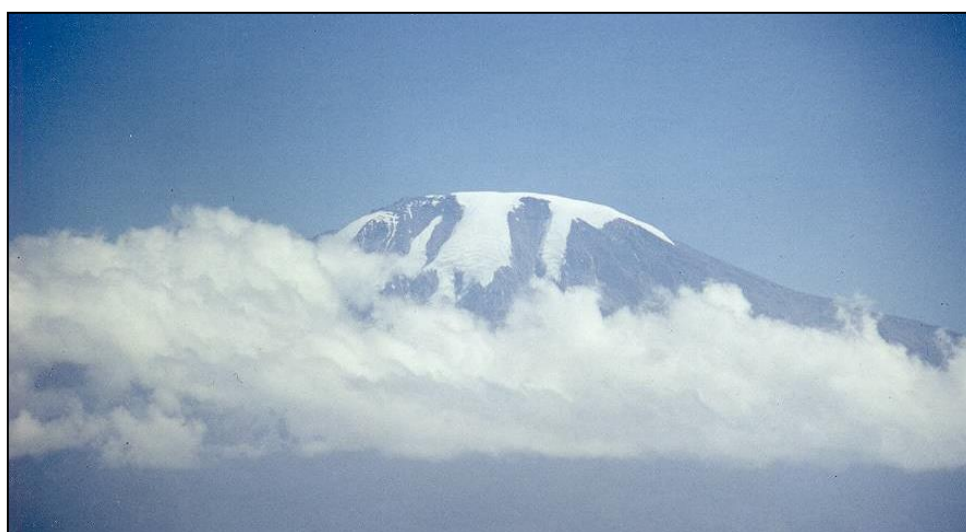


# The Africa Walking Company (AWC)

Authorised Agent, Ground Handler and Climb Operator for  
**Gane and Marshall** Kilimanjaro and Meru Climbs

*Jeremy Gane selected African Walking Company after examining and working with several operators in Tanzania over two decades. AWC's outstanding level of service and commitment to care of their staff and the environment was the most important factor. Subsequent testimonials from Gane and Marshall clients have proved that this decision was right. Not only have Gane and Marshall and AWC worked together on large projects such as the Comic Relief celebrity climb of Kilimanjaro, they have also helped countless individual climbers summit Kilimanjaro, happy and healthy!*

*AWC are members of the Kilimanjaro Porters Assistance Project and their climbs are monitored by KPAP independent staff ensuring you that our guides, cooks, and porters are well treated.*



The African Walking Company is one of the few specialist companies organising high quality trips on Kilimanjaro and Meru at competitive prices.

## **Our standard of service**

Kilimanjaro is a very popular mountain with many different companies operating on it, and they offer a variety of service levels. The African Walking Company aims to provide a safe and well managed climb of Kilimanjaro, with an excellent quality of service.

### **AWC feedback from 2017-18**

	Exceeded expectations	Met all expectations	Met some but not all expectations	Failed to meet expectations
Overall level of satisfaction	94.50%	5.30%	0.10%	0.0%
Chief Guide	96.00%	4.00%	0.0%	0.0%
Food on Kilimanjaro	80.90%	18.40%	0.50%	0.10%
Camping equipment	65.30%	31.50%	2.80%	0.40%
Assistant guides; communication, knowledge and mountain skills	94.30%	5.70%	0.0%	0.0%

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## What to expect

With African Walking Company our service starts on the day before the Kilimanjaro climb when we meet the clients and their trip co-ordinator, who is personally experienced on Kilimanjaro, gives a thorough briefing.

The briefing will include general information about the Kilimanjaro region, details of the practicalities of the trek and particularly the summit day, a check to ensure all clients have the required equipment for climbing Kilimanjaro, and further detailed information about the tipping process for the mountain crew.

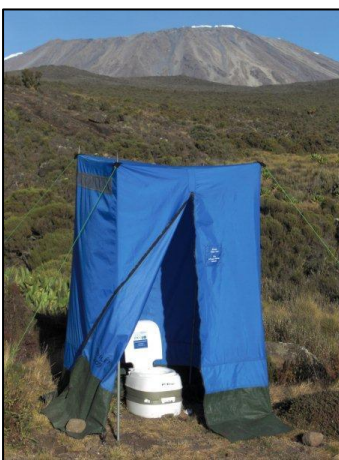
On all Kilimanjaro trips we ensure a ratio of 2 clients to 1 guide. This is particularly important on the summit day when the harsh conditions mean that some clients will need personal attention and encouragement. This is the best practice for companies offering Kilimanjaro climbs – not many operators have this ratio and hence do not meet the high level of safety and flexibility that we provide.

