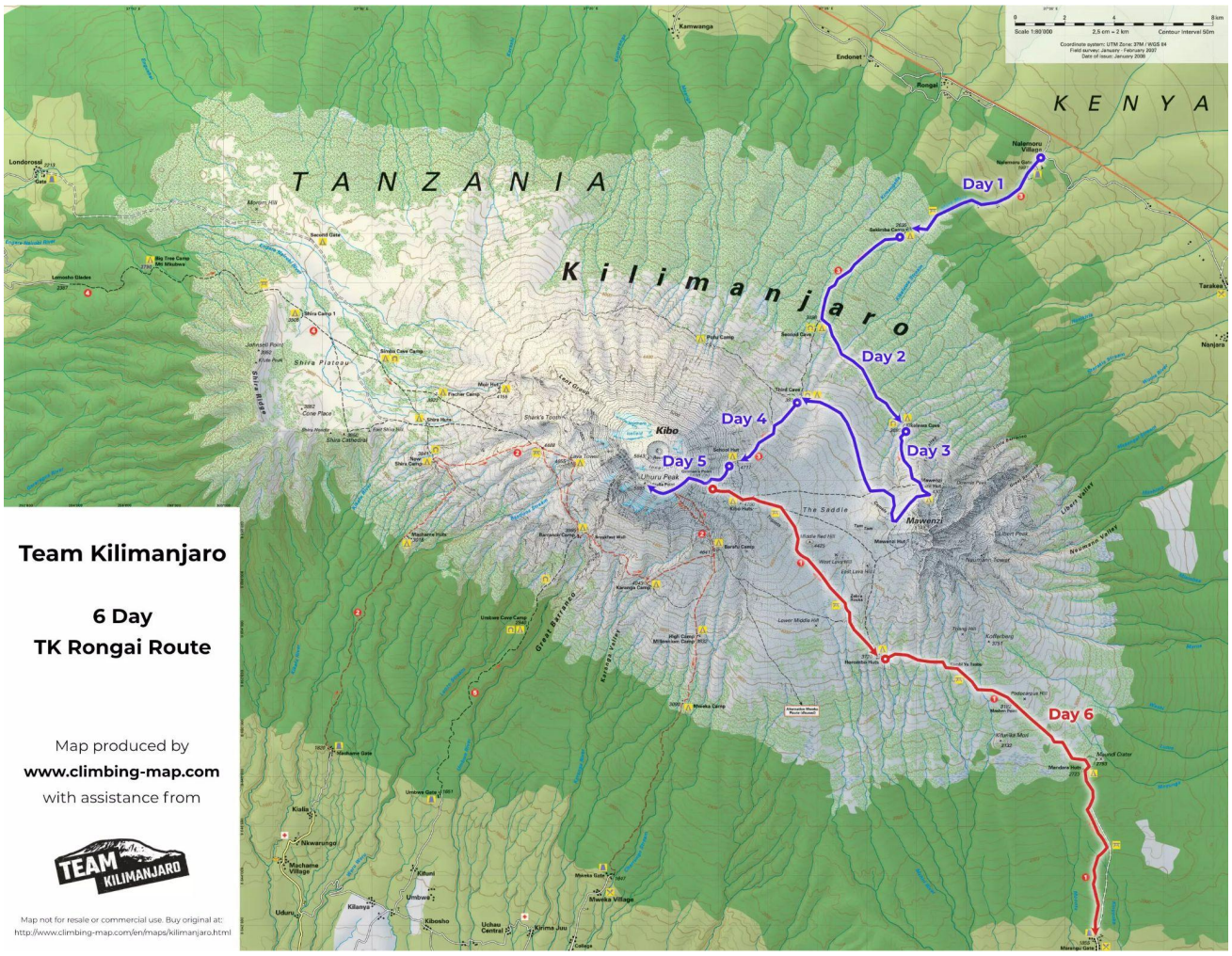
6 DAY TK RONGAI CLIMB

Day 1 - Arusha to Sekimba Camp 2635m

Breakfast at your hotel is served from 0700. Please ensure that you have packed your bags before breakfast, have signed over your extra luggage that will not be required on the mountain to reception, and have deposited your valuables into the hotel's safe.

