



ROCK CLIMBING IN SAUDI ARABIA

Read Macadam

WADI AL AKHU, HARIQ



الاتحاد السعودي للتسلق والهايكنج
SAUDI CLIMBING AND HIKING FEDERATION

Rock Climbing in Saudi Arabia Wadi Al Akhu, Hariq

**Saudi Climbing and Hiking Federation
www.climbing.sa**

Created by Read Macadam, November 18, 2019

Topo photos courtesy Will S. Lawrence/Streamline Drones



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DISCLAIMER

Rock climbing is a dangerous sport that can lead to serious injury or worse. The fact that a route is described in this book does not mean that it is safe for you, nor does the information in this guide list every possible hazard you may encounter. You should not climb without the proper training or equipment.

The details of the climbs in this guide, their grades, reference to protection and heights should be treated with extreme caution. Climbs can change due to natural events; holds fall down, rock becomes dirty, in-situ gear changes or deteriorates or disappears. Even small alterations can have a significant effect on the grade or seriousness of a route so it is therefore the responsibility of you, the climber, to judge the condition of any route for yourself before and during climbing.

Great effort has been made to make the routes as safe as possible and also in compiling the information for this guide however the Saudi Climbing and Hiking Federation, the author and the route developers cannot be held responsible for any omissions or mistakes, nor be held liable for any personal or third party injuries or damage, howsoever caused, arising from use of this guide or the climbing sites.

INTRODUCTION

In years past the desert plains near Hariq were explored and sporadically developed by the local Riyadh climbing community from Riyadh. This crag, Wadi Al Akhu, which translates to 'the brother's wadi' comes from Joao Miquel who equipped the first route, the area's namesake, in April 2019.

The formal development work was undertaken by the Saudi Climbing and Hiking Federation between October 24th and November 1st 2019 during the second phase of the Saudi Bolting Project. The team consisted of the project leader and author, Read Macadam, A. Mountain Guides' Carlo Giuliberti and Piergiorgio Lotito along with Federation board member Abdulrahman Alabdu. The crag now hosts 38 climbs from 3 to 7b+.

The stone is a mix of marble and limestone and the climbing is short and technical on uniquely sculpted edges and pockets. Tons of loose stone was dropped from the cliff to bring the climbing to fruition and the talus base prepared with care, however the nature of the climbing remains dusty and wild. Wadi Al Akhu is not considered a 'child-friendly' zone. Exercise caution. Wearing a helmet is strongly encouraged.

Wadi Al Akhu Crag is a desert crag at 1,000m and, since it is generally north-facing, shade can be found all day, with only a few of the right-most sections taking sun briefly in the mid-afternoon.

More initiatives of the Saudi Climbing and Hiking Federation can be found at www.climbing.sa

Material:

Raumer Superstar 10mm x 100mm 316L stainless steel glue-in bolts with Hilti RE500 V3 epoxy. All of the lower-offs are Raumer Superstar 10mm x 100mm 316L combo chains with stainless steel rings.



DIRECTIONS

RIYADH

WADI AL AKHU

23°41'6.21"N 46°17'21.89"E

220KM FROM RIYADH 2.5 HRS

35KM FROM HARIQ 35 MINS



From Riyadh:

Leave Riyadh on Route 80 (Makkah Road) heading west and exit southbound onto Route 30 at GPS#1. Follow Route 30 for 38km then exit left/east at GPS#2 onto road 4883 which becomes road 5397. After 29km turn right/south at GPS#3 onto road 5913. After 68km exit left at GPS#4. After 10km the paved road ends. Turn left/north before the row of trees and after approx. 1km the track curves back right/east to circumnavigate the farm to the north. Follow this track for 22km to GPS#5, turning right to pass the east side of the shepherd's trailer leading to the open gravel plain and the parking GPS.

From Hariq:

Head west on the dual carriageway towards road 5874. Turn right/north at GPS A. After 17km exit left before the bridge at GPS B onto the gravel road. After 13.1km turn left onto the track at GPS#5, skirting the shepherd's trailer and onto the gravel plain towards the parking GPS.

4x4 high clearance vehicle required

Approach:

From the parking descend straight ahead into the wadi and trend right, following the cairns. The crag is at the head of the right-most wadi of the three visible from the parking. Approach time approximately 12 minutes.

COORDINATES

1	24°27'23.90"N 46° 8'54.58"E	A	23°37'3.58"N 46°28'3.12"E
2	24° 9'54.05"N 45°58'16.79"E	B	23°44'53.14"N 46°23'7.31"E
3	24° 9'40.81"N 46°14'46.94"E	5	23°43'12.43"N 46°16'53.87"E
4	23°37'38.35"N 46° 6'40.61"E	P	23°41'33.15"N 46°17'20.65"E

HARIQ

RULES OF THE CRAG

- 🍃 **Never ever litter. Carry out more than you brought in**
- 🍃 **Stay on the beaten trails. Do not cut trees**
- 🍃 **Never modify the rock. Brush excess chalk and tick marks**
- 🍃 **Always partner check and tie a knot in the end of your rope**
- 🍃 **Respect the local culture, residents, animals, property and other climbers**
- 🍃 **Dispose of human waste and paper appropriately. Leave no trace**
- 🍃 **Use your own gear for top-roping, the last climber descends on the fixed gear**

LEAVE NO TRACE



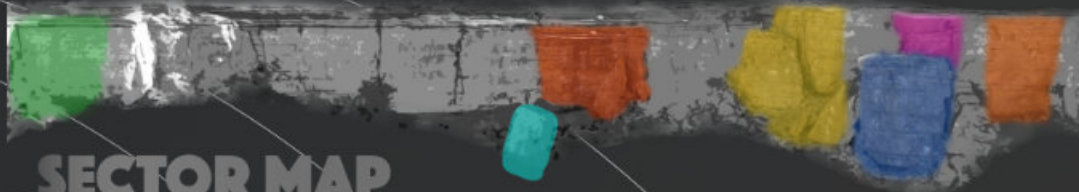


One of the many locals inhabiting the area surrounding Wadi Al Akhu. Take caution driving, especially at dusk and dawn when the camels are on their way in/out to graze..

