

The alpine-like jagged arete of Bosigran Ridge, which dominates the foreground of the view from Bosigran itself, is a classic Cornish expedition. The ridge's setting, diverse climbing and length mark it out as one of the region's most famous climbs and should not be missed. In contrast to the open aspect of Bosigran Ridge is the deeply-incised dramatic gash of the Great Zawn, hidden only a short distance away from the ridge, but offering a very different experience in terms of both atmosphere and difficulty.

Mod to S

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HS to HVS

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E1 to E3

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E4 and up

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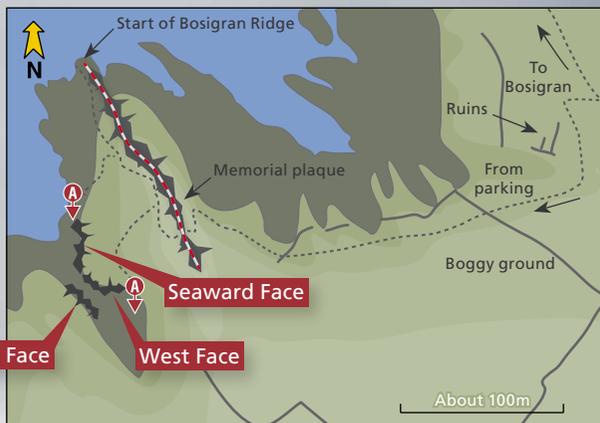
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Approach Area map page 199

Take the B3306 St Ives - Pendeen road to the prominent ruined mine buildings of Carn Galver and park in the National Trust car park. Follow the path that heads seaward, initially through bushes and then fields and over a couple of granite stiles. The path meets the coast path at some ruins. From this viewpoint the jagged crest of Bosigran Ridge is easily seen to the left. Cross the stream by the ruins and head across boggy ground to meet the ridge where a memorial plaque is bolted to the rock.



This is the best place to gear up for Bosigran Ridge and the starting point for the descent to the base of Bosigran Ridge and the Great Zawn. For both Bosigran Ridge and the Great Zawn, cross the ridge (up slope of the pinnacle with the memorial plaque) via a scramble to meet a narrow path on its opposite side. The descent and approaches are described in the relevant sections from this point.

Tides

The start of Bosigran Ridge is only accessible at lowish tides and in calm conditions. Great Zawn is a non-tidal venue, although in rough seas the base of the routes at the zawn's mouth will become wave-washed.

Conditions

Bosigran Ridge dries very quickly and is exposed to any sun that is going. Parts of the outer edges of the Great Zawn see the sun in the afternoon but the inner confines see little sun and take time to dry out after rain. In heavy seas the bases of both Bosigran Ridge and Great Zawn are wave-washed.



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Ashley Lewis poised above the crux-roof of the magnificent *The Dream/Liberator* (E3 6a) - page 217 - in the atmospheric Great Zawn at Bosigran. Photo: Virgil Scott



Bosigran Ridge

The majestic, serrated *Bosigran Ridge* (often called *Commando Ridge*) is one of the longest routes in the West Country, that combines sustained climbing with great rock, airy positions and expansive views.

Approach - Just before the ruined building remains on the approach from the parking, head left towards the ridge across some boggy ground and gain a gearing-up ledge just up and left from a memorial plaque on the face of the ridge itself. Cross the ridge at the col via a short downclimb on its opposite side and follow a path down hill next to the ridge until steeper ground requires a steep downclimb or abseil from insitu slings. Continue down to sea level ledges and traverse smooth rock and ledges around the base of the ridge to a belay ledge.

Tides - The base of the ridge is only reachable at lowish tides and in calm conditions. Great care must be taken to judge whether it is safe to traverse around the base of the ridge to the start.

Conditions - The climb dries quickly and the ridge itself gets the sun all day. The ridge is very exposed to the wind.

