

American Alpine Institute

KILIMANJARO CLIMB MACHAME ROUTE ITINERARY

9 Days /8 Nights with 7 Days on the Mountain

Summary

On this climb we ascend by one route (Machame) and descend by another (Mweka), and in the process we gain tremendous views of the Kilimanjaro region as well as several aspects of the beautiful mountain itself.

The climb starts above the picturesque mountain village of Machame to the south of Kilimanjaro. After passing through forestland and trekking higher into a moorland zone, we encounter an easy rock scramble and eventually emerge onto the Shira Plateau. We will then move below the southern face of Kibo, climb the feature called the Lava Tower for magnificent 360-degree vistas.

We ascend the Great Barranco Wall, an enjoyable scramble, and then approach Uhuru Summit from Barafu and the ridge that abuts the South East Valley. This approach provides incredible views of Mawenzi, Kilimanjaro's remnant volcanic cone. We descend by a different route to the Mweka Forest, and so from beginning to end we get to enjoy the constantly changing landscapes of diverse ecological and geographical zones.

Day 1: Arrival/Mbahe Farm House

Your trip leader will pick you up upon your arrival at the Kilimanjaro International Airport. A private car will take you to Mbahe Village, located in the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro, approximately 2 hours from the airport. Accommodations are in cottages at beautiful Mbahe Farm House.

Day 2: Mbahe Farm House (6,000')

You have the morning to rest and relax. You can enjoy delicious "homebrew" coffee, grown and roasted on the farm, and meals made with fruits and vegetables from the garden. Your trip leader will provide an orientation on the climb and do an equipment check. This is also a day to take a guided tour around Mbahe Village, the Mtuy family farm, and to swim in the waterfall on farm's land. We will all gather together for dinner. B.L.D.

Day 3: Machame Gate (6,000') to Machame Camp (9,950'), 6.6 miles

After breakfast we will drive to the Machame Gate, where you will meet your other guides and mountain crew and enter the Kilimanjaro National Park. We begin our climb at 6,000 feet, walking for a few hours through thick and undisturbed tropical forest. With luck we may see the colobus monkeys that live in the forest. B.L.D.

Day 4: Machame Camp (9,950') to Shira Camp (12,620'), 3.5 miles

Today is an easy paced acclimatization day. We will hike over streams, a river gorge, and moorlands. Camp is located on the Shira Plateau, providing expansive views of Kilimanjaro. We will do a conditioning hike in the afternoon on which you can enjoy clusters of giant lobelia and senecios that grow at this elevation. B.L.D.

Day 5: Shira Camp (12,620') to Lava Tower Camp (15,230'), 4.4 miles

Today is another acclimatization day as we have a mostly uphill climb of 5 hours to an elevation over 15,000 feet. We will pass through the alpine moorland zone where plants are extremely

hardy and consist of lichens, grasses, and heather, to reach Kilimanjaro's alpine desert zone. You will have a spectacular view of the steep Western Breach. After an early afternoon rest we will take a two-hour round-trip adventure climb up the Lava Tower. This scramble is fun and will help prepare you for the climb tomorrow. B.L.D.

Day 6: Lava Tower Camp (15,230') to Karanga Valley Camp (13,250'), 5.9 miles

Today we will climb the Great Barranco rock wall – not too steep but challenging for some – which our guides make comfortable and accessible for everyone. We will go *pole pole* (meaning "slowly" in Kiswahili). You will be able to see the breathtaking Heim Glacier. We descend into the Karanga Valley and then to our camp on a ridge above the valley, where you will be able to enjoy a rest and have refreshing a sponge bath with warm water. B.L.D.

Day 7: Karanga Valley Camp (13,250') to Barafu Camp (15,360'), 2.4 miles

As we begin trekking today the trail turns steadily uphill. The temperature will grow colder and the landscape more sparse as we work our way to Barafu Camp. *Barafu* means "ice" in Kiswahili. Hiking time is 4 to 5 hours. The Camp is set on an exposed ridge and is the staging point for our push to the summit. After an early dinner we will go to bed for some sleep. At midnight, hopefully under the stars, we will begin the final ascent. We are going to go *pole pole* and drink plenty of water and tea along the way, refueling with small snacks regularly to keep our energy high and to help us enjoy this final climb to the summit. B.L.D.

Day 8: Barafu Camp (15,360') to Uhuru Peak (19,340') to Millennium Camp (12,530'), 8.3 miles

We will reach Uhuru Peak, the summit of Kilimanjaro at 19,340 feet, around 8 a.m. At this early hour, before any possible clouds close in, you will have spectacular views of Africa in all directions. The hiking time is 7 to 8 hours. Tea and snacks will be served on the top. After a stay of about 30 minutes and photos all around, we will descend 2 to 3 hours to our Barafu Camp for lunch, rest, and to pick up belongings. Then we continue downhill 3 to 4 hours to the edge of the Mweka Forest. Tonight's camp is 7,000 feet below the summit! It is a long descent and trekking poles are recommended. Eat, share your experiences of the climb, and sleep soundly! Congratulations, you made it to the Roof of Africa! B.L.D.

Day 9: Millennium Camp (12,530') to Mweka Gate (5,380'), 8.5 miles; Mbahe Farm House

Our last day is another descent of 7,000 feet with 4 to 5 hours of hiking to the trailhead at Mweka Gate. The trail is steep in places and may be slippery if wet; again we recommend that you use trekking poles. At the gate we will temporarily say goodbye to our mountain crew and enjoy a picnic lunch. The trip leaders will take you back to Arusha for a hot shower and a celebration dinner with the whole team. B.L.D. Depart Tanzania after dinner or remain for rest day or remain for safari.

Day 10: Mbahe Farm House/Departure

Today is a rest and relaxation day at the farm house. Optional activities include light hiking, swimming, exploring the village and local school, visiting with the neighbors, drumming, tasting homemade banana beer, and shopping in Moshi Town. For those returning home, you will be transferred to the Kilimanjaro International Airport to catch your flight (most people fly out in the evening on KLM to Amsterdam). Those continuing on safari will pack lightly for the continuation of your African adventure tomorrow. B.L. If you are continuing on safari, you will depart in the morning for your first day of safari.

NOTE: If you have limited time, you can fly out on night #9 or begin your safari on day #10 instead of having Day #10 for rest and exploring after the climb

Inclusions:

- All accommodations
- Meals as indicated (B.L.D.)
- Services of trip leader, climbing guides, and mountain crew
- Kilimanjaro National Park entrance, camping, and permit fees
- All dining and camping equipment (excluding sleeping bag and pad)
- Gamow bag (portable hyperbaric chamber) and supplemental oxygen on all climbs
- Transfers from Kilimanjaro International Airport and to/from park entrance/exit gates
- Guided Mbahe Village walking tour

Exclusions:

- International airfare
- Personal clothing and equipment
- Gratuities to leaders, guides, crew, or other staff
- Additional accommodations made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors
- Alcoholic and bottled beverages
- Pre-trip expenses such as medical immunizations, travel insurance, passports, and visas
- Airport departure taxes
- Any other expenses of a personal nature such as alcohol and laundry.