Photo R.Macadam 2019

WADI AL AKHU

SECTOR MAP



AL AKHU

OBELISK

SLAB

SOUQ

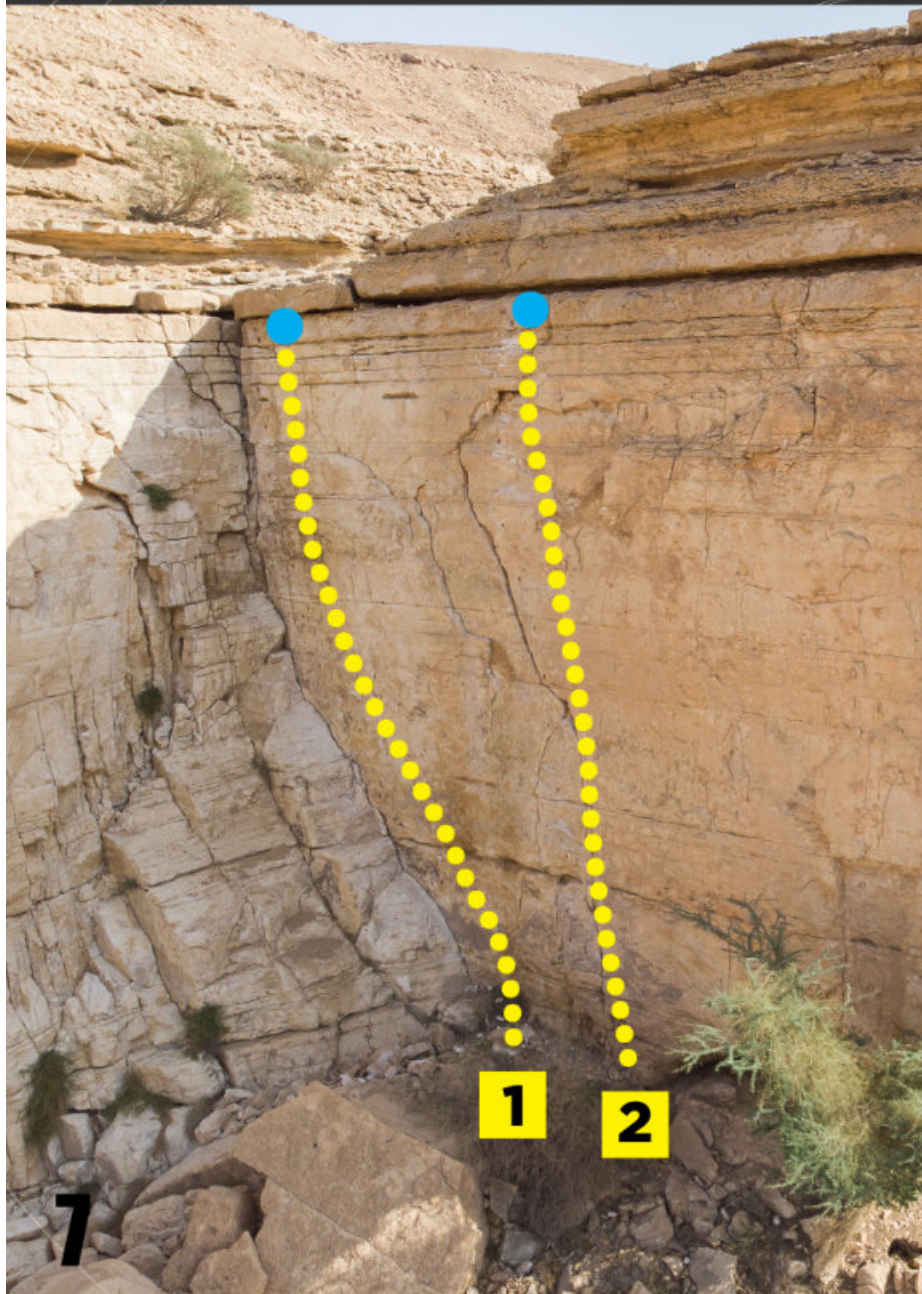
NASEEM

THE TWINS

AL A'AMUDU

AL AKHU

WADI AL AKHU



#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
1	ZAWIYAT AL AKHU	5b	10	18m	Stemming corner
2	AL AKHU	6b+	10	18m	Wonderfully sustained climbing in the flared crack system.

Al Akhu and Al Akhu

Al akhu, meaning the brother, is the namesake pitch of the crag bolted by Joao Miquel in 2019 and cleaned and refitted with glue-in bolts during the bolting project.

Joao Miquel and Naif at the latter's local hangout during one of Joao's trips to Hariq. Joao named his route after Naif who reminds us that we are all akhu.



Photo courtesy Joao Miquel 2019



Joao Miquel bolting Al Akhu, the first route and namesake of the crag.
Photo Phung Ly, April 5, 2019

Piergiorgio Lotito climbing a lap on the area classic, post refitting with chemical anchors, November 1, 2019

Photo R.Macadam

THE TWINS

WADI AL AKHU



#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
3	LAITH	5a*	6	18m	Both routes share a common anchor.
4	FARIS	5a*	6	18m	Using stacked stones and beginning from the lip of the boulder these routes are 5a. *Preclip the 2nd bolt for safety



The Twins is the freestanding boulder in the middle of the entire crag and named after two of Saudi Arabia's budding climbers.

*Preclip the 2nd bolt for safety to try the entrance moves, which make the routes significantly harder.

Aerial view of Barbora Sankotova, Climbers on Mars November 1, 2019



Read Macadam on the crux of Matter fe Al-Mataar Obelisk October 31, 2019



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Abdulrahman Alabdu climbing on Al Fawakeh Al Muharamah, October 31, 2019

