



KILIMANJARO

Tanzania Ascent by the Machame route

9 days 6 day ascent nothing to carry

Majestic Kilimanjaro and its eternal snows, the frozen summit of a continent which is baked by the sunshine, symbolises Africa for many in the West.

Since time immemorial, the exploration and ascent of this mysterious mountain have captured the imagination of people from all over the world. For many, the ascent remains the adventure of a lifetime.

We attempt the main summit, Uhuru Peak (Liberty peak) 5895m by the Machame route. It is less frequented than the classic route, and leads through a succession of landscapes, from the wildlife sanctuary of the savannah, to banana plantations, through tropical forests and prairies, to reach the eternal snowfields.

THE PROGRAMME

D1 Flight Paris – Nairobi (Kenya) Transfer to hotel in Arusha (4h) (according to arrival time)

Ascent of Kilimanjaro

The ascent by the Machame route is perhaps the most beautiful, and will give you a chance to see the mountain from all sides. It is much less busy than the normal route (Marangu), has no technical difficulties and you will acclimatise whilst climbing. Descent via the Mweka route. The sections are a little longer than on the Marangu route.

The first part of the trek leads us through a dense, inextricable forest, created by the permanent humidity levels in the lower levels (giant ficus, podocarpus, olea, tree ferns, as well as numerous flowers, begonias etc...), before entering an area of giant ferns and high grasses, at about 3000 metres.

The Shira plateau, the oldest of the three Kilimanjaro volcanoes, is situated in an area of high altitude moorland; vegetation is sparse, and only a few plants adapted to the extreme temperature differences (freezing at night and up to 35°C in the middle of the day) manage to survive. Shira is an immense eroded crater, and one of the most fascinating places on Kilimanjaro. There is a superb view of the western gap and the glaciers (Credner, Arrow, Great and Little Penck...), lit up by the colours of the sunset, in late afternoon.

We then cross a mountain desert in the direction of the Lava Tower, at the foot of Kibo, and a col at 4500m before descending the immense Barranco canyon, overlooking the Heim glacier. The vegetation here is strewn with flowers, as well as giant goundsel and lobelias. Opposite is the great wall of Barranco, cut out by the landslide which opened up this immense valley.

The path to Barafu follows the slopes of Kibo, below the hanging glaciers and their huge seracs (ice towers), before climbing the moraine at the foot of the Barafu route. This is the last bivouac before the final assault.

Beautiful view of Mawenzi, with Mt Meru in the distance; superb at sunset.

Leave early, during the night, for the summit, accompanied by the Chagga guides.

The first section is relatively easy, on gentle slopes, followed by scree which becomes steeper. The sun climbs gradually over Mawenzi as we arrive at Stella Peak, on the edge of the crater.

A last effort and you are on the summit, Uhuru Peak, the highest point on the African continent, and a superb reward for all your efforts.

D2 Transfer Machame village - Machame camp (3050m)

Departure for the Chagga village of Machame, starting point for the trek.

Formalities at the entry to the Kilimanjaro National Park, and introduction to your guides and porters.

After a six hour walk (approx), we reach our first bivouac,

Machame camp, at 3050 m. The trek begins on a wide path through the forestry reserve, before entering a denser forest. With luck, you will see colobus monkeys and touracos. Bivouac under canvas. 6 to 7h walk, +1200m

D3 Machame Camp / Shira Camp (3840m)

Beautiful view of Kibo on leaving the camp. The path steepens, staying in the forest, amongst ferns festooned with lichens, which when lit up by the sunlight give a surrealist air to the surroundings. We follow a ridge, more or less, into volcanic terrain where there is little vegetation. A short, sharp climb with a few steps takes us to the picnic site. There remains just a traverse before arriving on the Shira plateau. Throughout this section you will come across many small streams, as well as the first groundsel and lobelias. The path from here is flat, even slightly descending and soon you will catch a glimpse of the camp and your porters in the distance. Kibo, although possibly obscured during the day, will certainly be clear in the twilight, lit up by the rays of the setting sun. On the other hand, Mt Meru will disappear slowly, above the rocky spikes of Shira. Night in bivouac at Shira Camp, 3840 m.
5 to 6h walk. +840m

