

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

KILIMANJARO

TANZANIA



CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | TOPICS | PAGES |
|-------------|---|-------|
| CHAPTER - 1 | *OVERVIEW | 5-5 |
| | ■ What Is Mount Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ How Tall Is Mount Kilimanjaro? | |
| CHAPTER - 2 | *LOCATION | 6-6 |
| | ■ Where is Mount Kilimanjaro Located? | |
| CHAPTER - 3 | *WEATHER | 7-7 |
| | ■ What Is The Weather On Mount Kilimanjaro Like? | |
| CHAPTER - 4 | *DURATION | 8-9 |
| | ■ Time Duration To Climb Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Benefits Of Shorter Kilimanjaro Climbs | |
| | ■ Benefits Of Longer Kilimanjaro Climbs | |
| CHAPTER - 5 | *FACILITIES | 10-11 |
| | ■ What Are The Campsites On Kilimanjaro Like? | |
| | ■ Where Do You Sleep On Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ Are There Bathrooms And Showers On Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ What Are Public Toilets On Mount Kilimanjaro Like? | |
| | ■ Is there Mobile Network Coverage On Kilimanjaro? | |
| CHAPTER - 6 | *DIFFICULTY | 12-13 |
| | ■ What Is The Difference Between A Climb, Hike And Trek? | |
| | ■ How Difficult Is It To Mount Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ Does Anyone Need To Have Special Skills To Climb Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ Is There An Age Limit To Climb Mount Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ What Makes Kilimanjaro Difficult To Climb? | |
| CHAPTER - 7 | *SAFETY | 14-15 |
| | ■ Is It Dangerous To Climb Mount Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ How Many Tourists Die On Kilimanjaro Every Year? | |
| | ■ How Does The Facility Rate On Kilimanjaro Compare To Other Mountains? | |
| | ■ How Big Is The Risk Of Rock fall When Climbing Kilimanjaro? | |
| | ■ How Dangerous Is Altitude Sickness When Climbing Kilimanjaro? | |

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--------------|
| CHAPTER - 8 | *HIGH ALTITUDE | 16-17 |
| | ■ Common Symptoms Of Altitude Sickness While Climbing Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Shortness Of Breath While Climbing Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ 3 Golden Rules Of Altitude Acclimatization | |
| | ■ Avoid Altitude Sickness When Climbing Kilimanjaro | |
| CHAPTER - 9 | * BUDGET | 18-19 |
| | ■ Tipping Guidelines For Kilimanjaro Climb | |
| | ■ Cost To Climb Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Reasons Of Kilimanjaro Tours So Expensive | |
| | ■ Save Costs To Make Kilimanjaro Climb Affordable | |
| | ■ Cost To Hire A Porter For Kilimanjaro | |
| CHAPTER - 10 | *DRINKS & MEALS | 20-21 |
| | ■ Beverages | |
| | ■ Bottled Water | |
| | ■ Soft Drinks | |
| | ■ Alcoholic Beverages | |
| | ■ Food | |
| CHAPTER - 11 | *HIKING ROUTES | 22-25 |
| | ■ Route Options To Climb Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Shortest Route To Climb Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Most Difficult Route On Mount Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Easiest Route On Mount Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Most Popular Route On Mount Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Safest Route to Climb Mount Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Best Kilimanjaro Route During Rainy Season | |
| | ■ Key Differences Between The Routes On Mount Kilimanjaro | |
| CHAPTER - 12 | *SUMMIT SUCCESS | 26-26 |
| | ▪ Kilimanjaro Route With Highest Summit Success Chance | |
| | ▪ Average Kilimanjaro Summit Success Rate | |
| CHAPTER - 13 | *FITNESS | 27-28 |
| | ■ Fitness Level Needs To Be Maintained For Climb Kilimanjaro | |
| | ■ Physical Preparation For Kilimanjaro Climb | |
| | ■ Best Cardio Activity To Prepare For Kilimanjaro Climb | |

| | | |
|---------------------|--|--------------|
| | ■ Best Muscle Exercise For Kilimanjaro Climb | |
| CHAPTER - 14 | *HIKING ARRANGEMENTS | 29-30 |
| | ■ Required Gear For Kilimanjaro Climb | |
| | ■ Time To Organize The Necessary Gear | |
| | ■ Best Options To Rent A Kilimanjaro Gear | |
| CHAPTER - 15 | *FLIGHTS | 31-31 |
| | ■ Airport To Consider When Prepare For Kilimanjaro Climb | |
| | ■ International Airlines Fly In To Kilimanjaro International Airport | |

*OVERVIEW



■ What Is Mount Kilimanjaro?

