

# TREK KILIMANJARO

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How fit do I need to be?

Trekking Mount Kilimanjaro is all about **endurance** rather than speed; you will soon come to learn the term '**pole, pole**' ('slowly, slowly' in Swahili) when on the mountain. You will be waking up early in the mornings and trekking for long distances each day, so ensuring that you have a good level of fitness and stamina before you depart is key. Sticking to our training plan will really pay off. The best form of preparation is to walk for good lengths of time on undulating terrain, and where possible to follow this up with a similar length trek the next day. It is important that you train with the walking boots that you will be using on the trek itself and with your day pack on your back.

### What will the trekking be like?

You will trek through **different eco-systems** on your ascent up the mountain, on overgrown forest paths, moorland, rocky trail and scree. Much of the walking is rough underfoot. Lower down it can be wet and muddy; barren and arid higher up. It is challenging in itself, but the main challenge lies in the **altitude** – read on for more detail. You will trek approximately 90km (55 miles) on this trip overall, though it's much more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk for, and the terrain, not the distance. There's a reason this trek carries our hardest grading level.

Keep in mind that this is an **extremely tough** trek and everyone will find elements of the challenge difficult at some point, whether it is the physical trekking, camping, changing weather, effects of altitude or something else. It is great if you can work as a team and help each other out during any difficulties. While there are many challenges, **the enjoyment and rewards that come from trekking Mount Kilimanjaro are immense!**

### How will the altitude affect me?

Trekking at altitude makes even the simplest tasks feel like hard work, and along with feeling cold and fatigued, there will be tough times for everyone. The Machame Route allows for excellent acclimatisation to the altitude as it contours around the mountain, rather than going straight up, and allows you to trek higher than you sleep at important points on the ascent.

Symptoms of being at altitude include **tiredness, shortness of breath, headaches and nausea**. Altitude affects people differently and being super-fit is no guarantee of being less likely to feel the effects. Where a participant is suffering from the effects of altitude, it may be necessary to walk them back down the mountain. There is no way of predicting how you will feel at altitude, even if you have been at altitude before.

Our recommendations are to have **trained properly, to not drink alcohol** in the days leading up to the trip and to **listen to your leaders/guides** if they try to slow down the trekking pace. The slower you trek the more it helps fending off feeling poorly. A Tanzanian guide will walk at the front of the group to set the pace. It is not a race - go at your own pace, enjoy the scenery and the amazing experience! There is a lot of information about Altitude Mountain Sickness (AMS) in our document 'The Effects of Altitude,' including information about the medication Diamox.

### Who accompanies us on the trek from Discover Adventure?

Your trip will be led by an experienced Discover Adventure leader. Sometimes they accompany you from the UK, but they may meet you in-country. Leaders are selected for their experience in wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour, and ability to effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first-aid. You're in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.



01722 718444  
info@discoveradventure.com



## Will there be a doctor with us as well?

An expedition doctor or medic usually accompanies the group as well, dependent on **group size**. Our medics are there to provide first aid and promote day-to-day welfare on the trip; they carry a robust medical kit, but cannot possibly be equipped with everything needed to counter any given situation. They also provide crucial support to our leaders and, as they are usually found at the back of our groups, are also experts at encouraging you when things get tough.

## Who else will accompany the group on this challenge?

Our leadership team on the mountain is completed by local mountain guides, who have a wealth of experience. We also have a local support crew of porters, cooks and drivers. The local team knows the area well, and is a great source of knowledge about the local way of life as well as trekking Kilimanjaro. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

Guides are usually conversant in English, German and French. To become a guide, one must work through the ranks from porter to cook to assistant guide, then guide. All men on Kilimanjaro have small plots of land they work to feed their families - portering is extra work, which they do to supplement their incomes.

## What will the weather be like?

Prepare for **all weathers** as you will experience a range of temperatures whilst trekking. It's hot and humid when you first start and then very cold towards the top. Never underestimate the power of the sun's rays, even when it feels cold, there is cloud cover, or the wind is blowing. Please bring SPF30 sun-cream as a minimum, preferably higher, along with lip salve with a high SPF too. The higher you trek, the more intense the sun's rays are, and risk of burning is increased. A hat and quality sunglasses are a must.

## What are the transport arrangements for the group and our kit?

Vehicles take the group to the start of the trek and pick us up at the end. Porters carry all luggage, food, water and camping equipment. You cannot access your main packs during the day so need to carry a day-pack with your fleece, waterproof, sun-cream, hat, camera, water etc. Discover Adventure Kitbags are specially designed for the rigours of our challenges and are very affordable, please ask for details.

