



**Alaska Mountain Guides  
International Inc.**



## **KILIMANJARO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

The following questions and answers were designed to provide you with all of the details of our Kilimanjaro program. Please don't hesitate to call or email if you have additional questions or need any clarification.

**Who are my American guides?** Your American Guide is a medically trained professional who has experience guiding with us in Alaska and around the world. They are very fun people to adventure with and they place your safety as their top priority.

**Who are my African guides?** Our African guides are Killian and John. They are outstanding guides who have worked with us for years. They have each climbed the mountain over 200 times.

**How much weight will I carry?** You only carry your daypack with water, lunch, extra layers, camera, etc. Porters carry the rest.

**How much gear can I give the porters?** Porters can carry up to 32 pounds of your extra baggage.

**When should I reserve my trip?** The earlier you reserve your date, the better chance you have to get the date of your choice, and the best airfare. In addition, prices do go up each year; we charge you the advertised price at the time of deposit.

**How do I sign up?** Just mail, fax or email us a completed registration form and pay the \$500 deposit.

**What are your cancellation policies?** Our complete trip policies are available via email and on the web at <http://mountainguidesinternational.com/internationalpolicies.html> Please let us know if you would like a copy.

**Which is the best route?** This depends. The Machame is the most popular and it is a great route. The trail is in fantastic shape and this makes the climb easier than the Rongai. We suggest the Rongai for those who are looking for a bit rougher trail with less people. The Lemosho is the most gradual and considered the easiest route. It is also one day longer. All the routes meet up at Barafu for the final summit push and descend via the Mweka route. Please give a call if you have any questions on which route is best for you.

**Do you camp on the crater rim?** No, the chances of serious altitude sickness increase greatly when sleeping at over 18,000 feet. We adhere to the age-old climber's adage "Climb high, sleep low"

**How much should I tip?** We suggest budgeting \$200 to be split with the African Staff (\$225 for Lemosho Route) and another \$50 to \$100 for your American Guide. You can give all the tips to the American guide to disperse to the staff. Safari drivers should get a total of \$25 to \$30 per day from the people in your vehicle.

**Do I need a visa?** You will need a single entry visa for Tanzania. You can get a visa upon arrival in Arusha or get one before your trip. (Recommended) We use Passports Plus <http://www.passportsplus.com/> (888) 821-8472 -Please allow one month for processing. The application asks for a Tanzanian contact, use: Zainab Ansell P.O. Box 1990 Moshi, Tanzania Tel. 255 27 2750011.

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**Do I need shots or Malaria medicine?** We recommend that you check with your doctor for the most current immunization information. If you have received immunizations, either in the past, or for this trip, make certain to bring your immunization book/card. You can also go to the Center for Disease control website to learn more.

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/> Malaria medication is recommended.

**What are your rescue protocols?** Our number one job as guides is to catch any medical issues before they become serious. For this reason we take twice daily pulse oximeter readings and constantly monitor our guests' health. In the event someone does become ill, our first action will be to descend using special wheeled stretchers. If we cannot immediately descend, we carry oxygen and a portable hyperbaric chamber to alleviate altitude issues. Our staff also carries cell phones for instant contact with park officials and EMS services. There are good hospitals in both Arusha and Moshi. If someone is seriously ill or injured, the American guide will accompany them all the way to the hospital and the trip will continue on with our lead African guides.

**Do you carry oxygen and a hyperbaric chamber?** Yes.

**What will we eat?** The meals are healthy and hearty. Breakfast and dinner are served hot in our dining tents, while most lunches are cold. We provide plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and can accommodate special diets if you give us notice. Coffee, tea and cocoa are served at breakfast and dinner.

**What about the tents?** We utilize 3 people, expedition tents made by Kelty. We only put 2 people in these tents so there is plenty of room.

**What if I am traveling solo?** Solo guests will have their own room in hotels and their own tent. We do not charge extra for singles.

**Do you have private toilets?** Yes. This aids in sanitation and privacy for our guests.

**How should I prepare for the climb?** We suggest training by hiking, running, biking, swimming, aerobics, or another program. Please call us if you have questions about your fitness.

**How hard is it?** We have taken guests of all ages to the top of Kilimanjaro. Everyone finds it challenging, but if you can hike for 8 to 12 hours you should make it. The better shape you are in will make the experience that much more enjoyable.

**Can I leave my non-climbing gear and valuables at the hotel?** Yes, there is a room for luggage and a safe for valuables. The safe is \$1 per day.

**What equipment do I need?** A detailed equipment list will be provided.

**Can I rent anything?** Sleeping bag, trekking poles, down jacket, duffle bags and packs are available for rent.

**When should I arrive?** We will pick you up around 9:00 PM at the Kilimanjaro International Airport on Day 1 (this is the date listed on the website dates and prices). The following day we have a team meeting, go over equipment, catch up with any lost bags, and take a hike or relax by the pool. We begin hiking on Day 3. We return to the hotel on day 9 and you can fly out on day 10.

