



Richard Bass, a businessman and amateur mountaineer, set himself the goal of climbing the highest mountain on each of the seven continents, including mainland Australia. He hired David Breashears to guide him up Everest, the most difficult of his Seven, and completed his Everest summit on April 30, 1985. He then co-authored the book *Seven Summits*, which covered the undertaking (Bass et al. 1986).

Reinhold Messner revised Bass's list by substituting the Australia-New Guinea continent for mainland Australia. Pat Morrow first met Messner's challenge, finishing with climbing Carstensz Pyramid on May 7, 1986, shortly followed by Messner himself climbing Vinson on December 3rd, 1986. Morrow has also been the first to complete all eight summits from both lists.

As of March 2007, more than 198 climbers have climbed all seven of the peaks from either the Bass or the Messner list; about 30% of those have climbed all of the eight peaks required to complete both lists.

The first woman to complete the Bass and Messner lists was Junko Tabei finishing on July 28, 1992, by climbing Elbrus.



Criticism of the Seven Summits Challenge

Many mountain climbers, beyond these one hundred and ninety eight, aspire to complete the seven ascents of one or both of these lists, but the expense, the demands placed on fitness, the physical hardship and the dangers involved are often greater than imagined. Popularization of the Seven Summits has not been without its detractors, who argue that it tempts the ambitious but inexperienced into paying large sums to professional guides who promise the “seven”, and that the guides are therefore pressured to press on toward summits even to the detriment of their clients' safety.

Alpinism author Jon Krakauer (1997) wrote in *Into Thin Air* that it would be a bigger challenge to climb the second-highest peak of each continent, known as the Seven Second Summits. This is especially true for Asia, as K2 (8,611 m) demands greater technical climbing skills than Everest (8,848 m), while altitude-related factors such as the thinness of the atmosphere, high winds and low temperatures remain much the same. Some of those completing the seven ascents are aware of the magnitude of the challenge. In 2000, in a foreword to Steve Bell et al., *Seven Summits*, Morrow opined with humility '[t]he only reason Reinhold [Messner] wasn't the first person to complete the seven was that he was too busy gambolling up the 14 tallest mountains in the world.'

{gallery}frontpagegallery{/gallery}From [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seven_Summits) , the free encyclopedia