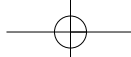


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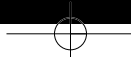
# ALA DAGLAR

## ADVENTURE CLIMBING IN TURKEY

*Most people associate Turkish rock-climbing with sea, sun and safe sport routes. If you head inland to the mountainous regions, however, the climbs become bigger, bolder and wilder. This month Vertical visits the Ala Daglar region in Central Anatolia where several summits reach an altitude of more than 3500m. Until recently the preserve of traditionalists, European climbers (and we're including the locals here) have been active over the past decade exploiting the blank, protectionless walls between the obvious weaknesses. Plenty of bolts have been placed, but in between you'll find long run-outs and bold climbing.*



*The end of the Emli Valley. On the right is the Guzeller and, partly hidden, the west face of Lower Guvercinlik. Photo Rolando Larcher.*



## The history of climbing in the Ala Daglar

*The mountaineering potential of the Ala Daglar was first explored by western Europeans, and in particular climbers from Germany and Austria. In recent years however, Turks have been joining forces with French, Italian and Swiss climbers to open up the incredible potential that the area holds for modern routes. Local activist, Recep Ince, tells the story.*

*By Recep Ince.*

*Original text in English*

Austrian geologist Franz Schaffer was the first surveyor to enter the Ala Daglar mountains proper. Having twice travelled to the region – first in the spring and then the autumn of 1900 – Schaffer succeeded in ascending Alaca Basi during his third trip in 1901. Alaca Basi is an exposed rock summit of some 3200m, on the southern edge of the range. Schaffer, setting off from the village of Yelatan and approaching via the Emli Valley, reached the summit in an easy seven hours. Like his predecessors, Schaffer's purpose was scientific research and not the scaling of mountains and he abandoned any further attempt on the remaining summits.

*After many years, Dr George Künne from the Hohenfinow section of the German Alpine Club and Dr Wilhelm Martin and his wife Marianne from Berlin, went to Ala Daglar in the summer of 1927. Finding a fearless heart and a willing guide*

*in Veli Cavus, a local youth, Dr. Künne, Dr. Martin and his wife accomplished the first ascent of Demirkazik, approaching via the Narpuz Valley. Thus Veli Cavus became the first Turk to set foot upon the highest summit of his home mountain.*

*Following the ascent of the Demirkazik, the two alpinists from Germany, continued to the southern sector of the range.*

*Here they made the first ascent of Kaldi (3734m) via the Avci Veli col and climbed the west face of Kizilkaya Dagı (3725m) via the large scree chute, before heading into the southern Emli Valley. They continued westwards, climbing Alaca-Lorut (3588m), via the Avci Veli col, and the east ridge and then Eznevit (3560m) by the boiler plate slabs on the west face which overlook the alpine meadow of Eznevit. Four of the highest summits in The Ala Daglar had now been conquered.*

*1938 was a turning point in the history of the range. In the course of little over a month, four alpinists from the Klagenfurt section of the German/Austrian Alpine Club – Walter Pleunigg, Siegfried Tritthart,*

*Herman Heide and Josef Pucker – accomplished a series of ascents that is unparalleled in its scope. Establishing a camp inside the Cimbar Valley during the first half of August, the twin summits of Yildiz Basi, Cagalin Basi, Bes Parmak Sivrisi, Koca Sarp and Kucuk Demirkazik were climbed. In 1938 the summits surrounding the intricate south-western valley systems of Emli, Mangirci, Siyirma and Aksam Pinari were still unknown. Kaldi and Lorut-Alaca, the two most prominent summits, had been climbed in 1927, but an abundance of others awaited their first babas (cairns).*

*This time a camp was established in the Siyirma Valley and the party of four made the first ascents of Guzeller via the south face and Sulagan Kaya by the south face/east ridge, as well as the north to south ridge traverse of the Kaldi Sivrilere which involved exposed grade IV climbing. New routes were put up on Kaldi and Lorut-Alaca, the imposing north face of both mountains falling to the concerted efforts of the climbers.*



January 1963 was a turning point in the history of the range with a team entering the mountains for the first time in winter. Besides some summits on the Karasay-Kizilkaya ridge, the most outstanding achievement of the expedition was the first winter ascent of Lorut-Alaca via the Aksam Pinari Valley, Avci Veli col and the east ridge.

In 1971 one of the last unclimbed summits surrendered. The slender rock spire of Parmakkaya in the Aksam Pinari Valley was tackled via the south face by two American climbers (one of them half Turkish) John Waterman and Dennis Mehmet. They climbed to the summit in 8 1/2 hours, the ascent requiring technical grade VI and A1 rock climbing. The third overall and first Turkish ascent of Parmakkaya was recorded in 1988 and was done by Emre Altoparlak and David Smeaton. Emre Altoparlak led all the difficult pitches, including the crux, to gain the summit.

*Second generation climbs: sport and multi-pitch routes.*

In 1994, Denis Conevaux and Pascal Duverney, a couple of French climbers went to the Ala Daglar. The pair opened a few sport and multi-pitch routes in the Cimbar Valley. These were the first bolted routes in Turkey. (In about the same year, new sport routes started to be opened in Ballikayalar near Istanbul.)

On 6 June 1994 the French guys opened a new route on the north-east wall of Parmakkaya. Parmakkaya is a fantastic tower and the pearl of the Aksam Pinari Valley. Turkish climbers found this route almost unbelievable and nobody climbed it again until 1998.



*Above: Walking in to Parmakkaya, past the impressive pillars of Guvercinlik. Photo Rolando Larcher.*

*Opposite: The best way of getting in to the Emli Valley is on the back of a tractor. Photo Rolando Larcher.*

After Parmakkaya, the French opened a new route on the west face of lower Guvercinlik Tower (Tranga) in the Guvercinlik Valley. They then went on to open another route on the east wall of Yeniceri Dagi in the same valley.

