

Cascade Cliff



► Overview

Although climbable in summer and sporting exquisite sculpted granite, the long approach and limited selection of routes keep the **Cascade Cliff** from becoming crowded. Most popular routes are fully bolted, but a single rack is required on some of the obscurities. All of the 5.14s at the crag are exceptional and climb beautiful, rounded features, which are also found on **Tree Beard**, one of the best 5.12s in the Sierras.

► Season

The seasons are spring, summer and fall. The cliff goes into the shade from noon to 1 pm, with the left side getting shade first. Expect temperatures about 10°F less than South Lake Tahoe.



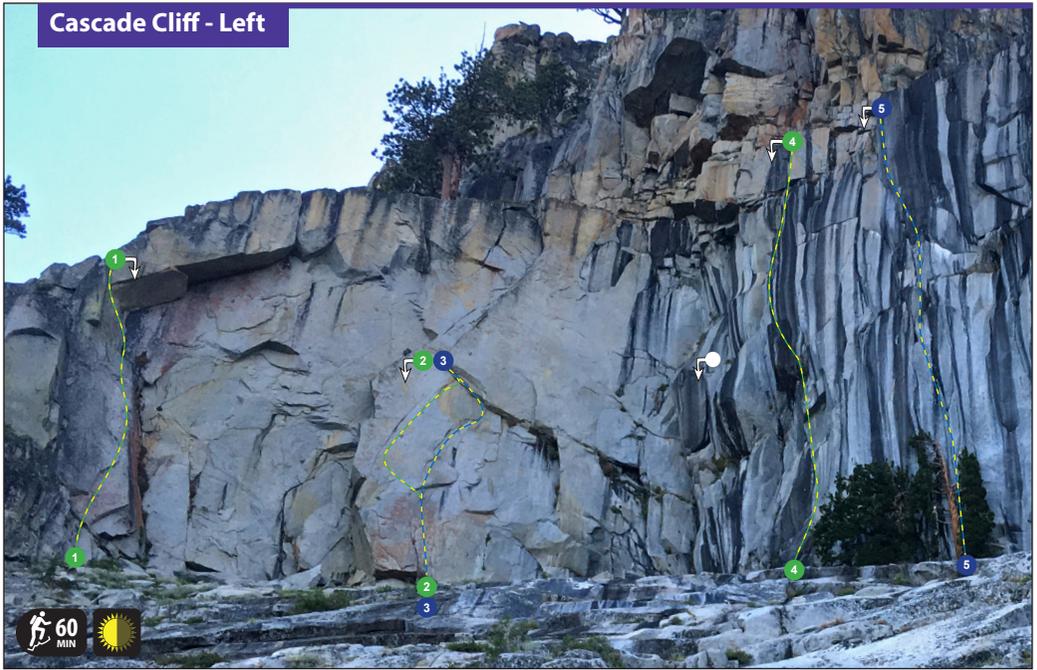
Restrictions

The cliff lies within the **Desolation Wilderness Area**. Motorized equipment, including powered hammer drills are not allowed.

► Directions

Park at the **Bayview Campground** trailhead or near the campground along SR-89. Follow the **Cascade Falls Trail** south for 0.6 miles. The trail will traverse slightly down a rocky hillside above **Cascade Lake** for the most of this distance. When the hillside opens up to an area of granite slabs, about 130 yards before the falls, head right (east). The cliff should be visible on the side of a mountain to the right (east). Head about 230 yards over the granite slabs, then move right into a wooded area with social trails at the base of a bushy, talus-filled hillside (don't follow the stream into a swampy area). Follow a social trail below this hillside for about 270 yards. At a small boulder at the edge of the wood, a social trail weaves through bushes to gain a talus slope. Follow this talus slope to a zebra-striped slab. 3rd class up and left through slabs and rocky gullies with intermittent cairns, generally aiming for the cliff, which is visible above. Total distance is 1.25 miles.





