

ANNEX 36

SURVEY OF HIGH MOUNTAIN ACTIVITIES IN THE SAN JOSÉ DE MAIPO COMMUNE

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this survey is to describe the main attractions that the commune of San José de Maipo has to offer in terms of mountain activities and adventure sports. The survey, which is by no means exhaustive, is based on publicly-available information on the localities in the direct area of influence of the Project.

More specifically, the information on high mountain activities in San José de Maipo needed for the survey was obtained from municipal agencies and the internet, mainly from the websites of tourist agencies operating in the area.

The activities and the areas where these activities take place are discussed in the following sections.

2 MAIN ACTIVITIES

The main mountain activities of the commune of San José de Maipo are: mountaineering, climbing, hiking, trekking, and skiing. In general, these activities take place in the upper basins of the Colorado, El Volcán and Yeso rivers, and include:

- Colorado river basin: walking, hiking, rambling, horseback riding, and adventure sports, such as mountaineering, trekking, sport climbing and traditional climbing.
- El Volcán river basin: walking, hiking, rambling, and adventure sports, such as mountaineering, trekking, randonee skiing, sport climbing, and traditional climbing and ice climbing.
- Yeso river basin: mountaineering, trekking and ice climbing.

The most popular mountain peaks of the area are listed in the table below:

Table 2.1
Principal Peaks of the San José de Maipo Commune

Area	Peak	Elevation (m.a.s.l.)
Yeso River Basin	Cerro Bello	5,200
	Cerro Aparejo	4,700
	Cerro Casa de Piedra	4,500
	Cerro Cuerno Blanco	5,000
	Cerro Nevado Los Piuquenes	6,000
El Volcán River Basin: La Engorda Stream Watershed	Cerro Marmolejo	6,100
	San José Volcano	5,856
	San José Cascade	3,500

Area	Peak	Elevation (m.a.s.l.)
El Volcán River Basin: Baños Morales Sector	Cerro Mesón Alto	5,257
	Punta Italia	5,200
	Cerro El Morado	4,490
	Cerro San Francisco	4,345
	Cerro Arenas	4,366
	Punta Zanzi	3,800
El Morado Stream Watershed	Loma Larga	5,400
	Cerro Cortaderas	5,200
Colorado River Basin	Tupungato Volcano	6,500

3 DEVELOPMENT AREAS

The areas where these activities take place include El Manzano, Los Maitenes, El Alfalfal, the Olivares river zone, the area surrounding the El Yeso Reservoir, Baños Morales and Lo Valdés.

The El Manzano area is known for its mountain climbing and free climbing activities.

Common activities in Los Maitenes and El Alfalfal are mountain climbing, walking, hiking and geological and archaeological research. There are many ascent possibilities in the area of the Olivares river, ranging from medium to high altitude, and requiring a high degree of both physical and psychological effort. These activities, practiced by experienced mountaineers, take place mostly during the spring and summer, and decline during the colder season due to unfavorable weather conditions.

The area surrounding the El Yeso Reservoir is also popular with mountain climbers. Particularly noteworthy are the tourist units Montañas and Mesón Alto. The former is better known to tourists, while the latter is popular with experienced mountaineers who usually do not require the services provided by tour operators. Once again, activities are mostly limited to the months of spring and summer, and include rock, ice and mixed climbing, with heights ranging from 2,324 m (Loma de Diablo) in the locality of Melocotón, to 5,257 m (Mesón Alto).

Andinism is also practiced in the Baños Morales area, specifically in the El Morado National Park. Particularly popular are Lo Valdés (Mount Valdés, 3,620 m) and Valle Colina. Tourism is more developed in Lo Valdés than in Valle Colina, which is preferred by experienced mountaineers who usually do not require the services provided by tour operators.

Lo Valdés presents the best conditions for rock climbing in the area. The German Andean Club has courses for beginners and experts, interested in learning or improving mountain climbing techniques. Also, many sports persons come to this area, particularly to Punta Zanzi, to train. Activities take place year-round, depending on the weather conditions.

Table 3.1 below summarizes the activities developed in the upper basins of the Colorado, El Volcán and Yeso rivers. The routes of the high mountain activities developed in the commune of San José de Maipo are included in Annex 9.