Mount Kilimanjaro is an inactive volcano in northern Tanzania, near the border with Kenya. At 5,895 meters (19,340 feet) above sea level, Kilimanjaro is Africa's highest peak and the world's highest free-standing mountain. It is also a major destination for mountaineers and trekkers from around the world.

■ How Tall Is Mount Kilimanjaro?

Mount Kilimanjaro is 5,895 meters (19,341 feet) tall. This makes Kilimanjaro the tallest mountain in Africa. It is also the tallest free-standing mountain worldwide. Free-standing means that Kilimanjaro is not part of a mountain range. Compared to the Himalayas' Mount Everest or the Alps' Mont Blanc, Mount Kilimanjaro rises like a landmark amid its surrounding lowlands.

*LOCATION



■ Where is Mount Kilimanjaro Located?

Mount Kilimanjaro is located in Tanzania, East Africa. Situated in the northern part of the country near the border to Kenya, Mount Kilimanjaro is sometimes erroneously attributed to Kenya. The Mount Kilimanjaro area, starting from its surrounding rainforest—or remainders thereof—at its base all the way up to its peak, is a protected nature reserve, the so-called Kilimanjaro National Park. The entire park bestrides a surface area of 100 kilometers long and 65 kilometers wide.



■ What Is The Weather On Mount Kilimanjaro Like?

The temperature on Mount Kilimanjaro swings between the two extremes of very hot or extremely cold. Generally, the lower areas will be humid and subject to plenty of rainfall – particularly in the rainforest and during the rainy season. The higher parts of the mountain are often much colder, with bitter winds and potentially snow at the top. There are two rainy seasons and two dry seasons in Tanzania. January to mid-March and June to October are the dry seasons – they are also the two main trekking seasons on Kilimanjaro. Late March to May, November and December are the wet seasons, which bring heavier rainfall and thunderstorms.

*DURATION



■ Time Duration To Climb Kilimanjaro

Depending on the route, Kilimanjaro climbs take anywhere from 5 days to more than 8 days. As it is important to ascend slowly in order to acclimatize to the high altitude, most climbers opt for 6 to 8 day routes. The longest routes take 9 to 10 days.

While speed record climbers have scaled the mountain in less than a day, the minimum permit issued by the Kilimanjaro National Park for normal tourist climbers is 5 days. Exceptional tourist climbers may complete their climb initially booked for 5 days within 4 days by descending all the way from the summit to the park gate within one day.

■ Benefits Of Shorter Kilimanjaro Climbs

Although longer Kilimanjaro climbs are better for altitude acclimatization, taking shorter climbs does have its benefits. Even though sleeping out in the wilderness away from civilization can be very relaxing and even fun, climbers unaccustomed to camping for long periods of time may want to reduce discomforts associated with the lack of basic modern facilities such as running water or heating. Nighttime temperatures frequently drop below zero at higher elevation. Combined with the effects of the altitude on your body, you may not be able to sleep well, and feel more and more tired the more time you spend on the

mountain. This in addition to the obvious benefits of saving money and time on shorter climbs.

■ Benefits Of Longer Kilimanjaro Climbs

One of the main benefits of taking longer climbs is that it gives you more time to acclimatize to the high altitude. This is important for reducing the symptoms associated with altitude sickness such as breathlessness, dizziness, and nausea; and to mitigate the risk of developing more severe forms of acute mountain sickness. If you are serious about making it all the way to the summit of Kilimanjaro, then it is worth taking the extra time to climb because better acclimatization is one of the single most important factors when it comes to increasing your chances of success. You'll also get more time to enjoy the breathtaking scenery and natural landscapes away from the rest of civilization.



■ What Are The Campsites On Kilimanjaro Like?

All routes on Kilimanjaro use specifically designated campsites. Most campsites have a registration office and basic toilet facilities. They are safe, provide a good way to meet fellow climbers, and almost always have spectacular views. Your meals will be provided by your tour operator in a separate mess tent where you will be able to sit comfortably. Apart from the Marangu Route, there are no shops on Kilimanjaro. Furthermore, there are no charging facilities, and there is no heating. Few campsites have running water, and there are no water sources near the base camps at high altitudes.

