

# The Kilimanjaro Guide

This guide is for anyone thinking of doing, or has booked onto, an Kilimanjaro trip with The Adventure Company.



# Kilimanjaro



At 5,985m, Mt Kilimanjaro is the world's highest freestanding mountain. Standing on the summit of Uhuru Peak you'll enjoy the longest view on earth; you can even see the curvature of the horizon. Climbing this impressive mountain is definitely a challenge, but you don't have to be an experienced mountaineer with technical knowledge of ice axes or rope-work. This guide is an introduction to summiting Kilimanjaro, it

provides useful background information and an overview on what to expect and how to prepare for this memorable experience.

## Kilimanjaro history

Formed over 500,000 years ago the first recorded account of the mountain came in the 2nd century AD, when Ptolemy of Alexandria wrote about a 'great snowy mountain'. It wasn't written about again until the 12th Century, when Arabic and Chinese writers again mentioned the impressive landmark. Hundreds of years later the first European account of Kilimanjaro came from a missionary called Johann Rebmann. His accounts of the peaks of Mawenzi and Kibo were published in the Church Missionary Intelligencer in 1849. It took however another 13 years before his finding was accepted, and by 1880 a number of attempts had been made to summit the mountain, none of which were successful. Finally in October 1889 Dr Hans Meyer and his climbing partner Ludwig Purtscheller became the first Europeans to ever conquer Kilimanjaro.

## How was the mountain formed?

Kilimanjaro rises 4,800m above the East African plains, 270km from the shores of the Indian Ocean and measures up to 40km across. Relatively young in geological terms, Kilimanjaro was formed around three-quarters of a million years ago. A giant eruption resulted in the formation of Shira volcano, the oldest of the three volcanoes that make up the mountain. Soon after Mawenzi started to form following a further eruption within the Shira caldera, and then 460,000 years ago an enormous eruption just west of Mawenzi caused the formation of Kibo. Several more eruptions of Kibo have forced the summit to climb ever higher, until reaching its current height of 5,895m.



"I have just returned home from successfully reached the summit of Mt Kilimanjaro, which can best be described as a wonderful experience. I would like to congratulate you and your team on a very well organised trip. Everyone involved in making our trip such a success which includes the guides, cooks and porters deserve a share of the praise." **Mr M Ellery**

# Kilimanjaro & The Adventure Company

*We have 15 years experience taking customers up Kilimanjaro and get great feedback from our passengers, which is testament to our long standing relationship with our local tour operator who we've worked with for many years.*

## So why travel with us?

We take care of all arrangements leaving you free to concentrate on the trek and enjoy the view. Each trip has a detailed set of Trip Notes, giving you information on everything you need to know, and every passenger that books receives a trekking guide which details what it is like on trek, how to train for them and how to recognise mountain sickness.

The price you pay **includes all Park Fees** – make sure you check this when comparing prices.

Our trips are designed to ensure as much money as possible is invested into the local economy as possible. Through our local agent we employ local Group Leaders who brief you on each day's walk, and a team of porter's who'll carry baggage everyday along with all the camping and cooking equipment. Within the team there's a chef who does all the cooking, including warm soups at Kobo - soup will never have tasted so good – and warm cups of tea are delivered to you first thing in the morning to help you enjoy the early views with the rising cloud.

## What is it like on trek?

If you're looking for firsthand accounts visit our dedicated Kilimanjaro web page which has a selection of videos and blogs  
[adventurecompany.co.uk /kilimanjaro-trek](http://adventurecompany.co.uk/kilimanjaro-trek)

In essence you'll walk for around five hours each day, apart from summit day where you'll be walking for around ten hours, taking regular breaks to eat, drink and take in the stunning views. If you're camping you'll stay in a two person dome tent and enjoy a hot meal in the communal eating tent. If you choose the accommodated route you'll stay in Swedish style huts that sleep 5-6 in bunk beds, and you'll eat your hot meals in the communal eating hut. There are toilet huts, whichever accommodation option you choose, and each morning and at the end of each day you'll get a bowl of warm water to wash.

## We care

We work closely with the destinations we visit. For every person who travels on our Kilimanjaro trip we donate £5 to the Arusha Children's Trust. The centre helps educate and support underprivileged children in the rural areas of the Rift Valley.

We are also officially part of the Kilimanjaro Parks Assistance Project to ensure that best practices are being adhered to in relation to porter welfare.



## Adventure Company facts

- Across our Kilimanjaro trips 95% of passengers last year rated their trip as 'excellent' or 'good', and 99% rated their Group Leader as 'excellent' or 'good'.

**Our summit success rate is around 75-80%.**

**A full group of 16 trekkers will always be accompanied by two head guides and four assistant guides. All our guides are qualified mountain leaders and are trained to recognise mountain sickness and react to alpine conditions.**

## How to prepare

**If you're new to higher altitude trekking or want to gain confidence in your trekking abilities, we can help you prepare.**

### Treksmart

We run trekking training days in the UK; led by qualified mountain guides, they tell you everything you need to know to prepare for a trek, and they're a great opportunity to meet some of your fellow passengers.

**For more details go to page 11**

### Training for Trekking Fitness Guide

Download our fitness guide for suggested pre-trekking training exercise and eating plans at [adventurecompany.co.uk/guides](http://adventurecompany.co.uk/guides)

# Kilimanjaro routes

## Which is the right trip for me?

### • Lemosho Route

The Lemosho route is two days longer so allows extra time for acclimatisation, improving your chances of summitting.

### • Rongai Route

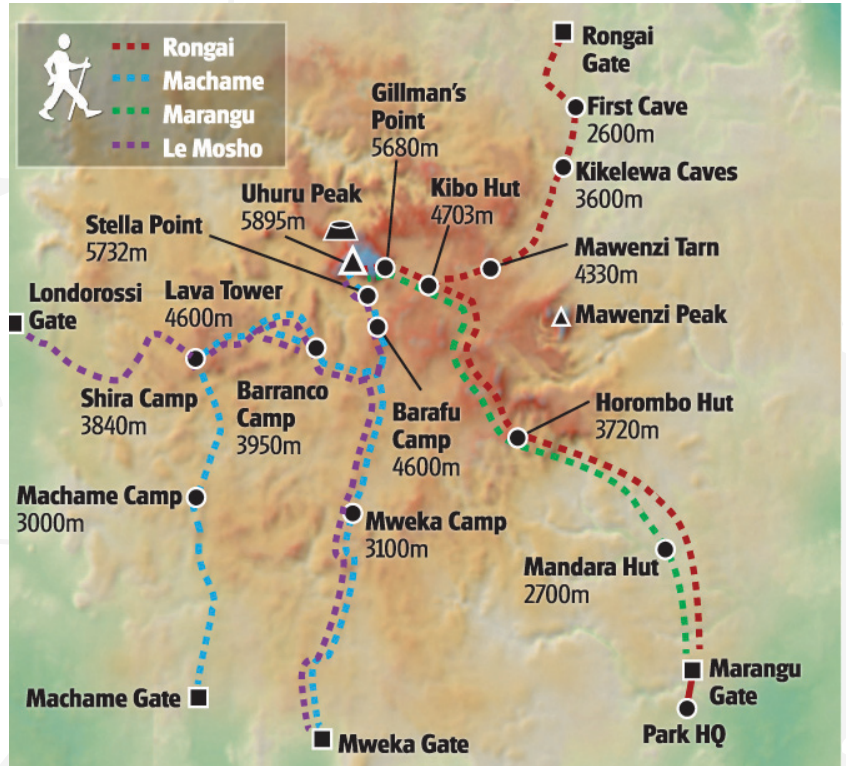
For spectacular views across the Serengeti choose the Rongai route.

### • Marangu Route

On the Marangu route you stay in mountain huts, ideal if you are not keen about camping, this route also has the easiest walking.

