



namaste

KILIMANJARO

the roof of Africa...

Expedition Plan

Welcome to the August 2005 Namaste Kilimanjaro Expedition Report...

On 16th August 2005, we set out to scale Africa's highest mountain at 5,895m (19,340ft). On Day 5, we reached the summit, first under the watchful gaze of the full moon, then in perfect sunshine after 2 days of inclement and stormy weather.

'Kili' can often be underestimated, partly because it is easily accessible and offers non-technical routes, including ours, the Machame & Marangu Routes; and partly because people are unprepared for the effects of high altitude trekking, when the

weather and terrain can present massive physical and mental challenges.

Kili is also unique among the 7 summits as it is possible for hillwalkers of all abilities and experience to undertake the trek. And not least because of the level of guiding and portering support available to individuals and groups.

Here is our story, and with it, everything you need to know to make a successful ascent of this incredible mountain...

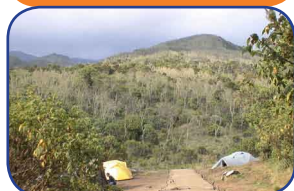
Cheers, Chris

Contents

Kilimanjaro Overview	1
Route Summary	2
Expedition Story...	2
Kilimanjaro National Park	6
Personal & Group Kit	6
Machame & Marangu Route	7
Geography, Flora & Fauna	8

Kilimanjaro - 'the mountain that glitters' - Overview

16/8/05 Camp 1
Machame Camp 3,100 m



17/8/05 Camp 2
Shira Camp 3,840 m



18/8/05 Camp 3
Barranco Camp 3,860 m



19/8/05 Camp 4
Barafu Camp 4,700 m



20/8/05 Summit
Summit Day 5,895 m



About Kilimanjaro

Looming some 16,000ft (4,900m) above the plains that spread out from its base, Kilimanjaro dominates its surroundings. It is an extinct volcano, with 3 peaks: Kibo, Shira & Mawenzi.

Kibo is the highest one (5,895m or 19,340ft) in the centre, Mawenzi is lower (5,149m or 16,896ft) and east of Kibo, but more technical. Kili's 3rd peak Shira is less obvious, but it's also an extinct volcano (3,962m or 13,000ft), west of Kibo.

The peaks of Kibo and Mawenzi are joined by a broad saddle 7 miles (11 kilometres) long.

Comprising these three separate volcanoes, the massive and complex Kilimanjaro covers an area 60 miles (100 kilometers) long and 40 miles (65 kilometers) wide.

The volcanoes, whose lava fields overlapped and partially obliterated each other, began erupting approximately 2 million years ago.

The first western ascent was by H. Meyer & L. Purtscheller in 1889.

The Machame Route

If Marangu is the "CocaCola" route, then the Machame Route is the "whiskey" route. It is the second most popular and arguably the most scenic route on the mountain. All climbers sleep in tents and meals are served on the floor of a dinner tent or on a blanket outside. It is done over six to seven days, so acclimatization is easier, and the success rate is fairly high.

With the Machame/South Circuit route, you will circle halfway around the mountain with great views from all angles. This route

is approximately 40km versus 20km on the Marangu route. It is for physically fit people with some hiking experience.

The Marangu Descent

The Marangu Route provides easy walking down steep scree slopes from the broad crater rim with good views over the caldera and of Mawenzi. The first section undulates and is occasionally snowy.

The Marangu Route is also known as the "Coca Cola" or "tourist" route. It is the easiest and shortest route to/from the summit and many people in a hurry try to make the summit via this overcrowded route, although less than 50% actually make it.

90% of Kilimanjaro climbers use this route and all the other routes combined see only 10% of visitors...

Expedition Story

Prelude

With 2 days in Arusha to prepare for the climb, I first met Leonard, who runs Black Mamba Travels, the company I had chosen to provide support services on Kili (I always try to support local



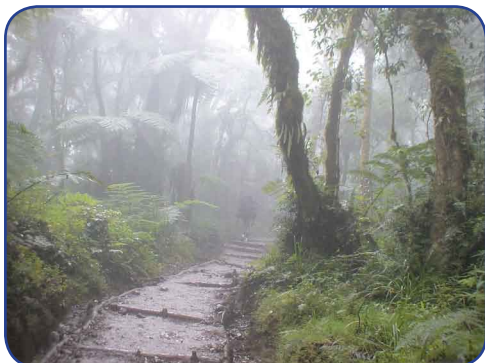
companies wherever possible). He recommended an exceptional place to stay both before & after the climb - Visiwani Lodge - now my recommendation to anyone visiting this region of Tanzania.

I also met my guide, and we discussed kit and route options. With a plan in hand, Naiman left and I enjoyed the comforts of the lodge while finishing emails, packing kit, and enjoying a last supper before turning in for a good night's rest. I was looking forward to getting above the ever-present clouds as I had not even seen the mountain yet!

16 Aug: Day 1

I met Naiman and Musa, our cook, the following morning, to pick up final food supplies in Arusha market; then drive to Machame village and the Kilimanjaro National Park Gate at the start of the Machame route.

As we signed in and collected our permit, it began to rain. OK, I thought, it is rainforest after all on the lowest slopes of Kili, and I hoped it would dry out higher up. We met our porters, who were busy scurrying around in and amongst all the other groups at the base of the mountain; organised our kit into loads (each porter is legally allowed to carry



no more than 20kg). Naiman and I set off first, with the rest of the team to follow shortly after.

