



Shira Route – 7 Trekking Days

The Shira Route is one of Kilimanjaro's quieter trails. It begins high on the Shira Plateau, offering wide open views, dramatic landscapes, and fewer crowds than other Kilimanjaro routes. It later merges with the Machame Route, following the same scenic southern circuit. Trekkers camp each night in designated mountain campsites. Because it starts at a relatively high altitude (3,400 m), it is best suited for trekkers with some prior trekking experience or prior acclimatization.

The Shira Route can be done in 6 or 7 days. The difference on the 7 days Route is an extra acclimatization night at a higher altitude and slower progress on the trail. This additional day allows your body more time to adjust to the altitude, making the summit attempt safer, less exhausting, and increasing your summit success rate. The 6-Day Shira Route is also possible but involves a faster ascent, making it more challenging and with a lower success rate. The 7-day version is recommended, as the extra acclimatization day at Shira Camp 2 greatly improves summit success rates and reduces the risk of altitude sickness.

Key Differences

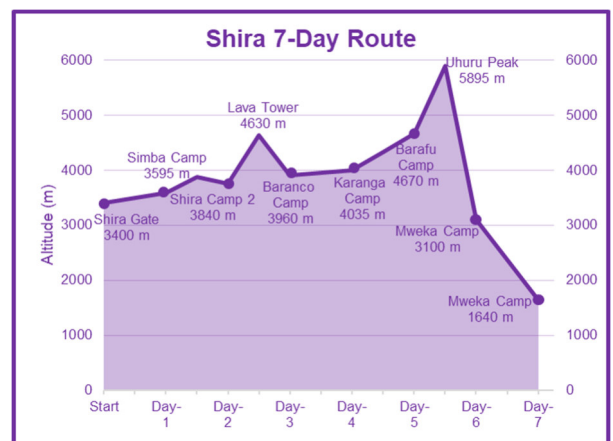
The itineraries are almost the same. The only real change is on Day 5:

- 7-Day Route: Barranco Camp → Karanga Camp (shorter day, overnight stop, better acclimatization)
- 6-Day Route: Barranco Camp → Barafu Camp (longer, tougher day, no overnight at Karanga, less acclimatization).

🔗 On the 6-Day route, Day 4 is a very long hike of 8–10 hours from Barranco to Barafu. On the 7-Day route, Day 4 is shorter (4–5 hours) because you stop at Karanga Camp. This extra night makes the climb less demanding and improves acclimatization.

Shira Route – 7 Days

- Total trail distance - 56 km / 35 miles
- Duration: 9 days including arrival and departure days. 7 days trekking
- Start Point: Shira Gate – 3,400 m / 11,155 ft
- Highest Point: Uhuru Peak – 5,895 m / 19,341 ft
- End Point: Mweka Gate – 1,640 m / 5,380 ft
- Difficulty: Moderate to challenging (due to high starting altitude)
- Success Rate: Higher on the 7-day option (better acclimatization)



Average Daily Hiking Times – Shira Route (7 Days)

- Arrival Day & Briefing: No hiking
- Day 1 – Shira Gate → Simba Camp: 4–5 hrs
- Day 2 – Simba Camp → Shira Camp 2: 4–6 hrs
- Day 3 – Shira Camp 2 → Lava Tower → Barranco Camp: 6–8 hrs
- Day 4 – Barranco Camp → Karanga Camp: 4–5 hrs
- Day 5 – Karanga Camp → Barafu Camp: 4–5 hrs
- Day 6 – Summit Day (Barafu → Uhuru Peak → Mweka Camp): 11–15 hrs
- Day 7 – Mweka Camp → Mweka Gate: 3–4 hrs
- Departure or start of safari

Arrival Day & Pre-Trek Briefing

Welcome to Tanzania! Our driver will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your hotel in Moshi or Arusha. In the evening, your mountain guide will join you for a detailed briefing about the climb. Together you'll check your gear, go over final packing tips, and talk about the adventure ahead. Afterward, enjoy dinner, relax, and get a good night's sleep before your adventure begins.

Day 1 – Shira Gate → Simba Camp

- Start: 3,400 m / 11,155 ft
- End: 3,595 m / 11,800 ft
- Hiking: 4–5 hrs • Moorland
- Meals/Stay: B • L • D | Camping

After breakfast at your hotel in Moshi or Arusha, your guide and driver will meet you between 8:00–10:00 am for the transfer to the park gate (2–4 hours depending on the route and road conditions). Along the way, there may be a short stop for last-minute supplies or snacks before heading up the slopes of Kilimanjaro.

At the gate, your trek team will handle the registration formalities with the National Park. You'll sign in (you need to know your passport ID). With the bus you continue up to the mountain. Your trek begins at Shira Gate, high on the western slopes. You start pretty flat, hike through heath and moorland across the Shira Plateau. You'll camp at Simba Camp, often under crystal-clear skies, ideal for stargazing.

