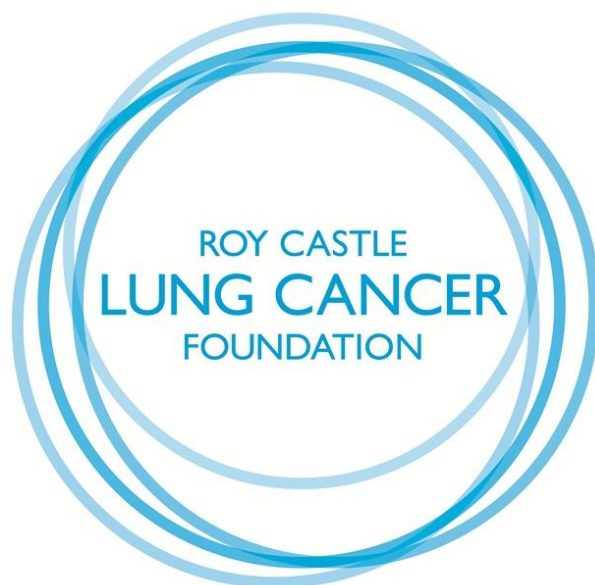


KILIMANJARO

A guide to the incredible journey of a fundraiser



Kilimanjaro 2014

Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest free-standing mountain in the world at 5,895m (19,341ft). It is higher than any point in Western Europe, and is the highest point in the whole of Africa.

Each year Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation send as many amazing fundraisers as they can to the incredible country of Tanzania to help defeat lung cancer, the UK's biggest cancer killer. Raising over £3,500 to take on this trip, each fundraiser has gone through a journey of organisation, nerves, excitement, fun, and wonder, all before even setting foot in Africa. The Foundation exists to fund vital lung cancer research and offer help and hope to those affected by lung cancer. With the help of fundraisers spending on average one full year of raising funds and an incredible amount of awareness, we are edging ever-closer to that overall goal of defeating lung cancer.

Each year fundraisers are coming up with more novel and intriguing ways of raising funds. Bag packing, quiz nights, themed nights, raffles, collections, sweepstakes, tuck shops, donations, requests, match-funding, and many more new and interesting ideas are tested to raise those all-important funds, and your fundraiser is here to help you discuss each and every one of them should you choose.

What You Will Need

(All details supplied here are true as of the trek in 2014)

Bags

When leaving for Tanzania you are permitted to take with you three bags; one main rucksack, a second decent size bag that will remain at the hotel while you climb, and a third smaller day bag that you will personally carry up the mountain. It is not essential to completely fill all three bags, and probably best not to, but it is a great idea to take all three with you at the very least. Check-in at the airport allows you to stow 23kg in the hold, so that should be between your two main bags – this is more than you will need. An 85 litre rucksack is a good size bag to take with you, it allows you to squeeze thicker items into it but as long as it is not a suitcase you can take whichever bag you choose (remember, the porters carry this up the mountain for you so it needs to be easy to carry). When you arrive at the hotel you are tasked with getting your main rucksack down to just 12kg and must leave behind anything that you need for the hotel days (first and last days) – these items go in your second bag and are kept safe for you while you climb. In terms of your day bag ensure it is one that will fit a 2 or 3 litre camelback (also known as a bladder), and will also allow you to fit in a change of clothing in case the weather turns, along with sun cream, snacks, and of course your camera. Choose a bag and weight that you are comfortable with carrying.

Clothing

Do not panic about clothing, you will not need as much as you will think that you need. A fresh t-shirt for each day is definitely advisable, but you should only need one set of shorts, one jumper, fleece, and jacket. There is certainly no need to take a few of each. The majority of the days you will find yourself in shorts and t-shirt, so enjoy the sunshine and warmth! Once you arrive at Kibo Hut and are 4,720m high, you will however need to start layering-up. This is where a fantastic fleece and your winter jacket will really start to come into their own.

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For clothing it's all about the climb night, the point in which you will feel the cold and will climb to Uruhu at 5,895m high – at this point you can experience temperatures as low as -25 degrees. Please ensure that you have worn-in your walking boots long before your trip. You will also need smart clothes for the final meal of the trip.

Equipment

Walking poles and a 2 or 3 litre camelback (bladder) are essential for the trip, along with a pair of sunglasses. A great camera (where possible video camera also) and a music player are definitely advisable when taking on this trek. Please make sure that you have enough provisions for carrying at least 4 litres of water with you each day (perhaps a 2 litre bladder and 2 flasks), a carabiner clip or two is always handy, along with a 3/4/5 season sleeping bag (up to around -17 is a fantastic sleeping bag, you will only experience sleeping temperatures of around 0 degrees but the warmer the sleeping bag the better).

Before you leave the UK, buy yourself enough snacks for perhaps two a day, sucking sweets for the summit night, and a few energy drinks/gels. A fantastic sun hat is also necessary along with sun cream of factor 50, wet wipes, and lip balm. Water purification tablets are advised, however you will be supplied at all times with pre-boiled water so the tablets are therefore unnecessary – some still choose to use these however and there will be one occasion where the water is not boiled so at the very least you will need one or two tablets. A head torch is necessary for summit night. If you do get yourself one make sure it is good quality, a cheap one will not really help too much.