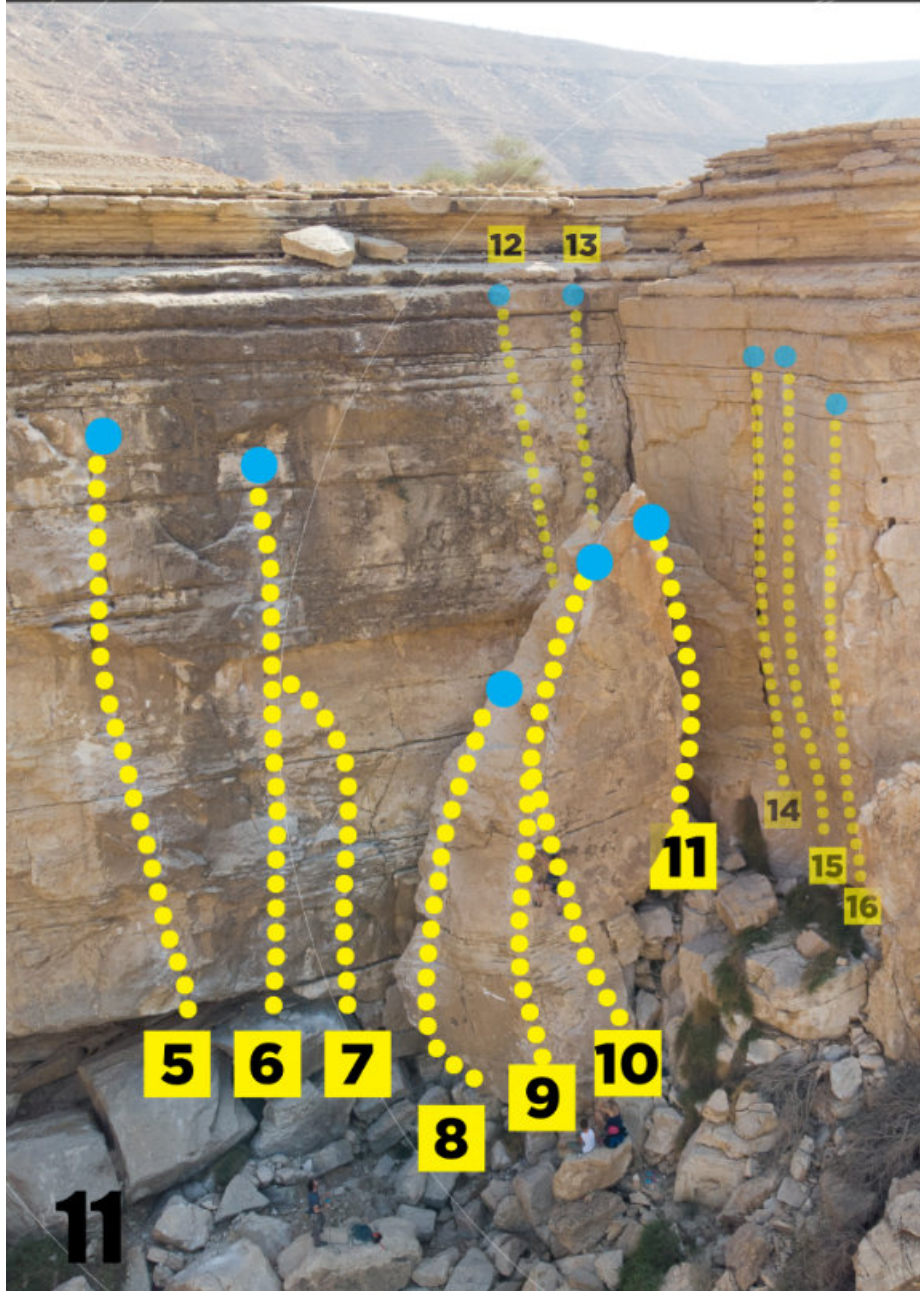
All photos W.S. Lawrence



Carlo Giuliberti looks on from the Obelisk as Piergiorgio climbs Al Fawakeh Al Muharamah October 31, 2019

OBELISK

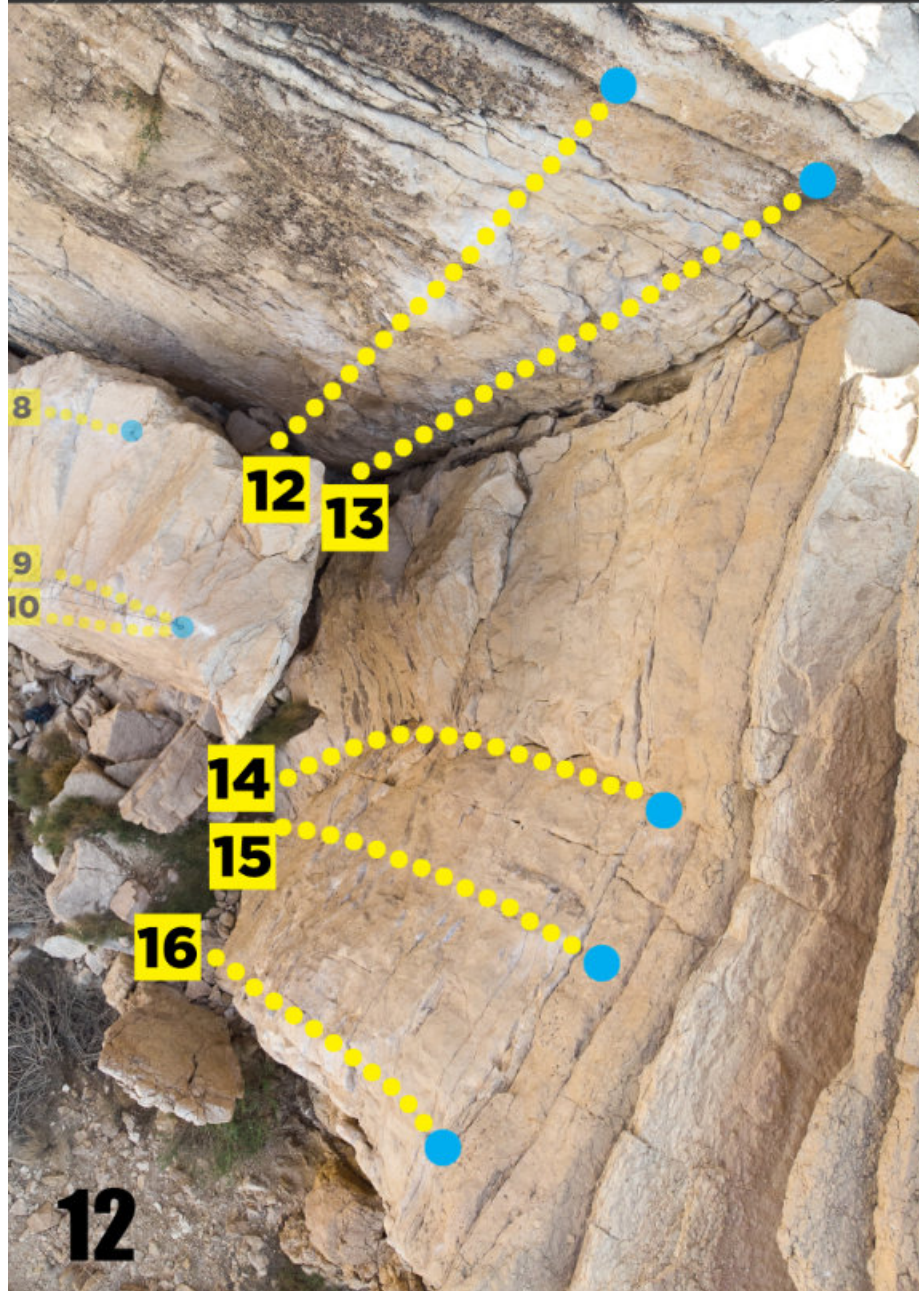
WADI AL AKHU



#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
5	FEBBRE DEL DESERTO	6c	14	20m	An old top-rope line cleaned extensively and bolted for lead
6	MENTE FOTTUTA	7a	13	20m	The direct line. Crimpy and cruxy
7	SKY AND SAND	7a+	13	20m	Right variation. Intended to climb right of bolt line. Common top half
8	MATTER FE AL-MATAAR	7b+	8	16m	Boulder problem. Crux clipping the 3rd bolt
9	BACK TO BANANAS	6c	10	18m	Balancy and thoughtful climbing on the arete
10	CLIMBERS ON MARS	6a+	7	18m	Little brother of Back to Bananas sharing a common finish
11	DOLOMITE IS MY NAME	6b+	6	14m	Short and stout. Hug the arete

