



# NORTHERN PATAGONIA WOMEN'S EXPEDITION

FREJA, MICHELLE & SASHA - JAN 2018

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MEF18-03

BMC18-01

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Before we talk about the endless jungle bushwhacking we would like to gratefully acknowledge the enormous amount of support we received for this trip, without it none of this would have been possible.

First of all, we would like to offer our gratitude to the Mount Everest Foundation, BMC, Austrian Alpine Club (UK) and Irish Mountaineering Club who believed in our trip and provided substantial financial support. We would also like to say a huge thank you to DMM for saving the day by supporting our team with necessary equipment and to Base Camp Food and Nairn's for keeping us well fuelled in the mountains.

We would also like to thank Joaquin Reyes and his family, who adopted us in Bahia Murta and supplied horses, delicious home cooked food and cultural experiences. Thank you also to hostel owner, Farid Hidalgo at Aumkenk Aike in Coyhaique for his amazing hospitality, sharing with us, his knowledge of the history and culture of the Aysen region of Chile but also for his humour and throwing a party on New Years Eve.

Last of all, we would like to thank our family and friends for their support and encouragement and specifically Joe Salter, Jim Shannon and Ricky Bell for their reliable weather updates and John Crook, Jim and Angela Donini and Polly Harmer for all their knowledge, inspiration and psyche.

Thank you,

Sasha, Freja and Michelle, March 2018.



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## EXPEDITION SUMMARY

Our three-woman team set off to explore a remote and hidden valley in Northern Patagonia, called *The Avellano Valley*, meaning the Hazel Valley. The Rio Avellano winds its way up this long and wild valley, met at its source by striking granite towers otherwise hidden by the surrounding mountains. The region and the towers themselves are relatively unexplored, large areas were unmapped and the rock had only seen a handful of climbing teams before. We were hungry for a wild adventure and with rumours of untouched granite and unexplored mountains we deemed the location the perfect fix. Upon our return, I can confirm that *Wild and Adventure* is what we got.

We had a month we could dedicate to the trip, hoping to optimize our chances for a good weather window. After a hard-going approach from the village of Bahia Murta and a few stormy days in basecamp we lucked out as a high pressure system rolled in. This gave us the opportunity to establish a new route on a tower called the Tooth and also make the first ascent of a mountain to the East of the Avellano towers. After running out of food and with the weather turning, we decided to retreat to the safety of Bahia Murta. Over the month we learned lots of lessons (the hard way) of an adventurous expedition, but overall we were really chuffed to have had a successful expedition.