Our guides are equipped with a medical kit and portable stretcher. All our private and open group climbs have an emergency oxygen system included as standard. This is an additional safety measure that would be used during an evacuation of a client from Kilimanjaro due to sickness.



Our camping equipment is of proven quality and specifically designed for use on Kilimanjaro. The client tents are Vango Hurricane 300 mountain tents. They are designed for 3 people but we only put 2 clients in each tent, hence there is plenty of space. The communal mess tent has aluminium chairs, tables and a bright LED light suspended from the ceiling.

We provide a toilet tent so clients do not have to experience the awful national park toilets!



Kilimanjaro is a very busy mountain and we at the African Walking Company aim to look after it. All the rubbish we generate is carried off Kilimanjaro, and we regularly pay our porters to collect the rubbish of other more careless companies so as to keep Kilimanjaro as clean as possible.

The food we provide on Kilimanjaro is tasty and nutritious, and our cooks use fresh food wherever possible. The menu is specifically designed for altitude with a high liquid and carbohydrate content. We also include a couple of local Tanzanian dishes for your interest. Feedback from our clients often mentions 'the food on the mountain was outstanding'. After the trip the clients will be met by their co-

ordinator, who will find out how the trip went and collect written feedback via questionnaires to monitor the quality of our trips.

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## Kilimanjaro Guides

Our Kilimanjaro crew are very important to us. We pay a great deal of attention to finding the right staff and retaining them. All our staff only work for us and we run training courses to help them develop and regularly promote from within. Some of our current chief guides started with us as porters and have been trained and worked their way up to the highest position.

A number of our guides have undertaken a 3 month tourism course with the help of a grant from Kilimanjaro Guide Scholarship Foundation ([www.kiliguides.org](http://www.kiliguides.org)).



Gane and Marshall funds at least one scholarship every year.

All our guides know Kilimanjaro very well, they climb it around 20 times each year! The guides speak English, and are welcoming and helpful towards their clients. Their level of formal education varies widely, but all have good logistical capabilities to manage the complexities of porters, camp routines, and cooking.



Each chief guide has a licence from Kilimanjaro National Park to lead climbs and has his own team of assistant guides and camp staff that ensure a good level of service on the mountain. He has the ultimate authority during a climb and any decisions will be final and reflect the African Walking Company policy of client's safety being of utmost importance.

Our guides are well paid, and we have developed a structure with 6 payment levels to ensure the guides continually want to improve their skills. Promotion up the levels is a reward for exceptional performance. There is also a Christmas bonus to reward consistent performance by the guides over the whole year.

Our guides only work with us and we provide them with company t-shirts, fleeces, Mountain Equipment Ibex pants (trousers). We also assist with down jackets, rucksacks and sleeping bags so the guides are suitably equipped to guide you on Kilimanjaro. Except for the t-shirts all these items have to be imported into Tanzania, and with customs duties being around 50% of the goods value it is an expensive operation.

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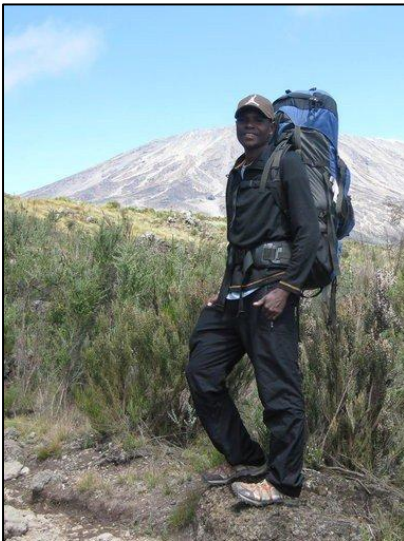
## Kilimanjaro Porters

Our porters are expected to have suitable mountain kit, it is one of the criteria for being in our porter pool. They should have a sleeping bag, sleeping mat, waterproof, boots, gloves, hats, torch and warm clothes. We have regular inspections to ensure porter equipment is safe and up to standard. We not only expect our porters to have suitable kit but as there are no manufacturers of such kit in Tanzania we regularly bring in suitable kit from England. Over the years we have distributed to our mountain crew at least 380 gortex



waterproofs, 120 pairs of walking boots, 420 sleeping bags, 110 pairs of gloves, 75 sleeping mats, 350 warm hats. Since 1999 we have provided in excess of 750,000 days of work for porters on Kilimanjaro!