In 2004, Swiss climbers Francesco Pellanda and Giovanni Quirici came to the Ala Daglar in March on their way to Pakistan in a van. With Turkish climber, Mumin Karabas, they opened a new route called *Elmaslar içinde* (Diamonds on the Inside) on the Oksar Tepe east wall. After the route, the two Swiss climbers tried to open another route on Lower Guvercinlik Tower. But they didn't manage owing to bad weather and loose rock and only one pitch was put up in the end.

2005 saw another new route on Parmakkaya. *Uç Muz* (*Mezza luna nascente*) is on the Demirkazik east wall. It

was opened by three guys from Italy, Rolando Larcher, Maurizio Oviglia and Michele Paissan. Thanks to these last two routes, grades in Ala Daglar and Turkey have become much harder.

In June 2006, two climbers, Helmut Gargitter and Pauli Trenkwalder, opened a third route on the east wall of Parmakkaya. There are now three multi-pitch routes and one trad route on the Parmakkaya.

In August 2006, two climbers from Italy, Marco Sterni and Mauro Florit, finally opened three nice traditional routes in the Ala Daglar range. After that we realized there were a lot of potential lines just waiting to be touched.

The latest route put up on the Lower Guvercinlik Tower is called *Come to Derwish...* ■

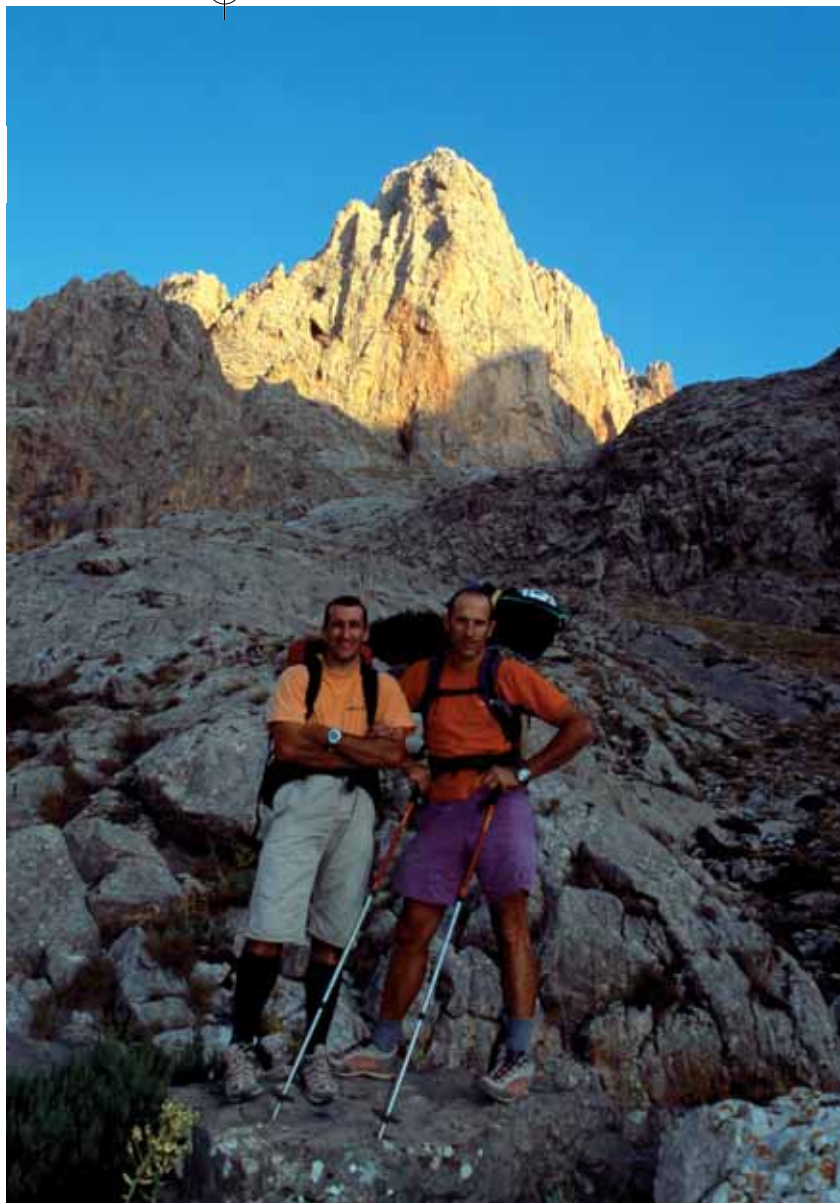
## EUROPE

## A question of ethics

*If you're going to try the impossible, try it free. That was Rolando Larcher and Maurizio Oviglia's attitude when they went to Turkey to try to put up some new 'modern' routes. Climbing in the mountainous regions of Turkey is more about tradition than performance; the walls are big, the rock is not always perfect and bolts are only used sparingly. It all adds up to a lot of fun and adventure.*

*By Maurizio Oviglia*

**M**y first expedition with Rolando was to Morocco in 2003. It was a long, hard learning experience, demanding total dedication. Finally, after 25 days of effort, we left behind a great new route. We have dedicated ourselves to 'modern' new-routing for a few years now. My first 'modern' new route dates back to 1993, whereas Rolando started in 1988. Our technique was a bit hit and miss in the beginning, but with experience we have refined our method. In general, we go for true big walls. But instead of resorting to aid climbing to get to the top at all costs, we always try to free climb them. We place as few bolts as possible but don't go so far as to risk potentially fatal falls. As we deliberately choose cliffs that are overhanging and unprotectable, there are times when we obviously have to use bolts, and we accept this compromise without too much soul-searching. On the other hand, we have set ourselves strict rules for new-routing; we are all too aware that using a drill on a route can lead to the degradation of the mountain and of the sport, to the 'killing of the impossible' as Messner put it. We feel that you have to make the necessary distinctions between different kinds of climbing. We decided that we would never aid climb or use pitons on



