

Northern Circuit Route with Crater



The Northern Circuit route approaches Kibo from the west using the Lemosho ascent, then circles clockwise around the quieter northern slopes to Pofu Camp and onward to the east (Third Cave and School Hut Camps), offering outstanding views of the summit from all sides. The north flank of the mountain is remote and less trafficked, so the environment is less disturbed and allows one to enjoy Kilimanjaro away from other climbers. And with an overnight in the soft sand at Crater Camp, the route is well-suited for those seeking an enjoyable backpacking and camping experience without a frantic push for the summit. This allows for superior acclimatization and nearly guaranteed success reaching Uhuru Peak!

- Price
- Duration
- Best months
- Why this route?
- Route Map
- Climb Calendar

2024/2025: US \$5,095

per person, double occupancy (single supplement US \$500)

13 days / 12 nights (10 days on the mountain)

Route climbable year-round. January through March and mid-June through October are driest months.

Incorporates all elements of an exceptional climb: remote wilderness trail, unrivaled views from all sides of the mountain, unhurried pace allowing climbers to savor the experience with absolute acclimatization, crater overnight, and morning summit ascent.



The calendar below lists all confirmed Kilimanjaro climbs. ***Join a confirmed group*** or ***start a new climb group on your dates*** (two people minimum required to start a new group unless paying for a solo supplement). Private climbs can also be scheduled. Contact us to discuss dates and route you would like.

Highlights

- Route encircles the mountain at $\pm 13,000'$ / 4,000m.
- Long sections of undisturbed environment.
- Ten total days on Kilimanjaro for maximum acclimatization and nearly 100% success rate.
- Morning summit ascent starts at dawn.

Daily Distance, Time, Elevation...

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Daily Itinerary

Day 1: Mbahe Village, Kilimanjaro

We will pick you up upon arrival at the Kilimanjaro International Airport and bring you to Mbahe Village, located in the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro, approximately 2 hours from the airport. Accommodations are in SENE's private cottages at Simon Mtuy's Mbahe Village Farm.

Overnight: Mbahe Farm Cottages.

Meals: D.

Day 2: Mbahe Village, Kilimanjaro

You have the morning to rest and relax. Enjoy delicious "homebrew" coffee, grown and roasted on the farm, and meals made with fruits and vegetables from the garden. Your trip leader will provide a climb orientation and equipment check. This is also a day to take a guided tour around Mbahe Village, the Mtuy family farm, and to swim in the river and waterfall running through Simon's land.

Overnight: Mbahe Farm Cottages.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 3: Lemosho to Big Tree Camp

After breakfast, we drive to the Londorossi Gate for check in, where you will meet your other guides and mountain crew. We enter the Kilimanjaro National Park from the Lemosho trailhead and walk for a few hours uphill through the thick and undisturbed montane forest to our camp for the night. Many beautiful flowers are seen en route and with luck, we will observe colobus monkeys at play. In the evening you may hear the unforgettable shrieking call of the tree hyrax.

Overnight: Big Tree Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 4: Big Tree Camp to Shira 1 Camp

Today we reach the west side of the Shira Plateau in a hiking time of 6 hours. Taking our time walking through the forest allows 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 heather zone, where old lava flows are visible. Your guides will point out unique environmental differences that characterize each zone. After a picnic lunch, we reach the edge of the Plateau and eventually our camp that offers a dramatic view of Kilimanjaro and its permanent glaciers.

Overnight: Shira 1 Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 5: Shira 1 Camp to Shira 2 Camp

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 examine the clusters of giant lobelias and senecios that grow at this elevation.

Overnight: Shira 2 Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 6: Shira 2 Camp to Moir Hut Camp

Today we start by heading due east toward Kibo, before veering northward as we start our circumnavigation of the northern flank of Kilimanjaro and diverge from the routes leading along the south side. The majesty of the solitude begins to envelop us as we enjoy the remoteness of the route. The sheer-sided peaceful valley where camp is set affords wonderful views over Shira, from whence we just came, and up to Kibo where we will be in a few days.

Overnight: Moir Hut Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 7: Moir Hut Camp to Pofu Camp

We have a steep climb out of the Moir Valley, followed by more gradual up-and-down ascent up to 14,400 feet before a long descent and a brief rock scramble to our camp more than a thousand feet lower. This helps in acclimatization as we "climb high, sleep low." The rarely-used path can be followed by the cairns placed at periodic intervals. Pofu means eland in Swahili as the area was popular in the past for these majestic antelope to graze in the area.