OBELISK

WADI AL AKHU



#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
12	AL MAHAR	7a	7	16m	Intricate and diverse
13	AL JAMAL A'DAHABI	6c	7	16m	Fantastic smooth sculpted marble holds
14	MIYA MIYA	5c+	7	16m	Corner crack with a sting in the tail. Shared first bolt
15	AL FAWAKEH AL MUHARAMAH	7a+	6	16m	Consistent from the first move to the last
16	TADREEK AKTHAR	6c+	8	16m	Boulder off the ground and then sustained to the top

Obelisk offers some of the most enjoyable climbing in Wadi Al Akhu on very compact and sculpted stone.

The developer's set their basecamp beneath Febbre del Deserto. Rats have been spotted so hang up your rope if you plan to stash it.

Carlo climbing Mahar, the dowry, Obelisk sector, October 31, 2019



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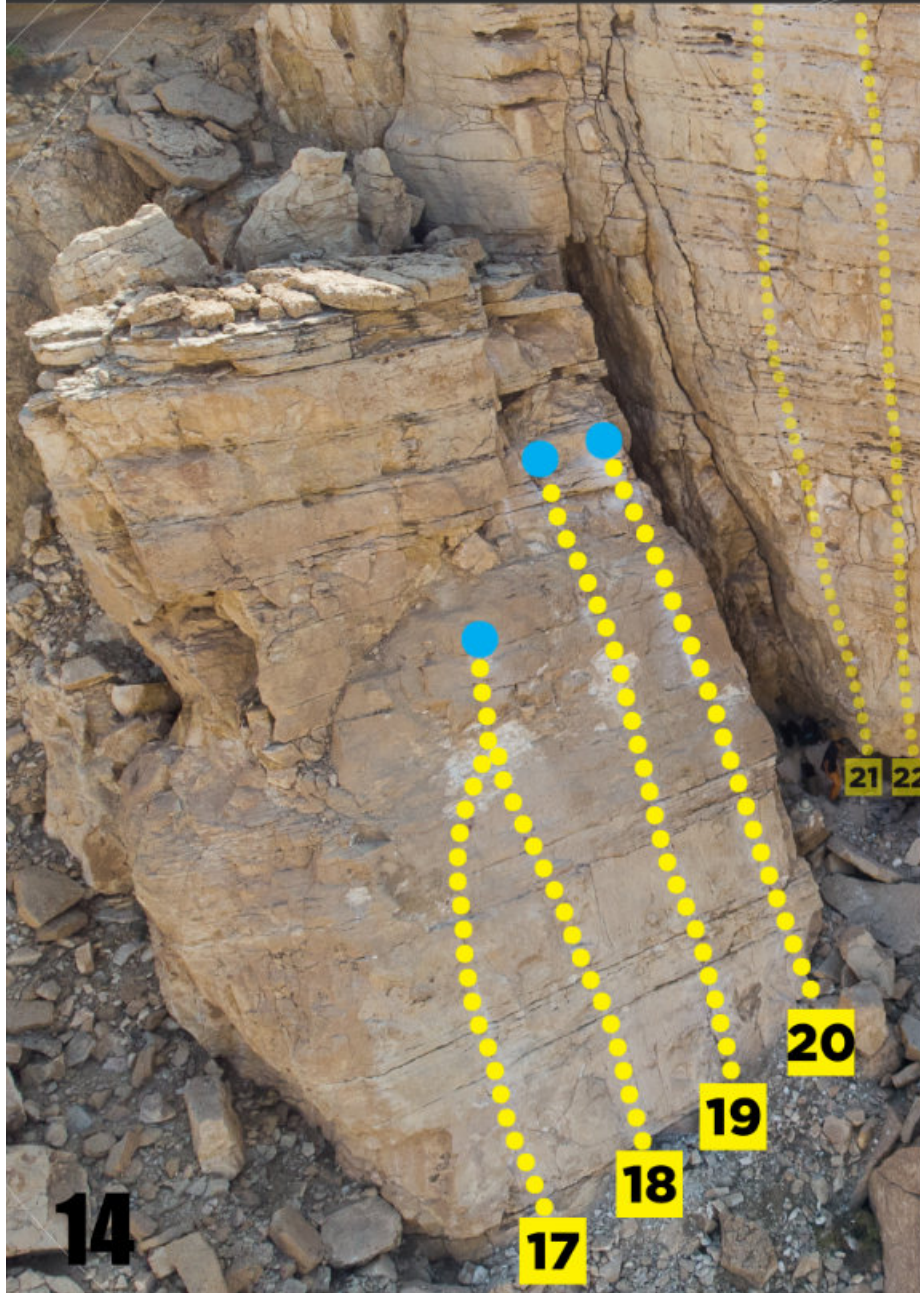


Read climbing Forbidden Fruit, Al Fawakeh Al Muharamah, October 31, 2019

All photos W.S. Lawrence

SLAB

WADI AL AKHU



#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
17	CINDARELLA	5a	6	10m	Cindarella and Giac e Gas share a common anchor
18	GIAC E GAS	4	5	10m	
19	LUCIFERO	5a	6	12m	
20	TOBIA	4	6	12m	