Through the drizzle and humidity, the trail wound its way upwards through dense and lush forest. From time to time we would spot black colobus

monkeys in the trees and 2 hours later we reached our first stop and the day's halfway point. On the way, I had noticed that all the other trekkers were carrying only day packs, or nothing at all, as their porters were carrying everything. I personally felt that was cheating a bit; but then even my group consisted of a guide, cook and 3 porters.

The accessibility, lack of technical difficulty, and the support available on Kilimanjaro does make it possible for inexperienced mountaineers to have a crack. Whilst I might find it a little strange, it does give any reasonably fit, and more importantly, determined individual, the wonderful opportunity of scaling a big mountain. And that is a good thing.

Mountaineering, Kili-style, is far from lightweight, with eggs, cabbages, chickens, you name it, being dragged up the hill. I did relent after some persuasion to let the lads carry my tent and sleeping bag, but no more. I was here to climb Kili and I would carry my fair share.

As our cook did not catch us up after 45 minutes (he was carrying lunch), we decided to continue on to the Machame Hut at 3,000m, a further 2 hours climb to our first camp. And partially as expected (and hoped), we cleared the last of the rain by 2,800m and it was a welcome change to see the sun beaming in through the tree canopy.

After signing in at the Rangers' Hut, we found a



suitable spot to camp. Given the number of groups on the route, it was a good idea to arrive early to have the pick of the available campsites. The porters arrived an hour later and we pitched the tents among the trees - I had one, and the 4 other guys shared the other - cosy!

People kept arriving during the afternoon and what luck, the clouds finally cleared in the late afternoon sun, revealing for the first time the rock and snow of Kili's volcanic cone. Fantastic!

At the same time, I chatted to three others, here climbing Kili by themselves (well, with their respective guides and porters) - Ania, 19, from the UK (who had timed the climb to attempt Summit Day on her 20th birthday); Sebastian, a student from Germany; and Chris, 39, from the US, who had already been travelling in Africa for 5 months.

After dinner, which was deluxe to say the least, I wandered over to chat to Ania. I was really impressed with her bold decision to climb Kili, her first ever mountain, and by herself. I did a little surreptitious checking to make sure her guide and team had everything to make her climb safe and rewarding. Old mountaineering leadership habits die hard! We were also amazed to discover that we had grown up not 5 miles apart in England. A small world indeed.

Go to Page 3

Summary

Day 1 - 16 Aug: To Machame Hut: 1,830m to 3,100m - About 5 hours. Drive from Arusha or Moshi to the Kilimanjaro National Park Gate (45 minutes). Final preparations for the climb. Walk through the rain forest on a winding trail to the Machame Hut.

Day 2 - 17 Aug: To Shira Hut: 3,100m to 3,840m

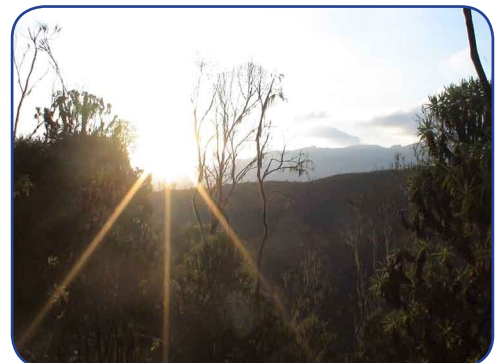


- About 4 hours. Leaving the glades of the rain forest and continue on an ascending path, crossing the little valley walking along a steep rocky ridge, covered with heather, until the ridge ends. Then west through a river gorge at 3,658 meters to the Shira Hut camp site.

Day 3 - 18 Aug: To Barranco Hut: 3,840m to 3,860m - About 6 hours. From the Shira Plateau, continue to the east, passing the junction towards the peak of Kibo, then south east towards the Lava Tower, called the "Shark's Tooth." Shortly after the tower, the path comes to the second junction up to the Arrow Glacier at an altitude of 4,876 meters. Then descend to the Barranco Hut at an altitude of 3,860m. Important acclimatization day.

Day 4 - 19 Aug: To Barafu Hut: 3,860m to 4,600m - About 8 hours. Leaving Barranco on a steep ridge passing the Barranco Wall, through the Karanga Valley (4,200m), and the junction which connects with the Mweka Trail. Continue to the Barafu Hut, which is located at an altitude of 4,600 meters and the completion of the South Circuit, which offers views of the summit from many different angles.

Day 5 - 20 Aug: To Summit & Horombo Hut: 4,600m to 5,895m (and down to 3,700m) - About 7-10 hours. Early morning, continue to the summit of Uhuru Peak at 5,985 meters (about 5-7 hours). Faster hikers will see the sunrise from the summit. From the summit, descend continuing straight down to the Horombo Hut via Gilman's point on the crater rim at



5,861m, and the Kibo encampment located at 4,700m on steep and heavy scree or snow/ice (2-3 hours).

Day 6 - 21 Aug: To Arusha: 3,700m to 1,700m - About 3-5 hours. The descent continues past the Mandara encampment (lunch) back down to the Park Gate. This is where successful climbers may collect their well-earned certificates. Drive to Arusha.

Expedition Story cont...

I also received a call from a good friend in the UK and found it a wonder of modern technology that I could talk on a mobile phone from Camp 1 on Kili!

17 Aug: Day 2



After breakfast and breaking camp, we set off at approx 08:15. Climbing steeply upwards through thinning vegetation, we followed the ridgeline all the way to the plateau just below the Shira Hut. Reminiscent of Alpine terrain, the small flowers, bushes and hardy trees, had replaced the dense forests from below.

At 3,800m, it's also a good place to continue acclimatising. The trail was good and the weather alternating sunshine and cloud. I was still a little amused at the Kili-style approach to mountaineering. Looking down the ridge, I could see an 'ant-like' trail of porters ferrying their respective client and food loads inexorably upwards. The ratios mean that there were far more porters, cooks and guides on the route than 'clients', and it made for quite a sight.

Some with rucksacks; some carrying huge bags on their heads, teapots clanking in the wind; some carrying stove fuel and buckets in their hands. I was pleased to observe that most of the porters did have reasonable kit to protect them from the mountain environment, from sturdy shoes and rain jackets to fleeces and tents. I could imagine a few though, particularly higher up, that would suffer from the cold. Fortunately for most porters, it is



only the guides who go all the way to the summit, and they tend to be better equipped than most.

Reaching our campsite at 11:15, Naiman and I waited for 2 hours for the rest of the team and kit so we can put up the tents. This was a great chance

to catch up on some writing and enjoy the views of nearby peaks and the sea of cloud below.

After another great dinner by the boys, and I really didn't know how I could eat so much food, I spent some time chatting to other trekkers, who Chris observed looked a bit like dogs in their kennels eating food from a mat in front of the tent!

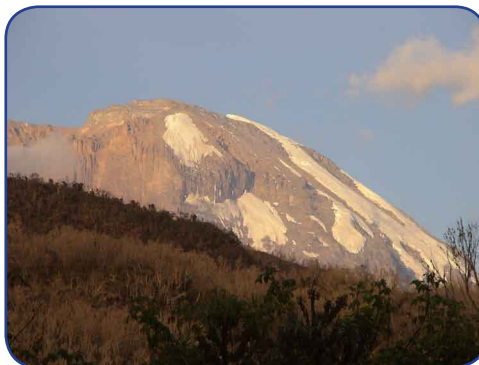
With a mild headache, typical at this stage of acclimatisation and altitude, I headed for bed...

18 Aug: Day 3

A nice relaxed start today - woken with tea by the lads (I can get used to this!), though a little disappointed that we are yet again surrounded by clouds which obscured any chance of a view. In some ways though, I was quite relieved - better the bad weather now than on Summit Day.

The route from the Shira Camp threaded its way between rocks up a broad ridge at a pleasant angle, so the going was relatively easy, give or take the altitude. It was good to chat with other groups to find out more about their experiences and reasons for being here, including 2 Irish girls, Gronja and Letty, on their first big mountain outing.

By 09:45, an hour from camp, the weather continued to deteriorate - first came the rain, then



sleet, and finally snow. I must admit, it was a little surreal trekking in the snow in the heart of Africa, just off the Equator!

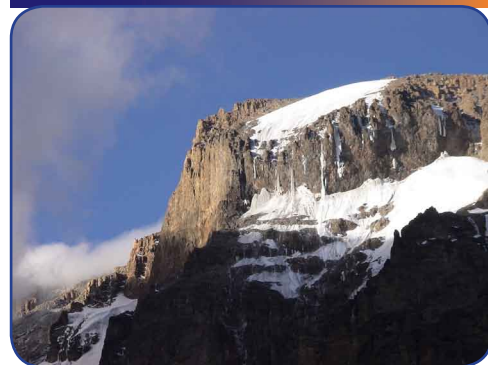
Naiman and I mused about the 'character-building' nature of the weather, and it is at times like these you appreciate having good kit. I felt for some of the porters; and hoped some of the less experienced climbers would not give up now the going was a bit tougher.

After 3 hours, we reached the high point of the day, just above Lava Tower at 4,900m and right beneath the Western Breach. An early eruption had created a passable and glaciated gully that drops steeply and directly from the crater rim. As I had decided to save the Arrow Glacier for another trip, I was going to continue on via the Machame Route which takes you around the southern flanks of Kili before climbing to the summit.

At that point, I was hoping to have had some spectacular views of the breach, but sod's law, or more precisely, the weather, dictated otherwise. The whiteout meant that we could barely see each other, let alone the view. Coupled with the biting cold of the wind, it was not a place to stick around without the warm shelter of a tent, so we began our descent to Barranco Camp.

Whilst it is always a bit annoying to lose all that

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altitude that you have just gained, it feels good to know that the acclimatisation process is paying dividends. "Climbing high, sleeping low", as the old mountaineering adage goes, is a proven technique on big mountains, and ensures the body has time to adjust to the thin air...

I did laugh when Naiman was caught a bit off-guard in the whiteout and managed to lose the path, so we 'dead-reckoned' our way back onto the main track using a handy stream. This gave me a good excuse to take the piss out of him - well, he had been guiding on Kili for 5 years, and he now owed me a beer!

I think he was slightly embarrassed, but I said it happens to us all, no matter how experienced. What is important is the response, as a calm mind and a smart solution are key, and 15 minutes later, we were back on the track. Good job Naiman.

After the final steep section into Barranco Camp, I was pleased to see that the lads had arrived first and pitched the tents. Given that they were able to take a short-cut below Lava Tower, there was no excuse today! I dropped into my tent to begin the process of drying out from the day's rain and snow, not all that easy at 4,000m altitude!

An hour or two later, the clouds lifted again to reveal a fantastic view of Kili's south face, an



imposing mix of sharp buttresses, hanging glaciers and frozen waterfalls, contrasting sharply with the deep blue sky. It also afforded a fine view of the Western Breach, and the ominous-looking Barranco Wall, our route for the next day.

Go to Page 4

Expedition Story cont...

