

## IKER AND ENEKO POU

Iker and Eneko Pou are true world reference points for climbing and alpinism. If not to say true legends. In fact, it is difficult to find a different term to define the two brothers from Spain's Basque country. Just as it is difficult to find another partnership as eclectic and complete as theirs. They have been climbing for almost 20 years, often together and always at the cutting-edge. Their climbing and alpinism began together, as youngsters in 1991. Iker immediately showed his worth as a champion rock climber, mastering the hardest of routes. Eneko for his part remained versatile and dedicated himself to the mountains in general. Together they form a formidable partnership on all types of terrain and this is shown clearly by their immense curriculum of ascents, a true world record. A long list which continues to grow with new and important ascents.

Their latest big performance together dates back to August 2009, with the first free ascent of Orbayu on the Naranjo de Bulnes, in Spain's Picos de Europa. 510m divided up into 13 pitches which deserved the super grade 8c+/9a. An absolute cutting-edge route, in part also thanks to the truly run-out protection. It comes as no surprise that Iker defines this as being the hardest he's ever climbed. And seeing that this comes from someone who can boast ascents such as Eternal Flame on the Trango Towers, with the famous "Pou brothers" variation with its 8a at 6000m, there can be little doubt as to the absolute difficulty. Also because at the start of 2010 Iker confirmed his sport climbing talent by repeating Demencia Senil at Margalef, a 9a+ which places him at the forefront of world climbing. Iker had gained this position back in 1995 with the second repeat of Action Directe, the legendary 9a first ascended by Wolfgang Güllich, and with many other top climbs at crags throughout Europe, as well as repeating hard boulder problems up to 8b+.

Eneko on the other hand has an exceptional alpine background, from the world's great rock faces to the Himalayan giants, via extreme ski descents in the Spanish Pyrenees. Eneko is also an extremely talented ice climber and he loves alpinism as an adventure and at the same time as an experience which he cannot conceive without his brother Iker. This is another reason why in 2003 the Pou brothers invented their great journey across 7 walls and 7 continents.

This beautiful world mountaineering tour kicked off on the North American continent with a great second repeat of El Niño on El Capitan in Yosemite Valley. This was followed by the first free ascent of Zunbeltz in the Picos de Europa in the Pyrenees, while in 2004 their journey continued to Madagascar where they carried out the first free ascent of Bravo les Filles on Tsaranoro, the hardest big wall in Africa. A year later they travelled to the Australian continent and made an ascent of the famous Totem Pole in Tasmania, and this was immediately followed by their adventure on the famous Eternal Flame on the Trango Towers in the Himalaya. 2007 started with an ascent of the classic Supercanaleta on Fitz Roy in Patagonia, and their tour then came to an end on the Antarctic Peninsula with the first ascent of Azken Paradizua on a virgin summit they called Zerua Peak (Sky Peak).

"I wanted to do something nice with my brother" Eneko wrote. "Something which we could only do by combining forces. We wanted to travel, meet new people. Risk the unknown and get to know our limits. We decided to do this together, by climbing together." They crowned their dream. As great alpinists and as a great climbing partnership!