



Trekking Kilimanjaro

MAKE TRACKS FOR AFRICA

Departure information for Trekking Kilimanjaro

Snow-capped Kilimanjaro is the highest point in Africa at 5,895 metres, and one of the world's largest free-standing mountains accessible to walkers. Kilimanjaro is located in northern Tanzania, only 190 miles from Nairobi.

Absolute Africa ensures our guides and porters receive a fair wage and are proud to work with our Chief Guide, Samson Lauwo, the grandson of the famous Yohani Kinyala Lauwo, 'Mzee Lauwo', who led Hans Meyer, the first European to summit Kilimanjaro in 1889. Samson is our consultant and man on the ground in Moshi to ensure all aspects of the trek run smoothly.

Absolute Africa ensures that anyone who climbs with us is covered for their entire trek by membership with Amref, who operate specialist medical evacuation with advanced life support ambulances, paramedics and air rescue. This service is additional to and does not replace your travel insurance.

Having our own specialist team on the ground in Moshi means that we can accommodate your needs and the dates that you are interested in climbing. Please let us know when you would like to climb as soon as possible so that we can let our team on the ground know.

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Flights

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When arranging your flights you will need to arrive in at least the day prior to the trek. If you wish you can allow a day spare to give you some extra time to recuperate from your flight and relax, as well as to ensure you are feeling prepared for your climb. Return flights should be arranged to depart at least one day after your climb is scheduled to end.

At certain times of the year flight availability can become very tight and if you delay your booking you might have to pay a higher price. Please organize your flights as soon as you can once you decide to travel.

Many clients find that flying into Kilimanjaro International Airport is the easiest when wanting to trek Kilimanjaro. From here we include transfers to Moshi. Alternatively you can fly into Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and we can arrange a shuttle transfer to Moshi, Tanzania, where you will be based for your climb. The journey by shuttle takes around 8 hours currently and leaves early morning from Nairobi so you will need to fly in before 6am the day prior to the climb, or even the day before this and overnight in Nairobi.

If you have spare time in Moshi either before or after your climb then there are a range of activities that we can organise for you in or around Moshi, from further hikes in the area including village visits, as well as safaris in the northern circuit game parks – Serengeti, Ngorongoro, Tarangire and Manyara. Many clients also enjoy relaxing on Zanzibar Island or the Kenyan Coast after their climb. Feel free to talk us about any extra arrangements you would like to make whilst in Africa.

Pre and post climb accommodation and transfers can all be arranged prior to departure to Kilimanjaro airport, Arusha and Nairobi. Please see the pre and post climb section below.

We can help you with a flight quote. Please feel free to call the office if you would like assistance.

A reminder – When purchasing your flights, check whether your flight ticket already includes departure tax (if applicable) for the country you are flying out of at the end of your trip. If it does not, remember to keep the necessary funds aside in USD to make this payment.

Your safety and enjoyment when traveling with Absolute Africa are of the utmost importance to us, which is why it is essential that you have arranged adequate travel insurance to cover your entire travel plans.

We are happy to introduce you to specialist insurance brokers Campbell Irvine, underwritten by AWP P&C SA. The cover includes a 24-Hour Worldwide Emergency Medical Service who are expert in providing friendly and professional emergency help.

Click on the following link to the page on our website to find out more:
www.absoluteafrica.com/absolute_insurance/insurance.lasso

Do note that is a condition of booking that you have contacted your insurers to confirm that the cover you have arranged is appropriate cover for climbing Kilimanjaro and for any other arrangements you have made whilst in Africa.

When selecting insurance carefully consider the cancellation policy, as well as cover for any valuables you might take. If you buy insurance in the UK you should check your policy is valid if you are a non-UK resident and provision for one-way travel if this is required.

Remember when traveling it is important to take all sensible precautions in regards to your security and safety and health, including taking precautions to avoid illness such as malaria. We advise you to make an appointment with a travel clinic as soon as possible after deciding to travel. Your travel insurance might also be affected by the relevant government's Travel Advice for the countries you visit. Do stay up to date in regards to the latest official government Travel Advice.

Visa requirements for trekking Kilimanjaro

Your passport needs to be valid for at least 6 months after your trip finishes. Visas for Tanzania for most passport holders including British, Australian, New Zealand, Irish, South African, German, French, Dutch, Canadian and American passport holders can be arranged in Africa.

At present please note that all travellers must apply for an eTA (electronic travel authorisation) for Kenya prior to arrival if flying into Nairobi.

Visas on the ground can only be paid for in US Dollars cash.

Below is an estimation of current visa requirements and their cost:

Passport	Kenya	Tanzania	No of Visas	Total Value US\$
Australian	\$30	\$50	2	\$70
New Zealand	\$30	\$50	2	\$70
South African	\$30	-	1	\$0
Canadian	\$30	\$50	2	\$70
American	\$30	\$100	2	\$120
British	\$30	\$50	2	\$70
German	\$30	\$50	2	\$70
Dutch	\$30	\$50	2	\$70
Irish	\$30	\$100	2	\$120
French	\$30	\$50	2	\$70

The above information covers current visa requirements for British, Australian, New Zealand, Irish, South African, German, French, Dutch, Canadian and American passport holders only. If your passport is not detailed above please do not hesitate to contact the office if you would like further details of your visa requirements.

Please note the above assumes you will travel by land from Kenya. If you are flying into Kilimanjaro airport you will of course not need a visa for Kenya.

Be aware that visa requirements can change without prior notice. This information is given as a guide only. We do ask that you also check your personal current visa requirements with the relevant embassies well in advance before you travel. Ultimately you are responsible to ensure you have the appropriate visas for your trip. For more information on visas check out <https://absoluteafrica.com/Visa> and www.projectvisa.com

Pre and post climb information

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Our pre and post climb accommodation is at **Bristol Cottages**, a countryside hotel in the middle of town. It's known for its warm family atmosphere with fantastic views of Kilimanjaro. Alternatively occasionally we will use the Keys Hotel.

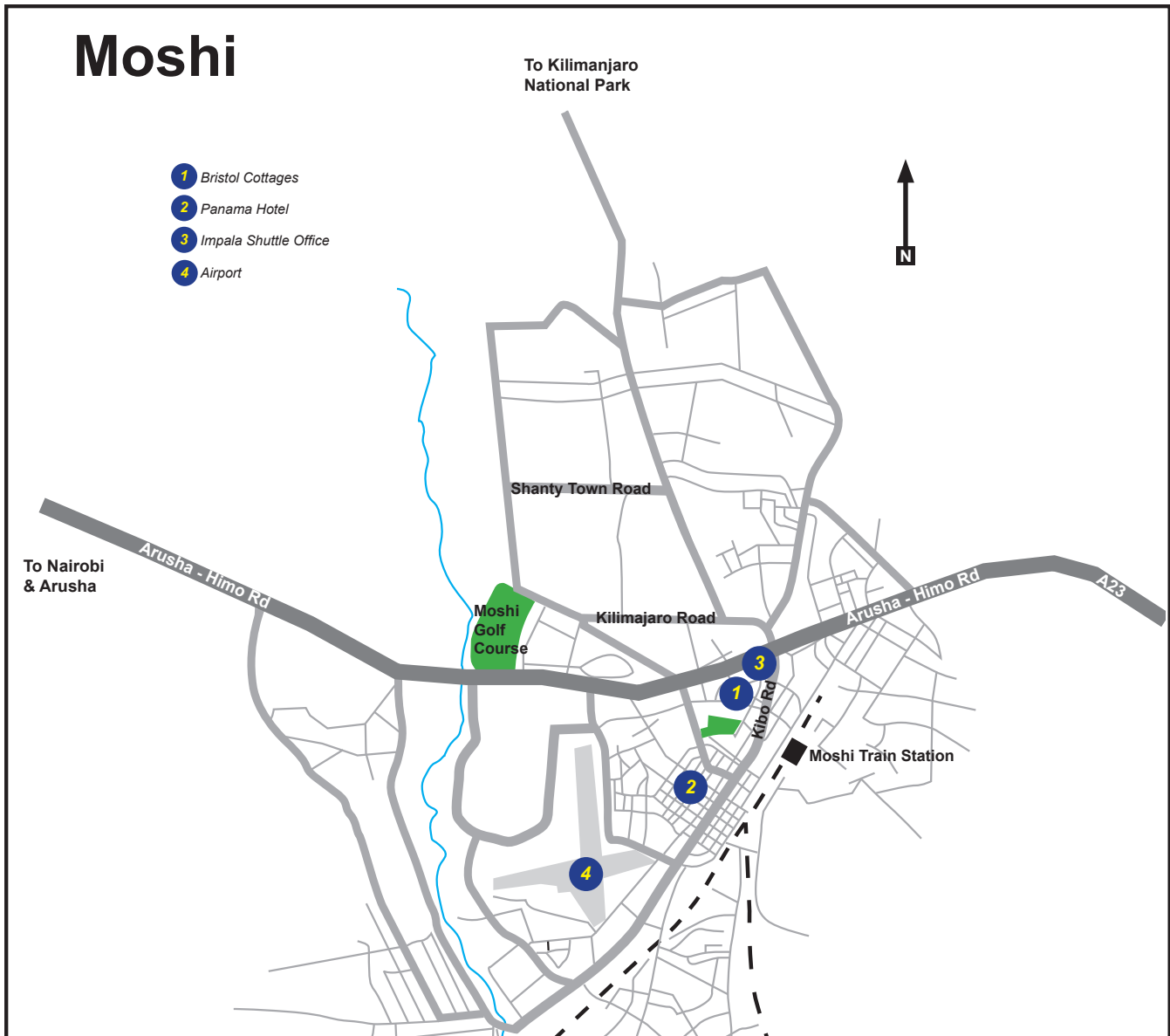
As part of the Kilimanjaro package your accommodation for the night before and the night after your climb is included in the price.

Bristol Cottages has en-suite rooms, with mosquito nets, free wi-fi access, and hot water. Breakfast is served in the restaurant from 7am.

If you would like extra accommodation either before or after your climb just let us know your needs on booking.

When you arrive in Moshi from the shuttle from Nairobi you will be met at the stop by a representative from Bristol Cottages who will take you through to Bristol and check you in. Airport transfers from Kilimanjaro airport can also be organised for you.

Moshi



Shuttle transfers from Nairobi

If you are flying into Nairobi and would like a shuttle transfer to Moshi we can arrange this for you.

The shuttle departs at least once a day and takes around 7 – 8 hours to reach Moshi. You can be collected from either the Heron Hotel in Nairobi, or from Nairobi airport.

If you are meeting a safari after your climb in Arusha we can also book you a shuttle from Moshi through to Arusha.

Arriving in Nairobi

If you arrive in Nairobi and require a night's accommodation before transferring down to Moshi we can reserve accommodation for you prior to departure in Nairobi at the Heron Hotel, Jakaya Kikwete Road or Wildebeest Eco Camp, Mokoyeti Road West.

THE HERON HOTEL

Rooms are en suite and room service is available. There is an e-mail cafe as well as a swimming pool and a restaurant. The restaurant is open from 7.00 am for breakfast. There are also individual electronic safety deposit boxes in every room and this is inclusive of the accommodation.

Prices for the Heron Hotel are

11,000 KES for a single en-suite room including breakfast

14,000 KES for a double en suite room or twin share en suite room including breakfast.

Airport transfers can be arranged to the Heron Hotel . Prices are:

US\$35pp (4,550 KES) for 1 person
US\$20pp (2,600 KES pp) for 2 people

The Heron is payable on arrival in Kenyan Shillings or by credit card (Visa and MasterCard)

Cancellation penalties apply for 'no show' unless 24 hours notice is given. If your arrival in Nairobi is delayed, please ensure you contact the Absolute Africa London office or the Heron Hotel in Nairobi.

Alternatively Wildebeest Camp offers slightly cheaper accommodation.

WILDEBEEST CAMPSITE

Wildebeest is a permanent-tented camp with dorms, budget rooms and safari tents including en-suite, based in peaceful gardens. Prices include a simple breakfast.

Wildebeest is payable in Kenyan Shillings, Euros, USD, GBP and credit card. Credit card payments attract a 5% charge.

The camp has a restaurant, bar, internet, and lockers in the dorms. Breakfast is served from 07:00am. The showers are usually hot.

Prices for the Wildebeest Camp are:

Dorm	40 USD
Single Garden Tent	56 USD
Double Garden Tent	88 USD
Single Cottage Room	88 USD
Double Cottage Room	120 USD
Single En-suite GardenTent	104 USD
Double En-suite Garden Tent	136 USD

All prices include breakfast.