38.932804°, -120.1110154° 7868'

1 Rasputin ★★ 5.10d

FA: Nils Davis. 1999

7 bolts to LO. 75'

Begin about 15' left of the right-facing dihedral with red lichen at the far left side of the crag. An enjoyable layback flake leads to a thin, cruxy face, which is followed by ledgy terrain (runout) and a more-physical finish.

2 South Tahoe Two Step ★ 5.12b

FA: Jesse Bushey and Chris Doyle.

5 bolts, gear 0.1" to 1". 2-Bolt LO. 60'

Start as for the **Right Warm Up**, after the 5th bolt, move left then follow the right-trending crack (tricky gear) to the anchor of the **Right Warm Up**. A nice line, but the rock is a bit crumbly.

3 Right Warm Up ★★ 5.11c

9 Bolts to LO. 60'

Start about 10' right of the large, left-facing dihedral. Layback and crack climb up the face with good, but not great, rock quality. Finish with a bicep intensive undercling traverse left or awkward jamming scenario to the anchors.

4 Hammer Down ★ 5.12c

FA: Chris Doyle, Jesse Bushey, and Bernie LaForest.

6 bolts, gear 0.1" to 2"; nuts helpful. 2-Bolt LO. 120'

Rarely undertaken, this route climbs like a scrappy street fight. Begin about 30' left of **Tree Beard**. A quick intro gains a technical dihedral (bolts) followed by a burly crack (0.2" to 0.75"). Above, some suspect rock, vegetation, and flaring cracks keep the spice level high.

5 Tree Beard ★★★ 5.12c

FA: Nils Davis. 2000

12 Bolts (slings optional for branches) to LO. 125'

Begin up the ladder-like branches of a large juniper (slings optional). Follow awkward rounded seams in dihedrals to a powerful, off balance layback finish up the left side of an arête. An outstanding classic.

Descent: With rope stretch, a 70m rope barely reaches the ground from the LO.

6 Joe Bunyan ★★★ 5.14a

FA: Ethan Pringle. 2013?

10 Bolts to LO. 80'

The nearly-featureless dihedral left of **Weekend at Bernie's** features a physical, slopey start, lots of laybacking, and strenuous cruxes.



7 Weekend at Bernie's ★★★★★ 5.14a

FA: Joe Kinder. June 2014

12 Bolts to LO. 80'

A superb symphony of movement up an exquisitely sculpted granite crack and dihedral feature with a tricky, physical finish. Begin in the dihedral about 25' right of **Tree Beard** and climb through a dagger/dong feature at 30'.

8 Blue Sky Black Clouds ★★★ 5.14b

FA: Joe Kinder. January 2015?

1 fixed pin, 10 bolts to LO. 80'

Climb near the striking black streak at the center right of the wall. Two vicious boulders problems interspersed with a good rest. Less popular than it's neighbor **Weekend at Bernie's** but still outstanding.

9 On Beyond Zebra ★★★ 5.14a

FA: Mark Seelos. August 2017

10 Bolts to LO. 80'

Start as for **Blue Sky Black Clouds**, after the 7th bolt, move right into layback boulder problems.

10 dark layback ★★ 5.11b

1 bolt, gear 0.4" to 3", mostly 1" to 2". 2-Bolt LO. 60'

Start about 25' left of the burly juniper. An awkward start negotiates blocks to gain the crack system. Follow the left crack in the dark streak. Short but strenuous.

11 extension ★ open project bolts.

Continue up the short headwall above the crack to a roof. Above the roof trend left with a dihedral feature.

12 Longshanks ★ 5.11c

FA: Nils Davis. 1998/1999

6 Bolts to LO. 60'

Start in a blocky black streak roughly midway between the two large junipers on the right side of the wall. Trend up and left through nice rock with a distinct, sequential crux and thought-provoking finish. The extension, with one bolt, is an open project.

13 All the King's Men ★ 5.12

FA: Nils Davis. 1999

6 bolts, gear 0.4" to 3". 2-Bolt LO.

This route is found at the far right side of the cliff. Climb a short bit of blocky slab. Underclings in a face lead to a crack, which slices through offset roofs.