



SICHUAN, CHINA

FOUR GIRLS MOUNTAIN

RASTAFARICE

The Last Great Challenge, according to Greg Child: if you're on top of a Himalayan mountain, and you look out at the infinite tapestry of summits around you, imagine they'll all be climbed one day.

So, new games have to be invented. With new rules. The last problem, renewed without end. Head to the other end of the planet. Search the hidden recesses of lost valleys. Hunt down the Last Great Challenge. A forty meter overhanging route with a two-and-a-half meter dyno and a horizontal roof of equal length. Clean granite - no cheating possible. A final hanging sheet overcome with a wide stem. The icing on the cake: 250 meters of ice.

If you have any time left, there are dozens of reasonable 500 meter frozen waterfalls. And less reasonable, thousand meter big walls. Lost summits between 5000 and 6000 meters, including the superb Abbi Mountain ("old lady") at the end of the valley, offering magnificent mixed climbing. But watch out: The Last Great Challenge may be close to home.

KEY INFORMATION:

STARTING POINT: Chengdu. Four Girls Mountain is a day's bus ride northwest of Chengdu ; it neighbors the Siguniang Mountains. The route is on the right side of the valley on the east face. Approached by foot in half-an-hour from the road !

DIFFICULTY: M-hard, or JMB ("J'ai-Mal-aux-Bras"). The final section is 120 m of grade 6 ice

VERTICAL GAIN: 300 m total. The key starting pitch is 40 m.

The waterfall finishes at around 4000 m; the summit is around 5600 m.

SEASON: January

TIME REQUIRED: a full day to link it up

EQUIPMENT: a few bolts on the first pitch

FIRST ASCENT: Stéphane Husson (P1), with François Damilano, Monica Dalmaso, Craig Luebben, Guy Lacelle and Kai Zhao.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Go there and find out !