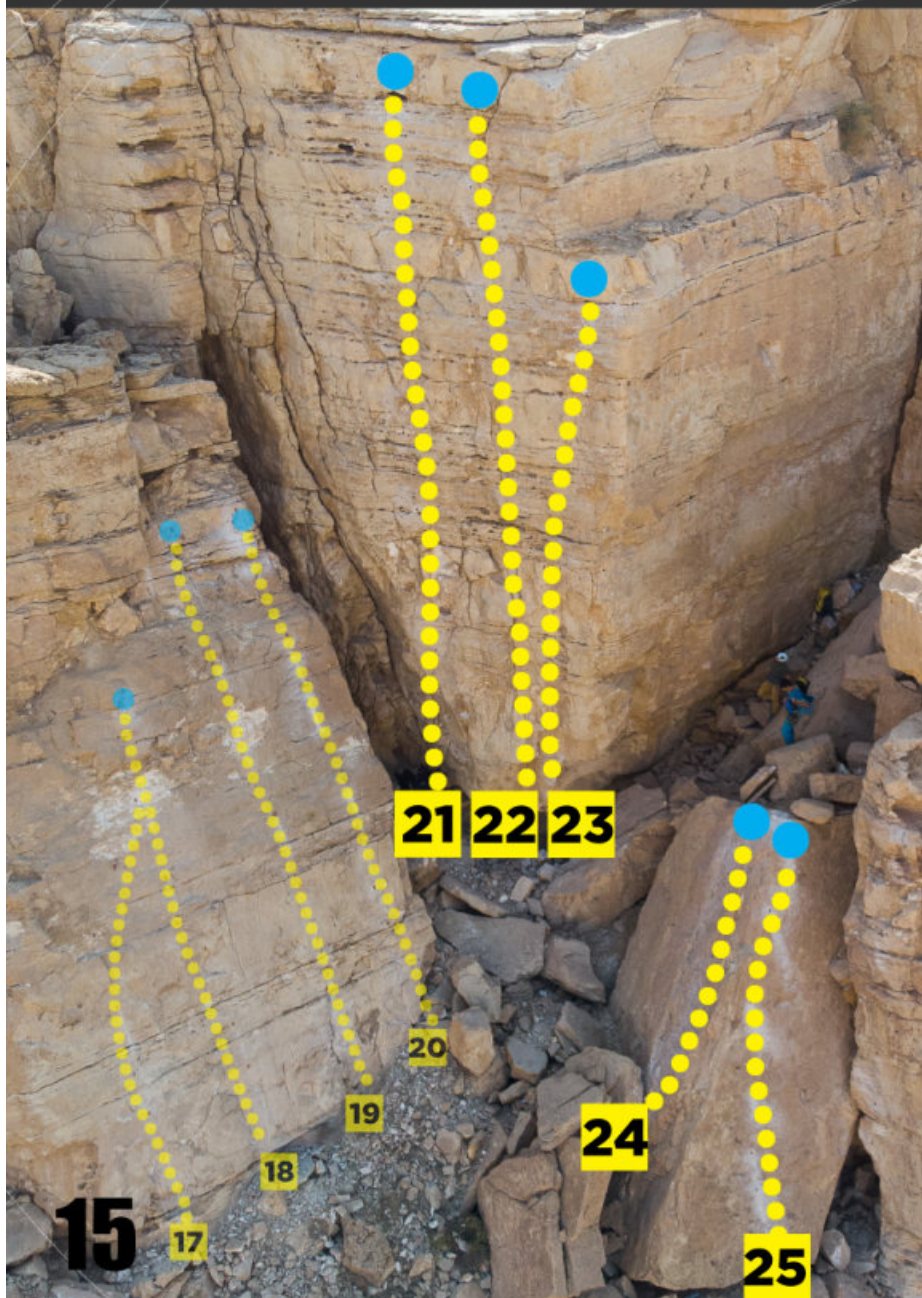


Slab sector has the highest concentration of easy low angle climbs making it a good warm up and school for new climbers.

A lot of loose blocks were cleaned in this sector and the rock remains dusty. Climbers pay attention. Wear a helmet.

SLAB

WADI AL AKHU



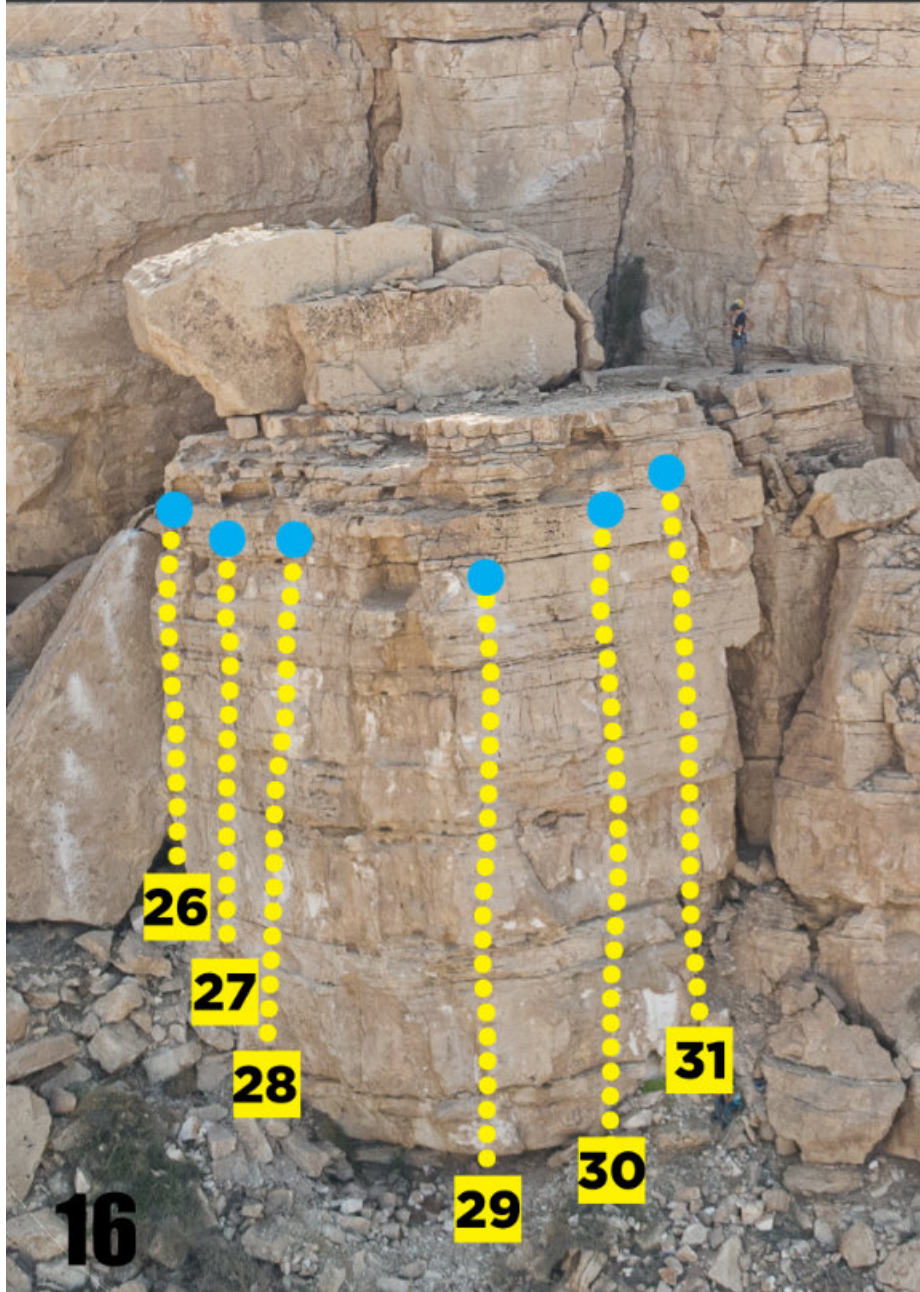
#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
21	THE CONSTANT GARDENER	6b	9	18m	Named for the amount of cleaning required to bring Wadi Al Akhu to life
22	MORNING BEAT	6b+	8	18m	Intended to stay left of the bolt line. Mandatory crux
23	TOO OLD TO DIE YOUNG	7a	7	16m	Intended to stay right of the bolt line. Mandatory crux
24	LIL TADREEB	3	3	5m	A short and very easy slab for teaching
25	RAGE AGAINST THE SPEED BUMPS	5	5	8m	The seemingly blank red slab

