6-DAY UMBWE ROUTE ITINERARY

If you are up for the task, the Umbwe route is well known for its reputation of being the most difficult route to the top of Kilimanjaro. The fast ascent to high altitude does not provide enough time for proper acclimatization. Although the number of climbers on the Umbwe route is extremely low, so are the chances of making it to the top of Kilimanjaro. If you are looking for a very difficult and taxing route then this is an excellent selection. The Umbwe route should only be attempted by the strongest hikers who have previous experience hiking at high altitude and are confident in their ability to acclimatize quickly.

ARRIVAL DAY

We will pick you up at the airport and take you to the hotel. You will have some time to rest and get sorted before a briefing about the Kilimanjaro climb and equipment check. We will also double check that you have the proper medical coverage and travel insurance.

DAY 1

UMBWE ROUTE ITINERARY: UMBWE GATE 1,600 METERS (5,250 FEET) TO UMBWE CAVE CAMP 2,850 METERS (9,350 FEET)

- **Distance:** 11 kilometers (6.8 miles)
- **Elevation Gain:** 1,250 meters (4,100 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time:** 5-8 hours
- **Habitat:** Heather and Rainforest

We will wake up very early and have breakfast at the hotel before we load up the gear and begin with a 50 to 60-minute drive to the Machame Gate. The first day is very long as we have a long drive and a lot of climbing to complete. This is where registration formalities will be completed before we transfer through a few small villages and eventually reach the Umbwe Gate. Today is a very long hike and it being extremely important that we keep a good pace even as the trail ascends sharply into the dense rain forest. As the path narrows it will get steeper as we climb the ridge between two
rivers. Today we have to climb 1,250 meters (4,100 feet) until we eventually reach the Umbwe Camp, which is perched in a thick forest with dense undergrowth.

DAY 2

UMBWE ROUTE ITINERARY: UMBWE CAVE CAMP 2,850 METERS (9,350 FEET) TO BARRANCO CAMP (3,950 METERS / 12,959 FEET)

- **Distance:** 6 kilometers (3.7 miles)
- **Elevation Gain:** 1,100 meters (3,609 feet)
- **Estimated Hiking Time:** 4-5 hours
- **Habitat:** Heather and Moorland

We will wake up early and enjoy a warm breakfast with coffee and tea. Your legs will probably be sore and you might be feeling very tired from the long hike from the day before. Today the trek starts off with some steep and rocky terrain with some moss-covered trees. You will be happy if the skies are clear because you will see glimpses of Mount Kilimanjaro. As the path flattens out, we will be approaching the Barranco Valley. From the Umbwe ridge, the route descends to Barranco Camp through the very unique and interesting Senecio Forest. This is where the Umbwe route joins up with a number of other routes; like the Machame, Lemosho and Shira routes.

DAY 3

UMBWE ROUTE: BARRANCO CAMP 3,950 METERS (12,959 FEET) TO KARANGA CAMP 3,950 METERS (12,959 FEET)

- **Distance:** 5.5 kilometers (3.4 miles)
- **Estimated Hiking Time:** 4-5 hours
- **Elevation Gain:** 725 meters (2,378 feet)
- **Elevation Descent:** 725 meters (2,378 feet)
- **Habitat:** Alpine desert

Today is a short hiking day that is designed for extra acclimatization and today you will have a chance to recuperate your legs. After the morning hot breakfast with coffee and tea, the day starts by climbing over the Great Barranco Wall! It looks daunting at first glance, but you will find that this climb is much easier than it appears. At the top of the Wall, we will most likely be above the clouds. From here the trail goes up and down, then up and down a few more times through the Karanga Valley. We will spend the night at Karanga Camp and enjoy another delicious dinner and washing at the Karanga Camp. Today is a good day to rest up at camp. Note: There is a 5-day option where we skip camping at Karanga Camp and go straight to Barafu Camp. This option is only recommended for the strongest of climbers.

DAY 4
UMBWE ROUTE: KARANGA CAMP 3,950 METERS (12,959 FEET) TO BARAFU CAMP 4,600 METERS (15,091 FEET)

- **Distance:** 4 kilometers (2.5 miles)
- **Estimated Hiking Time:** 2-3 hours
- **Elevation Gain:** 650 meters (2,132 feet)
- **Habitat:** Alpine

Today is another short day but this is where many climbers feel the effects of the altitude. We will begin our ascent to the Barafu Hut and after about 2 hours of climbing the trail intersects with a trail called Mweka. This trail is the path we will use to descend after reaching the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro. After joining the Mweka Route we will climb for about one more hour until we will reach the Barafu camp.

