



TANZANIA: JOURNEY TO KILIMANJARO



This information should answer some of your questions about the trip and give you a better idea of what we do day-to-day. It doesn't hope to answer everything. If you have any questions please get in touch.



On top of Africa!

- **Superb walking to reach the highest point in Africa at 5896m**
- **Wildlife viewing in Ngorongoro crater**
- **Excellent acclimatisation with 7 nights/8 days on Kili to increase success rate and enjoyment**
- **A carefully balanced trip with mountains, wildlife and contact with local people**

“We the people of Tanzania would like to light a candle and put it on top of Mount Kilimanjaro which would shine beyond our borders giving hope where there was despair, love where there was hate, and dignity where there was only humiliation.” Julius Nyerere, inscription on top of Kilimanjaro.

The trip

A well balanced visit to Tanzania combining a lead-in of game viewing, hiking and culture with an ascent of Kilimanjaro, where we trek to the highest point on the continent of Africa.

On the Kilimanjaro trek we take seven nights/eight days to traverse the massif, which allows for excellent acclimatisation. This is very important as too many walkers on Kili fail, not through

technical difficulties, but because they underestimated the time it takes to acclimatise. The extra day's acclimatisation increases the enjoyment of the walking as well as the chances for success – 100% in 2011.

On Kili we normally walk between 5 and 7 hours each day. We take several guides so there is no need to “stick together” allowing us to walk at a range of paces. The section of the route up to Kilimanjaro's summit is a laborious but unavoidable rocky track with some scree, however, technical climbing knowledge and equipment are not required. On this day we will be walking for about twelve hours. Note, however, that this long hard day is not essential. Anyone who wants to enjoy the mountain without necessarily reaching the summit, can climb to the crater rim.

Throughout all the trips, our equipment will be carried in the vehicle or by local porters. You will only carry what you need for the day: waterproofs, camera, snacks, etc. We use porters to carry all the gear and food on Kili. This is a normal job for the locals and a valuable way of earning money. We form personal contacts with the local people and they are a valued part of the team. As in all mountain areas, unexpected local conditions may make paths difficult, or impossible to follow. Sometimes we have to make alterations to the route which may include more (or less!) walking. When travelling in a wildlife area, an experienced park ranger accompanies us.

Accommodation

While game viewing and visiting villages we stay in safari type camps or bandas (simple chalets). Prior to Kili we stay in a comfortable guesthouse in Arusha. On Kilimanjaro there is no permanent accommodation so we use roomy two person mountain tents. Camping gives us independence and flexibility, and allows us to explore the wilder and more remote areas.

Food

On safari and on trek all meals are provided. We are happy to cater for vegetarians or special diets with prior notice. Food is cooked on gas stoves by our own cooks.

Tipping

Tipping in East Africa has been customary since explorers and safari seekers first started travelling there and using the services of local people. It is a sensitive issue, and High Places do not automatically accept the practice of tipping, as we prefer to make honest and fair payments for services received. However, where there is a strong local tradition of tipping it is not possible to avoid this without upsetting local staff, who work extremely hard to make your trip successful. We suggest you allow US\$250-300 for tips and consider donating some clothing or equipment to local staff at the end of the trip.



Walking with zebras by Lake Manyara

Climate

Our trips in Tanzania are run during the East African dry seasons (over Jan-Feb and between July and September). Rain is still possible during these periods but it's usually no more than an afternoon shower. Air temperatures during the day in the lowlands and foothills are around 20 - 30°C (we often walk in shorts and T-shirts) although evenings can be chilly. Conditions in the mountains usually form a pattern of glorious warm sunny morning, with an overcast afternoon, rain or mist, then a beautiful sunset and a clear star-lit night. Some nights higher up can be well below freezing (as low as minus 10°C). Strong winds on Kilimanjaro can make the temperatures feel

much colder. Clothing, therefore, should be adaptable, ranging from shorts and T-shirts through to waterproofs and thermal underwear. A full kit list will be sent when you book.