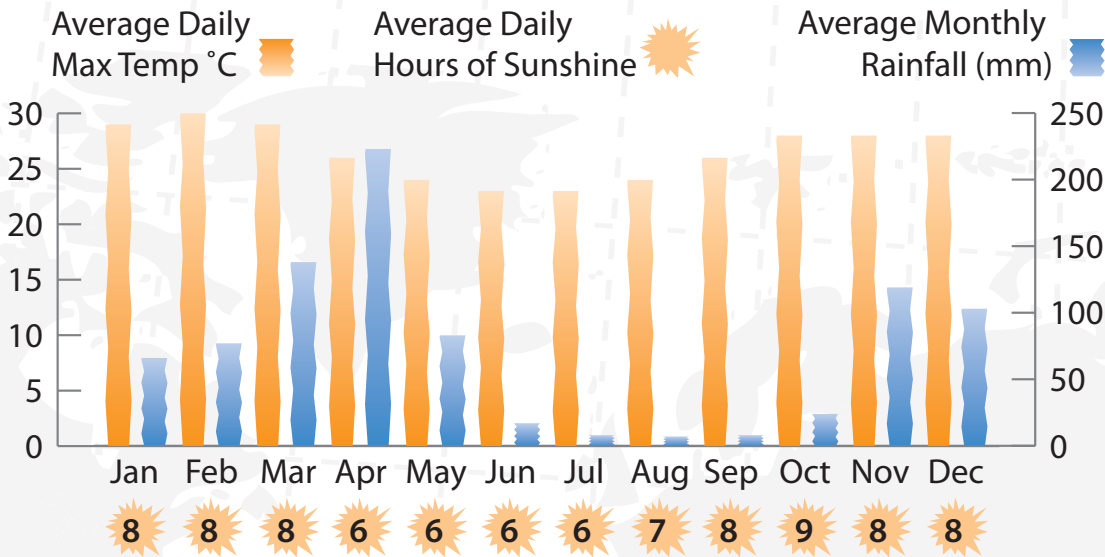
### • Machame Route

If you are feeling more adventurous, the Machame route is for you, it has some of the steepest ascents with some scrambling.



# Planning your trip

## Arusha



### When should I book?

It's always important to book as early as possible to ensure you avoid paying flight supplements, especially during peak travel times such as Easter, Christmas and the Summer Holidays. We hold an allocation of seats on all our Kilimanjaro trips, which are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. So it's best to book early to avoid disappointment and extra cost.

### Get the most from your trek - our trips

It's important to remember that it's not a race, so don't feel under pressure if you find yourself walking more slowly than other members of the group. You'll be stopping at fixed points at the end of every day, so the sooner you get there the more time you'll have sitting around and waiting. Instead we suggest you take your time to enjoy the challenge and take in the views and the experience - after all you're unlikely to do it again.

### Top Tip

There's not much to do in the evenings so a pack of cards, head torch and a good book are a must. It's also a good time to write up your journal if you're planning on keeping one. Remember we publish blogs & journals on our website so you could be our next hall of fame traveller. Learn some Swahili before you go, it'll really help your camaraderie with your porters and guides.

All our trips include regular breaks for refreshments, plus three meals a day, but it's worth taking energy bars and glucose tablets which are easy to digest even if you're not hungry. You'll have the chance to buy snacks at the end of each day, but once you're walking it's very remote, so come prepared.

The night before the summit it's a good idea to check your camera batteries, and make sure you keep them warm, we suggest keeping them in your sleeping bag. When you start your summit attempt, make sure your camera is somewhere warm and easily accessible, the last thing you'll feel like doing is rummaging around for it in the cold, and you really don't want to miss one of the most memorable sunrises you'll ever experience. It's cold at

the top so be prepared with good gloves and a hat. You won't spend long up there for that reason, so make sure you take plenty of photos and appreciate what you've achieved, because before you know it you'll be on your way down.

### How fit do I need to be?

Whilst no previous mountaineering experience is needed we do recommend improving your overall fitness before the trip to enhance your enjoyment. This means concentrating on aerobic exercises - ones which increase your heart rate. Walks, runs, rowing machines, anything which will raise your heart beat to 60-70% of your max is improving your aerobic capacity.

You can determine your max by taking your age off 220. Then 60-70% of this is calculated. You can then measure your pulse by placing your fingers onto your major arteries such as your neck or wrist or by buying a pulse monitor (£10-£30).

For more details on fitness before your trip read our trekking fitness guide which is available at [adventurecompany.co.uk/guides](http://adventurecompany.co.uk/guides) or from a Travel Consultant.

### Will I be affected by Altitude Sickness?

Our walks are planned to give your body time to acclimatise and you'll have regular food and drink stops. We can not guarantee you won't feel the affects; it affects everyone in different ways, but most people complete the trek without feeling any serious side affects from the altitude. To help avoid discomfort drink regularly, and never just take an aspirin to fight off a headache as this could mask the symptoms of altitude sickness and stop your Group Leader from making a diagnosis. We offer an AMS self-check sheet you can take with you to help you determine how you're feeling.