As the sun set, I popped over to see how some of the others were doing. This had been an arduous day, and I enjoyed listening to their stories as we sat on the ground with rocks for seats. By 8pm, darkness had long since fallen, and it had become too cold to sit outside, so we all retreated to the



warmth and comfort of our tents and sleeping bags.

There, I silently wished my Dad happy birthday - unfortunately no mobile signal at Barranco, but I had spoken to him just a day or two before...

19 Aug: Day 4

After the morning ritual of washing, breakfast and packing kit, we set out for Barafu Camp, our start point for the following day's summit bid. But not before saying goodbye and good luck to new friends who were to take an extra day on the hill. Despite the short window of sunshine at the end of the previous day, the clouds had returned in earnest this morning.

From camp, the first hurdle of the day, the Barranco Wall, looks imposing and near-vertical. But closer in, it's not that steep, but still the path, often carved into the rock face, required a fair amount of easy scrambling. It was definitely good to get the heart pumping first thing, shaking off any residue sleep, and an hour of steady climbing brought us to the top of the Wall.

The route then wound its way downwards into the next valley, Karangu. At the top of the far side



of the valley is another campsite, and useful for those taking 7 days rather than 6. Our destination that day, though, was Barafu Camp, a further 2-3 hours away on a steep and winding path that claws its way over scree, rock and then boulders to the shoulder of the ridge that is the site of Barafu

Camp.

Perched atop the ridge at 4,700m, it made for a great setting for the final push planned for the next day. I said some more goodbyes to other new friends who would be returning to the valley by a different route in case our paths didn't cross on route to the Summit, then grabbed some patchy sleep before dinner.

As we would be leaving at 3am, any chance to recover from the day's exertions and prepare for the big day, was most welcome. I had noticed that the standard approach on this route was to leave at midnight. With a 7-8 hour climb to the summit, I was somewhat perplexed at the reasoning. For sure, on snow and ice routes, an early start ensures utilising the best and frozen conditions, but this was not the case on Kili. I heard the rationale was more to prevent 'clients' from seeing just how far it was to the summit and its consequent impact on morale!

After dinner at 9pm, the clouds, like a phoenix, had plunged into the valley far below leaving a glorious view of the ridge above, the snow glistening in the light of the full moon. Surely a good omen for the next day.

Before turning in for a few more hours sleep, I managed to send and receive a few text messages to/from friends, still somewhat amazed at the



ability to do it from this point on Kili..

20 Aug: Day 5

At 2:30am, the alarm buzzed me awake. Stirring from my slumber, I thought right, this is it, the big day! Having packed and prepared most of my kit the night before, I was ready to go after a last dose of porridge and tea. In the light of the moon, there was barely any need for a headlight, as the track began its long and steep ascent towards the crater rim, some 1,000m higher up.

Heads down, one careful step at a time, Naiman and I climbed, and climbed. Even for hardended mountaineers, this day is far from easy. Combining the cumulative effects of 4 days' effort, plus the thin air above 5,000m, it is arduous. But with a slow and steady pace, and a determined will, the ridge gradually drops behind you.

Up ahead, I could see a little trail of headlights of the others who had left camp much earlier. Good, an extra motivator. Every step was one step closer...

By 5:30am, the sun had reached the horizon, its magnificent orange glow arcing its way over the clouds. Looking east, we could also now look down on the sharp turrets of Mawenzi Peak. At 5,149m,

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it was a good marker for our own altitude. Into the final 500m.

At 7:45am, in beautiful sunshine, we finally broke onto Kili's crater rim at Stella Point, at nearly 5,800m. I was surprised to learn from Naiman that many people turn around at that point as the remaining climb around the edge of the crater rim to the summit, though still hard, is on easy-angled terrain with gorgeous views all around.

Still, I could imagine the desire to turn back after the steep ascent from Barafu Camp. Indeed, on the way up, you pass many small cairns left as high point markers by those who had decided to turn back.

Rather than wait around at Stella Point, I suggested that we continue straight to the Summit and enjoy the views on the way down, letting gravity take its share of the work. 45 minutes later, we stood elated on the roof of Africa at just under 20,000 feet!

The views were awesome - 360 degree panorama as far as the eye could see - the peaks of Mawenzi to the east and Meru to the west, both poking through the cotton wool clouds; Kili's crater to the north, and the tops of the south face glaciers to the south. And the plains of Africa all around, barely visible in the haze. Time to take the customary photos



and soak up the achievement, both personal, and shared with others. I even bumped into an Australian couple I had met on the shores of Lake Malawi some 3 weeks earlier!

We had reached the summit from Barafu in 5

Go to Page 5

Expedition Story cont...

hours, a good effort by any standards, but the day was far from over. A few more photos and we began the long and winding descent. Rather than descend the same ridge to Barafu and then onwards via the Mwaka route to the valley, I had chosen to go down via the Marangu route, which would give me the

to have completed the rigours of a big mountain.

Make no mistake, Kili is big, and it's tough - it's a long way up and a long way down - no wonder that only 50% of people who try actually reach the top. And regardless, I take my hat off to anyone who has the courage and determination to give it a shot.

21 Aug: Day 6

From Horombo, the descent into the valley and the national park gate took about 4 hours, at first traversing the lower slopes of Mawenzi, then steeply through the forest. We stopped once at the halfway point, a convenient hut complex that offers hot and tired trekkers the chance of a refreshing cold coke, even a beer for the so-inclined!

Reaching the gate, I collected the customary summit certificate before marvelling at the wonders of African bureaucracy. Apparently, the rules (and the permits) in the park dictate that you are only supposed to ascend and descend by specific routes. The proper descent if you climb via the Machame route is the Mwaka route. The fact that we had descended via the Marangu route, at my specific request, caused some consternation.

