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Great Trango Tower, First Ski Descent

Pakistan, Karakoram, Baltoro Muztagh

The 2024 ski descent on Great Trango, with Trango Tower on the left. The skiers climbed and descended more or less along the 1984 route on the north-northwest face. Photo: Erich Roepke / The North Face

On May 9, on their second attempt in two years, Christina Lustenberger (Canada) and Jim Morrison (USA), along with Chantel Astorga (USA), skied down from the main summit of Great Trango Tower (6,286m). The trio climbed and skied the normal route on the north-northwest face, first climbed over four days in 1984 by Americans Andy Selters and Scott Woolums.

The climbers acclimatized and dealt with illness at base camp for three and a half weeks before their final push. Starting from a high camp at 5,000m, they completed the ascent and ski descent in one long day.

From the summit, their route descended a hanging glacier atop the face and then continued along the narrow, snow- and ice-covered north ridge to reach the top of the broad couloir that descends southwest to the Trango Glacier from the foot of Trango Tower. Lustenberger and Morrison made two short rappels during the descent, and Astorga made a third rappel. The total vertical drop from the summit to base camp is more than 2,000m.

Lustenberger, Morrison, and Nick McNutt attempted to climb and ski the same route in the spring of 2023, reaching a point about 500m below the summit.

—Dougald MacDonald, AAJ, with information from Christina Lustenberger, Canada

Images



Climbing above high camp on Great Trango Tower. At right are Paiyu Peak and Uli Biaho Tower.



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Article Details

Author	Dougald MacDonald
Publication	AAJ
Volume	66
Issue	99
Page	271
Copyright Date	2025
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions