

"This Workout Will Change Your Body Forever." p.50

**SPORTS
ILLUSTRATED**

WOMEN

OCTOBER 2002

7 Sports Adventures of a Lifetime

**One of Them
Is Right for You**

ELITE ABS

**How Athletes
Get Them,
Keep Them**

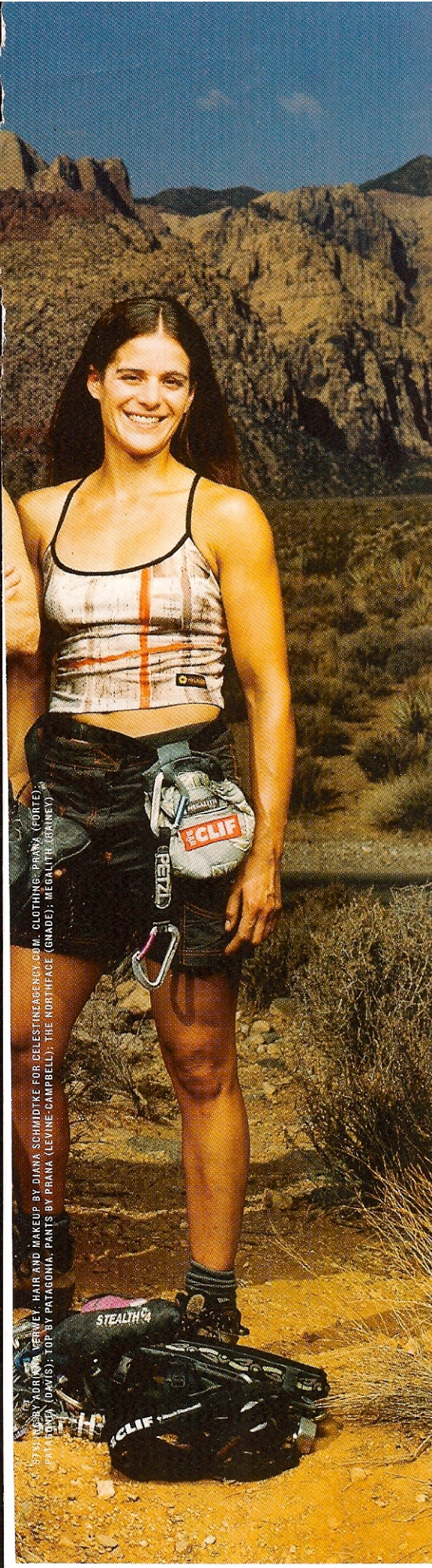
**Fast, Nutritious
Gourmet Foods**

**5 Simple
Yoga Moves
for Strength**

Heidi Albertsen, 24
Recent Adventure:
Climbed Kilimanjaro
What's Next:
Everest Bound



WOMEN WITH ALTITUDE
From left: Forte, Davis,
Levine-Campbell, Gnade
and Rainey



STYLING: JORDAN VERWEY, HAIR AND MAKEUP BY DIANA SCHMIDTKE FOR BELESTINEAGENCY.COM, CLOTHING: PRANA (FORTE), PATAGONIA (DAN(S)), TOP BY PATAGONIA, PANTS BY PRANA (LEVINE-CAMPBELL), THE NORTH FACE (GRADE), MEGALITH (GRINNY)


ROCK

How five
famed
climbers
became
hooked
on their
notoriously
addictive
sport

CLIMBING WAS A GENTLEMAN'S GAME UNTIL 1799, when one Miss Parminster—who left no first name in the registry—became the first woman to summit the Le Buet peak in the Mont Blanc Mountains in France. Today you're as likely to see just as many women as men "flashing" (summitting on the first try) a big wall. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, 3.1 million people tried the sport of climbing last year, and more than one third of all climbers nationwide are women. They're winning competitions, setting records and making first ascents—and we are not talking about first female ascents—of dangerous, high peaks in Patagonia and elsewhere. "There are so many women climbing these days that nobody notices if you're a good woman climber," says top talent Tiffany Levine-Campbell. "They only notice if you're good, period."

BY GRETCHEN REYNOLDS
Photographs by Jim Wright

ON

A full-page photograph of a woman with blonde hair tied back, smiling as she climbs a rock face. She is wearing a grey tank top and a climbing harness. The background is a warm, orange-toned rock wall.