So much so that one senior park official threatened to remove my guide's licence to guide.



chance to see the Eastern side of the mountain.

We walked around the crater rim to its north-eastern edge and Gilman Point. A last look back at Kili's crater and summit and we began the steep descent to the Kibo Hut. In soft sand and scree, it was a pleasure to half walk, half "ski" down, a world away from the labour of climbing up. We dropped over 1,000m in 45 minutes and wiled away an hour sitting on the rocks below the Kibo hut. Already, the lungs were enjoying more oxygen in the air.

The terrain then flattened as we crossed the saddle between Kili and Mawenzi. The march across this section was a time to soak up the atmosphere, enjoy the views of the steadily-approaching forest and valleys below, and share thoughts and good luck with those on their way up.

A few hours later, we pulled into Horombo Camp at 3,700m, over 2,000m below the summit, which now seemed a distant and faraway place. The lads were already there, cheering at our arrival, having continued on the southern circuit rather than over the top. In suitable style, I managed to find some beers to buy, which we shared in jubilant celebration along with the hip flask of whiskey I had brought for the occasion. It was done, Africa's highest in the bag.



The thought did cross my mind that I wouldn't have to put myself through that kind of thing again until it was time for Mt Elbrus, Europe's highest, scheduled for late February, some 6 months away. It's funny how your mind lets you know it is relieved

A 'small' overreaction by this overly self-important individual. Removing a man's livelihood over something so trivial would be ridiculous. No wonder he refused to give his name, but I took his picture for reference if required.

Trying not to let this idiot spoil our triumph, we enjoyed a few more beers before heading back to Arusha and, for me, the extraordinary comforts of the Visiwani Lodge! A welcome hot shower was waiting...

The following day I bumped into Ania in Arusha, who, like me, was having some difficulty finding a working cashpoint in town. It was great to see her, now 20, in high spirits, though a little disappointed at not quite making the summit. Reaching 5,200m before succumbing to the effects of altitude after 6 days tough mountain trekking was an exceptional feat, and it reminded me of past peaks that I had not summited on. Sunshine, relaxation, wine and cheese were the order of the day and we shared our respective Kili stories. Until the next time Ania!

by Chris Charlton

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Recommendations:

Logistics Support and Guiding Services:

Black Mamba Travels, based in Arusha and run by Leonard Lomayani. Expect to pay US\$850 (all-in) for a 6-day climb plus tips for guide and porters.

info@blackmambatravels.com
www.blackmambatravels.com
Blackmamba Travels Ltd.
P.O. Box 2674
Arusha, Tanzania
Phone: 00255-748-536273
Preferred Mountain Guide: Naiman kilinaiman@yahoo.com

Accommodation at base of Kili:

The beautiful and handcrafted Visiwani Lodge on the outskirts of Arusha, run by Sami. Situated on the lower slopes of Mount Meru, this is an ideal and reasonably-priced "piece of heaven", perfect for relaxation and fantastic food and hospitality both before and after a climb of Kili.

Private lodges mix traditional African style with bathrooms fully equipped to Scandinavian standard. All set in exquisite gardens.

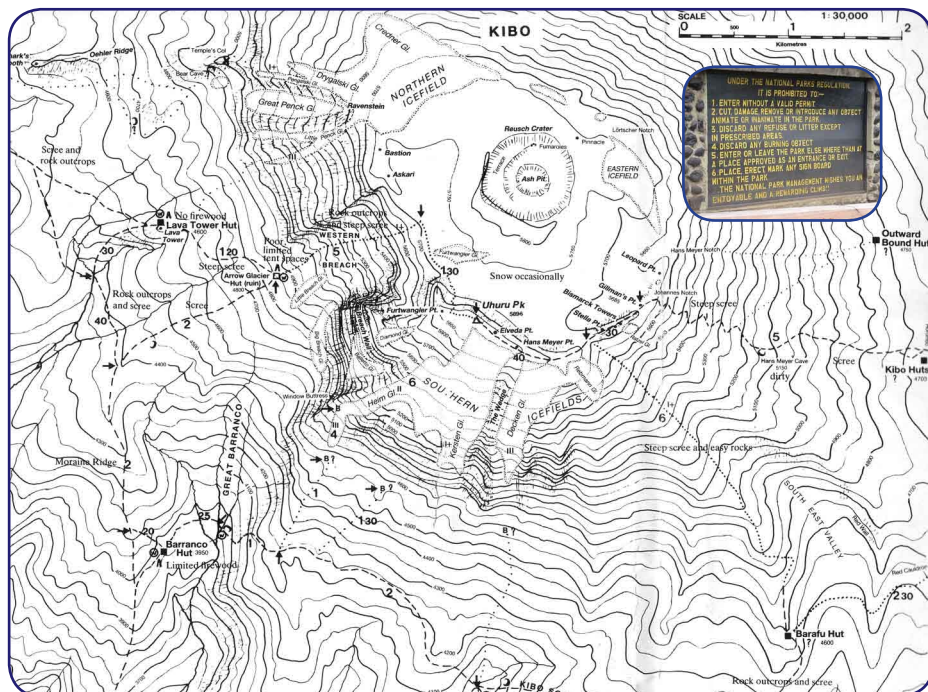
Arusha is also a great place to arrange a safari



into the nearby Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti National Parks.

