

**KILIMANJARO – LEMOSHO GLADES & THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT
WILDERNESS**

~WITH CRATER CAMP~

10 DAYS / 9 NIGHTS on the mountain

Route Description

The Lemosho Glades route is the amongst the least-used approach routes on Kilimanjaro, partly because of the remote starting location and rough roads leading to the trailhead. The trailhead is at relatively high elevation, and thus we start slow and easy on this route. The trail leads up to the western edge of the Shira Plateau, and the hike across the plateau is said to be one of the most stunningly beautiful hikes in Africa. On the fifth day we leave the tourist trails and head off across the north side of the mountain, facing Kenya and the famous Amboselli National Park. The spectacular hike along the northern circuit affords opportunities to see some animals; possible elephant, buffalo, eland, and signs of many other animals. Along this way we won't see other tourists, only following cairns which signal the route. On the 7th day we reach Rongai's 3rd Caves, and on day 8 the trail reaches Outward Bound Camp at 15,300 feet (4,670 m). From here we trek to the crater for an up-close experience with Kilimanjaro's dwindling glaciers. The Crater Camp is set in soft "beach" sand, and looking from the tent trekkers can only see the vertical ice walls of the Furtwangler Glacier. All the trekking is done by daylight, and overall this trek is designed to get you closer to nature, and to experience Kilimanjaro in a way that so few others do. The long trek to crater camp makes this trek quite difficult, but generally more than adequate for acclimatization. The spectacular hike across the Shira Plateau, the remote wilderness of the northern circuit, and the beauty of camping at crater camp make this trek truly unique and the best choice for those who prefer not to see many tourists during their Kilimanjaro trek. There are no huts on this route; the accommodation is in mountain tents and dining is in our mess tents. Toilet tents with convenient and sanitary portable flush toilets are set up at all camps.

Daily Itinerary

DAY 1 LEMOSHO TRAILHEAD (7,780 ft./ 2,370 m) ~ FOREST CAMP (9,300 ft./ 2,830 m)

Departure from Arusha will be at around 7:30am for Londorossi gate, about 4 hours, where you will complete entry formalities. Then drive to the Lemosho trailhead (another hour to reach the trailhead). Upon arrival at trailhead, eat lunch, then commence through undisturbed forest which winds to the first camp, only about 3-4 hours of trekking. Overnight at Forest Camp (Mtee Mkubwa Camp)

DAY 2 FOREST CAMP ~ SHIRA 1 CAMP (11,500 ft./ 3,500 m)

Once out of the forest, take a steep track into a Savannah of tall grasses, heather, and volcanic rock draped with lichen beards. Ascend through the lush rolling hills below the Shira plateau, finally reaching camp at the edge of the plateau, a day of 5-6 hours trekking. The view of Kibo from across the plateau is amazing.

DAY 3 SHIRA 1 CAMP ~ SHIRA 2 CAMP (12,800 ft./ 3,900 m)

Full day exploration of the Shira plateau; Trek east toward Kibo's glaciated peak, with the option to visit the ancient collapsed Shira cone, the oldest of Kilimanjaro's three volcanoes. Arrive at Shira 2 camp (Fischers's Camp), at 12,600 ft. Shira is one of the highest plateaus on earth, averaging over 12,000 feet. Trekking time without the optional excursions is about 3 hours.

DAY 4 SHIRA 2 CAMP ~ MOIR CAMP (13,800 ft./ 4,200 m)

Proceed steadily upward through the heather and into the barren high altitude desert, toward the "Shark's Tooth", to Moir Camp. The trek is about 2-3 hours. Moir camp is an isolated and seldom used camp affording views over the Shira Plateau, and upward to the Lent Group of lava plugs along the northwest ridge to the crater. A re-supply of food will reach camp on this afternoon.

DAY 5 MOIR CAMP ~ POFU CAMP (13,200 ft./ 4,025 mt.)

Begin the morning trek heading out of the moorland and into the stark highland desert, on a steep ridge off the main trail, and begin our venture on the Northern Circuit Route. The total trekking time is about 5 - 7 hours. From the Pofu Campsite you will enjoy a magnificent view into Kenya's wild lands to the north.

DAY 6 POFU CAMP ~ RONGAI 3 CAVES CAMP (13,000 ft./ 3,950 mt.)

Proceed steadily onward through the barren mountain desert, continuing our circuit to the east, where we'll have a vast mountain wilderness to ourselves. Trekking time today is 3-4 hours.

DAY 7 RONGAI 3 CAVES CAMP ~ OUTWARD BOUND CAMP (15,585 ft./ 4,750 m)

Trek into the alpine desert, as Mawenzi's jagged peak looms ahead to the east. The temperatures turn cold as you near the foot of Kibo, at Outward Bound Camp, after 4-5 hours of trekking. Prepare all your gear for the day ahead, and turn in early to rest.

DAY 8 OUTWARD BOUND CAMP ~ UHURU PEAK (19,340 ft./ 5,895 m) ~ CRATER CAMP (18,800 ft./ 5,730 m)

A 5am wake-up call is the start of a juggernaut (7-10 hours of trekking). You begin trekking at 6am up the winding path of endless switchbacks. From your camp to the rim of the crater (Gillman's Point (18,750 ft./ 5,712 m)) to Uhuru Peak, the trekking time is about 7 - 8 hours. The slope is steep, with switchbacks, over loose rock and scree with some boulders as you near Gilman's Point. You will stop at Hans Meyer cave on the way, the famous place where Kilimanjaro's first western climber described in his journals. Once you arrive at Gilman's Point at the edge of the crater, the trail to the summit is less demanding, and is reached after a further 1½-2 hours along the snowy crater rim (depending on the season). We arrive at the summit in the early afternoon hours, when there are no other tourists there at that time, and usually the best weather of the day. From the summit we take a short descent to reach the Crater Camp. Our camp is set in soft sands near

the retreating vertical ice walls of the Furtwangler glacier. Rest and enjoy snacks and hot drinks in the mess tent, then opt to explore the strange landscape of the inner crater, including a walk around the Furtwangler glacier. So few that trek Kilimanjaro ever experience the summit zone in this way.

DAY 9 CRATER CAMP ~ MWEKA CAMP (10,070 ft./ 3,070 m)

Morning hike to the Reusch Crater and central ashpit, then, descend via Stella Point to Barafu Camp for lunch. In the afternoon continue the descent into the Heather Zone to Mweka Camp for the night. The trekking time from the Crater to Mweka Camp will be from 6-8 hours.

DAY 10 MWEKA CAMP ~ MWEKA GATE (5,370 ft. /1,635 m)

Descend straight to the gate (2-3 hours), where you'll have lunch and will be awarded climbing certificates. Transfer back to Arusha for a much-welcomed shower!
