

Kilimanjaro Climbs

CLIMBING KILIMANJARO.

Kilimanjaro can be trekked by using different routes. It is very important to have the skills and knowledge first before attempting to climb and conquer it. The mountain can be trekked using several routes, the two main routes to the top of Kilimanjaro are :

Marangu Route – this route starts at Marangu gate near Marangu village, on the southern eastern side of Kilimanjaro and about 40 km by road from Moshi. This is the most popular and easiest route to the top. Usually the ascent descent takes five days or more:

Day 1: It takes up to four hours from Marangu gate to Mandara hut, depending upon the level of visitor traffic, for registration and payment of fees at the entrance gate at Marangu. You should start this route early in the morning from Marangu gate (1800 m) to Mandara hut (2750 m) avoiding afternoon rain showers, this can take longer if you use forest trail. From the gate you climb a cleared ridge trail which used to be a vehicle tract. This the fastest way to Mandara hut. But heavy foot traffic limits wildlife viewing.

Day 2: It takes from five hours up to six hours trekking from Mandara hut (2750 m) to Horombo hut (3780 m). The trail from Mandara hut passes through a short stretch of forest before skirting the base of Maundi crater, crossing a meadow and then a wooded stream, before emerging into a grassland. A short detour to see the superb views of the Uhuru peak and surrounding country from the rim of Maundi crater is recommended. Before reaching Horombo hut you will cross several moorland ravines before reaching your destination which is set in a rocky valley marked by giant senecios. Horombo is a small village and usually busy, many people spend two nights here on the way up as well as one on the way down.

Day 3: In order to increase your chances of reaching the summit, an extra day or more at Horombo (3780 m), is recommended to give you time to acclimatise to the altitude which is likely to be significantly different from what you are used to. An easy stroll to the Saddle by the right hand path takes you close to Mawenzi. You then return to Horombo for dinner and overnight.

Day 4: It takes six hours trekking from Horombo hut (3780 m) to Kibo hut (4700 m). From Horombo there are two trails to the saddle, continue through the moorland passing the 'last water Point' before the slopes eases as you reach the high altitude. Kibo Hut is very cold at night. The right fork is very stony and eroded but has the merit of being the most direct route to the saddle and mawenzi. From Horombo it will take about two hours and a half to the saddle, a further half an hour to mawenzi hut, and across the length of the saddle to Kibo hut about three hours. However, the left fork from Horombo hut is an easier trail which emerges on the saddle about one km from Kibo Hut.

Day 5: From Kibo hut (4 700 m) you continue trekking to Uhuru Peak (5895 m). You should start early in morning, because at this time the stone scree is still frozen making climbing easier, you will see the sun rise over Mawenzi from the top of Kibo. Leaving Kibo Hut in the middle of the night, the gradient will increase rapidly and tackle the scree slope of the crater rim. The main problems are psychological and you should walk slowly and rhythmically. As you near Gillman's Point (the lowest point on the rim), the sky lightens and rocks appear around you. It takes seven hours up the Uhuru Peak. This is the most exhilarating and exhausting day as you bid to reach your goal. The highest point, Uhuru Peak, is further than it looks. The walk round the rim to Uhuru is fairly level but takes around two hours there

and two back, so only continue if you are feeling fit. Then you descend from Kibo to Horombo Hut (3780 m), with your lungs absorbing increasing oxygen, is a relief. But don't run as you will stir up the dust for others and risk a fall.

Day 6: From Horombo hut (3100 m) you descend further to Marangu gate (1800 m). It takes six hours descending time. This is easiest day, all down hill with oxygen intake ever increasing. You will arrive at Mandara Hut by lunch, the park gate and Marangu in the afternoon. **END OF THE TREKK.**

Machame Route – Most people believe that this is the most beautiful route up Kilimanjaro. And it takes much long time, about six days or more, and can be much expensive.

Day 1: You start trekking from Machame gate (1634 m) to Machame hut (2834 m). Takes about seven hours . After signing in you will ascend from Machame gate to Machame Hut, you cross the valley and continue up to the steep ridge. You will pass through tropical rain forest ,reach your campsite early evening.

Day 2: You trekk from Machame hut (2834 m) to Shira Hut (3749 m), which takes about six hours. Departing from the Machame Hut, you will cross the stream and follow the path up the steep rocky ridge to a semi-circular wall of rocks , known as Picnic Rock. From here you have excellent views of Kibo glaciated dome. You will cross the gorge to reach Shira campsite where you will overnight.

Day 3: It takes five hiking hours from Shira Hut (3749 m) to Barranco Hut (3901 m). From Shira Hut, you will hike up to Lava Tower and then you cross scree slopes and a river valley before proceeding down to Barranco Camp via the Great Barranco Wall. Tonight's camp is one of the most stunning on the mountain.

Day 4: From Barranco Hut (3901 m) it takes about three hours and a half to Karanga Valley (3963 m). From Barranco Hut, you climb up through the edge of great Barranco Wall. It's a difficult, steep trail, but once you reach the top, the views are well worth it.

Day 5: Ascend further from Karanga Valley (3963 m) to Barafu Hut (4,600 m), this will take you about three hours and half. Today is a shorter trek than the past few days, hiking up over steep rocky slabs to the final campsite, Barafu. You will want to get as much rest as possible before the push to the summit.

Day 6: Further go on ascending from Barafu camp (4,600 m) to the summit (5895 m). This will take you more seven hours. You will start trekking early before sunrise (1-2 am) as the walk today will take 10- 12 hours. The 1,100-meter ascent to Uhuru Peak in just over 3 km will take us about 6-8 hours, as we try to reach the Uhuru Peak to watch the sunrise over the Rift Valley. After watching the sunrise, you descend down to Mweka Camp which is below the tree line.

Day 7: The descend from Mweka hut (3100 m) to Mweka gate (1828 m) will take you about three hours. On your final day, you will have a short three hour hike out, walking through the lush forest. You will come up to the main gate! You will be awarded your certificate after having been successfully conquered Kilimajaro ! END OF THE TREKK.

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