# Lemosho - 12 days



The Lemosho Route is the most scenic and unspoilt of all the Kilimanjaro options traversing beautiful forests and moorlands. This trip includes eight days of trekking, two days longer than our standard trips, providing you with more time to acclimatise and therefore a better chance of reaching the summit.

## Itinerary

**Day 1/2** Overnight flight to Kilimanjaro Airport; transfer to Arisha.

**Day 3 Mti Mkubwa (2,650m)** Drive to Londrossi Gate and start your trek through lush forest. Approx 5 hrs walking.

**Day 4/5 Shira Huts (3,480m)** Walk through open moorlands to reach the Shira Plateau, and summit Shira Cathedral. Approx 6 hrs walking.

**Day 6 Barranco Valley** A longer trek takes you to Barranco valley which lies in a sheltered area below the spectacular cliffs of the Breach Wall. Approx 6-7 hrs.

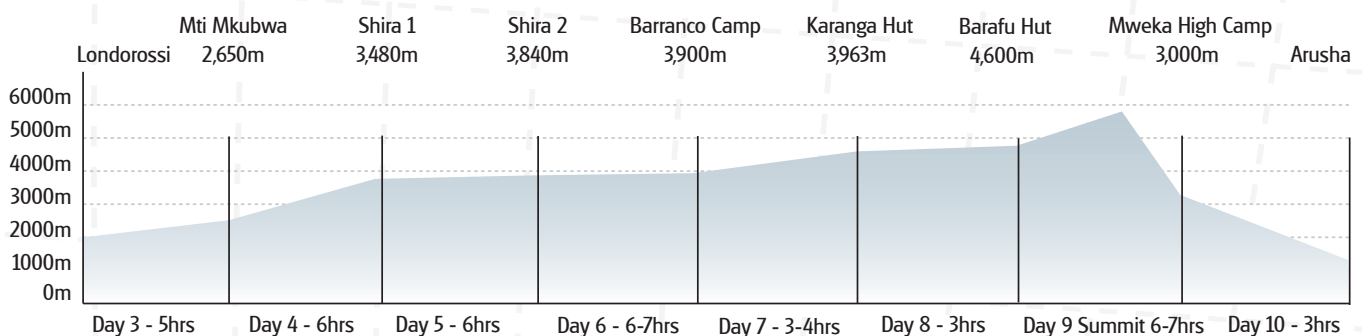
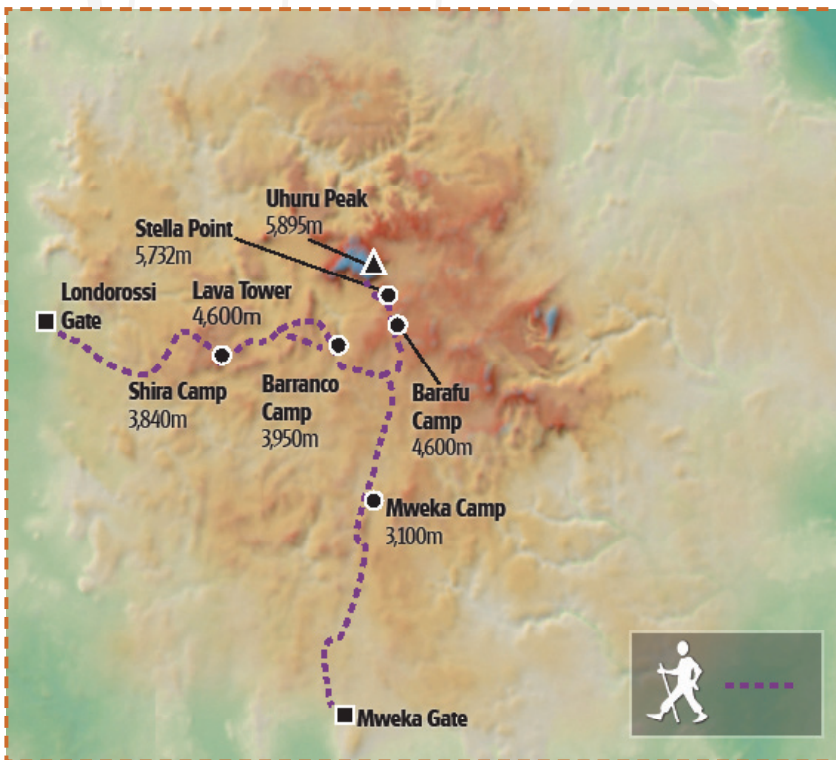
**Day 7 Karanga Valley (3,965m)** Walk over the Barroco Wall and valleys to tonight's campsite. Approx 3-4 hrs.