Contrasting the slabs are The Constant Gardener and its neighbours, which offer adventurous and committing climbing.

The routes were cleaned during the work, yet remain dusty. Climbers pay attention. Helmets are strongly encouraged.

AL A'AMUDU

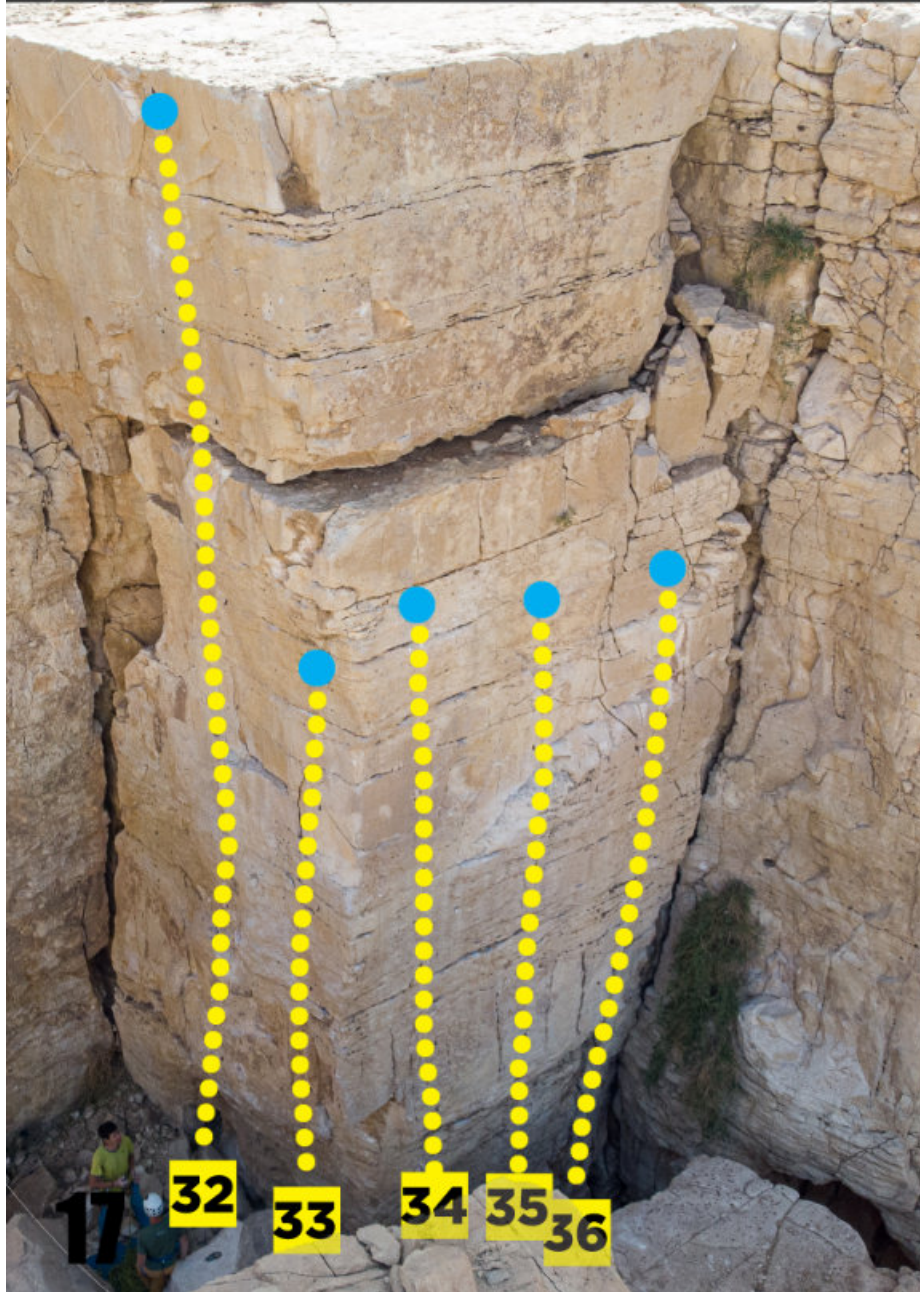
WADI AL AKHU



#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
26	SALAM, HOB WA TASALOQ	6a	5	10m	Peace, Love and Climbing
27	ESHTAGT LAK YAL BARD	6a+	5	10m	I miss you, cold
28	FAREEG TANDEEF HARIQ	6a	6	12m	Hariq Cleaning Team
29	TATHKERA H ELA EUROPA	6b+	7	16m	Ticket to Europe
30	BEDOON MOHAY	6a	6	16m	Without Water
31	DAMA'AH	6b	6	16m	Tear drops. Fantastic holds on the face

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Al A'amudu - The Pillar. A lot of blood, sweat and love went into uncovering these very enjoyable moderates.