There are strict rules restricting the weight of the load a Kilimanjaro porter is permitted to carry – see below.

## What is the luggage allowance?

Your main luggage limit on the plane is 20kg with a 5kg allowance for hand luggage. However, you will need to travel as lightly as possible as there is a **weight limit on the trek itself. Your main bag must not weigh more than 12kg (26lbs)**. Your main toiletries, travel clothing and anything else that you do not need to take on the mountain can be left in a separate bag at the hotel, so bring something smaller to hold your extras in. Stick to the kit list and you'll manage that with no problems. Don't forget that suitcases are not suitable, **soft rucksacks/kitbags only** (with no wheels on). Doing a practice pack/weighing your bags before you leave home is very beneficial to make sure you will be able to stick to the limit.

## What do I need to bring?

Refer to your **Kit List** to ensure you have all the essentials for a comfortable trip. Make sure your walking boots are waterproof and well-worn in. Trekking tops of a wicking nature will be more comfortable to walk in than cotton. If you intend to trek with poles, ensure that you train with them. If required, equipment hire (eg sleeping bags and sleeping mats) in Moshi may be possible – please contact us to find out more.



## What is the accommodation like?

Your first and last night will be spent in lodge accommodation near to Moshi, where there is a swimming pool. Make sure you eat a good dinner on your first night there. The lodge also has a fantastic view of Mount Kilimanjaro which puts the challenge into perspective. Whilst on the trek you will be **camping in tents with room for 2 people plus your luggage**. If you are travelling alone, you will be paired up with someone of the same sex and similar age. You can still let us know if you wish to share with a particular person, if you have not already done so. On the rare occasion where flights depart very early in the morning (eg 4am), a full night's accommodation will not be provided, but day-rooms will be available for freshening up before transferring to the airport.



## Can I request single accommodation?

There may be a limited number of single rooms available in the lodge accommodation at the start and the end of your trip, subject to request and at an additional cost (on a first-come, first-served basis). It is not possible to have your own tent on the trek itself. Sharing a room is a really good ice-breaker if you don't know anyone else on the trip, so don't worry too much about it!

## Will there be Wi-Fi, phone reception and charging points?

The Wi-Fi in the hotel may not be as fast as you're used to at home and there won't be any internet access when on the trek itself. The phone reception will be limited and, unsurprisingly, there are no charging points on the trail. You may wish to bring your own solar charging device. Treat this challenge like a 'Digital Detox' and tell your relatives that no news is good news, as the leader will have a satellite phone for emergencies only.

For information on voltage and plug sockets in hotel accommodation, see <https://www.iec.ch/world-plugs>

## Is it true that there's a ban on plastic bags?

Yes. In June 2019, the Tanzanian Government banned all use of plastic bags in an effort to protect the environment. People (including tourists) found using them or bringing them into the country can face a heavy fine or even imprisonment. This includes shopping bags, bin-bags and rubble sacks.

Clear plastic bags given out at airports for liquids and toiletries should be fine. Nappy sacks and zip-lock bags should also be okay but we would advise limiting how many you bring and pack them in your hold luggage. We strongly urge you to comply with these regulations. Please refer to our detailed kit-list for further advice.

Please also note that single-use (soft) plastic bottles are not permitted in Kilimanjaro National Park - ensure you have a water-bottle of rigid plastic to accompany your hydration bladder.



## What will I be eating?

The food is fresh and plentiful so **make sure you eat well** (it's typical to lose your appetite at altitude, so you may have to make yourself eat at times). The meals are usually high in carbohydrate content, and you will eat foods like porridge, bread, stews, soups, potatoes, meat dishes, pastas, fruit & veg.

## I have a specific dietary need; will there be enough for me to eat?

Being vegetarian, gluten free, dairy free or having other dietary requirements is usually not a problem provided you **let us know well in advance** (airlines need to know at least 8 weeks prior to the departure). If you feel you aren't getting enough energy because of your dietary requirements please talk to the leaders on the trip – they can't help unless they know there's a problem. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

## Do I need to bring snacks?

Bring enough snacks to keep you going each day - around **3 - 4 tasty treats a day plus 6-8 for summit night will suffice**. We recommend a combination of slow and fast release snacks such as cereal bars (e.g. Tracker), flapjacks, salted nuts, chocolate bars such as Mars or Snickers, and a packet of sweets. Bringing a combination of treats will keep you interested in snacking as consistent energy levels are very important. This trip is all about the calories as you may be expending around double your usual calorie intake!

