



KILIMANJARO CLIMB

SHIRA

ROUTE ITINERARY

11 Days / 10 Nights • 8 Days on the Mountain

Summary

Shira is a beautiful route with gentle ascents approaching the mountain from the west. We pass through the Lemosho Glades and traverse the Shira Plateau, providing stunning views of Kibo, Kilimanjaro's main peak. We will then proceed in a clockwise direction below the southern face of the mountain, climb Lava Tower for magnificent 360 degree vistas, ascend the Great Barranco Wall, a challenging and exhilarating scramble, and 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.

Day 1: Arrival/Mbahe Farm House

Your trip leader will pick you up upon your arrival at the Kilimanjaro International Airport. A car will take you to Mbahe Village, located in the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro, approximately 2 hours from the airport. Accommodations are in the rustic cottages at Simon's 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. After lunch we will have a brief orientation and equipment check. This is also a day to take optional walks around Mbahe and swim in the waterfall on Simon's land. We will all gather together for dinner. B.L.D.

Day 3: Londorossi Gate (6,890') to Big Tree Camp (8,700'), 3.8 miles

After breakfast we will drive to Londorossi Gate, where you will meet your guides and mountain crew and enter the Kilimanjaro National Park. From the trailhead we will walk for a few hours through the thick and undisturbed montane forest to our camp for the night. Many beautiful flowers are observed en route and with luck we will spot colobus monkeys and possibly signs of elephants. In the night you may hear the tree hyrax. B.L.D.

Day 4: Big Tree Camp (8,700') to Shira 1 Camp (11,420'), 4.7 miles

Today we will reach the west side of the Shira Plateau in a hiking time of 6 hours. Taking our time walking through the forest will allow us to observe its animal and bird life. The day's hike takes us from the montane forest, through a transition zone, and into the heath zone, where the old lava flows are visible. Your guides will point out unique environmental differences that characterize these zones. After a picnic lunch we reach the edge of the Plateau and then our camp that provides a dramatic view of Kilimanjaro and its glaciers. B.L.D.

Day 5: Shira 1 Camp (11,420') to Shira 2 Camp (12,750'), 5.3 miles

Today is an easy paced acclimatization day of 4 to 5 hours hiking. Camp is set higher on the Shira Plateau with more expansive views of Kilimanjaro. There is a conditioning hike in the afternoon where you can enjoy the clusters of giant lobelias and senecios that grow at this elevation. B.L.D.

Day 6: Shira 2 Camp (12,750') to Lava Tower Camp (15,230'), 4.3 miles

Today is another acclimatization day as we have a 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 which we will not be doing on this climb. After an early afternoon rest we will take a 2 hour round-trip adventure climb up the Lava Tower. This scramble will help prepare you for the climb tomorrow. B.L.D.

Summit Expeditions and Nomadic Experience

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Day 7: 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 safe 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 a sponge bath with warm water. B.L.D.

Day 8: 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 rest. At midnight, under the stars and hopefully a brightly shining moon, we will begin the final ascent. We are going to go *pole pole* and drink plenty of water and tea, refuel with small snacks, and enjoy this final climb to the summit. B.L.D.

Day 9: Barafu Camp (15,360') to Uhuru Peak (19,340') to Millennium Camp (12,530'), 10.1 miles

We will reach Uhuru Peak, the summit of Kilimanjaro at 19,340 feet, around 8 a.m. At this early hour, before the 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 brief stay of 20-30 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 10: Millennium Camp (12,530') to Mweka Gate (5,380'), 7.7 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 Simon’s Mbahe Village farm house for a hot shower and a celebration dinner with the whole team. B.L.D.

Day 11: 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, or shopping in Moshi Town. For those returning home you will be transferred to the Kilimanjaro International Airport today to catch your flight. Those continuing on safari will pack lightly for the continuation of your African adventure tomorrow. B.L.

2009 Price:

Shira Route: U.S. \$3,235 per person (double occupancy)
 Single supplement: U.S. \$420

Price includes:

- All accommodations
- All meals as indicated (B.L.D.)
- Services of trip leader, climbing guides, and mountain crew
- Kilimanjaro National Park entrance and camping fees
- All group camping and cooking equipment
- Transfers to/from Kilimanjaro International Airport and to/from park entrance/exit gates

Price does not include:

International airfare; tipping or gratuities to leaders, guides, crew, or other staff; additional accommodations made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors; 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.

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