*Maurizio Oviglia and Rolando Larcher after making the first ascent of Come the Derwish on the west face of Lower Guvercinlik. Photo Recep Ince.*

sections between bolts, just free climb from one bolt to another. This forces us to follow a route's logical line of ascent and, if we run out of holds, we just have to turn around and abseil back down the route. It is our firm conviction that this guiding principle can justify the (sparing) use of bolts on long face routes. But we know that some people will find this approach difficult to accept, understand and adopt. Rolando's routes have set the benchmark for this kind of climbing across the world. Yet the level of difficulty and the amount of physical and mental preparation required to make free ascents - or simply to get to the top - of them, means that only a small group of elite climbers can appreciate their true value. Nevertheless, history teaches us that what today is the preserve

of the elite might be open to a far wider public tomorrow. In the future our routes might well be appreciated by the many and not just the few. This is perhaps a rather naive hope, but it's what pushes us to continue.

*We had both put up new routes in the Alps and all over Italy, and decided to join forces and broaden our horizons. We are clear about what we are looking for: steep, unclimbed, good quality rock, and mild weather conditions, without which it is impossible to free climb. That is why, unlike the many mountaineers from around the world who head for the Himalayas, Patagonia and Baffin Island, we turned our attentions south, towards the hot African and Middle Eastern countries. In any case we have always*

... it is much more challenging to have whole unclimbed faces of rock at your disposal, rather than a little patch of wall, even if it is on the Grandes Jorasses or the Marmolada.

loved discovering new places, rather than picking out a line from between a dozen others, worried that we'll cross or wreck other routes. It goes without saying that it is much more challenging to have whole unclimbed faces of rock at your disposal, rather than a little patch of wall, even if it is on the Grandes Jorasses or the Marmolada. But this does mean spending time exploring and looking for the right wall. There's always a risk that we won't find anything and we will have wasted our holiday time and money.

*I had heard about some cliffs* in the Ala Daglar range, in Central Anatolia, from a friend who had been ski-touring there. It sounded like it was just what we were looking for: limestone pillars and overhanging walls of rock in an oasis of

non-glaciated mountain terrain that could be climbed on all year round, even in summer. We had very little information when we arrived in Ankara and when we saw the Demirkazik range mountains in the distance, it certainly wasn't like seeing Fitzroy or Cerro Torre for the first time. With no snow on them, the Demirkazik mountains look like a pile of rubble! But in the space of two days, spent combing the valleys on foot, we had changed our minds. Hidden in the folds of the mountains were superb walls of rock, which had earned them the nickname the 'Turkish Dolomites'. Now we understood why.

*During a week at altitude*, we put up and freed a fantastic route on the east face of the chain's highest peak, Demirkazik (3756m). It was a perfect climb, giving 650m of

impeccable limestone with sections up to F8a and exceptional weather from start to finish. What more could we ask for?!

*We were tired but pleased with ourselves*, yet we still hadn't seen the southern part of the massif, through the heart of which the Emli Valley runs. We knew that an incredible pillar of rock called Parmakkaya (finger of rock) rose up out of one of the valley's folds. We had a few days left and decided to see what it was like. Zeynep and Recep, two young Turks we had met at the Demirkazik base camp, took us to it and we repeated the French route with them. It was no walk in the park and gave us a great and really intense day, exceeding all of our expectations. Michele and I could happily have gone home satisfied with what we had achieved but Rolando was completely captivated by this finger of rock. A 250-metre high limestone pillar with only two routes on it. It was incredible, you couldn't find that anywhere, not even in Antarctica! True, but just where did Rolando find the energy to want to put up yet another new route? We tried to reason with him but to no avail. Obviously Rolando's mind was significantly sicker than our own! The result was *Mezza luna nascente*, a hard route on the pillar's east face that we put up over three days. I finished opening the last pitch in a hailstorm. It was the first storm of the holiday. We waited under an overhang for two hours hoping for the rock to dry. This was our last chance to free the route as our plane was leaving the following day. But we were out of luck. At six o'clock in the evening Rolando decided to have a go at it anyway, but I was the only one who knew the moves. I decided to 'guide' him. He did exactly what I told him to do, but it still required his special talent to hold on to the tiny pockets that were full of water, telling himself all the way that it wasn't really 7b... The following day all three of

Maurizio frees the fourth pitch of *Come to Derwish* (7a+) on Lower Guvercinlik. Photo Recep Ince.



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us got on the plane home. We were tired but strangely our bags felt lighter. On closer inspection, we discovered that the crafty Rolando had deliberately left the static ropes with Recep, telling him "we'll be back for them next year, I've spotted a great project".