Visiwani Lodge
PO Box 6147
Ilboru, Arusha, Tanzania

Kilimanjaro National Park



Lying in Tanzania just south of the Kenya border, Kilimanjaro National Park is the area above 2,700 meters (8,850 feet) on the mountain. It includes the moorland and highland zones, Shira Plateau, Kibo and Mawenzi peaks. In addition, the Park has six corridors or rights of way through the Kilimanjaro Forest Reserve. The Forest Reserve, which is also a Game Reserve, was established in 1921; the Park was established in 1973 and officially opened in 1977.

Permits

The park headquarters are located by the Marangu Park Gate, 5 km above Marangu. Permission to climb any route on the mountain must be obtained at the gate and all park fees must be paid here. At present (2005), these are US\$400 per person for a 6-day visit on the Normal (Marangu) Route and US\$200 for other routes.

Porters & Guides

Guides are compulsory and are available at the Park Gate. It is best to make arrangements several days before the planned ascent. Porters, if required, are selected by the Guide, and their wages may be paid in local currency. Guides and porters are self-sufficient; wages are low compared to park fees but they will negotiate high tips. Expect to pay about US\$5 per day for a porter and US\$10 per day for a Guide. Porters often prefer to carry equipment in sacks on their heads.

Personal Kit

FOOTWEAR

Socks – Inner / Liner	2
Socks – Outer	2
Trekking Boots	1
Light Shoes/sandals (for camp)	1
Gaiters	1

UPPER BODY

Polypro/capilene Top – light	1
Polypro/capilene Top – med	1
Fleece Jacket	1
Gore-tex Shell	1
Down Jacket / Parka	1

LOWER BODY

Capilene Underwear	2
Polypro/capilene Long – light	1
Polypro/capilene Long – med	1
Trekking Trousers	1
Gore-tex Wind Shell Trousers	1

HEAD

Sun Hat	1
Warm Hat	1
Lightweight Balaclava	1

HANDS

Inner Gloves (capilene/fleece)	2
Insulated Ski Gloves / Mittens	1

SLEEPING

Sleeping Bag (4 season)	1
Compression Stuff Sac	1
Thermarest or sleeping pad	1
Sleeping pad stuff sac	1

BACKPACK & BAGS

*Back Pack (75+ litres)	1
*Day Pack (25 litres)	1
Back Pack Liner	1
Stuff Sacs	3
Large Stuff Sac (for storage)	1
Plastic Bags (to line stuff sacs)	1

MISCELLANEOUS

Mountain Sunglasses	1
Nose Guard	1
Headlamp	1
Lamp Batteries & Bulb	1
Water Bottle (1 litre)	2
Water Bottle Insulator	2
*Thermos flask (1 litre)	1
Lip Balm/Screen	2
Sun Screen – spf30	1
Pocket Knife	1
Toilet Articles	1
Tooth Paste	1
Baby Wipes 20	1
Hand Disinfectant	1
Toilet Paper	2
Watch	1
Lighter	2
Compass	1
Book (for reading/writing)	1

CLIMBING

Trekking Poles – pair	1
Step-in Crampons	1

MEDICAL

Personal Medical Kit	1
Antibiotic – (1*7days)	14
Diamox –20, 250 mg. tablets	20
Ibuprofen (400mg)	20
Immodium	20

CAMERA & VIDEO

Camera kit	1
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Plus travel clothes, documents (including passport) and wallet (including some local currency)...

* How you carry your personal equipment depends on your choice of guide/porter combination. Note that a Guide is compulsory on Kili and they will need a porter even if you don't.

Group Kit

SLEEPING

Tents – 2man	3
Tent Repair Kit	1

TRAVEL

Porter equipment	1
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MEDICAL

Trauma Kit	2
Emergency Shelter	1
Emergency Blanket	2

FOOD

Stoves (MSR)	2
Stove Repair Kit	1
Fuel – white gas, 2 litres	2
Breakfast/Dinner Food Bags	7
Snack Bags	7
Fresh fruit & veg bag	7

COMMUNICATION

Mobile Phone	2
Batteries	3

MISCELLANEOUS

Map	2
Compass	2
Park Permits	4
Minidisc player	1
Speakers	1
AA Batteries	12
Playing Cards	2
Cribbage board	1
Toilet Bags	10

All group equipment and food is organised by your Guide, Cook and Porters in Arusha or Moshi

The Machame Route & Marangu Descent

Machame

Machame village is served by a tarmac road. There is a park checkpoint at the start of the route. The walking is strenuous, initially up narrow, slippery paths through beautiful forest. It provides good access to the South Western Glaciers and the Western Breach.

This popular route begins on the Southern ridge of the mountain, climbing through the rainforests to the Machame Hut. It proceeds up to Lava Tower Hut (4,600m) before either crossing the Great Barranco Valley to Barafu Hut (South Circuit), or ascending to Arrow Glacier Hut and summitting via the Western Breach.

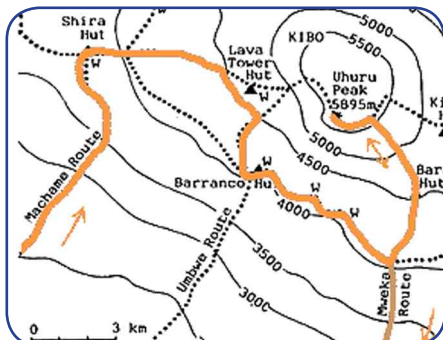
If Marangu is the "CocaCola" route, then the Machame Route is the "whiskey" route. It is the second most popular and arguably the most scenic route on the mountain. All climbers sleep in tents and meals are served on the floor of a dinner tent or on a blanket outside.

