



MOUNT KILIMANJARO MARANGU ROUTE

This is the easiest route to the summit of Kilimanjaro, sometimes called the Coca-Cola Route. The Marangu route takes you at a gentle pace through forests, moorlands and then across The Saddle, a high-altitude desert separating the main summit, Kibo, 5896m, from craggy Mawenzi, 5149m, to Kibo Hut. From here an early start is made for the ascent to Uhuru Point (the highest top of Kibo). The path zig-zags up steep scree which is easier to climb when frozen. The views from the crater rim at Gillman's Point at dawn can be spectacular. Uhuru Peak lies a further 1h30min. around the rim.

If you are not accustomed to camping and mountain walking you could consider the Marangu Route as the most suitable. This follows easy angled paths through magnificent rain forests to the Mandara Hut. Shortly beyond it passes Maundi Crater, a fine view point located at the edge of the forest belt. Above you enter the moorlands with their fine giant heathers stands, groundsels, lobelia and other exotic tropical high altitude plants. The next hut is the Horombo Hut, soon after this hut you reach the Saddle, a high altitude desert separating the rugged Mawenzi summit from Kibo. The final ascent starts from the Kibo Hut and involves steep paths on loose scree. There is fresh running water at all the huts apart from Kibo where it will be carried by your porters. You will be accommodated generally in 4 person clean huts with mattresses.

The other routes are all more demanding as regards steepness and in places involve some scrambling. Accommodation is in tents and there is no running water at the campsites though warm water for washing is provided. The scenery more than compensates for these difficulties. Whichever route you choose it is essential to allow enough time for acclimatisation to the altitude. Although Mt. Kilimanjaro can be climbed throughout the year it is worth avoiding the two rainy seasons (late March to mid-June and October to the beginning of December) when the route becomes slippery. The best time to visit is January to February and September to October when there is usually no cloud.

Mount Kilimanjaro (5895m) lies just 3 degrees south of the equator and is one of the highest volcanoes in the world. It rises some (4572m) above the surrounding plains and savannahs. The Kilimanjaro National Park covers some 1864 sq. Km. The base of this immense mountain has a diameter of 80 Km and the outstanding features are its three major volcanic centers: Shira (4160m) in the west. Mawenzi (5280 m) to the east and the permanently snowcapped Kibo in the middle. In climbing, the terrain passes from a tropical to an arctic climb in just a few days. The encircling rain forest ensures the fertility of the lower lying shambas and is rich in birdlife. Above the rain forest lies the Alpine Meadow, a beautiful moorland, offering many splendid views. Exotic plants such as the giant Lobelia and the fork-like Groundsel are to be seen. The latter blooming once every 50-70 years. Leaving the Alpine Meadow we reach the Alpine Desert and eventually the snows of Kilimanjaro.



MARANGU ROUTE

This is the easiest route to take to ascend Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa with its two main summits, the craggy Mawenzi, 5149m, and the 'flat-topped', glaciated Kibo, 5896m. The Saddle, a 5km wide, high-altitude, semi-desert separates the two. From the summit glaciers, scree, cliffs, afro-alpine moorland then forests lead down to the cultivated foothills. The Marangu route takes you at a gentle pace through these dramatically different zones. For the ascent to Uhuru Peak from Kibo Hut a very early start is made since the scree is easier to climb when frozen and the views from the crater rim at dawn can be spectacular. Ski sticks are useful when ascending the scree to the summit. Accommodation on the mountain is in comfortable huts you will require a sleeping bag and mat. This is a tough walking trip but within the limits of a fit individual used to walking in mountain areas. An extra day for acclimatisation to the altitude can be spent at Horombo. From Horombo there are various walks to enjoy.

DAY	DESCRIPTION
Day 1	Arrive hotel.
Day 2	Drive to Marangu Gate. Walk through the rain forest to Mandara hut (4hours, 2743m).
Day 3	Leave the forest and cross open moor land to Horombo hut (5hours, 3760m).
Day 4	Rest and acclimatisation day at Horombo Hut. Day walk to Zebra Rocks or to Mawenzi Hut.
Day 5	Walk through moorland then across <i>The Saddle</i> to Kibo hut (5hours, 4730m).
Day 6	Early start for the summit on steep scree up to Gillman's Point (5h, 5681m), continue to Uhuru Peak (1h30min., 5895m). Descend to Kibo Hut for lunch and a rest before descending to Horombo hut (about 13hours walking time).
Day 7	Descend to Marangu gate (5hours). Drive back to the hotel.
Day 8	Depart after breakfast.