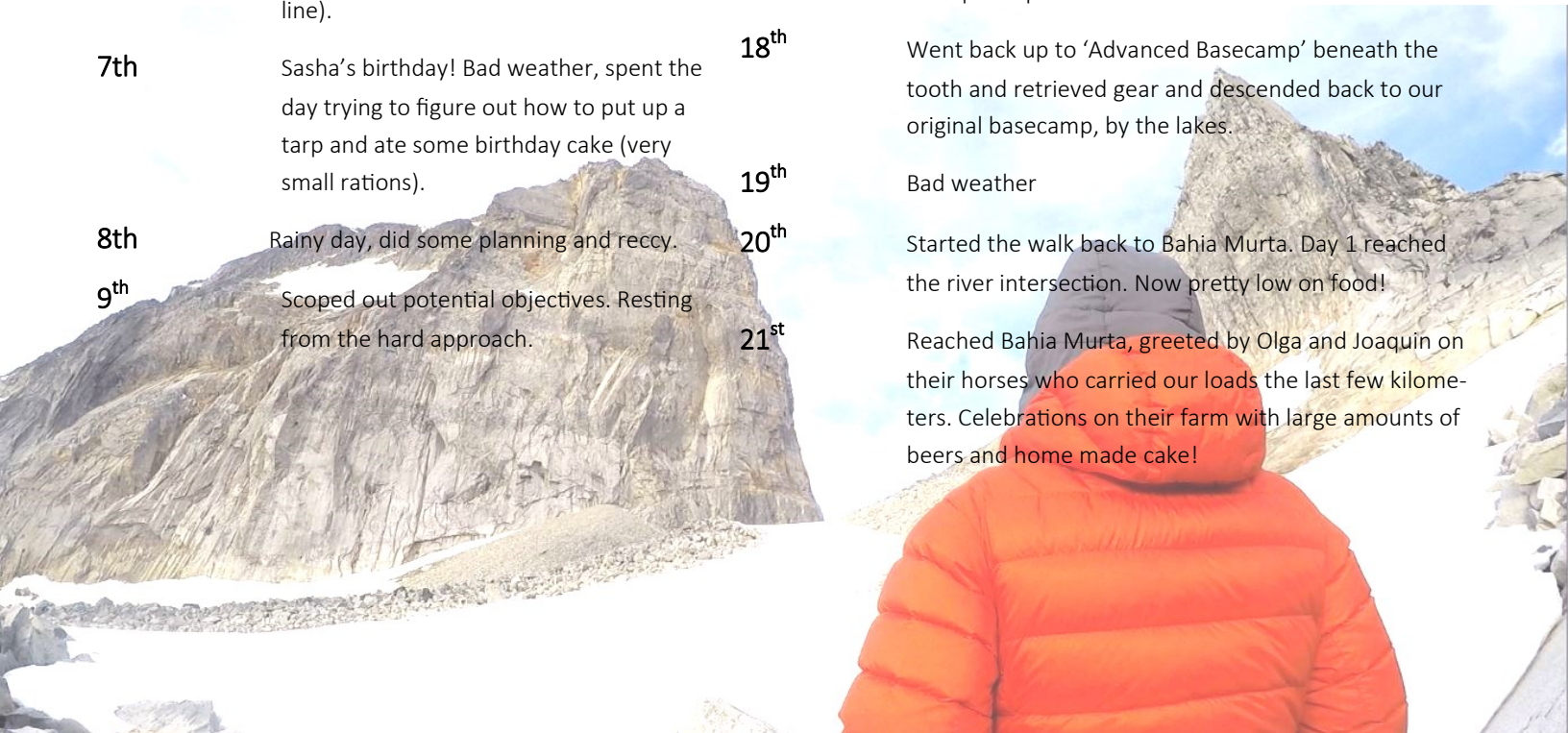
We were determined to make this an all female trip to inspire and promote females in the outdoors. We hope by reading this report you'll see that we are just three women that shared a simple, inner drive to go out and do something a bit mad. Yes, we all love climbing and yes climbing was the theme of our trip but our excitement was fuelled by the idea of having a good old adventure.

Sasha Doyle, Freja Shannon and Michelle O'Loughlin,

March 2018.

# DAY-BY-DAY SUMMARY

Date	Diary		
29 <sup>th</sup>	Flew to Balmaceda. London Heathrow Madrid – Santiago – Balmaceda)	10 <sup>th</sup>	Finally clear skies! Re-packed bags and headed to ‘Advanced basecamp’ right beneath the tooth and the Avenali Tower.
30 <sup>th</sup>	Arrived in Coyhaique.	11 <sup>th</sup>	Set off to climb the South Face of the tooth. Line seen from basecamp. Original objective, Avenali Tower, was not a safe option (poor rock quality). Successful ascent of the South Face of the Tooth. Back to the tent late evening.
31 <sup>st</sup>	Bought supplies and food. Celebrated New Years Eve.	12 <sup>th</sup>	Rest
1 <sup>st</sup>	Bus journey from Coyhaique to Bahia Murta. Met local Gaucho, Joaquin.	13 <sup>th</sup>	Bad weather, used the day to approach the east face of the Avenali Tower in order to scope out potential line or repeat ‘Avenali Avenue’. Passing of large crevasses and glacial navigation. Saw potential objectives in east side of the valley. Walked into that valley and camped to climb on one of the spires.
2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup>	Weather was not good to approach. Spent some time with Joaquin, his wife Olga and family on their farm.	14 <sup>th</sup>	Climbed ‘Aumkenk Aike’ (New peak!).
4 <sup>th</sup>	Day 1 of approach. Led by horses 3km up Rio Espalon before hindered by river in spate. Left here by Olga and Joaquin. Did 1 shuttle to the river intersection.	15 <sup>th</sup>	Bad weather
5 <sup>th</sup>	Day 2 of shuttle. All equipment now at river intersection, “camp 1”. Made it to basecamp, long and arduous approach.	16 <sup>th</sup>	Bad weather
6 <sup>th</sup>	Day 3 of shuttle. Made it to basecamp, long and arduous approach. All equipment at basecamp by the lakes (see approach notes and photos. We followed the red line).	17 <sup>th</sup>	Still in East side of the valley. Attempted route on spires to the left of previous peak, though exhausted teams and bad conditions resulted in backing off after a couple of pitches.
7 <sup>th</sup>	Sasha’s birthday! Bad weather, spent the day trying to figure out how to put up a tarp and ate some birthday cake (very small rations).	18 <sup>th</sup>	Went back up to ‘Advanced Basecamp’ beneath the tooth and retrieved gear and descended back to our original basecamp, by the lakes.
8 <sup>th</sup>	Rainy day, did some planning and reccy.	19 <sup>th</sup>	Bad weather
9 <sup>th</sup>	Scoped out potential objectives. Resting from the hard approach.	20 <sup>th</sup>	Started the walk back to Bahia Murta. Day 1 reached the river intersection. Now pretty low on food!
		21 <sup>st</sup>	Reached Bahia Murta, greeted by Olga and Joaquin on their horses who carried our loads the last few kilometers. Celebrations on their farm with large amounts of beers and home made cake!