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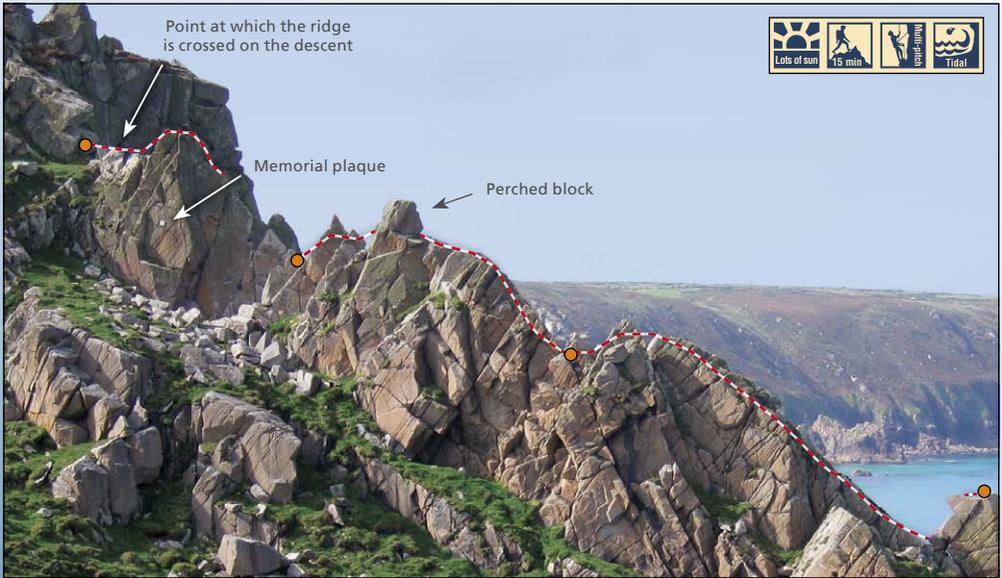
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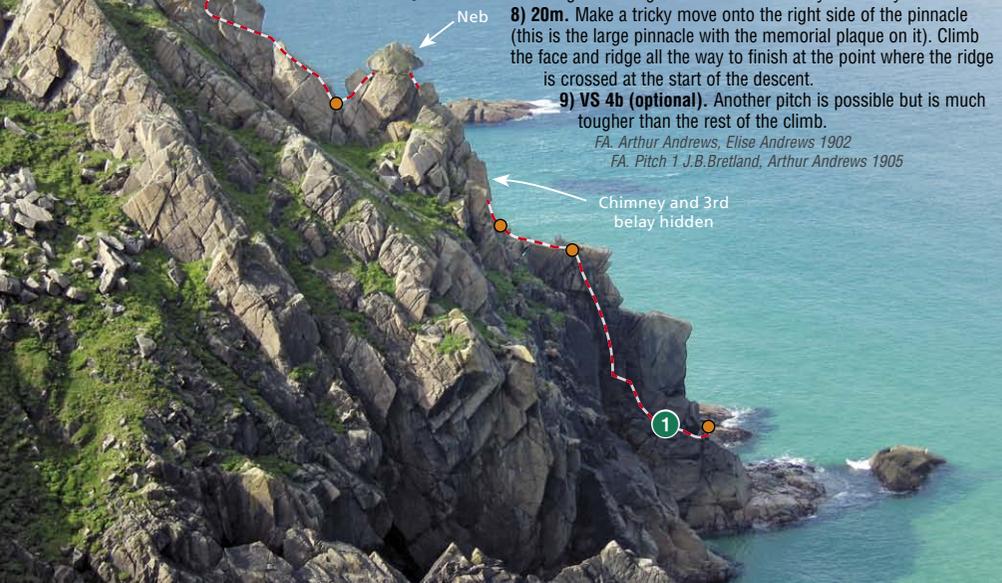
Passing through the gap at the end of the 4th pitch of *Bosigran Ridge* (VDiff) - *opposite*.



1 Bosigran Ridge. **Top 1** **LS0** **VDiff**

Continuously excellent climbing, brilliant rock, exhilarating situations and a stunning location make this the very best VDiff in the West Country. Although protection is always at hand, the exposure, sections of downclimbing and the traversing nature of the route call for all party members to be competent at the grade. Slings are very useful. Start at a belay ledge just before the arete.