Taking the South Circuit route, the route circles halfway around the mountain with great views from all angles. This route is approximately 40km versus 20km on the Marangu route. It is for physically fit people with some hiking experience.

The Western Breach route is reached from the Barranco Hut via the Lava Tower Camp. The night before summitting is spent at the Arrow Glacier Camp. The summit path goes straight up a rocky amphitheatre. It is not technical, but there is some scrambling over steep icy rock. A seasoned mountaineer will find it easy, but newbies will need an experienced guide.

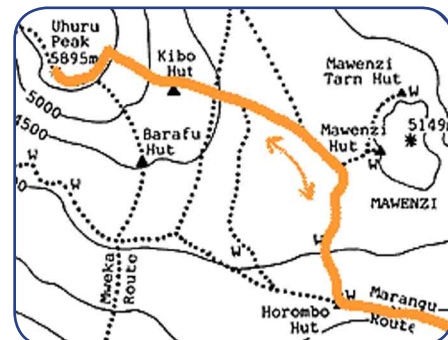
Once at the top of the amphitheatre, there are magnificent views of the crater and glaciers. There is one more fairly short but switch-backed hill to climb to the summit.

To descend, it is possible to head down the Mweka trail and stay



at the Mweka camp on the final night on the mountain. The alternative is to descend the Marangu route, but availability may be limited in the Horombo Hut.

The route is usually done in 6 days but 7 or 8 is recommended so acclimatisation is easier, and the success rate is fairly high. The extra day(s) can be spent resting at Shira plateau or to divide the Barranco-Barafu section into 2 easier days.



Marangu (in descent)

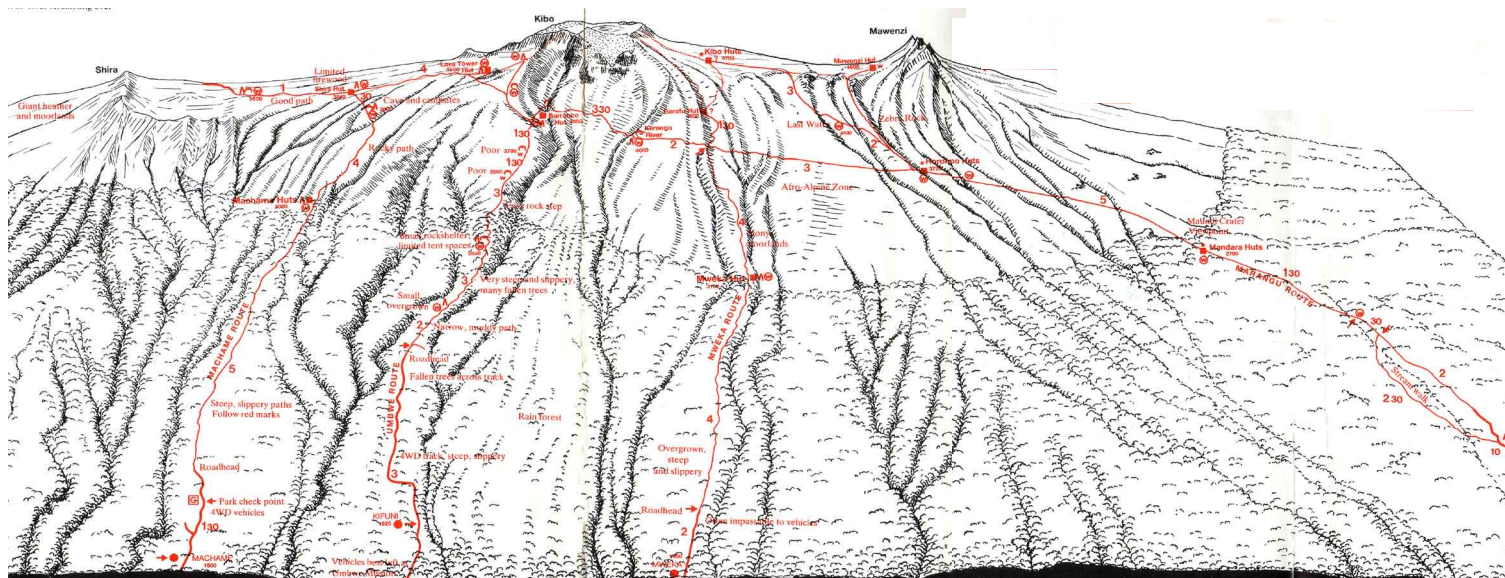
The Marangu Route provides easy walking down steep scree slopes from the broad crater rim with good views over the caldera and of Mawenzi. The first section undulates and is occasionally snowy.

The Marangu Route is also known as the "Coca Cola" or "tourist" route. It is the easiest and shortest route to/from the summit and many people in a hurry try to make the summit via this overcrowded route, although less than 50% actually make it. 90% of the Kilimanjaro climbers use this route and all the other routes combined see 10% of the visitors...

This is also the only route with the 'comforts' of sleeping huts at every camp site with solar lights and comfortable beds. The huts are communal, and the bunks have a sponge mattress and pillow. Men's and ladies' latrines are available at each camp but are very basic.

All climbing groups, share meals in dining huts; soft drinks (hence the nickname), bottled water, and beer are for sale at the huts. Bring small Tanzanian bills to purchase these items (prices increase with elevation).

In descent, the Marangu route can be completed in 2 days, including from Summit to the Horombo Hut on the first day.