*His project was the big west face of Tranga, named for its resemblance to the Nameless Tower in the Trango group. The Guvercinlik wall had already been climbed, probably by a French team, but the new-routers had deliberately avoided the large overhanging section on the south-west face. Subsequently the west face remained unclimbed. An attempt by the Swiss climbers Quirici and Pellanda, in 2004, was curtailed by a bad fall on the first pitch, the cold and the slightly dodgy rock. This time there were only two of us, as Michele had had to stay in Italy because of work commitments. Rolly and I felt very small faced with 600 metres of terrifying overhangs. Our friends Marco and Mauro, who had joined us on the trip, were doing some more traditional new-routing, so we were left alone to play in our big, bad playground. It was so hot that we were climbing in T-shirts in the shade at an altitude of 3000m, which is not how it's meant to be. By the time the sun starting hitting the rock at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, it was really difficult to continue climbing. So we agreed that we should only open new ground in the morning and then head back down to the camp. As a result, we would leave our tents at 3am to start climbing at five, and would be finishing the abseils at seven in the evening! I found the whole thing exhausting. The limestone was difficult to read and it was*

**The limestone was difficult to read and it was all extremely hard and loose, even when the grass had been cleared away and I had figured out the moves.**

all extremely hard and loose; even when the grass had been cleared away and I had figured out the moves. The route turned out to be 'only' 7b, so for Rolly it was all just a bit of fun, while for me it was more like a marathon. It did show, however, if a demonstration were necessary, the huge difference between new-routing and merely repeating existing routes.

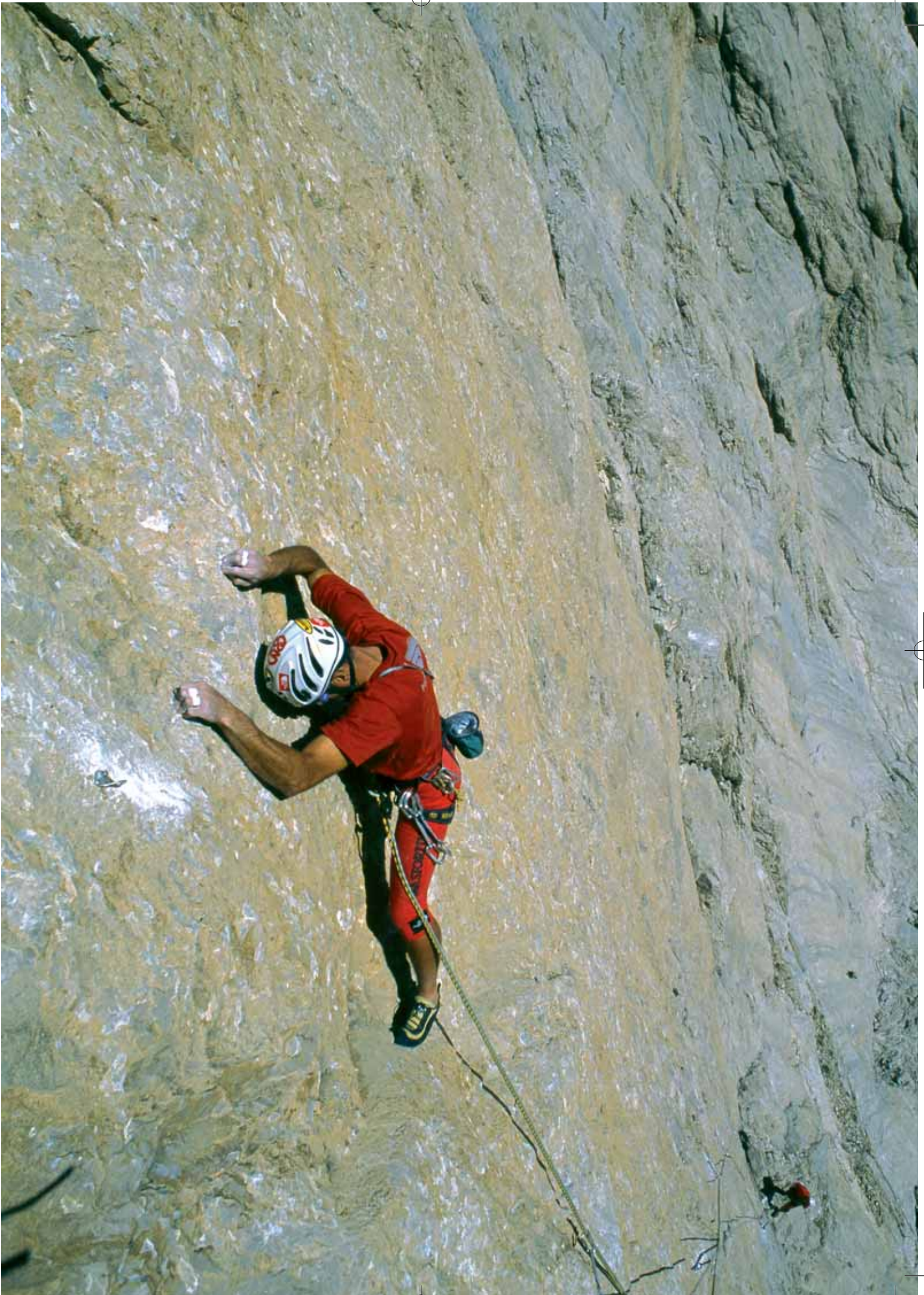
*As I write about my two summers spent in the Ala Daglar, I can still clearly remember those clear mild nights where a giant moon would rise up behind the mountains and light up the smooth sheets of limestone as if it were daytime. I have often thought about those mountains, the cradle of mysterious civilisations, imagining how many of those starry nights must have fascinated those distant ancestors too. Despite the arrival of technology, the modern explanations of the mysteries of the universe and the 5000 years that have gone by since then, I was just like them, hopelessly fascinated by the heavens above me. The fear and fatigue of those new routes are behind us now and our attention has turned to new places to explore. It is a shame that the ropes are still there; forgotten or deliberately left behind at Recep's house, I'm not sure which. We still*

have a stack of other projects and if, for some reason, we decide to turn our backs on big wall climbing, Recep and Zeynep have found a new valley which is several kilometres long and is stuffed full of new crags. They send me emails from time to time, asking me to come back and give them a new route to try. I'm scared that one day I might not be able to resist the temptation... ■

*Right: Parmakkaya is a stunning finger of rock. The French route takes the pillar between light and shade. Photo Rolando Larcher.*