## How much do I need to drink?

You will find that you need to drink significantly more whilst trekking at altitude, and should be drinking small amounts at regular intervals to keep well hydrated; this can help to keep the effects of altitude at bay. You will be provided with plenty of sterilised water at breakfast, lunch and in the evening so keep topping up your personal water bottles/hydration systems. **Ensure that you bring sufficient water-carrying capacity**. You will need to bring at least 3ltrs water capacity in total, with a 1ltr (35oz) water bottle and 2ltr (70oz) bladder or another 2 x 1ltr bottles. You will need to have one bottle down your jacket on summit night as bladder hoses and mouth pieces tend to freeze at higher altitudes even with insulation on them.



01722 718444  
info@discoveradventure.com



## What is the celebration meal?

At the end of your challenge, there will be a final meal together as a group to celebrate your achievements. Please check your trip itinerary to confirm whether you will need to set aside funds to pay for this on the night.

## What about toilets?

Toilet facilities won't be like home. There are no toilet facilities except for in camp or at lunch so there may be occasions when you need to go whilst trekking. You will need to take paper / wet wipes and something to store it in once used (eg small tub / pouch), in order to make sure you **leave no trace** whilst on your trek. This can then be emptied at the next stop. There will be portaloos at lunch and in camp. You may see toilet paper discarded by other trekkers, but please do not be tempted to do likewise. We feel strongly about minimising our environmental impact.

## What can I do to prevent illness?

On the trip itself, food is cooked and prepared to very high standards and you can eat with confidence – though illness can spread through the group very quickly when you are living closely together, so it's important to bring **antiseptic hand sanitiser** for use after the toilet and before eating to minimise the spread of germs. Also, avoid sharing water bottles and sharing each other's food or sweets as this spreads germs very easily, even if you are being careful.

Away from the trek itself, we'd advise against drinking tap water (or cleaning teeth in it), and avoid ice cubes in drinks unless you are sure they are made with bottled/treated water. For the same reason avoid salads, raw vegetables and fruit that you cannot peel yourself, as well as unpasteurised dairy products and ice cream.

There is a risk of sunstroke and dehydration. With the country being so close to the equator, the blazing hot sun is directly overhead and you should use a high factor sun cream or sun block, wear a hat, sunglasses and ensure that you drink plenty of water or energy drinks to replenish your fluid levels. Bear in mind the sun is very strong at altitude, even if you feel cooler.

## Any safety tips for non-trekking times?

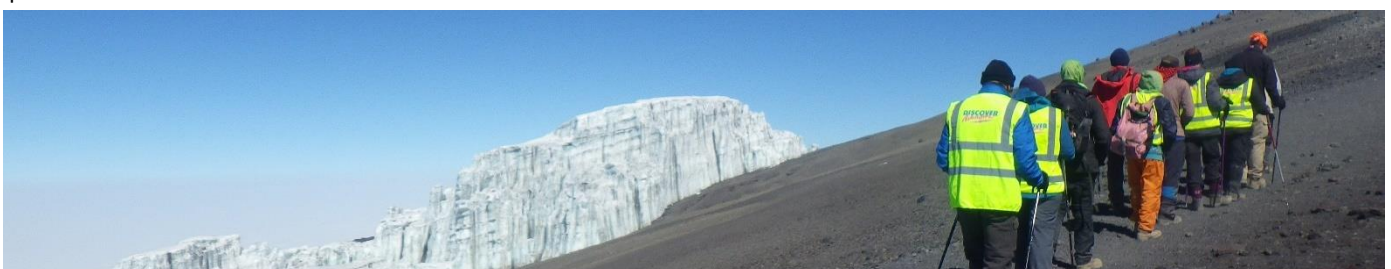
One of the benefits of group travel is safety – you all look out for each other, and there's no reason to be alone. Sometimes, however, it's easy to lose concentration in a group. Theft is relatively common in Tanzania, particularly in the cities, so stay focussed, and take responsibility for yourself and your belongings. Leave valuables behind; you don't need your best jewellery and gadgets on this trip. Store your main cash separately and keep a few notes in your pocket while sight-seeing, so you don't have to display your wallet when you just want to buy something small, especially on buses or in tourist areas. That also means that if you are unfortunate enough to be mugged, you have something handy to pass over quickly. Wear a concealed money belt with your flight ticket and some of your cash inside. Be careful at night and avoid walking or getting into taxis alone. Crowded areas such as bus stations and markets attract pick-pockets and bag-slashers, so be vigilant for both yourself and your companions. Don't leave drinks unattended in bars. This might all sound a bit intimidating, but it's no different to most major cities or tourist areas in the world, and it's very rare for a problem to occur on one of our trips.