Airport transfers can also be arranged to the Wildebeest Campsite payable in KES. Prices are:

US\$20 - 25 (2,500 KES) for 1 person
US\$15 - 18 (1,500 KES) pp for 2 people

Exchange rate at the time of writing: 1US\$ =129 KES (November 2025)

If your arrival in Nairobi is delayed please ensure you contact the Absolute office or the Wildebeest campsite in Nairobi.

Wildebeest campsite require 30 days notice to cancel a booking. All bookings cancelled within one month of arrival will be subject to a 100% cancellation fee.

Please note that all prices quoted in £'s are an approximation. Prices can vary dependant on the foreign exchange rate of the day.

Day trips in Moshi

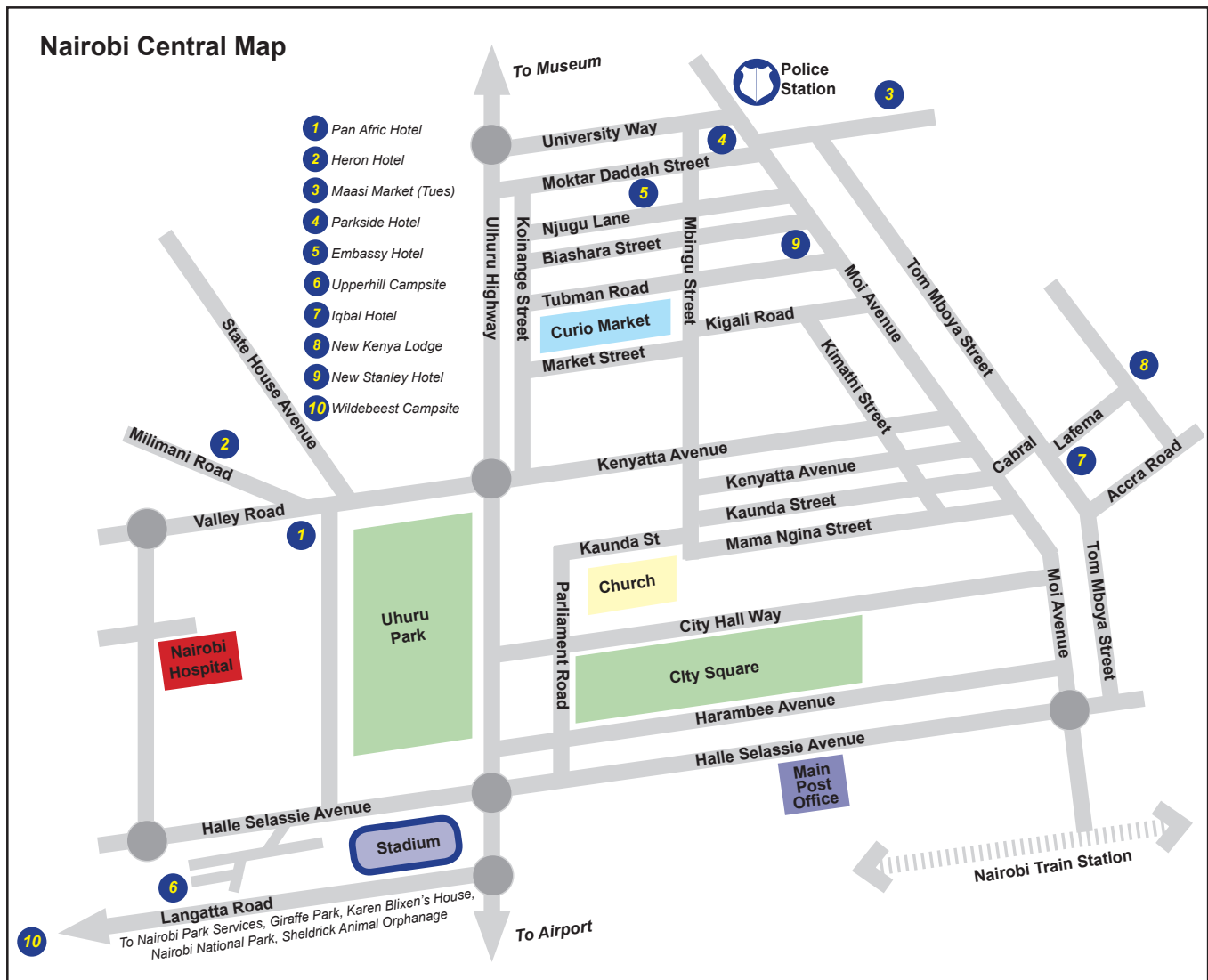
A day's guided walking tour can be arranged, visiting the beautiful towns of Marangu and Mamba to give you a good sense of local village life.

The walks can allow you to visit a Chagga village and lead through panoramic viewpoints of local waterfalls as well as the mountain. There is a chance to pass historical sites of clan wars as well the local blacksmith who prepares traditional Maasai spears and tools. Price available upon request..

Day Trip in Nairobi

If you wish we can arrange tours to take in some of the sights of Nairobi.

Nairobi National Park Lastly we can arrange a half-day visit to Nairobi National Park, which is the oldest park in Kenya. Lion, gazelle, oryx, zebra, giraffe, buffalo, cheetah and leopard are seen regularly, as well as rhino. Price: Available upon request



Security in Nairobi

Do be aware that Nairobi is known as 'Nairobi robbery'. Make sure you stay alert at all times and take sensible precautions. You are best to 'dress down'. Don't wear or carry anything valuable or new including cameras. Mobile phones should be inconspicuous. Do not leave anything of value lying around on display in your room at the hotel. Take great care in the city centre and do not walk on the streets at night.

Eating out in Nairobi Prior to Departure

The restaurant at The Heron Hotel is excellent. If you feel like an alternative though you might also like to visit the Pan Afric Hotel just down the road, which has a popular terrace cafe overlooking the street. We would advise that it is best to catch a cab down to the Pan Afric, particularly if eating there at night.

Important Pre Trek Details

Forms are provided on which you can complete any equipment hire requests as well as your hotel and transfer needs in Moshi, the town near Kilimanjaro. It is an immense help if these can be sent to the office 10 weeks before you leave for Africa so all your requirements can be finalised.

Upon booking your trek we also e-mail you a form, so you can advise us booking requirements in Nairobi or Moshi if required. You can also update us on this form of any change in your details and confirm your insurance details, if you don't know these when booking.

In the event of any last-minute delays or problems there are emergency contact numbers for the Absolute Office on your Booking Voucher for our out of hours service. These can be used in the event of delay e.g. at the airport, or loss of luggage so that we can assist to ensure all runs as smoothly as possible.

Do protect your valuables at all times when travelling in Africa.

