

Las Conchas

by Randal Jett and Matt Samet

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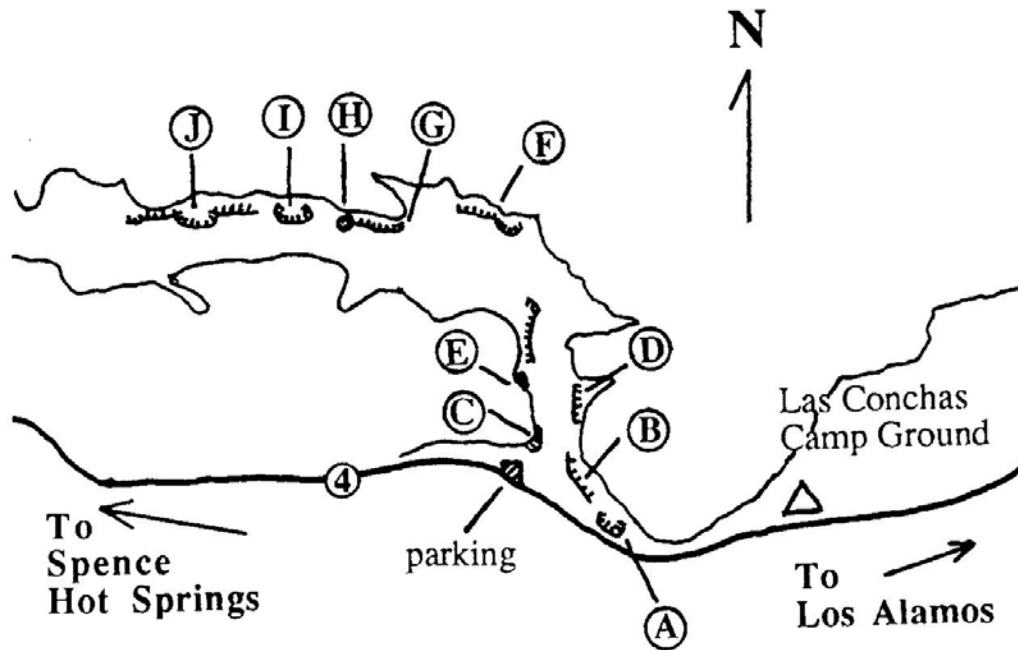
Warning: Rock climbing is a potentially dangerous sport. The author's opinions regarding the following climbs are intended to serve only as guidelines. It is the responsibility of each user of this guide to determine when our suggestions should be disregarded in favor of a more suitable approach. Helmets are advised. You are responsible for your own actions.

Some climbs in this guide are equipped with cold shut anchors. These anchors are intended for lowering after a lead only. **DO NOT BELAY ON OR TOP-OUT OVER OPEN COLD SHUT ANCHORS.** Serious injury or death may occur if this warning is ignored. Top roping at this area is discouraged due to extremely poor anchors and loose rock at the top of the climbs.

To get to the crags from Los Alamos take highway 502 to the "back gate" and turn right (west) onto State Road 4. Drive through the Valle Grande and continue until you see the Forest Service "Las Conchas" fishing access sign between mile marker 36 & 37. Continue for another 0.1 miles and park in the first pullout on the right. "Cattle Call Wall" is right in front of you, and "Roadside Attraction" is the large rock close to the road. Cattle Call is great for beginners. Almost any line you see can be topoped. Several lines can be topoped on "Roadside Attraction". Other crags are scattered along the trail that runs parallel to the river, and downstream (best accessed from second, paved, pullout). From Bernalillo/Albuquerque take 550 to San Ysidro, turn left onto State Route 4 and drive about 36.5 miles, past Jemez Springs and La Cueva.

Located in the heart of the beautiful Jemez mountains, Las Conchas is graced by a trickling brook and lawn-like meadows. The aesthetics and close proximity of the climbing to the road make this area a choice stop. Climbing is at it's best in the summer months because of the area's high altitude, but can also be enjoyed in the early fall and late spring. The rock is of an interesting variety called rhyolite, and is very similar to Penitente Canyon in Colorado. Due to the area's high precipitation rate (for New Mexico, anyways) and the relatively short history of sport climbing, some of the routes still retain a certain amount of moss and loose flakes, however, with more traffic and a little more cleaning most of these routes are destined to be future classics. Potential is incredibly abundant, so bring your drill and read the next paragraph carefully.

