YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

El Capitan

May 2011
A new generation of superclimbers is pushing the limits in Yosemite.


By Mark Jenkins
Photographs by Jimmy Chin

With no rope to save him, Dean Potter scales a route on Glacier Point called Heaven.
The distance between El Capitan and Half Dome summits is 5.8 miles (9.3 kilometers).
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Scaling El Capitan

We granite and marble formation is an ideal test for rock climbers. The 3000-foot El Capitan, "El Cap," is where climbers and rock enthusiasts gather to "teach" the mountain how to climb. The granite-and-marble jointing produces unique climbing opportunities in the granite-walled walls. On a peak-wider-than-a-city, climbers can climb El Cap on the most difficult routes, the Nose.

El Cap Milestones

- 1980: First ascent, "The Nose"
- 1983: "Free Solo" ascent
- 1984: "Free Solo" ascent, "The Nose"
- 1986: "Free Solo" ascent, "The Nose"
- 1988: "Free Solo" ascent, "The Nose"
- 1990: "Free Solo" ascent, "The Nose"
- 1992: "Free Solo" ascent, "The Nose"
- 1994: "Free Solo" ascent, "The Nose"
- 1996: "Free Solo" ascent, "The Nose"

Climbing Styles

- Free Solo: Climbing without protective gear
- Free Climbing: Climbing without lanyards or ropes
- Traditional Climbing: Climbing with traditional rock climbing gear

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Glossary

- Belaying: Attaching a rope to a fixed point
- Rappelling: Descending a cliff
- Chalking: Applying chalk to hands
- Knot: A method of joining two pieces of rope

Reference:

El Capitan

El Capitan's 3,000-foot height makes it one of the tallest cliffs in the world. It is a popular destination for climbers and has seen many historic first ascents. The image shows a detailed map of the routes and climbing styles available on El Capitan.

CLIMBING STYLES
- Free Climbing: Climbing without the use of ropes or belays
- Mapped: Climbing at night
- Rappel: Climbing with the use of ropes and belays
- Free Solo: Climbing without the use of ropes or belays

EL CAP MILESTONES
- 1960: The first ascent of El Capitan was made by Tom Frost and tonic Payne.
- 1970: The first free ascent of El Capitan was made by John Long and Don climber.
- 1980: The first free ascent of El Capitan was made by Steve House and Chuck Hull.
- 1990: The first free ascent of El Capitan was made by Hans Florine and Chuck Hull.
El Capitan

REACHING THE WALL

El Capitan’s 3200 vertical feet of granite have made Yosemite an international climbing ground for climbers for decades. Climbers spend months—even years—plotting new routes up rocks in the wall to the summit. On a peak-season day 60 climbers may dot El Cap, many on the most famous route, the Nose.

EL CAP MILESTONES

The Nose route was first climbed in 1964, but the test to be tackled it 1970. Over


Utilizing an internal monologue to avoid conserve the climb.


El Cap milestone 1964:
• First ascent of the Nose route


El Cap milestone 1965:
• First ascent of the Three Sisters


El Cap milestone 1966:
• First ascent of the Dawn Wall


El Cap milestone 1965:
• First ascent of the Nose route


Utilizing an internal monologue to avoid conserve the climb.
1958
First major ascent: Warren Harding and team climb the Nose in 47 days over a 17-month period.
EL CAPITAN
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