Flight Departure

Check in as early as possible prior to your departure time: your flight ticket will indicate how early you should check in. When checking in you may need to show your Booking Voucher to explain your travel plans. Please remember to carry this with your personal documents.

Arriving in Africa

At either Nairobi or Kilimanjaro airport you will find all signs are in English and Swahili. There is always a bank open for international arrivals.

Arriving in Nairobi you will find a bank to your right after you collect your backpack before you go through Customs. You should change up enough money into Kenyan shillings for what you need until you leave Kenya.

Traveling into Nairobi - The airport is situated 15km from the centre of Nairobi. The easiest way to get into town and to The Heron Hotel or Wildebeest camp is to use a taxi. For your own personal safety and security, do not get the local bus into town.

If you would like the Absolute Office to order a taxi for you ahead of time so that there is someone waiting for you at the airport when you arrive do let us know using the previously mentioned form.

Alternatively the information desks at the airport can assist with taxis, which can be hired out the front of the airport. Do ensure your cab is licensed and appears in reasonable working condition. Remember also to confirm the fare before you climb in the cab.

Do be aware that anyone offering to assist you with your bags at the airport will expect a tip. You can say no politely. Expected tips for assistance with bags are around 100 KES. It is wise to have a small amount of change readily available.

Arriving in Kilimanjaro - Kilimanjaro is an international airport situated about a 1 hour drive from Moshi. When you arrive immigration may ask to see your yellow fever certificate on arrival so have this easily accessible. We will arrange a free taxi transfer from the airport to Bristol Cottages.

Health and immunisation

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Prior to departure it is essential that you contact a specialist travel medical clinic. Clinics such as Nomad Travel Stores and Medical Centre in London will provide you with the latest recommendations for travel in Africa.

You will need to have the required immunisations and start a course of anti-malarials prior to departure for this trip. Travelling to Africa will expose you to diseases and health hazards that you may not have come across before, such as malaria and waterborne parasites including bilharzia. You must consult a medical professional who specialises in travel medicine before you depart to discuss where you will be travelling in regard to the above, your immunisation schedule and any other requirements. Remember to start your vaccination program in good time, so that it is completed before you go. About six weeks is usually enough, depending on how up to date you currently are.

Ensure you are well informed on the health concerns en route so you can stay fit and healthy to relax and enjoy your trip. The Lonely Planet publish a medical travel guide for the region which may be of interest called Healthy Travel Africa.

You may also like to check out the following websites:

www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

www.dh.gov.uk

Suggested travel clinics in the United Kingdom

Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics

Tel: 01341 555 061

- 11 S Molton St, Mayfair, London W1K 5QP, UK
- 65 London Wall, London, EC2M 5TU

There are also Nomad clinics in Bristol, Cardiff and Manchester.

Visit www.nomadtravel.co.uk for further information.

If travelling from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, South Africa or destinations in Asia we recommend you contact Travel Doctor/TMVC. Their websites are at:

www.traveldoctor.com.au/

www.traveldoctor.co.nz

www.traveldoctor.co.za/

In Australia and New Zealand Travellers Medical and Vaccination Centre also have a Health Travel Line. The Travel Health Line is 1902 261 560. There is a per minute charge on this line.

There are travel clinics in many of the big centres in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as in Thailand, Singapore, Hanoi, Bali and Nadi.

Suggested immunisation requirements (guide only)

Typically the immunisations usually suggested for the countries visited on this safari:

- Yellow fever – Vaccination must not be left any later than 10 days prior to departure and you must be able to show proof i.e. carry your certificate of vaccination
- Typhoid
- Polio
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis A (three months)
- Meningitis
- Diphtheria
- Tuberculosis
- Other Suggested Immunisations – Hepatitis B, rabies.

It is essential to take a course of anti-malarials. It is best to discuss the type of anti-malarial medication you should take with a travel clinic such as Nomad. They will have the latest information on which medication is most effective in the countries through which you will be travelling. They can also advise on possible side effects and which drug might best suit you. Do follow all medical advice given with your prescribed medication. Do be aware that some anti-malarials can have negative side effects and also that your choice of drug needs to be appropriate to protect against strains of malaria specific to the regions in Africa through which you are travelling.

The choices usually suggested are:

Larium, taken x1 a week

Doxycycline, taken x1 a day

Malarone, taken x1 a day

Do think about how to set up a reminder system for yourself so you remember to take your medication. If you are taking a daily medication, as an anti-malarial, do remember also to carry it with you on the plane in your hand luggage.

As well as your anti-malarials, you will need to bring a number of other medical items in a simple Personal Medical Kit. Medical kits can usually be bought at travel clinics. Alternatively lists as to the types of items you are advised to carry can be found in the 'What do I need to bring for my climb?' section on page 14.

General information on avoiding malaria

The best way to avoid malaria is to guard against being bitten by mosquitoes and stick strictly to your

chosen medication regime. To avoid against being bitten:

- Cover exposed skin thoroughly in insect repellent, such as DEET, from dusk to dawn, and reapply it regularly. If applying with sunblock apply it above the sunblock.
- Ensure you carry enough DEET with you to Africa. It is not easy to get hold of mosquito repellent once on the road.
- Wear long-sleeved and long-legged lightweight clothing in light colours as well as socks.
- Always sleep under a mosquito net or in a secure tent with all zips zipped up.
- Wear impregnated wrist and ankle bands.
- You may wish to treat clothing with permethrin.

Do be aware also your insurance cover may well assume you are on a recognised course of anti-malarials. If you don't take a recognised anti-malarial, it may affect your cover.

Other medical issues

You are reminded that the incidence of HIV AIDS is very high in the countries through which we travel. Sexual contact and dirty needles are the main ways that the disease is spread. Do take all necessary precautions. Use condoms. If you have to have any kind of injection, do ensure that the needle is unwrapped in front of you. Please ensure you contact a travel health clinic prior to departure for the most recent professional medical advice. The above is given as a broad guide only.

Remember it is a condition of booking that you let us know upon booking or at the earliest opportunity if you have any medical conditions, and particularly if you are on regular medication.

Altitude sickness

Altitude Mountain Sickness (AMS)

AMS commonly affects people at high altitude who are not accustomed to the high altitude conditions. Around 70% of all climbers who do Kilimanjaro will suffer from AMS to some extent during their climb. AMS is caused by the failure of the body to adapt quickly enough to the reduced level of oxygen in the air at higher altitudes. The most common symptoms of AMS include headaches, light-headedness, nausea, loss of appetite, tingling in your extremities and a mild swelling of the face, ankles and fingers.