- 1) 25m.** Move left around the arete to a ramp above the zawn. Move along to a corner at the end of the ramp. Climb the wall on its left on good holds, left and then back slightly right, to beneath a vertical crack. Climb the crack on superb holds to a belay on the ridge.



- 2) 10m.** Move along the easy-angled ridge to a belay at the base of an open corner that forms a chimney at its top.

- 3) 18m.** Climb the corner and chimney to a belay under a protruding neb.

- 4) 16m.** Move up left to beneath the neb, and then make a traverse left through a large gap and climb down to a belay at a col.

- 5) 17m.** Move up the ridge to where it steepens and move left to a traverse line. Follow the traverse line for about 5m and then climb a short corner up onto the ridge. Move along the ridge to a belay on its summit.

- 6) 30m.** Downclimb a corner on the right of the ridge (when looking up the ridge) and then scramble along easy ground to a belay in the next col.

- 7) 25m.** Move up the ridge to a perched block and traverse the foot ledge on its right. Descend awkwardly to a belay in the col.

- 8) 20m.** Make a tricky move onto the right side of the pinnacle (this is the large pinnacle with the memorial plaque on it). Climb the face and ridge all the way to finish at the point where the ridge is crossed at the start of the descent.

- 9) VS 4b (optional).** Another pitch is possible but is much tougher than the rest of the climb.

FA. Arthur Andrews, Elise Andrews 1902

FA. Pitch 1 J.B. Bretland, Arthur Andrews 1905

Chimney and 3rd belay hidden



1 Variety Show HVS 5a

A fine and friendly introduction to the delights of the Great Zawn, having plenty of atmosphere and outstanding climbing on its first pitch. Start right of the abseil approach at a narrow corner/groove that leads to a thin crack-line in the smooth wall.

1) 5a, 32m. Climb to, and then up the difficult corner/groove to better holds in the crack. Climb the crack to a move right into a small corner, and climb past a horizontal break to a stance.

2) 4b, 25m. Head up right to below a steep corner and climb this to finish on easier ground. Some loose blocks.

FAA. Trevor Peck, Barrie Biven, Cliff Fishwick 25.5.1958

FFA. Pat Littlejohn, Frank Cannings 23.5.1970

2 Green Cormorant Face. E2 5c

The front of the Seaward Face is taken centrally by this well-positioned and popular line. Start by negotiating 'The Crevasse' and then traversing 7m to a stance in a small corner.

Photo on page 4.

1) 5a, 20m. Move up steeply leftwards through a small overhang to a flake in the wall above and then on up to a horizontal break. From the horizontal break climb up either on the left or right to a good belay ledge.

2) 5c, 10m. Above the stance is a corner with a thin black crack in its right wall. Gain the crack, either direct, or from a ledge on the left, and climb it to a ledge and belay.

2a) E3 6a, 10m. A good variation up the corner to the left.

3) 4a, 20m. Finish up the groove and broken ground above.

FAA. John Deacon, Mike Banks 21.4.1957

FFA. Frank Cannings, Pat Littlejohn 12.9.1969 (1pt)