## What if I have any issues during the trip?

Our leaders are very experienced and work very hard to ensure your trip runs as smoothly and enjoyably as possible, and we're sure that you'll have a wonderful time. If you do have any concerns or problems during the trip **please talk to the crew and give them the opportunity to explain or rectify things while they are able**. They are all very approachable!

## What are the contingencies in case of an emergency on this challenge?

The crew will have radios and emergency satellite phones, extensive medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. If you are feeling unwell on this trek, tell your leaders and listen to their advice, as your health and safety is our top priority. In some cases, you may need to come down from the mountain and the crew will support this quickly and efficiently in the best way possible.



## What currency should I take?

You can only obtain Tanzanian Shillings (TSH) once in Tanzania. It is possible to exchange sterling and US dollars into local currency in Moshi and at hotels. Prices are widely quoted in dollars, and dollar cash is easier to use and exchange than sterling. US dollars issued before 2006 will not be accepted. It is advisable to take small denominations of dollars; you may find that change will be given in TSH. Damaged or torn notes are very hard to get rid of so try to avoid accepting them. Major credit cards are accepted in large hotels and some shops. Cash can be withdrawn (Visa/Mastercard only); any sizeable town has at least one bank with an ATM.

## How much money will I need to bring with me?

We recommend that you take **approximately £250 worth of US dollars** for personal expenses, as you cannot get the local currency outside Tanzania. Out of this amount, you will need to set aside approximately \$15-25 for the meals typically not included (check your itinerary for details) and money for tips for the local crew. You will also need to set aside money for your visa if you are obtaining this on arrival. It is advisable to bring a credit card in case of an emergency, however cards are not always widely accepted so please don't be offended if they are refused, it is best to use cash.

If you struggle to acclimatise to the altitude and need to descend to lower elevations for your own safety, you **must ensure you have enough funds to cover any resultant costs – for example, extra hotel accommodation or meals**. Some of these may be recoverable through your travel insurance, depending on your cover. The same applies if you have to depart from group arrangements for any other reason, such as fitness, illness or any unforeseen circumstances.

## Are there many shopping opportunities?

There will be opportunities to buy souvenirs and crafts from the shops and markets on your free day. Many market sellers will expect you to haggle over price. Haggling is great fun, and a good way of interacting with local people. A good rule of thumb is to offer a third of the asking price and meet somewhere in the middle. However, while the intention is to knock the price down, be aware that if the sellers are desperate for immediate cash they will sell at a loss. So do not drive too hard a bargain; remember that a dollar means a lot more to the seller than it will to you once you get home.

## What do you recommend for crew tips?

This trek is a considerable operation, involving a large local support team on the mountain, from guides and camp manager to cooks and porters. All play their part in your challenge, and work incredibly hard for the duration of the trip. We show our appreciation in the form of a tip, which is split out between them. The recommended guideline is **around \$150-\$200 per participant**; your tour leader will give you a more accurate amount on the trip, as the size of your group dictates the size of the support team looking after you. Please do not give out individual tips to any local crew who you feel have helped you personally. They work well as a team and those 'out of sight' will be working just as hard. Feel free to give away any unwanted kit as the porters are always grateful for extra items – they can be pooled together when you get back to the hotel.

This might seem a lot, and might be hard to appreciate in the comfort of your own home! Once you have experienced (and relied on) the cheerful support and strength of the local team, we're sure you will want to contribute your share. While tipping is at your discretion, it is the way on Kili. We work with a professional, ethical in-country operator who ensures the local crew is paid fair wages and well looked-after, but tips are still relied upon. We also work closely with a local Porters' Association, ensuring that wages and general standards for all members of our local team meet or exceed their guidelines. These guidelines also form the basis of the recommended amount to tip that we give you.

We have a long-standing relationship, and there is high mutual respect between Discover Adventure groups and the local team; as a result, we are looked after extremely well on the mountain. Please do your bit to ensure this excellent working relationship continues for future groups.