## **THE TEAM**

(From Left – Right)

Freja Shannon

Michelle O’Loughlin

Sasha Doyle

# PLANNING

## WHERE IS THE AVELLANO VALLEY?

The Avellano Valley is hidden away in the wild Aysen region of Chile, not far from the border of Argentina and at the Northern tip of Patagonia, otherwise known as the middle of nowhere. The Valley is capped by tall granite towers and Rio Avellano leads down to the huge Lago Carrera General. The nearest city is Coyhaique, classed as a new city, it is the largest in Northern Chilean Patagonia. Surrounded by open plains rolling into breathtaking mountains, Coyhaique is interesting and definitely developing but still feels strangely desolate. We spent a few days in Coyhaique and then headed south on the Carretera Austral, a road that runs 1240km north-south across Chile. We travelled passed a town called Cerro Castillo, which has another interesting mountain range and stopped at Cruce Murta, a cross roads between the highway and a small road leading us to the small ranch town of Bahia Murta. From the cross roads we got a ride to Bahia Murta meet the Gaucho family that would support upon the first bit of our approach.





## OBJECTIVES

### PLAN A

In the photo above Michelle is pointing to the Avellano Towers from the East. Left-Right, you can see the South Avellano Tower, the Tooth, the Avenali Tower, the thin Crown Tower and then a ridge leading over to the North Avellano Tower in the right of the photo. We decided on a main objective for our trip would be establishing a new line on the Avenali Tower, currently there is only one line up the east face of this tower. We wanted to establish another line on the east face and also a line up its south face, starting from the col between it and the Tooth.

### PLAN B

Although we came with some ideas of objectives, we knew that we would have to factor in some degree of flexibility with this - sitting on a computer, planning the trip from home we knew little about the quality of the rock on the faces or whether or not there would be any crack systems to follow. On arriving in the valley came to realise that the granite of the Avellano Valley is actually different to many other types of granite and doesn't have many clear crack systems so it was harder than we imagined to find lines. Taking a closer look at the South face of the Avenali Tower with binoculars we decided that the rock was poor quality and with a blue bird day forecast we had little time to suss out the east face. We scratched our heads and wondered what we were going to attempt with the amazing weather forecasted. We had never imagined being faced with the challenge of good weather and not knowing what to climb. Luckily, on approaching the col to make our new 'advanced' base camp we spotted a large slabby wall on the South face of the Tooth, through the binoculars the face looked relatively clean and had a few cracks weaving across it. So we set up camp and prepared to attempt this the following day.





**Above** ~ The Team looking up at (left-right) the Avenali Tower and The Tooth, rethinking their objectives.

**Across** ~ Freja pointing to the clean slab on the south face of the Tooth, our new objective that we had spotted approaching the col.

**Below** ~ Michelle getting a closer look at the South face of the Avenali tower.



# APPROACH

We arranged to approach the towers from the West (follow red line), a shorter walk but with steeper jungle bush whacking required. This approach had been taken before by American climbers Angela & Jim Donini and British Mountain Guide John Crook who kindly offered us some helpful beta given we were map-less.