*Opposite: Rolando Larcher free-climbing the difficult fourth pitch (7a+) of Uç Muz on Demirkazik. Photo Michele Paissan.*





## EUROPE

# Diamonds on the inside

*In the heart of the Turkish Dolomites, Giovanni Quirici, Francesco Pellanda and their guide, Mümin, went looking for sun rock but found Alpine weather conditions. Loose holds, snow and illness conspired to thwart their attempts but, when the sun finally dared to show itself, they climbed a new route in a little-known valley.*

*By Giovanni Quirici*

Francesco Pellanda and I left Switzerland on 8 January 2004 with the intention of spending about a year putting up new routes and repeating existing routes, old and new, along the Silk Road to Tibet. And the Ala Daglar massif, more commonly known as the Turkish Dolomites, was one of our objectives. Once there, we abandoned our home from home (a minibus we had specially adapted for our expedition), picked up our backpacks and set off, with our friend Mümin Karabas, to spend eight days in the grey cathedrals of rock that the snow had enveloped in its magic. It was March and it really felt like we were in an alpine climate: it was cold, there was wind and snow, and the sun's warmth was filtered by clouds. After a quick recce, we decided to put up a new line on Tranga, one of the most imposing walls of rock in the massif.

*Francesco led off first.* It was snowing. He struggled to warm his hands so that he could try and climb and place gear. It looked to me like the rock was pretty crumbly. It hadn't been a particularly clever idea to set off on this north face in these conditions after all. All of a sudden a hold broke and Francesco slid down with the drill, the hammer and all the gear. The metal screeched as it scraped on the wall and Francesco's back hit the rock hard. Silence. I asked if he was ok and he gave

## Route

*Name: Elmaslar içinde (Diamonds on the inside)*

*First ascent: Francesco Pellanda, Mümin Karabas, Giovanni Quirici*

*Date: 20-23 March 2004*

*Grade: F7c (6b+ obl.)*

*Aspect: south*

*Approach: The wall is on the left-hand side (south) and can be seen from the base camp for Parmakkaya and Tranga. From here continue up the same valley for about 500m then go left up a rocky slope towards the face.*

*Pitches: P1 55m 5 bolts (F6b), P2 25m easy, P3 50m 5 bolts (F6a+), P4 55m 2 bolts (F6a+), P5 35m 5 bolts (F6b), P6 30m 9 bolts (F7c), P7 45m 9 bolts (F6c+), P8 40m 10 bolts (F7a+).*

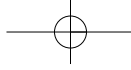
me a sign to lower him down. Luckily he hadn't broken anything. He let me know that the rock was not really that great after all... I got up to where he had fallen and continued for another fifteen or so metres. It was still snowing.

*The following day we stayed in the tent.* Team moral was rather low. We scrutinized the wall with binoculars, trying to find a patch of rock that was less rotten. We spotted a line to the south that had solid rock and was criss-crossed by a logical system of cracks. It looked like a gem, like a diamond. The face burned red that evening and our desire to explore it made us

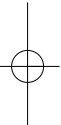
move our camp 200 metres lower down. The following day there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Francesco and Mümin set off for the base of the wall early in the morning while I stayed in the tent with a bug that had given me bad diarrhoea. Alone in this corner of Turkey, we appreciated the sun's gentle caress on our hands and after three days of climbing and descending back to the camp, we reached the top. A new 330-metre route, with some sections of F7c, had been created in a little-known valley. We got back to our truck and loaded up our packs, pleased to have touched this hidden gem, before continuing on our journey to Iran. ■

*In spring you sometimes come across avalanche debris. This is at Adziz Gol at the foot of Demirkazik. Photo Maurizio Oviglia.*





*Rolando Larcher on the fourth pitch of Mezza Lune Nascete (7a+) on Parmakkaya. Photo Michele Paissan.*



## ALA DAGLAR 'à la cool': Emli Valley, Practical information

The Ala Daglar chain lies between the towns of Konya and Kayseri in Central Anatolia. Even though they are not far from the famous tourist destination of Cappadocia, these mountains are not very well known in the West. They have nevertheless been the venue for various exploratory trips over the past few decades and have earned themselves the nickname 'the Turkish Dolomites'. Italian climbers have been organising expeditions to climb the most obvious walls here since 1955 and are among the area's most regular visitors. A small group of French climbers has also been active in the region since the 1990s and has put up a number of new routes, using both bolts and traditional gear. Nevertheless, the Ala Daglar massif is better known to ski-tourers and trekkers than it is to climbers, which explains why most of its visitors come in spring.

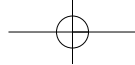
Up until quite recently, alpinists mostly climbed trad style in the massif. With so much rock available only the most obvious lines were climbed, and routes generally followed cracks. Bolts were only ever used on rare occasions. This then was how Turkish mountaineering in the area had developed. Tacitly at least, these mountains (like all of Turkey's mountains) were considered bolt-free zones and this may have contributed to Ala Daglar's reputation as being a dangerous place to climb. Indeed not a year goes by without another fatal accident, sometimes caused by the collapse of a pillar or rock-fall. The arrival in 1993 of a group of strong French climbers shook things up a bit. The first bolted routes in the Cimbar Valley, a gigantic canyon near the village of Demirkazik,

were not looked upon kindly by the traditionalists. The French went even further and put up the first bolted routes on Parmakkaya and Guvercinlik (nicknamed 'Tranga Wall' by the local climbers), peaks that are emblematic of the massif. The route on Parmakkaya, an incredible finger of rock, remained virtually unknown for ten years and is very rarely climbed. The other big route has only been repeated twice. Little by little, however, the French routes gave rise to a sport climbing area in the Cimbar Valley (complete with a hut). It is at 1600m and the Turks mainly visit it in the summer. These days not all the local climbers are strictly trad climbers and most of them like and even encourage new-routing

with bolts. But it is important that foreign visitors respect the local traditions and existing routes, only using bolts when it is strictly necessary and never opening routes on abseil. Before new-routing in an area it's best if you contact the local climbers and involve them in one way or another in the project. Even if the latest campaigns have given rise to many new modern sport routes, there is still a lot of potential in the Ala Daglar mountains. Several cliffs remain totally unexplored and numerous blank-looking lines are yet to be climbed. And seeing as there is always good weather in the summer, it looks likely that Ala Daglar will become, in future years, a popular destination for climbers seeking adventure!