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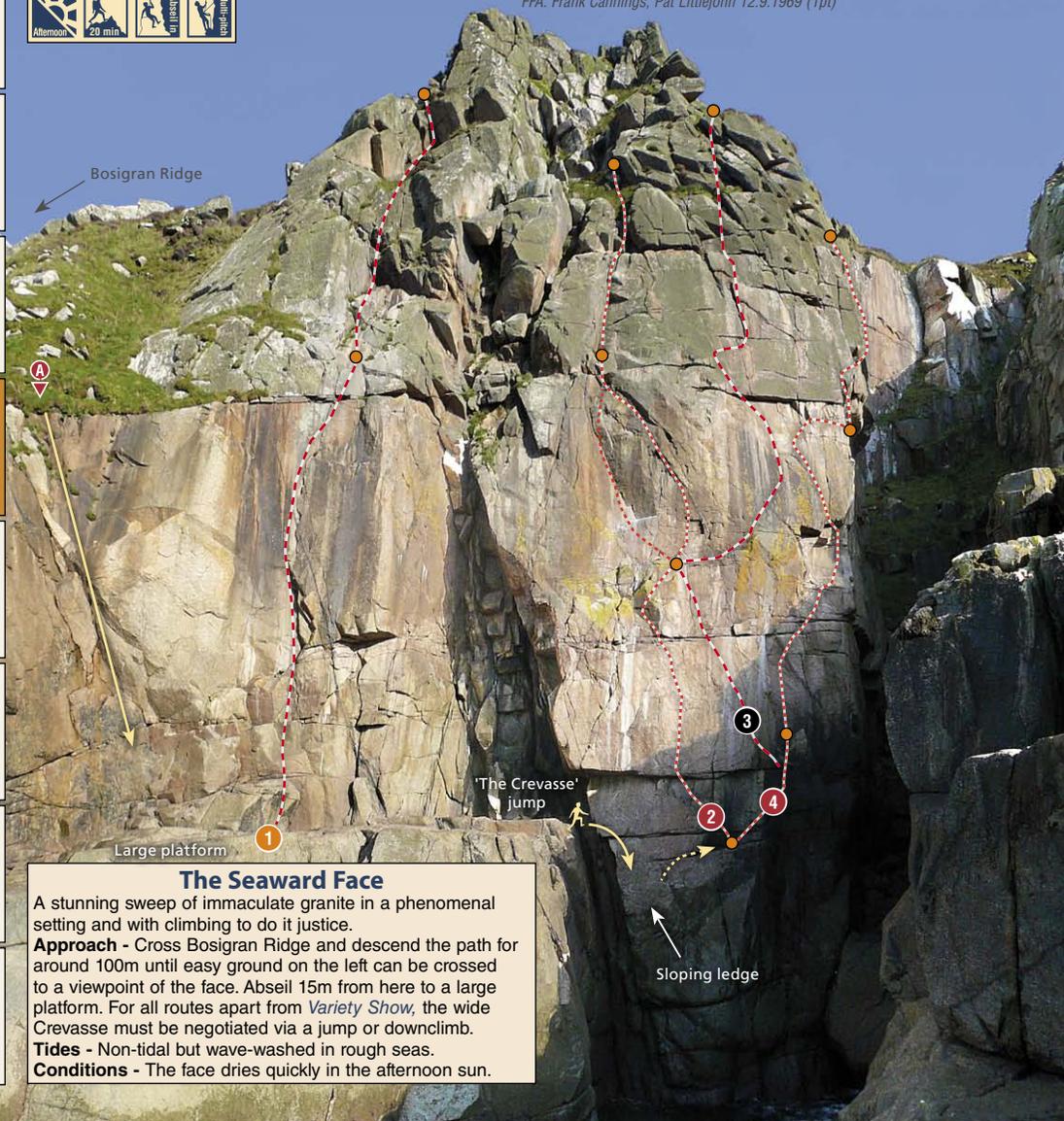
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The Seaward Face

A stunning sweep of immaculate granite in a phenomenal setting and with climbing to do it justice.

Approach - Cross Bosigran Ridge and descend the path for around 100m until easy ground on the left can be crossed to a viewpoint of the face. Abseil 15m from here to a large platform. For all routes apart from *Variety Show*, the wide Crevasse must be negotiated via a jump or downclimb.

Tides - Non-tidal but wave-washed in rough seas.

Conditions - The face dries quickly in the afternoon sun.



3 Deja Vu    **E4 5c**

The upper, thin blank wall of the Seaward Face is overcome by this airy, sweeping line located directly above the narrow strip of blue water at the bed of the zawn. Start by negotiating 'The Crevasse' and then traversing 7m to a stance in a small corner.

