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6-DAY RONGAI ROUTE ITINERARY

This 6 Days Rongai route Kilimanjaro climb is the only route that approaches Kilimanjaro from the north side. The Rongai Route has beautiful scenery and its remoteness allows for a less crowded climb.

ARRIVAL DAY

If you arrive at Kilimanjaro Airport, we will pick you up and take you to the hotel. You will have some time to rest and get settled in before our [pre-climb briefing and equipment check](#). We will also confirm you have medical coverage and travel insurance.

DAY 1

RONGAI ROUTE: NALE MORU GATE 1,996 METERS (6,548 FEET) TO SIMBA CAMP 2,626 METERS (8,615 FEET)

- **Distance** – 6.7 km (4.2 miles)
- **Elevation Gain** – 630 meters (2,066 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time** – 3-5 hours
- **Habitat**- Rain Forest

We will wake up early because the Rongai route is a long drive to the gate as this trail starts on the north side of Kilimanjaro. We will first drive to the Marangu National Park Gate (45-60 minutes) to submit the required registration. From there we will transfer to the Nale Moru Gate via Land Rover on a long and bumpy road (2 ½ hours). Eventually we will arrive at the Rongai starting point called Nale Moru.

The climb begins from Nale Moru with a short gradual climb. The trek then starts to climb consistently through the rain forest. As you are walking keep your eye out for Colobus monkeys and tree hyrax. When you notice that the rain forest begins to thin out, we will soon arrive at Simba Camp. This is a basic camp with a public toilet and it is located at the edge of the moorland zone with extensive views over the Kenyan plains.

DAY 2

RONGAI ROUTE: SIMBA CAMP 2,626 METERS (8,615 FEET) TO KIKELEWA CAVES 3,679 METERS (12,070 FEET)

- **Distance** – 11.8 km (7.33 miles)
- **Elevation Gain** – 1053 meters (3,455 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time** – 5-8 hours
- **Habitat**- Moorland Zone

We will wake up early with a hot breakfast and coffee and tea. The morning walk is a steady ascent up to Second Cave (3,450 meters). If the sky is clear there will be superb views of Kibo Peak and the eastern ice fields on the crater rim. We will enjoy our lunch at Second Cave and then continue across the moorland on a smaller path towards the jagged Mawenzi Peak. After another two or three hours of hiking we will arrive at the Kikelewa campsite, which is in a sheltered valley near Kikelewa Caves (3,600 m) [6-7 hours walking].

DAY 3

RONGAI ROUTE: KIKELEWA CAVES 3,679 METERS (12,070 FEET) TO MAWENZI TARN CAMP 4,330 METERS (14,206 FEET)

- **Distance** – 3.7 km (2.3 miles)
- **Elevation Gain** – 651 meters (2,136 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time** – 2-4 hours
- **Habitat** – Moorland Zone

Today is a short and steep climb, rewarded with superb all-around views and you will be surrounded with wilderness. As we leave the vegetation behind, we will arrive shortly thereafter at the next camp called Mawenzi Tarn Camp. This camp has spectacular views and is situated in a cirque directly beneath the towering spires of Mawenzi. You may want to spend the afternoon resting or you might want to explore the surrounding area. We strongly recommend a short exploration hike because it will aid with altitude acclimatization.

DAY 4

RONGAI ROUTE: MAWENZI TARN CAMP 4,330 METERS (14,206 FEET) TO KIBO HUT 4,730 METERS (15,518 FEET)

- **Distance** – 9 km (5.6 miles)
- **Elevation Gain** – 400 meters (1,312 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time** – 3-6 hours
- **Habitat** - Alpine

Today the hiking will be slow. The elevation will be quite noticeable to many climbers as we cross the lunar desert, known as the 'Saddle' between Mawenzi Peak and Kibo Peak. As we walk "pole-pole" which is slowly-slowly in Swahili, we will soon reach the Kibo campsite. This camp is located at the bottom of the Kibo crater wall. The remainder of the day is usually spent resting and possibly a short stroll as we need to prepare for the final ascent which will start around 11:30 PM.

DAY 5

RONGAI ROUTE: KIBO HUT 4,730 METERS (15,518 FEET) TO UHURU PEAK SUMMIT 5,898 METERS (19,341 FEET) TO HOROMBO HUT 3,705 METERS (12,155 FEET)

- **Distance** – 5.4 km ascent (3.4 miles ascent) then 19.8 km descent (12.3 miles descent)
- **Elevation Gain** – 1,168 meters (3,823 feet)
- **Elevation Descent** – 2,193 meters (7,186 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time** – 6-8 hours to reach the summit of Kilimanjaro, then 6-8 hours to descend to Horombo Hut
- **Habitat** – Stone Scree, Ice, and Alpine

Summit day is exciting and difficult so be mentally prepared to reach the summit of Kilimanjaro. We will start the climb by torchlight by waking up around 11:30 pm and we will have some small snacks and tea before starting the climb around 12:00 midnight. We will walk very slowly in the darkness on a switchback trail through loose volcanic scree, taking short breaks, until we reach the crater rim called Gillman's Point 5,685 meters (18,651 feet). We will take a short rest here for a short time and we usually will enjoy the spectacular sunrise over Mawenzi peak.

From Gillman's Point we will continue to walk pole-pole and we will pass close to the spectacular glaciers and ice cliffs that still occupy most of the summit area. The breathing will be difficult at this elevation but we will soon arrive at the summit of Kilimanjaro called Uhuru Peak; 5,896 meters (19,341 feet). We will celebrate your incredible accomplishment and take photos at the summit. The temperatures at the top are usually very cold and we will want to begin our descent to Kibo Camp. The descent to Kibo Camp will be over with relatively quickly and we will have a warm breakfast and a short rest before we continue the long descent to Horombo Camp. For many climbers, the downhill is punishing on the legs, knees, and feet. Mental toughness is necessary today, as this will be one of the most difficult, but rewarding trekking days of your life. We will have a hot dinner and share stories of the summit of Kilimanjaro, before a much-needed sleep.

DAY 6

RONGAI ROUTE: HOROMBO HUT 3,705 METERS (12,155 FEET) TO MARANGU GATE 1,860 METERS (6,102 FEET)

- **Distance** – 5.4 km ascent (3.4 miles ascent) then 19.8 km descent (12.3 miles descent)
- **Elevation Descent** – 1,845 meters (6,053 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time** – 5-6 hours
- **Habitat** – Moorland Zone and Rainforest

We will wake up early as we have a longer hike than you imagine. Today is a steady descent that takes us down through the moorland zone and we will pass by the Mandara Hut 2,700 meters (8,858 feet), which is the first camp site if you were to take the Marangu route. We will take a short break before we continue descending through the lush rainforest. The air will get thicker and thicker as we descend and breathing will get easier and easier until we reach the Marangu Gate. Climbers that reached Gillman's Point will be issued green certificates and climbers who reached the summit of Kilimanjaro will receive gold certificates. Here you can buy a beer or cold beverage before we drive back to Moshi or Arusha for a long overdue shower! You will be ready for dinner, a descent bed, and drinks.