

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m



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Mount Kenya may be **Africa's second highest mountain** but it's first for its fascinating variety of flora, fauna and magical landscape. Our expedition takes you to the **trekkers' summit: Point Lenana** (4,985m)– a stunning peak just below the highest peaks of Nelion and Batian which involve a true technical climb.

You also have the option to reach the true summit of **Batian Peak** on Mount Kenya (5,199m). This involves a long 22-pitch technical climb on summit day.

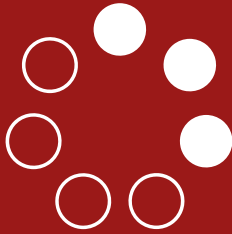
We **trek** through equatorial rainforest rich in wildlife, including elephant and waterbuck, across moorlands hiding crystal-clear lakes and above remote gorges where you can relive the excitement felt by the first explorers. We camp by mesmerising lakes fed by

waterfalls. On clear days we can see the summit of Kilimanjaro, 200 miles away across the **African savannah**. Mount Kenya is a collection of sharp, jagged peaks forming a single mountain. Our objective, Point Lenana at **4,985m**, is attainable for the fit and adventurous and is a perfect first trekking peak. We ascend at dawn to capture the sunrise over this spiky eerie landscape overlooking glaciers, and as we stand at the high point of our journey, we marvel at what seems like all of Africa falling away below.

The diversity of habitat and wildlife, the absence of other trekkers, and geography akin to the set of Jurassic Park combined with the challenge of the ascent make a climb to Point Lenana an experience never to be forgotten.

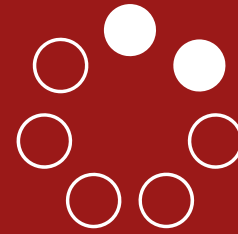
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Physical - P3

This trip is physically tough. Frequent exercise is necessary to prepare properly for this expedition. Regular walking mixed with training at the gym to build up endurance and cardiovascular fitness is key. Expect to be able to do 8 hour days in hilly and often steep terrain, carrying a pack of 6-10kg in weight with the occasional extra long day.



Technical - T2

Consider this a trek, although there may be occasion to use hands for short sections of easy scrambling. No previous climbing or trekking experience is necessary.

Please note that the grading system used is a rough guide only.



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ITINERARY

DAY 1 : Depart UK

Today we depart our home country. We try to schedule an evening flight to arrive in Nairobi early the next day.

DAY 2 : Arrive Nairobi, transfer to Mount Kenya

We land in Nairobi airport and transfer straight to Mount Kenya, a 5–6-hour journey through beautiful Kenyan countryside to the National Park gate, we'll stop en-route to have lunch. Here we meet our 360 guides, porters and cooks and jump into 4 x 4 vehicles to drive the muddy road through the rainforest and bamboo forest to 2,900 meters for our first night in comfortable Chogoria log cabins. That evening your 360 leaders will give a comprehensive briefing on the days ahead.

(Cabins, D)

DAY 3 : Chogoria Gate to Lake Ellis (3,400m)

After a great breakfast we commence our ascent of Mount Kenya. Initially we walk through ancient woodlands and climb up into the heath zone speckled with colourful Protea plants. Once we reach the beautiful open moorland, we take a side track to view a spectacular fifty-meter-high water fall and after a few more hours reach a stunning, quiet lake, and our first camp. It's around 5–6 hours of walking today to get into the swing of things, and we'll have the rest of the day either to climb the impressive Wegu peak (2,700 meters) or relax and join the 360 local crew to catch some trout for dinner!

(Camping, BLD)

DAY 4 : Lake Ellis to The Temple, Lake Michaelson (3,800m)

After breakfast we head out across more moorland through Africa's unique high-altitude plants, giant groundsel, and lobelia before crossing into the mouth of the great Gorges Valley where we find Lake Michaelson and our night's camp. (5 –6 hours). Set in a vast 400m high amphitheatre, we catch our first glimpse of some of Mount Kenya's summits and glaciers above us. The few hours remaining before dusk can be spent exploring the lake side (there's a fantastic round the lake walk) or you may want to join our 360 local team who will most likely try their luck at catching some trout again!

(Camping, BLD)

DAY 5 : Lake Michaelson to Simba Col (4,550m)

After a relaxing start we break the 4,000m barrier as we follow a thundering river out of the gorge. After a few hours we climb past the old wreck of an aircraft and up over the ridge surrounding Gorges Valley. From there we scramble up scree towards Simba Col, our stop for the night before we go for the summit. (3–4 hours). Once at camp we'll have a hot lunch before preparing for our ascent of Mount Kenya's third highest summit, Point Lenana. An early dinner for an early start the next day.

(Camping, BLD)

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ITINERARY

DAY 6 : Simba Col to Point Lenana (4,985m) descend to Shipton's Camp (4,200m)

We typically wake up around 3am and have a small breakfast before starting off for the summit in time to see the sun rise over the breathtaking eastern panorama of Mount Kenya. When we've finally taken in the glory of reaching the summit, with the incredible excitement at having completed such a fantastic challenge we'll begin our descent down to the beautifully located Shipton's Camp for a well-earned rest. (Total trekking time 6-7 hours)

**Climbers attempting the technical summit of Batian, will spend their last night on the mountain with the trekking team at Shipton camp and bid goodbye to their team mates the following morning. Your personal full itinerary for these 3 days will be emailed to you separately and is also outlined in our FAQs.