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**When should I depart?** Flights leave Arusha at 10:00PM. So you can depart on the evening of our last scheduled day. If you are going on safari, you can leave the last day of the safari and still get a full day of wildlife viewing. Please call to confirm your exact dates before committing to airline tickets.

**What about kids?** People under 18 are more likely to have altitude issues. We do take teenagers on the mountain, but suggest taking the Lemosho route for the added acclimatization provided. The park service has set 12 years old as the minimum age.

**What is included?** Guides, porters, cooks, food, tents, sleeping pads, airport transfers, 3 nights lodging w/ breakfast, park fees, oxygen, hyperbaric chamber, are all included.

**What is not included?** Meals at the hotel, bottled drinks, and guide gratuities are not included.

**Is the water safe to drink?** Yes, we treat or filter all the water that you drink.

**When is the best time to climb?** You can climb the mountain year round. With climate change there is a less defined wet and dry season, and the temperatures are pretty constant. On any trip you should expect a few days of rain and a few days of sun. June through August is the busiest time on the mountain. If you are planning on a safari, timing your trip with the wildebeest migration in January and February is exciting.

**How many people will be on my trip?** No more than 8 people and often only 4 to 6. We believe that group size is one of the most important factors determining the kind of experience our guests will have. Smaller group sizes give us the flexibility to meet individual goals and expectations, as well as to avoid some of the challenges associated with large groups. We are happy to work with larger groups by special arrangements.

**What if I already have a group?** Groups of 4 or more receive a 10% discount. Groups of 6 or more will be treated as a private trip and no one outside the group will be added to the trip. These groups can also choose any dates that work for them and are not limited in size.

**Where should I fly?** Arusha is the starting and ending place for our trip. It can easily be reached by daily flights from Europe. We will meet you at Kilimanjaro International Airport for the short drive to Moshi. A driver with a sign that says "Zara Travel" will meet you or "Springlands Hotel" if there is any mix up you can call 255-27-2750011 / 2754240 / 2753105

**Do you have a good travel agent who specializes in Africa travel?** Yes, we work with Barb and Diane at Bay Travel in Wisconsin. They can be reached at 800-964-6164 or email [baytravel1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:baytravel1@sbcglobal.net)

**Where are we staying?** We stay in Moshi the first and last night of our trip. Our accommodations here are very comfortable. The Springlands Hotel has a pleasant staff, good food, clean rooms, and a refreshing pool. If there are any mix-ups in communications you can call them at 255-27-2750011 / 2754240 / 2753105. The Springlands has Internet and long distance phone service.

**What about airline tickets?** Make certain that your ticket matches the full name on your passport. Please make certain that we have your flight and arrival information so that we can meet you at the airport! Make certain to reconfirm your flights.

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**What about airline routing?** Flights go through Europe then nonstop to Nairobi and then on to Arusha. We will meet you at the airport unless other arrangements have been made.

**Are there arrival or departure taxes?** Currently there is no arrival tax in Tanzania. There is a departure tax for leaving which is approximately \$20.

**What about traveler's checks and credit cards?** Traveler's checks and cash are both easily exchangeable. Credit Cards also work well but are not accepted at the Springlands Hotel.

**Spending money?** We recommend bringing at least \$500 cash or travelers checks for restaurants, gifts, and travel after our climb. This is addition to the money needed for gratuities. Always carry a credit card for emergencies as well.

**Language?** Swahili is the main language, but English is common. Learning a few phrases goes a long way towards building relationships with the African guides.

**Medical issues?** Please make certain to answer the questions regarding health on your registration form. We also recommend that everyone check with their doctor to learn about the possible effects of high altitude and hot climates. If you require any personal medications, or, have any pre-existing medical problems, make certain to re-confirm with your guide upon arrival.

**How long are the trips?** Machame and Rongai trips are 10 days. 7 days on the mountain and 3 days in town. On the 9<sup>th</sup> day we return to the hotel. Day 10 is either the start of the safari or airport transfer. The Lemosho Route spends 8 days on the mountain and are 11 days in total.

**Travel insurance?** We highly recommend travel insurance. In many cases travel insurance will cover medical expenses, evacuation costs, lost baggage, travel delays, and other costs in the event you need to cancel your trip. We have worked with almost every provider of travel insurance and feel strongly that the Adventure Travel Protection Plan from AIG/Travel Guard is the best one available. It is one of the only plans that covers high altitude climbing and has significant benefits if purchased within 15 days of making your trip deposit. Details can be found on our website at <http://mountainguidesinternational.com/insurance.html>

*Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, or, if you would like any additional information.*

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