



KILIMANJARO ADVENTURE 2016

MACHAME ROUTE

Duration: 7 Days

Ascent: About 43 km Descent: About 20km

This is probably the most beautiful route up Kilimanjaro. All your equipment and supplies are portered and a cook prepares all your meals. Where accommodation on the Marangu route is in huts, the Machame route offers strictly tents only. This makes Machame better suited to the slightly more adventurous hiker, however rewarding him with a scenic splendor such as not seen on the Marangu route. From late afternoon sunsets at Shira, to the misty revelations of Kibo at the great Barranco Wall, the Machame route offers the adventurous hiker a stunning scenic "slide show" over 7 days.

The Machame route is normally completed in a minimum of 6 days. We have added the 7th day to allow for acclimatisation. There is an added benefit to this, as you are afforded the most valuable commodity on the mountain - acclimatisation. The Machame route takes you high to Lava Tower (4630m) on the day 3 and brings you down by nearly 700m for an overnight at Barranco camp (3950m). This is the secret to successful acclimatisation.

DAY 1

Machame Gate (1800m) - Machame camp (3000m)

Elevation gain: + 1200m

Hiking time: 7 - 9 hours

Distance: About 10 km

Habitat: Montane forest



Machame Gate © Hasin

Your day starts early with a briefing, followed by breakfast and a 45-minute drive from Moshi (910m) to the Machame village (1490m). The guides and porters prepare and pack the supplies and your equipment in the village. You will receive a lunch pack and you can also buy mineral water in the village.

Depending on the condition of the road, it is possible to drive from the village to the Machame gate, but if not, the muddy 3 km walk will take about 1 hour to complete. After registering at the gate office, you start your ascent and enter the rain forest almost immediately. There is a strong possibility of rain in the forest, which will transform the trail into a very soggy, muddy and slippery experience. You will have a welcome lunch stop about half way and will reach the Machame camping area in the late afternoon. Your porters (arriving at the camp site long before you) will have erected your tent on your arrival. In the evening the porters will boil drinking and washing water and the cook will prepare dinner, before you retire to your tent for the night. Night temperatures can already drop to freezing point at this campsite.

DAY 2

Machame camp (3000m) - Shira camp (3720m)

Elevation gain: + 720m

Hiking time: 6 - 7 hours

Distance: About 8 km

Habitat: Moorland



Shira Plateau in mist © Hasin

You rise early at Machame camp and after breakfast you climb an hour or so to the top of the forest and then for 2 hours at a gentler gradient

through the moorland zone. After a short lunch and rest, you continue up a rocky ridge onto the Shira plateau. By now you will be able to see in an easterly direction, the Western Breach with its stunning glaciers. You are now due west of Kibo and after a short hike you will reach the Shira campsite at 3840m. The porters will boil drinking and washing water, before serving dinner. The night at this exposed camp will even be colder than the previous night, with temperatures dropping to well below freezing.

DAY 3

Shira camp (3720m)-Lava Tower (4650m)-Barranco camp (3900m)

Elevation gain: + 930m | Elevation Loss: -750m

Hiking time: 7 - 9 hours

Distance: About 10 km

Habitat: Semi desert



Above the clouds © Hasin

The route now turns east into a semi desert and rocky landscape surrounding Lava Tower, where you reach an altitude of 4630m after about a 5 hours walk. Lunch is served in a designated area before ascending the rocky scree path to Lava Tower (4630m). Definitely the toughest day so far. It is normally around this point, where for the first time, some climbers will start to feel symptoms of breathlessness, irritability and headaches. After lunch you descent again by almost 680m to the Barranco camping area and after reaching the high altitude of 4600m at Lava Tower, the true acclimatisation benefit of this day becomes clear. This descent to Barranco camp takes about 2 hours and offers great opportunities to take some beautiful photographs of the Western Breach and Breach Wall. The camp is

situated in a valley below the Breach and Great Barranco Wall, which should provide you with a memorable sunset while you wait for the preparation of your dinner.

