

## PERUVIAN ANDES ADVENTURES

### ARTESONRAJU CLIMB 6025m (19767 ft)

Grade: D+ to TD/ Technical

#### Routes:

The two routes to climb Artesonraju are;

- \*Via the Paron Valley South East Ridge 5 days (option for 6 with a reserve day)
- \*Via Santa Cruz Valley North East Ridge 6 days (option for 7 with a reserve day)

Conditions on Artesonraju are often difficult and unstable. Generally each year the route on one of the faces proves to be dangerous with high avalanche risk and climbing is only attempted from the alternative route. The decision as to which route is in safest condition to climb often cannot be made until just weeks before or even days before the climb. When planning your trip you should allow extra days in the event that the climbing is moved to the longer North East route for safety.



*Artesonraju*

The climbing is steep and technical with several hours of continual front pointing and using two technical ice axes on steep slopes averaging 55 to 65 deg and up to 80 deg. mixed hard ice and soft snow.

Climbers need to be experienced on steep ice, and comfortable with using ice screws, snow stakes, anchor systems and descent by rappel. The Artesonraju climb is **NOT** suitable for beginner climbers.

**Note 1: Acclimatisation:** You do need to be very well acclimatised to the altitude to climb Artesonraju. You are sleeping & climbing above 5000m and this is very demanding and tiring for the body. Without sufficient acclimatisation the chances of becoming ill on the mountain are high, or you may experience a complete loss of energy and be unable to continue with the climb.

We always recommend that our Artesonraju clients take a 4 to 6 day trek minimum for acclimatisation followed by another climb of 2 to 4 days on a 5000m peak for additional acclimatisation and strength before the demanding Artesonraju climb.

**Note 2:** The routes used and the conditions on all the peaks are changing each year and even each month. The descriptions we have given are general only, and the routes used, conditions on the mountain or description of the routes may change considerably on the day we are climbing. It can be the case that during the course of the season, the large accumulations of snow disappear and more crevasses can open or existing crevasses become larger. Alternatively, the route can become easier to negotiate.

It is possible that if there is significant movement on the glaciers that the conditions for climbing could be more difficult and technical than described here. Conditions on all the mountains are changing rapidly due to global warming and glacier recession and descriptions of routes that you may find in some guide books can be out dated within 12 months.

Artesonraju is subject to avalanche.

If at the time of your climbing expedition, information received from previous groups indicates unstable or difficult conditions, we may recommend an alternative climb.

**The ultimate decision about whether a route is safe to climb, or whether an alternative route must be found, or at worst that it is not safe to continue, will be made by the Peruvian Andes Adventures guide.**



**Note 3:**

The guide in charge of your climb will be one of our local experienced & professional UIAGM International Mountain Guides.

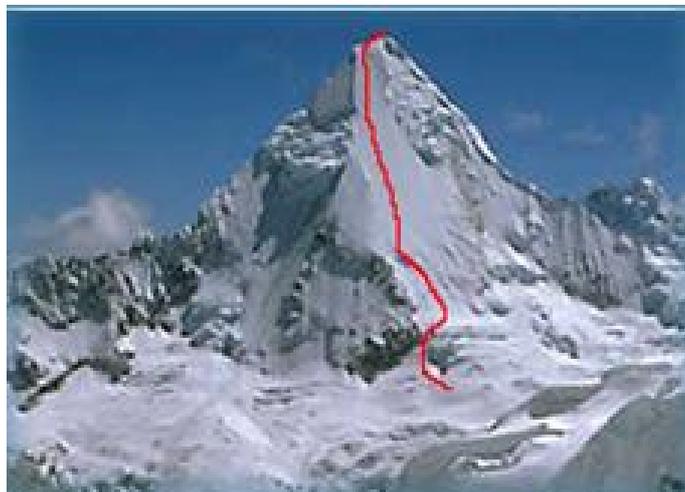
**Southeast Face from Paron Valley**

Timing: 5 days (option for 6 days with reserve day)

The Southeast Face of Artesonraju will test the climber's stamina and technical ability. It is extremely high quality technical climbing. The summit marks the true halfway point of this climb, as the descent involves down climbing and rappelling to retrace our steps. It is a long day, a demanding but rewarding climb.

The route crosses the Southeast face starting from Laguna Paron. This demands good ice climbing technique, as it is about 50 degrees steep for well over 600 vertical metres.

The summit ridge of Artesonraju is well known for its fragility and special care must be taken: there is an unusually high chance of avalanches at the start of the climbing season.



### **Day 1: Drive Huaraz to Laguna Paron & Hike to Artesonraju Base Camp**

We drive from Huaraz to Caraz and then on to Laguna Paron (3½ to 4 hours). As the road enters the valley, we see an abundance of quenual trees on the slopes of unexplored rock walls. At the end of the road, there is an Electro Peru office located across from the Lake Paron. Once we arrive here we start the hike to Base Camp, carrying loads in our backpacks with the help of the porters. We walk through a dusty path going along the left side of Lake Paron. We have incredible views of the Garcilaso Pyramid 5885m, the absolutely enormous west wall of Chacararaju 6112m, the impressive north plate of Huandoy Norte 6395m and the two peaks of Pisco Mountains. We continue until we reach an open valley at the end of the lake at Base Camp 4200m. 2 hours hike.

### **Day 2: Base Camp to Moraine Camp or High Camp**

We climb up on a prominent moraine ridge and then pass by the Artesonraju Lake, on a path that rises continuously until it gets to some frozen cascades. At the upper part of it we can see a serac barrier and the last part we walk along a sandy trail until we get to the first moraine camp at 4900m. 2 hours. There is a choice of camps either here on the moraine just below the glacier or we continue on to a second camp by crossing the moraine until we get to the glacial area. From here, we can see the Artesonraju southeastern slope, Garcilaso Pyramid to the south and Paron Mountains in the distance.



