



AAC Publications

Eleven New Routes in Oman

Western Hajar, Oman

Marco Cocito on pitch one (7a) of Evening Coffee (180m, VIII+ max) on Jebel Fokha, Al Hamra Towers.

Photo by Riccardo Volpiano

Our expedition to Oman in February and March marked the conclusion of the Club Alpino Italiano (CAI) Eagle Team project, which focused on promising young climbers. The Eagle Team was conceived by Matteo Della Bordella, funded by the CAI, and organized with the support of the Club Alpino Accademico Italiano (CAAI) for this trip. The climbers opened 11 new routes, and all the participants—some experienced, some still novices—found Oman’s limestone to be the perfect terrain to unleash their imaginations.

Our initial forays were among the previously climbed towers of Al Hamra (Jebel Fokha), where the team added the routes Old Style (175m, UIAA VI), on the north face of the east summit of Al Hamra Tower, and Evening Coffee (180m, VIII+ max), on the east summit of Jebel Fokha.

In Wadi Misfat Al Abriyeen, we climbed three new routes, each about 120 meters, with the hardest, put up on the west wall of the canyon, having a 7c+ crux over a roof.

The best terrain undoubtedly was in the Jebel Kawr area and nearby Wadi Damm. The first route of mention was a ridge-plus-tower climb called Dreaming the Tower (400m plus 250m of scrambling/traversing, UIAA VI), a classic route on the north-facing Said Wall.

On the same wall, Matteo Monfrini, Marco Ghisio, and Riccardo Volpiano found the trip’s centerpiece, Drips of Joy (500m, 7b max, 7a mandatory). An overhanging, arching crack led to compact, water-sculpted slabs that accompanied the climbers to the top—the route’s eponymous “drips of joy.” Given the climb’s length and technical difficulties, the team was forced to bivouac. Bolts were used sparingly, with only six to protect lead climbing and three at belays.

During a rest day above Wadi Damm, we discovered the west-facing wall of Jebel Al Wal, which gave us Via Patatonia (250m, VII) and Dattero d’Oro (220m, VII).

On the final days of the trip, enthusiasm remained high, and even in the well-known Wadi Nakhar, a few glances at the wall—and among ourselves on the climbing team—were enough to spur us to establish All You Need Is a Date (120m, V+) and the overhanging Pole Crack (120m, 7a), both by Volpiano and Ghisio. Meanwhile, on the wall directly opposite, Bonalda, Lo Russo, and Cocito opened Via Vento del Deserto (140m, VIII).

—Marco Ghisio, Italy

EDITOR’S NOTE: An overview of this expedition and more photos can be found at the Club Alpino Accademico Italiano website. At the same site, this webpage has pitch-by-pitch descriptions and photo-topos of all routes climbed.

Images



Marco Ghisio on the steep corner crack of pitch one (7b) of Drips of Joy (500m, 7b max, 7a mandatory), Said Wall.



Marco Cocito on pitch one (7a) of Evening Coffee (180m, VIII+ max) on Jebel Fokha, Al Hamra Towers.



Matteo Monfrini seconding pitch one (7b) of Drips of Joy (500m, 7b max, 7a mandatory), Said Wall.



Marco Ghisio establishing pitch two (6c) of Drips of Joy (500m, 7b max, 7a mandatory), Said Wall.



Matteo Monfrini drilling a protection bolt on pitch four (6a) of Drips of Joy (500m, 7b max, 7a mandatory), Said Wall. The team only placed nine bolts on the entire route: six as lead protection and three at belay anchors.



Riccardo Volpiano starts up pitch eight during the first ascent of Drips of Joy (500m, 7b) on the Said Wall.



The line of Drips of Joy (500m, 7b max, 7a mandatory) on the Said Wall.



Matteo Monfrini exploring a possible new route on the middle tower of Jabal Fokha. The team thought they were establishing a new climb, but found some previously placed bolts before the line dead-ended.



Riccardo Volpiano on pitch two (6b) of Evening Coffee (180m, VIII+ max), Jebel Fokha, Al Hamra Towers.



Team Oman 2025. From left to right, in black: Riccardo Volpiano, Erica Bonalda, Lorenzo Toscani, Daniele Lo Russo, Matteo Monfrini, and Marco Cocito; in yellow: Marco Ghisio, Mauro Florit, and Francesco Leardi.

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