

**MOUNT MERU TREK**  
4 DAYS / 3 NIGHTS on the mountain

**Route Description:**

Though often ignored in favour of its big sister Kilimanjaro, Mount Meru is a worthy trekker's paradise. This massive volcano towers over 3,000 meters above Arusha town, which lies at the foothills on its south side. The mountain endured a violent explosion in the distant past, and in its wake the explosion left towering cliffs in a gaping U shaped ridge facing east towards Kilimanjaro. The crater stands today in a protected amphitheatre of sorts, thousands of feet below the summit rocks. The craggy top lies at the westernmost point of the summit ridge and juts boldly into the sky at 4566 mt. (14,979 feet). From the top, one can look out at Kilimanjaro from the highest perch possible.... Perhaps there is no better vantage point to gaze at Africa's tallest mountain, approximately 80 kilometers to the northeast. The trail to the summit follows the northern rim of the natural amphitheatre which forms Meru Crater. The trail skirts the ridgeline, and above the Saddle (between the summit and Little Meru Peak (12,533 ft / 3,820 mt.)), the route is quite steep, with sections of rock scrambling and sheer drops on one side. At the summit, the cliffs drop almost 1200 meters to the crater floor. The final overnight trek is quite difficult due to the altitude and the steep terrain. It is recommended that only experienced hikers ascend to the summit.

What makes this trek truly special is the chance to see animals on foot. The lower section of the trail runs into the forest on the Meru crater floor, with many large, potentially dangerous game animals about. An armed ranger comes along on this trek for safety, the biggest danger being Cape Buffalo and Elephant. You may see while on this trek many animals, including Cape Buffalo, giraffe, elephant, waterbuck, bushbuck, dik dik, warthog, olive baboon, Abyssinian (black & white) Colobus monkey, sykes monkey, and may find traces of leopard, civet cat, red duiker and mountain duiker. Bird life is amazing, with the Momella Lakes close by, attracting thousands of European and African migrant species in the green season.

On this four day trek, the extra time allows a later departure for the final ascent to the summit, and giving a more leisurely pace from the summit back down to the first hut (Miriakamba) for the night.

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### **Detailed Itinerary:**

#### **DAY 1      ARUSHA ~ MOMELLA GATE (4,920 ft. / 1,500 m) ~ MIRIAKAMBA HUT (8,250 ft. / 2,514 m)**

Morning transfer from Arusha into Arusha National Park, to the Momella Gate (about 1.5 hours). After completion of administrative formalities and meeting with the guide, porters and ranger, you will begin the 4 to 5 hour trek to Miriakamba Hut, through the crater floor. The gentle uphill trek will take you through thick woodland, past the giant fig tree arch up to the Itikoni clearing where there are likely to be buffalo grazing. Then you'll then cross a large stream just above the Maio waterfalls, and take a steep path up the crater rim wall to Miriakamba. You may encounter elephant along the way, and an armed ranger will escort you at every step. Have dinner then retire for the night at Miriakamba Hut.

#### **DAY 2      MIRIAKAMBA HUT ~ SADDLE HUT (12,300 ft. / 3,750 m)**

Saddle hut is at approximately 2 to 3 hours trekking from Miriakamba Hut. The path will take you through a mix of trees and pleasant glades up to Mgongo wa Tembo (elephant ridge), where you will have a clear view of Meru crater and the cliffs below the summit. Continue through a pass between the slopes of Meru and the peak of Little Meru to reach Saddle Hut. There is an optional 1 to 1.5 hour round trip hike to the summit of Little Meru, from the Saddle Hut.

**DAY 3      SADDLE HUT ~ SUMMIT (14,979 ft. / 4566 m) ~ MIRIAKAMBA HUT**

You will be woken at about 5am, and begin trekking at about 6am, to avoid night-time trekking. A trek of approximately 4 to 5 hours along a narrow ridge, between the sheer cliffs and the sloping outer wall will see you to the summit. The walk has been said to be both exhilarating and nerve wracking. Whatever the reaction, the breathtaking sunrise over Kilimanjaro makes it all worthwhile. After the summit, you will retrace your steps back to Saddle Hut for a rest, then descend down the ridge to Miriakamba for some rest, dinner, and overnight. The total trekking time this day is from 8 to 11 hours.

**DAY 4      MIRIAKAMBA HUT ~ MOMELLA GATE**

Continuing down through open mountain meadows and wooded streams directly to the Momella Gate, where you will be met by your driver and proceed to Arusha for some rest. The total trekking time this day is from 3 to 4 hours.

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