



AAC Publications

Punta Guillem Aparicio, first ascent via southwest face; Shafat Peak, La Gent que Estimo; Shafat Wall, Pors de Gos

India, Ladakh, Zaskar, Shafat Valley

Tasio Martin Elorrieta on the 14th pitch (6c+) of Txoria Txori on Punta Guillem Aparicio. Photo by Marc Torralles.

In August 2022, a team of friends traveled to the Shafat Valley, where several of us opened new rock routes.

Marc Toralles and I made the first ascent of a 5,700m peak we named Punta Guillem Aparicio in memory of a good friend who was killed in 2011 while ice climbing. This peak lies at 34°00'17"N, 76°11'42"E in a small side valley that runs west into the Shafat and is a southern outlier of Shafat Peak (5,900m; immediately north of Shafat Peak and at a lower altitude is the well-known Shafat Fortress).

After a long day's approach from base camp, we reached the foot of the access couloir. We started up our proposed line on August 14, loaded with bivouac gear, as we were planning to climb the face over two days. After ten pitches up to 6c+, we reached a narrow ledge, where we spent a terrible night. A storm with lightning, hail, and rain lasted all night, and we survived the best we could using a thermal blanket for protection. It was one of those nights you will never forget.

Next morning, very tired, very wet, and with a dubious forecast, we retreated and returned to base camp.

On August 23, we came back for a second try. Our plan this time was to go fast and light, hoping to climb to the summit and descend in one day. As we already knew the first half of the route, we reached pitch ten early in the day. Seven more pitches, with several at 6c+ and a crux of 7a+, saw us on the summit. It was now snowing, and we had only a few hours of daylight remaining. Our rappel descent was to climber's left of our ascent, so that we avoided the access couloir. After around 17 rappels from nuts and pitons, we arrived at our tent 20 hours after leaving. Our new route, Txoria Txori (740m of climbing, 7a+), was climbed entirely clean, using only nuts and cams for protection and belays.

The southwest face of Shafat Peak and line of La Gent que Estimo. Earlier in the summer, a different line called Tukcheche was climbed farther left on the same pillar. Both routes gained about 500 meters. Photo by Tasio Martin Elorrieta.

Between these two attempts, on August 19, Jordi Mons and I climbed the southwest face of Shafat Peak (34°00'48"N, 76°11'48"E). On July 1, Oriol Baró and Guillem Sancho had climbed this aspect of the mountain via Tukcheche (500m, 6c), following one of the rock pillars that characterize this face and which they had called Wild East Pillar. After another long approach east up a side valley from the main Shafat, we climbed the same pillar but via a line slightly farther right.

After an initial pitch of 4+, five sustained pitches from 6a to 6c, with a little A1+, followed by another pitch of 4+, brought us to the final 100m–150m of straightforward mixed terrain. Heading up right, we reached the summit and then rappelled the wall, the anchors not always coinciding with the line of ascent. We named the route La Gent que Estimo.

The other new route opened in the Shafat Valley was Pors de Gos (130m, 6a A3), put up by Adrià Fidalgo, Núria García, and Guim Llorca on the Shafat Wall. This face lies near the entrance to the Shafat Valley and has many existing routes. The three-pitch Pors de Gos is to the right of Los Asfixiados and begins with a laborious pitch of aid on pitons and Peckers, before continuing above in a conspicuous dihedral.

— **Tasio Martín Elorrieta, Basque Country**

Images



The southwest face of Punta Guillem Aparicio with the line of the 17-pitch Txoria Txori. A rappel descent was made on the wall to the left to avoid the approach couloir.



Marc Toralles on the seventh pitch (6b+) of Txoria Txori on Punta Guillem Aparicio. The scree-covered approach couloir is visible below.



Marc Toralles on the ninth pitch (6c+) of Txoria Txori on Punta Guillem Aparicio. The scree-covered approach couloir is visible below.



Tasio Martin on the 12th pitch (7a+) of Txoria Txori on Punta Guillem Aparicio.



Marc Toralles on the 13th pitch (6c) of Txoria Txori on Punta Guillem Aparicio.



Tasio Martin on the 14th pitch (6c+) of Txoria Txori on Punta Guillem Aparicio.



The southwest face of Shafat Peak and line of La Gent que Estimo. Earlier in the summer, a different line called Tukcheche was climbed farther left on the same pillar. Both routes gained about 500 meters.



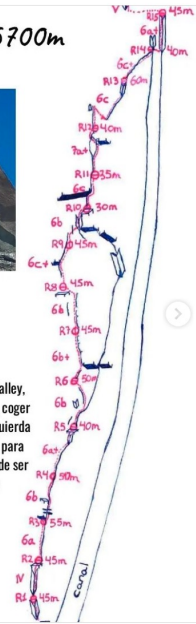
Adrià Fidalgo on the first pitch (A3) of Pors de Gos on Shafat Wall.



Jordi Mons on the fourth pitch (6b) of La Gent que Estimo on the southwest face of Shafat Peak.



Jordi Mons on the fifth pitch (6c) of La Gent que Estimo on the southwest face of Shafat Peak.



Topo for Punta Guillem Aparicio.

Article Details

Author	Tasio Martin Ellorieta
Publication	AAJ
Volume	65
Issue	98
Page	286
Copyright Date	2024
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions