ENCOUNTERS TRAVEL

Your passport to adventure

Classic Kilimanjaro Trek

Country(ies): Tanzania

Tour type: Small Group

Transport: A/C minibus/car

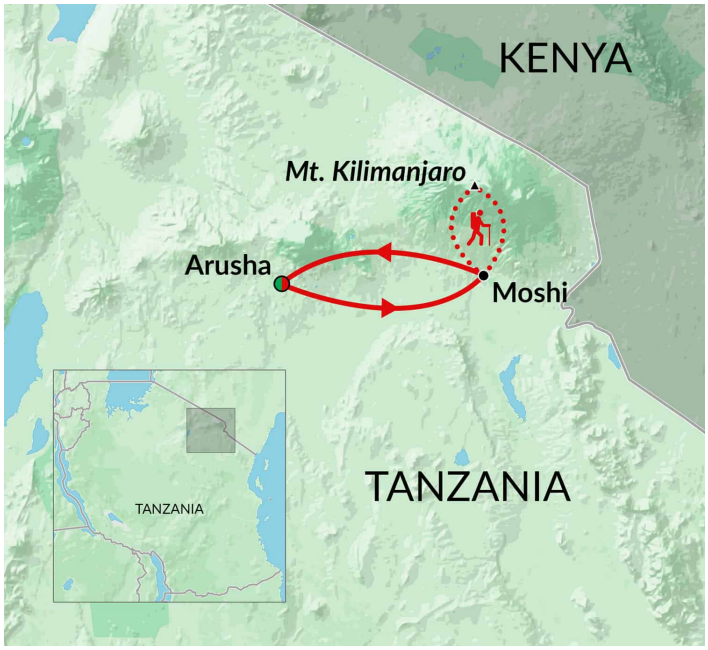
Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 12

Days: 8 days

Start Location: Moshi, Tanzania

End Location: Moshi, Tanzania

Meals: Breakfasts - 7, Lunches - 6, Dinners - 5



Highlights:

Climbing Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa!

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Moshi, optional transfer to hotel

Today we meet in Moshi - if you are flying in to Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO), we can add an airport transfer for you. If you are making your own way to Moshi please advise your estimated arrival time in order to organize the briefing. If the weather is favourable we might get a first glimpse of the world's tallest freestanding mountain, Mt Kilimanjaro (5,895 m). When you arrive at the hotel you will have some time to relax. One of our representatives will brief you on what to expect in the upcoming week.

OVERNIGHT: Moshi hotel

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Single room supplement (TATMCK)

Day 2: Kilimanjaro National Park, Mandara Hut (2,700m)

After a big breakfast we transit to the eastern side of Kilimanjaro to start our trek. Marangu Gate is at 1 860 m above sea level and this is where we begin. It is roughly a 7 km journey through rainforest to the Mandara Huts (2,700 m). If you are still feeling energetic after this section you can walk to Maundi Crater for some scenic views of both Kenya and Tanzania and on a clear day, Kibo Crater. There is an evening meal and overnight stay at the Mandara Hut.

OVERNIGHT: Mandara Hut

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Kilimanjaro National Park, Horombo Hut (3,700m)

After a good night's rest we have a filling breakfast before we climb through forest and moorland to the Horombo Huts (3,700 m). The distance covered today is roughly 11 km and along the way we see some of Tanzania's most interesting vegetation such as the giant lobelia and giant groundsel. Half way we stop for lunch while enjoying amazing views of Mawenzi (5,149 m), one of Kilimanjaro's peaks. Tonight we stay at the Horombo Hut.

Note: Additional day for acclimatisation
If you're not rushed for time, then we recommend adding an optional extra day on the mountain for further acclimatisation with the day spent resting at Horombo or climbing Mawenzi peak.

OVERNIGHT: Horombo Hut

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 4: Horombo Acclimatisation Day

We spend a second night at the Horombu Hut tonight, giving our bodies the chance to acclimatise to the altitude. This should make the next two days of hiking feel easier and give you a better chance of reaching the summit.

During the morning you can walk up the steep grassy slope to Mawenzi Hut for some great scenic views over towards Kibo. The rest of the day can be spent resting or taking some other short walks in the area. Your guides are on hand to provide advice and ideas based on how you are feeling.

