

Kilimanjaro Information and itinerary



Kilimanjaro – home to the highest point on the African continent (Uhuru, 5895m) and the highest free standing mountain in the world.

The climb to the summit is one of the great challenges of the trekking world.

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Introduction

There are numerous recognised routes and sub-routes on Kilimanjaro. Whilst we can run any route, we generally only use 3 of them due to the acclimatisation issues; the Lemosho, Machame and Rongai routes.

The Lemosho route is 8 days, 7 nights
The longest, most beautiful and remotest of all of the routes. It is also our preferred as it affords the best acclimatisation. It approaches from the far west, tracks under the southern side of the mountain and summits from Barafu.

The Machame route is 7 days, 6 nights
This route approaches from the south west and joins the Lemosho route on day 3 of its itinerary. It climbs up to 3800m quite quickly but it is possible to add a day. Summits from Barafu.

The Rongai route (Kikelewa) is 7 days, 6 nights
The only route to approach from the north; only approx 15% use this route. Generally longer paths but gentler in steepness.

You can download a map of the National Park with the routes on from our webpage.

Flying into Kilimanjaro's international airport, you will be collected and transferred to one of our preferred hotels either in Moshi or just outside. Both are comfortable and spacious.

After a nights rest, it is straight into the trek, entering the National Park via the appropriate Gate. It will become immediately apparent that your trekking crew is big. Expect 3 porters to every trekker + 1 chef and a Guide (it may vary). In all fairness, there is a lot of equipment and food to carry and Porters are limited to 20kg per Porter. This is well policed.

Once on the trek, you will get used to the daily routine:

0630hrs - wake up with tea in bed! Wash, breakfast and away by 0800hrs. This may vary a little depending on the distance of the days walk. Most days you will get a packed lunch to take with you.

Daily walking times can be short at times but don't be tempted to short cut the days; the acclimatisation is very important. Your crew will have packed up the site, gone passed you and re-set up in the new site ready for your arrival including tean and biscuits!

You then have time to relax and take in the scenery.

1830hrs - Dinner after which it won't be long before you are in bed.

Expect basic facilities on this trek; there are no showers. Water is available for washing but clothes may not dry so be prepared for that. It is also quite dusty.

On summit day, you will ascend first to either Barafu or Kibo during the day and set up camp. You just need to eat, drink and rest as at midnight it is time to head for the summit with just your head torch for company.

AMS is a delayed reaction and the ascent to Barafu or Kibo may well already be having an effect on the more susceptible. Hopefully, you are fine.

The trek to the summit is demanding; it will be cold, dark and you have a 6 - 7 hr climb, initially to Stella or Gillman's Point (on the rim of the Kibo crater) and then onto the Uhuru signpost, which marks the summit.

Once it is time to descend, you will quickly realise why the ascent felt like a slog at times! The top half of the mountain is made of soft scree. The good news is that the descent is fast. Scree runners will love it. Once you have descended back to Barafu or Kibo, you will be given time to have some tea (or breakfast) and maybe rest a little before further descending to the night stop. This can be quite deceptive and demanding. The total descent for the day will be big.

Your final day is a matter of enjoying the scenery as you head for the exit gate, a hot shower and a celebratory drink later that evening.

Details
Duration (UK - UK): 11 days - Lemosho route 10 days - Machame route 10 days - Rongai route
Min/Max pers: 2/12
Max altitude: 5895m/19,350ft
Accommodation on trek: Camping
Dates: See website
Cost (2012) Machame £1285pp for 3 or more pax £1325pp for 2 pax
Rongai £1300 for 3 or more pax £1360 for 2 pax
Lemosho £1390 for 3 or more pax £1480 for 2 pax
Our trips formally begin and end at Kilimanjaro's international airport

When to go
In general terms: Jan - mid Mar Jun - Oct

Travel and Trek is a truly independent company specializing in adventure trekking and touring. We pride ourselves on the personal touch and whether you are travelling solo or in a big group, we can adjust itineraries to suit you.

Important information

Costs

Costs are based on 2 people sharing and are per person (singles see below)

Fully Bonded

Your money is safe. We are protected by Insurance Passenger Protection (IPP), which protects YOU against OUR insolvency.