The help of Joaquin and Olga meant we could optimize how much time we'd have at basecamp, taking a fair amount of supplies with us and doing less shuttles. Due to heavy rainfall, we delayed the approach for a day and stayed with Joaquin's family for the night, tasting some of Olga's tasty cooking and learning some local Cueca dancing, from 3 years old Marin. The next day we helped load the horses and began our approach. To our dismay after just 3 km of relatively straight forward hiking we were met by a flooded river which was unsafe for the horses to cross. Sadly, Joaquin and Olga had to leave us there. This was a big shock, changing our plans dramatically but with no other solution we said goodbye. Joaquin gave me that type of prolonged hug that someone gives you when they think they might not see you ever again, then, they left. Suddenly, there we were on our own, in a wild overgrown forest, with no map and over 100kg of stuff, great.

After the initial shock, we conjured up a Tyrolean like solution to cross the angry river and then made our way bushwhacking through the forest. For the next four days we vaguely followed two rivers, first the aptly named Rio Espalon, meaning slippery river. We followed this, weaving away from the river to avoid steep banks, trudging through deep mud and ducking over and under fallen rotten trees, until we finally came to a cross section. We then followed the Rio Etsero Sud, that took us steeply to a huge cascade below the lake that we planned to call home for a few weeks. To overcome the waterfall we scrambled up a steep forest that clung willingly to moss covered slabs. Scrambling precariously up and down these slabs to shuttle kit, carrying in excess of 30kg, I'd say this was the most dangerous part of our whole expedition!



The picture above points out the three known options to approach the Avellano towers. Previous teams have approached from all colored lines, we chose the approach marked with the red line due to ease of access from Bahia Murta. Photo Credit—Jim Donini.

# APPROACH MAPS

We finally reached the top of the waterfalls, with all our kit and to welcome us out of the relentless jungle and into the mountains, was a pair of awesome Indian Condors. It would be an understatement to say that we had underestimated the difficulty of this terrain and the predicted two-day approach actually took us a long, hard four days. Saying that, we'd made it to base camp and the difficulty we'd faced on the approach made the sight of the beautiful blue glacial lake all the more rewarding. This lake signified basecamp and home for the next two weeks.





We wanted to make use of a forecasted spell of good weather so we moved our basecamp to an advanced basecamp under the Tooth. To approach we traversed around the small lake and then accessed a ridge and followed this until a ledge. We traversed across the ledge until a boulder gully lead us up to col between the tooth and the South Avellano Tower. This gave us access to the snowfield under the tooth where we pitched our tent for the next week.









# THE TOOTH

**Route:** Route Canal, E25b, 250m.

**Date:** 10th January 2018.

**Climbers:** Freja Shannon, Michelle O'Loughlin and Sasha Doyle.

**Location:** 46°25'37°S 72°31'35°W    **Altitude:** 1,700m

Start by scrambling up the slabs at the base of the SW ridge (50m) then make a two pitches, firstly direct and then traversing rightwards, (around HVS) over some loose ground to overcome the ridge. This passes through a narrow corner of good climbing to a 'V' shaped notch, then following a good crack direct to belay at large boulders. Continue direct to overcome the bulge and then traverse rightwards over loose alpine terrain to the base of a featured wall. Make a pitch up this wall then rightwards again to belay at a large flake, now established on the South face. From the flake traverse slightly down and rightwards along a double (hand and foot) ledge to belay below a crack (short 15m pitch). Follow this crack up and slightly rightwards then zigzag back leftwards along a good crack, a few tricky steps (5b) to belay in a hollow in the wall. From here head up good cracks and thin flakes (5b) bearing leftwards, towards the ridge and exiting the ridge on a flat blocky section to belay. From here make 1 final pitch to the top by traversing left initially around a corner and then directly up the cracked corner to finish on the blocky summit. We completed the route with 50m of scrambling and 200m (8 pitches) of roped climbing.