OVERNIGHT: Horombo Hut
MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner
EXTRAS:

Day 5: Kilimanjaro National Park, Kibo Hut (4,700m)

We get up at sunrise and after breakfast we set off for the Kibo Huts (4,700 m). Again, it is roughly 12 km to our destination. The first half of the hike traverses upper heath land while the second half crosses the vast saddle that connects Mawenzi and Kibo. The saddle of Kilimanjaro is alpine desert and care must be taken on this rough terrain. After dinner we need a very early night as the next day there is an extremely early start.

OVERNIGHT: Kibo Hut
MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner
EXTRAS:

Day 6: Kilimanjaro National Park, Uhuru Peak (Summit 5,895m)

Today is 'The Big Day' - the summit stage. Many hours before dawn we begin the final trek to the summit of Kilimanjaro. At sunrise we reach Gillman's Point (5,681m) which is the crater rim of Kilimanjaro, where the sun slowly starts to warm up the land. After a further hike of 1-2 hours to Uhuru Peak (5,895 m) we can celebrate the accomplishment of reaching the 'Roof of Africa'. The route back down is faster (compared to ascent) and a warm meal awaits us at the Kibo Hut. Later we continue on to the Horombo Hut where most of the mountain conquerors will be glad of an early night.

OVERNIGHT: Horombo Hut
MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner
EXTRAS:

Day 7: Kilimanjaro National Park, Moshi

Our journey back to Marangu Gate is about 18 km, a steady descent down through moorland to Mandara Hut (2,700m) where a hot lunch is prepared for us. If you conquered the summit you will collect your summit certificate at the gate. Green for Gilman's Point and gold for those that reached Uhuru Peak. Then we head back to Moshi for a hot shower and a well-deserved rest.

OVERNIGHT: Moshi hotel
MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch
EXTRAS:

Day 8: Moshi, optional departure transfer

The tour ends after breakfast today and your time is free until your onward travels continue. Optional transfers are available to the airport on request.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Included:

- 7 night's accommodation
- All transport and transfers
- Services of a local mountain guide, porters and trek crew
- Kilimanjaro park, rescue and camping fees
- Flying doctor insurance cover
- Meals: 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 5 dinners
- Coffee and tea

Excluded:

- International flights (available on request)
- Visas
- Airport arrival and departure transfers
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks, tips and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Equipment hire
- Tips for guides and porters (these come to a substantial amount, please see the tour notes for details)
- Any other items not mentioned above

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

No Options

1. Accommodation

- **Hotels in Moshi**
  We use a comfortable tourist class hotel in Moshi - this is normally the Springlands Hotel

- **Trekking with 'huts'**
  On this tour we trek the Marangu Route which is the easiest and shortest route to the summit. This is also the only route with the comforts of sleeping huts at every camp site with solar lights and comfortable beds. The huts are communal, and the bunks have a sponge mattress and a pillow. There are 60 beds at both Mandara and Kibo Huts and 120 beds at Horombo Hut. Bathrooms and running water are available at the two lower huts. Mens' and ladies' latrines are available at the last camp which are basic. All climbing groups, often from several countries around the world, share meals in dining huts providing a jovial and energetic atmosphere. Soft drinks, bottled water, and beer are for sale at the huts. Bring small Tanzanian bills to purchase these items (prices do tend increase with elevation).

2. Transfers

Airport transfers are not included in the price of this trip, but are available to book as an optional extra. Please contact us for details.

If you have booked an airport transfer with us, on arrival please look out for signboard with your name showing to find our representative. You may be pestered for tips by porters who try to carry your luggage. We suggest you either be firm and insist on carrying your own luggage, or if you want assistance, wait until you have met our representative and then let him arrange the porter for you. You will need to have some money ready for a small tip (eg. a single US Dollar bill).

3. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don’t include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to book your flights for you, and our ATOL (UK flight sales license) covers all holidays booked together with a flight from the UK.

Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we’ll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from. Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour whether you book your flights independently or through us. This tour starts and ends at Kilimanjaro International Airport and this is where you should book your flights to.

4. Tipping on Kilimanjaro

It is customary tip the guides and porters on the Kilimanjaro Trek and it is important to understand that this is an essential part of the porters, cooks, drivers and guides income - though we do pay their basic wages of course. They work very hard to provide the best possible services. Suggested amounts are given in our tips guide below. Note that this is the total amount to be given by each group (not per climber). The staff used on a Kilimanjaro climb are typically:

1 guide per group of 8, 1 assitant guide per 4, 1 cook per 8, Porters (per person) - 2 for Marangu route, 3 for Machame, Umbwe, Rongai routes, and 4 on the Lemosho route.

