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here are six established routes to climb Mount Kilimanjaro – Marangu, Machame, Lemosho, Shira, Rongai and Umbwe. The Marangu, Machame, and Umbwe routes all approach from the south of the mountain. The Lemosho and Shira routes approach from the west. The Rongai route approaches from the north. All routes except Marangu and Rongai descend via Mwerka.

Rongai Route on Mount Kilimanjaro

Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro via The Rongai Route



Less crowded because of its remote location the route offers trekkers a unique wilderness experience where it is possible to see large wildlife like antelope, elephant and buffalo. As there is typically less moisture on this side of the mountain you are less likely to encounter rain and have more unclouded views of the peak. While it is flatter, it does not give the climb high sleep low option and therefore recommended to select more days for acclimatization.

The Rongai route is one of the easier routes up Kilimanjaro. Rongai is the only route to approach Kilimanjaro from the north and the descent is via the Marangu Route. Summit night from Kibo Hut is steep and follows the same path taken by the Marangu route which passes Gilman's Point to Uhuru Peak.

There are several variations; the one described is a longer route taking in Mawenzi Tarn.

DAY 1: NALE MURU GATE – SIMBA CAMP: 7KM /5MI | 3-4 HRS | RAINFOREST

Elevation: 1997m/6552ft to 2635m/8645ft

Altitude gained: 638m

Departing from Moshi a 4-5 hour drive will take you through the coffee plantations and Village of Nale Muru to the Kilimanjaro National Park Gate. We will patiently wait for our permits to be issued while watching the hustle and bustle of operations as many crews prepare for the journey ahead. Enjoy the beautiful wooded scenery, and windy trails while your guide tells you about the local flora and fauna and natural wildlife you are likely to see. Simba camp sits near the first cave at the edge of the moorland zone with spectacular views of the plains of Kenya.



DAY 2: SIMBA CAMP – SECOND CAVE CAMP: 5.8KM/3.6MI | 5-6HRS | MOORLAND

Elevation: 2635m/8645ft to 3487m/11,440ft

Altitude gained: 852m

After a good night sleep and a hearty breakfast we continue along moorland terrain on a consistent ascending path. You will catch some terrific views of Kibo and get your first glimpse of the ice fields on the Eastern crater rim. The small shrubs of the moorland became thinner as you approach the Second Cave. Temperatures begin to drop.

DAY 3: SECOND CAVE CAMP – THIRD CAVE CAMP: 3.3KM/2MI | 3-4HRS | SEMI DESERT

Elevation: 2635m/8645ft to 3936m/12,913ft

Altitude gained: 449m

After breakfast and packing, you continue your steady ascent, entering into the semi-desert terrain. This relatively short hiking day brings you closer to the Easter ice fields, continually drawing your attention to their beauty. Pay attention to your body and keep your guide informed of any signs of altitude sickness.

DAY 4: THIRD CAVE CAMP- KIBO HUTS: 6.7KM/4.2MI | 4-5HRS | ALPINE DESERT

Elevation: 3936m/12,913ft to 5174m/16975ft

Altitude gained: 1238m

As you depart early the semi-desert zone from the Third Cave early in the morning and begin your trek into the Alpine Desert terrain for the remainder of your ascent. Today's hike will take you just below the Kibo crater wall to the Kibo Huts. At this



point, you will merge with the Marangu Route, which you will use to hike to the summit. You will prepare your clothing and equipment (replace batteries for headlamp and camera) before you go to bed by 7 PM and try to catch a few hours of rest before your summit attempt.

DAY 5: KIBO HUTS – SUMMIT: 4KM /2.5 MI UP | 5-7HRS | – HOROMBO HUTS: 15.75KM /9.8MI DOWN | 5-6HRS | GLACIERS, SNOW CAPPED SUMMIT

Elevation: 5174m/16975ft to 5895m/19,341ft

Altitude gained: 721m

Descent to 3721m/12,208ft

Altitude lost: 2174m

Excitement is building as morning comes with an early start between midnight and 2 a.m. This is the most mentally and physically challenging portion of the trek.

We continue our way to the summit between the Rebmann and Ratzel glaciers trying to stay warm and focused of the amazing sense of accomplishment that lies ahead. With a switchback motion in a northwesterly direction and ascend through heavy scree towards Stella Point on the crater rim. You will be rewarded with the most magnificent sunrise during your short rest here. Faster hikers may view the sunrise from the summit. From here on your remaining 1 hour ascent to Uhuru Peak, you are likely to encounter snow all the way.

Congratulations, one step at a time you have now reached Uhuru Peak the highest point on Mount Kilimanjaro and the entire continent of Africa!



After photos, celebrations and maybe a few tears of joy we take a few moments to enjoy this incredible accomplishment. We begin our steep descent down to Mweka Camp, stopping at Barafu for lunch and a very brief rest. We strongly recommend gaiters and trekking poles for uncooperative loose gravel and volcano ash terrain. Well-deserved rest awaits you to enjoy your last evening on the mountain. Overnight Mweka Camp.

DAY 6: HOROMBO HUTS – MARANGU GATE – MOSHI: 20KM/12.5MI | 6-7HRS | RAINFOREST

Elevation: 3721m/12,208ft to 1905m/6250ft

Altitude lost: 1816m

After breakfast and a heartfelt ceremony of appreciation and team bonding with your crew it's time to say goodbye. We continue the descent down stopping at the Mandara Huts for lunch. Remember to tip your guides, cooks, and porters, since you will be leaving them here. You return back to the Marangu Park Gate and receive your summit certificates. As the weather is drastically warmer, the terrain is wet, muddy and steep and we highly recommend Gaiters and trekking poles. From the gate, a vehicle will meet you to drive you back to your hotel in Moshi (about 45 minutes). Enjoy a long over due hot shower, dinner and celebrations!!

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