



COMMUNITY ACTION TREKS LTD

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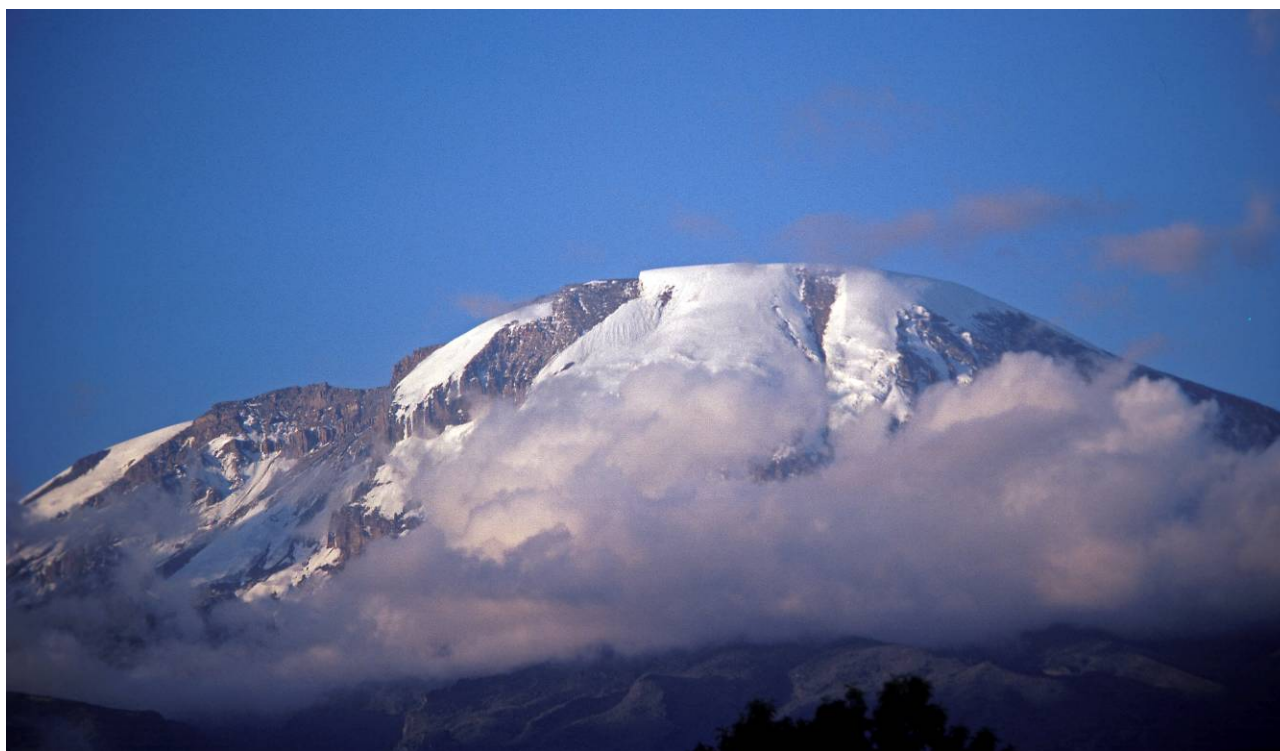
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CLASSIC KILIMANJARO Machame Route

Grade: Strenuous to very strenuous
Land-only duration: 8 days
Trekking days: 7 days
Maximum altitude: 5895m
Dates: Fri 22 – Sun 31 July 2011
You Are Asked to Raise: £2,990



Kilimanjaro (Doug Scott)



About Kilimanjaro

Located on Tanzania's border with Kenya, 330km south of the equator, Kilimanjaro is the highest peak on the African continent. This colossal mountain is composed of three extinct volcanic cones – 3962m Shira, 5149m Mawenzi, and 5895m Kibo, whose crater rim forms the summit. Trekkers have long been drawn to Kilimanjaro and it is not hard to see why. Nowhere else on earth are such extremes of climate and vegetation to be seen in a single location. Glaciers spill off its snowbound summit, leading to desert-like screes and open moorland, where giant lobelias and tree heathers thrive, while its lower slopes are clad in luxuriant rainforest which is home to striking black and white colobus monkeys, antelopes, raucous hornbills and many other animals and birds.

Kilimanjaro is among the world's highest free-standing mountains, rising 4,800m from the undulating plain that is the ancestral home of the Maasai people. There are several routes up the mountain, presenting different levels of challenge, from the popular 'tourist' trail starting at Marangu to the quieter and more scenic Machame and Umbwe routes. The climb up Kilimanjaro is a long, but technically not difficult walk. What makes it challenging is the altitude but by allowing 7 days (and not the 5 or 6 that some parties attempt), proper acclimatization is possible and the summit can be safely achieved by most fit walkers.

Machame Route

The very scenic Machame Route combines spectacular views and scenery, providing good acclimatisation and a quieter path than the tourist route. So it is perhaps the best of the standard routes on the mountain, a rewarding trek on Kilimanjaro.