(BLD)

DAY 7 : Shipton Camp to Old Moses camp (3,200m) and The Ark Lodge.

After a leisurely breakfast we enter an entirely different aspect of the mountain as we enter the steep sided MacKinder's valley and from there descend the open moorland, overlooking the vast Kenyan plains below us. A 5-6 hour descend will see us reach Old Moses camp which is linked to civilisation by a tarmac road. Together with our 360 crew we transfer via the National Park gate (at Sirimon, 2600m) to The Ark Lodge situated in the heart of the Aberdare's National Park. Tonight, we celebrate our amazing journey and our time spend together by having a few well-deserved drinks and an amazing African themed buffet.

(BLD)

DAY 8 : Nairobi

We will have a leisurely start today and after breakfast we'll be taking advantage of the Ark Lodge's amazing location for a morning game drive and picnic. There's no rush to get back to Nairobi but time and inclination permitting, on the way to the city, we'll stop at the equator for the fascinating demonstration of the Coriolis Effect before heading back to Nairobi Airport for our overnight flight home.

(BL)

DAY 9 : Arrive home country.

Arrive back to your home country.

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KIT LIST

Bags & Packs

Kit bag

A 80-120L duffel bag to transport kit. A duffel bag is a strong, soft, weather resistant bag without wheels but with functional straps for carrying. Suitcases and wheeled bags are not suitable

Daysack

Approx. 30L capacity. Your day to day pack that you carry with your daily essentials, fitted with shoulder straps and importantly a waist belt

Waterproof rucksack cover

To protect rucksack from rain

Padlocks x 2

For use on your kit bag for travel and on the expedition plus your hotel bag

Drybags

Nylon rolltop bags that keep fresh clothing and other important items like passports and iPods dry in the event of a total downpour that seeps into your kitbag. Good for quarantining old socks. Please note that many countries are now banning plastic bags. We would always advise buying re-usable nylon rolltop bags for keeping your kit dry (and sustainability).

Small kit bag or light bag

This is for any kit you intend to leave at the hotel and could even simply be a heavy duty plastic bag

Sleeping Gear

4 Season sleeping bag

You should get a sleeping bag rated to -10C and choose a sleeping bag that functions within the comfort rating of this temperature. A silk sleeping bag liner will enhance this rating on the coldest nights

Sleeping bag liner

Silk is best for keeping the bag clean and you a little warmer

Sleeping mat

Full length self-inflating rather than ¾ length Thermarest

Headwear

Warm headgear

This can be a warm hat, beanie, balaclava, anything to reduce the heat loss from your head

Wide brimmed hat

Keeps the sun off exposed areas like ears and the nape of the neck

Buff/Scarf

Essential for protection from the sun and dust

Sunglasses

Worth spending money on good UV filters. Julbo is our preferred supplier

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KIT LIST

Sunblock

Buy the highest SPF you can find as UV intensifies with altitude

Lip salve

Sun cream will not work on your lips and they are very susceptible to burn without proper protection

Upper Body

Base layer x 2

This is the layer closest to the skin and its principal function is to draw (wick) moisture and sweat away from the skin. You can also get thermal base layers for use at higher altitudes that provide an additional insulative layer while still drawing sweat during times of high exertion

Mid layer x 2

These are typically lightweight microfleece or similar technology that provide varying degrees of warmth and insulation without being overly bulky or heavy to pack

Gilet (optional)

Optional - A great low volume additional layer to keep your core warm, whether down, Primaloft or fleece

Light insulated jacket

A lighter jacket such as a Primaloft or lightweight down which can be worn at lower to mid altitudes is a great addition to your kit offering greater flexibility with layering

Soft Shell (optional)

Optional - These should be windproof (not all are) and insulative. They are mostly made of soft polyester and sometimes resemble a neoprene finish which makes them very mobile and comfortable to wear. While offering a degree of weather repellence, they are not waterproof

Hard Shell

Essential waterproof, windproof kit, should be big enough to fit over several other layers and breathable. Heavy and bulky ski jackets are not suitable for this expedition

Down jacket

Generally made using feathers, these are the ultra-warm and insulated layer that are used when sitting in the tea houses or in extremely cold environments. Those with a windproof outer fabric will provide the best insulation. Ask advice in the shop (or from us) when buying the jacket and mention you want it rated to -10C and the assistant will recommend the correct fill for you

Warm gloves

Consider liners or a light polartec pair for lower altitudes and evenings, and a thicker waterproof pair like ski gloves for higher altitudes

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KIT LIST

Lower Body

Trekking trousers

These tend to be polyester so they dry quickly after a shower and weigh little in your pack. Consider perhaps a pair with detachable lower legs as an alternative to shorts

Softshell trousers

Windproof or thermal lined trekking trousers for higher altitudes and the summit phase. Thermal leggings can still be worn underneath if necessary

Long Johns

Thermal insulation for the lower body

Waterproof trousers

Like the jacket, an essential piece of kit to stay dry and should also be Goretex

Underwear

Merino or wicking material, not cotton. How many pairs you take is entirely up to you

Feet

3-4 season walking boots

Well worn in 3-4 season waterproof boots with mid to high ankle support

Comfortable trainers

For evening use and to give your feet a break once we reach the lodges

Trekking socks x 4

Start with lighter socks lower down, working up to thicker pairs for higher up as it gets colder. Some people like a clean pair every day, others are happy to change every other day – that's a personal choice

Spare laces

Just in case

Hydration

Water bottles/bladder

3L equivalent – Camelbaks are useful at lower altitudes but have a tendency to freeze up at higher altitudes without insulation tubes, Nalgene bottles are better at altitude. We suggest a combination of a 2L bladder and 1L bottle or 2 x ½L bottles to put in your jacket for summit night

Water purification

Although generally all water is boiled some prefer to double up and add purification tabs as well. Always good to have in your bag

Toiletries

Wash kit

Keep it simple on the mountain. Essentials are handsoap, toothbrush, toothpaste and deodorant. Moisturiser is advisable, everything else is a luxury!

