

ABAK (3523¹ Meter)

Friday, October 17, 2003

My old friend Fred G. being on a business trip to Tehran and having some spare time I had the moral obligation to organize a hike!

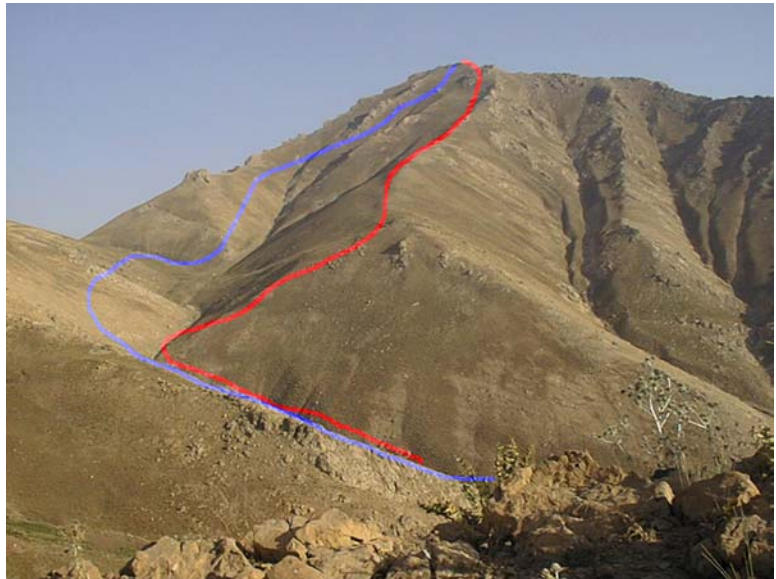
He is so much in love with our mountains and the country in general that sometimes I think the main goal of his visits is not so much his business but a hike in the mountains!

Our mountaineering spiritual guide Majid S. not being around and I just riving from a week long trip abroad with work piled up; I thought that a one-day excursion would be enough. The most obvious choices close to Tehran are for me Abak and Kolumbastak. I avoid Tochal because it is so close to Tehran that you do not feel as though you are really out of the city. There are just too many climbers, especially on a Friday. The vertical drop being almost 2000 meters the climb is also a little too long and demanding for a relaxed hike.

Kolumbastak and Abak are both close to ski areas, Dizin and Shemshak respectively. They both seem "just right" for a one-day hike. They are also good choices for ski touring close to Tehran in the winter.

We ended up choosing Abak. It would be my nth climb but I didn't mind because it is always pleasant to be in the Shemshak area where my friend Tezi B. has a place just at the foot of what is the ski slope during the winter where we can stop for coffee and slightly more on our way back! We also have the chance to run into one of our many Shemshaki friends, which is also pleasant since we usually get to see them only on skis during the winter.

Fred G., Massoud G., Marco D. and Tommy² were of the party.



Abak view, from the Shemshak crest. Red: our way up; Blue: our way down.

We started climbing at about 8 in the morning and reached the top at about a quarter to 12. Although the net vertical drop is only about 1000 meters, I estimate the actual climbing to be a good 200 meters more because of the couple of small valleys that you have to cross forcing you to loose altitude.

On the way down, we saw Tezi, whom I had told that we would be in the area and Ali B.³ who had come up to the Shemshak peak (abt 3004 meters) with their mountain bikes.

We were back at Tezis' early in the afternoon on time for refreshments!

J-M Houtcieff

PS: Compliments to Massoud G. for having done so well on his first climb with us.

¹ I had the altitude as 3600 meter in my previous reports but I now rely on my GPS, which should give more accurate readings.

² My dog.

³ An old friend, all around sportsman and ski instructor. He has one of the best classical skiing styles that I have seen.