



AAC Publications

Cuerno Este, North Face, Vacaciones Metamórficas

Chile, Southern Patagonia, Torres Del Paine

In mid-December, Romano Marcotti (Chile) and I ventured into the Valle Bader in Torres del Paine to check out a project of mine. After discovering that conditions weren't great, we decided on the north face Cuerno Este, ascending a line that looked just stellar. After climbing five pitches up five-star cracks and perfect rock, we reached the end of the granite. Looking up at the metamorphic rock comprising the summit tower, we descended, assuming this part had been climbed before.

Arriving back in town, we learned the first three pitches of our route are shared with the 2002 route by Hesleden-Nadin, which climbed only the lower granite portion, and that Cuerno Este had no complete ascents. [Editor's Note: The 2002 route was repeated by Frédéric Degoulet, Jean-François Reffet, and Romaric Pellicier in 2009; they continued for an additional five or six pitches to the western subsummit, calling their climb *Bailando con el Viento*. In 1998, Tom Bauman, Alan Kearney, and Jack Lewis climbed a nine-pitch route further to the right, stopping where the granite ends (AAJ 1998).]

Curiosity got the better of us, and on January 18, 2022, Romano and I headed back into the valley with Pepo Jurado (Ecuador). We climbed the same five pitches of incredible splitter cracks and then simul-climbed a 200m-long ridge to the base of the summit tower. We first checked our options on the north ridge but then decided on a system of ledges and overhangs to the left that seemed to have a crack we could use for protection. The crack disappeared after the first relatively easy pitch. We continued by climbing four more spicy pitches, composed of loose rock and ledges interspersed with vertical to overhanging sections, to reach the small, pointed summit. The view was incredible, with turquoise lakes in all directions.

We descended by rappelling the north ridge, leaving one piton below the summit and carving out natural anchors in the rotten rock until reaching the lower route. We named the route *Vacaciones Metamórficas* (600m, 5.11-) after a rest day spent swimming in a "heated pool" of glacial meltwater warmed by giant granite slabs, and in honor of the terrible metamorphic rock that crowns Cuerno Este.

— Sebastian Pelletti, Australia

Images



Romano Marcotti, Sebastian Pelletti, and Pepo Jurado beneath the stellar-granite lower portion of Vacaciones Metamorficas (600m, 5.11-) on Cuerno Este.



A small climber in a sea of granite on Vacaciones Metamorficas (600m, 5.11-) on Cuerno Este.



Climbing "five star" granite on the lower portion of Vacaciones Metamorficas (600m, 5.11-) on Cuerno

Este.



Vacaciones Metamorficas (600m, 5.11-) on the north face of Cuerno Este, the line of the peak's first complete ascent. The route shares some terrain with Bailar con el Viento (Hesleden-Nadin, 2002), which climbs to the western subsummit (right).

Article Details

Author	Sebastian Pelletti
Publication	AAJ
Volume	64
Issue	96
Page	
Copyright Date	2022
Article Type	Climbs and expeditions