

# 7 Days Marangu Route



## Itinerary for 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, screes, 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 1: Arusha

On arrival at Kilimanjaro International Airport, you are met by a member of your guide team and transferred by road to your hotel in Arusha. After a long day of travel, we enjoy a quick meal before retiring.

- ✓ Transfer Time
- ✓ Meals
- ✓ Accommodations
- ✓ 50 min
- ✓ Dinner
- ✓ Ngurdoto Mountain Lodge FB

The hotel has 139 rooms including: 30 chalets with 60 rooms, 72 rooms in the main building, 7 presidential suites.

Accommodating up to 350 guests, all rooms have spacious en suite bathrooms, telephones and most of them have Jacuzzis. The luxury rooms comprise of spacious beds, with some rooms having a magnificent view of both Mt Meru and Mt Kilimanjaro. All the rooms have mini bars, satellite TV's, tea/coffee making facilities, safe deposit lockers. Some rooms can comfortably accommodate disabled guests and are close to the reception and public areas.

### Day 2: Mandara Encampment

Marangu Gate (1980m) - Mandara hut (2700m)

Hiking time : 5 hours

Distance : About 12 km's

Habitat : Montane forest

Transfer to the Park Headquarters at Marangu Gate for registration. From the gate, you ascend a cleared ridge trail, formerly a vehicle track to Mandara Hut. The cleared trail is the fastest way to Mandara, but opportunities to see wildlife or enjoy the forest are limited due to the heavy foot traffic. An alternative is to ascend along the parallel forest trail and descend on the main trail. The forest trail branches off to the left, a few minutes after the gate, and follows the edge of a stream through the undergrowth. About halfway (1 1/2 hrs from the gate) you can choose to cross the stream and rejoin the main trail, or continue on the forest trail. Both trails continue on opposite sides of the stream, merging about one hour before Mandara Hut.

### Day 3:

Mandara hut (2700m) - Horombo hut (3720m)

Hiking time : 6 hours

Distance : About 15 km's

Habitat : Moorland



From Mandara Hut the trail passes through a short stretch of forest and skirts the base of Maundi Crater, crosses a meadow and a wooded stream, then emerges into grassland. It is well worth the short detour to scramble up to the rim of Maundi Crater for a superb view of the mountain and its surroundings. The trail crosses numerous moorland ravines before ending at Horombo Hut, which is set in a rocky valley with a fine stand of giant senecios or groundsels.

#### **Day 4:**

Horombo hut (3720m) - Acclimatisation day

Horombo hut is a village of huts perched on a small plateau, with buildings similar to Mandara, but with a total capacity of 120 climbers! Normally bustling with hikers, guides, porters and with an atmosphere of adventure and excitement. You will meet both ascending and descending hikers here. This extra day and night at Horombo is for additional acclimatisation. A hike towards the Mawenzi hut, passing the Zebra Rocks on the way (about 3 hours up and 1.5 hours down), is strongly recommended. This hike will further assist with the process of acclimatisation. Remember to drink enough water and move slowly! All meals for the day are provided at the hut. Retire to bed early and get a last good night's rest.

#### **Day 5:**

Horombo hut (3720m) - Kibo hut (4700m)

Hiking time : 6 hours

Distance : About 15 km's

Habitat : Alpine desert

From Horombo Hut there are two trails to the Saddle. The right fork is very stony and eroded and is the most direct route to the Saddle and Mawenzi. From the Saddle (about 2 hrs from Horombo), there are trails to Mawenzi Hut (1/2hr) or Mawenzi Tarn Hut (2 1/2 hrs) and across the length of the Saddle to Kibo Hut (3 hrs). The left fork from Horombo Hut is an easier trail and emerges on the Saddle much closer to Kibo and about one kilometer from Kibo Hut.

#### **Day 6--SUMMIT ATTEMPT**

Kibo hut (4700m) - Uhuru Peak (5895m) - Horombo hut (3720m)

Hiking time: 8 hours to Uhuru - 6 hours to descend to Horombo

Distance: 6 km's ascent - 21 km's descent

Habitat: Stone scree and ice-capped summit

You will rise around 23h30, and after some tea and biscuits you shuffle off into the night, and this is where the going really gets tough. The first section of the trail consists of a rocky path to the Hans Meyer Cave (5150m), also a good resting spot. The path then zigzags up to Gillman's point (5681m), which is located on the crater rim. This section is very steep with a lot of stone scree, requiring a great physical and mental effort. Probably the most demanding section of the entire route. Do the Kili shuffle and move slowly. From Gillman's Point you will normally encounter snow all the way up to Uhuru peak (5895m), the highest point in Africa. Total exhilaration and satisfaction - you made it. Weather conditions on the summit will determine how long you will be able to spend, taking photographs, before the 3 hour descent back to Kibo hut. After a short rest you gather all your gear you left behind for the ascent and head down to Horombo hut (3 hours) for your overnight. The return to Horombo hut will seem surprisingly fast compared to the ascent. The total time spent walking on this day is around 14 hours, so be prepared for a very tough day. Later in the evening you enjoy your last dinner (with soft drinks and beer for sale at the camp office) on the mountain and a well-earned sleep, filled with memories and stirring emotions.

#### **Day 7:**

Horombo hut (3720m) - Marangu Gate (1980m)

Hiking time : 6 hours

Distance : About 27 km's

After breakfast you continue your descent (6 hours), passing the Mandara hut, down to the Marangu gate. It is strongly recommended not to pay your porters any tips until you and all your gear have reached the gate safely. At Marangu gate you sign your name and details in a register. This is also where successful climbers receive their summit certificates. Those climbers who reached Gillman's Point (5685m) are issued with green certificates and those who reached Uhuru Peak (5895m), receive gold certificates. You now drive back for a long overdue hot shower, dinner and celebrations!! Overnight in your hotel in arusha.

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