



AAC Publications

Llave de Granito, Northwest Arête to North Ridge

Chile, Northern Patagonia, Aysén Region

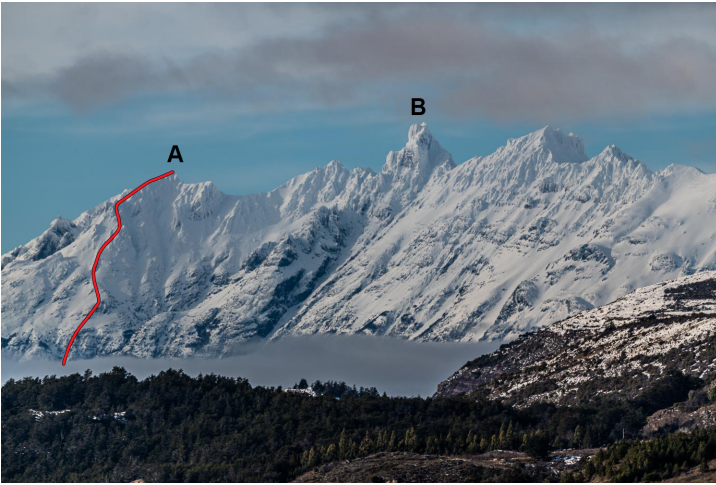
Sitting on Jim Donini's deck in Patagonia, a world of peaks can be seen, many of them unclimbed. Jim has taken to saying, "Climb the view." In the spirit of his project to do just that, Weston Boyles, Max Schilling, and I made the first ascent (to our knowledge) of one peak visible from Jim's deck in austral summer 2021. The peak is the northernmost in Parque Patagonia, above Lago General Carrera, and is located along the same ridgeline as 2,067m Cerro Choss (AAJ 2009), which Donini climbed with Morgan Boyles. [These peaks are on the east side of Lago General Carrera, approximately halfway between Puerto Guadal and Chile Chico.] Since the geology changes from volcanic choss to Llaves pluton granite at the nearby Paso Las Llaves, we informally named the 1,902m peak Llave de Granito ("The Granite Key", 46°37' 53"S, 72°19' 27"W).

We approached from Paso Las Llaves February. A week prior to our successful climb, Nadine Lehner and I pioneered the first part of the route up the northwest arête: four pitches of easy rock (up to 5.6). Weston, Max, and I repeated this portion and then continued via a long section of talus bashing to reach ice-covered rock on the upper northwest arête. Two pitches of spicy 5.6–5.8 led us past a perfect perch of a bivy site and onto the northern summit ridge, which had a few sections of 5.6–5.7 and snow leading to the top (III 5.8).

We reached the summit at sunset and descended 100m to the bivy spot in the twilight (about 11 p.m. at this latitude). With mini-Tabasco-sauce dinners, no wind—for two of us (sorry, Weston!)—and great views down to the lake, it was a beautifully planned night out. Coffee, downclimbing, two double-rope rappels, and scrambling got us back to the ground the next morning. We continued to Puerto Guadal, taking in excellent views of soaring condors along the way, and, eventually, fulfilling our dreams of cold beers and pizza.

— Gregory De Pascale, Chile

Images



Snowy view of (A) Llave de Granito (1,902m), with the 2021 route, and (B) Cerro Choss (2,067m), climbed in 2009. The peaks were much drier during the 2021 ascent.



Weston Boyles and Max Schilling on the first ascent of Llave de Granito with Lago General Carrera below.

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