

TREK KILIMANJARO - THE MARANGU ROUTE
OXFAM
20 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

“The Roof of Africa”

"as wide as all the world, great, high, and unbelievably white in the sun." - Hemmingway

Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa and one of the largest free standing mountains in the world. Climbing Kilimanjaro is a challenge to say the least and is one of the mountains almost every trekker and mountaineer in the world wants to conquer. Kilimanjaro is more or less 24 miles wide and 49 miles long; it is more ecosystem than mountain. It dwarfs other regional landmarks like Mt. Meru and Mt. Kenya and dominates the savannah of East Africa. The mountain consists of three peaks: Shira, Mawenzi, and Kibo (the highest point of which is Uhuru). We will be climbing Mount Kibo peak in this challenge

Day 1

We board the overnight flight from London Heathrow tonight to Nairobi.

Day 2

Arrive in Nairobi in the morning and change planes for the onward flight to Kilimanjaro. We land in Tanzania and transfer to the hotel in the village of Marangu, 2km from the park entrance at Marangu Park Gate. This afternoon we have free time to relax and prepare for the challenge ahead.

Overnight: Nakara Hotel, Marangu
Sleep at altitude 1800m / 5,906 feet.

Day 3

Transfer to Marangu Gate (approx 10 minutes)

Trek Marangu Gate-Mandara Huts

approx 4 ½ hours

Breakfast and briefing by the guides, tour manager and doctor on the challenge ahead and health and safety. Pack for the ascent and weigh the kit. Transfer approx 10-15 minutes to the Park entrance at Marangu Gate and after completing the necessary formalities we start the ascent. The trail weaves through dense forest filled with the noises of chattering of Colobus monkeys. We are surrounded by an incredible variety of towering trees, giant ferns and wild forest flowers – perhaps even the odd orchid. We picnic on the way. There will be a short trek to the Maundi crater from the hut, time permitting.

Overnight: Mandara Hut

Climb to altitude: 2744m / 9,000 feet

Sleep at altitude: 2700m / 9,000 feet

Summary: Gentle ascent on a rain-forest dirt trail, can be muddy/slippery if it has rained.

Day 4

Mandara Hut to Horombo Hut

approx 7 - 8 hours

An early start for the longer trek along an uphill trail to the Horombo Hut. The landscape takes on a more rugged and rocky terrain, in the distance we will see the magnificent peaks of Mawenzi and Kibo. We pass through the cloud level!

Overnight at Horombo Hut.

Climb to altitude: 3761m / 12,334 feet

Sleep at altitude: 3700m / 12,334 feet

Summary: Good steady climb, first through forest and then across heath and moorland

Day 5

Acclimatisation trek

approx 5 hours

Today is an acclimatisation trek of approximately 5 hours. At about 8.30am we head off on the upper Kibo trail which takes us through streams and rocky mountain vegetation to "Zebra Rock" at 4,000m. We continue to an observation point at 4200m for some spectacular views of Kibo Hut, the twin peaks and the trail to the summit. We return to Horombo Hut for a hot lunch and time to relax.

Overnight: Horombo Hut

Climb to altitude: 4, 4200m / 14,108 feet

Sleep at altitude: 3700m / 12,334 feet

Summary: Good ascent to 4,400m (14,000 feet) and back down

Day 6

Horombo Hut - Kibo Hut

approx 7 - 8 hours

We collect our picnic lunches and follow the lower route to Kibo Hut through spectacular mountain flora and fauna – giant cacti, lobelia and other mountain flowers line our route. After trekking for 4 hours we stop for our picnic at the Kibo Saddle and although we can see the Kibo Hut it is another 2 –3 hours trek in the afternoon. This part of the trek is beyond the water point as we enter the 'desert' zone, it can be slow-going and cold due to the high altitude.

Overnight : Kibo Hut.

Climb to altitude: 4732m / 15,525 feet

Sleep at altitude: 4700m / 15,256 feet

Summary: Good path with final ascent at the end of the day, enter the desert zone

Day 7

Acclimatisation trek

approx 5 hours

We trek halfway to William's point at 5000m approx to acclimatise to the high altitude and rest sufficiently for tomorrow's ascent to the summit. Overnight : Kibo Hut.

Sleep at altitude: 4700m / 15,256 feet

Day 8

The Summit

approx 15-17 hours

After a warming cup of tea and a light snack of biscuits we set off in the small hours (just after midnight) to embark on a slow ascent up the steepest and most difficult part of the challenge to Gilman's Point at an altitude of 5685m, perched on the crater rim where we rest to watch the sun begin to rise. Everyone qualifies to have climbed Kilimanjaro at this point and can return to Kibo Hut if they choose. There is an option to continue on from here for a further 2 hours through snow and wind to Uhuru Peak, 5895m. It can be extremely cold to well below freezing temperatures. At the top we spend some time resting, taking photographs of the world below (clouds permitting). On a clear day you may see Mount Kenya. Descend to Kibo Hut for a warming snack. Continue the descent for a further 3 – 3 ½ hours to Horombo Hut to rest and overnight.

Overnight: Horombo Hut

Climb to altitude: Gilmans Point : 5895m / 19,342 feet Uhuru Peak: 5685m / 18,655 feet

Sleep at altitude: 3700m / 12,334 feet

Summary: Steep ascent, loose scree; strenuous due to altitude, early start and cold temperatures. Descent is gradual with difficult scree sections.

Day 9

Horombo Hut – Marangu

approx 6-7 hours

We have breakfast and prepare to descend. Descent is rapid, in 3 ½ hours we reach Mandara Hut and then after another 3 hours we reach Marangu Park Gate. We stop briefly for a packed lunch on the way. Transfer to our hotel and relax for the afternoon to rebalance and rest aching limbs. Tonight we celebrate together and toast our achievement.

Overnight: Nakara Hotel, Marangu

Sleep at altitude 1800m / 5,906 feet.

Day 10

Fly Kilimanjaro - Nairobi at 6am.

For those NOT visiting the Oxfam Project in Mombasa

Free day in Nairobi then you return to Nairobi airport for the overnight flight home (flight at 23.50). You can take part in an optional tour – for £75 you can visit the Nairobi National Park to see giraffes, monkeys, rhinos, antelopes and more. The tour also includes a visit to a rhino and elephant orphanage located in the park. Lunch at Mamba Village. Later on drive to Nairobi and Carnivore for early dinner and transfer to the airport

For those who ARE visiting the Oxfam Project in Mombasa.

A special today as we visit an Oxfam project and see how the funds we have raised are helping people. We catch the flight to Mombasa at 08.30, arriving in Mombasa at 09.30. On arrival we split into 2 groups to visit different Oxfam projects. In the evening we have dinner together and stay overnight in Mombasa.

Day 11

We have an early start as we catch the flight back to Nairobi at 06.00. We then board the flight back to the UK at 11.30. Arrive back in London at 18.30.

Due to the complex nature of the challenge the itinerary is subject to change