, more aesthetic, and less exposed route, it would be preferable to continue up the glacier and climb the south ridge via Chomotang III.

On September 15, we ended our stay by climbing a small, unnamed summit, which we named Amloca Kangri (5,700m). It is located immediately east of the glacial lake in the eastern arm of the Spang Nala.

– Laurent Lafforgue, France

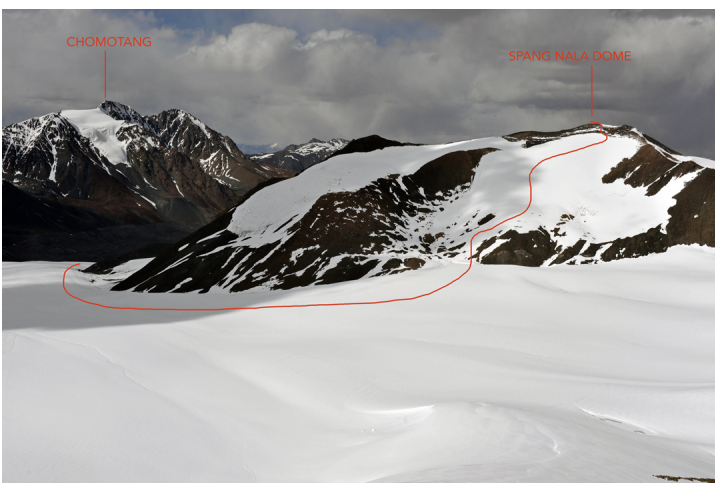
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The north face of Sum Nomo Kangri and French route of ascent to the west top.



The French route up the west face of Spang Nala Dome, with the Chomotang Massif on the left.



The French route up the north face of Spang Nala Kangri.



Fabrice le Bobinec during the descent from Sum Nomo Kangri. The north-flowing ice sheet below is the western arm of the Spang Nala Glacier, while the Chomotang Massif is clearly visible behind.



Fabrice le Bobinec descending the west face of Spang Nala Dome. At the end of the broad snow ridge above and right of the climber stands Spang Nala Kangri.



Fabrice le Bobinec on the ascent of Sum Nomo Dome from the upper western arm of the Spang Nala Glacier. Behind him is the north face of Spang Nala Kangri.

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