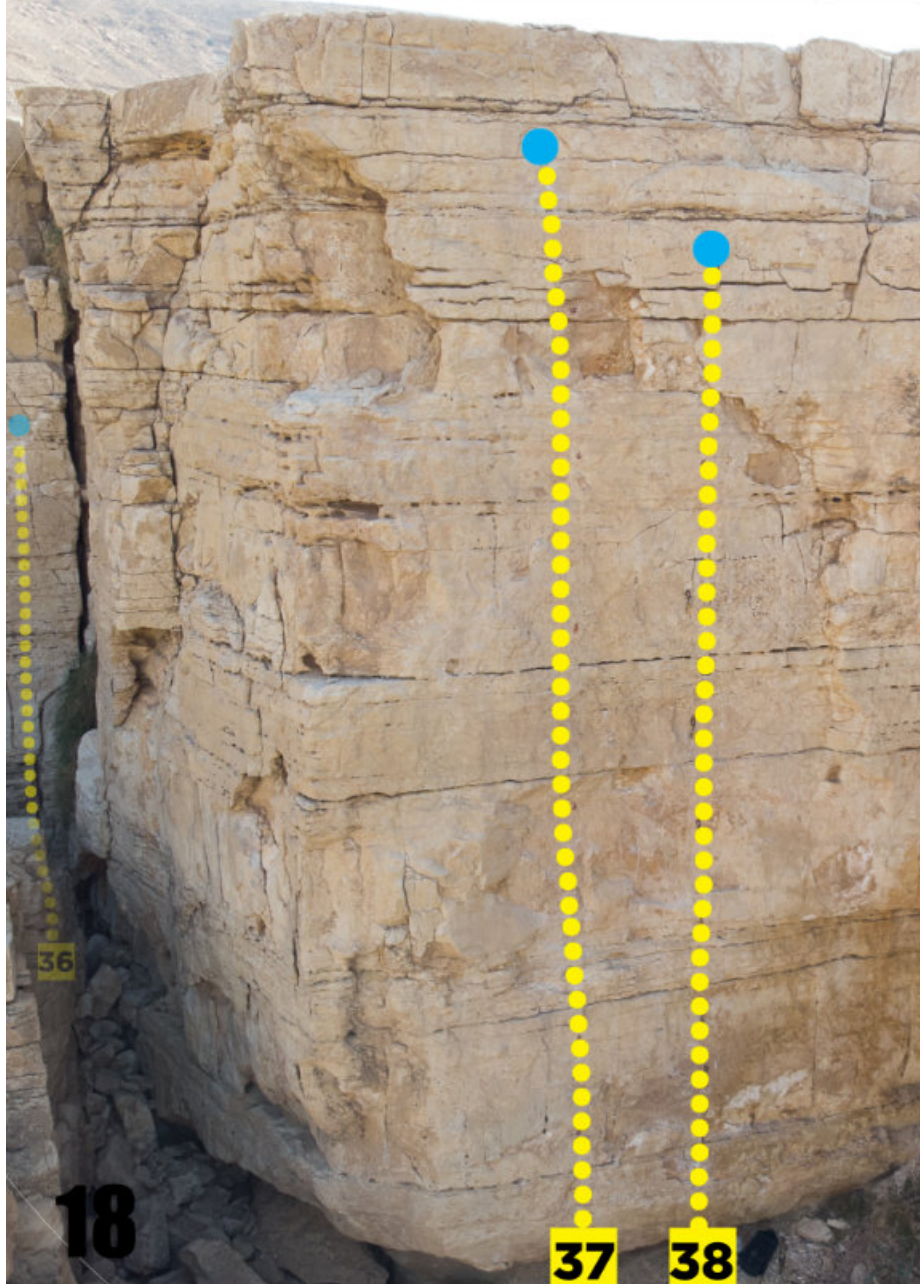


#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
32	SALAM ALYNA	6c+	8	18m	Peace be upon us. Long and beautiful
33	OPEN CONCEPT	6b	5	12m	Left side of the arete. Can pre-clip the 2nd bolt from the ground
34	KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES'	6c	6	14m	Right side of the arete
35	RUKHAMI ALL NIGHT	6c+	6	14m	Stout face climbing on pockets
36	MAZBOUT	6a+	7	15m	Begins bridging in the corner

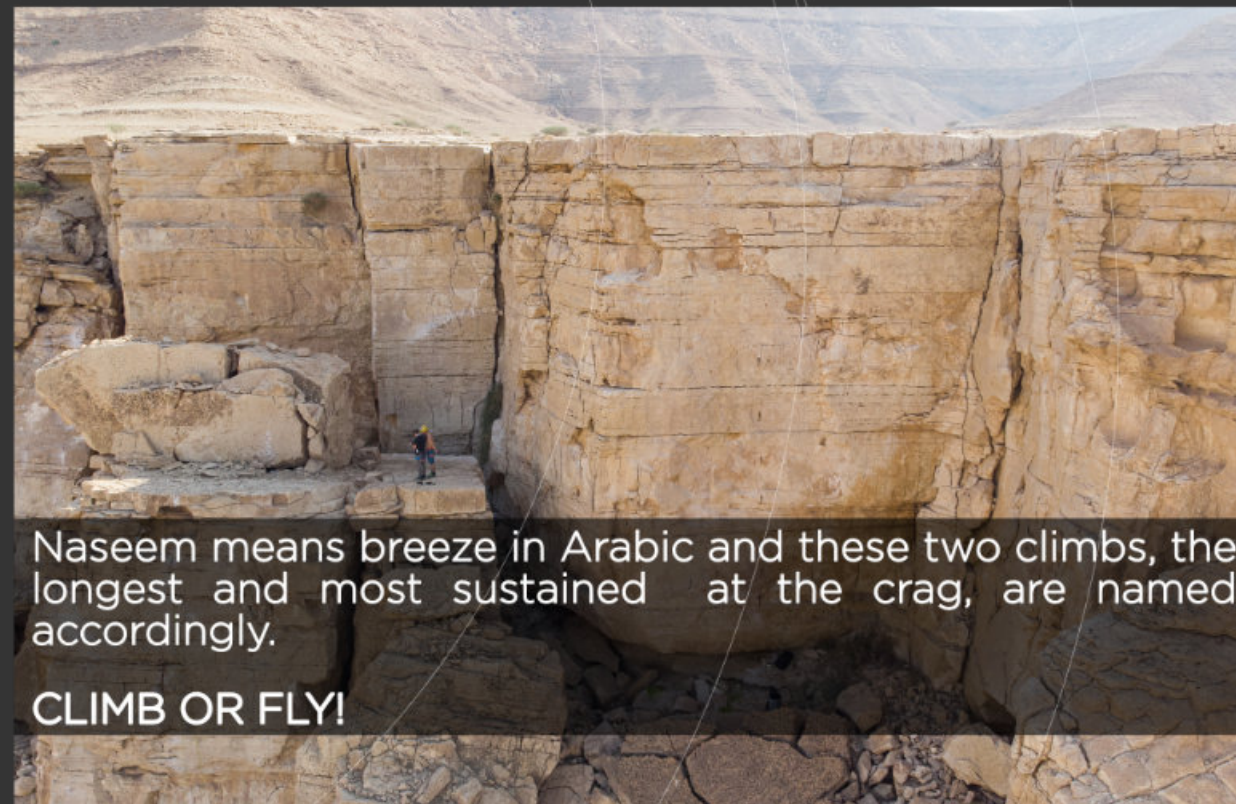
The Souq is nestled in behind Al A'amudu and offers some of the best quality and cleanest stone in Wadi Al Akhu - the sculpted marble will have you wishing that the routes were longer.