Transfer and Registration. You will normally be collected at 0730 from your hotel. In the event that we have to collect climbers from other hotels before collecting you, we may need to amend this to 0800. Should you wish to confirm this in advance please enquire via WhatsApp to **+255 76 777 5895.**

Your driver will transfer you some two hours to Marangu Gate where we complete registration formalities. Climbers should have their passport numbers for their registry entries but are advised to have kept their passports and valuables in the hotel safe (excluding the amount they will budget for tipping their crew). Climbers under 16 years of age, however, are required to present their passports to the KINAPA gate staff as proof of their eligibility to climb on a concessionary permit.



From Marangu we transfer to Naro Moru, north east Kilimanjaro, a further 68km and 2 hours 20 minutes on bad roads. Depending on the progress of your transit the guide will designate a suitable location for lunch, usually en route to Naro Moru near to Tarakea. Please note that following any transfer it is customary to tip the driver, $5 - $10 per group is usual.

Around 1400 we start trekking from the Rongai Start Point at 1996m, located 600 metres south west of the Naro Moru junction.

Today we ascend to Sekimba Camp at 2635m, a trek of **6.7km**. It is usual to arrive in camp shortly before sunset but in the event of road obstacles, recent road damage caused by rains or unforeseen delays, climbers are advised to carry their head torches in their daysacks.

Day 2 - Sekimba Camp to Kikelewa Camp 3680m

Sekimba Camp to 3482m for lunch at Second Caves, a distance of **5.8km** from Sekimba. A sheltered 2-3 course lunch seated at a table in a mess tent is the usual daily practice on our climbs, though in good weather we dispense with the mess tent and arrange the table and chairs in the open air. After lunch we trek a further **6.0km** to Kikelewa Camp 3680m, for overnight. It is not uncommon to experience a mild headache today though this usually abates within some 2 hours of arriving in camp. Please discuss this with your guide if your headache becomes persistent or intensifies.

Day 3 - Kikelewa Camp to 3rd Caves 3936m

Today, initially we travel only a short distance of **3.7km**, and while gaining only 624 metres in altitude from Kikelewa to Mawenzi Tarn at 4303m for lunch (some 320 metres higher than on the corresponding day on the Machame Route). We set up the lunch stop close to the water feature nestled between two spurs on the western side of Mawenzi.

After lunch we surmount Mawenzi's north west ridge and move around the north western flanks of Mawenzi, crossing onto the high eastern edge of the Plateau, from where some of the rarest, clearest and most dramatic views of both peaks can be had. If you request your guide to take the higher left hand trail past Mawenzi, you will pass within just 820 linear metres of Mawenzi's summit (5148m).

The highest point on this excursion is 4614m. From here we descend a distance of **8.0km** to the tent site at Third Caves Camp to overnight at 3936m, hereby affording a climb high sleep low differential of exactly 678 metres. If you are tired when ascending from Mawenzi and wish to opt for the lower left hand trail this will still ensure a differential of 561 metres, which is still an excellent compromise.

Spending the night this low in a significantly more oxygen-rich environment than the lunch stop ensures that the body has sufficient reprieve to be able to make the necessary adaptive changes that it has identified the need for during its exposure to the environmental factors associated with high altitude over the last 24 hours.

Tomorrow morning, even though you may feel quite tired you will nonetheless be better prepared for your approach to the high camp, via School Hut and Hans Meyer Cave than you would have been on any other route.

Day 4 - 3rd Caves to School Hut 4717m

After gently traversing the eastern slopes of Kilimanjaro yesterday, today we start the trek upwards from 3rd Caves Camp (3936m) to School Hut (4717m). Shorter distance than yesterday, but 781m of height gain. Do not under-estimate today, and the valuable preparation you have completed prior to arriving here. Today's distance is **4.9km**.

Aim to get to sleep as soon as possible as you will be woken at around 2300-0000 to begin your assault. Don't worry about waking yourself for meals - your staff will wake you for these.

You probably won't feel like eating but please endeavour to do so as you'll need the energy reserves. You are advised to get all your gear ready for the summit bid before you go to sleep as you may feel disoriented when awoken for the assault.

Day 5 - School Hut to Uhuru Peak 5895m

Around midnight of Day 5 (your guide will judge the time that is optimal for you based on your pace thus far) quit camp for the assault via Gilman's Point (5708m) to the summit. Tonight is very difficult - particularly the final 550m - and you'll need to commit to fight for the summit. You will inevitably feel like giving up and going to sleep. This is normal and can be overcome with perseverance and the confident knowledge that your body possesses the necessary reserves, irrespective of how you're feeling.