D4 Shira-Camp / Barranco camp (3950m)

From the camp, the track climbs directly towards the Lava Tower, overlooking the whole Shira plateau and gradually approaching the glaciers. We cross a small col, at 4500m and descend to the picnic stop in a small valley. Two short climbs follow, before the descent into the Barranco, definitely the most beautiful spot in the Kilimanjaro range. This huge canyon is the result of a landslide, a little over 100,000 years ago. Several small streams wind past the foot of the glacier and the campsite is bordered with lobelias and groundsel. The majestic Heim glacier hangs 2000m above your head. Night in bivouac at Barranco camp, 3950 m.

7h walk, +650m, -550m.

D5 Barranco Camp / Barafu Camp

After the superb bivouac at Barranco, we climb the big wall, which looks impressive from a distance, but is really very easy. There is a beautiful view from the ridge, which is reached by a succession of ascents and descents : the glaciers are above your head ; behind you, in the distance, Mt Meru emerges from the plain.

3 to 4 hours to reach the Karanga valley.

Beautiful climb afterwards, on an inclined plateau.

The path follows the hillside across many valleys, in very open terrain, before reaching the Mweka route, where we turn off towards the last camp, Barafu, 4600m. In front of you, the beautiful Mawenzi (5149m) range stands out.

Preparation for the ascent. Dinner, then short night.

7 to 8h walk. +800m, -300m.

D6 Barafu Camp / Uhuru Peak (5895m) / Mweka Camp (3100m)

Departure during the night (around midnight). The temperature is bearable even though it is below zero, but will drop as we gain height and if the wind starts to blow. For the first hour, the path is not too steep, but climbs steadily afterwards through scree and small rocky steps. 5 – 6 hours walking, the last section close to the glaciers, brings us to Stella Point, at around 5700m, on the edge of the crater : we usually arrive here in time for a superb sunrise over the rocky spikes of Mawenzi! From here, the summit is less than an hour away, (this section is not difficult ; if you have no problems with the altitude, it demands less effort than the last section before Stella Point). The arrival on the 'roof of Africa', symbol of freedom for the Tanzanian people, is a moment filled with emotion....

Descent by the same route as far as the Barafu camp. We advise you to rest here and drink copiously. A picnic awaits you, before striking camp and descending to the last camp, Mweka, 3100m.

12 to 14h walk, +1450m, -1950m, a long day which appears impossible in the morning, but as height is lost, is finally achieved without too many problems. Arriving back at 3100m is a real 'breath of fresh air!'

In September 2001, the descent via the Mweka route was closed for repairs. We followed a new route, which brought us to the very beautiful, new camp on the Maua route. This does not make any difference to the descent.

D7 Mweka Camp / Mweka Gate (1800m) / Arusha (1400m)

This very varied stage takes us from scrubland (our last camp) to the tropical forest, passing through luxuriant scenery where it is possible to see black and white colobus monkeys. Picnic on the way at a specially organised site.

5h30 to 6h walk to the gates of the Park.

After the last formalities on leaving the Park, and a goodbye to our porters, we return to Arusha at around 2.30. The descent starts on a fairly long track ; we pass through many small villages before joining the road for the last 80km to the town of Arusha, or, depending on flight times, directly to Nairobi (Kenya).

Night in hotel, in double rooms. (3*)

D8 Transfer to airport. Return flight to Paris,

Arrival on **D9**.

10 day programme.

We offer 3 dates with a 10 day programme.

In this case, Day 5 is split into two days, with a bivouac at Karanga Valley, giving better acclimatisation, and better recovery, and the certainty of being able to rest before the real ascent from Barafu to the summit.

Arriving early morning in Barafu (4600m) means, moreover, that you can sleep before the final ascent, which is not really true for the 9 day ascent. The ascent of Uhuru begins at around midnight!

We have tried this out with several groups, who found this programme very satisfactory.

