



Feel at home in Africa

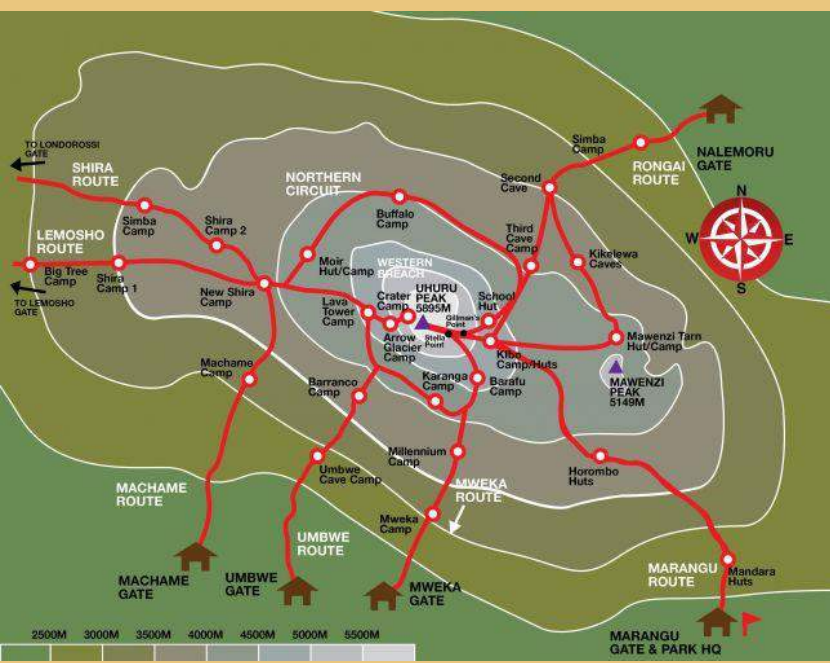
## Climbing Kilimanjaro



**Mount Kilimanjaro** is the tallest free-standing mountain in the world. We say it looks like a bundt cake, with icing on the top! All this snow and glacial ice, yet it is right next to the equator. That makes for a climb of a lifetime: 4 climate zones; 5 vegetative zones; and a 50+ degree Celsius temperature swing!

**What is involved?** Climbing Kilimanjaro is a long, slow walk, mostly on gently sloping terrain over hills and through valleys. It is attainable by young and old alike (age 10 to 70) – with basic physical fitness and a healthy dose of mental determination. You are going way up – almost 6 km (20,000 ft) above sea level! For this you will need ample time for acclimatization.

For our climbers, we highly recommend the 7 day Machame Route, with the 8 day scenic Lemosho Route also being very good. Even though the climbing is not super rigorous, only about 70% of people make it on average. The longer routes of 7 or 8 days, help the odds significantly, as the body acclimatizes to decreased atmospheric pressure and available oxygen which at the summit is only 50% that of sea level.



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## Sample itinerary of 7-Day Climb Machame Route

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### **Day 1: Machame Gate (1800m) to Machame Camp (3000m) 5 to 6 hours**

After breakfast we will drive about 2 hours from Dashir to the Machame Gate, where you will meet your mountain crew and enter Kilimanjaro National Park. We begin our climb at 1800m, walking a few hours through thick and undisturbed tropical forest, your cook will stop halfway and prepare a hot lunch, then dinner and overnight at Machame camp. With luck we may see the colobus monkeys that live in the forest.

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### **Day 2: Machame Camp to Shira Camp (3840m) 4 to 5 hours**

Today is an easy paced acclimatization day. We will hike over streams, a river gorge, and moorlands. Camp is located on the Shira Plateau, providing expansive views of Kilimanjaro. There is a conditioning hike in the afternoon where you can enjoy the clusters of giant lobelias and senecios that grow at this elevation. Depending on the weather conditions your cook may stop halfway for a hot lunch or continue to the camp for lunch, dinner and overnight at Shira camp hike takes you from the montane forest, through a transition zone, and into the heath zone, where the old lava flows are visible.

After a picnic lunch, reach the western edge of the Plateau and your camp. Enjoy the dramatic view of Kilimanjaro and its glaciers.

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**Day 3: Shira Camp to Lava Tower (4640 m/15,220 ft) to Baranco camp (3985 m/13,070 ft) 6-8 hours**

Today is another acclimatization day with changing vegetative zones.

Trek up to Lava Tower and the desert zone, passing through the alpine moorland zone where plants are extremely hardy and consist of lichens, grasses and heather. Then after lunch, go back down to Barranco Valley, which is dominated by the beautiful giant senecio and lobelia moorland forest where your camp will be set.

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**Day 4: Baranco Camp to Karanga Valley Camp (4040 m/13,255 ft) 4-5 hours**

Climb the Great Barranco rock wall - not too steep, but challenging. Your guides will help make it safe and accessible. You will be able to see the breathtaking Heim Glacier. Descend into the Karanga Valley and then up to your camp on a ridge above the valley.

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**Day 5: Karanga Valley Camp to Barafu Camp (4680 m/15,360 ft) 4-5 hours**

Today the trail turns steadily uphill. The temperature will grow colder and the landscape more sparse. Arrive midday at Barafu ("Ice") Base Camp. After an early dinner we will rest early in great anticipation of the summit attempt.

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**Day 6: Barafu Camp to Uhuru Peak (5895 m/19,340 ft) to Mweka Camp (3170 m/10,400) 13-16 hrs!**

At midnight, literally one foot in front of the other, and with short deep breaths and the mind telling the body to keep going, slowly make your way to the summit. The spectacular view of the rising sun at Stella Point is a welcome diversion from the dizzying effects of altitude you may be experiencing.

Finally plod on to Uhuru Peak. Share high 5's, take a quick photo, and enjoy the moment. Congratulations - You have made it to the Roof of Africa!

Descend to Barafu Camp for lunch and a short rest. Continue on a steep downhill to the edge of the Mweka Forest where you can finally fully relax, eat, and share your experiences of the climb.

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**Day 7: Mweka Camp to Lemosho Gate (1640 m/5380 ft)**

After breakfast, you will have time to share a moment of photos and a song with your climbing crew. Give them great thanks, as they have made it possible for you to experience this incredible journey.

Descend again through the tropical forest to Mweka Gate. Take lunch at Moshi and drive back to Dashir Lodge for a hot shower, a great meal, and a much deserved relaxing evening.

