

INFORMATION SHEET

Top Tips for Kilimanjaro

Training - Spending time on your feet will help you get through get through your Kilimanjaro experience. Do at least one 4 hour walk every week to supplement your training and then build it up to 5 or 6 hours and use the boots you're going to wear on your trek. Ideally get two long hikes in per week for the last four weeks.

Kit Bags - Use a 90l cargo bag as your main travel bag, this makes sure you don't over do the amount you take, they are easy for porters to carry and they open from the top so you don't have to get everything out to get to the items you want at the bottom, they're also fairly shower and dust proof.



Dry Bags - Pack ALL your gear in dry bags, these will keep your kit dry if it rains and keep the dust out when it's dry. You don't want to get to the bottom of your pack after your trek to find your documents and valuables ruined. Label up your bags so you know what's in them (some gaffa tape and a pen will do the job.)

Clothes - Due to the altitude summit night is very cold even in summer, so make sure you have appropriate clothing, check out our High Altitude Packing List.

Packing - Don't pack too much as your kit has to be carried up and back down again, 16kg is usually the maximum. Do make sure you're equipped for all weather conditions - hot, dry, cold and wet.

Drink - During your time on Kilimanjaro it is important to drink plenty of water, little and often is a good strategy. For summit night you will need 2 - 3 litres of water. The problem here is that if you are using a water bladder and tube, the tube is likely to freeze even if it is in an insulated cover (ever tried to

drinking straight out of a bladder!). We recommend taking a wide mouth "Nalgene" type water bottle, you can even get it fitted with an adaptor, tube and insulated jacket. If the tube freezes then you can still drink direct from the bottle, it's worth having a bottle insulator for the summit night as well. These are available from www.outdoorhire.co.uk on request as an alternative to the Camelbak. Before you set off on Summit night, get your porters to fill your water bottle with hot water.

Medical - The distance and altitude associated with summiting Kilimanjaro certainly puts a strain on your body. A couple of months before you go make sure you get a medical check-up, get the jabs you need for your trip to Africa and discuss taking DIAMOX with your doctor (acetazolamide, which is a drug that helps with altitude sickness). You will also need to pack your personal first aid kit including head-ache tablets, I find Ibuprofen does the trick for me. But whatever you take make sure you don't react to them before you go.

Summit Day - Summit day is the killer, and I'm not talking about that final climb up. Getting to the summit is tough, but the steep drop down the mountain afterwards is the real test. Think about it, you take 4 to 5 days to get to the summit but only 2 days to get down. When the lubricating fluid in your knees runs dry, walking down a mountain can become very painful. On the Machame route, you cover a distance of 30kms on the Summit day alone and more than 2/3 of this is on the descent. We recommend packing anti-inflammatory meds for your knees since they act as your main shock absorbers on the way down.