**Descent:** Two full 60m abs down the N ridge and then scramble off.



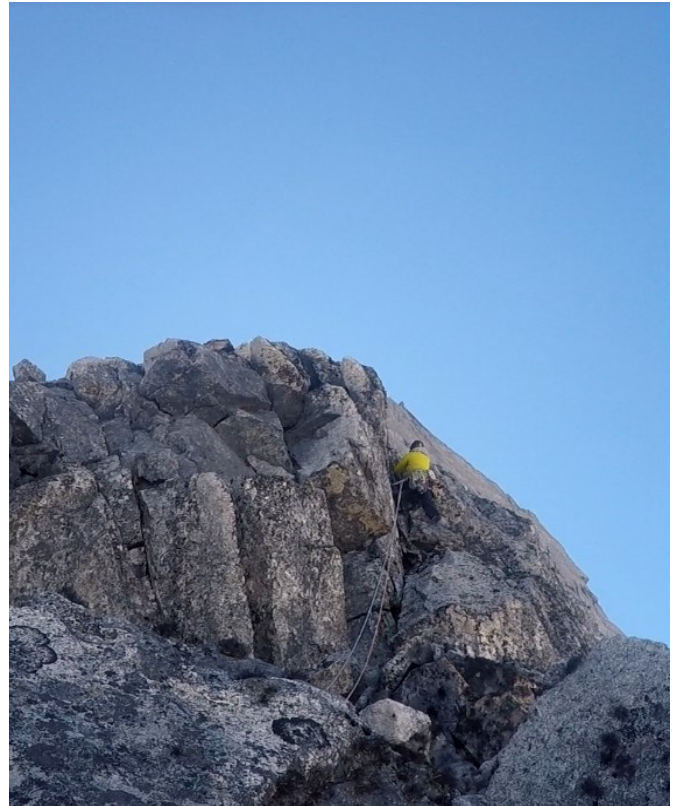
## CLIMBING THE TOOTH

We started our ascent with a relatively late and relaxed start given we were camped no more than 200m away from the start and felt we had more daylight than we knew what to do with. We even had the luxury of approaching in our light-weight trainers as there was only a tiny bit of snow to cross before the rock, so as far as adventurous, new routing, expedition climbing in Patagonia goes - it had already been very different to what I had imagined. I remember really welcoming the chilled out feeling though, given our horrific approach, climbing a new route on a nice little slab, on the tower that was conveniently standing right next to our tent, definitely felt like the right thing to do.

The first bit of the approach was just easy scrambling up slabs onto a large boulder field. Then we had to navigate around a little ridge of loose, lichen covered granite that peeled off like cornflakes under our feet—nothing crazy dangerous but we were definitely all hoping to find nicer rock soon. After 200m we traversed right, nicely positioning ourselves on a ledge under a small ridge that bends around eventually to the south facing slab. Volunteering to take the first lead, I stared up at the wall above me, an overall uninspiring wall of discontinuous cracks leading to the ridge followed a series of ledges—relatively straight forward, VS or so ground, I suspected. Stood on that ledge, I felt this huge wave of relief come over me, an overwhelmingly sudden sense of calm. A week of clinging onto roots of the steep mossy rainforest with 30kgs on my back had definitely built up some anxiety in me. Flashing images of shiver bivies, getting caught in storms and climbing myself onto walls of nothingness. Suddenly, I realised that adventurous new routing didn't need to be like that.



Staring up at the wall above me, it didn't seem like the line of my life but it looked like a challenge I was confident we could achieve, which was nice considering it was to be the first pitch of new routeing I've ever done. A new experience in an incredible situation with two good friends, keen to just have a fun time. I was suddenly reminded why I was there in the first place and sank into a calm, confident state. An amazing way to start, I thought. There was just few loose spots I had to dodge, reminding me I shouldn't completely let my guard down.



Freja was keen to take the next pitch, the first bit was really loose and scary, but then followed a nice crack into a 'v' notch, then up nice solid cracks towards a belay by big boulders. Naively, I felt like we were almost clear of the loose ground now. Michelle took us on from here and we soon realised that we had some more choss to navigate. Michelle went up a crumbly crack on the right, I thought at first it was lichen that was crumbling off in my hands but on realising it was the rock I decided wedging and jamming were safer moves. After this Michelle traversed along a ledge of piled up loose pinnacle blocks, assembled like a game of Kaplunk. I saw a crack up above me and took the lead from here around a small ridge to finally gain the cleaner slabs. From here we could see the crack system we had spotted from our binoculars, excited to reach them Freja lead a short pitch across. She brought us across, one at a time, it was an incredible position.