Fitness & Experience

The walk up Kilimanjaro is long and arduous, particularly the approach to the summit. The altitude, combined with the cumulative effects of several days of ascent and descent, mean that a high degree of fitness and stamina are essential. For the basic route, no technical climbing experience is involved, though some short sections of the route involve a scramble and may not be suitable for anyone who is affected by vertigo. Regardless of the route you take, the secret of success is to take the climb slowly – you will become familiar with the Swahili cry of 'pole, pole' (pronounced to rhyme with 'slowly') from your guides. Drinking plenty of water is also essential at altitude and in the heat.



OUTLINE ITINERARY



Walking and journey times are approximate

Day 1: Arrive Kilimanjaro

On arrival transfer to our hotel by road - a journey approximately 1 hour. After your long journey, the day is free to relax at the hotel. In the evening we meet with our local trek guide for a briefing on the climb and to check through equipment and clothing.

Day 2: Start of Trek to Machame

Before the climb starts there is an hour's drive to the start of the trek at 1800m. This is an opportunity to be introduced to our assistant guide, the cook and porters, who will do their best to assist us in reaching the summit. From here we walk through farms and montane forest to Machame hut (3000m - 1200m of ascent). The lower slopes of Kilimanjaro receive ample rainfall and are very fertile and though much of the area is given over to coffee plantations, a great range of crops can be grown here. Most of the villagers are subsistence farmers, who cultivate small plots of land and graze a few head of livestock. Leaving the villages behind, we enter the rainforest, which is home to many beautiful birds and animals. The heat will slow us down but by walking quietly, we have good chances of spotting black and white colobus monkeys and we will undoubtedly hear the raucous call of the hornbill. Climbing slowly and steadily, we eventually emerge above the tree line amongst giant heather to the Machame hut, where the tents are pitched. (6 hours)

Day 3: Machame to Shira

Today we climb 840m to the Shira hut camping area. Walking through the rainforest the track can be very muddy (good boots and gaiters recommended!) Leaving the rainforest the trail follows a steep rocky ridge to reach the flatter ground of the Shira plateau. We should be able to spot Mt Meru above the clouds. The path is then level until near the hut, we cross a stream and then a small rise to the camping area. (6-8 hours)

Day 4: Shira to Baranco Hut

As an undulating trail, with a total ascent of only 140m but there are some incredible views of Kibo. The trail goes under the Lava Tower and the Great Western Breach of the summit. There are some impressive cliffs and rock formations all the way with some interesting colours if the light is good. Dropping steeply down the side of a ridge we reach the Baranco Hut, close to the foot of the Baranco wall at 3940m. (7 hours)

Day 5: Baranco Hut to Karanga Valley)

The trail climbs up the formidable looking Baranco Wall - but like many such trails it looks worse from a distance. Once on the wall care is needed in a few exposed places and here our guides will assist. Mostly however it is a good track, although steep, and we should reach the top of the wall in just over an hour. The path crosses a plateau area divided by several valleys with superb views up towards the southern ice-fields; in the order that we see them they are Heim, Kersten and Decken glaciers. We descend fairly steeply to the Karanga valley camp site 4,000m. (6-7 hours)

Day 6: Karanga Valley to Barafu

An undulating route goes from the Karanga Valley to the junction of the Mweka route. From here there is a final pull up to the Barafu hut – Barafu means 'ice' in Swahili. Located at 4,600m, we are in fact still below the snow line, but there is little vegetation at this altitude. Bird life too is scarce though we may encounter the white-necked raven, hearing its echoing croak as it wheels about scavenging for food. The tents are pitched among rocky outcrops for shelter, from where magnificent views of the summit of Kilimanjaro and Mawenzi peak to the east are ample reward for the day's efforts. (650m of ascent, 6-7 hours walking)

Day 7: Barafu to the Summit and descend to Mweka

This is the toughest day of the whole trek - 10-15 hours walking at high altitude over steep ground. Total ascent 1300m. We set off from Barafu Hut at 1.00am with head torches to climb the steep scree slope to Stella Point on the crater rim – 5700m. This is a long hard slog but by pacing ourselves and taking it slowly we should reach the rim just in time to enjoy the incredible spectacle of sunrise. From Stella Point it is another 1- 1 ½ Hours along the rim to Uhuru Peak – 5895m. Snow may be encountered on the scree slope and walking poles are useful for ascent and descent. After the exhilaration of the summit we descend slowly to our overnight camp for a late breakfast and 2 hour rest in your tent. All too soon the guide will be urging you to start the long descent to Mweka Hut via the heather moorland. We reach Mweka Hut camping area in late afternoon for a deserved rest. (10-15 hours)

Day 8: Mweka to the end of the trek and our hotel

After breakfast we descend the park gate. This can be a wonderful walk through the mountain forest - superb scenery and plenty of birds and calls of the colobus monkeys. We have chance to freshen up in our day room at our hotel before our flight. Transfer to airport.



Ice on Kilimanjaro summit