

The Stone Sentinel

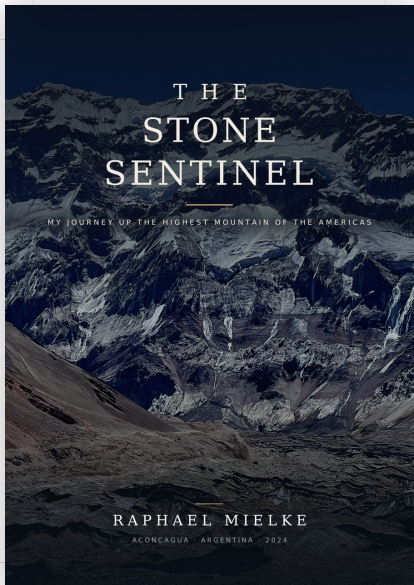
My Journey Up the Highest Mountain of the Americas. By Raphael Mielke

Published 20 August 2026, paperback and e-book, English and German
Amazon bestseller: No. 1 in Argentina Travel, No. 2 in Climbing & Mountaineering Biographies

6,961 meters. 40 percent oxygen. Minus 25 degrees. And a mountain that hasn't let anyone reach its summit in sixteen days.

In January 2024, Raphael Mielke sets out for Argentina to fulfill a dream that has refused to let go of him since a chance bus ride six years earlier: Aconcagua, the highest mountain outside Asia. Not a hero's tale but an honest, self-critical account of patience, ego, luck and the art of walking slowly, with a 74-year-old Japanese climber on his final expedition, a friend who turns back just below the summit, a night at 5,500 meters when everything hangs in the balance, and the people waiting at home. Plus an extensive practical appendix: costs, training, packing list, dangers.

On the mountain, as in a startup, it's rarely the fastest who reach the top. It's the most patient.



THE CLIMB IN NUMBERS

6,961 m

Aconcagua, highest mountain outside Asia

16 days

without a single summit before the team's window

6 of 12

team members reached the top

15 hours

summit day, summit at 2:52 pm

AT A GLANCE

Author	Raphael Mielke
Format	Paperback, 146 pages, 30 photographs and a route map. Kindle e-book
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

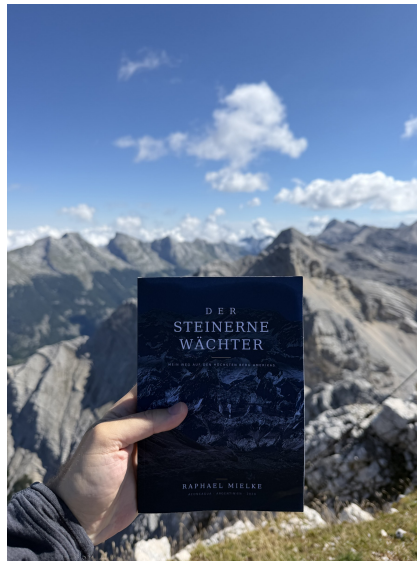


Raphael Mielke, born 1995, grew up in Heidelberg on the edge of the Odenwald hills. A decathlete in his youth, he discovered the mountains in 2018 on a backpacking trip through South America, spontaneously climbing 6,088 m Huayna Potosí in Bolivia. More than 60 summits in over 16 countries followed, from Mont Blanc to Kilimanjaro to Aconcagua. He co-founded and built a software company in Munich, where he lives. *The Stone Sentinel* is his first book.

STORY ANGLES

- An amateur, not a pro: Aconcagua as a first big expedition, with costs, training and mistakes
- Turning back as the greatest achievement: Peter's story just below the summit
- Takashe, 74: the final expedition of a lifetime
- The people waiting at home: what an expedition asks of those who stay behind
- Ego, patience and luck: parallels between the mountain and founding a company
- Self-publishing: reaching No. 1 in an Amazon category without a publisher

PHOTOS



Aconcagua summit, 6,961 m, 2:52 pm, after 15 hours The book out in the Alps

Photos by Raphael Mielke, free for editorial use with credit. High-resolution files on request.

MATERIAL

Review copies (print or PDF), high-resolution cover, author photo, expedition photos and a sample chapter are available on request. All Aconcagua guide articles are freely available at raphaelmielke.com/en.

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