Trek Dossier

On booking, you will receive a comprehensive Trek Dossier, which includes:

- Clothing and equipment list
- Medical notes (including vaccination requirements)
- Notes on trekking at high altitude
- What to do on arrival at Kilimanjaro's airport
- Visa
- Food, money, staff tipping and more

Airport arrivals

We pick you up on arrival and transfer you back on departure.

Passports

Passports should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months on the date on entry into Tanzania.

Tourist Visa

A tourist visa is required for UK Nationals. This can be done on entry into Tanzania and is an easy process.

Itineraries

Day 1 of your itinerary is deemed to be your departure day from the UK.

Hotel Accommodation

Our hotels are of 3* standard with very friendly staff. Our costs are based on a B&B basis, twin share. All rooms are en suite.

Accommodation on Trek is two man tents with good thick foam mattresses.

Feeding

You will have a camp chef with you and be fed in a dining tent with chairs and a table.

Toilets

The group will have its own private toilet tent.

Singles

Travel and Trek does not believe in penalising single travellers unnecessarily. If you are a single traveller and do not request sole occupancy of a room, you will be accommodated with another member of the group of the same sex. If there is an odd number travelling and you happen to be the odd one out then you will be allocated sole occupancy at no extra cost. If you do request sole occupancy

throughout all or part of the trip, then you will be charged a supplement.

Extended Stays

You are free to extend your stay in Tanzania with extra days before or after the trek. Travel and Trek can assist you with accommodation if you wish or you are free to make your own arrangements.

Our Guides

Our Guides are qualified, english speaking and experienced in trying to make the experience as memorable as possible.

Fitness

The perception that you have to be super fit to climb Kilimanjaro is not true. A reasonable level of fitness based on the ability to walk at your own comfortable pace for 4 - 5 hrs a day (with rest stops), for several consecutive days carrying a day sack weighing approx 5kg is all that is required.

Summit day is a clear exception. Expect a demanding 12 hrs, initially through the night as you aim to get to the summit at dawn. If you are in any doubt about whether you are fit enough, please consult Travel and Trek prior to booking.

Clothing and equipment

This information is part of the Trek Dossier and is provided on booking.

Medical/Vaccinations

You are advised to consult your GP if you are in any doubt about your physical condition to undertake your chosen trek. Whilst we do provide information on vaccinations, you should also seek professional advice on what vaccinations you require for Tanzania and other locations should you have an extended trip.

For pre-planning purposes you should need: Hep A, Typhoid, Tetanus, Polio and Meningitis. You are also in a Malaria area. Yellow Fever certificates will also be required if you enter Tanzania via an infected country (ie Kenya).

Internal Park Rescue Fee

This service will get you out of the National Park should you require medical assistance. It does not in any way replace your travel insurance.

Expert Help

If you have any queries in the planning stage of your trip, call our experts on 01476 562763 or 07725 943108

Altitude Sickness

Formally known as Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), Travel and Trek has produced a 'Guide to Trekking at High Altitude', which can be downloaded from the website. If you wish to discuss it personally, please call the Travel and Trek office; our experienced staff will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Local Payments

Travel and Trek does not charge any local payments.

Travel Insurance

It is absolutely vital that you have adequate travel insurance. See separate page.

How To Book

- Complete the booking form (downloadable from the website) and return it with a deposit of £150 pp.
- Booking forms can be completed electronically and returned as an attachment to an e-mail.
- Details of payment options are on the booking form.
- Balance payments are due 10 weeks prior to departure.



Trip inclusions and exclusions



Inclusions

- Return international airport transfers from Kilimanjaro's international airport
- Hotel accommodation in Moshi, total 2 nights on a twin share, B&B basis
- Tented accommodation throughout the trek, including thick foam sleeping mats
- All meals and boiled drinking water on trek
- A dining tent (complete with dining table and chairs), kitchen tent, toilet tent
- All National Park, Camping fees and internal Park rescue fee
- Services of an English speaking Guide throughout the trek
- Porterage
- Staff tips
- Comprehensive Trip Dossier and other associated documentation

Exclusions

- International flights
- Tanzanian Tourist visa
- Personal spending
- Personal travel insurance

Itinerary - Lemosho Route

The longest, most beautiful and remotest of all of the routes. It is also our preferred as it affords the best acclimatisation. It approaches from the far west, tracks under the southern side of the mountain and summits from Barafu via Stella Point.

