

# Scottish Adventurer Ricky Munday announces 38-day South America 3 Peaks Expedition to High Andes of Argentina

Submitted by: Ricky Munday

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PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI, August 12, 2013 – Scottish Adventurer & Aid Worker Ricky Munday (<http://blog.rickymunday.com>), 36, today announced that he will lead an international team on a 38-day expedition into the remote and arid high plateau of the Puna de Atacama in the Andes of northern Argentina. The South America 3 Peaks Expedition (<http://www.facebook.com/southamerica3peaks>) will commence in late December this year. Ricky explained more about the expedition objectives:

“Our main mountaineering objective is to climb the three highest mountains in South America, which are all over 6,700m. That’s over five times higher than the UK’s highest mountain, Ben Nevis! We’ll face extreme physical conditions. At that altitude, the amount of oxygen available is less than half (43%) compared to sea level, which places severe demands on our cardiovascular and respiratory systems. We’ve planned a careful acclimatisation program that includes climbs on three other peaks between 4,500m and 6,100m to help our bodies adapt to the thin air. We’ll also face summit temperatures below minus 30 degrees C, extremely dry air and strong winds, which are prevalent in the Puna. We’re grateful that Montane (<http://www.montane.co.uk>) are supporting the expedition by providing specialist clothing that will protect us from the elements and increase our chances of success”

Once acclimatised, the team, consisting of Ricky, David Kenealy (36, Ireland) and Carolina Morales (42, Venezuela), will climb Monte Pissis (6,795m), Ojos del Salado (6,893m) and finally Aconcagua (6,959m) via the False Polish Glacier Route. If the team succeeds, Carolina would become the first Venezuelan woman to climb all three mountains, and the team would be the first to climb all three mountains in one extended expedition.

During the descent phases of the expedition, the team will collect rock and snow samples for two scientific research projects. Snow samples will be analysed by researchers at the University of Venice to help quantify mountain glacier thinning. Since glaciers are the source of many of the world’s major rivers, this thinning has an impact on freshwater availability for many populations. Rock samples will be sent to researchers at the University of Arizona to help understand how microbes interact with bedrock in the high mountain environment. Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation (<http://www.adventurescience.org>) are coordinating this collaboration. In addition, the team will create geo-tagged images of glaciers to contribute to Project Pressure (<http://www.project-pressure.org>)’s crowd-sourced glacier atlas, which is documenting the world’s vanishing glaciers. Ricky explains more about the team’s motivation to contribute to this scientific research:

“I believe that we all have a responsibility to contribute to a better understanding of our planet. In my case, I have the privilege of visiting places that many people can only dream about and I feel compelled to support researchers who would otherwise have no access to samples or data from those remote areas. My career in humanitarian aid is focused on supporting the most vulnerable people, but my own passion is understanding and protecting our planet.”

The team is also actively raising funds for Macmillan Cancer Support (<http://www.macmillan.org.uk>) in memory of Ricky’s twin uncles who both died from cancer. So far the team has raised over £1,000 on

their JustGiving (<http://www.justgiving.com/south-america3peaks>) page. To prepare for the expedition, the team has been training since late last year and has completed training trips to the Rocky Mountains in Canada, the highest volcanoes in Mexico (5,000m+), the West Highland Way in Scotland and an ascent of Mt. Roraima in the remote Gran Sabana of Venezuela. A training expedition to the Caucasus Range in Russia to climb Europe's highest mountain (Elbrus - 5,642m) gets underway this week. Both expeditions are part of a long-term project to climb the three highest peaks on every continent - the Triple 7 Summits (<http://www.rickymunday.com/expeditions.html>). Carolina, who has climbed above 5,000m only once before, explained more:

"I'm excited, but nervous, about this training expedition to Elbrus. Recently, the weather there has been very poor with winds up to 65 km/h and very low temperatures. We're hoping the weather improves this week and that we can acclimatise well enough before summit day. I'm proud to be representing Venezuela and the whole team are grateful for the amazing support from all of our sponsors and supporters".

The expedition is supported by Redefine BDL Hotels (<http://www.bdlhotels.co.uk>), Montane (<http://www.montane.co.uk>), Nite Watches (<http://www.nitewatches.co.uk>), Tiso (<http://www.tiso.co.uk>), Aquapac (<http://www.aquapac.net>) & Lyon Equipment (<http://www.lyon.co.uk/outdoor/>). For further information, photographs or to request an interview with Ricky Munday or other team members, please contact:

Ricky Munday

Tel: + 509-3701-1575 email: [ricky@rickymunday.com](mailto:ricky@rickymunday.com)

blog: [blog.rickymunday.com](http://blog.rickymunday.com) (<http://www.facebook.com/southamerica3peaks>) Skype: rickymunday

The South America 3 Peaks Expedition Facebook page is [www.facebook.com/southamerica3peaks](http://www.facebook.com/southamerica3peaks) (<http://www.facebook.com/southamerica3peaks>)

Ricky has been on mission in Haiti with the Red Cross since July 2012 and has an exceptional adventure pedigree. In 2004, he completed the 'toughest footrace' on earth, the Marathon des Sables, where he ran 220km in 6 days through the Sahara desert in temperatures up to 48 C. Since 2005, he has planned and completed mountaineering expeditions to 9 countries on 5 continents. He plans to complete the North America Twin Peaks Expedition in 2014 and to climb Mount Everest in 2015. During his Triple 7 Summits project he is attempting to climb the three highest peaks on every continent, a feat that has never been completed.