01722 718444  
info@discoveradventure.com



## How do I ensure I'm sensitive to the local culture?

At Discover Adventure we expect our groups to be sensitive to other cultures – be especially respectful in public areas and near places of worship, but also remember that even in the most remote locations, we have local crew with us and they deserve your respect. Remember that what you would wear on a hot day in the UK is not necessarily acceptable in other countries, even in areas used to tourism. While much of your trekking time you'll be dressed for the cold, on hotter days please dress appropriately. Women are advised to avoid tight or strappy tops in favour of regular T-shirts; men should wear a top at all times. Avoid short shorts; trousers are preferable in rural areas. By dressing thoughtfully, you not only experience minimum hassle but do not offend the local people; many of our trips rely on these small communities.

Try to research a little about the culture before you go, or learn a few basic phrases; it all goes a long way to ensuring you connect with local people in a positive way. Thanks in advance for helping to maintain the good reputation of Discover Adventure groups.

## Do I need travel insurance?

As part of your booking conditions, it is **compulsory that you ensure you have adequate travel insurance cover** to cover you for trekking. See the [insurance page on our website](#) for further information.

## What if this trip does not meet minimum numbers?

Every group needs a minimum number of bookings for it to be feasible to run. Cancelling a trip is rare, and we do our utmost to avoid it. You will be contacted in plenty of time if we are concerned about the group size, and we will discuss options with you.

## When will we know the flight details and meeting point?

Discover Adventure will usually confirm the main group flight details 6 weeks prior to the trip departure so you will know which airport you are travelling from and can arrange suitable transport. You will be sent your **Final Joining Instructions** in the month prior to the trip departure date, within which specific details of **where and when to meet your trip leader** and fellow trekking participants will be confirmed.



## Can I make my own flight arrangements or alter my flight from the main group?

Flights are included on this trip and you will automatically be booked on to the main group flights, unless you let us know otherwise in good time (no later than three months prior to the trip departure). It is possible to make your own flight arrangements; a land-only discount will be applied. See the **Flight Arrangements Form** in your Passenger Portal. It is also possible to extend your stay and deviate from the main group flight booking (fee applies); again, see the Form. Note that you will remain on the same flight path, returning from the same airport. There is sometimes a supplement to pay if the flights are more expensive on your requested day; early requests have the best chance of avoiding this. We will always contact you if this is the case to check whether you are happy to proceed. If you are keen to upgrade your flight, this may be possible at a supplement and you can contact us for an approximate price but please note that this is often very expensive and we will require full payment upfront.

## Will I need my flight ticket before the trip departure date?

Unless specified otherwise, you do not need to have your flight ticket prior to the trip departure date as this will be given to you by the trip leader or a Discover Adventure representative at the airport.

## What are the entry requirements?

A valid 10-year passport is essential; with at least six months remaining before expiry. **British passport-holders will require a tourist visa to enter Tanzania.** We highly recommend obtaining an **e-visa** (online visa application) in good time prior to travel, which is available via the Tanzanian High Commission website and costs \$50 (for single entry) at time of writing. For more details, please refer to the foreign travel advice [given here](#). Although it may be possible to obtain your visa at Kilimanjaro Airport on arrival (subject to all the immigration requirements) this is not recommended as it can take in excess of 2 hours to complete. For all other nationalities, please check the visa fee and requirements with the Tanzanian High Commission as it does vary. Remember to check any regulations for countries you transit during your flight.

There may also be health declarations to make. Do check the [FCO Entry Requirements](#) information carefully, as regulations can and do change without warning.



## How can I find out more about the requirement for vaccinations?

We recommend you ensure your routine schedule of vaccinations is up-to-date (especially Tetanus) and check the Fit For Travel website for guidance and information [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk). Always consult your local GP or travel clinic for the latest health advice, as they are made aware of any updates in World Health Travel requirements. Allow plenty of time prior to travel to have any vaccinations required.

Vaccination against yellow fever is only essential for entry into Tanzania if travelling from an infected area or country – this does not include transit stops under 12 hours in duration where you have not left the airport, which is usually the case on our trips. Most people taking our group flights will therefore not need to be vaccinated.

## What about malaria and insect bites?

While you are above 1000m it is unlikely that you will encounter any mosquitoes, but protection against malaria is strongly recommended for the parts of your trip at lower elevations. Again, check [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk). Your GP or travel clinic will advise on the best malaria tablets for this region. Other insects bite too, so prevention against being bitten is always key. Cover up at dawn and dusk in loose-fitting clothing, use a good insect repellent and avoid wearing strongly perfumed toiletries.

## Passenger Portal

We have a passenger portal which will enable you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).



01722 718444  
info@discoveradventure.com

