

ITINERARY for 7 Days 6 nights Machame Route

Duration: 7 days 6 nights

Best time to travel: all year round

Day 1 Machame route 7 days – Machame Gate (1490m) – Machame Camp (2980m)

Hiking time: 7 hours

Distance: Approximately 18 kilometers

Habitat: Montane forest

After an early breakfast at your hotel, you will be picked up from Arusha (1400m) and driven to the Machame Village. In the village, you can buy mineral water and will receive a packed lunch. From the village, depending on the road conditions, you will either continue driving 3 kilometers or walk to the Machame Gate (1490m). At the gate, the porters will organize and pack the belongings for the hike while you and your guide register with the Tanzania National Park (TANAPA). You will then begin your ascent into the rainforest. During this section of the hike, you should expect rain, mud, and fog. Also, be on the look out for wildlife, including Colobus monkeys! About halfway up the trail you will have a lunch break and you will reach the Machame Camp (2980) in the late afternoon or early evening. The porters and chef, who move very fast up the mountain, will reach camp before you and set up your tents, boil drinking water, and prepare snacks for your arrival. After washing up, a hot dinner will be served. For overnight, mountain temperatures may drop to freezing so be prepared!

Day 2 Machame route 7 days – Machame Camp (2980m) – Shira Camp (3840m)

Hiking time: 6 hours

Distance: Approximately 9 kilometers

Habitat: Moorland

After an early morning breakfast, you will start your ascent leaving the rain forest and entering the heathland moorland vegetation. You will cross many streams and walk over a rocky ridge onto the Shira plateau that leads to Shira Camp (3840m). At this campsite, you will be next to a stream and have a spectacular view of the Western Breach and its glaciers in the East. Similar to the first night, your tents will be set up prior to arriving at camp and the porters will prepare drinking and washing water for you. You will enjoy evening snacks then dinner prepared by our chef. Be prepared for a cold night as temperatures drop below freezing at this exposed camp.

Day 3 Machame route 7 days – Shira (at 3840m) – Lava Tower (at 4630m) – Barranco camp (at 3950m)

Hiking time: 7 hours

Distance: Approximately 15 kilometers

Habitat: Semi-desert

Following an early morning breakfast, you will leave the moorland environment and enter the semi desert and rocky landscape. After 5 hours of walking east, you will be come face to face with the Lava Tower (4630m). Packed lunches are served at the Tower and hikers have the option of climbing the massive Lava Tower weather permitting. At this point of the hike, it is normal for hikers to start feeling the effects from the altitude including headaches and shortness of breath.

After lunch, you will descend from Lava Tower (4630m) to the Barranco Campsite (3950m). The 6800m descent gives hikers a huge advantage to allow their bodies to adjust to the conditions of high altitude. The descent to camp takes around 2 hours to reach. It is located in a valley below the Breach and Great Barranco Wall (“Breakfast Wall”). Drinking and washing water and dinner will be served as hikers view the sun setting.

Day 4 Machame route 7 days – Barranco Camp (3950m) – Karanga Camp (3950m)

Hiking time: 4-5 hours

Distance: Approximately 5 kilometers

Habitat: Alpine desert

After an early morning breakfast, it is now time to conquer the Great Barranco Wall! Although it may look intimidating at first glance, hikers state that this Class 2 hike is usually much easier than they anticipated. At the top of the Wall, you will have a view of Heim Glacier and will be above the clouds. The trail then winds up and down in the Karanga Valley. This is an ideal hiking day for acclimatization.

Day 5 Machame route 7 days – Karanga Camp (3959m) – Barafu Hut (4600m)

Hiking time: 2-3 hours

Distance: Approximately 4 kilometers

Habitat: Alpine desert

Following breakfast, you will leave Karanga Camp (3959m). The trail intersects with the Mweka Route, which is the trail used to descend on the final two days. As you continue hiking for an hour, you will reach Barafu Hut. This is the last water stop for the porters because there is no accessible water at Barafu Camp (4550m). The word “barafu” in Swahili means “ice” and this camp is located on a rocky, exposed ridge. Tents will be exposed to wind and rocks so it is important for hikers to familiarize themselves with the campsite before dark. An early dinner will be served so hikers can

rest before attempting the summit the same night. Your guide will brief you in detail on how to prepare for summit night. Get to sleep by 19:00!

