

Kilimanjaro Via Marangu Route



About Marangu Route

The Marangu Route is also known as the “Tourist Route” and the “Coca-Cola Route.” This is because Marangu is the most popular route on the mountain, and thus is considered “touristy”, and because the route is the only one that offers sleeping huts, which serve beverages like Coca-Cola, on the way.

Marangu is the easiest route on Mount Kilimanjaro. It’s ascension profile is very gradual and steady, allowing for painless trekking for most of the way. However, due to its reputation as an easy route, Marangu is often selected by unprepared, unexperienced climbers. Correspondingly, only about 35% of the people actually make it to the top.

The trek begins in the south-east area of the mountain at Marangu Gate. The route takes five days minimum to complete, although six days is more practical and recommended. The sleeping huts along

the route are structures with a dining hall and bunk beds, equipped with mattresses and pillows. The descent is done on the same path, contributing to Marangu's overcrowded feeling. It is a cheaper climb as well, do to the close proximity of the gate to Moshi, the gateway town, and because it is a shorter route.

Scenically, Marangu is not a desirable route compared to all the other routes because it confines climbers to one area of the mountain, thus limiting the variety. However, Marangu has the best trail in the rainforest section of the trek. Of course, there are still great views of the Mawenzi and it's equally spectacular for everyone at Uruhu.

Marangu is ideal for those who are not confident in their ability to hike over steeper paths. It's also attractive for those who do not want to sleep in a tent. Marangu's huts offer shelter and warmth against the weather so it is a decent choice when climbing during the rainy season. Marangu is for those who want to spend less on their climb, and do not mind crowds.

6 Day Marangu Itinerary

DAY 1

Marangu Gate to Mandara Hut

Elevation (ft): 6,046 ft to 8,858 ft

Distance: 8 km

Hiking Time: 4-5 hours

Habitat: Rain Forest

We depart Moshi for Marangu Gate for the necessary formalities before beginning our trek. The hiking trail begins by ascending a beautiful, tropical rain forest. At the upper edge of the forest line, we have the opportunity to see blue monkeys. The trail then widens to expose beautiful hillsides until we reach Mandara Hut.

DAY 2

Mandara Hut to Horombo Hut

Elevation (ft): 8,858 ft to 12,205 ft

Distance: 12 km

Hiking Time: 6-8 hours

Habitat: Heath

We start the day continuing through the forest until the trail opens into high moorland. We may get our first views of Kibo and Mawenzi peaks – two of the three volcanic peaks that make up the summit of Kilimanjaro.

DAY 3

Horombo Hut to Mawenzi Ridge

Elevation (ft): 12,205 ft to 14,400 ft

Distance: 5 km

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours

Habitat: Heath

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Mawenzi Ridge to Horombo Hut

Elevation (ft): 14,400 ft to 12,205

Distance: 5 km

Hiking Time: 1-2 hours

Habitat: Heath

This is an extra day meant for acclimatization and can be spent day hiking on Mawenzi Ridge. The unique landscape offers motivating views of Kibo and Mawenzi. After spending a few moments exploring the area we head back to Horombo Hut.

DAY 4

Horombo Hut to Kibo Hut

Elevation (ft): 12,205 ft to 15,430 ft

Distance: 10 km

Hiking Time: 6-8 hours

Habitat: Alpine Desert

We climb gradually, then cross the lunar desert of the “Saddle” between Mawenzi and Kibo. Our camp, Kibo Hut, sits at the bottom of the Kibo crater wall. Once here we rest, enjoy an early dinner to prepare for the summit day.

DAY 5

Kibo Hut to Uhuru Peak

Elevation (ft): 15,430 ft to 19,341 ft

Distance: 6 km

Hiking Time: 6-8 hours

Habitat: Arctic

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Uhuru Peak to Horombo Hut

Elevation (ft): 19,341 ft to 12,250 ft

Distance: 16 km

Hiking Time: 4-5 hours

Habitat: Heath

Very early in the morning (around midnight), we begin our push to the summit. This is the most mentally and physically challenging portion of the trek. The wind and cold at this elevation and time of day can be extreme. We ascend in the darkness for several hours while taking frequent, but short, breaks. At Gilman's point (18,600 ft), you will be rewarded with the most magnificent sunrise you are ever likely to see coming over Mawenzi Peak. Finally, we arrive at Uhuru Peak- the highest point on Mount Kilimanjaro and the continent of Africa.

After spending a few moments taking in the plains of Africa and your accomplishment, we descend to Horombo Hut. Later in the evening, we enjoy our last dinner on the mountain and a well-earned sleep.

DAY 6

Horombo Hut to Marangu Gate
Elevation (ft): 12,205 ft to 6,046 ft
Distance: 20 km
Hiking Time: 5-7 hours
Habitat: Rain Forest

On our last day, we have a long trek mostly downhill through the tropical rainforest. Once at the park headquarters at Marangu gate, we collect our summit certificates. A vehicle will meet us here and drive us back to the hotel in Moshi/Arusha.

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