Table 3.1
Summary of Mountain Activities in the Upper Basins of the Colorado, El Volcán and Yeso Rivers

Activity	Peak or Attraction	Location	Characteristics	Season
Sport Climbing	El Manzano Crag	El Manzano	Wall with small grips. Height: up to 30 meters	All year
	Piedra Rommel		Wall and overhang. Height: 15 meters	All year
	Torrecillas I		Alpine climbing zone. Multi-pitch (6+) climbing walls. Height: up to 250 meters	All year, except winter
	Torrecillas II			
	Torrecillas III			
	Punta Zanzi	Baños Morales	Good cracks and chimneys; multi-pitch (5+) climbing. Height: up to 250 meters	November - April
	Mesoncito Valley Rock Needles	Baños Morales	The Mesoncito Valley is hidden behind Cerro Arenas. It is more a high plain than a valley, located approximately 1,000 meters above the El Morado Valley. Height: up to 300 meters	Summer
	La Engorda Columns	La Engorda Stream Watershed	The site was discovered in 2004. Easy access. Height: up to 70 meters	November - April
Arenas Boulders	Arenas - Alto Volcán Canyon	Rocky area with varying degrees of difficulty	All year, except winter	
Traditional Climbing	Hitchcock	Baños Morales	Wall located at the base of Punta Zanzi. Height: up to 120 meters	
	La Mina		Wall located on the way to Lo Valdés	All year, except winter
	Alfalfal – Colorado Valley	Alfalfal	There are many good places on one side of the river, before arriving at Alfalfal.	--
	Chagual Big Wall		GENER authorization required	--
	San Gabriel Spurs	San Gabriel	These rock formations are located on the road to the village of San Gabriel	September - May
	San Gabriel Cliff		Granite cliff of up to 400 meters	October - May
	Las Melosas	10km south of San Gabriel	A series of granitic rocks that appear along the Maipo River Valley	All year

Activity	Peak or Attraction	Location	Characteristics	Season
Ice climbing	San José Volcano Cascades	Baños Morales	Ice cascades. Danger of falling ice.	Autumn, spring and, some years, summer
	Marmolejo Cascades	El Morado Canyon, Baños Morales	Very big cascades, visible from the road. Height: 300 meters	Autumn, spring, and some years, summer
	Colgante del Morado	El Morado Canyon, Baños Morales	Glacial ice at 90° and more slope angle. Danger of ice falling.	All year, depending on the access chosen
	El Yeso Reservoir Cascades	Yeso River Basin	A single 100-meter cascade. Altitude: 3,000 meters	Only in winter
Randonee Skiing	El Morado Viewpoint	El Morado National Park, Baños Morales	Altitude: 3,700 m.a.s.l.	July - September
Alpine Climbing	El Morado	El Morado National Park, Baños Morales	Walls along the 800 meters: rock, ice and mixed	--
	Mesón Alto	Baños Morales	Walls along the 1,000 meters, some are mixed	--
	Cerro Arenas	Baños Morales	Rock above 1,300m; ice in winter.	--
	Cerro San Francisco	El Morado National Park, Baños Morales	Rock and ice walls of more than 800 meters; loose rocks.	--
	Loma Larga	Baños Morales	Located at the end of the El Morado Basin, in an isolated, highly glaciated site. Long, easy ascent, ideal for altitude acclimation.	--
	Cerro Cortaderas	El Morado Canyon, to the east of Laguna del Morado, near Punta Italia and Yamakawa	Part of the group of mountains surrounding Loma Larga. A bit hidden behind a lateral valley, between Punta Italia and Loma Larga.	--
	Cerro Yamakawa	Cortaderas Canyon, to the east of Laguna del Morado (El Morado Canyon), near Cerro Cortaderas and Punta Italia	Part of the group of mountains surrounding the Loma Larga massif. Located in a lateral valley of the El Morado Canyon, between Punta Italia and Loma Larga. Altitude: 4,900 m.a.s.l.	--

Activity	Peak or Attraction	Location	Characteristics	Season
Alpine Climbing	Punta Italia	Baños Morales	Part of the group of mountains surrounding Loma Larga. Located between Cerro Yamakawa and Loma Larga.	--

Source: Website on climbing, mountaineering and trekking in the Andes in Chile: www.escalando.cl

4 TOURISM OPERATORS

The main mountaineering operators of the area, bring together sports lovers from the Metropolitan Region around climbing, skiing, mountaineering and trekking activities. Through courses, expeditions, and national and international competitions, they bring together people from the different mountain sports disciplines. These operators are listed in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1
San José de Maipo Mountain Sports Operators

Organization / Club	Commune
Cumbres Andinas Mountain Club	San José de Maipo
Chiquillán Andean Club	San José de Maipo
German Andean Club	Santiago
Santiago Andinism and Excursion Association (ASAE)	Santiago
Chilean Andinism Federation	Santiago

Source: www.escalando.cl