The following are daily amounts (in US Dollars) the group as a whole is recommended to pay per staff member :

Porters - $8-10

Head Guide - $20-25
Assistant Guide - $15-20
Cook - $10-15

This system works best because the alternative is to add these amounts to the tour price which would result in large groups paying considerably more than necessary for the trek. So the current system is actually the fairest and cheapest way for climbers.

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5. What to take

Luggage: Whatever you're doing in Africa, you'll find that large rigid wheeled suitcases are cumbersome - you may be able to wheel them inside the airport and your hotel, but due to the condition of roads and pavements that's often about it. As many of our tours involve a degree of adventurous activity, we strongly advise you to bring a more practical bag for these i.e. a rucksack or holdall. These are easier for both your porters, and yourself to carry around. Suitcases are OK for our cultural tours in Africa though, but please aim to bring small or medium sized ones rather than very large. If you are trekking or doing a lot of travel throughout the country, then as little as possible is the basic message. A rucksack or holdall (50-70 liter approx.) for your main luggage, and a daypack for you to use during the day should be plenty. While trekking your porters will carry your main luggage, leaving you with just a daypack with things you'll need during the day. You can also leave some luggage locked safely in the pre-trek hotel if you wish. We recommend that couples plan to leave one main bag behind, and pool their remaining luggage in their other bag for the porter to carry.

Luggage limits: Most international airlines allow 20-23kg per person of hold luggage. Domestic flights often have smaller allowances around 15kg. As airline rules vary we recommend that you take no more than 20kg of luggage if your tour just includes international flights, and no more than 15kg if there are any domestic flights included in your itinerary. Please ask us for details if you are unsure. Any excess baggage fees will be your responsibility to cover. Most airlines allow between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage so we suggest that you take no more than 5kg unless you have confirmed that your airline(s) will allow more than this.

If you are trekking with us, we ask that you keep the weight of your main bag that the porter will carry to a maximum of 12.5kg. This then allows the porter to carry up to 2 bags, and a maximum of 25kg.

What to Pack: Essential items we recommend on this trek as as shown below:

- Warm underwear
- Warm socks
- Gloves and warm hat
- Raincoat
- Sunglasses- Sun protection
- Boots/Walkers/Climbers Shoes
- Walking Pole(s)
- Sleeping Bag
- Water purification tablets
- Torch and Batteries
- Toilet Paper
- 2 Water bottles
- Wash kit and towel
- First Aid Kit (ie. blister plasters, headache tablets, lip balm, personal medication)

A huge variety of cheap trekking gear is available close to the base hotel and buying or renting some here can save you carrying it with you, and support the local economy. However, you should definitely bring your own walking boots which have been well bedded in to avoid blisters.

Day Packs and Main luggage: You will want a sturdy and comfortable daypack to carry your day-to-day items with you while you are walking (clothes you may change in and out of regularly, drinks, snacks, camera). You will also need a sturdy holdall or backpack for your main luggage. Your porters will carry this for you, so suitcases are not appropriate. They may leave earlier than you, and may not walk with you throughout the entire day, so bear in mind that you won't have access to this luggage all the time - you need to ensure you are carrying everything you

require during the days walk in your daypack. You can leave luggage behind in storage at your hotel so you don't need to take everything with you on the trek.

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6. Meals on trek

On this tour we include breakfast only whilst in Moshi, however whilst on the trek you'll be provided with 3 meals per day which will be prepared by our cook. During meals tea and coffe will be included however soft drinks, mineral water and alcoholic drinks must be paid for locally.

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7. Acclimatisation and Altitude Sickness

The tour reaches an altitude of over 5000m and we therefore build in several acclimatisation days and plan the daily walking schedule to take account of the effects that spending time at high altitude can have on you. These acclimatisation days are compulsory; you may not miss them out and push on ahead even if you think you are feeling fine at the time or you want to shorten the tour.

Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS) can develop at any altitude over 2000 meters. The early symptoms are headache, extreme fatigue, and loss of appetite. Some people become breathless at rest. AMS is the result of fluid accumulating in parts of the body where it does not belong: in the brain, in the lungs, or both. When mild symptoms develop, it is a signal that you must stay at that altitude or descend until symptoms have gone away. Never ascend with any symptoms of AMS!

Most people reaching altitudes above 3000m and certainly above 3500m will experience some breathlessness, mild headaches, and poor sleep patterns. Other common symptoms include lack of appetite, increased urination (though you should be drinking a lot so should expect this anyway), strange dreams, tightness in the chest and fatigue. However, few people get very severe symptoms or go on to develop acute altitude sickness (AMS) which requires medical treatment.

