



Mount Meru: Complete Expedition Guide & Packing List

Mount Meru (4,562 m / 14,967 ft) is Tanzania’s second-highest mountain, located inside Arusha National Park. It serves as a standalone trekking goal and an ideal high-altitude acclimatization climb prior to Kilimanjaro. Treks are standardly 3 or 4 days, with accommodation in fixed mountain huts (Miriakamba Huts and Saddle Huts).

1. CLOTHING (LAYERING SYSTEM)

While Mount Meru starts in warm lush forest, night temperatures near Socialist Peak (4,562 m) drop below freezing, accompanied by strong winds along the crater rim.

- **Base Layer (Thermal Underwear):**
 - **Long-sleeve thermal tops (2x):** Merino wool or synthetic.
 - **Short-sleeve tops (1–2x):** Merino / synthetic.
 - **Long thermal bottoms / leggings (2x):** Merino.
 - **Moisture-wicking athletic underwear (3–4x)**
- **Mid Layer (Insulation):**
 - **Fleece jackets or lightweight grid-fleece mid-layers (1–2x)**
 - **Trekking trousers (1–2x):** Wind-resistant and quick-drying.
- **Outer Layer (Weather Protection):**
 - **Waterproof hardshell jacket with hood (1x):** Gore-Tex or equivalent.
 - **Waterproof hardshell trousers (1x)**
- **High-Altitude Insulation Layer (Summit Night & Huts):**
 - **Packable down jacket with hood (1x):** Rated for sub-zero temperatures down to -5 °C / -10 °C.
- **Head, Neck & Hands:**
 - **Warm thermal beanie (1x):** Covering ears.
 - **Wide-brim sun hat or baseball cap (1x)**
 - **Neck gaiters / Buffs (1–2x):** Essential for protection against cold air and fine volcanic dust.
 - **Lightweight liner gloves (1 pair)**
 - **Warm, waterproof winter gloves or mittens (1 pair)**
- **Footwear & Socks:**
 - **Well broken-in trekking boots (1x):** High-cut, waterproof, good ankle support for rocky ridge scrambles.

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- **Camp shoes (1x):** Sneakers or light sandals for the huts.
- **High-cushion trekking socks (3–4 pairs):** Merino wool.
- **Thick thermal socks (1 pair):** For summit night.
- **Gaiters (1x):** Protection against volcanic ash, dust, and gravel.

2. SLEEPING & HUT GEAR

Accommodation on Mount Meru is inside dorm-style wooden huts equipped with bunk beds and mattresses.

- **Sleeping Bag:** Down or synthetic sleeping bag with a comfort rating of -5 °C to -10 °C.
- **Compression / Dry Bag:** Waterproof sack to keep the sleeping bag dry during transit.
- **Sleeping Bag Liner:** (Optional) Microfleece or silk liner for added warmth and hygiene in huts.
- **Inflatable Pillow:** (Optional) For extra comfort on wooden bunk beds.

3. BACKPACKS & LUGGAGE

- **Main Duffel Bag / Transport Bag (70–90 L):** Heavy-duty duffel bag carried by porters (strictly limited to 15 kg / 33 lbs per client).
- **Daypack (30–35 L):** Carried by the client for water, rain jacket, camera, warm layers, and personal items.
- **Backpack Rain Cover:** Plus internal dry bags/ziploc bags to protect gear from tropical rain.

4. HYDRATION & NUTRITION

- **Water Bottles:** 2× 1L wide-mouth water bottles (e.g., Nalgene).
- **Insulated Flask / Thermos (0.75 L – 1 L):** Highly recommended for hot tea during the cold summit push.
- **Hydration Bladder (Camelbak):** Convenient for lower rainforest stages (hoses can freeze near the summit).
- **Water Purification:** Water filter bottle or purification tablets (Aquatabs).
- **Energy Snacks:** Energy bars, electrolyte tablets, nuts, dried fruit, and energy gels for summit night.

5. TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT & ELECTRONICS

- **Headlamp:** High-lumen output + spare batteries / charging cable (the summit push starts at 1:30 AM).
- **Trekking Poles:** Sturdy, collapsible poles (crucial for stability along narrow crater rims and steep ash descents).

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- **Sunglasses:** Category 3 or 4 UV protection (essential against high-altitude glare).
- **Power Bank:** 10,000–20,000 mAh capacity (keep warm inside your sleeping bag to preserve battery life).
- **Heavy-Duty Ziploc Bags:** To shield cameras, phones, and documents from rain and volcanic dust.