■ Where Do You Sleep On Kilimanjaro?

Where you sleep on Mount Kilimanjaro depends on your hiking route and climbing package. On all but the Marangu route, you will sleep in tents at designated campsites. Your tour operator will typically organize your sleeping tent and mattress, whereby the quality of tents ranges from cheap locally produced via high-quality imported winter mountaineering tents to luxurious walk-in size tents with proper frame beds.

The Marangu Route offers shared hut accommodation with dormitory-style bunk beds. This means you'll have a firm roof, but it also reduces your level of privacy. High-quality tents may feel more luxurious and comfortable than the Marangu Huts.

■ Are There Bathrooms And Showers On Kilimanjaro?

There is no permanent shower or bathing facilities available on Mount Kilimanjaro. However, all our tour operator partners will provide you with a daily hot bowl of washing water. Some also provide a hand wash station for use at camp.

If you require, it is possible to upgrade your climb with a portable hot mountain shower & tent, which all our VIP packages also include by default. Simply let us know when booking your climb if you'd like to use a mountain shower, and we'll customize your offer accordingly.

■ What Are Public Toilets On Mount Kilimanjaro Like?

Depending on your campsite and altitude, the public toilet facilities that you'll encounter on Kilimanjaro range from flush toilets at some lower campsites to very basic wooden squat latrines. The state of cleanliness varies greatly and has caused a fair bit of disgust amongst climbers. At larger campsites, the public toilet facilities may also be a bit of a walk from your tent which is not ideal especially overnight when temperatures often drop below freezing. Therefore, private toilet tents have become popular on the mountain.

■ Is there Mobile Network Coverage On Kilimanjaro?

Your biggest concern when climbing Kilimanjaro won't be if there is network coverage but whether your battery will last long enough to be able to make use of it.

Over the years, the mobile network coverage on Kilimanjaro has improved greatly. In fact, you will have a signal almost your entire climb to the summit. Of course, depending on the landscape there will be areas with a disrupted connection or no signal at all.

However, don't expect the signal to be as strong as it is back home. Usually, it's possible to send messages and make phone calls. But streaming data is a different challenge that will most likely require some patience.

On top of this, keep in mind that many cell phone companies will charge tremendous costs for roaming. You could consider buying a data bundle to avoid it. Alternatively, it's recommended to buy a sim card in Moshi or Arusha with a local bundle. Keep in mind to bring an unlocked cell phone if you plan to do this.



■ What Is The Difference Between A Climb, Hike And Trek?

A hike is generally a short walk on charted trails. A hike's length is variable and can be a day trip or an overnight. Minimal supplies are needed.

A climb can vary in length but is typically more demanding than a hike. A climb has steep terrain and may involve using climbing equipment to scale the face of the mountain.

A trek is the longest type of journey on foot. It involves walking through challenging terrain for multiple days. Because of the length of treks, you need to bring supplies and food.

■ How Difficult Is It To Mount Kilimanjaro?

In terms of the technical aspects of ascending a summit, Mount Kilimanjaro is not a difficult mountain to climb. Its slopes are mostly gentle, and its paths are well-trodden.

Trekkers can walk up to the summit without any expertise or mountaineering skills required. Tour operators organize climbs, while porters carry the gear, supplies and personal items.

Despite the relative ease on the technical side, many people find Mount Kilimanjaro very difficult to climb due to its high altitude. The difficulty varies from person to person and will depend how a trekker acclimatizes to the thin air at high elevations.

■ Does Anyone Need To Have Special Skills To Climb Kilimanjaro?

You do not need any special skills to climb Kilimanjaro. Even though it's commonly called a "climb", one can literally walk up to the summit – no ropes and harnesses required. Your guide will lead you up the mountain, and porters will carry most of your gear. This is not to say that the climb is easy or doesn't have its dangers. At 5,895 meters (19,340 feet), the climb provides serious risks for altitude sickness. A medical check is mandatory, and you must be in good physical and mental condition to endure long hours of hiking each day.

■ Is There An Age Limit To Climb Mount Kilimanjaro?