**Day 8 Barafu (4,600m)** Huge glaciers and cliffs mark this part of the mountain. It's a steep ascent to Barafu. Approx 3-4 hrs.

**Day 9 Summit (5,895m)** The final ascent to Uhuru (Freedom Peak, 5,895m) for dawn, before starting your descent

**Day 10 Arusha** Decent to Mweka, finish the trek and transfer to Arusha.

**Day 11/12** Free in Arusha; fly home.



# Rongai - 8 days

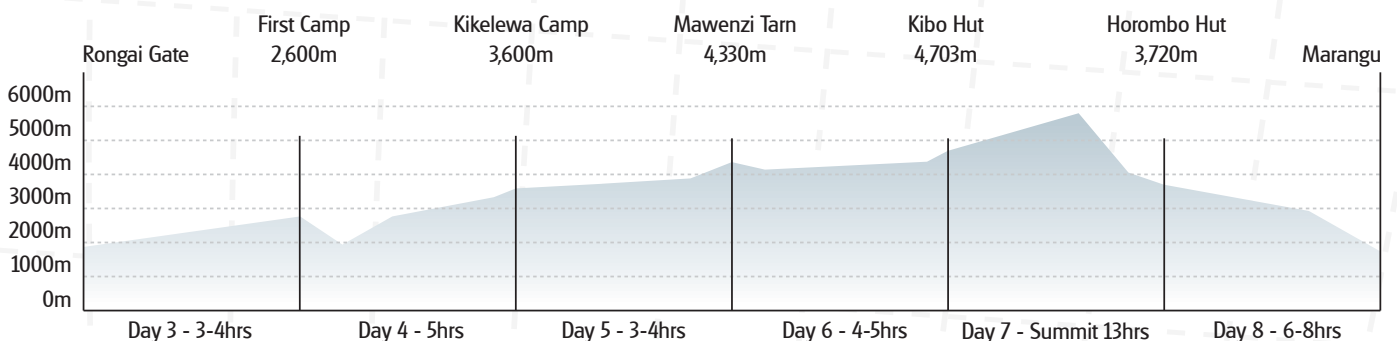


This route offers a different perspective of the mountain as you approach from the northern side. The numbers on this route are regulated so you get away from the crowds on your ascent, and as the route is only used for ascent you'll use one of the other routes on your way down. It's also the only route with views of the Masai lands too, so you'll maybe see monkeys, buffalo and elephants on the way up.



## Itinerary

- Day 1/2** Fly to Kilimanjaro Airport; transfer to Marangu via traditional Chagga villages.
- Day 3 First Cave (1,260m)** Drive to Rongai Gate and trek to First Cave from the northern side of the mountain. Approx 3-4 hrs.
- Day 4 Kikelewa Caves (3,600m)** Trek to Kikelewa Caves, beneath towering Kibo Peak. Approx 5 hrs. Approx 4 hrs.
- Day 5 Mawenzi Tarn (4,330m)** A steeper, but shorter, climb to Mawenzi Tarn Camp with a free afternoon for acclimatisation. Approx 4 hrs.
- Day 6 Kibo Hut (4,703m)** Trek to Kibo Hut, to prepare for tomorrow's summit attempt. Approx 4-5 hrs.
- Day 7 Summit (5,895m)** The final ascent to Uhuru (Freedom Peak) for dawn, before starting your descent. Approx 13-14 hrs.
- Day 8 Arusha** Trek to Marangu Gate and return to Arusha.
- Day 9/10** Free in Arusha; fly to London.



# Marangu - 10 days



The classic, most straightforward, route up Kilimanjaro and you'll stay in the relative comfort of mountain huts. If you don't like the idea of crawling into a tent after a day's hiking this trip is for you. On your way up you'll go through several ecosystems too; from lush rainforest and moorland to high altitude desert on the upper slopes.