A FEW NOTES

 ITINERARY

By the Machame route offers the best chance of success. It is much wilder, more varied and less busy than the normal route, (Marangu = coca-cola route) despite more use in recent years.

The sections can be altered. They are sometimes arranged to fit in with water supply points, the beauty of a site, or unforeseen encounters. These alterations are always made with your interests in mind, and are part and parcel of the surprises of travelling in Africa. However, the sections are well defined on the ascent as far as Barafu

Camp, only the last two can really be changed. For example, in 2002 the Mweka descent route had just been closed for repairs (gully erosion) but the new, replacement route is magnificent.

LEVEL

c. No real difficulty apart from acclimatisation to the altitude. However you must be well prepared for this expedition, as the conditions are quite tough. Physical preparation – by walking regularly in the mountains or the high mountains, and by building up the height gain. If possible, altitude gain in the Alps, strenuous effort at altitude. for example, is beneficial, as the difficulty on Kilimanjaro results from the altitude.

PORTERAGE

You have nothing to carry, apart from a small day sac for your food and essential personal effects. Luggage is carried by porters, who are English-speaking Chagga guides. They also carry the picnic (apart from the 1st day, when they will be distributed at the departure point). Avoid rigid bags and suitcases. A soft travel bag with a lateral zip fastener is preferable. Limit weight as much as

COMFORT

Accommodation :

Nights spent in tents whilst trekking.

In **hôtel** in Arusha and (or) à Nairobi. (3*)

Group tents : 1 mess tent : the whole group can be accommodated for meals.

1 special tent for the kitchen.

The lightweight 2-person tents are spacious and comfortable. You will not have to pitch them or pack them away, as everything is done by the porters.

You will be supplied with a thick mattress (5 to 6cm), essential for good recuperation at night.

In hotels in Arusha or Nairobi, 3* hotel (local standards) with bathroom and WC. (Arusha is sometimes subject to water restrictions imposed by the town, not the hotel).

SUPERVISION and ORGANISATION

During the trek : 1 or 2 registered Tanzanian guides, (depending on the size of the group) 2 porters minimum per person, 1 or 2 cooks, depending on the size of the group.

The local guides, who are very experienced on this ascent (some have climbed it 150 times) are your guarantee of success. Their rhythm is perfectly adapted to the ascent, and you will often hear them say « polé, polé », which means slowly ! Listen to their advice (they usually speak English), they are friendly people, and pay attention to everything.

GROUP

7 to 12 persons

RENDEZ-VOUS / SEPARATION

Meet on Saturday at Paris Roissy airport. The journeys are on normal flights. Some time before your departure, you will receive details of place and time of departure, and how to obtain your air ticket.

You will usually meet your guide on arrival at the airport.

TELEPHONE

Mobile phones work in Arusha, but not very well during the Trek and the Safari.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Formalities

Mandatory passport with at least 6 months validity remaining (on your return date)

Visa (2 photos, 1 form, 30,48 euros for Tanzania (2003) ; Takes 3 days.

Money

Currency is the Tanzanian Shilling (1Euro = 719,80 Shilling)

Regular jogging, especially uphill, is good for overall fitness (45 mins minimum). Getting plenty of regular sleep in the two weeks preceding the ascent will help guarantee good recovery.

As this is not an ascent to be taken lightly, you should neglect nothing in order to improve your chances of success ; we stress that training is essential. It is also an important guarantee of safety.

Despite all this, it is possible that certain persons will not succeed in going higher than a certain altitude. This is a fact, we do not all have the same capacity to adapt to altitude. We advise you to consult your doctor to ensure you are fit for strenuous effort at altitude.

possible. You must not exceed a 10 to 12kg load for the Tanzanian porters, as, apart from your personal effects, there is also the camping equipment, food, etc. to be carried. Do not bring bags which are too long, as they are sometimes difficult to carry.

Your day sac, which you carry yourself, should be comfortable, easily adjustable and have a hip belt.

Catering:

Copious meals prepared by one or 2 cooks. You are advised to bring food to eat whilst climbing (impossible to buy this in the area) which will provide the extra energy needed for the ascent. All food is cooked on stoves.