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KIT LIST

Wet wipes

Preferably biodegradable, these are great for washing when modern shower facilities become a thing of the past

Alcohol gel

A must have for good camp hygiene

Insect repellent

For early stages and once back down

Toilet paper

Provided on the mountain but a spare in your daysack may be useful if you need to hide behind a rock between camps

Nappy sacks or dog poo bags

Please note that Kenya has a country ban on plastic bags, so biodegradable alternatives should be used

Medications

Personal first aid kit

Your own first aid kit should contain: A basic blister kit, plasters, antiseptic, sun-protection, any personal medication, basic pain relief (paracetamol/aspirin/ibuprofen), strepsils, anti-nausea, a personal course of antibiotics if prone to illness etc.

Personal medication

Keep this in your daysack

Miscellaneous

Head torch

Bring spare batteries

Trekking poles

These tend to be a personal preference but help with your stability and can dampen the pressure on the knees coming down hill

Camera

Bring plenty of spare batteries and memory cards

Penknife (optional)

Snacks

You will be fed very well and given snacks each day however we advise bringing a small selection as a little bit of comfort. Extra snacks can be bought en-route if needed. Energy gels and protein bars are not suitable

Entertainment

Of course optional, but most trekkers like to bring an iPod, book, Kindle, cards etc for evening entertainment.

Documentation

Passport

Don't forget this! Your passport should have at least 6 months validity. With your passport expiry date at least six months after the final day of travel.

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KIT LIST

Copy of passport

Just in case

Passport photos x 4

Rarely needed but worth having just in case

Dental check up

We recommend you have a dental check-up before your trip. New fillings can be an issue at altitude if there is an air pocket left in the gap

Travel insurance

Copy of own travel insurance details. And relevant contact numbers. We have a partnership with True Traveller and would recommend that you contact them when looking for travel insurance for your trip with 360. However, it is vital that you ensure that the insurance cover they offer is suitable for you, taking your personal circumstances (items to be insured, cancellation cover, medical history) into account. Many other insurance providers are available and we do recommend that you shop around to get the best cover for you on the expedition you are undertaking. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Technical Equipment

Climbing harness

For those climbing the technical summit only.

Climbing helmet

For those climbing the technical summit only.

Climbing shoes

For those climbing the technical summit only. Please note that your climbing shoes need to be comfortable with socks – as it can get a bit chilly.

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FAQ'S

Food and Water

What is the food like on the mountain?

All meals on the mountain are of the highest possible standard. In fact considering that our cooks have to produce the best possible meals in a wilderness setting using only the most basic of facilities (kerosene stoves) the meals they produce are nothing short of a miracle. The meals are always fresh, nutritious and varied. We ensure that dietary preferences are always met and that the best local ingredients are used. The underlying aim is to provide balanced nutritional meals packed with carbohydrates to re-fuel hungry bodies and to replenish stores for the next day of activity. On top of well balanced meals clients are provided with coffee, tea and snacks upon arrival into camp. The morning wake-up call is usually accompanied with a cup of tea or coffee in your tent.

You are invited to bring along any of your favourite snacks and goody bags from home if they want. Concentrate on high energy food-stuffs such as Jelly Babies to give you that little boost on an arduous day.

I have food allergies, can these be catered for?

Absolutely, please inform the office of any allergies or intolerances and we will ensure that these are taken into account on the trek.

Where does the drinking water come from?

For the first day bottled drinking water will be used. At the higher camps we use locally sourced drinking water from streams or springs. These are usually fresh being topped up from melt water above or by rainfall but we also increase their purity by treating the water with purification tablets and by boiling it. We always ensure that our drinking water is 100% bug free.

How often is fresh water available for replenishing during the day?

Before leaving camp in the morning you will fill your water bottles or camel bladder. If this runs low you will have ample more water to replace it with. For most walking days water can be replenished at the lunchtime site.

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FAQ'S

Accommodation

How does tent sharing work? And how big are the tents?

Most altitude related symptoms manifest themselves at night. We therefore recommend tent sharing from the onset of all our Mount Kenya expeditions. Tent share is always organised according to sex and where possible age groups. Obviously if climbing this mountain with a friend or partner then you will be able to share tents. If you have joined the team by yourself then it is highly likely that you will be sharing a tent with your pre-assigned room buddy unless prior arrangements have been made. We use high quality 3 man tents to be shared between 2 people to provide extra space for your comfort.

Will the camp be freshly set up or will we be staying at existing camps at a set site on the way up?

Our local camp crew will set up the tents for you each night. We send them ahead of the group to secure the best site and to get the site prepared before you arrive. Bear in mind that these guys are also porters and when our walking days are shorter we might get to camp before them. If this occurs then have a cup of tea in the dining tent and wait for your tents to be ready.

Will the toileting facilities will be "Au naturel", or pit latrines?

We bring along our own toilet tents with Portaloo units. This method allows us to maintain the best possible levels of hygiene without contributing to the toilet problems that can happen at some camps.

