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Tanzania – The Land of Mt Kilimanjaro

Mount Kilimanjaro is the crown of Tanzania. The view of this majestic mountain's gigantic snow-capped summit dome, rising high above the surrounding savannah is one of Africa's classic images.

At 5895 metres (19,344 ft), Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa, and one of the highest volcanoes in the world, attracting trekkers and climbers from every corner of the world.

The attraction is even greater because with time and adequate preparation, it is possible to walk all the way to the summit without technical mountaineering equipment or experience

Mount Kilimanjaro:

Mt Kilimanjaro: 005.00 degrees south, 036 degrees east, 5895m a.m.s.l. Crowned by an eternal snow-cap, Mt. Kilimanjaro is situated inside the Kilimanjaro National Park in Tanzania; it is the highest mountain in Africa and the tallest freestanding mountain on earth.

This mountain is much more than just being the highest peak in the entire African continent AND the tallest free-standing mountain in the world.

For many, it represents the ultimate once-in-a-lifetime personal challenge - an arduous but highly rewarding 6 to 8 day trek up to Uhuru Point (the actual summit) or to Gillman's Point (on the lip of the crater).

The famous snow-covered peak of Kilimanjaro towers an impressive 5,895 metres (19,336 feet) above the African plains below. It is situated within the Kilimanjaro National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and is about a 130 km drive from Arusha.

The slopes are covered with a variety of vegetation, starting with dense tropical forests at the base, which are inhabited by elephant, leopard, buffalo, the endangered Abbot's duiker, and other small antelope and primates.

Further up, the vegetation changes to moorland, covered with heathers. When you reach 4,000 metres, the alpine desert landscape begins, whose extreme

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temperature fluctuations means that very little in terms of plant and wildlife can survive here, with the exception of a few hardy mosses and lichens.

And finally, the desert turns into a winter scene of snow and ice - and before you know it, you are at the summit, looking out over the world.

Climbing the Mountain: Since the summit of Kilimanjaro was first reached by the German geographer Hans Meyer and Austrian mountain climber Ludwig Purtscheller on 5th October 1889, literally thousands of people have succeeded in, or have attempted. the very same feat. It is estimated that today, a staggering 25,000 people a year set off on the journey.

There are 5 main routes up to the summit: Marangu, Machame, Rongai, Lemosho and Umbwe. You can pick the route that you think is best suited to you, and also the one that will give you exactly what you personally want to get out of your trek. Your accommodation will be tents, which are carried up by porters, but if you don't fancy sleeping under canvas, then you should definitely choose the Marangu Route, as this is the only route where you sleep in dormitory style huts.

All climbs have to be pre-booked, so you cannot just turn up on a whim and hope to start your climb that day or the next.

There are many excellent operators that you can pre-book with, who offer either pre-arranged treks on given dates with groups up to about 8 - 12 people (for safety reasons), or you can arrange a private trek with your own guide (minimum 2 people).

Obviously, it goes without saying that a reasonable level of fitness is required to climb Kilimanjaro, and most operators request that you consult your doctor to be given the 'all-clear' to climb prior to booking your trip.

The best months to climb Kilimanjaro are from January to mid-March and June to October, as these are the dry seasons.

Detailed itineraries, maps, useful links, stunning pictures and photography you'll find with the programmes of the routes: Marangu, Machame, Umbwe, Mweka (only for descending), Shira, Lemosho, Rongai (Nalemoru), and Arrow Glacier routes.

To further assist you with your preparation on hiking or trekking to the summit of this breathtaking mountain, we have included essential information and tips on your mental and physical preparation, a fitness program, and a list of all equipment required. Other useful information provided, included a final checklist, food, porters, guides, important health issues.

Before the climb

Be properly equipped

An essential part of your preparation will be to ensure that you are well equipped for your summit attempt. Print our final checklist and mark it off, to ensure that you are.

Be physically prepared

It is important that your body is adequately prepared for the physical challenges of Mount Kilimanjaro. We have developed a fitness training program which will assist you in getting your body in shape for your Kilimanjaro summit expedition.

Mental preparation

It is possible to summit Kilimanjaro successfully. Many before you have succeeded. This should be topmost in your mind when preparing for the summit attempt. You should always remain in a positive state of mind, but not overly arrogant. Try to anticipate various different scenarios, which you may possibly encounter on the mountain and try to work out the most suitable course of action, mentally by yourself or even as a group.

Your mental stamina will, without a doubt, make the really difficult sections, like from Kibo to Uhuru or from Barafu to Uhuru, easier to complete. Remember if you are properly equipped, you have taken everything as indicated on the final checklist, you are physically prepared and have all the knowledge gained from this internet guide - you will be mentally confident for the physical part of Kilimanjaro.

Adequate travel insurance

Make sure that you have adequate travel and medical insurance, which will also provide you with cover for the climb up Kilimanjaro.

On The Mountain

Go slowly

Go slowly - "Pole Pole" as they say in Swahili! This is also very important during your first days of climbing. Even if you feel well, slow down and enjoy the scenery.

Drink enough water

Make sure that you drink at least 3 - 4 litres of liquid a day - preferably water. For your first day it is recommended that you take along fresh water, which may be purchased at the hotel in Moshi before your climb. Try to get the bottles with the screw tops, this way you will also have containers in which to take water further up the mountain.

Running water on the mountain is safe to drink from day-2 onwards, but care should still be taken. If you are not used to fresh water in nature, prevent any inconvenience by using water purification tablets. **REMEMBER!** A functioning "body water balance" is one of the keys to a successful climb!

Walk high - sleep low

If possible and especially on your acclimatization day "walk high - sleep low" Try to do a short evening stroll to a higher altitude and then descend to sleep at the camp at a lower altitude. This is essential on your acclimatization day.

Climb light

Climb as lightly as possible; this becomes even more important on your summit night. Extra weight will slow you down and will also make breathing more difficult.

Packing

Remember that you will be on the mountain for at least 5 or 6 days. You need to take enough clothing, especially socks to last for this period. Due to frequent rainfall as well as numerous streams on the routes, it is advisable to pack items individually in your bag. These individually packed items should be wrapped in plastic bags to prevent them from getting wet in case of rain or of being accidentally dropped in a stream & Muellers Shoes from North Face, this can be weared once you in the huts.

Clothing

You will require the correct underwear, thermal hiking socks, gloves (preferably mittens), warm head protection, rain coat, sunglasses and sun protection cream.

Also remember your hiking boots, hiking/running shoes (it is not necessary to walk with boots or climbers shoes until the last sections where scree and rocks are encountered), and very importantly, a walking stick / ski-pole. **One of the most critical items of clothing is an outer jacket.** You want it to perform the functions of keeping you warm, protect you at temperatures of as low as minus 25 degrees Celsius, keep the wind out and yet still "breath".

Try to avoid tight fitting clothing or underwear. This will hamper circulation, causing either cold or discomfort on the mountain. A balaclava is a must, as it will protect your face against cold, wind, sun and snow. Other clothing like shorts, sweaters and T-shirts are strongly recommended, especially during hiking on the lower slopes, when the day temperatures are still high.

The only way to ensure that you are dressed warmly is to follow the principal of wearing the correct clothing layers, starting from against the body. A common mistake made by climbers is to wear almost everything they have and to start off with cotton against the skin. Cotton absorbs moisture perfectly, and moisture trapped against the skin will result in a definite lowering of the body temperature, which could even lead to hypothermia. It is therefore very important to use proper thermal underwear with "wicking" properties (a fabric which has the ability to draw moisture away from the body) and thus enabling it to evaporate to the outside.

The middle layer should provide the insulation and a product like polar fleece will be adequate in this regard. The outer layer should be windproof, waterproof and breathable. Products like Ventex, Goretex or Jeantex offer these properties. Short of altitude and physical exertion, cold is one of the most serious obstacles when attempting to summit Kilimanjaro. After securing your booking with us, you'll receive a comprehensive document, to guide you through the steps of purchasing the correct gear.

Take a ski - pole

A ski - pole is essential. Use of ski poles reduces external and internal loads on the knee joint by up to 20%. Using 1 ski pole is a must, but 2 poles are recommended. Buy one or hire one but take one.

New batteries

Replace your head lamp and camera batteries with new ones on your summit night.

Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS)

AMS commonly affects people at high altitude, who are not accustomed to high altitude conditions. AMS can be lethal if not treated immediately or if its symptoms are ignored. Probably 70% of all people climbing Kilimanjaro will suffer to some

extent from AMS. You should familiarise yourself with this condition and take preventative care.

Malaria

Malaria occurs below 1800 meters and you should use the recommended prophylactics. Please consult your doctor about these. Currently, there are various preventative medication products available, which will be effective against the malaria strains currently found in Tanzania. Women using oral contraceptives should consult their physicians before using prophylactics.

Wet wipes

There is no washing water at Kibo and Arrow Glacier camps. Wet Wipes are very useful.

Snacks

Take enough snacks like energy bars etc.

Adequate sun protection

Wear a good quality pair of sunglasses (with UV protection) and use adequate sun protection cream with a protection factor of at least 20+.

Thermal flask

Use a thermal flask for your water on the summit night, other water bottles might freeze solid.

Camera

Taking pictures with a fully automatic camera at the summit of Kilimanjaro is possible, and most people do this. The secret is to always have a new battery in your camera when going into cold areas at high altitude. A mechanical camera works just as well, provided you have the knowledge to operate it successfully.

Cameras exposed to cold do not cease functioning, but remember that if you keep your camera inside your jacket and the lens becomes warm, chances are that it will form condensation when suddenly exposed to extreme cold. This condensation will freeze under conditions at the summit. Therefore, keep your camera dry at all times. Moisture will freeze at the summit, which **will** cause your camera to stop functioning.

Mountain water

The stream water high on the mountain Kilimanjaro has been tested and has been found to be fit for drinking. However, if you would like to be on the safe-side, use water purification tablets or ask your guide to boil the water for you. This can be done in the evening. You can fill your flasks in the morning, ready for the next part of the climb.

Other useful tips

The most important tip of all: Enjoy this “Once-in-a-life-time-Experience”!

GUIDES AND PORTERS

Once on the Mountain, your well equipped guides and porters, will rank second only to your mental determination, in terms of important factors contributing to a successful summit attempt. For the duration of your Kilimanjaro trek, your guide will be your advisor, he will lead you to the summit, and he will bring down safely again. It will be important that you work closely with him and take note of his advice.

Other Important Points

Qualified and experienced guides

Guides are compulsory for all routes on Kilimanjaro. All our treks up the mountain are lead by highly trained and qualified guides, registered with the Kilimanjaro National Parks Board. Each of our guides has been selected over years, based on experience, safety record and through feedback from previous clients. Over the years they made a major contribution to our proud success rate of 96%+ and have safely guided in excess of 7000 successful Destination Africa Tours clients to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Support staff ratios

The average ratio of our support staff to climbers is 2 porters per climber, a cook and one guide for a maximum of 4 climbers. This excellent staff to clients ratio, bolstered by our superior support equipment, will ensure your safety and enjoyment on the mountain.

Porters and cook

The porters do not only transport your gear and the supplies up and down the mountain. Arriving at every camp site long before you, they will have already erected your tent on your arrival. In the evening they will also boil drinking and washing water and the cook will prepare dinner of a quality that has surprised many previous clients.

Weight limits for porters

Remember that there is a **weight limit of 15 kg (30 lbs)** per climber, on the gear of each climber to be portered. A soft duffel bag (barrel type) is preferred - a rucksack is not necessary as they prefer to porter the loads balanced on their heads and shoulders.

Tipping

This is a "**compulsory tradition**" on every Kilimanjaro climb. We recommend giving a tip of between US \$ 130 to US \$ 200 per climber to the mountain crew at the end of the climb. We recommend giving the tip to the main guide who will then distribute the tip among the mountain crew. We recommend not paying any tips until you and all your gear have descended from the mountain.

- Guide US\$ 70 - 80
- Assistant Guide US\$ 50
- Cook US\$ 40
- Porters US\$ 25 - 30

It is recommended not to pay your porters any tips until you and all your gear have descended from the mountain.

More on becoming a guide on Kilimanjaro

Qualifying as a Kilimanjaro guide brings with it great prestige and respect within the local community. Bearing in mind that your guide would have been employed as a porter for at least 3 years after which he would have been trained and employed as an assistant guide for at least a further 2 years. Only then did he earn an opportunity to become a registered guide, provided that he was found suitable and competent. On average guides and porters will do three (5 - 6 day) summit expeditions per month. That equates to between 15 - 18 days per month on the mountain!

This is without a doubt an extraordinary achievement.

CHECK LIST

One of the important prerequisites of a successful summit attempt is being properly equipped. Ensure that you are well equipped - print the Checklist below and mark it off, it will be an essential part of your preparation for the climb. Please remember to limit the weight of your duffel bag and its content, to be carried by the porters on the climb, to 15 kg (30 lbs.)

or less. Extra luggage, including clean clothes to wear after your climb, can be left at the hotel in Moshi. Please feel free to contact us should you have any further questions regarding the checklist. We also provide a complete and quality rental service on all the equipment required on the mountain, as a sensible alternative to purchasing. Please click Gear Rental for more information.

Please note: This checklist is only a guideline.

Make sure you have everything you need to help you successfully summit the Roof of Africa.

Travel Documents

- Valid passport and visa
- Airline ticket
- International health card with immunizations (Yellow fever)
- Travel insurance
- Medical insurance
- US\$ cash – INSMALL BILLS / Credit Card

Essential Items

- Duffel bag - large enough for all climbing gear and clothing. To be carried by the porters. An extra bag to be left at the hotel with extra gear
- Small luggage lock - to lock zippers
- Day backpack - between 20 - 35 litres. Large enough to carry your water, camera, raincoat, lunch pack, snacks & warm clothing
- Sleeping bag
- Ski-pole / walking stick
- Water bottle / containers
- Kilimanjaro map (Can be bought at Park gate)
- High Altitude Gear
- Waterproof, breathable & windproof jacket (outer wear like Ventex, Gore-Tex or Jeantex)
- Waterproof, breathable & windproof pants (outer wear)
- Polar fleece (middle layer)
- Thermal underwear (under layers)
- Mittens or warm gloves



- Glove liners (if necessary)
- One pair thermal (polertex) socks
- Balaclava
- Gaiters
- Thermal water flask
- Hiking Gear
- Shorts
- Hiking pants
- Regular underwear
- T-shirts
- Raincoat or Poncho
- Footwear
- Water resistant semi-stiff hiking boots - mid weight boots work great
- Shoes for overnight camps - i.e. sneakers, running shoes, etc.
- Socks - several pairs for the climb
- Liner socks - to keep your feet dry and limit the risk of blisters

Equipment

- Sun hat or similar (with a brim)
- Collapsible ski stick (optional but highly recommended)
- Water bottles - two or three (total capacity at least 6 litres)
- Head lamp, good strong one with spare batteries and an extra light bulb
- Water purification tablets
- Sunglasses, good quality dark lenses for the climb, with a securing strap
- Flashlight (torch) with spare batteries
- Personal Items
- Toilet kit (soap, tooth brush, toilet articles, wet wipes, etc.)
- Towel
- Sun screen and lip protection, SPF 30+
- Ziploc bags, to protect camera, binoculars, etc. from dust
- Toilet paper
- Money belt for passport and valuables
- Medical and First Aid Supplies
- Headaches--Syndols
- Altitude sickness-Diamox (if not allergic to sulpha)
- Diarrhea - Imodium
- Nausea - Valoid
- Malaria - Prophylaxis
- Water purification tablets
- Painkillers
- Muscular sprains
- Abrasions blisters and cuts - Plaster, bandages
- Antiseptic cream - Betadine
- Flu and colds



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- Eye drops
- Insect repellent
- Optional Items
- Camera, extra lenses and film (ASA 200 film recommended)
- Binoculars
- Powdered sports drinks for the climb (ex. Game or Isotonic drinks)
- Pocket knife
- Notebook & pencil
- Plastic bags to keep clothing dry (masking tape)
- Energy snacks and sweets
- Video camera, tapes, battery packs and tri-pod

Standard package - Mt Kilimanjaro gear rental from Tanzania (This is just a Guide-Line)

Rental item	COST IN US DOLLAR 6 day climb
Sleeping bag (length 220 cm) Optional: Please supply your own liner	35
Summit jacket (Shell jacket)	10
Waterproof jacket	10
Waterproof trousers	10
Gaiters	10
Pair of walking poles	10
Headlamp (excl AAA batteries)	10
Balaclavas	5
Warm Gloves	10
Day Pack	15
Duffle Bag	20
Poncho	15

Sizes available: Large & X-large.

Rental terms and conditions applicable in Tanzania:

- A credit card number can be supplied as a guarantee for your deposit payment. The relevant deposit will be forfeited on all unreturned or damaged items.
- All equipment rental is subject to demand and the availability of rental equipment or specific sizes cannot be guaranteed. To avoid disappointment it is strongly recommended that all your rental equipment is booked well in advance of your planned trip.

Important! Please note that **NO** equipment must be washed by the clients under any circumstances.