



AAC Publications

Pirita Central, Todo lo que se Comparte

Argentina, Northern Patagonia, Turbio IV Valley

Photo-topo of Todo lo que se comparte (5.11 A0). Photo: Flavie Cardinal. Photo-topo of Todo lo que se comparte (5.11 A0). Photo: Flavie Cardinal. Photo-topo of Todo lo que se comparte (5.11 A0). Photo: Flavie Cardinal. My interest in Argentina's Turbio Valley was piqued in January 2024 when Jasper Pankratz sent me a video of the valley. I half jokingly, half seriously responded, "We're going!" A year later, she and I began hiking into that wild valley with the goal of climbing a new route.

Photo-topo of Todo lo que se comparte (5.11 A0). Photo: Flavie Cardinal.

We departed from Bariloche on January 8, 2025, after receiving invaluable help from local climber Sebastian de la Cruz. With the assistance of gauchos, we covered 60km to reach the Don Ropo hut, where Osvaldo, the caretaker, welcomed us with a warm meal—an indication of the kindness we'd find throughout our journey. Another three days took us to the Don Chule refugio in the Mariposa Valley, where we established base camp.

Our goal was a new route on the north side of Pirita Central, part of a tri-spiked massif. The Piritas have quite a few routes but are still rarely visited by climbers—the last recorded ascent was in 2016 by Tess Ferguson and Alan Goldbetter (see AAJ 2016). We ended up climbing our new route to the right of their line on Pirita Central.

In mid-January, we launched our first attempt. Approaching the climb was brutal—an eight-hour bushwhack with multiple waist-deep river crossings, dense bamboo, and bags that weighed half our body weight. Three pitches up to 5.11 brought us to the huge slabs leading toward the 500m headwall on Pirita Central. After a bivouac partway up the slabs, we reached the headwall and started up, but poor cracks halted us after about 300m. We retreated all the way back to the hut.

A few days later, another window approached, and on January 24 we started up the slabs again, climbing through light rain that was forecasted to stop in the afternoon. By 2 p.m. we reached the base of the headwall, and as we started up, rain and hail forced us to retreat and bivy again. We got soaked and huddled for warmth, praying for better weather.

Miraculously, by dawn, the sky had cleared and our morale soared. We had opted for a new line to the left of our previous attempt, and the rock quality was better, with a continuous crack system that made for excellent climbing. Over 14 pitches, the only aid was a tension traverse into an adjacent crack. We reached the summit by late afternoon, just as another storm approached. We quickly started down, building anchors with nuts, pitons, and slings (we did not carry a drill or bolts) and soon intersecting the rappel route we had established during our earlier attempt. We reached the base just as the storm hit.

We named our route Todo lo que se Comparte (5.11 A0) as a tribute to the generosity we had encountered throughout our journey. For the last leg, we packrafted down the Río Turbio to Lago Puelo, reflecting on this valley's wild, rugged nature. Far from civilization and surrounded by endless peaks practically begging to be climbed, we felt incredibly lucky to have experienced its raw, untamed beauty. [This expedition was supported by a Jen Higgins Grant from the Alpine Club of Canada a Grit & Rock Award. Both grants support adventurous women's climbing.]

—Flavie Cardinal, Canada

Images



Flavie Cardinal climbing a steep tight-hands dihedral on the headwall of Pirita Central.



Sunrise in Mariposa Valley.



Flavie Cardinal climbing on La Oreja in Mariposa Valley, where the climbers repeated the route El Palito.



Approaching Las Piritas, the peaks in upper right.

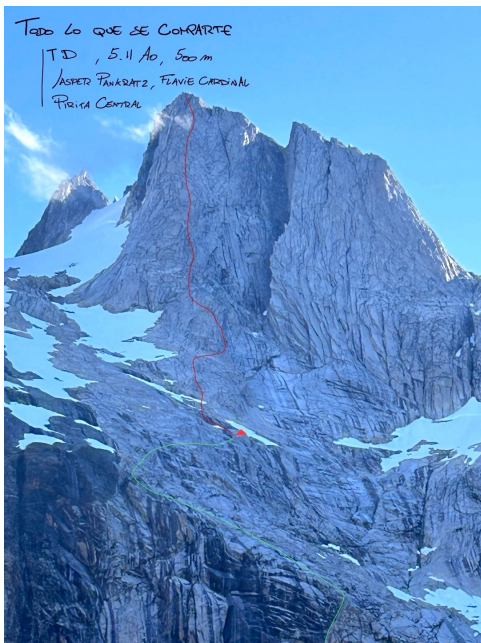


Photo-topo of Todo lo que se comparte (5.11 A0). The green line represents the approach slabs; the red triangle marks the high biv; and the red line shows the route. The route up the headwall is to the right of the 2016 route El Conono (Goldbetter-Smith). More routes ascend the formation to the right.



Todo lo que se Comparte (5.11 A0) on Pirita Central. The upper wall is about 500 meters high. Prior routes are not shown.



Jasper Pankratz climbing on the headwall of Pirita Central.



Jasper Pankratz climbing slabs at the start of the headwall on Pirita Central.



Jasper Pankratz following a chimney pitch on the headwall of Pirita Central.



The left side of Pirita Central from the approach slab. Todo lo que se comparte is on the right side of the sunny buttress.

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