

Footsteps of the Maasai, tanzania



This challenge takes place in the wild African bush, home to several Maasai communities. Perhaps the most revered of the great African nomadic tribes, the Maasai originated in the Nile basin and migrated south through Ethiopia to Kenya and Tanzania in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

They were then known as the fiercest of warriors. Now they struggle to retain their modest lifestyle.

Starting in the foothills of 2,590m tall Mt. Longido, a sacred Maasai mountain, you will trek across the floor of the Great Rift Valley right to the foothills of the visually stunning Crater Highlands with the Maasai as your guides.

En route, you will also have the chance to visit Mt Kitumbeine; on whose higher slopes are hidden remote Maasai settlements.

Once the challenge is complete, you can celebrate with a viewing of the Ngorongoro Crater or go on an optional game drive into the crater.

Day 1: International Departure

Night flight Heathrow to Nairobi, departing approx. 2000hrs. Our Charity Challenge representative will be there to assist you with the check-in and any last minute questions.

Day 2: Drive to Tanzania & Trek to Longido – approx 10kms trek

This morning you will depart by bus for the frontier at Nmanga (approx 2hrs); cross into Tanzania and drive a further half hour to Kawawa Camp located in the foothills of the dramatic Mt. Longido. This is one of the few high peaks in the region that is not volcanic. You will then have an afternoon trek in the bush to the small community of Longido to help acclimatise you to the

African bush, allow you to test your equipment and give you a great insight into typical African acacia bush country. The climate will be very very hot and dry and may be quite a different style of trekking to the training you may have undertaken. This trek will help you to adjust sufficiently to local conditions. Tonight will be spent in camp.



Day 3: Longido to Kitumbeine – 22kms

Today a vehicle uplift will take you approx 20kms further into the bush heading west towards Kitumbeine to reach the day's trek start-point. You will trek a tough 22kms towards the majestic volcano – Kitumbeine. Passing Maasai villages and herdsman, you will today have your first views of the celebrated mountain Ol Doiyno Lengai (2,878m), the most sacred Maasai mountain in the region. As on most days from now on, you will have a packed lunch provided. The trail is sandy and sometimes rocky all the way through to Kitumbeine, with only porous dust soil in the last 7kms before reaching the village camp. About 2kms beyond Kitumbeine Village is Kitumbeine Camp

Your trek today will give you a real understanding of how hardy the Maasai are, who walk these distances regularly. By now you will be captivated by the mystical, eternal beauty of this region, which is known as "The Cradle of Mankind". Overnight will be spent at Kitumbeine Camp.

The Maasai peoples are Nilotic – coming originally in vast migrations down from the Nile basin. They crossed into Kenya and Tanzania in the 18th and 19th centuries and became feared and respected by the Bantu tribes who had themselves moved into the region from the south and the west. We can generalise that the Bantu tribes such as Chagga and Meru tended towards agriculture and favoured the fertile foothills of the big mountains. The Maasai tended to a migratory life style and took over large swathes of land for grazing their cattle and goats.

In the Maasai Footsteps region you will see the traditional temporary villages with mud-built houses and thorn hedges; and young Maasai boys herding the cattle and goats as their forefathers have done for centuries.

In time the settlement into towns and the control of local government fell mainly to the Bantu tribes who prospered by virtue of their hard work in the rich agricultural lands around Mt. Kilimanjaro and Mt. Meru. The Maasai were marginalised to areas outside the national parks and away from the town and their agricultural catchment areas. Their traditional lifestyle has been threatened by modern life.

Your trek will bring important community funds to the Maasai regions you pass through. By showing an interest in their culture, you will help encourage the Maasai in their wish to retain tradition, but co-exist with other Tanzanians in an emerging economy and a developing education system. Tradition must be allowed to exist alongside modernisation. It is a difficult goal to achieve and community based, eco-friendly tourism such as your trek play an important part.