There is no maximum age limit to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, but it is important that each hiker is in good health. With increasing age, especially over the age of 60, health considerations become more serious, and climbers should undergo a thorough medical check prior to attempting to climb Kilimanjaro.

The minimum age to climb Mount Kilimanjaro is 10 years.

■ What Makes Kilimanjaro Difficult To Climb?

Even though Kilimanjaro is not technically difficult to climb, an average summit success rate of 60% (and historically less than 50%) suggests that it's not just a walk in a park either. What makes Kilimanjaro difficult to climb is its altitude. Its summit at 5,895 meters (19,340 feet) above sea level is in the so-called extreme altitude zone.

From as low as 1,500 meters (4,921 feet), climbers may start to feel the effects of high altitude. Altitude sickness or acute mountain sickness (AMS) becomes a serious risk at higher altitudes, typically above 3,500 meters (11,482 feet).



■ Is It Dangerous To Climb Mount Kilimanjaro?

While any mountain can be dangerous to climb, Kilimanjaro is a lot less dangerous than most. The average fatality rate is estimated to be 0.03% or one for every 3,000 climbers who attempt to scale the mountain.

The main cause of death is altitude sickness due to not acclimatizing well, while the risk of rock fall or falling to death is mostly avoidable.

If you are in good health and ascend slowly on a safe path under the guidance of an experienced and well-trained mountain guide, you are not likely to suffer injury or death on your climb.

It is worth noting that the route you choose to climb Kilimanjaro can determine how well you acclimatize to the high altitude.

The longer the route, the more your body has a chance to adjust to it. In general, the 7-8 day routes help you to adjust much better to the altitude.

Educate yourself thoroughly about all risks involved so you will know how to avoid them.

■ How Many Tourists Die On Kilimanjaro Every Year?

It is estimated that about 10 tourists die on Kilimanjaro every year. An exact number is unknown because the Kilimanjaro National Park does not release official statistics.

Some report lower numbers based on actually counted and known cases (based on industry insiders and media reports). Others believe that the real numbers might be higher than 10 tourist fatalities per year because most cases end up unreported and unknown.

■ How Does The fatality Rate On Kilimanjaro Compare To Other Mountains?

The fatality rate on Mount Kilimanjaro is low compared to other mountains. Of the 30,000-50,000 people who climb Kilimanjaro each year, an estimated 10 tourists die annually from altitude sickness and other causes. This represents a death rate of 0.03% or less, which is low compared to other mountains in the world.

■ How Big Is The Risk Of Rock fall When Climbing Kilimanjaro?

The only place you are likely to be at risk of rockfall on Kilimanjaro is on the Western Breach. The danger really only applies if you plan to climb through the Western Breach. It is by far the most challenging route variation on Kilimanjaro. The danger comes from the melting glaciers above the Western Breach. When the glaciers melt, they release rocks. However, there are plenty of other routes that do not include the Western Breach, so this problem can easily be avoided.

The best course of action to avoid the risk of rockfall when climbing Kilimanjaro is to choose a route that does not take you through the Western Breach, such as any of our most recommended routes.

■ How Dangerous Is Altitude Sickness When Climbing Kilimanjaro?

Altitude sickness is a serious and potentially dangerous risk when climbing Kilimanjaro.

If ignored and left untreated, it may become severe and, in extreme cases, lethal.

It is the most common cause of tourist deaths on Mount Kilimanjaro and needs to be taken seriously by the climber. It is important to climb with a well-trained and experienced guide who can monitor your individual altitude acclimatization, watch out for symptoms of altitude sickness, and – if required – insist on and assist with your descent.

*HIGH ALTITUDE



■ Common Symptoms Of Altitude Sickness While Climbing Kilimanjaro

Due to the high altitude, Kilimanjaro climbers will typically experience shortness of breath even at a relatively slow walking pace.

Other common symptoms of altitude sickness while climbing Kilimanjaro include headaches, nausea and dizziness. Loss of appetite and insomnia are also common. More severe symptoms include blurred vision, disorientation and the inability to continue walking.

If such symptoms arise, immediate descent assisted by your guide is imperative to avoid more serious and lasting consequences.

■ Shortness Of Breath While Climbing Kilimanjaro

Shortness of breath is the most common symptom of altitude sickness when climbing Kilimanjaro. It happens because your body isn't able to take in as much oxygen as you're used to.

