



AAC Publications

El Chaltén Summary, 2025-2026

Argentina, Southern Patagonia

In the Chaltén Massif, as has become customary, there were several major rockfall events in the 2025–26 season, some particularly large, including from Cerro Adela, El Mochito, the Filo del Hombre Sentado, Aguja de la Silla, the west side of Cerro Chaltén, and Glaciar de los Tres. These result from a combination of permafrost degradation and glacial recession, leading to reduced glacier thickness and the loss of slope support.

Fortunately, compared with recent summer seasons, there were few accidents, and none were fatal. One important reminder: Avoid activating the SOS button on an inReach and contact the local rescue team directly instead; the emergency contact email for the Chaltén Massif is icepnlgzn@gmail.com.

In recent years, we've come to realize that a number of well-regarded routes have marginal bolts. These include Whisky Time on Aguja Poincenot and Disfrute la Vida, Tee Pitelka, and Rayo de Luz on Aguja Guillaumet, which have quarter-inch star-drive bolts that urgently need replacement. Other coveted, quality routes—such as Greenpeace, El Corazón, Royal Flush, Patagónicos Desesperados, and A Fine Piece, among others—have self-drive bolts, which also require replacement. Beware.

In September, during the winter, Colin Haley from the USA soloed Cerro Torre via the Ragni Route and Aguja Standhardt via Exocet, the first solo winter ascents of both peaks. Around the same time, Italians Matteo Della Bordella and Marco Majori completed the Casarotto Route on Cerro Chaltén (Fitz Roy), with two bivouacs, also a first in winter.

Elsewhere on Cerro Chaltén, during the summer, Royal Flush was repeated twice, marking the sixth and seventh ascents of the route. Surprisingly, a free ascent still awaits. Immediately to the left, and late in the season, Tasio Martín and Seán Villanueva O'Driscoll climbed the Pilar Este in challenging post-storm conditions (see the report here). This was only the third ascent of the route, and the first free ascent.

Due to climate-driven changes, Patagonia has been hit by repeated major forest fires in recent years. This year, along the Cerro Huemul trail, just ten kilometers from Chaltén, a cigarette butt or burned toilet paper sparked a fire that consumed nearly 2,000 acres of forest and pasture, taking two weeks and close to 100 people to control. Torres del Paine National Park has also experienced significant fires and now imposes steep fines, ranging from US\$1,000 to \$10,000 for smoking, using stoves in restricted areas, and building fires. Please do your part.

—Rolando Garibotti

Images

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