Michelle jammed her way up the crack, making good progress at around HVS terrain, she came to a adjoining crack that traversed out towards the left of the slab. Tempted by the airy traverse she followed this left. After launching a few un-trustworthy blocks into the abyss, the afterwards cleaner crack was top quality, tiny feet on good holds with just enough gear to keep calm about the exposure.

She shouted down excitedly mid-move before reaching the comfort of a tiny niche. Wedging in some cams, she shouted 'safe'. We were so excited to be making progress on the tiny crack system we'd spotted with our bino's down at basecamp. Finding a large enough foot hold to pause, I remember looking back at Freja and down the valley the opposite side we'd approached from, it felt so remote. It wasn't far from Lago Carrera General or the village of Bahia Murta but it was hidden. Concealed by the winding valley and surrounding hills, it suddenly made sense why so little people had neither been to, or heard of the Avellano towers.



Reaching the niche I realised it was my lead, I looked up, above us was slabs broken by very thin flakes, but I couldn't make out much detail as the sun was so strong it hurt my eyes. I set off climbing the flakes, they were thin but felt good enough for the most part. The flakes sent me leftwards across the slabs towards the arête.



Reaching the arête seemed initially too steep to exit onto directly, so I had to climb up into a small corner just to the right first. There was a few 'fighty' moves and then it eased into easy climbing. I moved up a few more ledges and then gained a huge blocky flat ledge, like a shoulder below the summit. It was now really windy but we were so excited to have made our way up the slab and now we just had a bit of choss-wrangling to do to reach the summit. I brought the others up, they moved fast in relief from the tiny niche. I then lead through, onto the summit. I traversed around towards the left as it felt the least loose option, the blocks were huge, but defiantly not 100% wedged, I felt pretty terrified that actually the whole tower might fall down if I take one wrong step, so I took it really slow, trying to figure out what each block was balanced on. Finally I could see it, the top of the Tooth. I tried to imagine how the very rock that perched on the top had found itself there. Failing to even remotely answer my question I inched my way up and with relief attached myself a block on the summit. I brought the others up and there we were, after 8 pitches of climbing we had reached the balancing blocks of the summit!

Perhaps we were so consumed by the climbing before, or maybe it was perfect timing but only at the top did we notice, soaring above us, gaunt and ominous but magnificently humbling all the same, were three jet black, Indian Condors. They circled in thermals above us. One swooped so low I could see the white feathered tips at the end of its monstrously spanned wings and its deep-set inky eyes, watching our every move, perhaps hoping for an easy meal.





The 8 pitches were vary varied both in terms of rock quality, grade and style. Initially we climbed quite easy loose alpine style terrain to get onto the face and then once of the face, followed series of traversing crack systems across the face before taking a more direct pitch to reach the final ridge pitch to the summit. The pitches on the slab ranged from about HVS to E2, were loose in places and solid and very pleasant in others.

Blue bird skies and condors watching our every move made it an unforgettable day. Yes, it felt 'out there' being in the middle of nowhere, but with more day light than we knew what to do with, incredible weather and our tent only 200m below us, we had remarkably chilled out, fun day. Not the kind of climbing conditions we had expected to encounter on our Patagonia expedition, but from our experience I'd say usually things don't go the way you expect them to on these sorts of adventures!





The descent from the Tooth was very straightforward, we did two full 60m abs down the N ridge and then scrambled





The following day wasn't great weather as the winds had picked up and so we wanted to use this day to suss out our other initial objective of the east face of the Avenali Tower. So we scrambled down the gully, over the bergschrund and onto the glacier. We could see lots of potential lines and good quality rock on the lower parts of the towers face, however there was a huge crevasse blocking our access to these parts of the tower.

Unsure about how we'd access this wall we returned to our tent and scratched our heads, wondering how we were going to use the good weather and what objective we should go for. We had spotted another mountain across the other side of the valley that we presumed had never been climbed and so made a plan to try that (This mountain can be seen in the photo above, pointy mountain above Freja and Michelle). We dropped down the col on the other side of the tooth and made a new camp on the East of the towers alongside another team from the UK lead by John Crook that had impressively succeeded in their goal to climb the first successful ascent of the South Tower. They welcomed us to their camp and we spent the evening hanging out and drinking some local pisco.





The new objectives from our neighbour's camp on East of towers. We had spotted the thin spire in the middle of the photo above and also wanted to climb the mountain on the right, which we presumed had never been climbed before.



