



# CHOOSING A ROUTE UP KILIMANJARO


Mount Kilimanjaro (at 5,895 meters) is it the highest mountain in Africa and the highest free-standing mountain in the world. Kilimanjaro can be climbed without technical equipment and climbing skills. For the most part, it takes just putting one foot in front of the other. Although this sounds simple, it is most likely the toughest challenge you will ever face. The challenge is as much mental as it is physical.

One of the earlier pre-trek decisions is to choose which route for your ascent on Kilimanjaro. There is no "best" Kilimanjaro route! It all depends on you. The routes have starting points located on multiple sides of the mountain. The routes vary distance and accordingly so do the completion times. There are relatively easy trails, difficult routes, and even dangerous ones. Some routes are favorable for altitude acclimatization due to their route profile. There are routes that are better when climbing during the rainy season. One route offers hut accommodations while the rest are camping routes. Other considerations are the scenery, foot traffic and your budget.

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| Duration of your Kilimanjaro Trek | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The shortest duration available on the market is 5 days. We don't recommend that to most of our clients as it is dangerous, risky and hardly ever remembered let alone enjoyed unless you are very experienced hiker at altitude!</li> <li>If you are fairly fit with some altitude experience 6 days is a viable option.</li> <li>We usually suggest at least 7 days to give you the best chance of summit success with that extra day to acclimatize. 7 days improves your chances and the expedition is a lot more fun.</li> <li>There are 8-day options for all routes. The Lemosho route, is a bit longer and often done as an 8-day.</li> <li>There is even the big 9-day traverse!</li> </ul> |
| Marangu Route                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Marangu Route is the only one that offers hut accommodation.</li> <li>It's the oldest route and probably the most well known</li> <li>It has a good path and a steady, gradual slope (until the summit push).</li> <li>Also known as the Coco Cola Route.</li> <li>If you don't want to stay in a tent this is your only option.</li> <li>You go up and down the same route.</li> </ul>  |
| Machame Route                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Machame Route is one of the more popular routes on the mountain</li> <li>Also known as the Whiskey route.</li> <li>It's tougher than Marangu but it is not technically difficult.</li> <li>The days are a bit longer and the walks a bit steeper so popular with a more adventurous crowd.</li> <li>The trail is often steep and it involves many ups and downs, crossing a succession of valleys and ridges.</li> <li>Scenically it is also spectacular - Shira plateau, Lava Tower, Barranco Wall with lots of variety.</li> </ul>   |
| Rongai Route                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rongai Route is the only route from the northern Side of the mountain.</li> <li>The descent is in the South-east (Marangu Route) so you see more than one side of Kilimanjaro.</li> <li>It is the least crowded route as many trekkers are put off by the "long" drive to the start</li> <li>It's considered one of the easier routes.</li> <li>It is on the northern, sunny drier side of the mountain. A great choice during the wet season</li> <li>Scenically beautiful. You can stay at Mawenzi Tam camp, one of the only lakes on the mountain,</li> </ul>   |





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| Lemosho Route  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lemosho Route starts in the west and crosses the Shira Plateau so lovely panoramic vistas.</li> <li>• It joins the Machame Route later through Lava Tower, Barranco and Barafu. See Machame details.</li> <li>• An alternative is via the northern route to join Rongai. See Rongai details.</li> <li>• 8 days is the recommended number of days for this route due to the extra distance to be covered.</li> <li>• Lemosho Route is a bit more expensive due to the length, the remoteness &amp; transport cost to start.</li> <li>• The beauty and hiking in different terrains make it worthwhile.</li> <li>• There are no official statistics, however the average success rate across all operators is 90% for the 8-day Lemosho trek and an 85% success rate for the 7-day trek.</li> </ul>  |
| Shira Route  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Shira Route is almost identical to Lemosho (it was the original route from the west).</li> <li>• Most people have switched to Lemosho which is the "improved" version.</li> </ul>  |
| Umbwe Route  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shortest steepest, most direct and most difficult.</li> <li>• Seldom attempted unless you are an experienced mountaineer or going for a speed ascent/record.</li> </ul>  |
| Northern Circuit   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Northern Circuit Route is scenically varied, uncrowded with some challenges</li> <li>• It takes 9 days so can be on the expensive side.</li> </ul>   |
| Mweka Route ↓  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Descent route only</li> </ul>  |
| Kilema Route  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The only summit bound Mount Kilimanjaro <b>cycling</b> route</li> <li>• Runs parallel to the Marangu Route</li> <li>• Standard cycling itinerary is 5 days with 1 summit attempt.</li> <li>• An extra day is recommended to acclimatize</li> </ul>   |
| Crater Camp  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the highest campsite on Mt Kilimanjaro 5,750m</li> <li>• Crater Camp is located in the depression at the top of Kilimanjaro's highest volcanic cone</li> <li>• Crater Camp is only 1 km (0.6 mi) northeast of Uhuru Peak. It takes up to an hour to hike there.</li> <li>• The main appeal of Crater Camp is the chance to explore the crater during the day</li> <li>• Overnight stay next to one of the last remaining glaciers on Kilimanjaro, Furtwangler Glacier</li> <li>• Optional 2-3-hr roundtrip hike from Crater Camp to visit Reusch Crater &amp; the Ash Pit- the mountain's vent</li> <li>• Expect a long night- it gets cold -10° to -20°C (14°F to -4°F).</li> <li>• Most people don't feel great. Not even the mountain crew, which is basic staff compliment.</li> <li>• Altitude type symptoms - dizziness, nausea, headaches, shortness of breath and poor sleep are common</li> <li>• It costs more.</li> </ul> |