I can see our last night is at The Ark Lodge in the Aberdares is there a game drive that we can do?

We descend to the Ark Lodge and are likely to arrive around 6pm after our descent from the mountain and transfer. We'll spend the evening celebrating our huge achievement climbing Mount Kenya and then after an early breakfast next day we'll have time for a game drive and a picnic before transferring back to Nairobi for our late flight home.

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FAQ'S

Health and Safety

What happens if there is a problem on the mountain?

All our guides are in communication with each other by phone and radio. In addition the national park operates a rescue service on all the routes we use, this service is linked by radio to the park headquarters. In the vast majority of cases of emergency rescue the problems can be attributed to altitude and if so the solution is immediate descent to lower altitudes. Our local mountain crew are all experienced in dealing with any problems that arise. Our guides are either doctors or qualified with the highest standard of wilderness first aid qualifications and can handle any emergency to the highest level of competency, in the vast majority of cases without national park assistance.

Am I likely to suffer from altitude sickness on this expedition?

Although our acclimatisation regime ensures that everybody enjoys the best possible chance of getting high on the mountain, altitude related problems can happen. The most common of this is high altitude sickness – AMS (Acute Mountain Sickness). Symptoms for this can include headaches, nausea and vomiting.

In all this sounds quite dramatic but generally this is just the process your body naturally goes through to adjust to the higher altitudes and the reduced partial pressure of the atmosphere. For some people the acclimatisation process is a little longer and harder than others.

For our guides this is all part and parcel of ascending a near 5,000m peak and, although we assess each client's personal situation carefully, we also further consider the compounding effects of dehydration brought on by excessive vomiting and continuing headaches.

AMS might sound frightening but our guides are fully trained (and experienced) in helping to relieve your personal symptoms and provide advice on how to best proceed.

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FAQ'S

What can I do to help prevent AMS?

In most cases AMS can be avoided by following these guidelines:

- Drink lots of water
- Walk slowly
- Stay warm
- Eat well

We recommend that you familiarise yourself with the various affects that altitude can cause. During your pre-climb briefing, we describe altitude sickness to you in detail, and advise you how to cope with it. The most important thing is not to fear it, but to respect it and to know how to deal with it and more importantly tell your guides how you feel. Our guides have seen every condition that the mountain produces, and they will always know how to deal with problems. 360 ascends the mountain on the Chongoria Route. This is a longer route which greatly reduces the incidences of AMS developing.

Is there a risk of getting HACE (High Altitude Cerebral Edema) and HAPE (High Altitude Pulmonary Edema) on the mountain?

HACE and HAPE rarely occur on Mount Kenya and our guides are fully trained in the recognition of the onset of these problems and will deal with them at the first sign of their development.

Should I bring Diamox on the expedition with me?

Although we recommend you come armed with a course of Diamox or other high-altitude drug on this expedition, we do not recommend that take you these as a prophylactic during the trek or climb. We view Diamox as a treatment drug rather than a preventative medicine. Most adventure medics give similar advice, however we do appreciate this can be confusing, as many GPs (who aren't necessarily mountaineers) do suggest taking it as a prophylactic.

We pride ourselves on designing all our itineraries with acclimatisation very much front and centre and this expedition itinerary has been carefully designed to allow for your body to adjust to the altitude gradually, safely and comfortably. However, if you find that you are still having problems adjusting to the altitude (see our FAQ on Altitude Sickness) then your expedition leader or expedition medic will recommend the correct course of action regarding taking Diamox.

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FAQ'S

Should I take Diamox?

It is far preferable to take Diamox if and when needed during the course of the expedition. If you are already taking it and then start having altitude related problems you are left with few options but to descend to a more comfortable altitude which sadly often means that the summit is not attainable.

Furthermore, Diamox is a diuretic, meaning you will have to drink a lot of fluid to prevent dehydration. Of course, the upshot of this is you'll have to pee more which means you'll probably be having to get up more in the night and take cover behind rocks during the day. Another quite common side-effect is that it can cause your extremities to "buzz and tingle" including your fingers, toes and lips which can feel quite unsettling. Other side-effects can include dizziness and light headedness with loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Although all these side-effects are manageable when you have symptoms of altitude sickness, we personally believe it is counter-intuitive to take it unless necessary.

Of course, it is totally up to you, this is just our recommendation and we're not doctors. If you do decide to take Diamox on the advice of your doctor then please do let your leader know in situ so they are aware of this. We also suggest you take the drug for a couple of days a few weeks before travelling so you can experience the symptoms before taking them during the trek.

Do I need to take Malarial drugs?

The Malaria protozoa generally does not survive over an altitude of 1,500m so once you start the actual Mount Kenya climb Malaria poses no threat. (The entry gate is at 2,800m). We personally do not take them. However we recommend that you visit your Doctor or travel clinic before departure for the latest advice. If you are extending your stay in Kenya to visit other areas, for example, doing the safari option, then you should take them.

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FAQ'S

You advocate taking a small first aid kit, what should it contain?

We advocate a little bit of self-help on the mountain. If you have a blister developing for example then please stop take off your boot and treat it before it becomes a problem.

Your own first aid kit should contain: a basic blister kit, plasters, antiseptic, sun-protection, your own personal medication (sometimes your porter might get to camp after you and if he is carrying your medication you may not be able to take it according to the regime you are used to), basic pain relief (aspirin and Ibuprofen), a personal course of antibiotics if prone to illness. Foot powder in your socks every morning is great for preventing blisters.