Keep an eye out for porters carrying large jugs or buckets on their heads. There is no water at Barafu camp and the porters will have to carry all the water for cooking and drinking from the Karanga Camp. Keep in mind they are carrying water for 3-hours and a 650 meters climb (2,133 feet).

The Barafu camp is located on a rocky and exposed ridge. Tents are exposed to the wind and are surrounded by rock outcroppings. It is very important for you to familiarize yourself with the campsite before dark, to avoid getting lost. An early dinner will be served allowing you time to rest before attempting the summit of Kilimanjaro.

Before bed, your guide will brief you in details on how to mentally prepare for your Kilimanjaro summit attempt. Depending on how fast you hike will depend on when you will need to wake up in the evening. This is a very cold campsite and it is often difficult to sleep at this elevation. Please try your best to rest as much as possible as tonight we will begin climbing around midnight.

**DAY 5**

UMBWE ROUTE: MOUNT KILIMANJARO SUMMIT ATTEMPT FROM BARAFU CAMP 4,600 METERS (15,091 FEET) TO SUMMIT UHURU PEAK 5,895 METERS (19,341 FEET) TO MWEKA CAMP 3,100 METERS (10,170 FEET)

- **Approximate Hiking Time:** 8 hours to reach Uhuru Peak, 7-8 hours descent to Mweka Camp
- **Distance:** 7 kilometers ascent (4.34 miles ascent to the summit) then 23 kilometers descent to Mweka Camp (14.3 miles descent)
- **Elevation Gain:** 1,295 meters (4,250 feet)
- **Elevation Descent:** 2,795 meters (9,171 feet)
- **Habitat:** Stone scree, sometimes snow-covered, and ice-capped summit

Your guide will wake you around 23:30 (11:30 PM) for hot tea, popcorn, and biscuits. You will then begin your Mt. Kilimanjaro summit day.
Today is going to be the most mentally and physically challenging part of the climb; and for some it might be the most difficult hiking of your life. Summit night is usually quite cold and it is normal to feel nauseous, have a headache, or other effects of the high altitude.

After hiking for around 5 hours, you will reach the rim of the crater called Stella Point 5,685 meters (18,651 feet). We will take a short break and possibly enjoying a magnificent sunrise. We will then continue ascending for around one more hour on a snow-covered trail until we reach Uhuru Peak which is the summit of Kilimanjaro 5,895 meters (19,341 feet).

We will celebrate your accomplishment with hugs, high fives, and of course some photos before descending back to Barafu Camp. The hike back to Barafu Camp typically takes about 3 hours. The difficult climbing is over but your feet and legs will soon feel the pains of descending.

At Barafu camp, you will enjoy a hot lunch that is prepared by your chef and a short rest before we continue descending to the Mweka Camp 3100 meters (10,179 feet). The bad news is your feet, legs, and knees will suffer as we have to descend a total of 2,795 meters today (9,171 feet). The good news is you will feel the air getting denser as we descent and you will love the feeling of being able to breathe easy.

You might think to yourself that just a few hours ago you were standing at the summit of Kilimanjaro and soon you will be relaxing at the Mweka Camp. Tonight, we will have a hot dinner and will share stories about your incredible accomplishment of reaching the summit of Kilimanjaro. You will most definitely rest really well tonight and your feet will be very sore.

**DAY 6**

**UMBWE ROUTE: MWEKA CAMP 3,100 METERS (10,170 FEET) TO MWEKA GATE 1,980 METERS (6,496 FEET)**

- **Approximate Hiking Time:** 2-3 hours
- **Distance:** 15 kilometers (9.3 miles)
- **Elevation Descent:** 1,120 meters (3,674 feet)
- **Habitat:** Rain Forest

Following a hot breakfast, you will finish your descent from Kilimanjaro. You only have a few more kilometers (miles) of descending, but they aren’t going to be as easy as you might think. Your legs will be very tired and your feet will hurt from the day before, which makes these last few hours a little bit more difficult than expected.

After your reach the Mweka Gate, the Mount Kilimanjaro National Park Authority will issue certificates of completion. If you were a climber that reached Stella Point, you will receive a green certificate. If you reached the summit of Uhuru Peak then will receive a
gold certificate. You will be happy after you get back to the hotel. It has been a long time since you had a shower and slept in a proper bed. Congratulations are in order, because you reached the roof of Africa!