6. MEDICAL & FIRST AID KIT

Client Advice: Please consult your doctor regarding personal prescription medications prior to travel.

- **Altitude Sickness Prevention:**
 - **Acetazolamide (Diamox):** Prescription required.
 - **Ibuprofen / Paracetamol:** For altitude headaches.
- **Gastrointestinal Health:**
 - **Anti-diarrheal medication:** Imodium / Smecta.
 - **Oral Rehydration Salts:** ORS.
 - Anti-nausea tablets
- **Wound Care & Blisters:**
 - Blister plasters (Compeed) + adhesive bandages
 - Sterile gauze, elastic bandage, medical tape
 - **Antiseptic liquid / wipes:** Betadine.
- **General Health:**
 - Throat lozenges, nasal spray, cold/flu medication
 - Personal prescription medications
 - Antihistamines

7. HYGIENE & PERSONAL CARE

- **Sun Protection:** High-SPF sunscreen (SPF 50+) and UV lip balm (SPF 30+).
- **Personal Hygiene:**
 - **Biodegradable wet wipes:** Essential for daily cleaning in huts.
 - **Hand sanitizer:** Use frequently before meals.
 - Compact microfiber towel
 - **Toilet paper:** Stored in sealable plastic bags.
 - Eco-friendly soap, toothbrush, and toothpaste
 - **Small trash bags:** Leave No Trace policy.

8. TRAVEL DOCUMENTS, INSURANCE & CASH

- **Passport:** Valid for at least 6 months beyond intended return date.

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- **Tanzania Visa / Entry Permit:** Approved e-Visa or visa on arrival.
- **Travel Insurance:** Policy explicitly covering high-altitude trekking up to 5,000 meters above sea level, including emergency helicopter evacuation!
- **Park Entry Requirements:** National Park permit and mandatory armed ranger fee (handled by your tour operator).
- **Cash:** US Dollars (recent series notes) or Tanzanian Shillings (TZS) for tipping guides, armed rangers, cooks, and porters.

RECOMMENDED TIPPING GUIDELINES (MOUNT MERU)

Because Mount Meru is located inside Arusha National Park, treks require an armed park ranger (due to wildlife like buffaloes and elephants in the lower forest) alongside the standard mountain crew.

Recommended Daily Rates per Group (Not per Person)

- **Lead Guide:** \$20 – \$25 per day
- **Assistant Guide:** \$15 – \$20 per day
- **Armed Park Ranger:** \$15 – \$20 per day (paid at the end of the trek)
- **Mountain Cook:** \$12 – \$15 per day
- **Porter:** \$8 – \$10 per day

Budgeting Tip

For a standard 4-day Mount Meru trek, expect to budget roughly \$150 – \$220 per client total for crew tips.

MOUNT MERU TREKKING ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Unlike Kilimanjaro, Mount Meru has only one official trekking route (Momella Route), which ascends via Miriakamba Huts and Saddle Huts before reaching Socialist Peak.

Standard Momella Route

- **Duration:** 4 Days / 3 Nights
- **Accommodation:** Miriakamba & Saddle Huts
- **Success Rate:** Very High (~90%+)
- **Highlights:** Wildlife walking safari on Day 1, excellent altitude adaptation, crater rim scrambles
- **Best For:** Recommended choice for optimal acclimatization before Kilimanjaro

Express Momella Route

- **Duration:** 3 Days / 2 Nights

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- **Accommodation:** Miriakamba & Saddle Huts
- **Success Rate:** Moderate (~75%)
- **Highlights:** Fast-paced ascent, steeper daily elevation gain
- **Best For:** Fit trekkers short on time or with prior acclimatization

KEY TREKKING HIGHLIGHTS FOR CLIENTS

- **Walking Safari Experience:** On Day 1, trekkers walk through Arusha National Park alongside giraffes, buffaloes, zebras, and warthogs escorted by an armed ranger.
- **Hut Accommodation:** Sleeping in solid wooden huts with dining halls provides shelter from rain and wind, making tents unnecessary.
- **Summit Sunrise:** Socialist Peak offers panoramic views of the ash cone inside Mount Meru's massive crater and a sunrise backdrop over Mount Kilimanjaro in the distance.

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