

MOUNTAIN



LINK

AFRICA: KILIMANJARO ITINERARY SHIRA CRATER ROUTE AND SAFARI



- Day 01** Depart the United States.
- Day 02** Once you clear customs at the Kilimanjaro Airport in Tanzania (JRO), a Mountain Link representative greets you outside of the customs area to take you to the village of Marangu (1 ½ hour drive). Once there, you have a 15 minute hike to a mountain hideaway perched on the side of a hill. You arrive for some much needed rest and relaxation after the long flights. Note: Flights are limited into Kilimanjaro Airport. Please book your flights well in advance. (Dinner is included for those of you who arrive early in the day.)
- Day 03** Today is a rest day. Depending on how you are feeling there are a number of activities to participate in. Activities for this day are arranged once everyone has arrived. The guides will do a gear check before the day is through to ensure you have the proper equipment. (B, L, D).
- Day 04** Big Tree Camp (9,000'): You will be driven to Londorosi Gate at 7,500 feet to begin the climb. We drive for approximately 3 hours on a rough, dirt road to the edge of the forest and the national park. At the gate we meet the mountain crew and begin our ascent for a few hours through the undisturbed, very thick Montane Forest. With luck, you will be able to see colobus monkeys and possibly signs of elephants on our walk to the camp. Many beautiful flowers are observed and in the night you may hear the Tree Irex. (B, L, D)
- Day 05** Shira Plateau Camp (11,300'). You will reach the west side of the Shira Plateau. The hiking time is 6 hours. Taking our time walking through the forest will help us spot some of the animals and bird life. The day's hike will take us through the mountain forest through a transition zone. Then we enter the heather zone, where the old lava flows are visible. We will point out unique environmental differences that characterize these equatorial zones. After a picnic lunch, we hike to our campsite on the rim of the Shira Plateau and then onto our camp overlooking a dramatic view of Kilimanjaro and its glaciers. (B, L, D)
- Day 06** Fisher Camp (12,950'). Today is an easy paced acclimatization day. Hiking time is 4 to 5 hours. Camp is set a little higher on the Shira Plateau with expansive views of Kilimanjaro. There is an optional one-hour hike in the afternoon where you can enjoy the clusters of giant lobelias and senecious that grow at this elevation.
- Day 07** Lava Tower (14,300') Today we will hike for 5 hours to our camp just under "lava tower." This will be our first introduction to the Alpine Zone where the only plant life is the hardiest of grasses and lichens. We will have a spectacular view of our final ascent up the Western Breach. (B, D, L)



Day 08 Arrow Glacier (15,300') With the Western Breach ascent route in full view, we will spend a few hours climbing to the base of the route where we will make a camp near Arrow Glacier. Hiking time is 3 hours. We will take an afternoon hike further up the route before relaxing in camp; this will help our acclimatization and improve our performance the following day. (B, L, D)

Day 09 Summit Crater Camp (18,500') This is the most challenging day. We will wind our way up the Western Breach over switchbacks covered with frozen scree and then travel over a ridge trail, covered with large boulders. We can explore the inner crater and the ash pit before moving to our high camp next to the magnificent glaciers on the crater floor. Hiking time is 6 to 7 hours. Tonight we go to sleep early in preparations for the final ascent. (B, L, D)

Day 10 Uhuru Peak/ Mweka Camp (11,000') After breakfast, we make the final 1-hour and 40 minute hike to Uhuru Peak. You will reach the summit of Kilimanjaro at 19,340 feet, around 8 A.M. At this early hour, before the clouds have come in, we usually have spectacular views of Africa in all directions. Tea and snacks will be served on the top. After a short stay, 20-30 minutes, you will descend 2-3 hours to Barafu for lunch, rest and to pick up belongings. Then you will continue downhill 3-4 hours to the Mweka Forest. Tonight's camp is 9,000 feet below the summit! It is a long descent. Poles are needed by most. Eat; share your experiences of the climb and then sleep soundly. Congratulations. You've made it to the top of Africa. (B, L, D)

If you are just doing the Kilimanjaro Climb, this is your last night with the group.

Day 11 Today we head out toward the National Park Gates. The descent takes us through varied zones of forest and jungle. We walk out to the village where we will have an opportunity to shower and rest before a celebration dinner where you get may get to sample homemade banana beer. (B, L, D)

Day 12 For those of you continuing on for safari, it begins today. For those of you going home or traveling to other parts of the world, you will be taken to the airport on this day.

Lake Manyara

After breakfast, we find our way to Lake Manyara National Park. Lake Manyara has more than 350 bird species. Baboons abound. Hippos are found bathing in the pools near the salt water Lake Manyara. Lunch will be at the campsite and then off again for an afternoon game drive.

We will spend the night at a coffee Plantation known for its delicious food.
(Safari: B, L, D: Climb Only: B)

Day 13: Ngorongoro Crater



After breakfast, we leave Lake Manyara National Park and travel to Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Once in the crater we enjoy a picnic lunch along the way. We drive down 2,000 feet into crater. The Crater is home to the rare black rhino as well as lions, flamingos, storks, hippo, buffalos, wildebeests, zebras, and elephants. After the game drive, we travel back to our coffee plantation. (B, L, D)

Day 14: Tarangire National Park

Today after an early breakfast, we drive to Tarangire National Park. Here you will see the magnificent baobab tree and view hundreds of elephants, impalas, as well as, wildebeest, lions, gazelles and buffalo. We spend the night at a tented camp and get closer to the animals. (B, L, D)

Day 15: Tarangire National Park

We awake for a half day of game viewing in Tarangire, then we drive back to Arusha where we get cleaned up and have a Celebration dinner for our last meal in Tanzania. (B, L, D)

Day 16: Transportation to the airport is provided. (B only)

Itinerary subject to changeB: Breakfast; L: Lunch D: Dinner*