1) 5b, 22m. Traverse right, around the arete into another corner and then up a few metres, from where a rising traverse left, back around the arete and across the wall leads to a break. Climb the short corner above to a good belay ledge.

2) 5c, 30m. Traverse right from the belay to below a steep high-angled slab and climb this boldly to an easing at a left-trending shallow ramp-line. Follow this to the overhang above and move to its left end before working back right again above it to cracks that lead to the top.

FA. Henry Barber, Frank Cannings 5.1974

4 The Dream/Liberator    **E3 6a**

One of the region's greatest climbs that wends its way up the sensational arete dividing the Seaward and West Faces of the Great Zawn. The climbing is at the very upper limit of the grade. Start by negotiating 'The Crevasse' and then traversing right 7m to a stance in a small corner. *Photo on page 213.*

1) 5a, 9m. Traverse right, around the arete into another corner and ascend this to a stance just above.

2) 6a, 23m. Climb up the corner and then swing right at a horizontal break to below a right-leaning groove. Make some tricky moves up its right wall to below an overhang and pull leftwards through it, hard, to a thin crack in the wall above it. Follow the shallow ramp-line up the wall to a break, and traverse this right, past a peg, to a hanging stance on a foot-ledge just around the arete. The belays are hard to find but there is a good large cam in the crack above the stance.

3) 5c, 32m. Climb the steep cracks and narrowing small corner above until a sensational traverse right, below an overhang, can be made into the base of a long corner and thin crack. Follow this and the continuation groove to the top.

FAA. (The Dream) M.Gulliard, R.Wilson 12.1968

FFA. (The Dream) Pete Livesey 6.1976

FA. (Liberator) Frank Cannings, Pat Littlejohn 24/25.5.1970

FFA. (Liberator) Ron Fawcett, Pete Livesey 4.1976

The next route takes a line up the oppressive, overhang-strewn leaning wall that is taken centrally by a magnificent line of cracks. The base is non-tidal. See the next page for the approach and conditions.

5 The West Face    **E5 6b**

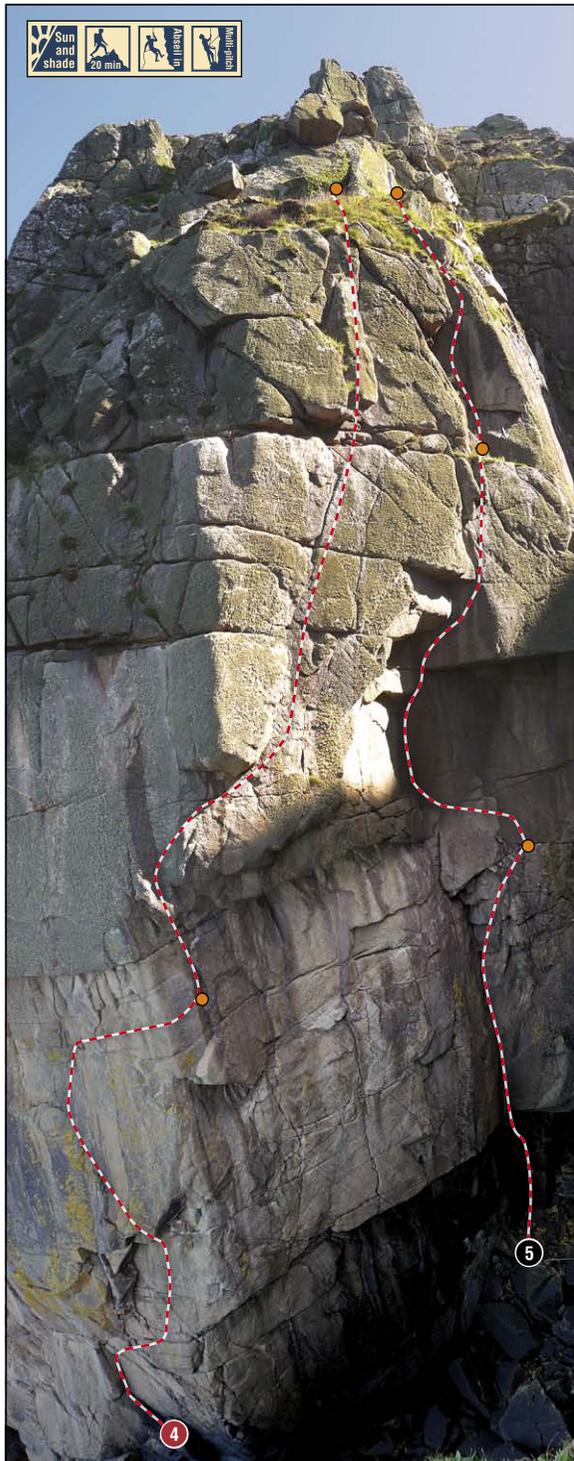
The central line of cracks and overhangs gives a stunning line and a powerful, difficult trip up the Great Zawn's most impressive wall. Start on boulders below a corner-crack in the centre of the face.

