



Mount Meru Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 - Depart mid-evening from London Heathrow on an overnight flight to Kilimanjaro International Airport.

Day 2 - Arrive at Kilimanjaro airport around breakfast time (subject to which airline used). An East African Adventure representative/trip leader will be there to meet you and help with your baggage and transfer to Ilboru Safari Lodge (generally) on the outskirts of Arusha on the lower-most slopes of Mt Meru. This lodge is about an hour's drive from the airport and is comfortably appointed with characterful private thatched rooms set in large gardens of many colourful flowers and plants, a great place for resting after a long day travelling.

Day 3 – Soon after breakfast we leave to drive to the start of our route on Mt Meru. This takes between 1 and 2 hours and travels through farmland and small communities on the edge of Arusha National Park. As we travel to the foot of the mountain there is a lot to see - examples of the local way of life, the alkaline lakes which are home to flamingoes and other water birds inside the park, and even giraffe near the road grazing. We arrive at the Momella park gate (1500m) and register while our porters sort their loads. We then enter the park with a National Park ranger who accompanies us throughout our time on the mountain and cross a small plain that is home to game including zebra, giraffe and elephant. Climbing gradually we enter the rainforest and can look out for bushbuck (a small antelope) and colobus monkeys amongst the large Cedar trees and glades of the forest. The relatively few trekkers on the mountain mean the camps are not over crowded and we will not meet many other groups during our trek enabling Mt Meru to retain a feeling of solitude. Around 4 hours walking brings us to Miriakamba Hut at roughly 2500 metres, in a small clearing with views of the lakes in the National Park. Whilst on Mt Meru we stay in large wooden huts divided into small dormitories that are relatively comfortable.



Day 4 – The path through the rainforest is steeper today and we should have views of Kilimanjaro roughly 50km away to the north-east. Hanging vines, many large trees, ferns and streams provide a rich habitat for plants and animals in this part of the



National Park where we hope to see monkeys, birdlife and may even spot the secretive leopard. Our camp for tonight is Saddle hut at 3570 metres, this is in a col between Little Meru and Rhino Point on Mt Meru, reaching this after 4-5 hours walking. From Saddle Hut, we have the option to climb Little Meru, which is a 2 hour return trip, taking us to 3800 metres, and is very useful for further acclimatising. We have time to get our kit ready for the summit tomorrow and have an early dinner, before getting to bed to be ready for the climb's early start tonight.

Day 5 – We get up around 1 am to leave the hut 2 am, and start walking by the light of our head torches towards Rhino Point and the crater rim. We then follow the crater rim to the 4566 metre summit and enjoy the spectacular silhouetted views of Kilimanjaro as the sun rises over the plains of Africa, including the pyramid shadow cast by Mt Meru behind us. The flag of Tanzania is fixed at the top of Mt Meru, also known as Socialist peak since the country's independence, and there is a summit register kept in a metal box to sign before leaving. The true, dramatic nature of Mt Meru can be seen on the way down now the sun has risen, the crater rim is shaped like a horseshoe since the opposite wall collapsed leaving cliffs of 1500 metres. These are some of the biggest in Africa and from the top of them on the crater rim we can see the ash cone below, which is a perfectly formed reminder of past volcanic eruptions that is quite spectacular to see. We follow the rim back to Rhino Point with views of Little Meru then back to Saddle Hut for food and to pack before heading down to Miriakamba Hut to stay the night. This is a long day with 1000 metres of ascent, a 2000 metre descent and a total walking time of 12-14 hours, but the little climbed peak of Mt Meru is a very rewarding and worthwhile achievement. It offers stunning views, and is an ideal short trek on its own, or as a trek either side of a safari, or acclimatisation for a climb of Kilimanjaro.



Day 6 – Today we make our way down through the rainforest, able to look back and follow the route we took around the crater rim to the summit above us. It is 3-4 hours to the National Park gate at Momella and we can look down on the plain we soon cross to spot game as we near it. From here it is less than 30 minutes to the gate and our certificates for climbing to the summit. Now we transfer to a local lodge on the edge of Arusha National Park for dayrooms and lunch. The lodge is around a 30 minute drive from the gate, with views of Mt Meru so we can relax in the swimming pool after our climb and look back at the mountain before our return flight later that day.



Day 7 – Arrive at Heathrow mid-morning.

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