Some climbers may feel it already on their first climbing day, just as they might experience shortness of breath when climbing stairs. Others may only feel that it becomes harder to

breathe above 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) of elevation. Sooner or later, however, everyone will experience shortness of breath on the climb – while climbing that is.

If you are in good health, it is unlikely that you will experience shortness of breath while resting.

■ 3 Golden Rules Of Altitude Acclimatization

The so-called 3 golden rules of altitude acclimatization will help you acclimatize naturally in order to reduce the discomforts and risks associated with altitude sickness.

The Golden Rules Are:

Take your time: Choose a route that allows you to ascend slowly over multiple days, and walk slowly during the day.

Stay hydrated: Drink at least 2-3 liters of water every day, or more if in combination with dehydrating substances such as diamox or caffeine.

Walk high, sleep low: Sleep at a lower altitude at night than you've climbed during the day. Some routes offer such a beneficial altitude profile.

■ Avoid Altitude Sickness When Climbing Kilimanjaro

The truth is that most climbers will be affected by altitude sickness in some way. You can however reduce the severity of it. Make sure to follow the so-called 3 golden rules of altitude acclimatization. Take your time over multiple days and ascend very slowly during the day. Drink lots of water while climbing.

It also helps to sleep at lower altitudes overnight than you've climbed to during the day. You can do this upfront by choosing a route with a beneficial altitude profile. While climbing, depending on route and tour operator, you may have the option to go for altitude acclimatization hikes in the afternoon or on rest days.



■ Tipping Guidelines For Kilimanjaro Climb

While it is customary to tip your crew for their assistance and hard work during your Kilimanjaro climb, the way tips are being paid and distributed to each crew member varies from company to company.

Some guide companies hold the tipping ceremony on the mountain on your last evening or morning; others ask you to pay the tips after completing your climb at the park gate. Some companies ask you to tip each crew member individually, others have a list for you to record the tip intended for each crew member, while yet others will allocate your total tip for you.

If in doubt, it's best that you bring lots of smaller US dollar notes to make it easier to tip crew members individually.

That's why all ethical climb companies have transparent tipping procedures and announce it in front of each crew member, or hand it directly to each crew member.

However, it is important that you check the tipping procedure and tipping ranges recommended by your Tour Company before the start of your climb and follow their guidelines in order to ensure a fair total compensation for your crew.

■ Cost To Climb Kilimanjaro

A typical Kilimanjaro climbing package costs anywhere from about US \$1,500 on a short 5-day low budget climb in a group to US \$5,000 and more on luxurious offers with high-end services and equipment. For a reasonable mid-range offer, you'd be looking at around US \$2,000 to 3,500.

In addition to your tour price, you will have significant additional costs for tipping of your mountain crew, flights, medical costs and insurance, gear rentals or purchases, and more. Altogether, your entire trip will easily cost US \$3,000 even on a very low budget tour, and usually around US \$5,000 and more for mid-range travellers.

■ Reasons Of Kilimanjaro Tours So Expensive

Kilimanjaro is an expensive mountain to climb. This is due to local park fees and taxes. For a 6-day climb, the Kilimanjaro National Park fees alone amount to over US \$800 per person. It is therefore not possible for them to offer you much lower prices than you find on Ascend Tanzania. Companies offering significantly lower prices are either not operating legally and/or do not treat your porters fairly.

■ Save Costs To Make Kilimanjaro Climb Affordable

Booking your flights and tours well in advance will help you to cut down on the costs of Kilimanjaro.

Your flights will be cheaper and it will be easier to get the best deals. You can also save by renting some of the equipment you need from your friends or tour operator, rather than buying it.

Another way to save money is to pre-acclimatize at home by climbing mountains in your local area. This means that your body may cope better with the high altitude once you get there and then you can attempt shorter climbs which will cost less. Joining a group tour or travelling with friends will also reduce the cost per climber.

■ Cost To Hire A Porter For Kilimanjaro

It usually costs around US \$100-250 for you to hire a personal porter, depending on the length of your climb and the porter compensation practices of your tour operator.

*DRINKS & MEALS



■ Beverages

All tour operators typically provide drinking water. In addition to this, it is common that they also bring instant coffee, chocolate powder as well as tea bags. They mix them with hot water to be able to serve hot drinks at the campsites.