Weather & Climate

Time to climb and seasons: All year long it is possible although most avoid the rainy season. The long rainy season is from mid-March to May; the short rainy season is mostly in November/beginning of December. Maximum rainfall occurs in the forest belt and on the south side of the mountain. Rain, and higher up, snow, can however be encountered at any time of year, even in the driest periods.

Always be prepared for wet days and cold nights on the mountain any time of year! For planning when to climb, it is good to summit with a full moon, so you can plan to leave 5 days before a full moon date.

Lying just south of the equator, Kili is affected by the passage of the InterTropical Convergence Zone, which brings with it the main rainy periods. Because of Kilimanjaro's great height, the mountain also influences its own weather. Winds incoming from the Indian Ocean are deflected upward by the slopes and drop their moisture as rain and snow. This moisture results in a variety of vegetative zones that contrast dramatically with the savanna grasses and semidesert scrub on the surrounding plains.

At the highest elevations is a zone of permanent ice and snow that is responsible for the name Kilimanjaro, which in Swahili means "the mountain that glitters."

Geology & Glaciology

Kilimanjaro lies on a tectonic line intersection 80km east of the tectonically active Rift Valley. The activity which created this volcano dates back less than a million years and the central ash pit on Kibo, the highest volcanic centre, may be only several hundred years old. Steam and sulphur fumaroles here are indicative of residual activity.

Shira and Mawenzi were two other areas of volcanic activity. Both became inactive before Kibo. The Shira volcanic cone collapsed leaving the Shira Ridge as part of its Caldera Rim. Mawenzi has been heavily eroded to leave a mass of steep-sided ridges and summits, particularly dramatic on the infrequently-seen eastern side.

Kibo is the best preserved centre - it has three concentric craters and the outer crater rim rises to Uhuru Point - the chief summit. The middle, Reusch crater contains the main fumaroles and in its centre the 130m deep and 400m wide Ash Pit. The outer crater has been breached by lava flows in several places, the most dramatic of these being the Western Breach.

The ash and lava covered slopes of Kibo are mainly gentle-angled from the steep, glaciated precipices which defend its southern and south-western flanks. The impressive rock walls on Kilimanjaro and Mawenzi are generally composed of lavas and ashes.

Deep gorges (barrancos) have been carved into the soft rocks and ashes of Kilimanjaro. The most impressive of these is the Great Barranco below the Western Breach and the two Barrancos on the east side of Mawenzi.

Numerous parasitic cones extend east-west across Kilimanjaro; some are located near the Mandara Hut (Maundi Crater offers a fine view point), while others lie just north of the Shira Route.

At one stage most of the summit of Kilimanjaro was covered by an ice cap, probably more than 100 metres deep. Glaciers extended well down the mountain forming moraine ridges, clearly visible now on the southern flanks down to about 4000m. At present only a small fraction of the glacial cover remains. The remnants of the ice cap can be seen as the spectacular ice cliffs

of the Northern and Eastern Icefields, and the longest glaciers are found on the precipitous southern and south-western flanks. If the present rate of recession continues the majority of the glaciers on Kilimanjaro could vanish altogether in the next 50 years.

Flora & Fauna

The lower slopes of the mountain are heavily cultivated, in particular those to the south which receive plenty of rainfall. Elsewhere lower rainfall coupled with the porosity of the lava soils makes conditions less suitable for cultivation. The forest belt which completely encircles the mountain and extends from about 1800m to 2900m provides the best conditions for plant life. Above the forest belt the porous soils and lower rainfall result in much sparser vegetation with semi-desert conditions prevailing above 4000m.

The cultivated belt contains many small holdings (shambas) where bananas and various vegetables are grown. The area is also suitable for coffee and there are several major plantations.

The southern, wetter forests contain camphor, podocarpus, fig and other trees; lush undergrowth contains many giant ferns and Usnea (old man's beard) drapes everything. Vines, mimulopsis and a multitude of flowers can be found in valleys and in clearer areas. The northern, drier forests contain podocarpus, junipers and olives. In contrast to Mount Kenya few large animals are found in this zone, though colobus and blue monkeys can often be seen but other inhabitants such as smaller antelopes and leopards are very shy. Many colourful birds are found here, the most noticeable being the Hornbill and the Turaco with its dark red wing markings.

The forests end abruptly without a bamboo zone as found on most other East African mountains. Above, the rapidly thinning giant heather zone leads to the upper moorlands; here the giant groundsels and lobelias peculiar to high altitude tropical mountain zones can be found. There are few animals other than rodents though leopard spoor can often be seen. Eagles and buzzards soar high above and smaller birds such as the alpine chat and streaky seed eater can also be seen. In the higher moorland and alpine zones only a few tufts of grass, mosses and lichen are found, together with occasional flowers such as the everlasting helichrysums and senecios.

Altitude

It is important to remember that altitude sickness is a serious and real risk when climbing Kilimanjaro. Every year a few climbers die on the mountain from altitude sickness. Most people tend to feel the effects of the altitude above 15,000 ft. You might feel nauseous or have a headache. If your headache gets worse, you get nauseous or vomit, get dizzy or stagger, you may be getting acute mountain sickness (AMS). If you get these symptoms do not ascend higher, and descend if possible until the symptoms pass.

One way to reduce the potential effects of altitude sickness is to be properly hydrated. Ideally you should have 4+ liters of water or liquids a day.

Some people chose to use Diamox to prevent altitude sickness. You can usually get a prescription from your doctor for this. It's also a good idea to get an updated physical and talk to your doctor about the stress of the climb, proper use of Diamox and altitude illnesses.

It is, however, recommended that Diamox is carried for emergency use only and sufficient time is allowed for effective acclimatisation.