*Moraine Camp beneath Artesonraju*

We go up the glacier leaving the area filled with séracs behind and rock on the southwest wall. We then ascend towards the southeast face crossing and avoiding some crevasses. We set up high camp (5100m) a short distance away from the bergshroud and get ready to leave for the summit the next morning. 2 hours further on from the first camp.

### **Day 3: Climb to the Summit & Return to High Camp**

We leave camp early (at midnight), the climb to the bergshroud will take us along an unavoidable slope, on which crevasses tend to complicate our climbing progress. This is a common obstacle; it is

usually overcome by going up to the left side, taking a rocky massif located at the base of the great wall as a point of reference. There are small vertical ice bergshrund and settle on the large southeast wall.



The route average steepness is between  $45^\circ$  and up to  $70^\circ$  with some pitches up to  $85^\circ$ . Often the climb commences with long stretches of soft snow before turning into hard ice as altitude increases. The slope gets steeper on the two last pitches of 100m requiring belays. This is physically demanding climb due to several sections with loose snow as well as the great distance from the glacier base. From the top you have extraordinary panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and steep walls. The descent is made following the same route setting snow anchors to rappel down and camp at High Camp. 19 to 21 hours for the day.

#### **Day 4: *Descend to Base Camp***

#### **Day 5: *Return to Huaraz***

Walk around the lake to meet our private van which will take us back to Huaraz

### **North East Face from Santa Cruz Valley**

Timing: 6 days (optional 7 days)



*Artesonraju Route NE Face*

The initial ascent on the glacier on the North East face is steep but the snow is stable and firm if weather is good. On the climbing there are some sections with large open crevasses & also many snow bridges that must be negotiated. Climbers must be totally confident using the 2 technical ice axes and have advance climbing skills including good knowledge of crevasses and self rescue.

The climbing difficulty varies from 45° to 80° in some sections but most of the climbing is on 60° to 70° grades.

The summit ridge of Artesonraju is well known for its fragility and special care must be taken: there is an unusually high chance of avalanches at the start of the climbing season.

### **Day 1: Drive to Cashapampa, trek to Llamacorrall**

Drive 2½ hours from Huaraz to the village of Cashapampa (2090m) where we meet our donkey drivers. Approaching Cashapampa we have our first view of Santa Cruz, the huge pyramid shaped mountain that gives the trekking circuit its name. We climb up through the Santa Cruz Valley, following the river. The first 2 hours we are in a steep sided river gorge and can be quite hard as we are climbing continuously up, and if the sun is out it is hot in the gorge. But later the valley opens out to grassland and it is more flat and cooler as we approach our first camp. We camp near the river at Llamacorrall (3750m) 4 to 5 hours.

### **Day 2: Llamacorrall to Base Camp**

An easier walk up the open valley to our camp at Base Camp Artesonraju (4250m). 5 hours. It is almost flat, and we climb just the last hour towards the camp. During the walk up the valley the twin peaks Quitaraju and the famous Alpamayo come into view. We walk past two lakes, first the small Ichiccocha then the larger Jatuncocha. Our camp is situated almost at the base of Artesonraju(6025m) and we are also surrounded by others, Paria, Taulliraju, Rinrijirca, Piramide, Quitaraju and Alpamayo.

### **Day 3: Base Camp to Morena Camp 5000m**

We start hiking following a cattle trail through the bushes and quenal trees for about 40 minutes. Then we make a small traverse to get to the moraine ridge. We climb up the moraine ridge (sometimes slippery and steep) for about 5 hours until we reach the Morena Camp at 5000m

### **Day 4: Morena to Camp to High Camp 5600m**

We start by climbing up on a faint trail mixed of rock and loose sand for about 30 minutes until we come to the glacier where we put on climbing gear and rope up. The first part of the ascent is 35° to 40° negotiating around crevasses and exposed ice bridges for approximately 3 hours. Before arriving at the camp there is a steep ice slope of 60° for about 40m to climb. Total time from Morena Camp to High Camp approx. 4 hours

### **Day 5: Summit Day.**

An early start, soon after midnight. We start the ascent by climbing a 80m ice wall of 60° a 65°, followed by a 200m easy traverse on a 10° snow platform. We then reach the start of the final ice wall, 280m of 70° a 80° slope. After the ice wall we reach a false summit. To reach the true summit we have to negotiate an exposed crevasse which requires descending into and ascending back out of the crevasse to pass, before making a final traverse to the true summit. Depending on conditions in the crevasses, some groups may decide to stop at the false summit. Descend by the same route, if possible all the way back to Base Camp. If we are too late we will stop at Morena Camp. Around 12 to 14 hours depending on conditions

### **Day 6: Hike out to Cashapampa & Return to Huaraz**

A long but easy walk down the Quebrada Santa Cruz to return to Cashapampa. 7 to 8 hours. Our private van will be waiting in Cashapampa to return us to Huaraz.

**OPTIONAL : Day 7: EXTRA DAY** in case of bad weather or for rest



*Climbers on Artesonraju NE Face*

**Climbing Hours:**

Climbing times are estimated times and based on our average climbing groups from past experience. Some people may be much faster and others slower.

**Trek Roads:** Access roads to and from treks are generally dirt mountain roads (not paved) and in some places can be bumpy. Road travel times are slower than you may expect for the kms travelled.