■ Bottled Water

Bottled water is only sold at the Marangu Huts.

The reason that it typically isn't offered by operators on other routes is that porters would have to carry it. On special request, it's possible to hire additional porters to carry bottled water. However, this is usually not recommended.

Moreover, drinking water provided by high-quality operators is safe to drink.

■ Soft Drinks

Soft drinks are only sold at the Marangu Huts. Tour operators usually don't offer it on other routes because porters would have to carry the bottles up the mountain.

On special request, it's possible to hire additional porters to carry your soft drinks. However, this is actually not recommended.

■ Alcoholic Beverages

Alcohol is forbidden within the boundaries of the Kilimanjaro National Park and is therefore not offered inside the park. Tour operators will not let porters carry alcoholic beverages for you.

Consuming alcohol at a high altitude isn't a great combination anyways. As it is allowed at park gates, people there will sell beer to climbers. These are most often sold warm, so you will probably not like it. Therefore, in luxury offers, we can include a champagne celebration at the park gate.

■ Food

Generally speaking, the food that is provided on Kilimanjaro climbing routes will roughly be the same for all tour operators on all routes. Depending on the tour operator, they will cater to vegetarians and vegans. They might also take any dietary restrictions into account. Inquire with your tour operator to find out what the possibilities are.

Breakfast typically includes toast, French toast, pancakes, eggs and meat like sausage or bacon. Hot or cold cereals can be offered in addition to fruits like oranges, mangos or bananas. It's also possible that cooked vegetables are served.

Lunch can either be packed or served hot if you take a longer lunch break. A packed lunch typically includes sandwiches with cold meat, tuna, chicken or grilled cheese. The same fruits like breakfast could be offered again. It is also possible that eggs and French fries or chips will be available too.

Your afternoon snack will consist of an array of popcorn, biscuits, nuts and a hot tea or coffee.

Dinner options include soup, pasta, rice, a variety of prepared vegetables as well as a variety of meat like beef or chicken. Usually, potatoes will be offered alongside meat and vegetables. It's also possible that you will get to taste the local dish Ugali which is porridge made from corn meal. Dessert will consist of fruits like oranges, watermelons, apples, pineapples, mangos or bananas.

*HIKING ROUTES



■ Route Options To Climb Kilimanjaro

There are many different routes you can take when climbing Kilimanjaro. The six main routes on Mount Kilimanjaro are:

- **Lemosho Route** – the most recommended route
- **Machame Route** – the most popular route
- **Marangu Route** – the only route where you can stay in huts
- **Rongai Route** – the only route that starts in the north near the Kenyan border
- **Shira Route** – the only route that starts at a relatively high altitude
- **Umbwe Route** – the shortest and steepest, hence most difficult route

In addition to the main routes, the following variations are also possible:

- **Northern Circuit** – the longest route offering almost 360° views
- **Grand Traverse** – an easier, quieter and even longer alternative to the Northern Circuit
- **Crater Camp** – can be added to any route, best with Lemosho or Northern
- **Western Breach** – shortcut on the southern circuit, but a risk of rockfall

■ Shortest Route To Climb Kilimanjaro

The Umbwe route is the shortest hiking route in terms of distance, with the most direct path to Uhuru Peak.

However, don't mistake short for easy as the opposite is true on Kilimanjaro as you need to conquer almost the same altitude difference on any route.

The shorter the route is, the steeper is its path, and the less time you have to acclimatize to the high altitude.

Therefore, only very fit climbers who are also confident of their ability to acclimatize to the high altitude should choose a short route.

■ Most Difficult Route On Mount Kilimanjaro

The Umbwe Route is one of the most challenging routes on Kilimanjaro, despite being one of the shortest routes.

It involves steep climbs from day one and you need a reasonable level of fitness to be able to handle this path. This route does not allow sufficient time for acclimatization as you will be trekking at altitude for the majority of your journey. Therefore, it is best to only attempt this route if you are an experienced climber.

■ Easiest Route On Mount Kilimanjaro

'Easy' means different things to different people. The same applies to the difficulty of the routes to climb Kilimanjaro. Therefore, we focus on two criteria: the amount of walking per day and the amount of ascent.