DAY 4

Barranco Camp (3,950m) to Karanga Camp (4,100m)

Hiking time: 8 - 10 hours

Elevation Gain: 500m

Distance: 7 Kilometers

Habitat: Heather, Moorland & Alpine desert



Climbing the Barranco wall © Hasin

Today you ascend the Barranco wall, and then walk across scree and ridges into the Karanga valley (4100m) with breathtaking views of the Western Breach and the southern glacier. You arrive in time for lunch in camp and then have plenty of time to relax and even go for a short acclimatization walk. The last water stop on the route is the Karanga Valley, as there is no water at Barafu camp.

DAY 5

Karanga Camp (4,100m) - Barafu camp (4600m)

Hiking time: 7 - 8 hours

Elevation gain: + 700m

Distance: About 8 km's

Habitat: Heather, Moorland & Alpine desert



The beautiful Mawenzi © Hasin

After breakfast, we leave Karanga Valley (4100m) We continue to the Barafu Hut, which is located at an altitude of 4,600 meters. You have completed the South Circuit, which offers views of the summit from many different angles. Here we make camp, rest, enjoy dinner, and prepare for the summit day. The two peaks of Mawenzi and Kibo are to be seen from this position. The route then heads down through the Karanga Valley over intervening ridges and valleys, and then joins up with the Mweka route. This is the preferred route down from the summit, so remember it. Turn left up the ridge and after another hour or so, you reach Barafu Hut. Barafu is the Swahili word for "ice" and it is a bleak and inhospitable camping area to spend the night. Totally exposed to the ever-present gales the tents are pitched on a narrow, stony, and dangerous ridge. Make sure that you familiarise yourself with the terrain before dark to avoid any accidents. The summit is now a further 1345m up and you will make the final ascent the same night. Prepare your equipment, ski stick and thermal clothing for your summit attempt. This should include the replacement of your headlamp and camera batteries and make sure you have a spare set available as well. To prevent freezing it will be wise to carry your water in a thermal flask. Go to bed at round about 19h00 and try to get some precious rest and sleep.

DAY 6
SUMMIT ATTEMPT
Barafu camp (4600m) - Uhuru Peak (5895m) - Mweka (3354m)
Hiking time: 8 - 10 hours to reach Uhuru Peak
6 - 8 hours to descend to Mweka
Elevation gain: + 1295m | Elevation Loss: -2541m
Distance: About 7 km ascent + 13 km descent
Habitat: Stone scree and ice-capped summit



Arrow glacier © Hasin

You will rise around 23h30, and after some tea and biscuits you shuffle off into the night. You will head in a northwesterly direction and ascend through heavy scree towards Stella Point on the crater rim. This 6-hour walk to Stella point is for many climbers, mentally and physically the most challenging on the route. At Stella Point (5685m) you will stop for a short rest and will be rewarded with the most magnificent sunrise you are ever likely to see (weather permitting). From Stella Point you will normally encounter snow all the way on your 2-hour ascent to Uhuru Peak. The time you will spend on the summit will depend on the weather conditions. Do not stop here for too long, as it will be extremely difficult to start again due to cold and fatigue. Enjoy your accomplishment and a day to remember for the rest of your life. The walk back to Barafu from the summit, takes about 3 hours. Here you will have a well earned but short rest and collect the rest of your gear, before heading down to Mweka hut (3100m). The route is not difficult and will take you down the rock and scree path into the moorland and eventually into the forest. The camp is situated in the upper forest and mist or rain can be expected in the late afternoon. Dinner, and washing water will be prepared.

DAY 7
Mweka camp (3354m)- Mweka Gate (1800m)
Hiking time: 3 -6 hours
Elevation loss: - 1554m
Distance: About 7 km's
Habitat: Forest



Loo with a view © Hasin

After an early and well-deserved breakfast, it is a short 3-hour and scenic hike back to the Park gate. It is strongly recommended not to pay your porters any tips until you and all your gear have reached the gate safely. At Mweka gate you sign your name and details in a register. This is also where successful climbers receive their summit certificates. Those climbers who reached Stella Point (5685m) are issued with green certificates and those who reached Uhuru Peak (5895m) receive gold certificates. From the Mweka Gate you will continue down into the Mweka village, normally a muddy 3 km (1 hour) hike. In the Mweka village you will be served a delicious hot lunch!! You now drive back to Moshi for a long over due hot shower, dinner and celebrations!!