1 Depart UK

Our trips formally begin and end at Kilimanjaro's International airport but we can assist you with advice on the best flight routings for your circumstances if you require it.

2 Arrive Tanzania

You will be collected by our Representative and transferred to the hotel. You are then free to settle in and prepare for the trek the following day. Our friendly staff are on hand to provide any advice or assistance.

3 Moshi - Londrossi Park Gate (2100 m) - Forest Camp (2800 m)

Drive approx two hours to Londrossi Gate on the west side of the Kilimanjaro.

After registering at the gate, meet your porters and begin trekking. 2 - 3 hours walking through dense rain forest you arrive at the Forest Camp.

4 Forest Camp - Shira Camp One (3500m)

Leaving the rain forest, the trek continues upward through a high moor with some interesting flora and fauna to see. Shira Camp is reached in approx 4/5 hrs with a fantastic view to Mt. Meru.

5 Shira Camp One - Shira Camp Two (3900m)

Take a diversion trek via the Cathedral rock formation across the wide Shira Plateau with glorious views to Mt. Meru and Kibo. The Shira Plateau is a relict of a gigantic volcano and oldest of the three volcano of Kilimanjaro Massive.

6 Shira Camp Two - Barranco 3950 m, via the Lava Tower (4590m)

Today is a good acclimatisation exercise. The first section is to ascend for approx 4 hrs to the Lava Tower (4590 m). Lunch is here.

The second section is a descend back down to 3950m, where you will camp at Barranco. There is an excellent view of the Barranco Wall right in front of you!

7 Barranco – Karanga 4050 m

Another trek high, sleep low day with the first hour and a half ascending up through the Barranco wall.

After a short break you will walk along the old original Machame Route until you arrive in the Karanga valley. It is a short ascent to Karanga Camp.

8 Karanga – Barafu 4650m

Ascend to the Barafu. It is time to rest, drink and take an early dinner in preparation for the overnight ascent to the summit.

9 Barafu – summit – Mweka Hut (3100m)

Summit day; a long and demanding one.

At approx midnight you begin the ascent. The initial target is Stella Point (5730m) with the summit (Uhuru) just another 40 mins away.

Enjoy the view, enjoy the moment.

The descent is much faster. Once you reach Barafu, rest a little, eat and drink and continue the long descent to Mweka Camp.

Total trek time today is up to 15 hrs.

10 Mweka Hut – Mweka Gate - Hotel

A 3hr trek down through the rain forest to exit the Park at the Mweka Gate.

Transport to your hotel for a well earned rest and shower.

11 Breakfast and transfer to Kilimanjaro Airport

Arrive UK same day.

Itinerary - Machame Route

This route approaches from the south west and joins the Lemosho route on day 3 of its itinerary. It climbs up to 3800m quite quickly but it is possible to add a day. Summits from Barafu.

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3 Moshi - Machame Gate (1790m) - Machame Camp (3010m)

A short drive to the Gate (less than an hour from Moshi).

After registering at the gate, meet your porters and begin trekking.

This 10km first day slowly ascends through the thick forest, steeper as you get higher. A potentially tough first day due to the altitude gain.

4 Machame Camp - Shira Cave (3845m)

A shorter but tough day due to the steepness of the path. By the time you get to the Caves (or close), you will be up onto the Plateau for real and enjoying the wider views.

5 Shira Cave via the Lava Tower (4590m) - Barranco (3960m)

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Total trek time today is up to 15 hrs.

9 Mweka Hut – Mweka Gate - Hotel

A 3hr trek down through the rain forest to exit the Park at the Mweka Gate.

Transport to your hotel for a well earned rest and shower.

10 Breakfast and transfer to Kilimanjaro Airport

Arrive UK same day.

Itinerary - Rongai Route

This is the only route to approach from the north; only approx 15% of trekkers use this route. The daily legs are generally longer paths but gentler in steepness. Summit access is via Gilman's Point.