T **A**ge: 36
I **H**omes: Las Vegas and Los Angeles
F **O**riginally **F**rom: Hermosa Beach, Calif.
F **R**ock **R**ésumé: She won the Phoenix
A **B**ouldering Contest in her first
N **Y**ear as a climber and is the only
E **w**oman to summit some of the
V **m**ost difficult routes in Arizona's
I **V**irgin River Gorge.
N **C**limbing **S**tart: Levine-Campbell
E **w**as finishing a master's degree
C **i**n nuclear science at the University
A **o**f Missouri when she was
M **i**nvited to join a climbing trip.
P **H**ooked, she moved to Colorado
B **t**o devote herself to the sport.
E **T**en years later, "I'm still planning
L **t**o finish my thesis. Really."
L **W**hat **K**eeps **H**er **C**limbing: "The sport
L **i**s such a physical puzzle," she
L **s**ays. "It makes good use of my

academic training, since it's all about mechanics, vectors and physics."

Proof of Her Obsession: In urban areas she's clambered up the sides of buildings, speeding away from cops afterward.

What's Next: Adventure racing and big-wall climbing in Yosemite. What about her thesis? "It's a good thing the principles of physics won't change much in 10 years," she says, "or possibly 11, or maybe 12."

art to feel stronger. That's so liberating."



STEPHAN FORTÉ

Age: 35

Home: Las Vegas

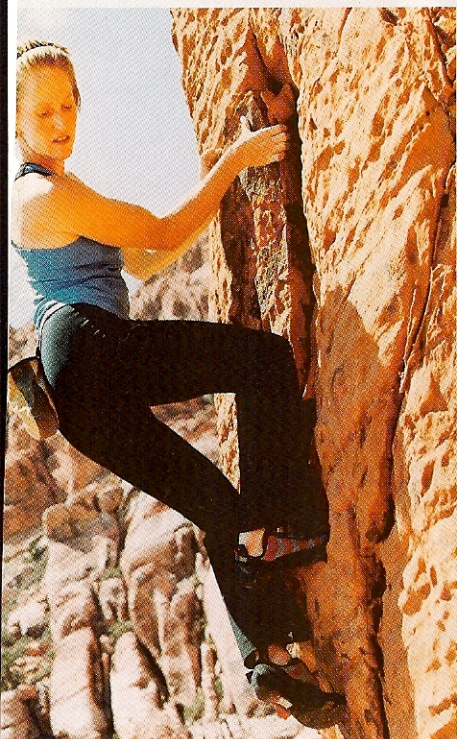
Originally From: Ramsey, N.J.

Rock Résumé: Forte is the first woman to ascend the Chollos boulder "problem" (climb) in California and the 5.13c Ghetto Boys in Las Vegas. She also climbed the 5.13d Soul Train in Las Vegas.

Climbing Start: As a 23-year-old working in Manhattan, Forte attended the funeral of a high school friend, where she met attendees from Aspen, Colo. "They told me how beautiful it was. I thought, Life is short—what am I doing in New York?"

What Keeps Her Climbing: "The need to push through my fears," she says. "You go a little harder, a little faster, and you start to feel more capable and stronger. That's so liberating. It's also really addictive."

What's Next: "Redpointing" a 5.14 (leading an extremely difficult route without using ropes). "It's the whole point of sport climbing," she says.



LISA GNADÉ

Age: 37

Home: Salt Lake City

Originally From: Des Moines

Rock Résumé: A top-crack climber (inching up tiny slits in the rock, using fingertips and grit), Gnade is the first person to ascend the extremely technical Ruby's Café in Utah's Canyonlands and one of the few climbers to scale Colorado's overhanging Sphinx Crack.

Climbing Start: At Northern Arizona University, Gnade signed up for rock climbing at the urging of a dormmate, who later dropped the class. Not Gnade: "The climbing bug bit me with a vengeance."

What Keeps Her Climbing: "I love the creative problem solving. Each climb becomes its own challenge. That translates nicely into nonclimbing life."

Scariest High-Altitude Moment: On belay with her husband, Steve Petro, in the red-rock country of southern Utah, their "camming" devices (climber anchors) "exploded out of the soft rock, raining down cantaloupe-sized blocks of stone."

What's Next: Fontainebleau, a climber's mecca near Paris, in search of "good rock and good food. What more do you need in a getaway?" ♦