If you are male and/or unfit/unhealthy and/or older (60s, 70s, 80s) then you are more likely to be affected than if you are female and/or fit & healthy and/or younger. However, there is no hard and fast rule and there are plenty of exceptions to these generalisations.

To try and minimise the effects of altitude, we recommend that you:

- Ensure you keep warm
- Don’t take any baths or showers for your first couple of days at altitude
- Don’t smoke
- Eat more fruit & vegetables than normal
- Breathe deeply but normally – don’t be tempted to gasp and hyperventilate
- Drink lots of water (several litres) before you leave low altitude, and carry on drinking a lot of water while at high altitude.
- Don’t rush – walk slowly and don’t exert yourselves. Taking things easy and slowly really helps prevent mountain sickness
- Don’t drink alcohol
- Tell each other and your guide how you are feeling as time goes on (this helps others spot if symptoms are becoming severe)

People with serious heart disease should not visit high altitudes, and people with light heart troubles should check with their doctor and follow their advice , as should people with high or low blood pressure.

More severe symptoms that may require medical treatment or an early descent to a lower altitude include severe and persistent headaches, nausea & vomiting, disorientation and loss of co-ordination, irrational behaviour. If you do experience any of these, make sure you tell each other and your guide straight away.

Trekking and Altitude Sickness
If you are trekking with us then you should keep your guide informed at all times of any symptoms you may be

developing, especially headaches and breathlessness while at rest. You may need to spend a night or two at the same altitude before continuing your trek. All our trekking tours have acclimatisation days built into the itinerary where necessary to help with this. Usually within one or two days you will feel well and can continue your trek. On private tours, your guide will adjust your itinerary to try and ensure the normal route can be achieved, though this may not always be possible. On group tours, the group may delay their ascent if the itinerary allows, or a porter or second guide may remain with you until the group descends and rejoins you, or you try and ascend to catch up later.

If you are resting at the same altitude and your symptoms are becoming worse, then it is necessary to descend. Worsening symptoms of AMS including increasing tiredness, severe headache, vomiting, and loss of coordination. These are signs of High Altitude Cerebral Edema (or HACE). HACE can lead to unconsciousness and death within 12 hours if progressive symptoms are ignored. Increasing shortness of breath, cough, and tiredness are signs of High Altitude Pulmonary Edema or HAPE. HAPE can also be rapidly fatal if ignored.

A person suffering from AMS may not have clear thinking and may have to be forced to descend. You accept that our guides have the final decision on whether you should descend and that ignoring their advice constitutes leaving the tour. Even if someone is willing to descent they should never be allowed to descend alone and one of our porters or a second guide will accompany you. Keep descending until the person shows some sign of improvement, usually after 300-500 meters of descent. Even if the diagnosis is not clear, but might be AMS, you should descend. You can always re-ascend when you feel better.

It is best to start descending while the person who is ill can still walk. In Tanzania, if the person can no longer walk porters can often be found to carry a sick person down. Do not wait for a helicopter. If you choose to administer oxygen or medications do not delay the descent to watch for improvement.

In summary, if you are not doing well at altitude, most likely you have some mild symptoms of AMS. Rest at the same altitude until you feel well. If you are getting worse at the same altitude, descend to at least the last point at which you felt well. If you are not sure of the diagnosis, err on the side of being too cautious. Remember severe altitude sickness is entirely preventable if you follow these guidelines.

Costs for changing itineraries:
If you are not able to complete your trek or tour for any reason and choose to return back down early, then you may be liable to pay for extra accommodation and transport costs (see our booking conditions for full details). We try to be as flexible and helpful as possible in these cases, and will aim to arrange some lower altitude trekking or other tours during the time you would have spent at higher altitude. You must ensure that you have travel insurance that will cover you for any extra costs incurred due to symptoms or treatment or altitude sickness, and that your policy will cover you to the altitudes reached on your tour.

More useful information on altitude sickness

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8. Guides, Porters and Trekking Crew

On our Kilimanjaro treks you'll be accompanied by a number of our Tanzanian staff members. These will normally consist of porters (to carry your main luggage), a cook (who will prepare 3 meals a day for you whilst trekking), a head guide (who will ultimately be in charge of your trek and will make all local arrangements) and also an assistant guide (who will help the head guide make the day to day arrangements and also be happy to help you along the way if the head guide is helping out other guests).

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Note: Please download an up-to-date copy of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.