

SOS Villages d'Enfants Monde: Kilimanjaro Challenge Itinerary

Day 1: Depart Luxembourg on a connecting flight to Kilimanjaro, Tanzania. Upon arrival, transfer to an Arusha-based lodge for an overnight stay.

Day 2: Spend the day meeting with SOS Villages d'Enfants regional team and being part of the Children's Village in Arusha. Immerse Challenge team members in what SOS Villages d'Enfant does – how and why. Return to the lodge mid-to-late afternoon for rest, relaxation, reflection, and the final expedition briefing.

Day 3 (4 hours / 6.5 kilometres / 1,950 – 2,600m): An early start to the day as you depart on a 4-hour drive to the Rongai starting point. After registration, you will be introduced to your guides and porters who will remain with you for the duration of the trek. The trek begins from the attractive wooden village of Nale Moru (1,950m) on a small path that winds through fields of maize and potatoes before entering pine forest. The track then starts to climb consistently, but gently through attractive forest that shelters a variety of wildlife. The forest begins to thin out and the first camp is at the edge of the moorland zone (2,600m) with extensive views over the Kenyan plains

Day 4 (6-7 hours / 9 kilometres / 2,600 – 3,600m): A morning walk up to the 'Second Cave' (3,450m). The walk is steadily uphill with superb views of Kibo and the Eastern icefields on the crater rim. The afternoon route leaves the main trail and heads out across moorland on a smaller path towards the jagged peaks of Mawenzi. The campsite is in a sheltered valley near Kikelewa Caves (3,600m).

Day 5 (3-4 hours / 6 kilometres / 3,600 – 4,330m): A short but steep climb up grassy slopes is rewarded by superb views and a tangible sense of wilderness. Vegetation is left behind shortly before reaching the next camp at Mawenzi Tarn (4,330m), spectacularly situated directly beneath the towering spires of Mawenzi. The afternoon will be free to rest or explore the surrounding area as an aid to acclimatisation.

Day 6 (5 hours / 9 kilometres / 4,330 – 4,700m): You will cross the seemingly never-ending lunar desert of the 'Saddle' between Mawenzi Peak and Kibo campsite (4,700m), which lies at the foot of the Kibo crater wall. The open landscape affords stunning all-round views and, as you approach Kibo, you will begin to be able to make out the winding summit path that you will take the following day. The remainder of the day is spent resting in preparation for the final ascent.

Day 7 (10-15 hours / 5 kilometres ascent + 15 kilometres / 4,700 – 5,896 – 3,720m): The final and most demanding part of the climb takes place by torchlight departing at 12am on a switchback trail through loose volcanic scree to the crater rim at Gillman's Point (5,685m). There is a short rest to enjoy the spectacular sunrise over Mawenzi, followed by a three-hour round trip to Uhuru Peak (5,895m), passing close to the spectacular glaciers and ice cliffs that still occupy most of the summit area. The descent to Kibo (4,700m) is surprisingly fast and, after a chance to rest, the descent continues to the final campsite at Horombo (3,720m).

Day 8 (5-6 hours / 20 kilometres / 3,720 – 1,650m): The day will begin with a ritual ceremony where the support team thanks the climbers for coming to see their mountain. The climbers respond with thanks and allocation of tips via the Chief Guide. Tips are determined at your discretion but, as a guideline, \$100 per person would be a good starting point to reflect the level of service received. Your desire to get back to the resort for a return to daily comforts will only have grown stronger, and it is this that will continue to motivate you down to the Marangu Park Gate. The post-climb registration is followed by a farewell to your support team – which will usually be an emotional time due to the bonds you will have struck during your time together on the mountain. An awaiting car will then take you on a 2-hour journey back to the resort where you will have a chance to relax, enjoy a swim, a meal and drink. Having done so, you will transfer later that evening to Kilimanjaro Airport for the return journey home.

Day 9: The flight from Kilimanjaro Airport leaves soon after midnight and arrives into Amsterdam later that morning. The connecting flight to Luxembourg leaves shortly after and arrives at the final destination mid-morning. The return home can be delayed in order to travel onto destinations such as Zanzibar or a safari. Such extensions can be arranged upon request and at your own personal cost.