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2 Arrive Tanzania

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3 Moshi - Nalemoru Gate (1990m) - Simba Camp (2625m)

A 4 - 5 hr drive to this Gate from Moshi, meet your Porters and begin trekking.

A 2 - 3 walk initially through plantations, then rain forest and finally bush country.

4 Simba Camp - Second Cave (3480m)

Up to 4 hrs through low bush and heather. As the altitude gets higher, the foliage gets lower.

5 Second Cave - Kikelewa Camp (3630m)

Into moorland country, gentle traverse across several ridges for about 3 hrs.

6 Kikelewa Camp - Mawenzi Tarn Camp (4310m)

Up to 4 hrs of moorland but towards the end, you will experience the scree that you will see on the ascent to the summit.

Into serious altitude.

7 Mawenzi Tarn Camp - Kibo Hut (4700m)

Up to 5 hrs to Kibo, easy scree but watch the altitude.

8 Kibo Hut - Summit - Horombo Huts (3700m)

Summit day; a long and demanding one.

At approx midnight you begin the ascent. The initial target is Gillman's Point (5681m). The summit is still 2 hrs away around the crater rim.

You will pass Stella Point where the other ascent routes join the crater rim.

Enjoy the view, enjoy the moment.

The descent is much faster. Once you reach Kibo, rest a little, eat and drink and continue the long descent to Horombo Huts.

Total trek time today is up to 15 hrs.

9 Horombo Huts - Marangu Gate - hotel

About 5 hrs to descend to the Gate.

10 Breakfast and transfer to Kilimanjaro Airport

Arrive UK same day.

Safe Ascent On Kilimanjaro

Amid the advertising for embarking on exciting and often life changing adventures to places such as Everest Base Camp and Kilimanjaro, one major factor is often not at the forefront of your mind - Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS).

At worst, it can kill and at best with a good acclimatization programme you may wonder what the fuss is all about although you are likely to see others suffering.

On short itineraries (a 6 day itinerary inside the Park is considered short), Kilimanjaro is notorious for AMS. This section explains why and how to avoid it.

Acclimatization is the process by which the body adjusts to the lack of oxygen at altitude. It takes time. Try and rush this process and you will succumb to AMS.

The most popular itinerary available and used by some companies to reach the summit is for 5 nights/6 days inside the National Park. A significant driving force behind this fast ascent is the hefty daily Park and Camping fees; short itineraries keep prices down.

Unfortunately, this is increasing your chances of suffering from AMS and therefore decreasing your chances of summiting. The tactic with Kili on a short 6 day itinerary is quite clear; climb up to 3500 - 4000m in 3 days and then 'rush' the summit, first to 4600m or 4700m (Barafu or Kibo Hut respectively) during the day and then at approx midnight (same day) ascend through the night to 5895m arriving by sunrise.

The graph below compares the ascent rates for the 6 day, the safer 8 day itineraries for Kili and also to Everest Base Camp (EBC).

You can begin to suffer from AMS from as low as 2500m. From experience, the vast majority will begin to experience the effects of being at altitude between 3500m - 4000m.

Note how fast the 6 day itinerary (red line) progresses through the important 3500m-4000m zone; just 2 nights. It is insufficient to acclimatize properly and therefore why so many trekkers encounter problems by the time they reach 4600m.

The onset of AMS is a delayed reaction; the effects may not be felt until later in the evening, just prior to the final ascent. Summit fever is a strong emotion and some may hide the fact that they are suffering. It is very dangerous to ascend in this manner.

Safe Ascent Guidelines

There are widely accepted guidelines for safe ascending. They relate to the daily net altitude gain, which takes into account the descent too.

You can safely increase the altitude that you sleep at by 300m per day. You can ascend more than that as long as your net increase is 300m. For example, you can ascend 700m with a descent of 400m.

Every 3rd day, a rest day should be factored in for acclimatization. The terrain often dictates that some flexibility is needed but clearly there is a limit.