Preparations

Prior to making the trip you need to prepare yourself both physically and mentally. Vaccinations are a must and training is essential, however please do not worry too much. In terms of the injections please ensure that your Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Polio, and Tetanus vaccinations are up-to-date (some do now come combined, this is not an issue).

Yellow fever is necessary to visit Kenya, which is where you will first land in Africa. You do not however leave the airport and are therefore never officially in the country so the vaccination is not crucial to your entrance into Tanzania. The injection is the only one that will cost (around £70) and it lasts for ten years. Yellow fever information is checked at Kilimanjaro Airport so please discuss this with your GP (some offer exemption certificates instead of the vaccination). Should there be a strong outbreak of yellow fever in Kenya however it is possible that the Tanzanian authorities can demand that you must have had the injection, but this is unlikely. **Please ensure that you ask your doctor for the best and most up-to-date advice.**

Diamox and malaria tablets (Doxycycline or Malarone) will be necessary for the trek. Diamox helps with altitude issues (by releasing pressure from around your eyes) and the malaria tablets are of course essential. Diamox can be scarce in the UK so please ensure that you get this relatively early as problems with distribution are quite common. Doxycycline is the cheaper malaria tablet but needs to be taken for a significantly longer period of time than others – again, your doctor will advise.

Training is key to having a great trip. Should you fail to train you will find the going tough and are more likely to suffer from altitude sickness. Your Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation fundraiser can help you with your preparations. Training advice is to get out and about as much as possible; walk or cycle instead of driving, enjoy the fresh air and see

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your country as you get ready to tackle what will be one of the toughest but greatest experiences of your life. Mental toughness is as vital if not more so than physical, so be prepared!

Taking on this challenge will see you go through a whole host of emotions. You will meet incredible people, see amazing sights and sounds, experience the wonders of the world above the clouds, and have the greatest ten days of your life. Thank you for supporting Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation.

Roy Castle Challenge Team

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Day One – London to Kenya

The first day of the trek sees the group come together at London Heathrow Terminal Four ready for the Kenya Airways flight to Nairobi. This is an exciting time when you finally get to meet those who you have seen and chatted with on the Facebook group - everyone is taking on the trip for their incredible cause. Upon arrival at the Kenya Airways check-in desks (Heathrow Terminal 4) you will be greeted by the Classic Tours representative and the tour doctor (at time of writing, Jenny Allen), who will hand you your flight information and let you know anything essential. Please ensure that you give yourself enough time for check-in.

The flight to Nairobi takes around 8 hours and you will be sitting amongst your fellow Kilimanjaro trekkers so make sure you say hello! It's an exciting time as you see Africa and Mount Kilimanjaro edge closer on the in-flight map.

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Day Two – Nairobi to Kilimanjaro

Your overnight flight from London sees you arrive in Kenya early on, however you will now move straight from your Air Kenya flight into the departure lounge where you will wait for your connecting flight to Kilimanjaro Airport – the excitement is building at this point and the group are starting to recognise who is who. You will also see other tour groups within the departure lounge, the majority if not all of the flights will be flying to Kilimanjaro for the same reason. Take the chance to relax and if you are lucky enough to sit on the left-hand-side of the plane you will more than likely see the enormous figure of Mount Kilimanjaro from a cruising altitude well above the clouds!

The flight is a short one of less than an hour and you arrive at Kilimanjaro excited for what is to come. After showing your yellow fever certificate or exemption form, you will then complete a short medical form and pass through passport control where you will regroup with your Classic Tours rep and tour Doctor. As a group you will then leave the airport and meet your tour manager (at time of writing, Henk Bleckenberg) who will be with you from start to finish ensuring that you have everything that you need and more. Please be careful at this point as to porters helping you with your bags, Classic Tours porters will not request tips from you at any point however there will be separate porters present looking for a tip in exchange for assistance. The Classic Tours porters are paid during the trip and **tips are given at the end of the trip.**

The bus journey to the hotel will take around 2 hours so relax and chat with your fellow trekkers and look around at the ever changing scenery of the local towns through to the jungle where the hotel is situated. The finish to day two will see you taking on an optional short walk to a waterfall and having dinner with your fellow trekkers before being debriefed by Henk, Jenny, and your Classic Tours rep.

Day Three – Trek Day 1, Start to Mandara Huts

With your bags packed you will leave one behind at the hotel and hand your main rucksack to the porters who will load up the buses. A short ten minute drive to the start of the trek is all it takes and you are ready to go. At this point you'll get the chance to buy one or two essential items such as a Kilimanjaro hat (\$10) or flask (\$25) if you hadn't already brought them with you. You will need your passport or passport number with you at this point also as you will sign in at the main reception to forever be logged in the book as having taken on the Kilimanjaro challenge!

