

Lemosho/Shira Route via Crater Camp (9 days)

This hike can also be done in 8 days, skipping Karanga Camp

Day One: Londorossi Gate (2,100m/6,890ft) to Mti Mkubwa Camp (2,750m/9,023ft)

Elevation Gain: 650 meters, 2,133 feet Hiking time: 4 to 5 hours

Lemosho is ideal for climbers seeking a more intimate hiking experience. Although the trail joins with the more popular Machame route on day four, the first three days on the mountain are relatively quiet with few other trekking groups on the trail. On the first day, arrive at Londorossi Gate at about 12pm. Spend about an hour at the gate while we register your climb and the porters and guides make final preparations. Please note that the arrival time at the gate may vary depending on road conditions.

After registering at the gate, drive to the trailhead and enjoy a picnic lunch before starting the trek to Mti Mkubwa (Big Tree) Camp. Pass through the rain forests of Kilimanjaro viewing trees and birds along the way. Arrive at the campsite in the late afternoon and relax for the rest of the day.

Day Two: Mti Mkubwa Camp (2,750m/9,023ft) to Shira 1 Camp (3,480m/11,420ft)

Elevation Gain: 730 meters, 2,397 feet

Hiking time: 6 to 8 hours

Hike through the forest en route to Kilimanjaro's moorland and enjoy the stunning variety of beautiful wildflowers. As the trail flattens out, take in your first views of Kibo peak. After lunch climb the Shira Plateau, created when Kibo's lava flows filled up the Shira crater. Stop at Shira 1 Camp, where you will relax for the rest of the day.

Day Three: Shira I (3,480m/11,420ft) to Shira II Camp (3,860m/12,600ft)

Elevation Gain: 380 meters, 1,180 feet

Hiking time: 3 to 5 hours

This is an acclimatization day that allows you to take day hikes that explore the Shira Plateau. Look to the west at sunset and you may catch a glimpse of the twin eruptions from the craters of Ol Donyio Lengai (The Mountain of God), an active volcano 100 kilometers distant.

Day Four: Shira II Camp (3,860m/12,600ft) to Barranco Camp (3,950m/12,960ft)

Total Elevation Gain: 810 meters, 2,660 feet

Hiking time: 6 to 8 hours

Although this up and down day ends with an elevation gain of only 110 meters, by early afternoon you will have climbed 690 meters to a height of 4,530 meters before beginning your descent to Barranco Camp. This day is crucial for acclimatization.

After breakfast, continue east on the Shira Plateau for two hours before reaching the junction for the Machame Route. Continue through the barren landscape for another thirty minutes before stopping for lunch. Shortly after lunch, reach the highest point of the day before descending quickly to Barranco Camp. From the high point see the Lava Tower, a 300-foot lava formation jutting from the mountainside. Optional detour via Lava Tower.

The descent to Barranco Camp will take you through a valley that is home to many unusual plants including the Senecio Kilimanjari. Barranco Camp is considered to be the most scenic campsite on the route. It is set in a canyon among

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forests of Senecio Kilimanjai beneath the Heim glacier. From the campsite, enjoy magnificent views of Mount Meru, Heim Glacier, Kibo's southern face and the imposing Barranco Wall.

Day Five: Barranco Camp (3,950m/12,960ft) to Karanga Valley (4,200m/13,780ft)

Elevation Gain: 250 meters, 820 feet

Hiking time: 3 to 5 hours

Leave Barranco Camp after breakfast for Karanga Valley. The day begins with an hour-and-a-half scramble up the Barranco Wall. This is the hardest part of the day and in some places you may have to use your hands to aid your climb. After reaching the top, hike through fairly level terrain before making a short but steep descent into the green Karanga River Valley. Karanga Camp is located on the ridge above the river valley.

Day Six: Karanga Valley (4,200m/13,780ft) to Barafu Camp (4,600m/15,100ft)

Elevation Gain: 400 meters, 1,320 feet

Hiking time: 3 to 5 hours

After breakfast, begin the hike to Barafu Camp. On the way to Barafu, view several of Kibo's glaciers as well as the junction that connects the descent route, Mweka, with the Machame trail. During the hike you will pass the Heim, Kersten and Decken glaciers. Although the trail to Barafu passes through alpine desert with little vegetation, there are stunning views of Kibo and Mawenzi peaks along the way. Try to sleep after finishing dinner as you will need to wake before midnight to start your summit ascent.

Day Seven: Barafu Camp (4,600m/15,100ft) to Crater Camp (5,715m/18,750ft)

Elevation Gain: 1,115 meters, 3,650 feet

Hiking time: 6 to 8 hours

Due to the steep ascent at high altitude, this is the most challenging day of the ascent. Leave Barafu Camp early in the morning to begin your hike to the top of Kibo Crater. It is important to remember to snack during the ascent to keep up your energy. You will likely lose your appetite during the hike and begin to feel new effects of altitude sickness.

After ascending Kibo's wall, hike to Crater Camp, the highest camp on Kilimanjaro. The camp is located inside Kilimanjaro's Kibo crater, and offers stunning views of the surrounding glaciers. Some climbers choose to summit in the afternoon instead of the following morning.

Day Eight: Crater Camp (5,715m/18,750ft) to Summit (5,895m/19,340ft) to Mweka Camp (3,100m/10,170ft)

Elevation Gain: 180 meters, 590 feet

Elevation Loss: 2,795 meters, 9,170 feet

Hiking time: 1 hour to summit, 3 to 4 hours to Barafu, 4 hours to Mweka

At dawn, begin the final ascent to Uhuru Peak, the highest point in Africa. The hike to the summit is slow, taking up to two hours to gain 180 meters. Reach Uhuru around 8am and take photos at the roof of Africa. Descend to Barafu Camp where you'll eat brunch. At 1pm continue to Mweka Camp, your final camp on Kilimanjaro.

Day Nine: Mweka Camp (3,100m/10,170ft) to Mweka Gate (1,500m/4,920ft)

Elevation Loss: 1,600 meters, 5,250 feet

Hiking time: 4 hours

After breakfast, complete the trek with a descent to Mweka Gate. Your last hike on Kilimanjaro is a beautiful one, passing through Kilimanjaro's cloud forest. Watch your step during the descent as the trail can be slippery. Our vehicles will be waiting at the lower station of Mweka Gate to take you back to Arusha. You can buy t-shirts, souvenirs and sodas at the gate. Enjoy a picnic lunch at the gate before departing the mountain.

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