Day 6 Machame route 7 days – Summit Attempt

Barafu camp (4600m) – Uhuru Peak (5895m) – Mweka (3100m)

Hiking time: 8 hours to reach Uhuru Peak, 7-8 hours to descend to Mweka

Distance: Approximately 7 kilometer ascent and 23 kilometer descent

Habitat: Stone scree and ice-capped summit

Your guide will wake you around 23:30 for tea and biscuits. You will then begin your summit attempt. The route heads northwest and you will ascend over stone scree. During the ascent, many hikers feel that this is the most mentally and physically challenging part of the climb. In about 6 hours, you will reach Stella Point (5685m), located on the crater rim. After enjoying the magnificent sunrise, you will continue ascending for about 2 hours on a snow-covered trail to Uhuru Peak (5895m). Reaching the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro is a lifetime accomplishment! You will be able to spend a short time on the summit taking photographs and drinking tea before the descent to Barafu begins. The hike down to Barafu Camp takes about 3 hours.

At camp, you will rest and enjoy a hot lunch in the sun. After eating, you will continue descending down to Mweka Hut (3100m). The Mweka Trail will lead you through the scree and rocks to the moorland and eventually into the rain forest. Mweka Camp (3100m) is located in the upper rain forest, so fog and rain should be expected. You will have a dinner, wash, and rest soundly at camp.

Day 7 Machame route 7 days – Mweka camp (3100m) – Mweka Gate (1980m)

Hiking time: 3 hours

Distance: Approximately 15 kilometers

Habitat: Forest

Following a well-deserved breakfast, your staff will have a big celebration full of dancing and singing. It is here on the mountain that you will present your tips to the guide, assistant guides, chef(s), and porters. After celebrating, you will descend for three hours back to Mweka Gate. The National Park requires all hikers to sign their names to receive certificates of completion. Hikers who reached Stella Point (5685m) receive green certificates and hikers who reached Uhuru Peak (5895m) receive gold certificates. After receiving certificates, hikers will descend into the Mweka village for 1 hour (3 kilometers). You will be served a hot lunch then you will drive back to Arusha for long overdue showers and more celebrations.

- Elevation (ft): 15,200ft to 19,341ft (and down to 12590ft)
- Distance: 5 km ascent / 9km descent

- Hiking Time: 6-8 hours ascent / 4-6 hours descent

- Habitat: Summit & back to the Moorland

Very early in the morning (midnight from 12:00am), we continue our way to the summit between the Rebmann and Ratzel glaciers. You head in a north-westerly direction and ascend through heavy scree towards Stella Point on the crater rim. This is the most mentally and physically challenging portion of the trek.

At Stella Point (18,600 ft), you will stop for a short rest and will be rewarded with the most magnificent sunrise you are ever likely to see (weather permitting). From Stella Point, you may encounter snow all the way on your 1-hour ascent to the summit. At Uhuru Peak, you have reached the highest point on Mount Kilimanjaro and the continent of Africa. Faster hikers will see the sunrise from the summit.

From the summit, we now make our descent continuing straight down to the Millenium camp site, stopping at Barafu for lunch. We recommend to have not more than 1 hour rest after the summiting before heading to Millenium camp. You will want gaiters and trekking poles for the loose gravel going down. Millenium Camp is situated in the upper moorland. Later in the evening, we enjoy our last dinner on the mountain and a well-earned sleep. This is the day when you get together and organize with your hikers for tipping the team and always tipping is done in the morning, the last day you prepare to leave the mountain.

DAY 8

Millenium Camp to Mweka gate.

- Elevation (ft): 12,590 to 5,400ft

- Distance: 14km

- Hiking Time: 5-7hours

- Habitat: Rain Forest

After breakfast, we continue the descent down to the Mweka Park Gate to receive your summit certificates. At lower elevations, it can be wet and muddy. Gaiters and trekking poles will help. Shorts and t-shirts will probably be plenty to wear (keep rain gear and warmer clothing handy). We will have lunch at the Mweka gate and after finishing celebrating our successful climb with our team, the vehicle will be waiting for you and drive you back to hotel.