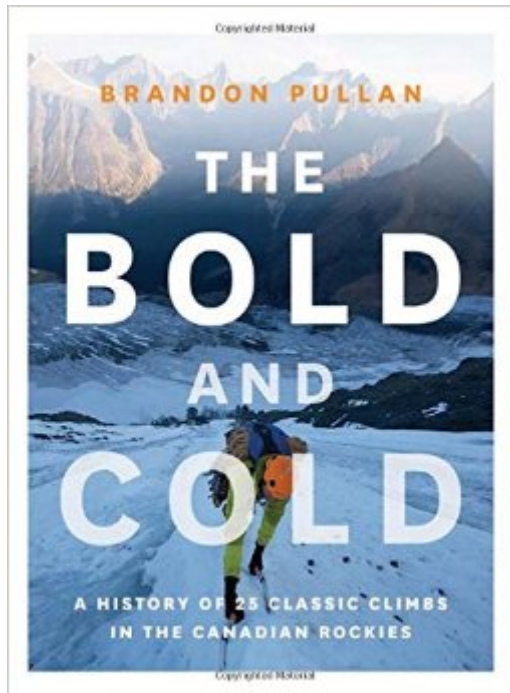


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The Bold And Cold: A History Of 25 Classic Climbs In The Canadian Rockies



Synopsis

Over the past 100 years, climbers have been pushing standards in the Canadian Rockies. From long alpine ridges to steep north faces, the Rockies are synonymous with cutting edge ascents. Peaks such as Robson, Chephren, Kitchener, Twins and Alberta elude the many and reward the few. Many of the big faces were climbed between the 1960s and 1990, the golden age of alpinism in the Rockies. The men and women who first were part of the golden age set high standards. Future alpinists read old journals and guidebooks, hoping to experience what the alpine pioneers did. The Rockies require a certain edge that comes with age, humiliation and failure, for most. Perhaps the ones who drink the most whiskey, dream of the biggest peaks and sleep with snowballs in their hands are the ones rewarded with the momentary triumph of coming to a draw with one of these mountains. This is not a guidebook, rather a story book by the people who risked life and limb to establish long and difficult climbs in the style of bold. What kind of climb? The scary kind of climb, the kind that will send most packing and the kind that rarely gets climbed, but often are dreamed about. They demand every inch of one's physical, mental and spiritual self being. The kind that might, has and could kill. These climbs are not for the weak of heart, the beginner or even the advanced climber. They are for a rare breed. A breed that through experience in harsh and unpleasant situations have honed their skills in a manner that allows them to ante up. The mountains dictate the route and conditions, the climbers dictate the style. These routes are perhaps enjoyed best through the words of others, the pictures taken with frosty lenses and numb fingers, the stories told by the bold souls who knowingly stepped into the spiritual, mental and physical struggle these mountains offer. Suffering, unforgiving circumstances, where if mistakes are made there is a price to pay. The grades are trivial, for it is the experience, not the difficulty that defines the route. These are not any-given-weekend routes. Many factors must align for an ascent to go down, conditions of both the route and the climber must be tip top. These routes are for occasions when the mind and body need a check, a good check. With an increasing number of people entering the world of climbing, it is important to keep these stories close. To know a small group of climbers including Canadian, European, American and South Africans made bold decisions that brought the world's attention to Canada. Legends were born, men died. The mountains made of rotten rock, ice and snow kept the stakes high. Once the summits were had, the walls had to be had. Nearly 100 years after the rise of alpinism in Europe, it began in Canada. The 1860s are for Europe what the 1960s are for Canada. The peaks had been climbed and it was time for the faces. The pursuit of difficulty on steep terrain, ice and rock marked the dawn of the golden era and the 25 bold and cold.

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Customer Reviews

A great book similar to Fifty Classic Climbs of North America, but just on the Canadian Rockies. Armchair alpinists and adventurers will enjoy this as much as the hard-core climbers looking to make a name for themselves. No one has done all of these 25 climbs and they have withstood the test of time as tough climbs. David Cheeseman did the first ascents of four of the five hardest climbs in the book, but none are easy. The names inspire or intimidate the knowing climber who has dealt with the loose rock, sub-zero cold, long winter nights, and remoteness of the big mountains in Canada. I just read The Calling by Barry Blanchard to get a perspective on what it was like to do some of these climbs as first ascents.....and these guys are tough!

At first glance, this book appears to be what the subtitle states: a history of 25 classic climbs in the Canadian Rockies. But it's so much more. Yes, it's a history of the climbs, and to have this history all in one book and written about with such passion by both the author and contributors (some of the climbers who did the first climbs), is a feat in itself. To include such a great selection of historical photos is another feat. But the most unique quality of The Bold and Cold is how it's presented and why. The book and its title were imagined in the '80's, while the author acquired some of the original notes in 2005. He subsequently climbed about half the climbs over the following 5 years. The author - and his guide Urs Kallen - have presented the climbs in order of difficulty as test pieces for those to come, and as inspiration for climbers to 'climb boldly and have adventures'. Throughout the book, there are comments of routes yet to be completed and how all 25 climbs have yet to be completed by one person. With the tick-list nature of the book, and so much climbing left to do, this book will

undoubtedly (and deservedly) inspire more than one generation of Canadian Rockies climbers. And it just might receive the highest possible praise from readers: becoming a Canadian climbing cult classic. Congrats on completing such a huge undertaking. A strong 5 stars. My only negative comments are for the publisher: the text font is a bit small; the font on the flaps and back cover is rather large and the neon green pages are distracting. I hope that a second edition fixes these distractions.

Great photos and classic tales of hard, scary climbs! What else could you want?

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