NASEEM

WADI AL AKHU



#	ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION
37	RUN, BOY, RUN	7a	8	21m	Airy, intricate and athletic
38	A MOMENT APART	7a+	8	20m	Brilliant. A cruxier version of its neighbour



Naseem means breeze in Arabic and these two climbs, the longest and most sustained at the crag, are named accordingly.

CLIMB OR FLY!

CLIMBS IN ORDER OF DIFFICULTY

ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION	AUTHORS	FIRST ASCENT	SECTOR	PAGE	ORIENTATION
LIL TADREEB	3	3	5m	A short and very easy slab for teaching	A.Alabdu	A.Alabdu	Slab	15	East North East
GIAC E GAS	4	5	10m		P.Lotito	W.Lawrence	Slab	14	North
TOBIA	4	6	12m		P.Lotito	P.Lotito	Slab	14	North
RAGE AGAINST THE SPEED BUMPS	5	5	8m	The seemingly blank red slab	C.Giuliberti	A.Alabdu	Slab	15	North East
LAITH	5a	6	12m	Both routes share a common anchor.	A.Alabdu	A.Alabdu	The Twins	9	North
FARIS	5a	6	12m	Using stacked stones and beginning from the lip of the boulder these routes are 5a. *Preclip 2nd bolt for safety	A.Alabdu	A.Alabdu	The Twins	9	North
CINDARELLA	5a	6	10m	Cindarella and Giac e Gas share a common anchor	P.Lotito	P.Lotito	Slab	14	North
LUCIFERO	5a	6	12m		P.Lotito	P.Lotito	Slab	14	North
ZAWIYAT AL AKHU	5b	10	18m	Stemming corner	A.Alabdu	A.Alabdu	Al Akhu	7	North
MIYA MIYA	5c+	7	16m	Corner crack with a sting in the tail. Shared first bolt	R.Macadam	A.Alabdu	Obelisk	12	East
SALAM, HOB WA TASALOQ	6a	5	10m	Peace, Love and Climbing	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Al A'amudu	16	East
FAREEG TANDEEF HARIQ	6a	6	12m	Hariq Cleaning Team	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Al A'amudu	16	East
BEDOON MOYAH	6a	6	16m	Without Water	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Al A'amudu	16	North
CLIMBERS ON MARS	6a+	7	18m	Little brother of Back to Bananas sharing a common finish.	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Obelisk	11	North

CLIMBS IN ORDER OF DIFFICULTY

ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION	AUTHORS	FIRST ASCENT	SECTOR	PAGE	ORIENTATION
ESHTAGT LAK YAL	6a+	5	10m	I Miss You, Cold	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Al A'amudu	16	East
MAZBOUT	6a+	7	15m	Begins bridging in the corner	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Souq	17	North
THE CONSTANT GARDENER	6b	9	18m	Named for the amount of cleaning required to bring Wadfi Al Akhuto life	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Slab	15	East North East
DAMA'AH	6b	6	16m	Tear drops. Fantastic holds on the face	A.Alabdu	A.Alabdu	Al A'amudu	16	North
OPEN CONCEPT	6b	5	12m	Left side of the arete. Can pre-clip the 2nd bolt from the ground	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Souq	17	East
AL AKHU	6b+	10	18m	Wonderfully sustained climbing in the flared crack system	M.Miguel Refitted P.Lotito	M. Miquel, R.Macadam after	Al Akhu	7	North
DOLOMITE IS MY NAME	6b+	6	16m	Short and stout. Hug the arete	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Obelisk	11	West
MORNING BEAT	6b+	8	18m	Intended to stay left of the bolt line. Mandatory crux	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Slab	15	East North East
TATHKERAH ELA EUROPA	6b+	7	16m	Ticket to Europe	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Al A'amudu	16	North
FEBBRE DEL DESERTO	6c	14	20m	An old top-rope line cleaned extensively and bolted for lead	P.Lotito	P.Lotito	Obelisk	11	North
BACK TO BANANAS	6c	10	18m	Balancy and thoughtful climbing on the arete	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Obelisk	11	East
AL JAMAL A'DAHABI	6c	7	16m	Fantastic smooth sculpted marble holds	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Obelisk	12	North
KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES'	6c	6	14m	Right side of the arete	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Souq	17	North
TADREEK AKTHAR	6c+	8	16m	Boulder off the ground then sustained to the top	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Obelisk	12	East

CLIMBS IN ORDER OF DIFFICULTY

ROUTE NAME	GRADE	BOLTS	LENGTH	DESCRIPTION	AUTHORS	FIRST ASCENT	SECTOR	PAGE	ORIENTATION
RUKHAMI ALL NIGHT	6c+	6	14m	Stout face climbing on pockets	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Souq	17	North
MENTE FOTTUTA	7a	13	20m	Direct line. Crimpy and cruxy	P.Lotito	C.Giuliberti	Obelisk	11	North
AL MAHAR	7a	7	16m	Intricate and diverse	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Obelisk	12	North
TOO OLD TO DIE YOUNG	7a	7	14m	Intended to stay right of the bolt line. Mandatory crux	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Slab	15	East North East
SALAM ALYNA	7a	8	18m	Peace be upon us. Long and beautiful	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Souq	17	East
RUN, BOY, RUN	7a	8	20m	Airy, intricate and athletic	P.Lotito	P.Lotito	Naseem Wall	18	North
SKY AND SAND	7a+	13	20m	Right variation. Intended to climb right of bolt line. Common top half	P.Lotito	P.Lotito	Obelisk	11	East
AL FAWAKEH AL MUHARAMAH	7a+	6	16m	Consistent from the first move to the last	R.Macadam	R.Macadam	Obelisk	12	East
A MOMENT APART	7a+	8	20m	Brilliant. A cruxier version of its neighbour	P.Lotito	P.Lotito	Naseem Wall	18	North
MATTER FE AL-MATAAR	7b+	8	16m	Boulder problem. Crux clipping the 3rd bolt	C.Giuliberti	C.Giuliberti	Obelisk	11	East



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