Although access isn't an issue YET at Las Conchas, the irresponsible actions of just one climber could be enough to draw negative attention towards all climbing at this area. The reason for this lies in the fact that Las Conchas is one of the most popular summer recreation sites in the Jemez Mountains. Hikers, mountain bikers, backpackers, picnickers, partiers, and gumbies of all sorts swarm over Las Conchas during the summer months, especially on weekends. Because of this fact, it is imperative that we as climbers recognize that we are a minority. Try to imagine what a power-drilling session must look like to the non-climber. Our excitement about the creation of a new route must not tread into the tranquility of an otherwise peaceful area, so please, use your brain when putting up routes!! Try to avoid bolting activity on weekends, especially right on the trail. Consider altering your behavior in response to the non-climbers who occasionally pass by our routes. Don't leave slings on your anchors, and camoflaue all hangars and chains. Don't be that one lame-ass who ruins it for the rest of us.



- A. Roadside Attraction Rock
- B. Cattle Call Wall
- C. Gateway Rock
- D. Chilly Willy Wall
- E. Love Shack Area
- F. The Wart
- G. Gallery Wall
- H. Dream Tower
- I. The Sponge
- J. The Leaning Tower Area

Access: Las Conchas is located approximately twenty miles west of Los Alamos and eighty miles northwest of Albuquerque. From Albuquerque, take I-25 north to Bernalillo, then go north on NM 44 to San Ysidro. In San Ysidro turn north on NM 4. Observe posted speed limits through Jemez Springs as traffic tickets seem to be the town's only source of income. At the small town of La Cueva (note: Spence hot springs was one and a half miles back on the right; see description at the end of this book) turn right, towards Los Alamos, then continue for another 9.8 miles to the East Fork's Box Canyon parking area (on left). From Santa Fe, take NM 285 north to the junction with NM 502. Take 502 west to Los Alamos. From Los Alamos, NM 501 and then NM 4 will lead you to Las Conchas.

Below the parking area, the main East Fork Trail leads northwest into the canyon. Rock formations and routes are described from this point forward into the canyon (downstream).

A. **ROADSIDE ATTRACTION ROCK:** The rock outcropping directly right of Cattle Call Wall.

1 Roadside Attraction 12a/b

One bolt, a 2.5 friend, and wires will take you to the top of this intriguing boulder. Somewhat runout and loose above the roof.

FA: Burns, Schillaci

B. **CATTLE CALL WALL:** This long solid wall lies across the river from **Gateway Rock** and has many top-rope anchors (five bolts) in-situ.

***2 Ow Now 11a**

The far left face. Natural protection.

FA: Gary Clark

***3 Bovine Inspiration 5.9**

***4 Cud For Lulu 5.8**

***5 Pie In Your Eye 5.6**

***6 Cow Flop Crack 5.8**

The crack in the middle of the wall.

FA: Clark

***7 Moon Over Belen 5.6**

Far right end.

C. **GATEWAY ROCK:** This large rock lies directly above the trail, one hundred yards from the parking area.

8 Garden Wall 5.4 to 5.7

Many variations on a vegetated wall left of Forest. Avoid when wet.

9 Forest 10d/11a

An obvious steep crack up the north face. Bring many wires and SLCD's. Watch out for loose rock at mid-height.

FA: Cam Burns, Mike Schillaci

D. **CHILLY WILLY WALL:** This expansive formation is located about a half-mile downstream from the parking area, on the right (east) side of the canyon.

***10 Turkey Sandwich 5.8**

This climb takes the arete with a chimney of the extreme right edge of Chilly Willy Wall. Finish either right up a small ramp or direct past Turkey Head. Medium, large SLCD's and stoppers are required to protect this route.

FA: John O'Donnell, Donna Williams

****11 Tasty Freeze 5.9 R-**

Groove up the face on the right end. Three bolts, stoppers, medium SLCD's. Quality

FA: Burns, Schillaci

***12 Wet Willies 11b/c**

The face left of Tasty Freeze. Six bolts worth of good moves. Don't get your wee-willy wanked!!

FA: Burns, Paul Fehlau

*****13 Donkey Show 10c**

The face around the far left end. Three bolts to a two bolt anchor. A quality climb when it's dry.

FA: Burns, Fehlau

E. **LOVE SHACK AREA:** This area is a shallow cave on the left side of the stream, near the second crossing, about four hundred yards from the parking area.

14 Captain America 11a

On the Fuzzy Phallus, forty feet uphill (and left) from the Love Shack. Three bolts and no fixed anchor to date.

FA: Per Nordlander, Schillaci

*****15 Happy Entrails 12d**

Huecoed roof inside the shallow cave. A high quality climb. Look for two bolt anchors next to a bush.

FA: Chris Vandiver

**16 Diseased Wet Crack With Running Sores
11c/d TR**

Left of Happy Entrails. The name says it all.
FA: Burns, Fehlau

F. **THE WART:** Located about three hundred yards downstream from the **Love Shack** area on the far northeast side of the stream.

****17 Something Big And Lovely 12a**

On the overhanging east face find four bolts. A bit loose but a good route.