Don't forget – AWC porters are protected under the KPAP monitoring scheme.



## Tour Leaders

The tour leader is an African Walking Company requirement for health and safety with big groups of 16 or more clients, as we perceive there is a greater potential risk with handling larger groups if there is only the chief guide. The maximum number of clients in one group is 29 clients. The tour leader acts as the main focal point for clients both socially and in case of any problems, whilst the chief guide make sure the logistics of the trip run smoothly.

You can provide your own tour leader, but note that they must have suitable qualifications (ML, first aid etc) and high altitude experience. We like to see their CV to check these details before confirming they are suitable.

African Walking Company can provide a tour leader. Our tour leader will meet the group at the airport and look after them until they finish the itinerary we have organised; this can include safari and Zanzibar. The African Walking Company tour leader has the Wilderness First Aid Responder qualification (a 10 day American course), some have a KINAPA chief guide licence, and all have vast experience on Tanzania trips, very good communication skills and personally know all our guides.

I think it is fair to say that a tour leader from African Walking Company will enrich the trip for your clients, as well as provide a suitable level of safety.

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## AWC personnel

The African Walking Company is owned and managed by people with a love for Tanzania and Kilimanjaro, who collectively have many years of experience in the region.

Rich Marsden has a passion for wild places. He has trekked, guided and climbed in many areas of the world, his exploits include cycling solo across the world's driest desert, living and studying in The Arctic region of Scandinavia, and guiding trips throughout the Himalayas and Andes.

He first climbed Kilimanjaro in 1995, and after a number of subsequent visits he moved to Tanzania in 2003 to manage the African Walking Company. He is leading it forward and constantly developing its already excellent reputation.



Ngaya Mboya is from the Chagga tribe who live in the foothills of Kilimanjaro. Before the African Walking Company was established in 1999, he worked with other companies arranging Kilimanjaro trips. He is the only remaining founding Director of the company and his excellent local contacts and practical knowhow ensure that our mountain operations run smoothly.

Flora Moshi has worked for the African Walking Company since its inception and in 2006 was invited to be a director. As the company has grown, Flora has taken on greater responsibility, she is known as 'Mama Porter' because she was instrumental in setting up our 'porter pool', which brings fairness and regular work to over 500 porters.

Vincent Modaha is our Accounts Manager, and demonstrates that the African Walking Company is full of people who love Kilimanjaro, because whilst he is a qualified accountant he also has a Kilimanjaro chief guide's licence! Once or twice a year he escapes from the office to lead a trip.

Jonathan Pennington-Ridge is the Operations Manager and looks after everything to do with the actual running of the trips; transport, guides, packing of equipment, trip co-ordinators etc. He is in regular communication with the co-ordinators so that we are sure that everything is in place for a perfect and enjoyable trip.

## Mountain Information

### *Trekking conditions*

Most of the trails used on our mountain treks are well-defined and of good quality but some forest sections can be slippery. The summit days on Mt. Meru and Kilimanjaro are long and hard passing over rock and loose scree. These mountains are large volcanoes that tower above the surrounding plains and result in all climbs requiring a considerable amount of uphill and then lots of downhill!

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## ***Handling of luggage***

Each client should bring a maximum of 15kg of luggage onto Kilimanjaro (12kg on Meru). It should be contained in a duffle bag or soft kitbag, this will be carried by a porter inside a heavyweight clientbag to give it further protection. The client carries only their day-sack. Any unwanted baggage and suitcases can be safely stored in the hotel.

## ***Food and drink***

We choose the ingredients carefully to ensure that the food prepared by our team is tasty, easy to digest at altitude, and with high energy content. We can cater for vegetarians, ensuring that their meals are varied and inviting.

A fresh food resupply is provided for all groups on climbs of 7 or more days, and on 6 day climbs when the group is of 5 or more clients. This resupply reaches the group part way through the trip and includes fresh bread, fruits, vegetables, cheese, and meat.