Generally the best approach to take when packing your first aid kit is to include such basic medications as if you would on a family or personal holiday.

Your 360 expedition leader and / or a local porter (we call the ambulance man!) carries a very comprehensive first aid kit which contains a wide range of supplies and medications. They are fully trained to use whatever is needed for any emergency that may arise. We advocate keeping this in mind when packing your own first aid supplies and keeping your own FA kit as compact and light as possible.

What vaccinations do I need?

The following vaccinations are recommended:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio

Yellow Fever (see below)

This list is not absolute and it is important you should see your GP Surgery or travel clinic for latest recommendations and to ensure you are up to date on necessary vaccinations.

Do I need to have a yellow fever certificate?

If you have an International Vaccination Certificate, it should be carried with you. This certificate shows which inoculations you have had and when. In the past 2 years there have been some remote YF outbreaks in East Africa which have resulted in travellers having to provide proof of vaccinations before entry. This is not always enforced however (at least not in January 2015) but the International Vaccination Certificate is well worth obtaining. On the occasions when they had been necessary clients without the document have had to pay \$50 to receive the inoculation at the airport before being permitted entry to the country. Please contact the 360 office to obtain the most recent travel information.

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FAQ'S

What happens if I need to leave the expedition early?

If a climber needs to leave early, arrangements can be made with the assistance our 360 Guide. Additional costs (transport, hotels, flights etc.) will be incurred by the climber but our guides will be able to assist in every detail of your departure.

What happens if there is a problem on the mountain?

All our guides are in communication with each other by phone and radio. In the vast majority of cases of emergency rescue the problems can be attributed to slow acclimatisation or altitude and if so the solution is immediate descent to lower altitudes. Our local crew is very experienced in dealing with any problem that may arise. Our guides are either doctors or possess the highest standard of wilderness first aid qualifications and can handle any emergency to the highest level of competency without assistance if necessary.

Kit

What clothing should I wear on the mountain?

We advocate the beg, steal and borrow principle for first timers instead of buying brand new stuff that may never get used again. The cost of equipment is usually a major deterrent for people coming onto trips in the first place.

Our guides usually start the walk wearing long, lightweight trekking trousers and T-shirts. Long trousers are recommended as a deterrent to insects, stinging plants and to act as sun protection. Shorts can also be worn on the initial few days of the trek as the temperature is usually warm. Ensure that you apply sun-protection frequently!

The prevailing conditions on the mountain will dictate what you will wear: if it is cold when you leave the camp in the morning then wear a fleece. As things warm up take advantage of the zipper system which most trekking clothing has and open and / or close the zips to adjust to your own preferred temperature. If you get too warm simply take a layer off.

Waterproofs are needed at all times. Mount Kenya is a big mountain that creates its own weather system. It is not unusual to be caught out in an afternoon rainstorm low down on the mountain. Waterproofs should be Gortex material or similar.

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FAQ'S

What do your guides wear on summit day?

On summit day it gets cold and temperatures of -10 to -15 C are not unusual.

Typically our guides wear 2 sets of base layers (Long Johns) a fleece layer (top and bottom) and then on the legs waterproofs whilst on the upper torso a down jacket is often worn. If the wind picks up near the summit ridge our guides will put on their wind proof layer to ward of the wind-chill. On their hands they'll wear a thin layer of working gloves over the top of which is a thicker set of "ski gloves" or mittens.

Their heads are covered by a thermal "beanie" hat and the hood of their down jackets. On their feet the guides wear one pair of thin socks and one pair of thick socks.

On summit day Guides use waterproofs as an invaluable wind shield to protect themselves against wind-chill when a strong wind blows.

What is the best type of footwear to use?

Because of the huge variety of terrain encountered when ascending this mountain it is very important to wear the right footwear. Boots should be sturdy, waterproof, insulated against cold temperatures and offer adequate ankle support.

In addition it is highly recommended that your boots are well worn in to prevent the formation of blisters. A range of suitable boots are on the market and further advice as to which brand names are available can be found online or at your local gear store. When in-store try lots of boots on, use the ramps in the shops to test their traction, make sure they are comfortable as you will be almost living in them for days on end and they are very important.

To ascend Mount Kenya it is not necessary to buy technical boots with crampon clips as crampons are not used for climbing this mountain unless you plan to do more ambitious climbs in the future.

What should I carry inside my daysack?

A daysack is worn by the client at all times during the trek. The content of this is mandatory and should include: a fleece (for when taking breaks or weather changes) a full set (top and bottoms) of waterproofs, sufficient water for the day, snacks, camera equipment, personal medication and a head torch.

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FAQ'S

What do the porters carry? What is the correct porter weight?

Your day to day sack should weigh no more than 3 – 4 kg and a rucksack of around 30L capacity will more than suffice. This rucksack can be filled to brim with extra stuff when checking in at the airport. It is important that this bag has an adjustable waist belt to transfer the weight of your daily load onto your hips and from here onto your legs (your strongest muscles) to do most of the carrying.

Your porter bags should be off a soft material “duffel bag” or rucksack variety and should not be a suitcase or hard bodied metal case. Furthermore they should weigh no more than 12-14 kg when packed for the mountain. On all our Mount Kenya trips we have found this weight to be ample and usually everybody can plan to take only enough clothes and equipment needed for the mountain. Please bear in mind that park regulations restrict porters only carrying 20kg and that on top of your load porters will also have to carry a share of the food, kitchen equipment, camping equipment and their own survival gear.