The other team had been climbing on the face of the mountain in the left of the skyline and had got a closer look at the mountains, they suggested climbing the S ridge of the pointy mountain (hard to make out in photo above but seen in the closer photo opposite it is the ridge in right-hand skyline). This seemed like a reasonable idea and so we made a plan to climb this first then attempt a route up to the spire the following day, making use of the two predicted good weather days we had left.

# AONIKENK PEAK

**Route:** Aumkenk Aike, HVS 5b.

**Date:** 14th January 2018.

**Climbers:** Michelle O'Loughlin  
& Sasha Doyle.

**Location:** 46°25'19°S  
72°28'43°W **Altitude :** 1,721m

**Approach:** Approach 2 hours.  
Start from the river and aim for  
the gully between the jagged  
ridge and Aonikenk Peak. Walk  
through dense bush, then  
through a scree field until  
reaching steep grass followed  
by granite slabs leading to the



**Climb:** From half height of the gully navigate slabs, 5.6-5.8 territory for three to four pitches until reaching a steep wall with a splitter crack. Trend upwards and right to avoid the steep wall at about 5.8. Continue through steep ground and an awkward corner ending in a rounded undercut traverse. Crux at 5.9/5.10 Continue trending right-wards towards the South West Ridge. Once the ridge has been gained continue for another 100m navigating through a maze of blocks with some technical moves. 2-3 pitches. Gain summit after around 400m of roped climbing.

**Descent:** Descend via NW ridge. 3 abseils then scramble downwards via ridge to top of gully between the peak and the other jagged ridge summits.



## CLIMBING AONIKENK PEAK

We wanted to climb the mountain via the South ridge, but accessing this was hard due to the steep gully seen in the photo above. After 2 hours of bush-whacking, something we were all too familiar with now, we eventually came up some scrambling ground broken up by grassy ledges and slowly made our way up and rightwards. Once up the scrambling ground we needed to access the gully and cross it to traverse out to the ridge. This wasn't as hard or sketchy as I had imagined, the gully was loose, but you could dodge the looser rocks and just climb up the solid slab underneath, for that reason we left the rope off for this bit. We continued right on the slabs heading towards the ridge until we could scramble no more and needed to pitch, the wall above us had jacked up suddenly and looked pretty imposing, we saw a traversing crack line heading to the ridge so I did a pitch aiming to get us up to the main crack. This pitch was good climbing, moving between two cracks, then we found our traversing crack. It wasn't what we'd hoped for. I lead on up this crack until it started to bulge, the crack was filled with mud and the rock as covered with lichen. It soon became pretty scary so I down climbed what I could and then made a really airy escape out following a precarious undercut rightwards, this got us to easier ground which we could then follow in a few pitches to the ridge. We then swung leads and ascended the ridge towards the summit.

It felt really nice to be finally on the prominent ridge line, ahead looked doable and we were both pretty excited to reach the summit. The climbing was initially easy but there was a few short ledges of technical climbing to overcome and loose areas to navigate around. Michelle did some steep but relatively straightforward climbing to reach below the final gendarme, then I took the first pitch up ledges at first, leading me to a nicely formed but unfortunately lichen abundant crack that felt pretty scary towards the top.



Then Michelle lead us to the highest point we could get on the gendarme, there was a huge featureless block above us, that seemed around E10 to get on top of and impossible to then get down off, so we decided to call that the top for us! There was around four gendarmes on the top of the peak but we felt happy we were on the highest one. We reached the summit, extremely pleased to be on top of our first unclimbed mountain!





We still had a fair amount of daylight but we were feeling slightly nervous, our brains preoccupied by the choss-jenga nightmare we had climbed on top of and now had to somehow get off. Like a child stuck up a tree we stared below us at the huge piles of balancing blocks precariously stacked on top of one another. Delicately we scrambled slowly down and across to reach the West ridge, and then managed to make another abseil onto easier ground, we were out of the choss but care was still needed as the rock was crumbling beneath our feet. Once back in the gully, we carefully retraced our steps back to camp, returning just before dark. We decided to call the peak Aonikenk Peak after the Aonikenk (also know as Tehuelche) indigenous people of Patagonia and the route Aumkenk Aike, meaning 'Travelers Stop' in the indigenous, Mapuche language. We chose these names with the help of a friend from Coyhaquie, Farid Hedalgo, as we felt the valley had no other names giving recognition to the areas pre-Hispanic heritage.