The 8-day Machame Route is your best bet for an easy route as it has the least amount of walking per day of all routes. Add to that the benefit of "hike high, sleep low". This really helps with continuous altitude acclimatization.

■ Most Popular Route On Mount Kilimanjaro

The Machame Route is the most popular route since awareness about the importance of proper acclimatization started increasing.

This route offers an ideal acclimatization profile "hike high, sleep low". It can also be extended over 7 days which drastically increases the summit success rate. Furthermore, this route offers some of the best sceneries on Kilimanjaro.

Historically, the Marangu Route was the most popular route due to its hut accommodation and the duration. The route can be completed in 5 days. As a consequence, it also has the lowest summit success rates as it doesn't allow enough time to acclimatize.

■ Safest Route to Climb Mount Kilimanjaro

The biggest cause of fatality on Kilimanjaro is altitude sickness. Therefore, the safest route will be the one which allows for the best acclimatization.

The Northern Circuit and Grand Traverse are the longest routes on Kilimanjaro. They also offer plenty of opportunities to climb high and sleep low. This is the best way to get your body used to the high altitude and reduce the severity of altitude sickness. Therefore, they have the highest summit success rates.

However, on any route, it is most important that you don't push beyond your limits and follow an experienced guide who will assist with descent if required. If you do so, all the popular routes may be considered more or less equally safe or risky.

Besides acclimatization, the routes that avoid the dangerous Western Breach are definitely safer than the routes that don't. To go even further, some routes also avoid the Barranco Wall. Therefore, the Northern Circuit, the Grand Traverse and the Rongai route could be deemed safest.

■ Best Kilimanjaro Route During Rainy Season

For the vast majority of climbers, we would highly recommend that you climb during dry season and avoid the rains as much as possible. However, if you are used to harsh climates and the outdoors, you may have your reasons why you still prefer to climb during rainy season – avoiding the crowds just being one of them.

When climbing during rainy season, you will want to try to reduce your exposure to the rain as much as possible, and make sure to stay dry at least at camp. Here are the rainy season back-up routes and options that we recommend:

- Climb on the Marangu Route, the only route offering accommodation in huts, and rest in the dry comfort of a firm roof at camp or
- Follow the Rongai Route on the northern slopes which tend to attract less rain than the southern slopes or
- Upgrade your climb on any route to a luxurious walk-in size sleeping tent. This will not only keep you dry but also offers plenty of spaces to keep your gear clean and tidy.

■ Key Differences Between The Routes On Mount Kilimanjaro

The routes on Kilimanjaro vary by length, duration, difficulty, scenery, altitude profile, accessibility, and (lack of) facilities. The better a route scores on all these criteria, the more popular it is.

Popularity is great if you like to share your experience with many other climbers and make lots of new friends. It's also great if you're looking for an affordable climbing package. If solitude and wilderness are what you're looking for, then the most popular routes may not be your best choice.



■ Kilimanjaro Route With Highest Summit Success Chance

The Kilimanjaro routes with the highest summit success rates are those with the best altitude profile so that you can acclimatize to the thin air before attempting your final summit push.

8-days Machame Route, 8-days Lemosho Route are all excellent routes for altitude acclimatization that allow you to hike high, sleep low and ascend slowly over multiple days. With the right planning and guide, the routes have a summit success chance close to 100%.

■ Average Kilimanjaro Summit Success Rate

The average Kilimanjaro summit success rate has climbed from below 50% to around 60% or more. It varies with the route taken and the length of the trek. The longer you spend on the mountain, the higher your chances of reaching the summit will be.

With increasing awareness about the importance of acclimatization, the average success rate has also increased. While in the past 5 or 6 day routes were most popular, climbers now increasingly opt for longer 7 or 8 day itineraries. If you follow a route ideal for altitude acclimatization, your summit success rate approximates 100%.



■ **Fitness Level Needs To Be Maintained For Climb Kilimanjaro**

If you dislike working out at the gym, or you are not an athlete or mountaineer, then fear not. While you do have to be in reasonably good health to climb Kilimanjaro, the type of fitness you have is more important than working out. You could be walking for anywhere up to 10 kilometers for hours on end at high altitudes, so it is important that you are able to do this.

Altitude sickness can strike anyone randomly, regardless of their fitness level. The key to reach the summit of Kilimanjaro is to give yourself more days to climb the mountain, so that you can acclimatize better.