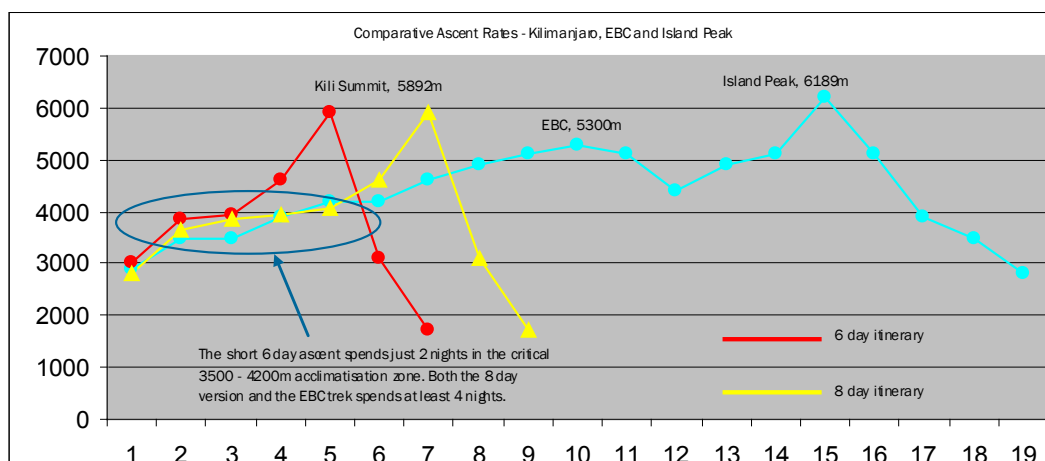
Ascent rates become more important the higher you go. As an example, in general terms you are more likely to feel the affects of AMS if you ascended from 4000 to 4500m as opposed to 3500m to 4000m.

Experience counts in this field. It is important to know the guidelines, how AMS is brought on and what to do if it all goes wrong.

Medex produce a booklet which is freely available to anyone and it is recommended by the British Mountaineering Council (BMC).

The 7 and 8 day Kili itineraries take a minimum of 3 nights (preferably 4) to progress through that important zone allowing the body to acclimatize much better. Even if you do experience difficulties early on, you have time to recover and continue.

The final big ascent (1300m) through the night from 4600m to the summit on its own is not a big issue (it is common practice for summit attempts) as the following descent is rapid but if you have a headache (prime symptom of AMS) prior to the ascent, it could cause some serious (and potentially fatal) damage if you continue. This emphasizes how important the acclimatization process is. Get that wrong and you greatly decrease your chances of summiting.



Travel Insurance

It is absolutely essential that you have adequate travel insurance. Be truthful to your insurance company about precisely what activities you are undertaking and to what altitude (max). Failure to do that may invalidate your policy.

To fly a patient back to the UK under any form of medical supervision (ie on a stretcher) is estimated to cost well in excess of £10,000.

In terms of activities for insurance purposes, you are trekking not climbing. Unless your trek specifically states that it does, your trek does not involve any form of specialist safety or climbing equipment.

This Foreign & Commonwealth Office link is a useful reference and recommended read:
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/staying-safe/travel-insurance/>

So What Happens If I Have An Accident?

If you have an accident that requires professional medical help (but does not warrant evacuation by helicopter), you will be moved to the nearest medical facility by the fastest possible means. Within the Kilimanjaro National Park, there is a local 'rescue system'. Depending on where you are, they can get you out either by vehicle or by using the mono wheel stretchers scattered around the park.

Should your injury or illness be serious enough to warrant a helicopter rescue, your travel insurance company will be contacted to handle that.

In either case, you will be taken care of by the local medical facility/hospital.

Please note that it is wise to carry some form of emergency funding to cover such situations as on some occasions, you may have to pay for services yourself prior to the travel insurance assistance kicking in. It is a good idea to carry a credit card.

A Little Preparation May Save Your Life

Some insurance companies provide a very handy credit card sized card with all of their contact details on it. If your company does not, then try using this very handy website Ucardit.co.uk. Travel and Trek clients get a 10% discount.

For about £5 (including P&P), you get a virtually indestructible credit card sized card with all of your important information on it. You can either use one of three pre-designed Travel and Trek cards or design your own. An example is shown below. You can literally put whatever you want on it from flight details, mobile numbers, addresses, insurance details, etc...

To try it, go to the Home page, click 'Travel'. Then scroll down, bottom left, click on the 'Travel and Trek' banner and either use a branded template or design your own. These are example cards from the website (not full size).