1) 5c, 20m. Move up the wall and pull through the overhang into the corner-crack. Climb the crack to an overhang and move up right to a stance and belay below the main overhangs.

2) 6b, 23m. Move left to a smooth-walled groove. Climb the difficult groove, peg, to the overhangs and follow the cracks and corners strenuously up through the stepped overhangs to a belay above the difficulties.

3) 12m. Straightforward ground leads to the top.

FFA. Pete Livesey, Jill Lawrence 1975 (1pt)



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East and Upper West Face

The East Face of Great Zawn is an imposing, dark wall that is not easily viewed from most angles. However, the one route described is a fine climb that is not to be underestimated, being strenuous, technical and slightly bold. A perfect route for a hot summer's day. The Upper West Face has one relatively popular line that is less steep than others in the Great Zawn.

Approach - Cross Bosigran Ridge and descend 50m down the path before breaking left over heather covered rocks to a short step down a corner that gains a grassy gearing-up ledge high above the zawn. Where the ledge narrows is a good rock spike from which an abseil can be made into the zawn. The base of the zawn is composed of grass, unstable rock and earth. Care should be taken when moving over this ground to the base of the climbs.

Tides - The base of the zawn is non-tidal in calm sea conditions.

Conditions - The East Face receives very little sun and can take a long time to dry out. There is usually no real path back to the gearing-up ledge. The upper half of *Desolation Row* gets sun from late morning but the base sees very little sun so can remain damp after rainfall.

1 Xanadu E2 5b

The east facing wall of Great Zawn is carved by an eye-catching left curving corner, which provides the line for this tremendous route. The climbing is remarkably diverse but the line takes some time to dry out. Start below the corner-line on boulders at the mouth of the zawn.

1) 5b, 25m. Climb the corner which is steep and sustained, but takes plenty of gear, to a stance under an overhang.

2) 5b, 20m. Move up and then work leftwards below the overhangs until it is possible to move up to the overhangs from where more leftward traversing gains a belay below a wide crack in the overhang above. A slightly bold and technical pitch.

3) 5b, 10m. Pull up steeply through the overhang and get stuck into the wide crack which is thankfully not too long. A large cam is useful on this pitch. A vague climbers' path sometimes leads through bracken around the head of the zawn back to the top of the abseil and the gearing-up ledge.

FA. Pat Littlejohn, Ian Duckworth 4.1970



This section of the zawn bed, reached via abseil, is very unstable and slippery in damp conditions



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1

To the mouth of the
zawn and the lower
West Face

2

2 Desolation Row E2 5b

A prized pitch that is very sustained but can be adequately protected by a very large number of small wires. Take extra quickdraws. Start near the left edge of the Upper West Face where a shallow groove is capped by a small overhang.

40m. Enter the groove from the right and climb to a small overhang. At the small overhang move up and left around the arete. Climb past the right end of a huge roof and then move right with difficulty to join cracks which are followed all the way to the top. Move up steep grass to find a belay.

FA. Frank Cannings, Pat Littlejohn 14.9.1969