

Adventures in Good Company's General Information, 2008

Welcome to Adventures in Good Company's Mt Kilimanjaro Climb and Safari! Before departing for Tanzania, you will need a valid passport, a Tanzanian visa, health insurance valid while overseas, airline reservations, and immunizations. Please feel free to contact the Adventures in Good Company staff if we can be of assistance as you make your preparations!

PASSPORT: You are responsible for obtaining your own passport; forms are available at your local government center and might be available at the library or the post office. You can find out the requirements for a passport and download an application at the State Departments web site (travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html). If you are renewing a passport, you can do it by mail. If this is the first time you are getting one, you will need to do it in person. Processing may take up to eight weeks. Please plan to have the passport safely in your hands three months before your trip, to make sure you'll have time to obtain the necessary visa. When you get your passport photos taken be sure to also get one for your Tanzanian visa plus an extra one, just in case (they usually come in twos).

TANZANIA VISA: A tourist visa is required to enter Tanzania. The Visa fee for 90 days is \$50.00. We have included a Visa application in this packet. If you misplace it, you can download one from the web site of the Tanzanian Embassy at www.tanzaniaembassy-us.org/visa/visa.html. For question #10, Name of Travel Agent/Tour Operator, put: Marangu Hotel Kilimanjaro; For question 11, for contact person put: Desmond Brice-Bennett and for address put: P O Box 40, Moshi. The fee needs to be sent with a Postal Money Order, payable to the Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania. Personal checks are not accepted. Send your passport (which must be valid at least 6 months from the date of entry), visa application with an affixed photograph, visa fee, proof of purchase of your ticket to and from Tanzania, proof of having sufficient funds to maintain yourself during your visit (a recent bank statement would be fine) and a postage-paid self-addressed envelope to the Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania, 2139 R St NW, Washington D.C. 20008 (their phone number is (202) 884-1080 or (202) 939-6125. The Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations also issues tourist visas; their address is 201 East 42nd St, Suite 1700, New York, NY 10017 (telephone number is 212-972-9160). Using Priority Mail to both send your application and your SASE is highly recommended. You should obtain your visa two months before the start of the trip.

IMMUNIZATIONS: While there are no required immunizations (there has not been a case of yellow fever in Tanzania for 20 years), there are recommended ones. To obtain the most current immunization recommendations, you should contact your state health department or visit an international travel clinic. For a clinic near you, either call the International Society of Travel Medicine at 770-736-7060 or visit their web site at www.istm.org. You can also contact the CDC International Travelers' Hotline at 404-332-4559, or visit their web site at www.cdc.gov. Taking anti-malarial medication is highly recommended; please discuss this with your doctor.

HEALTH & TRAVEL INSURANCE: We *STRONGLY ENCOURAGE* you to purchase trip cancellation/interruption insurance, which will help you recover some of your pre-paid expenses should you have to cancel or interrupt your trip. We included a flyer for this with your confirmation letter, or you can talk to your travel agent.

If you decide not to buy the full insurance, you can buy a more limited version that covers everything but trip cancellation and interruption. Most importantly, it covers medical expenses and evacuation, which you would want to have if you became ill. For ages 35-60, it only costs \$29. If you're not currently covered under a health insurance policy, you must get this limited insurance.

MONEY and COSTS: The unit of currency in Tanzania is the Tanzanian shilling (Tsh). The current exchange rate is about 1100 TSh for \$1US. Many places will take US dollars at an exchange of \$1 for 1000 TSh. We suggest that you bring the money you plan to spend on small items (including porter tips) in good quality small bills (\$1, \$5, \$10, \$20). You will get change in Tanzanian money when you use US money at a hotel or shop. Some shops do take credit cards, if you plan on buying more expensive souvenirs. It may also be possible to cash traveler's checks (Visa are preferred over American Express) but we have found that most people do fine with just bringing small denomination bills.

The Adventures in Good Company trip fee includes all costs on the climb and the safari itself: food; camping equipment; lodging on the safari; guide and porter services; all ground transportation including transfer to and from the Kilimanjaro airport; and permits. It also includes accommodations before and after the trek at the Marangu Resort; breakfast on these days; and both a welcome and farewell dinner. You'll need money for snacks, and soda pop or alcoholic drinks; tips for porters (plan on \$90 for the climb); and a \$20 departure tax when you leave (this is almost always included in your ticket).

We do not recommend giving clothing to your porters after the trek, as it is impossible to distribute fairly (i.e. you may get to know the porters who speak some English while others who work just as hard remain in the background) and in any case it will be sold. Instead, we have developed a relationship with the Kilimanjaro Porter's Assistance Project and can arrange to leave clothing with them that will then be reused over and over. In addition, if you have extra space in your luggage and could bring over additional clothing, please let us know.

You may also want to bring a few photos of home and family; porters don't always speak English but they will understand photos. If you choose to give small gifts, consider a very small souvenir item from your home town/state (a postcard, for example), or practical items such as hats, wool socks/gloves, sunglasses, or first aid items (ibuprofen, bandaids, etc.)

ACCLIMATIZATION: There is no way to prepare for altitude other than to spend time at altitude. Being in very good physical condition will help ameliorate some of the exhaustion that people often feel, but it will not prevent altitude-caused medical problems such as Acute Mountain Sickness. We have built an acclimatization day into the itinerary, but ultimately your response is due to genetic factors. Staying well hydrated and getting plenty of rest can help, as can taking medication that assists in acclimatization, such as Diamox. Talk with your doctor to decide if you want to take this. Unless you are allergic to sulfa, many people find this extremely helpful. It is important to take a small dose at home first to make sure you don't have an allergic response to it.

READING SUGGESTIONS:

Spectrum Guide to Tanzania

Well known for their profusion of full-color illustrations, Spectrum Guides feature clear, concise essays on wildlife, history and culture. The Tanzania guide includes an overview of the country, wildlife checklists and practical safari information.

Kilimanjaro, Journey to the Roof of Africa • Audrey Salkeld • David Breashears

A magnificently illustrated, detailed account of Africa's highest mountain, its exploration, history and nature, with 150 full color photographs. The author, a member of the expedition team that produced the IMAX movie of the same name, combines an account of climbing the Machame route with lots of good information on Kilimanjaro. With one-page essays on topics of interest throughout, this oversize book is not only beautifully illustrated but also a good reference.

No Picnic on Mount Kenya • Felice Benuzzi • Rick Ridgeway

Bored beyond belief in a British prisoner of war camp at the foot of Mount Kenya in 1943, the author scrounged the food, material and colleagues to break-out of the camp, climb the mountain -- and then sneak back into prison. Among the many pleasures of this book are Benuzzi's accounts of the landscapes, animals and habitats on the way to the top. This splendid adventure is characterized by Benuzzi's offhand courage and great spirit.

Kilimanjaro, A Trekking Guide to Africa's Highest Mountain • Henry Stedman

A compact, practical guide in the British Trailblazer series. Stedman (an experienced trekker who has written several other guidebooks) includes 23 sketch maps with points of interest and elevations, and camp-to-camp descriptions of the various treks. It would have been nice to see contour lines and color but for that you can buy a separate Kilimanjaro map. Best of all are Stedman's dead-on and often very witty chapters on preparation, perils and pleasures of the trek, as well as his excellent survey of the history, nature and people of the region.

Thanks for traveling with Adventures in Good Company to the roof of the world!