Altitude

Above 3000m, the air is thinner, the pressure is lower and there is less oxygen available in the atmosphere. Acclimatisation is the process by which the body adapts to these conditions. The key to acclimatisation is a good itinerary with a gradual initial height gain, walking at a slow and steady pace, and increasing fluid intake – drinking at least 4 litres a day is advisable above 3000m.

Many people have some minor side effects from altitude, such as headache, nausea or general lassitude. The optional use of 'Diamox' has proved very useful for many people, as this drug can reduce these symptoms. You will be given more information on 'Diamox' with your Final Information, between 8 and 10 weeks before departure.

Transport

Between the walking areas we use land rovers or minibuses. Driving times are kept to a minimum. We also use vehicles for wildlife viewing. When we are walking, any extra gear not required can be safely stored in the vehicle or at our base camp.

Language

Swahili is the national language of Tanzania, though most of our local staff speak English.

What our clients say.....

"The whole trip was extremely well organised. I cannot speak highly enough of the organisation for the 'Kili' part of the trip. I felt so at ease and safe on the mountain. We were in extremely capable hands and this showed through in the care and attention we were given and our well being was utmost in our guides minds." Mary Lissaman.

What did you enjoy most about the trip?

"Mt Kili Trek and our group!! (lots of time to "soak" it up)" Jill Burrows

"The whole thing but especially the guides & porters on Kili and of course, summitting."

Mary Lissaman

"The safari in Amboseli, and climbing up the mountain – esp being on the top, and walking into Barranco camp." Richard Arnold

Would you recommend High Places to others? YES. Why?

"High Places took all of the concerns about planning a complex trip away. All I had to do was turn up and enjoy it." Richard Arnold



Celebratory singing in the bus after Kili. Photo Mike Cosgrove

DAY BY DAY ITINERARY

This itinerary is flexible and should be seen as a guide only. Local conditions, weather or fitness could lead to changes in our daily plans. All times and distances are approximate. 'B,L,D' refers to meals included in the trip cost, i.e. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

This trip is 15 days starting in Nairobi and ending in Arusha, near Kilimanjaro International Airport. The first and last days refer to the days of arrival in **Nairobi** and departure from **Arusha** and may not be the days you depart from or arrive back home.

DAY 1 Arrive Nairobi and transfer to guesthouse/hotel, OR give yourself an extra day in Nairobi to settle in before the trip begins.

DAY 2 We leave the city and journey south through vast savannah to Amboseli National Park known for its wildlife viewing, rich bird life and spectacular views of Mount Kilimanjaro. Wildlife habitats range from open grassland plains, acacia woodland, rocky thorn bush, swamps, marshland and ecosystems that are home to gazelle, elephant, buffalo, lion, leopard, zebra, wildebeest and hippo among others. We arrive in time for lunch then set off for a game drive. En suite tents. (B,L,D)

DAY 3 After a morning game drive we continue south to the border town of Namanga, the crossing point into Tanzania, then drive to a remote camp close to a Maasai village below Longido Mountain. A Maasai warrior will introduce us to the area and some of the plants, birdlife and customs of his people and in the evening, we can enjoy folktales or songs under the starlit night sky. Camp. (B,L,D)

DAY 4 Guided by Maasai warriors through their land, we follow narrow footpaths through dense natural forest to reach the picturesque Dawa ya supu (medicine soup) view point from which, on a clear day, one can see all the mountains found in Northern Tanzania - Mount Meru, Oldonyo Lengai and Kilimanjaro. We visit a Maasai homestead to learn more about their age-old cultural heritage before driving to our bandas accommodation by Lake Manyara. (B,L,D)



Inside a Maasai boma

DAY 5 Today Ngorongoro Crater! This collapsed volcano, sometimes called the 'eighth wonder of the world', forms a natural wildlife sanctuary and is a truly remarkable spectacle. On our game drive in the crater we have a high chance of seeing elephant, rhino, zebra, lion, gazelle, wildebeest and others. Later we drive, with a walk en route, to nearby Empakaai Crater and set up camp on the crater rim at an altitude of 2700m. On a clear day Lake Natron and Mount Kilimanjaro are clearly visible. (B,L,D)