Inside the porter bag should be a change of clothing, your clothing for higher up the mountain, a sleeping mat (thermarest), sleeping-bag, personal toiletries etc. (see equipment list).

Are down jackets necessary?

They are highly recommended and are often worth their weight in gold on summit day. Our guides wear them on all evenings from the first camp up. A layer system comprising of several layer of base layers, fleeces, and a thick jacket will suffice on most summit nights but nothing beats the efficiency of a good down jacket (especially when topped with a water proof layer).

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

How warm does my sleeping bag need to be?

Should be rated within the -10C comfort zone. From the first camp upwards it is not unusual to experience frosty nights and a good night's sleep is important to giving you the best chance to climb this mountain. Ensure you get a sleeping bag that has this temperature rating at this comfort zone rather than as its extreme zone.

Our guides take sleeping bags rated to well below -10C to ensure that they are warm at night. 3 – 4 season sleeping bags can be enhanced by using an inner silk sheet (or similar). The idea is to be as comfortable and warm as possible for the night and henceforth to ensure plenty of sleep for the arduous days ahead. It is important to remember that down sleeping bags work by your own body heating the down that's inside the bag.

Once you have warmed up the bag the down will retain the heat and ensure that you sleep at a temperature that's your own body temperature. For best results it is best to wear as little as possible when inside your sleeping bag. Our guides will often only wear a set of thermals in their bag. It is important for the bag to trap the heat. By wearing multiple layers of clothing your clothing will trap this heat and your bag will not function properly.

Is it possible to rent equipment before I go?

You can rent equipment from www.outdoorhire.co.uk. Look under Partner Kit Lists, 360 Expeditions and Mount Kenya Point Lenana. However, we do advocate the use of personal equipment when it comes to footwear, your boots should be well worn in to your own feet.

What clothing is suitable for when we come back from the mountain?

Kenya straddles the equator and daytime temperatures are warm. When in Rome do as the Romans. Shorts and T-shirts are fine to wear during the course of the day. Evening wear generally tends to be casual: long trousers and casual shirt are fine for all hotels and restaurants.

Kenyans are generally quite conservative in their dress code and are generally well dressed despite their situation in life. Your town and party clothes can be left in a safe lock up and will not need to be taken up the mountain.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

The Trek (Point Lenana)

What are the three high points on Mount Kenya?

There are three high points on Mt Kenya: Point Lenana (4,985m), Nelion (5,188m) and Batian (5,199m).

The trekking Peak is Lenana.

Nelion and Batian are technical climbs, with Batian being the true summit.

Our expedition takes you to the trekkers' summit of Point Lenana but you also have the option to reach the true summit of Batian Peak (involving a 22-pitch technical climb).

How out of my comfort zone will I be?

On a day to day level remember that you will be camping at altitude. You are likely to be cold, washing and toilet facilities will be limited, your appetite may be affected by the altitude and as you get higher on the trek you are likely to suffer shortness of breath and many people experience difficulty sleeping. Remember that everyone on the trek is likely to be experiencing exactly the same symptoms: physical and mental.

How can I best train / prepare for trekking to Point Lenana?

The 360 Expeditions training programs have been devised to be expedition specific. Use these as a guide but also feel free to contact us for individual advice on how best to incorporate a suitable fitness program with your own lifestyle.

If you are struggling from day one then you will not enjoy the rest of the trip. Physical preparation does not have to be Herculean: concentrate on cardio-vascular exercise during the week by taking short runs when time allows and try to spend at least 2 weekends a month going on long duration walks (longer than 6 hrs) carrying a rucksack of around 10kg.

This kind of regime will not only prepare your body for carrying minor loads but will harden your body against the big days on the mountain itself. In addition it will help break in your boots and get you used to your equipment. In combination this will pay dividends when you reach Mount Kenya because even though you can't train for altitude your body will be ready for arduous days and you will be familiar with how to best use your equipment, both adding to you being able to enjoy and appreciate the mountain all the more. Summit day can be up to 9 hours long.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

The Technical Climbs (Batian & Nelion)

I would like to add on the Batian climb is that possible?

Yes! Just let us know, we may need a little information about your technical climbing ability but see below about the grading of the climb. It adds one day to your stay in Kenya.

How much does it cost?

The cost for the technical climb depends on how many of you there are:

1 pax: £1,525

2 pax: £950

3 pax: £775

4 pax: £675

5 pax: £625

6 pax: £575

What is the plan to climb to the true technical summit?

For those wanting to climb to the true summit, you will bid farewell to your trekking team on day 6 and your plan will be as follows:

Day 6:

Simba Col – Point Lenana – Kami Camp.

You'll climb the trekking peak Lenana (4,985 m) with your trekking team and enjoy their moment of reaching this spectacular summit with them. This climb also aids as a good acclimatisation climb before our ascent of Batian the next day. From this unique vantage point, you can see the eastern aspect of the massive climb ahead and begin to appreciate the exciting adventure in store. There will be a final breakfast with your trekking team before saying goodbye and beginning your descend to Kami hut, the base of the climbing route on the north face of Mount Kenya.

Day 7:

Kami Camp-Batian

You'll have an early start (4am) and will be supplied with a packed lunch and hike the 30 mins to the base of the normal route for climbing Batian. The climb itself commences at 4500m and tops out on the 5198m high Batian, the true summit of Mount Kenya. Generally, the climb to the summit and return to Kami camp takes around 11 -12 hours.