FA: Burns, Bob D'Antonio, Fehlau, Mike McGill

G. **GALLERY WALL:** This is the major series of walls nearly a mile down the canyon. The best rock is on the left end near **The Sponge and Dream Tower**.

*****18 Presumed To Be Modern 12a/b**

Ascend five bolts on the major face of upper Gallery Wall to a fixed anchor.

FA: D'Antonio, Mike Baker, McGill

***19 Across The View 11d**

Locate the black water streak left of Presumed To Be Modern and climb four bolts to an anchor.

FA: D'Antonio, Baker, McGill

H. **DREAM TOWER:** This is the obvious bottle-shaped tower on the lower left end of the **Gallery Wall**.

***20 East Coast Dreams 11b/c**

On the left side of the Dream Tower. Six bolts to a fixed anchor.

FA: D'Antonio, McGill, Bob Perna

***21 Sanctuarium 12b/c**

A direct start to East Coast Dreams. Clip four bolts then move left and join East Coast Dreams.

FA: D'Antonio, McGill

22 Animal Magnetism 11d

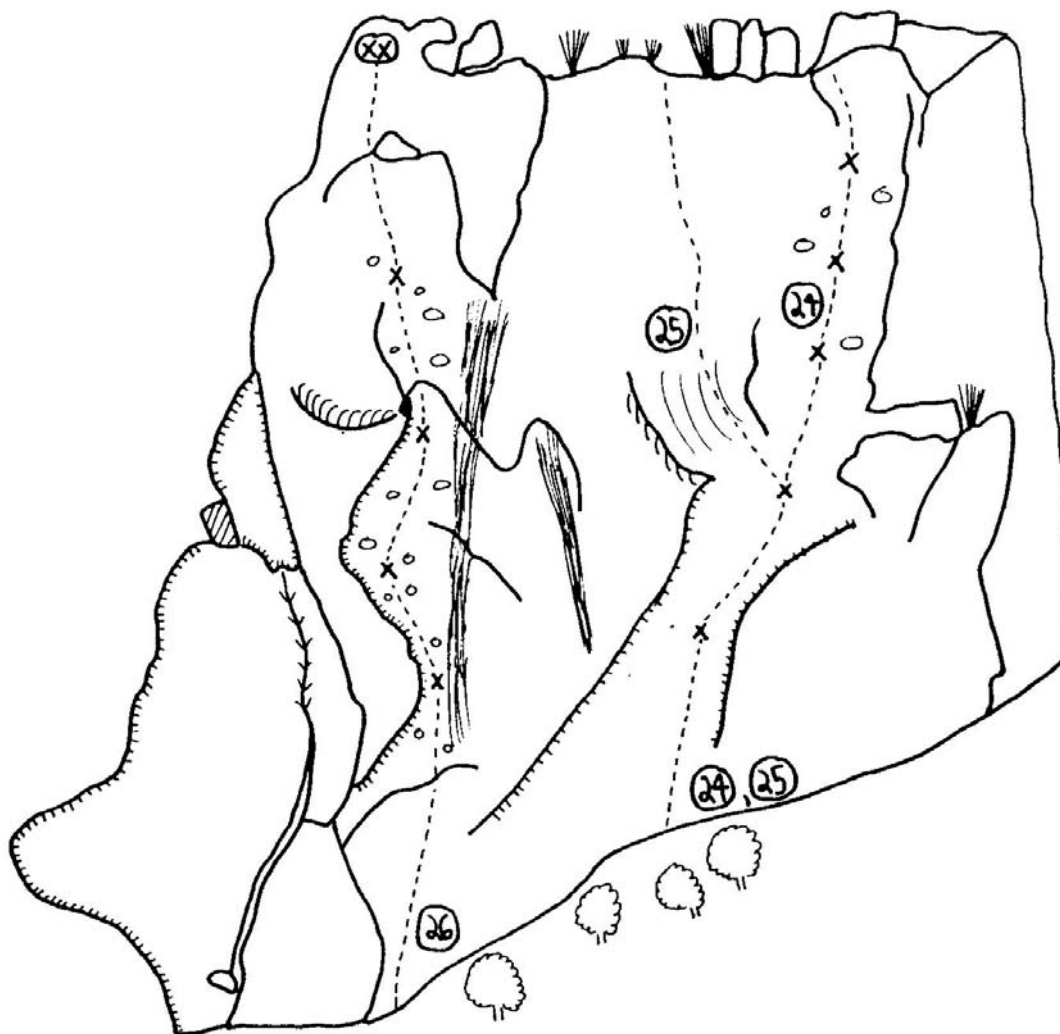
On the right side of the Dream Tower. Six bolts to a fixed anchor. Loose.

