

Rongai Route 6 Days hiking



The **Rongai route** is the only route that approaches Kilimanjaro **from the north**, very close to the Kenyan boarder. It offers **spectacular views** of the Masai lands reaching beyond Tanzania into Kenya. It is **drier than other routes** making it a good option for those climbing **during the wet season**. It is also a good route for those looking for a **shorter, more remote route** with **fewer trekkers**. The Rongai route **joins the Marangu route** for the **summit ascent and descent** via Marangu, southeast of the mountain. While being a potentially shorter and “easier” route the Rongai like the Marangu is a **continuous gradual ascent**, which can make **acclimatisation more challenging than on routes** where the trail ascends and descends between camps. The “hike up high, and sleep lower” on other routes helps improve acclimatisation to altitude. To improve acclimatization, summit success, and safety, on the **Rongai route 7- 8 days are recommended**. While we offer this 6 - day hike we **recommend** that you **consider our 7-day hike**.

Our guides will monitor you daily for signs of altitude related sickness, **using a pulse oximeter** to assess your level of blood oxygen saturation, and using a **stethoscope** to listen for any unusually lung sounds. **Of the many hikers** that journey up Kilimanjaro each year **a few experience potentially serious altitude issues**. **Our guides are trained to identify** these, and **will transport you down** if necessary. Our team take your **well-being seriously**, and carry an **emergency Oxygen** canister, and **2 – way communication systems**. Many hikers assist their acclimatization **by taking Diamox**, obtained from their **travel clinic** before travelling to Tanzania.

Accommodation: Hotel 2, Tents 5

Kilimanjaro Bliss: 6 days

Recommended days on trek: 6 - 7 days

Minimum days on trek: 6

Difficulty: Beginners

Scenery: Very Good

Hiker Traffic: Low - Medium

Stating point: North

Distance: 73km



Acclimatization: Low to medium

RONGAI ITINERARY (6 Days Hiking)

DAY 0: You will be **met at Kilimanjaro International Airport**, if flying direct, and **transported to your hotel**. We recommended that you try to arrange your flight, so you arrive 1.5 - 2 days before your hike. This is to allow your body time to rest and begin to acclimatise to the new time zone and altitude. It also allows for any flight delays and baggage issues (always wear or carry your hiking boots in flight with you, and let us know as soon as possible if your luggage does not arrive with you). We recognise that some people have limited vacation time and may arrive as late as the afternoon prior to starting their hike.

Your guide will arrange to meet with you during the afternoon / evening for a **pre - trip briefing**. Please make sure you bring your **passport and insurance details**, as well as your return flight details.

DAY 1: Transportation to Rongai gate - Simba camp, Elevation: 2000m - 2650m, Distance: 7km, Time: 3-4 hours walking

Habitat: Rain forest

We will **pick you up from your hotel** around 8:30am, where you will **meet the team of guides, cooks and porters**, who will load your luggage so that we can leave around 9:00am. We first **drive for about 3 hours to Marangu gate** to obtain our permit. We then have a **further 2 hours drive to the Rongai gate**, which is located 15 minutes from the Kenyan border. Here **hikers register** at the office (you will need your **passport number** for this) and eat **lunch** while the porter's loads are weighed. Once this is complete we **begin our hike up through the tropical rain forest**. Here there is a high chance that we will hear and see wildlife, such as monkeys and birds, as the trail continues upward to our first overnight at the **Simba camp**.

Day 2: Simba camp – Kikelelwa camp, Elevation :2650m- 3675m, Distance: 12km, Time: 6-7 hours

Habitat: Moorland

Following a hearty breakfast we begin **hiking through the moorland**, where the habitat supports colourful **wild flowers** along the side of the trail as well as **stunning views of the eastern ice-fields** on the rim of Kibo. We stop for **hot lunch** at the second cave, after which the hike continues anti- clockwise to **Kikelelwa camp** for dinner and overnight.

Day 3: Kikelelwa - Mawenzi Tarn hut, Elevation: 3675 m- 4300m, Distance :4km, Time: 3 - 4 hours

Habitat: Alpine desert

This is a **short day**, up steep **grass sloped terrain**. The views from here include the **vast expanse of the Masai Mara**, in Kenya to the North. We reach **camp for lunch**, then **hike up to the middle of the Mawenzi peak to assist acclimatization**, and return to camp. From the top of we will enjoy the **stunning views of Mawenzi, Kibo and the little Lake at our camp**.

Day 4: Mawenzi Tarn hut - Kibo hut campsite, Elevation: 4300 m- 4700 m, Distance: 8km, Time: 4- 5 hours

Habitat: "Lunar" landscape

The hike to Kibo campsite crosses the **lunar-like landscape** of the **Mawenzi / Kibo saddle** and takes between 4 – 5 hours. A hot **lunch** will be waiting for us at Kibo, where we will **relax before eating an early dinner**, so we can retire to our tents early to sleep, in **preparation for the summit hike which**



starts around midnight.

Day 5: Kibo camp - Uhuru peak and down to Horombo, Elevation: 4700m - 5895m and down to 3700m
Distance: 21km, Time: 12 hours

Habitat: Arctic

Our **final ascent to Uhuru Peak the “roof of Africa” begins at midnight**. There are three sections to this days’ hike. The first from **base camp to Gillman's point at 5681m** is the **most challenging** section due to its steepness and increasing altitude. It is a **slow shuffle** up the volcanic scree switchbacks, requiring both **physical and mental determination**. As we reach **Gilimans Point** we enjoy the **magnificent sunrise** (weather permitting) lighting up the mountain and valley below. From **Gillman's to Stella** point and on **to Uhuru Peak at 5895m** takes approximately two hours, and is a **gentle hike along the crater rim**, with **magnificent views** of Kilimanjaro’s famous **glacier and ice cliffs**. We spend a maximum of **15 minutes at Uhuru Summit** due to the high altitude. This gives us time to congratulate each other, enjoy the **euphoria of our achievement**, photograph and breath-in the **magnificence of our surroundings**. We **begin our descent**, first back to **Kibo for brunch**, then continuing **down to Horombo camp (3700m)** for dinner and overnight camp.

Day 6: Horombo hut - Marangu gate, Elevation: 3700m 1800m, Distance: 19 km, Time: 6 hours

Habitat: Rain forest

After breakfast the whole team (clients, guides, cooks and porters) celebrate and share their thanks with each other. The clients personally give tips to porters, cook, and guides, before making the final descent to Marangu gate. You **sign out of the Park**, receive **summit certificate**, board our vehicle, which will be waiting at Marangu gate and are **transported first to Moshi for lunch** and a **celebratory drink** for those who wish. Later we return you to your **hotel in Arusha**, where you can enjoy a **shower and soft mattress**.

Next Day: Depart for the **airport or other destinations** in Tanzania or Kenya. A trip to the beaches at **Zanzibar** is a good way to recuperate. **We can arrange** many reasonably priced **trips and safaris** around Arusha and the Kilimanjaro region.

If you are taking a day or two to rest up and see Arusha, we can arrange a visit to the **Paradiso Children’s Home** we support, and /or to other local attractions that interest you. **Ask Us** for list of recommended attractions.