The Batian ascent comprises of 18 pitches using a 60 rope or 22 pitches using a 45 rope. Depending on your ability and strength as seen the day before will often dictate which rope length we will be using.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

What technical kit do we need to carry if I wish to climb the true summit?

The only items you'll need to bring with you are your harness, helmet and climbing shoes (and socks for your climbing shoes as it can get chilly).

The rest we provide – including ropes, carabiners, climbing and belay devices.

What is the climber : guide ratio for reaching the true summit?

We have a 2:1 climber:guide ratio for reaching the true summit.

What are the climbing grades of the technical routes to reach the true summit?

The true summit of Mt Kenya is called Batian, (also known as the normal route). This peak can be climbed all year round BUT the best times are in the two dry seasons. December – March and June – October.

Batian comprises of 18 pitches using a 60 rope / 22 pitches using a 45 rope.

GB: HVS
French: grade 5b
US: 5.8
UIAA: Grade 6-

Nelion (also known as the north face) can also be summited. This peak can only be climbed in the longer dry season. December – March. Outside this season there is risk of lingering snow and ice.

Nelion comprises of 12 pitches using a 60 rope / 18 pitches using a 45 rope.

GB: Grade VS
French: Grade 4b
US: Grade 5.5
UIAA: Grade 4+

If you wish to attempt the true summit (Batian) your climbing grade should be 2 levels higher than the grade mentioned here. This is to allow for fatigue on a multi pitch route. Please also note the routes are well bolted.

We always climb Batian BEFORE we debate an additional climb on Nelion.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

What is the technical ascent on Batian like? (The true summit)

Think a major Alpine ascent when considering an ascent to the true summit of Mount Kenya. The route we propose to guide you on is around 800-900m in length and involves continuous rock-climbing. It's 18 pitches long in total (using 60 rope) / 22 pitches long (using a 45 rope). If you are comfortable climbing a **multi pitch** route at:

GB: HVS,
FR: 5b
US: 5.8
UIAA: 6-

then you have what it takes!

Multi pitch is far harder – so please do train with this in mind.

Your daily one pitch climbing should be at least two levels higher than the above mentioned.

The good news is that it is on fantastic granite and even though the nature of the climbing is traditional, the quality of the rock is safe and normal mountain hazards are minimal. Please also note that we like to try and include a practice climb to the summit of Point John. An equally impressive 400m route of grade Alpine D standard. This allows us to see your standard in situ and if we have a larger team to pair you with the correct climbing partner. You will climb with one guide to two climbers.

Your guide will do the lead climbing on these routes and remember the route is bolted, which helps.

What if I need to bail out halfway through the technical climb?

If you come to a point that you need to bail out whilst climbing the technical climb of Batian, then your climbing guide will make a plan in situ with you. Your safety will always come first and they will work a plan out with you.

Either they will secure you and take the other climber to the top and come back and collect you and take you down... or another plan will be put into motion in situ.

How do we go to the loo and eat on the technical climbing route ?

You will be given a picnic lunch and you will find ledge to have a pause and eat.

If you need the loo you will have to go in nature .. finding a suitable spot en route!

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

The Weather

What is the best time of the year to climb the mountain?

The optimal climbing seasons are late December through to early March when the daytime temperatures are the warmest and there is reduced cloud cover. June through to October are also good as the daytime conditions are generally cooler but clear. Bear in mind that this time-frame coincides with the European and USA holiday season and that the routes may be busy. In October the crowds vanish.

How cold can it get?

The temperature at the top of the mountain can vary widely. Sometimes it is only a degree or two below freezing, but visitors should be prepared for possible temperatures as low as minus 15 Celsius, especially in conjunction with wind chill.

What happens if there is a lot of rain on the trek/climb?

Please be assured that we only schedule our expeditions at the optimal time, during dry season, so we would not expect to encounter rain.

In the unlikely event of rain, this will not affect reaching Point Lenana. If you are undertaking the technical climb, rain will make the climb more difficult and if deemed too dangerous, will be void in situ.

Travel

Do I need to book my own flights to Kenya?

360 Expeditions will be booking flights on your behalf. We provide confirmation of flight times and departure terminal approximately three weeks before your departure date. Please be aware that flight schedules are subject to change. Please ensure that you have checked flight details before setting out for your flight.

Insurance

Do I need special travel insurance for the trek?

You must carry individual travel insurance to take part in the expedition. We cannot take you on the mountain without proof of insurance.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate insurance for your intended trip. To include medical evacuation and coverage up to the maximum altitude of this trip.

Your insurance details are requested on the booking form, however this can be arranged at a later date. 360 Expeditions will be requesting your insurance details 8 weeks before your departure.

What insurance do I have to have for the technical summit?

You must have insurance that covers you for high altitude multi climbing that takes you to the height of 5200m.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

Entry into Country

My passport runs out 3 months after the trek, is this OK?

Your passport should be valid for 6 months after the date the trek starts. If it runs out before you may be refused entry. It is also advisable to have a couple of photocopies of your passport in case of loss.

Do I need a visa for Kenya?

Visas are compulsory for entry into Kenya for all foreign nationals and now have to be obtained on the Kenyan e-visa website: <https://www.etakenya.go.ke/en>. You can apply 3 months in advance of your arrival. We'll be in touch with you about visas as part of our planned pre-trip communications.

Finance

When is the money due for this expedition? What kind of payment do you accept?

