

Photos

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- (1) Tanzania: Momella Lodge and Momella Lakes wildlife (46 photos)
- (2) Tanzania: Mount Meru four-day hike (45 photos)
- (3) Tanzania: Mount Kilimanjaro five-day hike (65 photos)
- (4) Kenya: Mount Kenya hike in and out (95 photos)
- (5) Kenya: Mount Kenya rock climbing (75 photos)
- (6) Kenya: Street scenes (38 photos)

Summary

The trip to Tanzania and Kenya in September 2014 was with Ken Baldwin, Ken Bell, Roddy Bell, Peter Briggs and Theo Hooy, all based in and around Canberra, Australia.

The highlights were hiking up really, really big mountains – bigger than Mount Rainier – that rise over ten thousand feet from their base; rockclimbing on Mount Kenya; seeing wildlife on the way; and very friendly people and support staff.

Tanzania: Mounts Meru and Kilimanjaro and Arusha National Park

These are close to Kilimanjaro International Airport. The two main towns are Arusha and Moshe. We stayed at Momella Wildlife Lodge (the filming location for the 1962 film “Hatari”) which was really nice but is an hour out of Arusha, adding to travel times. We did a one-day safari to the Momella Lakes. Other safaris out of Arusha are to Tarangire National Park, Manyara Park and Ngoronogoro (Peter did the first two of these).

Mount Meru is a four day round trip where there is only one route and one must stay in huts which are well maintained.

Mount Kilimanjaro is recommended as a six day round trip, with accommodation in tents unless you take the Marangu Route. We did it in five days as we already had some acclimatization from Mount Meru. Nonetheless the summit day was hard due to altitude. We were a little unlucky to have the cloud come in very early that day – at 7.20 am the summit was already in partial cloud. We took the most difficult of the hiking routes – the Umbwe Route followed by the Western Breach. So we encountered few people aside from at Barranco Camp (which is also on the Machame Route) on ascent and on the standard Mweka descent route. If using a standard route, the Machame Route is much better than the Marangu Route.

Kenya: Mount Kenya

The roadheads for Mount Kenya are high (10,000 feet), so it helps to have previous acclimatization. The hiking is really nice as the higher altitudes on Mount Kenya are less arid than on Meru and Kilimanjaro.

We hiked in by the Chogoria Route, taking four days, with spectacular side trips to the Nithi Gorge and to Lake Michaelson.

We were then based at Kami Camp for five days where we did three rock climbs – Point Peter, Batian and Point Dutton. (Mount Kenya has multiple peaks. Most visitors to Mount Kenya hike up Point Lenana (4985m), the highest peak that does not require technical rockclimbing. Peter is not a climber and did a two-day circuit of Mount Kenya including summiting Point Lenana).

The main climb was Batian (5199m), the highest peak on Mount Kenya. The North Face Standard Route is very long (500 meters vertical and around 25 pitches). Initially we planned to do it in two days, but changed this plan to avoid carrying up the extra gear needed to bivouac overnight. And initially we planned to be self-guided, but ended up hiring a guide. This was a good move as the route is very difficult to follow, especially when the cloud comes in, and it is very helpful to know where the rappel anchors are for the descent. We climbed as two ropes – Ken Bell, Theo and the guide on one and Ken Baldwin and I on the other. We moved slowly for a number of reasons, including a fair bit of ice and snow on the rock up high. As a result we didn't summit until 6.30 pm. We then descended through a cold night (minus four degrees Celsius or less with a strong wind). Rappelling in the dark (with headlamp and a full moon) was generally okay but down climbing, necessary especially at the top, in the dark was very hard. We got off the peak at 8.30 am after 25 ½ hours on the move.

We hiked out by the Sirimon Route. Then back to Nairobi. I flew out while the others went on safari to Enasoit and to the Masai Mara.

Summary

Tanzania and Kenya are great places to visit, not only for the mountains. They welcome and need our tourist dollars.

Our travel (transport, guides, porters etc.) in Tanzania was organized by Snow Africa Adventures (<http://www.snowafricaadventure.com/>) and in Kenya by Ice Rock Trekking (<http://www.icerocktrekking.com/>). These are entirely operated by locals and are highly recommended.