

# CRAZY MUSHROOMS RIDGE

190m HVS 5b

5) 47m (-) Scrambling to the top.

4) 35m (4c) Step down 3m, then climb the yellow wall straight up to a curving crack. Follow this, and some more cracks above to an easier finish to a large terrace.

3) 35m (4c) Climb up the left side of the arête, then continue up the superb ridge to the summit of a tower.

2) 25m (5b) The magnificent overhanging orange arête is no place to hang around, but not obvious enough to power through. Climb cracks up leftwards, then pull up right onto a short wall. This leads to a spike below steeper ground. Move right here, making awkward moves (5a) to enter a slim groove, with easier climbing above to a stance out left on the arête. A variation (5b) continues straight up from the spike and probably warrants E1.

1) 28m (-) Climb a small slab leading up right to the ridge, which is followed to a good terrace with a big block.

**Belay 4**  
End of difficulties

4c

4c

**Belay 3**  
Prominent tower

4c

**Belay 2**  
Stance near arête

E1 5b (var)

5a

5b

**Belay 1**  
Block on terrace

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**Crazy Mushrooms Ridge HVS 5b**

190m. First climbed by Alberto Rampini and Silvia Mazzani in October 2011, the left side of the daunting pillar gives a scintillating climb on perfect rock. An easy approach, simple descent, and enjoyable climbing, have helped this route to already achieve classic status, though arguments about the grade and quality continue to rumble. If you're after a route of sustained difficulty then this route may not be for you – the crux crack on pitch 2 is short and out of character with the rest of the climb, though it's a shame to let this put you off. The route starts easily up some poor-quality slabs to a block belay, where palms inevitably start to sweat. The overhanging arête above is notoriously furnished with big holds, though they never seem quite as big as you'd like, and the cracked wall above can't come soon enough. Here an exposed spike – used as a belay by the first ascent team – provides pause for thought. Surely you're over the worst of it now? Many continue straight up here (some by accident, cursing the HVS grade), whilst others make a crafty traverse right to a slim groove, which is only marginally easier. Relief soon arrives in the form of a tiny stance on the arête.

Above this things get much easier, and a shady chasm behind the tower even provides a welcome break from the midday sun: an ideal vantage point from which to watch the leader tackle the prominent curving crack above. If he's brave at this point (which of course he will be), he'll continue direct onto the crazy mushrooms for a steep, if rather artificial, end to a fine route.

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# SCIMITAR RIDGE

265m VS 4c

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## Scimitar Ridge VS 5a

265m. Looking up at the huge, curving central buttress of Safinah you'd be forgiven for thinking that there's no way up it at such a modest grade as Very Severe. The blank upper section strikes fear into many a leader, though as ever the quartzite will reward a confident approach.

Lower pitches are dismissed with ease, apart from a bouldery hand-traverse on pitch three that we won't mention. Confidence builds with height, and thoughts of that blank section fade with every move. By the time you reach the awful-looking overhang on pitch six you attack it with confidence, no doubt helped by the security of good runners. A high rock-up to the left gains a technical slab above, which is overcome with welcome ease and smugness. The belayer is no doubt suitably impressed, trying hard not to show their trepidation at having to follow.

The chimney above succumbs easily, and the blank section soon arrives. Having made such light work of the crux roof, the evident lack of protection on this 4c wall will surely be considered unimportant? Escapes to the left flit into view, but are soon dismissed. Sweaty palms – the result of the Moroccan sunshine, one presumes – make the whole thing feel rather insecure, but thankfully good holds arrive and success is assured.

10) 30m (-) Move left and climb some loose ground to the summit.

9) 30m (4c) The compact wall and blunt arete provide a superbly positioned pitch, finishing on a narrow ledge.

8) 15m (-) Follow a rightwards trending ramp then move back left to a sloping ledge by a huge perched block.

7) 20m (4a) A narrow chimney on the right is followed to a steep finish leftwards past blocks.

6) 30m (5a) Climb up to the overhang and tackle it direct with excellent holds and protection. The slab above is more technical, but easier than it looks.

5) 20m (4a) The ridge steepens to another good ledge below an impending overhang.

4) 40m (-) Easy climbing up the ridge to belay by another bush.

3) 30m (4a) Climb the left side of a steep wall to gain a rightwards hand traverse back to the crest which is followed easily to a belay by a bush.

2) 25m (-) Go up to a chockstone behind a pinnacle and make a high step to regain the ridge crest.

1) 25m (-) Start steeply from the lowest point of the buttress just left of the steep gully. Follow the crest of the ridge to a block belay.

Belay 9  
Narrow ledge

Belay 8  
Huge perched block

Belay 7  
Ledge below ramp

Belay 6  
Ledge below narrow chimney

Belay 5  
Good ledge

Belay 4  
Bush

Belay 3  
Bush

Belay 2  
Bushy ledge

Belay 1  
Pinnacle



# WILD COUNTRY

145m *Very Difficult*

6) 30m Easy scrambling, with big holds, good rock, and lots of exposure.

**Belay 5**  
Airy stance on left

5) 30m **The Black Groove Pitch** – first class climbing up the slanting groove system above the steep orange wall, with perfect protection and superb exposure. Interest is maintained throughout, until a distinct crux marks the end of the difficulties at 25m. From here an easy ramp leads 5m left to a stance.

**Belay 4**  
Bush in left-slanting groove

4) 10m Go rightwards up a cracked wall to belay by a bush in a left-slanting groove system.