Generally speaking deposits are due upon booking as we need to book your international flights well in advance. The full amount should be paid 4 months prior to departure. However having said this, our aim is to get you to the top of this mountain and we understand that personal financial situations can vary.

Please contact our friendly office crew to discuss a suitable payment plan should you find raising the funds to be difficult. We have after all been in your shoes and go by the motto of where there's a will there's a way.

What is your cancellation policy? What is your refund policy?

Please read our terms and conditions carefully before you book. We highly recommend trip cancellation insurance for all expeditions. Due to the nature and heavy costs of government and operator permits we must adhere to a strict refund policy.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

How much do we tip our local crew?

Our local crew work extremely hard to ensure that your expedition runs well. While tipping is not compulsory, it is very much ingrained in the Kenyan culture. Once someone sees the hard work the crew provides and realises the small amount of money they get paid relative to your own income, tipping will seem the least you can do to say thank you. We suggest a minimum of \$200-250 dollars is given per trekker that will be then split across the team.

Money: am I correct in thinking we only need to take American Dollars with us?

American dollars are readily recognised and easily converted to the local currency at banks. Upon arrival there will always be a bureau the change at the airport as well as lots of ATMs including Barclays that will give you Kenyan Shillings. Once away from the airport you will need Kenyan Shillings, very few places will accept dollars except the bigger souvenir shops or your hotel, and they will not offer you a great exchange rate.

What additional spending money will we need?

The amount of money you will need depends on how many presents you wish to buy or how much you wish to drink when you come off the hill. As a basic rule of thumb \$200 USD should be more than adequate for any post expedition spending. Kenya is a relatively cheap place and when indulging in the local custom of haggling then goods can be very good value for money.

Your 360 leader will be happy to point out the relative bargains and the suitable prices plus where to get the best value for money. The only cash you'll need to consider taking with you on the mountain is the local crew tips which are presented to them before you sign out from the national park.

Electronics

Will I be able to charge my camera/phone battery on the trek?

Opportunities to charge your batteries will be limited. If you can get hold of a solar battery charger this is probably the best option. Also make sure that you keep your spare batteries warm i.e. by keeping them near your body day and night.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

FAQ'S

Is there mobile phone reception on the trek?

In Kenya, telephones and internet access are readily available in town. Our guides will carry satellite phones in the mountains. Mobile reception on the mountain is sporadic, but the locals know all the best spots to pick it up.

Do we need a travel adaptor for the plug sockets in the hotel or are they the same as UK?

The voltage is 220v / 50Hz like the UK. Rectangular or round three-pin plugs are used.

General

Will my valuables be safe?

While we will do everything we can to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewelry, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times.

As with travel in any foreign country, you need to look after yourself and your possessions, and this is no different.

Has Kenya banned plastic bags?

Kenya has made a bold conservation move and has banned plastic bags – from production to importation and use within the country.

Visitors are advised to avoid carrying plastic bags or packing plastic bags in their luggage but please note that ziploc bags to carry toiletries will be permitted, on the basis they remain in your possession and are not disposed of within the country.

Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m



Mount Kenya Trek

Kenya | 4,985m/5,198m

TRAINING PROGRAM

To begin 6 months prior to the expedition where possible.

1. CVS: Cardiovascular exercise which is low impact such as swimming, cycling, cross trainer, rowing.

2. Weekend walk should be done over undulating terrain. Only a light rucksack needs to be carried.

3. For specific exercises it is worth doing static squats and heel raises on a regular basis to improve leg muscles prior to the trip. Static squats are especially useful to help protect the knees. Please remember that it is still important to have a well balanced workout using a variety of muscle groups.

4. It is worth winding down and resting in the week leading up to the trip, doing several light walks to keep things going.

5. When walking going at a pace of a brisk walk with a light sweat and enough to feel breathless is recommended

6. During the program, rather than step up suddenly each month (example, going for 3 one hour walks each week during the weekdays in April to 3 one and half hour walks suddenly in May) it is better to build up gradually each week so there isn't a large transition (example, going for 3 one hour walks during week 1 in April, going for 3 one hour and ten minute walks during week 2 in April, going for 3 one hour and fifteen minute walks during week 3 in April, going for 3 one hour and twenty minute walks during week 4 in April)

6. It is important you seek medical advice prior to starting any training program, especially if you are not used to regular physical exertion

All the best with your training!

MONTH 1

OPT 1

2 x 30 mins weekday walk
1 x 1 hour weekend walk
1 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 30 mins weekday walk
2 x 1 hour weekend walk
1 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 2

OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk
1 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk
2 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 3

OPT 1

2 x 45 mins weekday walk
1 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

OPT 2

1 x 45 mins weekday walk
2 x 2 hours weekend walk
2 x 10 mins CVS

MONTH 4

OPT 1

3 x 1 hour weekday walk
1 x 4 hours weekend walk
3 x 15 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 1 hour weekday walk
2 x 4 hours weekend walk
3 x 15 mins CVS

MONTH 5

OPT 1

3 x 1.5 hours weekday walk
1 x 5 hours weekend walk
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 1.5 hours weekday walk
2 x 5 hours weekend walk
3 x 20 - 25 mins CVS

MONTH 6

OPT 1

3 x 2 hours weekday walk
1 x 6 hours weekend walk
3 x 30 mins CVS

OPT 2

2 x 3 hours weekday walk
2 x 6 hours weekend walk
3 x 30 mins CVS

360^{EXPEDITIONS}



"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty & well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out & loudly proclaiming 'Wow! What a Ride!' "

Dream it. Plan it. Live it.