DAY 6 With a diameter of 6km, Empakaai is a much smaller crater than Ngorongoro, but is very beautiful. Together with local Maasai guides and a game ranger, we hike down into the crater floor and spend time inside the crater watching flamingos on the lake and enjoying the tranquillity of this rarely visited area. A steady climb back out of the crater is excellent acclimatisation for Kili and our vehicles await for the drive back via the Ngorogoro crater rim to our Lake Manyara bandas for a treat of a traditional African dinner. (B,L,D)

DAY 7 An easier day now to relax and prepare for our Kilimanjaro climb. In the morning a village visit gives an opportunity to learn about the different economic activities undertaken by the local people including small-scale horticultural farms, banana plantations and Makonde wood carving workshops. Later we continue on to Kilimanjaro's main town of Arusha for a relaxed evening and a comfortable guest house overnight. (B,L)

The Kilimanjaro Section:

The Kilimanjaro massif has three peaks: Shira, Mawenzi and Kibo. The summit of Kibo is Uhuru Peak, the highest point in Africa and our goal on this trek.

DAY 8 We drive to the Machame Park gate, then climb gently up through the original montane forest, carpeted with unique "busy lizzie" flowers, begonias and ferns. First camp is amongst the giant heather at 3,000m. Ascent 1200m. 5-6 hours. (B,L,D)

DAY 9 Emerging from the giant heather zone, we hike through fine open moorland to camp by Shira Cave at 3840m. There are herds of eland up here (and occasionally lion!) Ascent 840m. 4-5 hours. (B,L,D)

DAY 10 Most people will be starting to feel the altitude so we have added an acclimatisation day here to rest or to explore the geological features of the old volcanic caldera near our camp and walk towards Shira Cathedral, surrounded by rocky spires and pinnacles. (B,L,D)

DAY 11 From Shira, we climb towards the main peak Kibo, with the western glaciers clearly visible across the rugged high-altitude desert of volcanic rocks. Skirting around its base and under the imposing Western Breach, we descend into the sheltered Barranco Valley for mid-way camp at 3,950m. 5-7 hours. Only 110m total ascent - but climbing high and dropping back down assists acclimatisation. (B,L,D)



Top of Barranco Wall

DAY 12 We head up the steep Barranco Wall with some sections of very easy scrambling and after a few ups and downs, drop down again to the Karanga Valley before a final climb leads to our next camp. We should arrive in camp in time for a late lunch, and can relax in the afternoon in preparation for the days ahead. Approx 4 hours. Camp at approx 4060m. (B,L,D)

DAY 13 Up a new route to our next camp at Barafu Hut (4600m) perched on a rocky spur with fantastic views across to Mawenzi Peak. This is another short walking day, about 4 hours, with less exertion and a good rest in afternoon immediately before the hard summit day. (B,L,D)

DAY 14 A bracing midnight start to climb the steep frozen scree. This is unavoidable on any route but we aim to reach Stella Point (5700m) on the crater rim for sunrise – another 40 minutes and you're at the highest point on the continent (5896m), usually in warm sunshine. We return on the Mweka descent route. Ascent 1300m and about 7 hours trek to the summit; 2800m descent and 5-6 hours trek to the Mweka camp at 3100m. This is a long, hard, but rewarding day; you will feel absolutely ecstatic when you've done it! (B,L,D)

DAY 15 A 3 hour descent through the forest to Mweka Gate to collect certificates and meet the vehicle. We return to Arusha for a shower before transferring to Kilimanjaro International Airport for an evening flight home, or ask us to arrange extra night/s in Arusha or a Zanzibar extension. (B)



Mawenzi Peak (5149m) at sunrise from crater rim

ML12/11