High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema (HAPE)

This illness results from the build-up of fluid in the lungs, which prevents proper oxygen exchange. HAPE is a more serious illness if you are on the mountain, and has a number of very clear symptoms. These include breathlessness when resting, very high pulse, and a cracking sound in the chest that leads to coughing-up of fluid. This conditions is extremely serious, and if the symptoms are discovered an immediate descent and medical treatment is necessary.

High Altitude Cerebral Oedema (HACE)

HACE is the result of swelling of brain tissue from fluid leakage. HACE is again a serious illness, and has a number of clear symptoms - very severe headaches, severe loss of balance, mental confusion and repeated nausea. If a combination of two or more symptoms are apparent then an immediate decent and medical care are necessary.

Although these warnings may sound rather scary, it is better to be aware of the risk factors involved.

By following proper acclimatization guidelines, and maybe adding an extra day to your trek your chances of contracting or suffering from altitude sickness do reduce significantly. A few useful tips to help you on your climb:

- Ascend slowly – it takes time to acclimatize, so walk slowly, take regular rests to help your body adjust
- Don't over exert yourself, strenuous activity can bring on altitude sickness symptoms
- Climb high, sleep low – climb up to a higher altitude during the day and then spend the night at a lower altitude. Most of the routes do comply with this principle, with some extra acclimatization hikes organised in your itinerary
- Drink plenty of water – make sure you take on enough water, and at regular intervals, as well as make sure you eat well
- If you do begin to show symptoms of altitude sickness don't go any higher until these symptoms pass, if they increase you are best to descend form the mountain

Our guides are experienced at spotting the first symptoms of altitude sickness and of dealing with and

problems it can cause. It is important that you are open and honest about how you are coping with the climb. If you feel unwell then do say something, don't try to mask your symptoms it will only make things worse in the long run.

Oxygen cylinders

Oxygen cylinders can be provided on request, for an additional fee. This oxygen would be for use in emergency situations only, and not as a temporary way of alleviating altitude sickness. It is highly un-safe to use oxygen cylinders for those climbers who have not quite acclimatized on their own, this is because when the oxygen is stopped they are then at an even higher altitude that they have not properly acclimatized to.

The best, and most effective, immediate treatment for serious altitude sickness is to descend from the mountain.

It is wise to know your blood group particularly when travelling in the Third World. As this is the case, as a precaution on day 1 your crew will ask for your blood type can you please have this information available for them.

Choosing the right route for you

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When trying to decide the route that will be the best for your climb there are a number of factors that you need to look at. Try and choose a route that will best fit your skill level, time frame and budget. Our treks range from 6 to 8 days in length, with variations in itineraries that can take you quickly to the summit or give you the maximum time to acclimatize to the conditions.

Weather

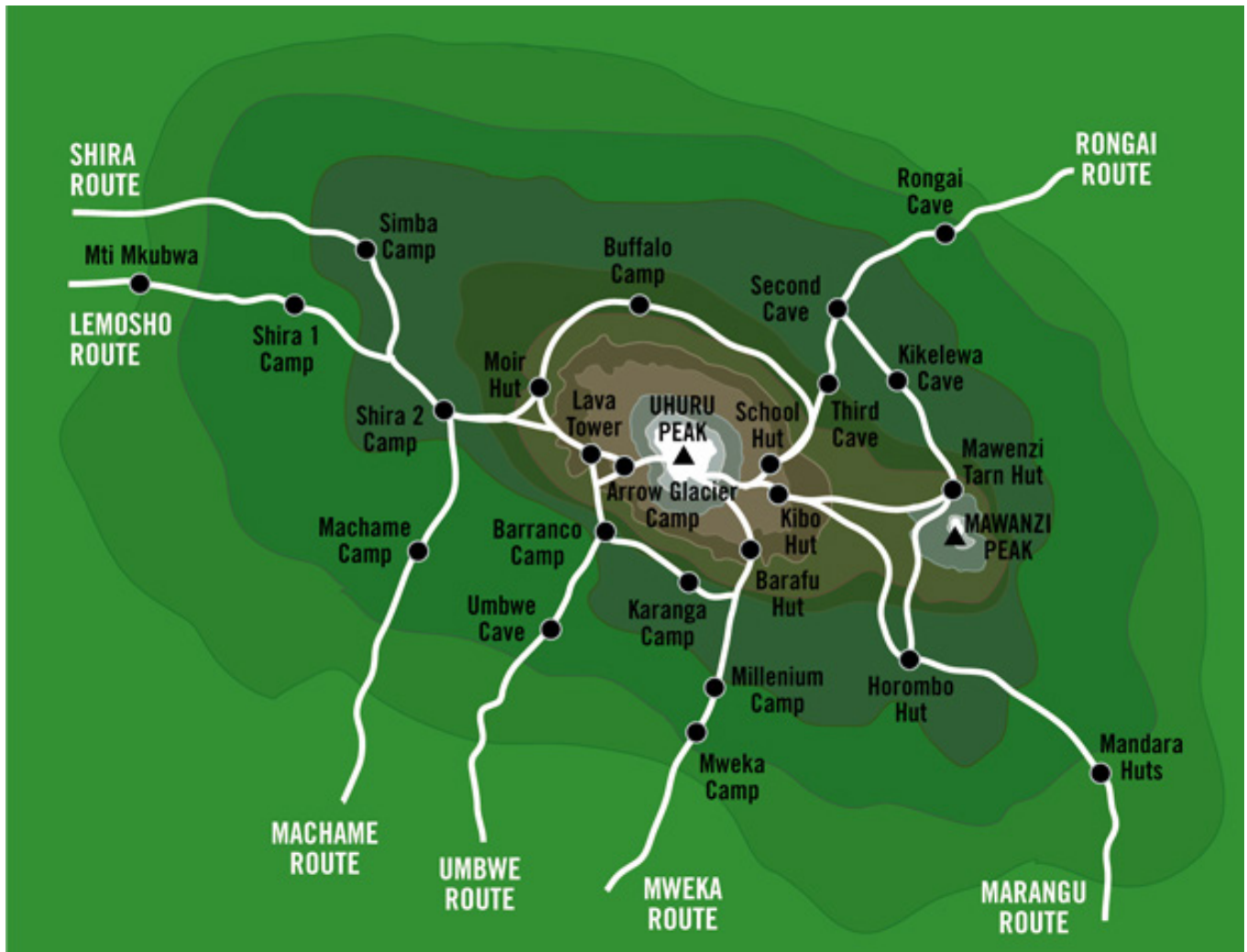
In many ways the weather can help to dictate when is the best time for you to be climbing Kilimanjaro. The rainy seasons can certainly have an impact on the conditions on the mountain. The main rainy seasons in East Africa are the 'Long Rains' from early-mid March through to the end of May, and sometimes into early June. The 'Short Rains' are from early November until late December. The rainy seasons can make conditions on the mountain treacherous and not as safe as at other times of the year.

Prior to the long rains from mid January through to when the rains start can be some of the most superb conditions on the mountain with reasonable temperatures, medium rainfall and not much cloud. Conditions from mid July to mid October are also usually good and clear, with low rainfall. In general the best times to climb Kilimanjaro are during the warmer and drier months, where you are more likely to experience clear, dry weather, which can last for weeks on end. However, do note though that even during the 'dry' seasons, you may still experience some heavy rains, as the weather on the mountain is unpredictable.

Temperatures on the mountain can vary considerably depending on the stage of climb you are up to.

The day and night temperatures can also vary dramatically. On the plains surrounding Kilimanjaro the average temperature can be about 30°C. Around 3000m you can expect to start to encounter frosts at night, with daytime temperatures ranging from 5 - 25°C. At the summit, the nighttime temperatures can reach well below freezing point, even as low as 20°C.

OUR ROUTES



Machame

The Machame route approaches Kilimanjaro through forest and moorland from the southwest, and joins the Shira route before traversing beneath the southern ice fields of Kibo.

The rainforest is extremely beautiful and there is a tangible sense of 'wilderness' once the higher elevations are reached. The views of Mt. Meru floating on the clouds are simply unforgettable. The final ascent to the summit of Kilimanjaro is made via the Barafu route.

We do both a 6 and a 7-day itinerary, with the 7-day itinerary giving maximum possible acclimatization, and also gives us plenty of time to enjoy the magnificent scenery. This route is now very popular, whilst more arduous than the Marangu.

Lemosho

On this route we approach the mountain from the west by the lightly used Lemosho trail. Experienced guides consider this ascent route to be the most gentle whilst the most demanding but also the most scenic.

At the beginning of the trek this route takes a little used approach on a narrow wilderness trail. From here it passes through pristine and remote rainforest with some good chances of seeing wildlife. It then crosses the caldera of Shira volcano, exploring the rock formations of the plateau, before traversing beneath the southern ice fields of Kibo.

On this route you should get some breathtaking views, on Shira Plateau before the convergence with other routes in the later stages of the trip. The final ascent to the summit is made along the Barafu route, often providing stunning views of Kibo.

We have both a 7 and 8-day itinerary, with the 8-day itinerary providing the maximum possible acclimatization and also giving an unusual view of the montane forest, before converging with the other routes and making the final ascent by the Barafu route.

Rongai

We avoid the crowded Marangu route as we approach Kibo from the north on the lightly used Rongai route. A positive of this route is that you get to see both sides of the mountain as we descend on the Marangu route. The Rongai route starts just south of the Kenya-Tanzania border and experienced guides consider this ascent route to be easier. The north side of the mountain is usually drier too so it is less likely you will have to walk through drizzle and mud during your first two days.

The Rongai route begins in attractive open farmland and then moves into delightful forest, with the possibility of wildlife viewing. This is regarded as a beautiful route retaining a sense of unspoilt wilderness. It also passes through several different climate zones, adding considerably to the interest of the trek.

This is a 6 day trek to ensure maximum acclimatization and the best chance of reaching the summit. We also offer this route over 7 days to allow an extra day for acclimatisation.

Marangu

The Marangu route, often called the 'Coca-Cola route', is used by almost 50% of all climbers. Instead of sleeping under canvas in tents, on this route we stay in comfortable mountain huts with solar power lighting. The views are beautiful and each day of walking progresses through a different climate zone.

The real highlight is the walk from Gilman's Point along the crater rim to Uhuru Peak, passing close to spectacular glaciers and ice cliffs. The views on a clear morning are magnificent, with the Rift Valley, Mt. Meru, and the Masai Steppes clearly visible.

We add an extra day to the standard 5-day itinerary to ensure maximum acclimatisation at Horombo Huts using that day to visit Mawenzi at 4538 m. Don't be misled into thinking this route is much easier than the others. This is still a 35 kilometre hike to the top, and then 35 kilometres back down!

Money and budgeting

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When costing a Kilimanjaro climb the areas you need to consider are:

Before you go remember you need to cover...

1. The price for your climb
2. Your airfare
3. Immunisation and anti-malarials
4. Insurance
5. Equipment
6. Kenyan eTA if required

Step off the plane in Africa with...

7. Spending money – This is very individual and will mainly depend on what you spend before and after your climb on meals, drinks and other personal needs eg internet.
There is not a lot to purchase once you head out except a map of the mountain, which can be bought at the Park Gate. A suggested budget would be £60 - £180.
8. Equipment hire.
9. Tips.
10. Visa for Tanzania: Up to 100 USD depending on nationality
11. Pre and Post safari costs

Please note: You need to carry money with you out to Africa to cover Items 7 to 11 (i.e. for your spending money, equipment hire, visa, tips and pre and post climb costs). The figures above are conservative estimates for average spending per person on a climb. Do note there will be some variation person to person as to what clients spend. Figures quoted are based on regular information we receive from operators, passengers and crew in the past 12 months.

How do I take this money to Africa?

We strongly recommend that you organise the money you want to take to Africa before you leave for your trip.

USD cash

You will probably find it most convenient to bring your traveling funds in USD cash. You should have we would recommend at least 550 USD when you climb off the plane.

Pounds cash

You may also like to carry up to GBP 100 pounds cash as well if your money is currently in sterling. This can be useful to buy local currency when you can get to a bank or regular forex bureau. If you are not in sterling consider carrying more USD cash. Please note also that Scottish pound notes are not accepted.

When arranging your cash remember small denominations can be useful but the larger denominations will give a better exchange rate. You should also request that your notes are not torn, written on or damaged in any way.

Please note that in general USD notes need to be dated 2013 onwards and in good condition.

A friendly reminder: Cash is carried at your own discretion. Do keep a close eye on your valuables.

ATM access

You can access ATMs in Moshi and use a credit card. Do be aware where ATM access is available you can only draw local currency which cannot be used for all your costs. Please note as well MasterCard and Maestro particularly seem to be of little or no use, Visa cards only usually being accepted the times you can use cards once on the road.

Other to note in regards to organising your money for Africa

For your information the currencies you will meet are:

Kenya Kenyan shillings
Tanzania Tanzanian shillings

Tips

Tips are a customary way to end your trip, and a good way of showing your appreciation for the job that your guides, porters and cook have done while you are on the mountain. This is certainly something that you should budget for when considering a climb, as a tip is an expected element of the trek for good service. How much you tip is totally dependent upon you and how much you feel is justified for your crew and for the work that they have put in. As a rough guideline, you should budget an extra US\$250 – US\$300 per person for tips for your climb across your trekking team.

Hire equipment

Not everyone will have all of the necessary equipment at hand for their Kilimanjaro climb, especially gear that can cope with the extremes in temperatures and conditions that you will experience on the mountain. Below is a list of the equipment that we can hire out to you for the duration of your climb. Have a look and see what you think you are likely to need and factor these costs into your budget. The hire equipment is paid in USD cash on the ground in Africa. We recommend that you budget between £15 - £85 for hire equipment. Do note that a sleeping mat and duffel bag for your luggage during the climb are provided by us.

- o Thermal Underwear \$10 per trip
- o Fleece \$15 per trip
- o Down Jackets \$20 per trip
- o Waterproof Trousers \$10 per trip
- o Waterproof Jacket \$15 per trip
- o Warm trousers \$20 per trip
- o Sleeping pad \$5 per trip
- o Gaiters \$15 per trip
- o Gloves \$10 per trip
- o Walking Poles (pair) \$15 per trip

o	Sleeping Bag	\$20 per trip
o	Head Torch	\$15 per trip
o	Water Bottle/ Camel bag	\$10 per trip
o	Walking Boots	\$25 per trip
o	Socks	\$5 per trip
o	Sunglasses	\$20 per trip
o	Rucksack / Day Pack	\$25 per trip
o	Balaclava	\$5 per trip
o	Poncho	\$15 per trip
o	Hat	\$10 per trip

What do I need to bring?

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Remember that we will provide a duffel bag for your items that the porter will carry. Your other luggage can stay at the secure lock up facility at the hotel. You should also have a day bag between 20 to 35 litres to carry your water, camera, raincoat, lunch pack and ski pole/walking stick.

During the pre trek briefing that takes place usually the evening prior to your climb, there will be an equipment /clothing check by one of the head guides who has lots of experience with the climbs. If they feel the equipment/clothing is lacking, they may require the client to hire more equipment to ensure their safety and comfort.

The following list details essentials as well as non-essentials. It is a guide only. If you are unsure about specific items please feel free to ring us.

You need to bring:

- Travel documents including passport (including relevant visas) and air tickets
- Booking Voucher with Final Receipt – essential for immigration purposes
- Vaccination documentation, particularly for yellow fever shot (They do check for this when you enter.)
- Insurance policy
- US\$ cash for your optionals and spending money
- Credit card – preferably Visa

Essential camping equipment

- Sleeping bag, 4 seasons, and sheet.
- Torch and batteries, a head torch being the most useful. Remember to bring spare batteries and an extra bulb.
- Ski-pole/walking stick
- Mosquito repellent (DEET)
- Insect repellent spray
- Sun block cream
- Lip salve/Chap Stick
- Padlock
- Small personal medical kit including: anti-malarials, vitamin tablets, paracetamol, antibiotic powder, Band-Aids, Blister pads, cotton wool, sterile gloves, flu medication for coughs, colds and sinuses, rehydration salts, rubs for sore muscles, sports injury cream for sprains, an antihistamine, immodium, treatment for tummy bugs, stings/bites and sunburn and eye drops. If you wear contact lenses you are advised to carry disposables.
- You should also consider a treatment for altitude sickness

Other items

- Pocket knife
- 1 litre water container. Make sure it screws tight. A thermal water flask can be useful.
- Sun glasses (good quality with 100% UV protection)
- Non-plastic bags for wet items, rubbish and to keep items dust free.
- Towel

- Antibacterial soap
- Condoms
- Tissues and soft toilet paper (1 roll, carried as half rolls)
- A means of securing your hair back is useful such as a bandana, a scarf, beanies, hair ties and clips
- Cigarette lighter
- Emergency sewing kit
- Tweezers, nail scissors, nail brush
- Energy snacks and sweets

Extra tips:

Any containers sealed at low levels (sun cream, contact lens solution, toothpaste etc) will tend to expand as you climb higher and external air pressure decreases. Carefully release the build up of pressure each night as you go higher so that they don't burst in your pack.

Remember to cut your toe nails well before departure particularly to avoid discomfort on your descent.

To keep your batteries warm keep them with you in your sleeping bag at night including your headlamp batteries. Keep your spare battery near your skin on summit day but in a bag to prevent condensation.

Electrical items

- Smartphone/Music player if you want to listen to your own music
- Camera in a protective case and spare memory card(s)/film
- Camera cleaning kit
- For SLR cameras we recommend a telephoto of 120 mm (or similar) or an 80-200 mm zoom
- 2 camera batteries
- Polarising filter/lens hood for SLRs
- USB cable - to connect to internet cafes or for downloading
- Mobile phone
 - Please remember if you set up international roaming the charges will be very high, even to receive calls
 - Sim cards can be purchased cheaply on the road
 - Remember you will need to have your phone unlocked prior to arriving in Africa so that other sim cards can be used with it

Clothes

The clothes that you take for your trek will certainly contribute to your enjoyment and comfort on the mountain. Temperature's can range from +30 degrees in the rainforest, to -25 degrees at the summit and you can walk through 5 different climate zones in as many days. Ensuring you are appropriately dressed is essential for your well being and can impact on your ability to reach the summit.

Do carefully consider how to pack sensibly and efficiently to ensure you have all the clothing required to cope with the extreme temperatures and conditions you will face during your trek.

Where to start?

Think layers! Take light weight thinner layers to keep cool, warm, dry and comfortable on the mountain, as opposed to thick heavy layers so you are able to more easily adjust your clothing as required.

The 3 main layers to consider are:

1. **Base layer** - A thermal layer to provide comfort by keeping the skin dry.

The base layer is a close fitting layer next to the skin that will help to keep you warm and draw sweat away from the skin. This will make you feel warmer and keep you more comfortable on the move. Synthetic materials such as polyester and microfiber-based fabrics are ideal as they do not absorb moisture but transfer it well. Bamboo-made base layers are also an excellent choice but they can be expensive.