When resting please ensure you only stand or sit and do not lie down or close your eyes. Please trust your guide; he is very adept at judging whether your condition will allow safe progress or whether you have succumbed to a potentially dangerous condition and to proceed will not be safe.

Nausea and headaches are normal and around a quarter of climbers will vomit at or near Gilman's Point. While very uncomfortable, these are not symptoms that are indicative of being at risk, *per se*. The onset of cerebral and pulmonary oedema are marked by distinctive early warning symptoms that your guide is capable of identifying. Please maintain regular dialogue with him and frequently update him on how you are feeling.

Avoiding loose scree slopes above Kibo Hut, we ascend from School Hut (4717m) via Hans Meyer Cave (5243m) and Gilman's Point (5708m), to Uhuru Peak (5895m).

When you reach Gilman's Point you will sit and rest. At this point the body often thinks you have finished your uphill fight and will be trying to coerce you into giving up and turning around. While you may genuinely believe that you have already exhausted your reserves in reaching this point, this is actually very unlikely to be so.

Remember that you are only 187 vertical metres short of the summit (via Stella Point), the journey from here is much less steep, and you have plenty of time for further pauses.

If you do feel the need to give up at Gilman's Point please proceed towards the summit for just two minutes before making your final decision. In most cases this act of re-establishing momentum is enough to persuade the mind and body to cooperate with your intentions and you will ordinarily find hidden reserves for a final push, reserves that you were not aware you still had.

Uhuru Peak to Horombo Huts 3705m

On the summit your guide will advise how much time you can spend there in consideration of your condition, your timings, and the weather. The brain does not function very intelligently at this altitude so please remember to take many photographs in all directions or you will probably regret not having done so at a later stage.

From the summit you will turn around and descend to Stella Point. From Stella we now follow the ridge line along to Gilman's Point, and descend using the Rongai's normal ascent route. There is clear logic in descending a loose scree slope; it is far easier on the knees and as the ground collapses underfoot if you take short quick strides it's easy to maintain momentum. We do short bursts and take regular rests, pausing to photograph the Saddle beneath us and Kenya to our left. At Kibo Huts we have a short refreshment break before continuing to Horombo 3705m where we overnight again.

Distances on summit day:
School Hut to Summit via Gilman's Point: 5.4km
Summit to Gilman's Point: 2.0km
Gilman's Point to Kibo Huts: 3.4km
Kibo Huts to Horombo: 9.6km
Total summit day's distance: **20.4km**

Day 6 - Horombo to Marangu Gate 1860m

This morning we descend from Horombo to Marangu Gate 1860m via Mandara Huts 2715m. The day's distance is **19.7km** along very well maintained trails. (Horombo to Mandara is 11.6km and Mandara to Marangu Gate is 8.1km). This is the standard Rongai descent route and the Marangu ascent and descent route.

Total trek distance is anticipated to be approximately 75.2km (46.7 miles), with minor variations based on a handful of diversion options and the extent of acclimatisation excursions that are customised as per the guide's discretion and assessment of the benefits of further enhancing acclimatisation versus the competing variable of not unduly depleting summit reserves with the additional exertion required to achieve this acclimatisation level.

The journey back to Arusha

Typically arriving at Marangu Gate at around 1300-1400 climbers are ordinarily collected and transferred 2 hours back to their hotels in Arusha via a lunch stop in Moshi. In your own case, it will probably be necessary to remind the guide to begin the descend earlier than usual this morning, and to proceed directly to Arusha by vehicle from the park gate in order to reach Village Supermarket in Arusha before 1600, so as to have time to shop and be checked-in to your hotel by around 1630, in time to make preparations for Shabbat.

Tipping your support crew

At Marangu Gate it is customary for climbers to tip their support staff. Ordinarily tips are collected by one of the climbers and the total amount is handed to the chief guide who himself decides how the amount should be divided amongst the rest of the crew according to a customary scale that is determined by the responsibilities and experience of each staff member.

All our chief guides are thoroughly honest and fair in this regard and it is not necessary for climbers to hand out individual envelopes to each porter, cook and assistant guide, unless they specifically wish to do so. ***Climbers nowadays tend to tip their support crew 10-15%*** *of what they have paid for their climb, with smaller groups tending towards the higher value.*