## Itinerary

**Day 1/2** Overnight flight to Kilimanjaro Airport. Transfer to Arusha.

**Day 3 Mandara Gate (2,700m)**

Drive to Marangu gate. Start your walk through coffee plantations and dense rainforest, arriving at your nightstop in the mid-afternoon. Approx 4-5 hrs

**Day 4/5 Horombo Hut (4,600m)**

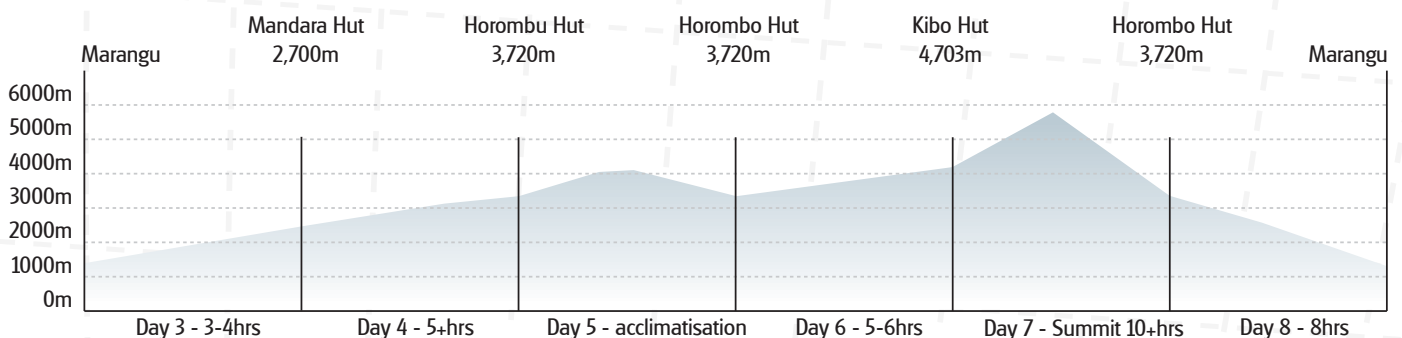
The day starts with a steep climb before rainforest gives way to moorland. As this is a 1,000m ascent, the next day is free for acclimatisation. Approx 5-7 hrs.

**Day 6 Kibo Hut (4,703m)** Trek to Kibo Hut, to prepare for tomorrow's summit attempt. Approx 5-7 hrs.

**Day 7 Summit (5,895m)** The final ascent to Uhuru (Freedom Peak, 5,895m) for dawn, before starting your descent. Approx 11 hrs)

**Day 8 Arusha** Descend to Marangu; drive to Arusha. Approx 8hrs.

**Day 9/10** Free time in Arusha; fly to London.





# Machame Route - 9 days



Arguably the most challenging option; the day walks are longer and steeper than the others, but your extra efforts are rewarded with breathtaking views of Kibo Peak, the eternal ice fields and Kili's scree-covered dome. You'll also enjoy great access to the remaining glacier and the Western Breach.

## Itinerary

**Day 1/2** Overnight flight to Kilimanjaro Airport; transfer to Arusha.

**Day 3 Machame Camp (3,000m)**

Drive to Machame Gate; through forest to the edge of vegetation. Approx 6 hrs.

**Day 4 Shira Plateau (3,840m)**

From Shira Plateau you will begin to get views of the Western Breach, Mt Meru and Kibo summit. Approx 5hrs.

**Day 5 Barranco Camp (3,900m)**

Apart from the descent to tonight's Barranco camp, most of today is spent climbing. You'll also have the chance to climb the Lova Tower. Approx 5-7 hrs.

