





### **Mandara hut to Horombo hut**

**Elevation:** 8,908ft (2715m) to 12,155ft (3705m)

**Hiking time:** 6h Distance: 7 miles (11.6 km)

**Habitat:** Moorland

From Mandara hut the trail passes through a short stretch of forest, skirts the base of the Maundi Crater and then emerges into the transition from rainforest to moorland. It is well worth a short detour to scramble up the rim of the Maundi Crater for your first really impressive view of the Kibo Crater. On a clear day, Kibo will glimmer in the distance, showing off her majestic glaciers in the morning sun. Once you are in the open moorland you will get the chance to see some of Kilimanjaro's most spectacular plants – the endemic giant lobelia which grows up to 10 feet (3m) in height and the giant groundsel (*Senecia Kilimanjari*), which can reach heights of 16 feet (5m)! After about 6 hours trek from here, you reach the Horombo hut.

### **DAY THREE**

#### **Horombo hut – Acclimatization day**

**Elevation:** 12,155ft (3705m)

Horombo hut is a village of huts perched on a small plateau, with buildings similar to Mandara, but with a total capacity of 120 climbers! Horombo is normally bustling with hikers, guides and porters, with an atmosphere of adventure and excitement. You will meet both ascending and descending hikers here. This extra day and night at Horombo is for additional acclimatization. A hike towards the Mawenzi hut, passing the Zebra Rocks on the way (about 3 hours up and 1.5 hours down), is strongly recommended. This hike will further assist with the process of acclimatization. Remember to drink enough water and move slowly! All meals for the day are provided at the hut. Retire to bed early and get a good night's rest.

### **DAY FOUR**

#### **Horombo hut to Kibo hut**

**Elevation:** 12,155ft (3705m) to 15,518ft (4730m)

**Hiking time:** 6h Distance: 6 miles (9.6 km)

**Habitat:** Alpine desert

After breakfast you now continue your ascent into the Alpine desert habitat. From Horombo there are two trails to the "Saddle" (which refers to the area located between the peaks of Mawenzi and Kibo). There is an upper route (right hand fork) and lower route (left hand fork) to choose from. The upper route (right hand fork) should be very familiar, as you will have climbed most of it the previous day (on



your acclimatisation hike) towards Mawenzi hut. This section is very stony and eroded. The recommended lower route (left hand fork) is much easier and nearly an hour shorter, and it also passes the last watering point at 13,549ft (4130m). You will have to fill your water bottles with all the water you will need until your return to Horombo hut in two night's time (unless you are willing to buy Mineral water at Kibo hut). Once again remember to slow down and drink enough water! Situated in the barren Alpine desert is Kibo hut, a stone build block house which has bunk beds for 60 climbers, but no streams with water nearby. There are platform toilets behind the hut. The summit is now only 3920ft (1195m) up and you will make your final ascent the same night. Prepare your equipment, poles and thermal clothing for your summit bid. This should include the replacement of your headlamp and camera batteries and make sure you have a spare set available as well. You will go to bed round 19:00. Try to get as much rest and sleep as possible.

## DAY FIVE

### **Kibo hut to Uhuru Peak and back down to Horombo hut**

**Elevation:** 15,518ft (4730m) to 19,341ft (5895m) and back down to 12,156ft (3705m)

**Hiking time:** 7 to 8 hours to reach Uhuru Peak, 6 to 8 hours to descend to Horombo

**Distance:** 3 miles (5.4km) ascent and 9 miles (15 km) descent

**Habitat:** Stone scree and ice-capped summit

You will rise around 23:00, and after some tea and biscuits you will start the trek. This is where the going really gets tough. The first section of the trail consists of a rocky path to the Hans Meyer Cave 16,896ft (5150m), also a good resting spot. The path then zigzags up to Gillman's point 18,638ft (5681m), which is located on the crater rim. This section is very steep with a lot of stone scree, requiring a great physical and mental effort. This is probably the most demanding section of the entire route. Do the Kili shuffle and move slowly. From Gillmans Point you will normally encounter snow all the way up to Uhuru peak 19,341ft (5895m), the highest point in Africa. Total exhilaration and satisfaction – you made it. Weather conditions on the summit will determine how long you will be able to spend, taking photographs, before the 3 hour descent back to Kibo hut. After a short rest you gather all your gear you left behind for the ascent and head down to Horombo hut (3 hours) for your overnight. The return to Horombo hut will seem surprisingly fast compared to the ascent. The total time spent walking on this day is around 14 hours, so be prepared for a very tough day. Later in the evening you enjoy your last dinner (with soft drinks and beer for sale at the camp office) on the mountain and a well-earned sleep.

## DAY SIX

### **Horombo hut to Marangu Gate**

**Elevation:** 12,156ft (3705m) to 6102ft (1860m)

**Hiking time:** 6 hours



**Distance:** 12 miles (19.7 km)

After breakfast you continue your descent (6 hours), passing the Mandara hut, down to the Marangu gate. At Marangu gate you sign your name and details in a register. This is also where successful climbers receive their summit certificates. You now drive back to Moshi for a long overdue hot shower, dinner and celebrations!