

Boxes /

Location / access:

Ben Amira and its satellites are located in the center east of Mauritania, 185 km northwest of the town of Atar, 5 km north of the road line linking Nouadhibou to the Zouerate mines.

Coordinates: 21°13'48 N, 13°39'53 W.

Atar, the gateway to Ben Amira (4 hours by 4x4), is served during the winter season (December/March) by direct weekly flights (4h30 from Paris) of the "historic" passenger cooperative on the entire Sahelo-Saharan zone Le Point Afrique. Dry flights / but also discovery programs of Adrar (meharee, circuits...) and Mauritania: point-afrique.com

It is also possible to reach Atar from the capital (Nouakchott/ 6 hours drive from Atar) via flights from national companies (Air France, RAM, etc.).

Logistics :

Delicate to imagine going to put your van on the spot in autonomy. Reception at the Ben Amira camp (tents, toilets and showers, meals, vehicle, etc.), as well as 4X4 transfers are managed by a (solid) local agency, Mauritanides Voyages. Favor (ideally) teams made up of 4/5 climbers for the trip. Given the isolation of the site and the total absence of rescue, a minimum of 2 ropes is essential. NB: climbing in Ben Amira is subject to authorization. This authorization can be obtained without problem by contacting the medicine and mountain association of the world by email:

contact@escalademauritanie.com

Resource site / topos:

The MMM association, via its pages dedicated to climbing in Mauritania: escalademauritanie.com

Equipment :

Lanes equipped and belays on bolts (spaced) of 10.

To know :

Sanitary formalities: entering/exiting Mauritanian territory this winter only required an up-to-date health pass / or a PCR of less than 72 hours. The exit tests (antigens) are carried out by a dedicated team at Atar airport, just before the return flight.

Tourist visas issued on site: 55 euros.

Health: no anti-malaria treatment, no, no....

Electricity: 12 volts on the camp. Possibility of charging batteries (perfo, computer, etc.) in the village.

Network tel. : from the top of Ben Amira, and to the village.

Drone: prohibited, except authorization for aerial photography on the territory.

Security :

The Saharan exception.

If the possibilities of climbing (and traveling...) in the vast Sahelo-Saharan zone have massively disappeared over the last decades (Mali, Niger, Libya, Algeria...), Mauritania can pride itself on being a real haven in a regional context for least unsmiling. Factually: since the Aleg attack in 2006 (4 tourists died in a vehicle attack claimed by Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb), Mauritania has not experienced any incident or tragedy related to tourism on its territory. So much so that in 2017, the

Quai d'Orsay changed (extremely rare...) the colors of its "Advice to Travelers" maps, going from total red to orange, then to yellow all of the west of the country, allowing in particular a resumption of Saharan tourism in the Mauritanian Adrar region where Ben Amira is located. Since ? Despite an almost zero season linked to the Covid winter 20/21, tourism (trek, camel rides, etc.) in the oases of Adrar has resumed its marks. In controlled territories. Where the benefits of tourism are a key issue for the economy of local structures and populations...

Topos

The 10 ways of Ben Amira and Ben Aïcha

BEN AMIRA

South face:

Normal route, PD, 450 m.

The route begins on the south face, via a characteristic pass surrounded by sand spits which separates Ben Amira from a secondary nipple. From its western slope, go up the slab along a large scree on the right. Then continue full slab up to several isolated blocks (belay points): at the cairn, turn 90° to the left, and cross for about fifty meters to reach a vague corridor of scree. Go up this bank line to the pass that separates the eastern antecime and the western summit of Ben Amira. Reach the summit starting on the left of this pass, passing at best through very large blocks. Under the south of the summit, the bivouac areas are visible.

East face:

Mauritanides Voyages, 500 m., 9 pitches, 5c, AD

Opening (2021 and 2022) by Anne de Bélinay, Nadine Rousselot, Jean Kanapa, Jean Louis Lauféron.

Rope: 60 m. 12 quickdraws.

Attack: from the camp, follow the North face towards the East up to a large scree which you go up along the face until you cross the characteristic black dyke that the first 5 pitches take.

Descent: normal route.

L 1 to 4: 3 / 3 + in the dyke. L 5: horizontal crossing of the dike in 2. L 6: ascending crossing in 5c, towards the belay of the way of the Princesses. L 7: 5c. L 8: 5b. L 9:4. Route in the shade in the middle of the afternoon.

North / North-West face:

The Princesses, 500 m., 8 pitches, 6c, ED

Opening (2021): Stéphane Moussard, Romain Lauféron, Jean Louis Lauféron, Anne de Bélinay, Philippe Craplet

Rope: 60 m. 12 quickdraws.