The menu has a high liquid and carbohydrate content; the two important elements for successful climbing. At higher altitudes, stimulants (such as coffee) and less digestible foods (such as meat) are not recommended. Our evening meal at the highest camp on Kilimanjaro is a meatless stew as our experience shows this to be the ideal preparation for the summit day. Treated water is offered each evening for filling water bottles and is readily available at other mealtimes too. At mealtimes a selection of hot drinks are available. Soup is served twice daily.

## ***Daily Meals***

Bed Tea - tea or coffee served in your tent.

Breakfast consists of seasonal fresh fruit (mango/banana/watermelon), porridge, cooked eggs, sausage, bacon and toast.

Energy snacks are provided for the daily walk such as biscuits, bananas, and chocolate bars.

Lunch is either a packed lunch on longer days or, more usually, a hot lunch served in camp by a small team who have raced ahead of the clients. A hot lunch typically consists of soup, bread or pancakes, cheese, tuna, jam, peanut butter, pasta salad and cake.

Afternoon tea is served in late afternoon. It is an opportunity to drink lots of hot drinks and snack on peanuts or popcorn.

Dinner is the main meal of the day and always consists of three courses; soup and bread, followed by a main dish, which could be rice, potatoes or pasta with fish, meat or vegetables, and is followed by a dessert often of fruit.

## ***Summit snacks***

Whilst we provide enough food for the climb, we recommend that you bring some of your favourite snacks, and keep them for the summit day. This is because the summit day is a long and tough climb and having your favourite snacks can give you a very welcome boost.

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## ***Hygiene***

We always ensure that there is a bowl of hot washing water for you in the morning and again after the walk at an agreed time in the afternoon. The only exception is the highest camp where there is no water source and hence all water must be carried from a lower level by porters.

Handwashing water treated with dettol is available along with soap before all meals, and everyone is strongly advised to make use of it.

We supply a private toilet tent on all camping routes as we have found that the long drop toilets maintained by the national park are of a sub-standard quality. The toilet tent has toilet paper within it, but we recommend clients bring their own toilet paper and wet wipes as well.

## ***Campsites***

The campsites on Kilimanjaro are designated by the national park, and are mainly are stone/dirt. They are not all level and can be crowded in peak season. We provide quality mountain tents that are rated as 3 person tents. Hence there is plenty of personal space and ample luggage storage area in the two porches. The tents are Vango Hurricane 300's ([www.vango.co.uk/tents/hurricane-300.html](http://www.vango.co.uk/tents/hurricane-300.html)). A limited number of these tents are available as single tents at a supplementary charge and should be reserved in advance. Clients should bring their own sleeping bag and mat.

Breakfast and dinner are served in our communal mess tent with chairs, tables and a bright LED light. This tent is also available for communal use in the afternoon and evening.

There are additional tents with our groups that are used by our mountain crew for sleeping and cooking in. We provide groundsheets for all of these tents.

## **Safety and Rescue with the African Walking Company**

### ***Medical equipment***

Group medical kits with instructions are provided on all climbs and looked after by the chief guide. All guides have had first aid training and renew it every 2 years. The courses are under the International Red Cross and last for one week, ending with a written and practical exam. We carry an emergency oxygen system (E1) on all private and open group climbs. We have the best ratio of guides to clients (1:2) on Kilimanjaro which means we pay personal attention to every client and avoid altitude sickness by maximising acclimatisation. The guides training means they can recognise the symptoms of serious altitude sickness and organise an immediate descent, which is by far the best treatment, on the few occasions when this is necessary. We also equip all our climbs with a portable stretcher so in the case of an accident we can evacuate the sick client effectively.

### ***Acclimatisation on mountain trips***

Technical descriptions of the causes and symptoms of altitude sickness can be found in many guidebooks. It is likely that you will experience some form of mild altitude sickness on a high mountain trek. What follows below is based on practical experience rather than on detailed medical explanations.

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Altitude sickness is caused by the failure of the body to adapt quickly enough to the reduced level of oxygen in the air as one gains altitude.

There are many different symptoms but the most common are headaches, light-headedness, nausea, sleeplessness and a loss of appetite. These symptoms can be considered normal for climbing Kilimanjaro.

Very, very rarely serious altitude sickness develops; either cerebral or pulmonary oedema. Cerebral oedema is recognised by severe headaches combined with severe loss of balance and dizziness, whilst pulmonary oedema is characterised by crackling noises from the chest and the coughing up of pink sputum. Both conditions lead rapidly to death unless (and this is the only cure) an immediate descent is made.