Party time! Celebrating the first ascent of Uç Muz. Photo Maurizio Oviglia.





## Logistics

The easiest way to get to the range is from the north. The pleasant villages of Demirkazik and Cukurbag sit at the foot of the mountains. They could easily serve as a base camp for various activities in the massif and the chain's south side is still pretty remote and the logistics much more complicated to organize. Not far from the villages is the entrance to the Cimbar Valley. Here there are sport climbs, single-pitch routes and long multi-pitch routes, most of which were put up by French climbers in the 1990s. The canyons, of which there are three, sit at an altitude of between 1600m and 1900m and the rock walls can be up to 250 metres high. For those who prefer mountaineering in the heart of the massif, you should set off from Demirkazik on foot, cross the canyons and walk up the length of the Cimbar Valley. You can set up a camp at the head of the valley. With mules or a 4x4 - both can be hired in the village - you can save an hour on the journey time.

The Emlı valley is farther south and can be accessed from the village of Cukurbag via a track about ten kilometres long. Cars cannot always get to the end of the track and so it is a good idea to hire a 4x4 or tractor. On the way you cross the Kazılık Valley, a canyon

composed of conglomerate and limestone and which has huge potential. For the time being there are around 40 single-pitch climbs up to 8a+. For any advice on accommodation and new-routing possibilities, contact local climber Recep Ince at: [incerecep@yahoo.com](mailto:incerecep@yahoo.com).

## Best period

The best time to climb in the mountains is between May and October and the weather is often stable and dry in July and August. At high altitude there are big temperature fluctuations but you will always be climbing in just a T-shirt when in the sun and it is often best to seek out the shade. On the other hand, during the other months there can be violent and sporadic storms. You can expect snow in the spring and the mountains fill with springs and lakes, which start to dry out again in July. As this is a karstic (underground drainage) zone you

won't necessarily always be able to find water in August and September, so you should prepare accordingly. The Ala Daglar region doesn't have any particular dangers as such. If there are wolves we didn't see any, only a great number of hares, which leads us to think that the local wolves are not very active! You often bump into local shepherds or nomads and in general they are very friendly.

## How to get there

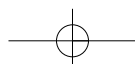
Your best bet is to fly to one of the big cities near the massif, such as Ankara, Konya or Adana. Get a bus to the small town of Nigde and from there take a taxi to Demirkazik or Cukurbag. You can go shopping in the neighbouring village of Camardi. You can't hire cars in these villages, and vehicle rental in Nigde is not easy and is not recommended by the locals.



Left: Big route, big lunch.



Right: The Ala Daglar mountains seen from the road to the Cappadoce. Photo Maurizio Oviglia.





Top: The Cimbar Valley where there is still plenty of new route potential. Photo Maurizio Oviglia.

Bottom: Opening a new route ground-up on Parmakkaya. Photo Maurizio Oviglia.

### Approach

Having left the villages, and upon entering the Emli Valley, you pass a first narrow section. Immediately after this is a clearing where there is often a camp set up by Sobek Travel for its trekkers. You can leave the car here, in a place called Sarimemedin (c.1800m). Continue along the road. It should take about an hour to get to the end of it where there is a clearing (ideal spot for a camp). A path heads off right and continues up the valley. Beyond some fir trees there is a vast plateau. The small Parmakkaya valley opens out on your right and there is an obvious path leading towards it. It should take you about two hours to get here from the end of the road.

To get to the Guvercinlik Valley (the large Lower Guvercinlik wall can be seen from the plain), stay in the plain then climb up the steep ground on the right to the base of the wall (two hours from the end of the road). It takes about another half an hour's walk to get to the other – higher – walls. The Diamant wall is on the south face, opposite Guvercinlik and you have to cross a rocky platform to get to it (two hours from the end of the road).

### Guidebooks and maps

– *Ala Dag – Climbs and Treks in Turkey's Crimson Mountains*, O.B. Tuzel, Cicerone  
A complete guide to the area's trad climbs, in Turkish and English.

