



Urus Oeste Group: Hanan Pacha and Emmoa

Peru, Cordillera Blanca

(A) Urus Oeste III, a 5,270m satellite spire due west of Urus Oeste. The 2022 route Emmoa (640m climbing distance, M6 75°) followed the obvious snowy weakness. (B) Urus Oeste (5,450m); the 2022 route Hanan Pacha (425m climbing distance, 90°) ascended the cleft just below the summit. Photo: Pou Collection

The three Urus peaks form a long, southwest-to-northeast ridgeline separating the Ishinca Valley from Laguna Ochapampa, with Urus Este (5,420m) the most ascended, Urus Central (5,495m) little traveled by climbers, and Urus Oeste (5,450m) with few ascents—most recently by the northwest face (AAJ 2022). We noticed the latter peak in 2021; it is surrounded by several independent, needle-like summits that exceed 5,000m.

In mid-June 2022, we hiked in via the Ishinca Valley, along with our climbing partner Micher Quito and cameraman Alex Estrada (both from Peru), hoping to trace new routes in the Urus Oeste group. After six hours, we made camp (4,900m) at the foot of the glacier at the base of the mountain.

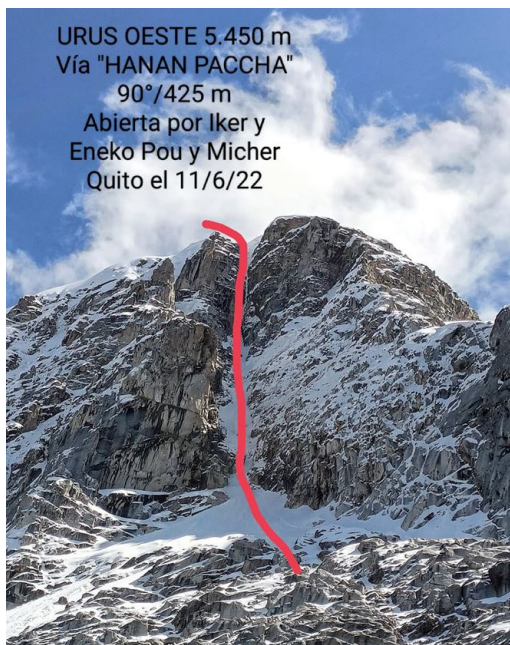
On June 11, we woke up at 4:30 a.m. It was an unpleasant -15°C outside the tent. Our focus was a south-southeast-facing rock cleft on the main summit of Urus Oeste. The climbing was technical and difficult, and covered in fresh snow. After 8.5 hours, we reached the summit, and our total round-trip time from base camp was 11 hours. We called our route Hanan Pacha (425m climbing distance, 90°), which refers to the upper realm, or cosmos, in Incan mythology.

The next day, we explored along the base of Urus Oeste, eventually finding a good objective on a satellite spire of about 5,270m, located about 500m due west of the main summit. We referred to the peak as Urus Oeste III, and it likely had no prior ascents.

On June 13, we woke up early to tackle the steep south-southeast face of this spectacular granite needle. After seven hours of uninterrupted climbing, navigating through narrow, vertical ice channels, we reached the summit. We called our route Emmoa (640m climbing distance, M6 75°) in honor of the Basque mountaineering museum. The descent was difficult, since the spire is steep on all sides. A couple of lucky rappels down a broken 100m rock wall and scrambling down an ice corridor eventually got us back to camp in 12.5 hours round-trip.

— Iker and Eneko Pou, Spain

Images



The upper portion of the route Hanan Pacha (425m of climbing, 90°), on the south-southeast face of Urus Oeste (5,450m).



Climbing steep ice on Hanan Pacha (425m climbing distance, 90°), on the south-southeast face of Urus Oeste (5,450m).



Emmoa (640m of climbing, M6 75°) on Urus Oeste III, a 5,270m satellite spire located 500m due west of Urus Oeste (5,450m).



Iker Pou, Eneko Pou, and Micher Quito on the summit of what they called Urus Oeste III, a 5,270m satellite spire 500m due west of Urus Oeste (5,450m).



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