



7 Summits: 1 Cornishman climbing the highest mountains on each continent

Ed Buckingham

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Most of us can watch an old episode of the holiday programme *Wish You Were Here* without it having the life-changing effect that it had on postman Edward Buckingham. For Ed, a young man from humble origins in Cornwall, the draw of Kilimanjaro and the high mountains of the world would change his life forever. It would also very nearly end his life during a fall from high on Cho Oyu, the sixth highest mountain in the world. Drawn to high places, Ed embarked on a journey that would take him to the summit of the highest mountain on every continent. His seven summits actually involved ten summits - he climbed the highest summit in Western Europe, Mont Blanc, and the highest in Continental Europe, Mount Elbrus, as well as summiting Australia's Mount Kosciusko and the far more remote Papua New Guinea summit of Carstenz Pyramid, the highest point in Australasia. And, of course, Cho Oyu. In *7 Summits*, Ed tells of hardship and near-death experiences on Cho Oyu, the sheer scale and suffering in being the first Cornishman to ascend Everest, as well as his final summit, Mount Vinson in Antarctica. Ed develops as a man throughout his quest. Always humble, working hard for the Royal Mail delivering post to fund his trips, on his early trip to Aconcagua and on his first attempt on Mont Blanc he is very much a novice mountaineer, but his passion for the outdoors and willingness to help his fellow climbers is always there. During his fifteen-year quest Ed's experience grows, particularly in the sub-Arctic of Alaska, where his ascent of Denali tested his stamina and equipment to the limit. At the culmination of his quest, he emerges as a capable climber, fit and strong and by sheer determination has become a world-class athlete, running full and ultra marathons, climbing mountains and delivering post.

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