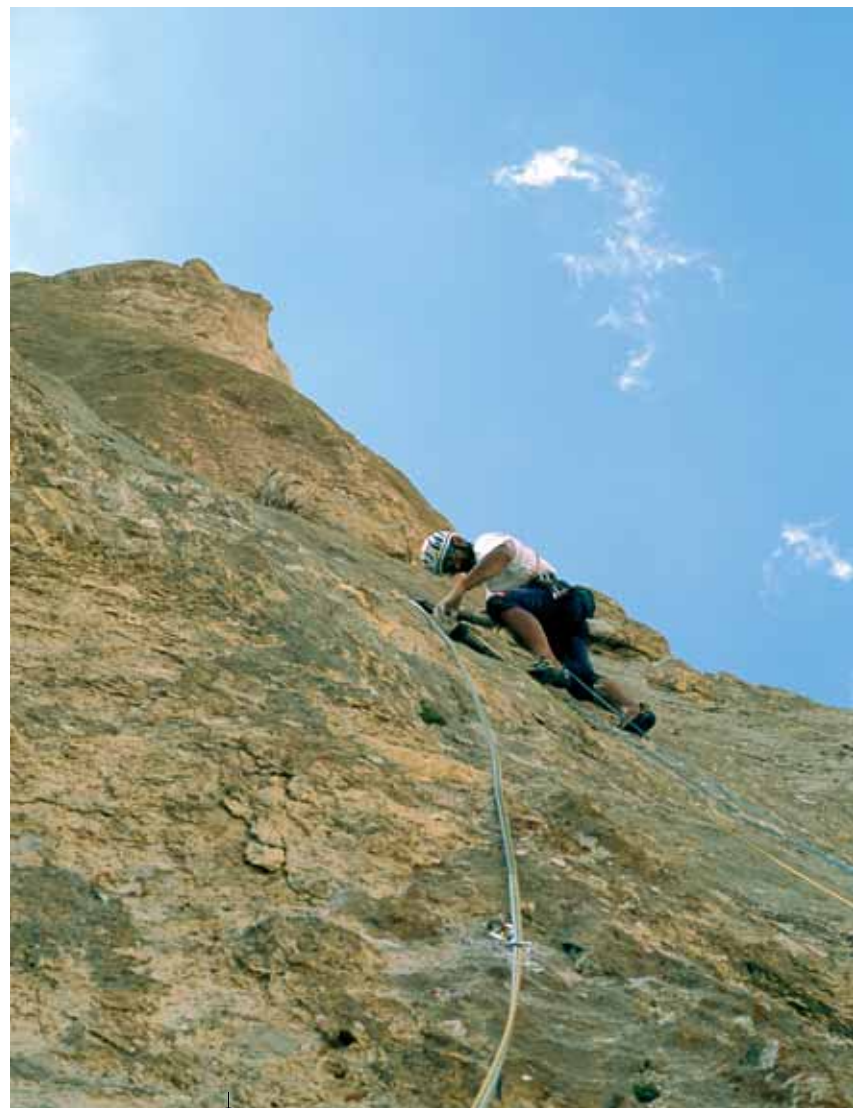
– *Turkiye Kaya Tirmanis Rotalari*, Dogan Palut and Ozturk Kayikci  
A guide to Turkish sport climbs, 2003, only available in Turkish.

– *Aladaglar da 50 Rota*, Tunc Findik  
A selection of the best climbs in the area, 2004, only available in Turkish.

– *Aladaglar*, Geven. Map

– *UP 2005, UP 2006*, Versante Sud, Italy  
Directory of topos for modern routes in the Cimbar Valley and the massif.

– *Rock Climbing Atlas*, Greece and the Middle East, Nederlands 2006  
General information about climbing in the Ala Daglar mountains.



# ALA DAGLAR

## 'à la cool':

### Emli Valley

### Routes and topos

Text and photos by Maurizio Oviglia

UPPER GUVERCINLIK, 3183m, west face

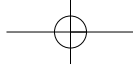
*Remembering 1955*  
 M. Florit and M. Sterni, 8 August 2006  
 600m – VI+ max.  
 Nice climbing on good rock.  
 The belays are equipped.