**Day 6 Barafu Camp (4,600m)**

Trek to Barafu camp, walking across scree and beneath glaciers. Approx 6-8hrs

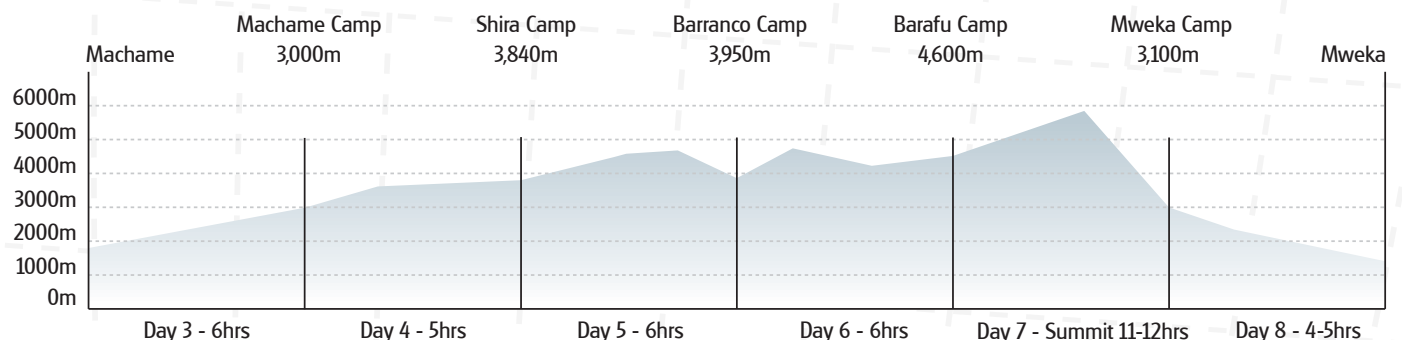
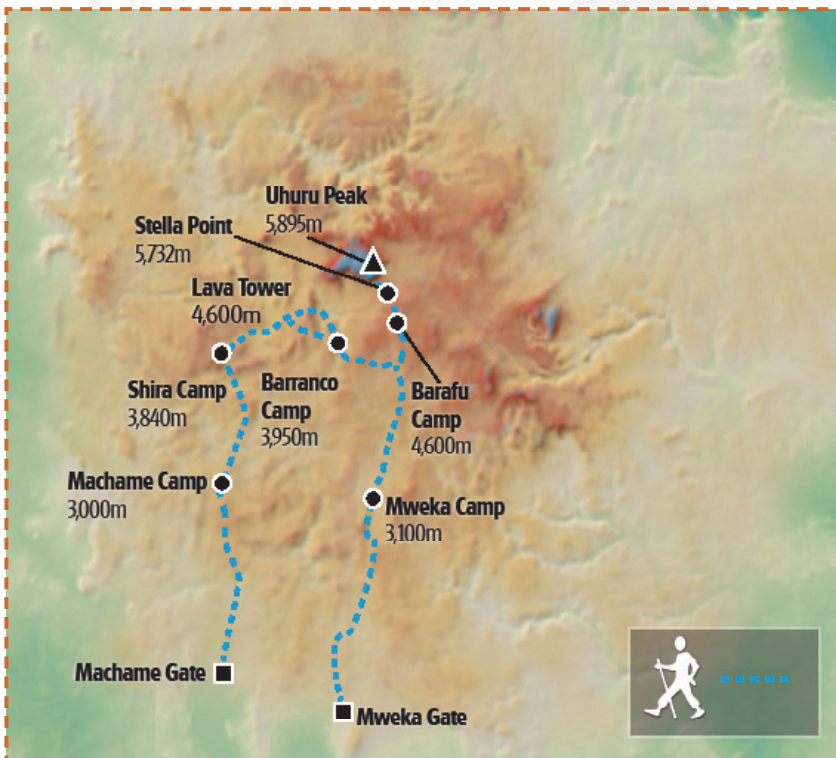
**Day 7 Summit (5,895m)**

The final ascent to Uhuru (Freedom Peak) for dawn; return via Barafu to Mweka camp.

**Day 8 Arusha (3,000m)**

Trek to Mweka village and drive to Arusha.

**Day 9/10** Free in Arusha; fly to London.



# Kilimanjaro extensions

Having conquered Kilimanjaro you might want to make the most of your time in Africa, either with a spot of relaxation, or an exciting safari. We have two extensions you can easily add onto your adventure.

## Zanzibar - Beach extension

Round off your trip with time on the exotic spice island of Zanzibar. Explore the rambling alleyways of Stone Town and have a full five days to relax on the white-sand beaches with views of the turquoise Indian Ocean.



### Itinerary

**Day +1/2** Fly to Zanzibar Island; Stone Town

**Day +3** Drive to beach

**Day +4-7** Relax on beach Free morning to spend at your leisure then afternoon transfer back to Marrakech.

**Day +8** Drive to Stone Town; fly to London via Dar Es Salaam

**Day +8** Drive to Stone Town; fly to London via Dar Es Salaam

## Serengeti Explorer - Safari extension

If you're interested in spotting some wildlife after your trek you can combine your Kilimanjaro adventure with our Serengeti Explorer tour, on certain dates. Ask our Travel Consultants for details.



