



AAC Publications

Santa Cruz Chico, West Face

Peru, Cordillera Blanca

Photo-topo of the route Directissima Mallorquina on the west face of Santa Cruz Chico.

From June 20 to July 20, 2025, a team from the Alpinism Technical Group of the Balearic Islands (FBME, Federació Balear de Muntanyisme i Escalada) explored the Cordillera Blanca. The team consisted of myself, Guillermo Anguera, Lluís Dietrich, Miquel Angel Lorente, and Tomeu Rubí.

We acclimatized by climbing Vallunaraju, Yanapaccha, and Shacsha Sur. Looking on Google Earth and at books in Huaraz, we noticed the west face of Santa Cruz Chico (5,800m) and learned that it appeared to be unclimbed. Inspired, we decided to attempt this face.

On July 7, we set out from the village of Hualcayan and trekked five hours to a base camp (4,500m) just before Laguna Yuracocha. The next day, we set an advanced camp near the lake, where we could see the west face of Santa Cruz Chico and plan a route directly bisecting the face.

We left our high camp (4,600m) at 1 a.m. on the morning of July 9 to make our attempt. We crossed a talus field, then easily avoided crevasses on the glacier, reaching the base of the wall at 3:30 a.m. We followed the line we'd picked out, happy to find firm snow and solid ice. Since we only had 12 ice screws for our group and had seen that the line was going to be mostly on ice, we decided to climb with a three-person team leading the route (switching leaders along the way) and a two-person team that was just following, secured by one person on the first team.

The route took 12 pitches, and the snow began to deteriorate dramatically near the top. The last pitch required Tomeu to dig a trench, and it was almost impossible to protect. We summited around 4 p.m., elated but exhausted and a bit worried about the descent. We had decided to rappel our route, since the ridges off the summit looked impassable. For the first rappel, we tried to place snow pickets and a deadman, but the snow was not consolidated. Finally, we wrapped the rope around the entire summit mushroom. For the rest of the rappels, we used V-threads. We reached our high camp at 11:30 p.m., 22 and a half hours after leaving.

We named the route Directíssima Mallorquina (520m, MD+).

—Cati Lladó, Spain

Images



Miquel Angel Lorente leading on the central part of the west face of Santa Cruz Chico.



Photo-topo of the route Directissima Mallorca on the west face of Santa Cruz Chico.



Tomeu Rubí leading an ice pitch on the upper part of the west face of Santa Cruz Chico.



Drone view of the team on the summit of Santa Cruz Chico, with the north side of the Cordillera Blanca in back. Quitaraju is prominent on the right, Alpamayo in the center, the fang of Taulliraju to Alpamayo's right, and the Pucajirca group to its left.

Article Details

Author	Cati Lladó
Publication	AAJ
Volume	67
Issue	100
Page	
Copyright Date	2026
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions