



The Zones of Kilimanjaro Tanzania

Stories about Mount Kilimanjaro often focus on its height and location. The tallest mountain in Africa is capped with snow and ice, despite sitting near the Equator. But it is also compelling for a different reason: To get to the icy summit, you must pass through incredibly diverse vegetation zones. The mountain rises from the hot, dry savanna, through rainforest and hardy scrublands, to a rocky and icy summit.

People have cultivated the lowlands ringing the mountain, which appear as patchy green areas. The continuous dark-green band is montane forest, which stretches from roughly 1,800 to 2,800 meters in elevation. The dark-green areas transition to a band of green-brown known as the moorland zone—colder, less humid, and full of short, hardy plants. The highest areas—the alpine desert and summit zones—are inhospitable to all but the most skilled mountain climbers.