**Belay 3**  
Large ledge beneath steep orange wall

3) 20m The wall above offers a number of possible lines, though some are rather bold. Options to the left are generally easier and better protected. Boulder-belay on a large ledge below and right of the steep orange wall.

**Belay 2**  
Ledge with bush

2) 20m Move back left onto the brown rock and climb straight up to a ledge with a bush.

**Belay 1**  
Ledge beneath pinkish-brown rock

1) 35m Start just right of a tree in a small bay on the right side of the face. Climb easily up white rocks, with one tricky move off a ledge, until the angle steepens and the rock takes on a pinkish brown hue. Step right to a good ledge.

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Wild Country **Very Difficult**



145m. Adrar Asmit (the *mountain of the wind*) lies hidden above and beyond the other Amzkhssan peaks; it's elevated location affording splendid views to the north and east on a clear day. It is a superb peak, and for climbers seeking low-grade mountain routes it is probably the best crag in the Anti-Atlas. Of the many routes which crisscross the northwest face, *Wild Country* is probably the most classic, though all are worthwhile.

The route starts up some white rock in a small bay, following the line of least resistance up the right-hand side of the northwest face. Large, comfortable belay stances give plenty of room to relax and enjoy the views, which are well-worth taking time for.

Eventually, about half way up the face, a very bold third pitch leads to the central terrace, where a steep orange wall blocks progress. A tempting crack above then affords passage to the start of the Black Groove, and it is here that the route really makes its mark. The Black Groove, whilst technically easy, offers the kind of exposure not normally associated with climbs of this grade, and from here the only way is up.

At the top of the groove, a ramp leads left to a small stance. By now you've forgotten about the huge ledges that you enjoyed lower down. Is this really V.Diff? The mind plays tricks in places of such exposure. Your second, having done their best to look cool, calm and collected up the Black Groove, now has a dilemma: unsure whether to lead the final pitch, they also don't particularly like the look of the stance; or your belay. Either way, an elated top out on the airy summit is not far away, and those mountain V.Diffs in North Wales will never be the same again...



# PINK LADY

230m VS 4c

9) 45m (4b) Climb up to the right of a right-facing undercut corner to gain a fascinating hand-traverse left under the roof. This leads to another unlikely move, pulling steeply through the overhang at a weakness into a right-trending groove and easier finish.

8) 15m (-) Scramble up an easy groove to belay below the left end of the arching overhang.

7) 30m (4b) Bridge up the black chimney, exiting left at the top. Finish straight up steep ground on good holds to a large ledge system (the *Lunchtime Ledge*).

6) 25m (4c) A superb rising traverse left, up the obvious groove, leads to the arête. Step back right and go up a short groove to a dead-end at the overhang. Unlikely moves rightwards hopefully reveal a hidden jug above the overhang, which facilitates an airy swarm onto a sloping ledge (The *Snoggers' Perch*)

5) 25m (4a) Good climbing, trending slightly right to a belay beneath a black wall.

4) 25m (-) Continue up the easy groove above the ledge, then trend up right to a stance below the steep pillar.

3) 20m (4c) Excellent technical climbing up the chimney leads to a large ledge (The *Partytime Belay*).

2) 20m (4a) Follow pleasant slabs to a poor stance at the foot of the chimney groove.

1) 30m (-) Easy climbing up a short groove, then make an airy step left and climb an easy slab to a narrow grassy ledge.

## Belay 8

Below left end of arch

## Belay 7 –

### Lunchtime Ledge

Large vegetated platform

## Belay 6 –

### Snoggers' Perch

Sloping ledge below black chimney

## Belay 5 –

### Black Wall Belay

Niche below black wall

## Belay 4

Stance beneath steep pillar

## Belay 3 – Partytime

Large ledges

## Belay 2

Stance at foot of groove

## Belay 1

Narrow grassy ledge

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## Pink Lady VS 4c

230m. The Grand Wall of Lower Eagle Crag is one of the most impressive pieces of rock in the range, particularly in the afternoons when it is a fine sight in the setting sun. Pink Lady, first climbed by Pete Johnson and Lun Roberts in April 2008, finds a surprisingly amenable way up the pillar which separates the slabby ground to the left from the much steeper (and more mossy) wall to the right. It is justifiably one of the most popular climbs in the Anti-Atlas.

The route starts up a short groove, from where and airy step left gains the start of a series of sweeping slabs. A myriad of off-route variations tempt the unwary, but it is the ominous chimney groove above that provides the first real test, when holds and protection seem to run out just before you reach the comfortable Partytime Belay. Easy climbing above this gains a pillar, where the exposure starts to grow.

Eventually, a tempting flake crack leads up leftwards towards the arête: too much to resist, despite the obvious fact that it leads to a dead end. Or does it? Nervous leaders pause and look down at this point (a bad idea), finding little comfort. The fact that they're not still there, however, means that at some point they must have found the hidden jug up to the right, above the roof. With quivering legs and shaking nerves, a swarm rightwards gains the Snoggers' Perch.

If the last pitch stopped you in your tracks then it's unlikely that you'll have long to enjoy the perch, as the Black Chimney beckons and you'll no doubt want to make it to Lunchtime Ledge in time for lunch? Thankfully the chimney is easier than it looks, though harder variations are available out to the left. A prominent tree then marks the arrival at Lunchtime Ledge, where success suddenly seems imminent. All that remains is the final, arching overhang, which is overcome athletically with the kind of high-foot manoeuvre that you never thought you'd find yourself doing 600 feet above the ground...

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