Attack: in front of the camp, 20 meters to the left of the large black trail that descends directly above the summit.

Descent: via the pass of the normal route (cairn).

L1:6c+ — L2:6b — L3:6a+ — L4:5c — L5: 6a+ (63 meters) — L6:5b — L7:5a —

L8:4 – output and relays in blocks.
Route almost entirely in the shade until noon.

See you in Casablanca, 360 m., 7 pitches, 6a+, TD
Opening: Anne de Belinay, Nadine Rousselot (2021), Anne de Belinay, Jean Louis Lauferon (2022).

Rope: 60 meters / 15 quickdraws

Attack: 10 minutes on foot from the camp along the face towards the East (cairn at the low point between 2 crests of the scree).

L1: 5a — L2: 6a — L3 6a+ — L4 5b — L 5 5a — L6 4 then 3 — L7: easy walk to reach the dyke of Mauritanides Voyages (common relay). Two possibilities :

- 1: Continue towards the summit via L6 de Mauritanides in 5c, length in ascending traverse to the right which allows you to reach the last 3 pitches (5b, 5a, 4) of the Princesses.

-2: Descent via the Mauritanides dyke.

Length of 40 meters in horizontal traverse to the left (walking) remaining on the dyke.

Then abseiling with equipment or de-escalation with a taut rope.

The track passes in the sun at noon.

La Loi Du Désert, 440 m., 11 pitches, 7b+, ED+

Opening: Jean Kanapa, Jean Louis Lauféron (2022).

Rope: 60 meters / 22 quickdraws

Attack: from the camp, the route starts at the level of the large black streak on the right in the face.

Descent: per day without wind retreat possible up to R5. Beyond R5, the route goes diagonally, there is a significant risk of jamming the abseil. More via the pass below the summit and the normal route.

L1: 4 - L2: 7b+ (7a /A0) - L3: 7A+, 7B - L4: 6c - L5: 6B+ - L6: 6b - L7: 6b+ - L8: 6b - L9: 6a+ - L10: 6a - L 11: 3.

The track passes in the sun at noon.

South face:

Point Afrique opens La Voie, 400 m., 9 pitches, 6a, D.

Opening: Jean Kanapa, Jean Louis Lauféron, Maxime Groppo, Anne de Bélinay.

Rope: 60 meters / 12 quickdraws.

Attack: on the left of the scree which descends from the large fault cutting the face in two.

Descent in the not recommended route (diagonals). Reach the summit on the right (15 min) to the bivouac sites, then normal route.

L1: 3 — L2: 4 — L3: 6a — L4: 5c+ — L5: 6a — L6: 2 — L7: 5 — L8: 4c — L9:3 (exit in blocks)

The top of the route passes in the sun around 10 am.

The Canyon, 350m, 7 pitches, 7b, ED+.

Rope: 60 meters / 12 quickdraws.

Opening: Nadine Rousselot, Jean Louis Lauféron, 2021.

Attack: at the end of the scree going up to the base of the canyon / fault which cuts the face.

Descent: possible on the route but beware of rope jamming in the blocks. Otherwise

by the normal route, which is reached by bypassing the summit blocks to the left.
L1: 2 - L2: 7b/2 L3: 7a - L4: 6b/6c/2 - L5: 2 - L6: 2 - L7: 7a/7b
Steep and hot route on the south face, starting at dawn.

AICHA

West / South-West face

Normal route, PD., 400 m.

The attack is made on the west face, to the left of the characteristic crack of the Origin of the World which scratches the face. Go up the scree on the left for about 150 meters, before going up to the right in full slab towards the summit. The chaos of blocks that encircles the summit is circumvented by the right (cairns). Bivouac sites immediately north of the summit.

The route remains in the shade until noon.

L'Origine Du Monde, 350 m, ED, 6c mandatory.

L1: 6c+ — L2: 6c — L3: 6b/6a+ — L4: 3 — L5: 2 — L6: 3.

Rope: 60 m

Attack: at the foot of the unmissable crack on the west face.

Exit by skirting a small vertical bar to the right. Reach the summit by walking through the systems of large blocks.

The first 3 lengths are in the shade until 11 a.m.

East face

Even Camels Die Of Thirst, 350m, D, 6a.

Opening: Jean Kanapa, Jean Louis Lauféron, Maxime Groppo, Anne de Bélinay.

Rope: 60 m.

L1:5c — L2:5b — L3:5b — L4:6a L5:5b — (relay at 65m) — L6:3.

Attack: South East face, slightly to the left above the sculptures.

Exit in the blocks to the right after the last point on the slab. Join the top (blocks).

Descent by the normal route.

The path in the shade from 1 p.m.