## **ATTEMPT AT CLIMBING THE SPIRE**

The following day we set off in an attempt to climb the spire we had spotted. Being close to Aonikenk Peak we managed to suss out some potential lines the day prior. We thought there was some good crack systems leading towards the spire and so stashed the climbing gear near the bottom of the gully to save us lugging it up the following day. Now knowing the approach, we set off to climb the spire and made good time on the approach. We started scrambling up towards it. The scrambling soon became a lot harder than it looked, being wet and slabby and took a long time. Finally we made it to the steeper rock but on arriving here it was clear the crack systems we'd seen the day before looked a lot steeper and less protected than before. The scrambling had taken us a lot further to the right of the spire than we wanted to be and so in an attempt to slowly pitch across towards it, Freja set off leading our first pitch which felt around E1. The weather was quickly changing and the wind had picked up dramatically in no time at all. Michelle was feeling pretty exhausted and so with all these factors stacked against us we decided to abseil back to the gully and return to camp.

We were slightly disappointed to not have climbed the spire but were content with our achievements. After reviewing the tiny ration of food we had left over we sadly made the decision that we must head back to base camp and make our way out as soon as possible if we were to avoid starvation!

# LOGISTICS

## Transport

Once in Santiago (having flown from London) we took our last flight to Balmaceda where we then hopped on a transfer to Coyhaique, the nearest town. From here we took a bus to just outside Bahia Murta, where a taxi collected us. A couple of days later we hired horses from Joaquin Reyes who brought us 5km into the valley. Throughout the trip we used public and local transport, which we overall found easy to find and it brought us most places we needed to go. Taxis are very cheap which aided us massively.

## Food

The majority of food throughout the trip was supplied by Base Camp Foods, who kindly supported us with endless freeze dried meals which made life a lot easier (and lighter for the walk-in!) Nairn's Oatcakes also supplied us with sufficient amounts of oatcakes and bars for the duration of the trip, which proved vital in terms of snacks. Otherwise, food mainly consisted of peanut butter, chocolate, smash (a British classic, of course) cheese and rice, though by the end of it we were having freeze dried desserts for breakfast...





### Communication

We used an IridiumGo Satellite Phone in the mountains, a device which seemed to have a mind of its own at the best of times. This was linked to our personal phones which allowed access to phone numbers etc.

### Gear

Asides from mounds of climbing gear (2 full sets of cams, 3 sets of nuts) we had two 60m half ropes, crampons, 1 ice axe each, harnesses, jetboil, 5 gas canisters, 1.5 liters of fuel, 1 multi fuel stove, tarpaulin, B3 mountaineering boots, rock climbing shoes, 1 jumar, 1 gri-gri, 1 pulley device, 1 3-man tent amongst other miscellaneous things.



# ACCOUNTS

Income	Amount	Expenditure	Amount
BMC and Alison Chadwick Foundation	£1,700	Flights, Taxis and in country travel	£4,000
Mount Everest and Julie Tulis Award	£2,300	Horses and Exped Support	£400
Austrian Alpine Club	£500	Accommodation	£400
Irish Mountaineering Club	£500	Equipment and Hardware (some supplied by DMM)	£500
Personal Contributions	£1,950	Food prior and after Exped	£400
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>£6,950</b>	Food for Exped	£600
		Insurance	£450
		SAT phone rental	£200
		<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE:</b>	<b>£6,950</b>



# FUTURE POTENTIAL

There is so much potential in the Avellano Valley, it seems there are lots of small residual peaks that remain unclimbed and areas outlying that still remain relatively unexplored. The towers themselves have some line available for sure but the cracks there are often closed seams and so makes the climbing difficult to protect. I would recommend that future teams go with a really open mind about plans and have as much time as possible to suss out the area. The routes we had chosen to climb before arriving turned out to be pretty unappealing loose options once we arrived in the valley. There is definitely potential on the East face of the Avenali tower, this looked like good rock and at the minute there is only one route on this huge wall, the issue here is access as there is a big crevasse running across the glacier, however with a little thought I am sure access to this wall could be gained.