After a hot meal your guide will check everyone's health and share the plan for the next day.



Day 2 – Simba Camp → Shira Camp 2

- Start: 3,595 m / 11,800 ft
- End: 3,840 m / 12,600 ft
- Hiking: 4–6 hrs • 5 km • Moorland
- Meals/Stay: B • L • D | Camping

After breakfast you continue your trek across the Shira plateau towards Kibo. The trail is steady.

Subject to your condition and pace, your guide might offer an acclimatization walk to Shira Cathedral, a view point on the Southern edge of Shira plateau. From here you have incredible views in all directions.

In the afternoon you will arrive at Shira Camp 2, where your tent is already waiting for you.



Day 3 – Shira Camp 2 → Lava Tower (lunch) → Barranco Camp

- Start: 3,840 m / 12,600 ft
- High point: Lava Tower – 4,630 m / 15,190 ft
- End: 3,960 m / 13,000 ft
- Hiking: 6–8 hrs • 10 km • Alpine desert → Moorland
- Meals/Stay: B • L • D | Camping

Today is an important acclimatization day. The trail climbs gradually toward the Lava Tower, a striking rock formation where you'll stop for lunch at high altitude. Many trekkers feel the thinner air here it's normal, and the key is to move slowly, drink plenty of water, and follow your guide's advice. In the afternoon, the path descends into the spectacular Barranco Valley, dotted with giant senecio plants. Your camp sits beneath the dramatic Barranco Wall an unforgettable place to spend the night.



Day 4 – Barranco Camp → Karanga Camp

- Start: 3,960 m / 13,000 ft
- End: 4,035 m / 13,250 ft
- Hiking: 4–5 hrs • 5 km • Alpine desert
- Meals/Stay: B • L • D | Camping

After breakfast, you'll face the famous Barranco Wall a fun, non-technical scramble that rewards you with breathtaking views from the top. From there, the trail follows gentle ups and downs across high ridges to Karanga Camp. You'll arrive by early afternoon, giving you time to rest, enjoy some snacks, and take a short acclimatization walk. This day is shorter by design, helping your body adjust to the altitude.



Day 5 – Karanga Camp → Barafu Camp

- Start: 4,035 m / 13,250 ft
- End: 4,670 m / 15,330 ft
- Hiking: 4–5 hrs • 4 km • Alpine desert
- Meals/Stay: B • L • D | Camping

From Karanga, the trail makes a steady climb up to Barafu Camp, the high altitude base camp for your summit attempt. The landscape here is stark and rocky, with sweeping views over the plains far below. You'll arrive in the afternoon, have an early dinner with hot drinks, and prepare your gear: warm layers, headlamp, snacks, insulated water bottles. After final instructions from your guide, you'll head to bed early - your summit push begins just before midnight.





Day 6 – Summit Day! Barafu → Uhuru Peak → Mweka Camp

- Start: 4,670 m / 15,330 ft
- Summit: Uhuru Peak – 5,895 m / 19,341 ft
- End: 3,100 m / 10,170 ft
- Hiking: 11–15 hrs total • 17 km
- Terrain: Scree → crater rim → descent to moorland
- Meals/Stay: B • L • D | Camping

This is the day you've been waiting for! Just before midnight, you'll begin the slow, steady climb up the slopes of Kibo. The air is thin and the climb is challenging, but your guides will set a safe, steady pace. By sunrise, you'll reach Stella Point (5,739 m), where the rising sun paints the sky in breathtaking colors. From here it's a final walk along the crater rim to Uhuru Peak - the Roof of Africa! After celebrating and taking photos, you'll begin your descent, stopping at Barafu for a short rest and hot drink before continuing down to Millennium or Mweka Camp, nestled back in the moorland zone. It's a long, tough day, but also the most rewarding.



📍 For our itineraries, we list Mweka Camp as the standard overnight stop, but please know that Millennium Camp is also an option depending on your pace and condition.

Day 7 – Mweka Camp → Mweka Gate → Moshi/Arusha

- Start: 3,100 m / 10,170 ft
- Finish: Mweka Gate – 1,640 m / 5,380 ft
- Hiking: 3–4 hrs • 10 km • Rainforest
- Meals: B • L (packed or hot lunch)

Your final day on the mountain! After breakfast, you'll descend through lush rainforest filled with birdlife and fresh mountain air. In just a few hours you'll reach Mweka Gate, where you'll receive your official summit certificate a proud reminder of your achievement.

After goodbyes to your mountain crew, a private transfer will take you back to your hotel in Moshi/Arusha. The evening is yours to relax, celebrate, and reflect on your unforgettable Kilimanjaro adventure.

Departure or Safari – Moshi/Arusha to Kilimanjaro Airport

A private car will bring you to the airport or you will start with our team your safari.