Breakfasts consist of the usual tea, coffee, chocolate, powdered milk, sliced bread, margarine and jam, with fresh fruit, omelette, sausages and cheese in addition.

The picnic at midday consists of salad, hard boiled eggs, sliced bread, cheese, fruit.

The evening meal usually consists of meat with vegetables + rice, pasta or potatoes, French toast, sometimes pancakes, fruit (pineapple, exotic fruits etc)...

Tea or coffee and snack on arrival at the end of the day's walk.

Beers and colas can be found in the huts on the first and last sections. (The huts are the hexagonal metal structures, exclusively for the use of the site warden.

Important ! you can bring a few good bottles of wine from France, but don't overdo the excess baggage !!

Transit visa for Kenya (in Paris or better directly on arrival, at the airport (59 USD at the time of writing))

Useful Address

Tanzanian Embassy : 13, ave Raymond Poincaré – 75016 PARIS
Tel. 01 53 70 63 66 / Fax 01 47 55 05 46
10h – 13h except Saturday

Import/export of local currency is forbidden.

Bring \$US notes, but we can also change Euros.

Travellers cheques : not advisable, as they can only be changed in banks (restricted opening hours) and large hotels.

Visa Card : accepted nearly everywhere

Postal Cheques postaux : we advise against, unless you are staying on to go to the Post Office.

Climate

Tropical, variable according to altitude. Dry season from December to March. Rainy season in April/May and mid October/November. Cool, sometimes cold at altitude (+10 à -10°C). Fairly hot in the Parks (25 à 28° C).

Health

Anti-malaria treatment advisable (consult a tropical medicine centre). (Savarine ou Lariam)

Vaccinations : yellow fever (no longer compulsory, but advisable) : hepatitis A and B, TABDT (typhoid) + Polio are recommended

Water

You are strongly recommended to treat the water you drink during the trek (micropur ou hydroclonazone for example) and for the rest of the time to drink only mineral water, or other sealed drinks. Learn to brush your teeth in mineral water.

Rescue

Nothing like in the Alps ; here rescues are carried out on foot. For relatively minor injuries (minor sprains, sunstroke, lumbagos etc) porters assist and descend with you to the following, or previous camp.

In the case of a more serious injury, we can call on the « flying doctors », who use helicopters or light aircraft (in the parks, for example). This takes time, however, as mobile phones do not work everywhere and the Tanzanians, although generally athletic are not supermen, either.

Beware ! Rescues are not free, and it is up to you or your insurance company to pay the costs involved. It is therefore important

to carry your insurance documents at all times.

Similarly, if for some reason you wish to leave the group during the ascent, hotel costs and transfer from a gate are your responsibility.

It is very important to be well insured on this kind of trip.

However, statistically, there are very few problems on this ascent, if participants have followed the preliminary advice, come fit enough for the ascent and follow the advice of the local guides.

You will probably be surprised by the slow walking rhythm set by the guides, but this is an important guarantee of success on this ascent.

Be attentive and relaxed, and even if you are very fit, respect the guide's advice.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Many books, a good **Lonely Planet** guide in French and English; **le Petit Futé** on Tanzania and in the collection **Guides Arthaud** « Kenya Tanzanie ».

Maps : Kilimanjaro 1/62000 Mountains of the World , can be found in large bookshops, such as l'Astrolabe in Paris, Arthaud in Grenoble etc...

PRICE :

2235 Euros per person (base hotel 3* in Arusha or Nairobi)

*** 2335 Euros per person**

**** 2375 Euros per person (10 day programme)**

***** 2475 Euros per person**

****** 2575 Euros per person (10 day programme , summer)**

full board, except meals in Arusha or Nairobi, transport by 4 X 4, climbing fee for Kilimanjaro.

The price does not include :

Meals in Arusha or Nairobi, drinks, 'hill food', tips, visa expenses, (Tanzania et transit Kenya), rescue and/or cancellation insurance, 1, 2 or 3%, airport taxes.