Day 4: Kitumbeine Mountain & Village – approx 16kms

Today you will take two superb treks that will show you the mountain scenery and also traditional Maasai boma (village). This morning you will trek part way up Kitumbeine Mountain (16kms) along a trail that takes you to the high Maasai lands and Endaleta Village located on the side of Kitumbeine. You will be visiting the market and meeting the local people. The trail is dusty and rocky to start and then mainly rocky underfoot. You will pass through lands very rarely visited by tourists and

you will have, wonderful views across the plains below which make up the floor of the Rift Valley. Temperatures should reduce as you pass midday and gain altitude. You will return later to your camp for overnight.



Day 5: Across Dustpans of Nagarirat to Gelai – approx 18kms

Today you will have a vehicle uplift to north-east of Kitumbeine village on rocky terrain. Crossing a low saddle between mounts Kitumbeine and Gelai you will then climb into the foothills of Gelai. This section is very challenging with a lot of uphill and very hot weather. On this day and the following days you will start to see more of the wild game that populates the region. In particular look out for zebra, gerenuk, and giraffe. The birdlife is rich along the entire route and you will be fascinated by the nests of the weaver birds. The superb starlings, the “Go Away” bird, hoopoes and numerous raptors are seen in the area. Tonight you will camp at Gelai Village Camp site.

Day 6: Sunken Crater & the Lava Plains – approx 22kms

Today you will begin very early and trek west across untamed bush towards Sunken Crater (22kms). You will cross a beautiful plain marked by dead volcanic vents - your journey bringing you ever closer to the escarpment of the Rift Valley, which rises from the bush up to the Ngorongoro Crater Highlands. Today's trek is likely to be hotter than ever, so wear lots of sun block, reflective clothing and wide-brimmed hats. After lunch you will trek to the impressive Sunken Crater and will be camping overnight at the rim of the crater. Evening temperatures drop and it has been known to be rather windy.

Day 7: To Engaruka - approx 15-30kms (dependent on group strength)

This morning you will have an early breakfast, then transfer by vehicle to the last Ol Doinyo Lengai Tributary south of Big Sunken Crater and start trekking from there. You will cross the Ol Kerii Plain passing by small settlements, until you finally reach Engaruka Stream campsite situated quite near to the ruins of the ancient Engaruka settlement. You will be camping near the river bank so there will be plenty of water for showers after a very hot and dusty day.



If you would like to book the above extension or have any extension enquiries please call the Tanzania Travel Company office on +255 (0) 27 250 3349 or email tanzaniatravelcompany@habari.co.tz All bookings are subject to availability and group booking limitations. We therefore ask you to consider your travel plans as soon as possible and if you want to extend your challenge, please put in your request immediately

Day 8: Ngorongoro Crater

After an early breakfast you will say goodbye to your support team & head towards the bustling town of Mto Wa Mbu and on up the escarpment of the African Rift Valley to the Ngorongoro Crater.

"The views from this north-eastern area's 20km-wide, 600m tall Ngorongoro Crater are most impressive. It's been compared to Noah's Ark and the Garden of Eden - and has the added advantage of actually existing. But he'd have no trouble finding lion, elephant, rhino, buffalo and many of the plains herbivores such as wildebeest, Thomson's gazelle, zebra and reedbuck, as well as thousands of flamingo wading in the shallows of Lake Magadi, the soda lake on the floor of the crater."

The Lonely Planet.

The Crater is a natural amphitheatre, where numerous species of game and birds reside. The massive sunken caldera forms a special eco-zone, both remarkable for its geography as well as its inhabitants. Here you will have the option to have a game drive into the crater to see most of the Big Five and plenty of other game. Optional Ngorongoro Crater tour costs £90pp to be booked prior to departure. (NB: there must be a minimum of 4 persons for this extension to run.) For those who decide not to do a crater tour you will be transferred directly to your hotel where you will have the rest of the day at your leisure.

Day 9: Back to Arusha

After a leisurely breakfast, you will drive to Arusha for last minute gift shopping with your guide and lunch. Then continue to Kilimanjaro Airport for the night flight to London.

Day 10: Arrive UK

You will arrive back in London in the early hours of the morning.

N.B: The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, wildlife movements, the strength of the group and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.