

North American Classic Route

Description



Castle Mtn., Brewer Buttress

Grade II, 5.6+

Author: Gary Clark, 7/02

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This is a long grade II at around 13 pitches in Dougherty's Guidebook. This description combines many of those pitches, for which a 60m rope is necessary. A small rack is adequate with all the fixed protection, but take plenty of slings to combat rope drag on the longer pitches. Ledges are plentiful and comfortable. Use the Canadian Hut Guide or Dougherty for a description of the approach to the hut on Goat Plateau. From the hut, it is a short hike on a climbers' trail (some unstable talus) to the base of the buttress.

P1: Climb the dihedral about 30m right of the toe of the buttress to a stance. Short, (<40m.), a bit amorphous and loose. Not a distinguished pitch.

P2: Continue up the dihedral on rock similar to P1; leads to a nice position on an expansive ledge directly on the crest. (40m.) Above this the climbing improves dramatically.

P3: Move right up this short, fun pitch (<35m) on corrugated gray rock to a stance behind a small pinnacle. (30m.)

P4: Excellent high-angle climbing on good holds all to the right of the crest.

P5: Continue right of the crest, then traverse left around the corner to a good fixed anchor (pins). This is the only belay ledge left of the crest. An inviting face stretches directly above.

P6: (Combines Dougherty guidebook P7 & P8.) Climb the face up and right to a dihedral. Just before the big roof at the top of the dihedral, step around to the right to a spectacular ledge. There are some tricky (5.6) moves on this pitch.

P7: This long pitch, probably a combination, is in the crux chimney (5.6+). After the chimney, traverse back to a good ledge on the crest. (60m)

P8: Very nice pitch over a small roof! Climb left of the major crack, and watch for fixed pins. Looks hard from below, but the holds are all there, and it protects perfectly. Airy.

P9: An obvious left-leaning crack on a vertical wall with great holds leads to the top. These are pitches #12 & 13 in the guide.

Descent: Hike along the summit plateau (leads west, then north, then west again) until you reach two large cairns above a long gully leading down to the left. Don't get discouraged, this is quite a long hike. Surf the talus down the gully until you reach some scruffy rock bands, where there are piton rap stations. Do 4-5 rappels (single rope adequate), and continue to Goat Plateau, with easy access back to the hut, or the descent route into the valley. This gully is the first major one to the left (west) of the gully used as a water source for the hut.

Our Times: Approach to hut: 3 hours; Hut to base of route: 20 minutes; The climb: 4:45; Descent to Goat Plateau: 2 hours