Cotton is a cheap option and will feel comfortable when dry, but will absorb moisture easily and moisture against the skin will only lower your body temperature. Cotton will be slow to dry out too, especially in cold conditions.

2. **Mid layer** - provides further warmth and insulation for the colder temperatures. The mid layer should be loose-fitting enough to allow insulating air between the layers. For extreme temperatures, multiple thin mid layers can be worn rather than one thicker layer.

Wool is the traditional mid layer material as it provides good insulation even when wet. A fleece or other synthetics have similar properties to wool, but are lighter and a very good option. It provides good insulation even when wet, absorbs very little moisture and dries quickly.

Down has a very good warmth-weight ratio and can be packed down to take up very little room. The downsides are that it is more expensive and loses its insulating properties when wet or compressed.

Synthetic Fiberfill such as polyester fiber is used similarly to down, but does not have as good a warmth-weight ratio. However, it is less expensive and provides good insulation even when wet.

3. **Shell layer** - the outermost clothing layer to protect you from wind and rain.

The shell layer should also be breathable, allowing moisture to pass through to the outside, while keeping the elements out. Plastic raincoats will protect from the wind and rain, but are not breathable. To compensate, these types of raincoats will have flap-covered holes and are very loose-fitting to allow air circulation.

Hard shell materials are waterproof and are breathable. Their essential element is a thin, porous membrane that blocks liquid from entering the garment, but will allow water vapor (evaporated sweat) through the material. Typically, the more expensive the material, the more breathable it will be. The known brands of this type of material are Gore-Tex, Jeantex and Ventex to protect climbers.

A water resistant (soft shell) material will only partially block water, but they are usually more breathable, comfortable and cheaper than completely waterproof materials.

Suggested Clothing List

Technical Clothing

- 1 - Waterproof Jacket, breathable with hood
- 1 - Insulated Jacket, synthetic or down
- 1 - Soft Jacket, fleece or soft-shell
- 2 - Long Sleeve Shirt, light-weight, moisture-wicking fabric
- 1 - Short Sleeve Shirt, light-weight, moisture-wicking fabric
- 1 - Waterproof Trousers, breathable (side-zipper recommended)
- 2 - Hiking Pants
- 1 - Fleece Pants
- 1 - Shorts that are comfortable to hike in. Convertible trousers are practical
- 1 - Long Underwear eg propylene leggings or similar for base layer (moisture-wicking fabric thermal underwear recommended)
- 3 - Underwear, briefs (moisture-wicking fabric thermal underwear recommended)
- 3 - Sports Bra (women)

Headwear

- 1 - Brimmed Hat, for sun protection
- 1 - Knit Hat, for warmth
- 1 - Balaclava, for face coverage (optional)

Hand-wear - double layer gloves or mittens

- 1 - Gloves, warm (waterproof recommended)
- 1 - Glove Liners, thin, synthetic, worn under gloves for added warmth (optional)

Footwear

- 1 - Hiking Boots, warm, waterproof, broken-in
- 1 - Spare laces
- 1 - Trainers / Tent mules, to wear in camp (optional)
- 5 - 6 - Socks, a few pairs of thick thermal pairs as well as a few normal pairs, wool or synthetic

- 3 - Sock Liners, tight, thin, synthetic, worn under socks to prevent blisters (optional)
- 1 - Gaiters, waterproof (optional)

Shorts and t-shirts are useful for trekking on the lower slopes as temperatures are likely to be higher than further up the mountain.

Additional information for your Kilimanjaro climb

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Who can climb Kilimanjaro?

There really is no upper age limit for climbers wanting to do Kilimanjaro, indeed people in their seventies often reach the summit. We would advise climbers towards the upper end of the age range to have a few extra health checks before deciding to do the climb, just to make sure that you will be safe to do so, but really virtually any age is welcome to come and try to reach the 'roof of Africa' with us. Similarly, both men and women can do this climb with little or no problems.

Preparing for your climb

You do need to be physically prepared for your climb; it is a strenuous hike. The toughest part of the climb is the 6 to 8 hour hike to the summit, and this is mainly due to the extreme altitude. The days prior to this are not too physically demanding if you have a reasonable level of fitness.

Any exercise you do before you go will help, but especially walking. Try doing a few hours a day if you can, regular gym sessions as well as some running, cycling or swimming may help you reach the level of fitness that will give you the best chance of making a successful assault on the summit.

Mental stamina and preparation are also vitally important for your climb. Your mental stamina will, without doubt, make the really difficult sections, such as from Barafu to Uhuru, easier to complete. If you are properly equipped and physically prepared you can be mentally confident that you will physically cope with your ascent of Kilimanjaro.

Climbs and safaris

If you are interested in really making the most out of your trip to Africa and also want to go on a safari before or after your climb, then this is certainly possible. Indeed, a significant number of our climbers also combine their trek to the 'roof of Africa' with a safari.

Please contact us if you are interested in combining your Kilimanjaro trek with one of our many safaris. Transfers to start points in Arusha and Nairobi can be arranged, as well as accommodation before your safari begins.

Flights can also be bolted on to Kigali, Entebbe and onto Zanzibar.

For those of you who want to read before you go, here are a few suggested titles:

Kilimanjaro	Henry Stedman
Explore Mount Kilimanjaro	Jacquetta Megarry
Kilimanjaro: To the Roof of Africa	Audrey Salkeld
Altitude Illness: Prevention and Treatment	Steven Bezruchka
The Shadow of Kilimanjaro	Rick Ridgeway
Making the Climb	John C. Bowling
In the Dust of Kilimanjaro	David Western
Kissing Kilimanjaro:	
Leaving it all on top of Africa	Daniel Dorr
The Snows of Kilimanjaro	Ernest Hemingway
The Weather in Africa	Martha Gellhorn

Lonely Planets, Bradts and Rough Guides are always a mine of information.

A 746 Michelin map will give you a good insight into where you are travelling.

A friendly note that conditions, price and details change constantly in Africa and what may be appropriate and/or correct one day is not necessarily the case the next. Much time and effort goes into keeping this information as up to date as possible. At the same time do not treat this document as 'the bible' for your climb. It is a guide only to assist in steering you in the right direction.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get in touch. We are more than happy to assist.

Queries about your safari booking should be directed to Absolute Africa. We are available on Skype and Live Chat, or feel free to email us at our bookings office at bookings@absoluteafrica.com

17th February 2026