

MOUNT KENYA: POINT LENANA VIA THE TIMAU ROUTE



FOUR DAYS/ THREE NIGHTS

Mount Kenya: Ascent of Point Lenana via the Timau Route

Full board accommodation in tents

Mount Kenya stands alone in the highlands of central Africa. Once an ancient volcano, estimated to have once been almost 22,000 feet tall, what now remains is a steep, eroded core, just over 17,000 feet in height. It's nearby neighbour Kilimanjaro, though a couple of thousand feet higher and hence much better known, does not offer nearly the climbing challenge and alpine character of Mount Kenya.

Standing at 5,199 metres above sea level, Mt Kenya is the second highest mountain in Africa but in the eyes of African Ascents, this is the most beautiful and mountain in Africa. Mt Kenya provides the best technical alpine climbing in Africa combined with incredible and challenging treks; this is a real climber's mountain. The highest peaks of the mountain are Batian (5,199 metres (17,057 ft.)), Nelion (5,188 metres (17,021 ft.)) which are technical ascents, and Point Lenana (4,985 metres (16,355 ft.)). Mount Kenya is located in central Kenya, just south of the equator near the African Ascents home of Nanyuki, around 150 kilometres (93 miles) north-northeast of the capital Nairobi. Mount Kenya is the source of the name of the Republic of Kenya.

The Timau Route approaches from the North of the mountain following a meandering route through the gentler northern slopes until they steepen at around 4200m. From here it drops abruptly into and across the Hinde Valley and the Nithi North river before climbing up to meet the Chogoria Route at Hall Tarns. The route lies in a major rain shadow. Because of this there is a very little forest on this side of the mountain. However the low rainfall zone it generally makes for a drier trek. The slope is gentle and because the peaks on Mount Kenya line up east to west the views from the north give you the impression you are trekking into a whole mountain range.

Distance to the Summit – 36kms

Altitude at the Start- 2700m, 8,860ft

Altitude at the Summit- 4985m, 16,355ft Summit- Point Lenana





DAY 1 **TIMAU TO MARANIA CAMP (3,200 m). Trekking time: 4 hours.**

You will be transferred from the Nanyuki Airstrip on the outskirts of Nanyuki Town to the road head of the Timau route north of Timau town at 2,700m above sea level. This hike starts off at the start of the moorland zone and takes you up through patches of bamboo and heather. We will stop for lunch on the rim of the crater, which offers a chance to see some of the rare mountain species such as eland, zebra, buffalo and even the occasional elephant. The view as you ascend is breathtaking, looking down across Kisima, Lewa Downs, Samburu and the great Northern Frontier beyond and up to the glaring peaks of Mount Kenya ahead. You will stop for a picnic lunch and continue on your way to Marania Camp on the edge of one of the mountain's shoulders in heather moorland.

DAY 2 **MARANIA CAMP TO MAJOR'S CAMP (3,800 m). Trekking time: 8 hours.**

You will depart the camp after breakfast, walking up through the moorland back towards the peaks ahead that make up the Mt Kenya Massif. You will have a picnic lunch at the Marania Spring, which is the source of the river that runs by Marania camp, which is a beautiful lunch spot, especially if there are some curious zebra around. You will arrive at Major's Camp in the afternoon, which is set up at the base of the valley near some very dramatic rock faces. Some wildlife have been known to frequent the area, previous guests have had sightings of the rare Serval cat

DAY 3 **MAJOR'S CAMP TO SIMBA TARN (4,650m). Trekking time: 8 hours**

You will begin the long, gradual hike up towards the Lower Simba Tarn. This walk is definitely an experience that resembles no other, with an extremely unique lunar landscape coupled with very distinctive vegetation; this will be your first glimpse of the fabulous Giant groundsels and Lobelias, particularly in the Holey Valley, below the massifs of Terere and Sendeyo, which are named after two Maasai wise men. This vegetation is endemic to Mt Kenya with its unique adaption's to the vast day to day temperature changes. You will arrive at the Simba Tarn camp at the top of the Holey Valley and aptly named Gorges Valley. The views from Simba Tarn camp are breathtaking



DAY 4 SIMBA TARN TO POINT LENANA (4,985 m) TO MET STATION

Trekking time: 12 hours

An early departure at 5.30am for a sunrise summit is the best way to experience this climb, and enjoy the expansive views of the mountainside, valleys and country beyond - even the summit of Kilimanjaro - whilst sipping a nice warm drink.

The descent takes you down the southern side along the Naro Moru route where you will have brunch in the Teleki Valley. Then it's a final walk down to the MET station for collection. You will be back in the Nanyuki area by 3pm for a late lunch at Nanyuki airstrip.

OPTION: An alternative is to spend the night at Colobus Cottages, where a hot shower and comfortable bed will await you after your long climb.

African  *Ascents*