Our practical experience is that there are three key steps to achieving successful acclimatisation. You will probably still suffer some mild symptoms of altitude sickness before adapting to function normally with reduced levels of oxygen.

- Drink lots – We recommend a fluid intake of 4-5 litres daily. Fluid intake improves circulation and most other bodily functions. Fluid intake does not add to fluid leakage from the body. Our menu contains lots of soup, hot drinks and fresh fruit. And you need to drink 3 litres of water per day too! If your urine is clear and copious, you are drinking enough.
- Walk slowly – It is vital to place as little strain as possible on the body whilst it is trying to adapt to a reducing oxygen supply. Unless there is a very steep uphill section, your breathing rate whilst walking should be as if you are walking down the street at home!
- Walk high, sleep low – This means having a well-planned itinerary with afternoon walks to a higher level than camp to stress your body, before descending to camp to sleep low. All our itineraries have this, although due to time and the distance to be covered the longer 8 and 9 day ones have more acclimatisation walks.

## ***Treatment of altitude sickness***

Mild forms of altitude sickness are best treated by rest, maintaining fluid intake, and by a painkiller such as paracetamol. Mild symptoms which have lasted for 24 hours or more can be treated with Diamox which aids acclimatisation. Some people take diamox before the climb as prescribed by their doctor. The use of diamox in this manner is a personal decision, we as a company think it is better to listen to your body and give it a chance to acclimatise naturally before resorting to the use of diamox.

Serious cases of altitude sickness can only be treated by immediate descent. Our guides are all experienced in dealing with the problems of altitude and their decision will be final.

## ***General Procedures in case of sickness***

As stated above the chief guide on the trip has received first aid training both from Kilimanjaro National Park, before he was awarded his licence, and also from The African Walking Company.



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All our guides undertake a first aid course every 2 years. If there is a problem the guide takes any initial action and informs both the national park and also our office in Arusha. Contact is usually by mobile telephone, as there is network coverage somewhere on each day whilst climbing Kilimanjaro. There are a number of national park ranger posts on Kilimanjaro and they also have radios to contact park HQ in Marangu.

Evacuation from Kilimanjaro is initially either on foot (if possible) or by stretcher. This is until the highest point where the national park rescue car can reach; either Shira Plateau, below Mandara Hut or Rongai Gate. This rescue car will transport the sick client off the mountain, but often it is necessary for our vehicle to meet the rescue car to complete the journey. For example when being rescued from the Shira Plateau, the rescue car only comes to Boma N'gombe, and hence our vehicle would collect the sick client from here. During the rescue an assistant guide would accompany the sick client. If the client is very sick the chief guide would accompany the sick client, and leave the group on Kilimanjaro under the charge of his assistant. The client is taken to either a doctor (KCMC Hospital in Moshi or ALMC Hospital, AAR Clinic or Aga Khan Clinic in Arusha) or as in many cases the client has recovered due to losing altitude and they go to a hotel to rest and recover.

During the rescue the sick client is accompanied by one of the guides and looked after carefully. On the morning after the rescue the guide would meet the client again and check how they were. At this time there is telephone communication from Jon or Ngaya to ensure that the correct medical care is being offered and the client's wishes being taken care of. This guide is then available to help the client in any way, whether they need to go to the doctors or do a short walk around town. The trip coordinators of African Walking Company are also involved in looking after the recovery of sick clients as they are conveniently based in Arusha and Marangu. In serious cases, one of the senior management of the company would visit the client to ensure the treatment and other arrangements are the best possible.

Any further arrangements that are needed for the sick client; hotel bookings, flight changes, transfers can be made through The African Walking Company office. Please note that all extra services need to be paid for by the client as per our booking conditions, and that US dollars is still the best way to settle these expenses. Tshilling cash can be used and obtained from ATM's in Arusha, Marangu or Moshi.

## **BOOKING YOUR CLIMB**

Climbs with African Walking Company are booked through the Gane and Marshall office. Please [contact us](#) to book your climb or for further information.

For more information on Kilimanjaro, including a comparison of the different available routes, the best times to travel, and guidance on kit and training, visit our dedicated Kilimanjaro website: [www.kilimanjaroclimbs.com](http://www.kilimanjaroclimbs.com).



**Gane and Marshall**

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