Overnight: Pofu Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 8: Pofu Camp to Third Cave Camp

Leaving Pofu Camp, we'll continue to circle around the mountain's north side, with magnificent views of Kenya the whole way. The route crosses several valleys and ridges, each distinct from the next, making for lots of up-and-down Kilimanjaro Climb and a surprisingly tiring day of hiking. You will notice that the vegetation begins to thin with the drier conditions on this northeastern section of Kilimanjaro.

Overnight: Third Cave Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 9: Third Cave Camp to School Hut Camp

There is a steady ascent to reach the saddle, a lunar landscape between the peaks of Kibo and Mawenzi. From here we continue upwards and reach School Hut (15,500 feet) in the early afternoon. The remainder of the afternoon is spent resting and preparing for the summit day.

Overnight: School Hut Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 10: School Hut Camp to Crater Camp

We have a long and steep ascent with many switchbacks up to Gillman's Point, from which we traverse the crater rim, then at Stella Point descend slightly into the crater. Across the floor of the crater is Crater Camp, with its great views of the surrounding glaciers.

Overnight: Crater Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 11: Crater Camp to Uhuru Peak to Millennium Camp

After an early breakfast, we make the final ascent to Uhuru Peak, reaching the 19,340 foot summit of Kilimanjaro by 8 a.m. At this early hour, before the clouds close in, you will have spectacular views of Africa in all directions. After a brief stay for photos, hugs, and high fives, we descend 2 to 3 hours to Barafu Camp for lunch, rest, and to take off extra layers. Continuing downhill 3 to 4 hours to the edge of the Mweka Forest, we reach the final night's camp - 7,000 feet below the summit! Eat, share your experiences of the climb, and sleep soundly. Congratulations, you touched the Roof of Africa!

Overnight: Millennium Camp.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 12: Millennium Camp to Mweka Gate; Moshi Town

Our last day is another descent of 7,000 feet with 4 to 5 hours of hiking to the exit at Mweka Gate. The trail is steep in places and within the forest may be slippery if wet. After a hearty celebration lunch with the whole team on private SENE land near the exit gate to say goodbye to the mountain crew, the trip leaders bring you to your hotel in Moshi Town to relax, have dinner, and enjoy its spacious garden and swimming pool. (Those going on safari tomorrow will overnight at a hotel in Arusha, closer to the wildlife parks.)

Overnight: Chanya Lodge.

Meals: B,L,D.

Day 13: Moshi Town

Those heading out on safari or to Zanzibar will depart after breakfast to continue your African adventure. For those returning home, we offer you a guided tour of Moshi Town with its colorful market and curio shops. You may eat lunch in town or back at the lodge (lunch not included). Transfer by SENE to the Kilimanjaro Airport.

Meals: B.

Inclusions

- All accommodations for **13 days / 12 nights**.
- All meals as indicated (B,L,D).
- On climb, filtered water (by Katadyn Expedition® filter) and coffee, teas, cocoa.
- Services of trip leader, climbing guides, and mountain crew.
- Kilimanjaro National Park entrance, camping, and rescue fees, including supplemental crater camp fee.
- All camping and dining equipment (**excluding sleeping bag and pad**).
- Portable private toilet with bio-degradable waste system (Cleanwaste®) at all camps.
- Gamow bag (portable hyperbaric chamber) and supplemental oxygen for emergency descents.
- Transfers to/from Kilimanjaro International Airport and to/from park entrance/exit gates.
- Guided Mbahe Village walking tour.
- Guided Moshi Town walking tour.

Exclusions

Tips and gratuities to leaders, guides, crew, or other staff; cold drinks and alcohol; additional accommodations and meals made necessary by airline schedule changes, inability to complete the climb, finishing the climb before the scheduled completion date, or other factors; pre-trip expenses such as immunizations, travel insurance, passports, and visas; international airfare; airport departure taxes; and any expenses of a personal nature such as souvenirs

and laundry.

Disclaimer

Trip prices are based on SENE costs, fees, and supplier prices in effect at the time of booking. SENE reserves the right to alter trip prices should inflation, cost of fuel, labor, materials, or exchange rates change. If the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA) raises park fees, or any hotel, lodge, camp, airline, or any other service provider raises their rates, SENE reserves the right to require additional payment from the client.