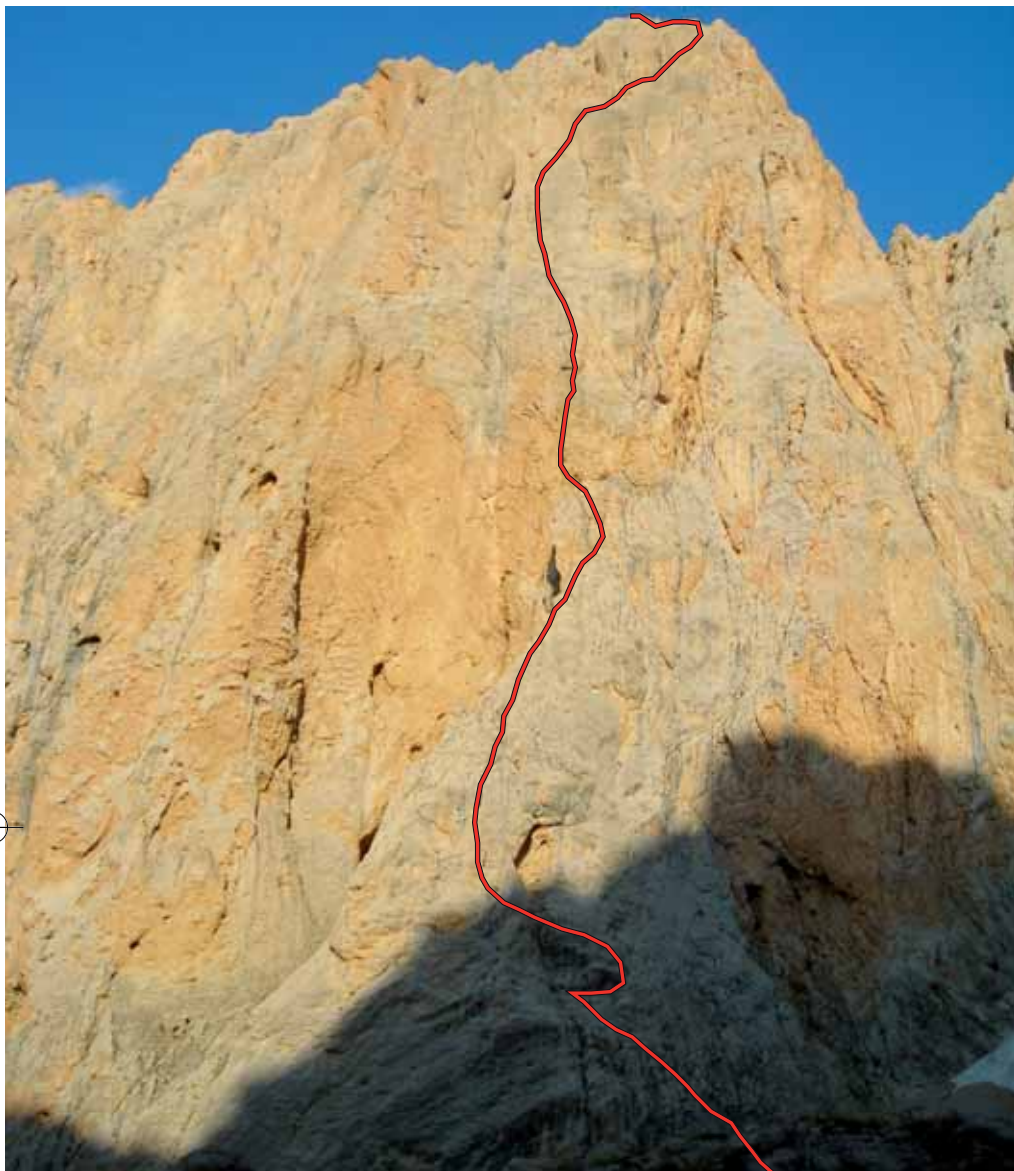
YENICERI, 3073m, east face

*1. Ocio Mull!*  
 M. Florit and M. Sterni, 3 August 2006  
 200m – VI+ max.  
 Nice climbing on good rock, difficult to protect.  
 There are a few in-situ pitons.

*2. Pistache ta mère a des moustaches*  
 P. Duverney and Parchet, 7 June 1996  
 200m – F6b max  
 Nice slab climbing on good rock, bolted.  
 P1 (4c), P2 (5b), P3 (6b), P4 (6a), P5 (6a+)



## EUROPE



## PARMAKKAYA 2800m

## 1. Normal route

Ilik Tirmanis, J. Waterman and D. Mehmet, 21 June 1971.

130m, F6a max (unavoidable F5c) – several in-situ pitons, take nuts and cams. Relatively short but very committing and strenuous. Has been given VI for a long time and is good F6a country (at least). The abseil descent down the modern routes on the east face is hard work.

## 2. Orient

H. Gargitter and P. Trenkwalder, June 2006.

230m, F7b max (unavoidable F7a) – entirely bolted but still runout.

Exposed and committing climbing. The last pitch is still being worked on.

P1 (7a), P2 (6c), P3 (6c+), P4 (7b), P5 (6b+), P6 same as for *Mezza luna nascente*.

3. *Mezza luna nascente*

R. Larcher, M. Oviglia and M. Paissan, 27/29 July 2005.

270m, F7c max (unavoidable F7a+) – entirely bolted but runout.

Committing climbing on vertical walls. Second ascent in 2006 by Dogan Palut and Recep Ince. P1 (6c+, 55m), P2 (7a, 60m), P3 (7c), P4 (7a+), P5 (6b), P6 (7b), P7 arête.

4. *Goldfinger*

F. Tirmanicilar, Denis Conevaux and P. Duverney, 1 and 7 June 1994.

275m F7a max (unavoidable F6c) – entirely bolted but with a few committing sections, take some cams.

Varied climbing with some nice long pitches and a crux at the top of the route.

Fewer than 5 repeat ascents.

P1 (6b), P2 (6c), P3 (6c+), P4 (6c+), P5 (6c), P6

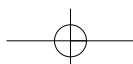
## MIDDLE GUVERCINLIK, 3145m, west face

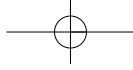
*Italian Classic*

M. Florit and M. Sterni, 4/5 August 2006

600m – VI+ max.

A great climb, which, according to the first ascensionists, deserves to become a classic. One hand-placed bolt at the belay. In-situ pitons. Abseil descent. In all probability, the summit had not been climbed before this route was put up.





### LE DIAMANT, south face

#### *Elmaslar İçinde*

F. Pellanda, M. Karabas and G. Quirici, 20-23 March 2004  
330m - 7c (6b+ obl.)

Magnificent diamond-shaped limestone shield.

P1 55m 5 bolts (6b), P2 25m easy, P3 50m 5 bolts (6a+), P4 55m 2 bolts (6a+), P5 35m 5 bolts (6b), P6 30m 9 bolts (7c), P7 45m 9 bolts (6c+), P8 40m 10 bolts (7a+).



### LOWER GUVERCINLIK (TRANGA TOWER), 3000m, west face

#### 1. Come to Derwish

R. Larcher and M. Oviglia, with help from R. Ince,  
3/5/7 August 2006 – first free ascent on 10 August 2006  
600m – F7b max (unavoidable F7a).

This route follows a logical line at the end of the tower's impressive west face. The first two thirds give committing and sustained climbing. Sixty-five bolts in place, plus the belays. Take slings to use as thread runners. Small cams might come in handy, although they weren't used on the first ascent. There are some committing, unavoidable sections of free climbing.

P1 (6c+), P2 (7a+), P3 (7a+), P4 (7a+), P5 (7b), P6 (7a), P7 (6c), P8 (7a+, 55m), P9 (5c, 60m), P10 (6a+, 60m), P11 (5b, 60m), P12 (III+).

#### 2. Papy Mazout

D. Condevaux, P. Duverney and F. Parchet, 26 May 1996. 450 m, VIII  
Equipped with fifty 8mm bolts, take a set of cams. You can avoid the first two pitches by going right.  
UIAA grades P1 (IV+), P2 no bolts (V-), P3 (VIII), P4 (VI+), P5 (VII), P6 (VII-, 60m), P7 (VII-), P8 (VI), P9 (V).