The price includes:

Return flights Paris/Nairobi, supervision and organisation,

*** Tipping :**

This is an institution in Tanzania, there is no escape !! (without exception)

Guidelines are (approx) :

10 USD per day for the Tanzanian guides. (split between the participants)

5 USD per day for the porters. (2 porters per person !)

5 USD per day for the cooks (split between the participants)

This comes to about 80 USD for an 8-day trip, payable on the spot. (It's the same in all the agencies !)



GENERAL INFORMATION



Useful to know

Languages : Swahili and English

Time difference : + 2h in winter

22 million inhabitants in 945100 Km2, the capital is Dodoma, on the east coast opposite the island of Zanzibar.

Useful words in Swahili (Tanzania's official language)

« Jambo » = hello, hi ! (each time you meet someone, you will be greeted like this).

- « Polé, polé » = gently, slowly
- « Asante » = thank-you
- « Hakuna matata » = no problem !
- « Twende » = let's go ! (you will hear this often during the final ascent)

Écology

Everyone is **personally** responsible, we travel through a **clean and often fragile natural environment**, and should **leave no trace** of our visit. Keep paper handkerchiefs and wrappers in your pockets until the evening, then dispose of them in the waste sacks.

Photography

We all like to bring back souvenirs and films of our trips, feel free to film the scenery, but show restraint and respect for the people who live there.

YOUR LUGGAGE.....

Travel documents

- **waterproof folder** containing your travel documents and personal papers.
- **passport** (participants other than French nationals should consult their respective embassy or consulate). Keep a photocopy of your passport separately in your rucsac.
- **Repatriation and rescue insurance contract** : (have a copy of your contract with exact details).

To transport your belongings

- **Day sac** : for clothes and smaller equipment (water bottle, sun cream and sunglasses, personal and/or grog snacks, camera, binoculars...) Choose a fairly large sac with comfortable straps and hip belt, even if you will not be carrying much.
- **1 kit bag or travel bag** for the rest of your gear : the porters will carry your belongings on their back or head. Choose a bag which is compact and not too bulky.

For sleeping

- Warm sleeping bag.
- Sheet inner bag.

Clothes

- a thick fleece or warm pullover
- cotton shorts
- warm underclothes (in wool or lightweight fleece for ex.)
- tee shirts
- mountain trousers
- goretex overtrousers (optional)
- pair of woollen gloves and pair mittens
- a balaclava
- a cotton sunhat or
- baseball cap
- bandanas
- a warm shirt or a lightweight fleece
- a goretex jacket or anorak
- a rain cape.
- lightweight socks and warm woollen socks (without seams)
- gaiters or stop tout
- pair of telescopic poles
- headtorch with spare alkaline batteries
- toilet paper
- toiletries
- hygienic wipes
- thermos, 1 litre min (water freezes in ordinary water bottles on Kilimanjaro!)
- pocket knife
- plastic bags
- tracksuit
- glacier glasses

For the upper body

We recommend three layers :
Long sleeved undergarments, lightweight sweater, fleece, all protected by a goretex jacket.

Boots

- well worn-in trekking boots which support the ankle. Good soles, warm. Boots are very important!!
- a pair of lightweight trainers or sandals

Personal first aid kit

Consult your doctor for advice.
Total sun block for lips and face, Elastoplast, dressings
Compeed, compresses et disinfectant,
Antiseptic cream, wide-spectrum antibiotic,

anti-diarrhoea tablets (intérix, immodium, ercéfuryl),
antalgic (aspirin, paracetamol), eye lotion, anti-inflammatory ointment, water treatment tablets (hydroclonazone-micropur), glucose tablets.
We advise you to take Diamox, a mild diuretic, which helps acclimatisation. One tablet each morning, starting at the Shira camp (3700m).
Mild sleeping tablets if you have problems sleeping (sleeping is difficult at altitude) Stilnox for exemple.



The whole team is at your service for the organisation of your trip. Don't hesitate to contact us, we will do everything possible to ensure that success your stay is a success.

See you soon for a trip to Tanzania!