■ **Physical Preparation For Kilimanjaro Climb**

The best training you can do to prepare for your Kilimanjaro climb is hiking. Running, swimming and cycling are all very good exercises but what you will be doing on Kilimanjaro is hiking.

You will need to condition your body to walk in ascension, over uneven terrain for long periods.

If you live in an area with hiking trails and mountains, this is a great opportunity to practice. If you live in a city or somewhere flat, taking stairs instead of elevators and targeted muscle exercises are excellent practice.

■ **Best Cardio Activity To Prepare For Kilimanjaro Climb**

Hiking is the best possible preparation for your Kilimanjaro climb. If you're a beginner, you should start by going for walks and carrying no weight with you. Gradually as you get more comfortable you can increase the duration of your walks, the height of ascension, and begin to add weight to your pack. You should also wear the boots you are planning to wear on your climb. Ideally, you should hike the kind of mountainous terrain you will be faced with at Kilimanjaro, but if that terrain is unavailable to you, you can try to simulate with stairs.

■ **Best Muscle Exercise For Kilimanjaro Climb**

The most important areas on your body to strengthen before your Kilimanjaro climbs are your legs and your core. Strong legs are essential as they are going to be doing most of the work, but a strong core will help keep pressure off your back as you climb carrying gear.

In addition to hiking and long walks, targeted muscle exercises such as squats, lunges and deadlifts are great for strengthening the legs.

Try to add and increase weight as you get comfortable with a set of up to 10-15 repetitions each. In addition, core strengthening exercises like pilates, planks, and abdominal work will support your back.

***HIKING ARRANGEMENTS**



■ Required Gear And Packing List For Kilimanjaro Climb

Please click [here](#) to download our gear & packing list. Many items can also be rented locally from your Tour Operator. If you do not see a price list with available gear for this Tour (or anything you need is missing), please contact us.

■ Time To Organize The Necessary Gear

The time it takes to organize the necessary gear for Kilimanjaro depends on individual experience. If you're an avid hiker you may already have much of the equipment necessary to hike Kilimanjaro.

It's also worth keeping in mind that much of the gear required for trekking Kilimanjaro is available to rent from tour providers. Renting equipment instead of buying can save you money and minimize gear-organization. In this case, preparing and organizing all of your gear may only take a week or so.

If you are a beginner it may take you several weeks to organize your gear, particularly if you like to do thorough research.

■ Best Options To Rent A Kilimanjaro Gear

Once you've gone through your list and made notes of everything you need that you don't already have, you can start to decide where you'll get the additional required gear. Most gear can be rented locally from your Tour Operator. Additionally, many community hiking or adventure groups may have gear you can rent or borrow for your trip. In the interest of your budget and our environment, we only recommend buying new gear if you are sure that you will also use it in future.

When you book your climb via Ascend Tanzania, you can conveniently rent your required gear as part of your fully customized climbing offer with AT Gear.



■ Airport To Consider When Prepare For Kilimanjaro Climb

The Kilimanjaro region has its own international airport—the Kilimanjaro International Airport. It is located less than an hour's drive from the Kilimanjaro National Park, in the south west of Mount Kilimanjaro. Most Kilimanjaro climbers arrive via Kilimanjaro International Airport.


Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi is located within 4 to 6 hours' drive from the Kilimanjaro region. Some tour operators offer complimentary transfers from Nairobi. Finally, Arusha airport can be used for connecting flights within Tanzania, including Dar-es-Salaam and Zanzibar.


■ International Airlines Fly In To Kilimanjaro International Airport


Several major international airlines fly to Kilimanjaro International Airport, including KLM Royal Dutch Airlines from Europe (Amsterdam), Turkish Airlines from Turkey (Istanbul) and Qatar Airways from the Middle East (Doha).

There are also flights operated by major African airlines including Ethiopian Airlines (Addis Ababa), a member of the Start Alliance group, and Kenyan Airways (Nairobi). As there are no direct flights from the US, and only one direct flight from Europe, most travellers will connect via one of the above cities.



 **+255 (0) 754 007 126**

 **info@ascendtanzania.com**

 **<https://ascendtanzania.com/>**

 **Ethiopia Street, Plot No. 27 Block 21 House No 3, Kaloleni**