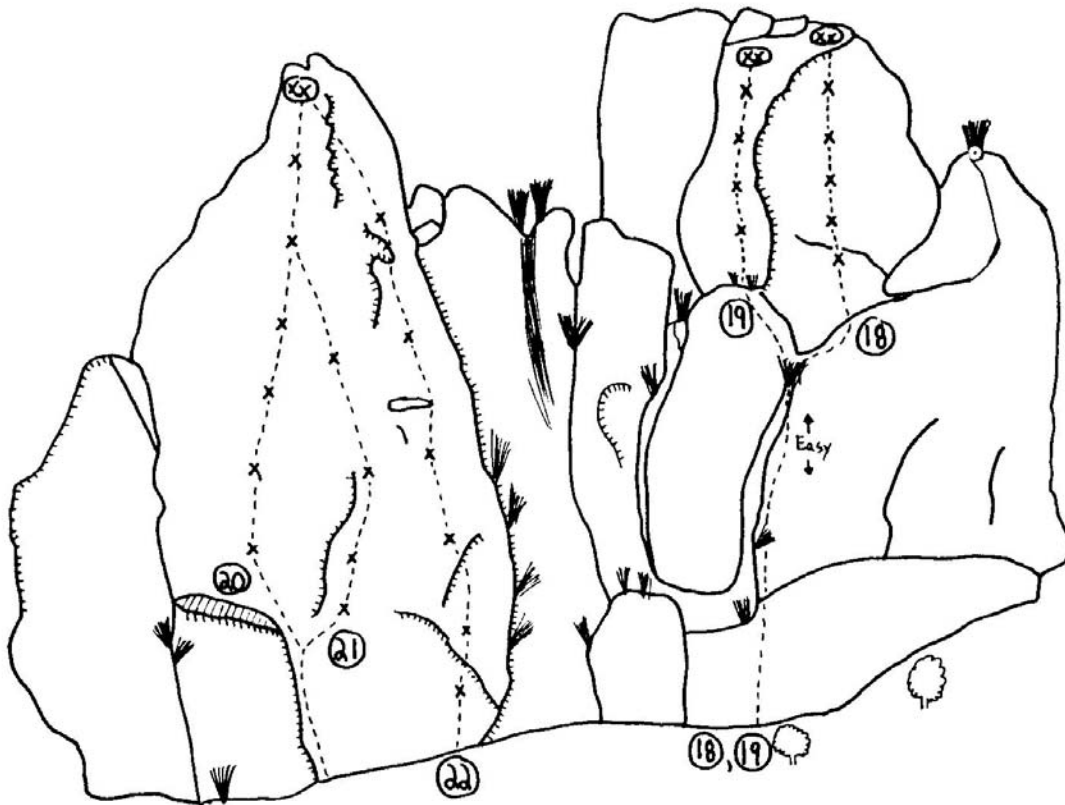
FA: D'Antonio, Baker, McGill

***23 Hail Dancer 5.9-**

The arete forty feet left of East Coast Dreams and eighty feet right of Hollywood Tim. One bolt, a .5 tri cam, a #1 tri cam, a #2 camalot, and a #3 camalot will bring you to fixed anchors.

FA: Baker, Leslie Henderson





I. **THE SPONGE:** This rock is located nearly a mile into the canyon on the right side of the stream. Probably the finest rock in the area.

*****24 Hollywood Tim 5.9**

The corner/arete on the right side of the formation.
Five bolts worth of high quality moves.

FA: Burns, Fehlau

***25 Mad Dogs And Englishmen 10- R**

This route takes the first two bolts of Hollywood Tim and then moves left through the small roof.
Run-out.

FA: O'Donnell, Williams

****26 Pumpin' Huecos 10d/11a**

The steep face left of Hollywood Tim. Four bolts to a fixed anchor.

D'Antonio, Baker, McGill

J. **THE LEANING TOWER AREA:** This major formation lies about three hundred yards downstream from **The Sponge**. The rock is good, but not excellent. An impressive feature with interesting route possibilities.

****27 Tupelo Chain Sex 11b/c**

Located on **BOLT** (Brother Of Leaning Tower) which is right of **The Leaning Tower**. A decent climb through seven bolts to a fixed anchor.

FA: Burns, Fehlau

28 Hard Yakka 5.9

The offwidth between **BOLT** and **The Leaning Tower**. Bring the biggest SLCD's you can dig up. Watch out for festering choss.

FA: Burns, Fehlau

*****29 Leaning Tower Crack A2+**

The steep, beautiful crack up the center of **The Leaning Tower**. Quality nailing with 2-3 Knif blades, 2-3 Lost Arrows, many friends, wires, etc. Somebody needs to free this climb.

FA: Burns, Schillaci, Fehlau

*****30 Lichen Attack Crack 10c/d**

A marvelous dihedral left of **The Leaning Tower**. Wires, SLCD's, etc.

FA: Baker, Henderson