### Itinerary

**Day +1** Arusha Game drive in Arusha

**Day +2** Lake Manyara Spot monkeys, elephants and a variety of other wildlife in the lush greenery of Lake Manyara.

**Day +3-4** Serengeti Extensive game drives through the Serengeti

**Day +5/6** Ngorongoro Crater Descend into the crater where you'll see lions, leopards, rhinos, buffalo, hippos and elephants to name a few.

**Day +7** Tarangire Descend into the crater where you'll see lions, leopards, rhinos, buffalo, hippos and elephants to name a few.

**Day +8/9** Fly to London

You can add both the Safari and Zanzibar extension to your Kili trip. For a full list of extensions and excursions, and to book, call our friendly Travel Consultants on **0845 868 0239**

# What do I need to take with me?

Leaving the mountain as you found it should underpin your packing plans – don't pack things you intend to discard after use.

Weather on the mountain can change quickly and temperatures can vary vastly from day to night, so pack plenty of layers which will help regulate your temperature. It's important to keep yourself dry, so keep your wet weather gear easily accessible.

Here are some suggestions for your packing list. Please be aware that there is a maximum weight of 20kg for your trek bag. Porters will carry the main luggage so we recommend a weight of 11kg, any baggage that is not needed on the trek can be left at the lodge at the start of your trip.

- Sunhat
- Waterbottle
- Trainers for relaxing
- High factor sunscreen & lipsalve
- Waterproof walking boots (well broken in)
- Warm sleeping bag (3/4-season) and liner
- Warm hat, gloves and thermal underwear
- Warm mid layer i.e.fleece
- Water proof thigh-length jacket (Goretex or similar)
- Trekking pole(s) · Headtorch + spare batteries · Wet wipes (Biodegradable)
- Water bottle(s)-minimum three litres capacity - Camelbak hydration packs carried in your day packs can be useful for the first few days but are likely to freeze higher up, so should be supplemented by a couple of water bottles.
- Glacier glasses (or good quality sunglasses - preferably with side shields)

## For more information on packing

For more details on a packing list, baggage, local currency and costs, vaccinations, altitude sickness and other frequently asked questions read the Trip Notes which are on each Kilimanjaro trip page on the website, or ask a Travel Consultant for details.



# More information

## Treksmart courses and contact information

If you have booked onto a trek and have some lingering questions on what to pack, or how to prepare, or are thinking of doing a trekking trip and are wondering what it will be like then try our Treksmart courses; a day of talks and interactive activities to help you prepare for your future trekking trips.

These sessions are friendly and fun, and are designed to answer your queries and questions which are at the back of your mind. The sessions run for a day (9.30am – 4.10pm) and cover the following points:

**What life is like on a trek** - details of a typical day.

**Pre-trek planning** – being organised upfront makes sure you avoid any last minute panics - areas covered include visa, currency, inoculations etc.

**Kit** – We breakdown the huge array of stuff on offer and explain what to take, including demonstrations of what's best for you or your trip.

**Acute Mountain Sickness** – one of the biggest areas of concern; we'll explain what it is, what signs to look for and how to deal with it.

**Physicality** – we'll discuss any concerns regarding fitness levels, providing basic tips and plans to help you make the most of the trek.

**Self Health Checks** – We'll explain what to lookout for and how best to deal with any issues on trek such as blisters, strains and bites.

**Basic outdoor skills** – although not needed on your trip we'll do some practical exercises to get you attuned to mountain life, including some basic principles on map reading and putting up a tent.

**Q&As** on any unanswered questions

## Attendees

The day will be led by a qualified, and highly experienced, mountaineering instructor, supported by staff from The Adventure Company. It's a great opportunity to talk to experts. The Treksmart days are designed for anyone with questions or concerns about their trekking trip. They give an overview on all elements within a trekking trip.

## Location & Dates

Join one of our Alton sessions and you are in the heart of the beautiful South Downs National Park and only an hour from the New Forest, so you can make a weekend of it, book some accommodation and enjoy a walk too.

Places cost £40 for the day and includes teas and coffees and a **FREE Adventure Company trek bag**. To reserve your place, or if you have any further questions, simply call our Travel Consultants **0845 868 0239**

## Contact Us

It's only natural to have more questions, so feel free to visit our website to find out more; our dedicated Kilimanjaro pages bring the trips alive, with people's blogs and videos on the trail. From here you can also print off the Trip Notes – a detailed day-to-day breakdown each. Alternatively, call one of our Travel Consultants on **0845 868 0239** and they'll be able to answer any questions you have.