Today will see you walking for around 4-5 hours through the jungle to your first huts, Mandara. Along the way you will see monkeys high in the trees and experience all that the Tanzanian jungle has to offer as well as stopping for a great packed lunch given to you by the impressive porters. While out walking you will pass many trekkers on their way back down after a successful summit to the top of Kilimanjaro, every one of them beaming with pride at their accomplishments (and one or two jokers who will do their best to scare you with ridiculous stories!).

Enjoy the walk as it is just the beginning, but will give you a fantastic insight and chance to warm up ahead of a wonderful trek. Once your bags are in the hut (you will be reunited with your main bag) you will then join the team on a 45 minute acclimatisation walk to a nearby crater – this is a daily occurrence but is essential and is a nice change to walk without a day bag on your back. You may not feel like doing these additional walks but they are very beneficial. The huts are great, sleeping four people in each one and the shower facilities are simple but freezing cold.....this is where your supply of wet wipes may come in handy.

You will tonight as with every night enjoy a nice meal prepared for you – most meals consist of a soup to start, a warm main course, and fruit for dessert.

Day Four – Trek Day 2, Mandara Huts to Horombo Huts

Today you will get your first full glimpse of the iconic mountain as you edge closer on your 8-10 hour trek through differing surroundings. Starting out at Mandara Huts just above the cloud level you will lunch after having completed around two-thirds of the day's trekking - this will be very well earned! After a refill of water it's time to get trekking again so you can reach Horombo Huts nice and early. The huts seem so far away but look out for the radio mast up ahead; the huts are by the mast!

Take the time to enjoy the views as on a clear day you can see well into Tanzania; alternatively you will receive an incredible view of the clouds below.

Collecting your bags and taking them to your hut is the next task before joining the team on another acclimatisation walk to get a fantastic view of the mountain and also Mount Mawenzi (the third highest mountain in Africa). This will again be a shorter walk of around an hour and will really help you for the days ahead.

The accommodation is great considering you will be 3,720m above sea level. There is a new shower block in place – the showers are still freezing cold however! Each hut sleeps six and you will get the chance to choose who you are with.

The evening will again see the team sit together for dinner and hear another briefing from Henk about the following day. At this point things start to get very cold the minute the sun goes down so remember to take some warm clothing items for the evenings.

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Day Five – Trek Day 3, Acclimatisation Trek Day

Today starts like every day with a group warm-up, everyone together preparing for a day of walking – today will however only be around 5 hours of trekking. Day five sees the group walk to Zebra Rock and then to an incredible viewpoint of the mountain.

The acclimatisation days are in one sense frustrating however in another, extremely vital. They allow us to get used to the conditions at higher altitude before heading back to the huts at a lower level. They also give you the chance to practice summit night trekking and scree running where possible (running down a steep dusty mountain side).

Today sees everyone back at Horombo Huts by around 1pm, resulting in a free day although there isn't much to do except take in the atmosphere and the view, enjoy being where you are and allow your body to get used to the conditions. The tour operators at this point will generally take the opportunity to let the group get to know each other giving you a chance to say why you are climbing the world's highest free-standing mountain. You will then be given the chance to play a few games afterwards and then it's another much needed early night ahead of a long trek the following day to Kibo Huts and 4,720m!

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Day Six – Trek Day 4, Horombo Huts to Kibo Huts

Today the trek starts to become a little more 'real'. Starting out at 3,720m you will trek for another 1,000m to the huts below the summit point. Leaving the clouds well below you, soon the mountain comes into view as you trek across the desert to the foot of Kilimanjaro. It's a fantastic awe-inspiring sight up in front of you and one which will leave you nervous, excited, and determined all in one.

Today you will need an extra layer or two as you walk towards colder temperatures, while the sun is high in the sky however you will really feel the heat and need to remove these layers, but as with most nights once the sun disappears it becomes very cold very quickly and they will need to go back on!

The trekking will be long and tiring but the welcome that you will receive at the 12-person huts will be well-worth the journey. You may really start to feel the effects of altitude at this height but with the correct tricks up your sleeve thanks to your tour doctor and guide you will be absolutely fine.

Tonight will see another acclimatisation walk up to a point higher than anywhere in Western Europe. At this point also there will be a strong mobile phone signal, so why not take the opportunity to let family and friends know just how well you are doing (there is no signal at Kibo Huts).

Tonight is where this tour really shows its strength. Having one night extra allows the group to really get used to the surroundings, whereas other groups will attempt to climb to the summit on the evening on arriving at Kibo Huts – this is not advisable and does not hold a strong success record unlike Classic Tour groups which remains at 100%!

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Day Seven – Trek Day 5, Acclimatisation Trek and start of Summit Night

Today's acclimatisation walk will really give you a feeling of altitude, making your way above 5,000m for the first time, spending a rest period there before heading back down to the huts to relax ahead of what will be the biggest trek of the tour. This is also where you will have the opportunity to practice scree running – take this chance as you will want to get back to the hut as soon as possible after you have reached the summit, and you will be a lot quicker if you learn how to scree run effectively.

At this point you may be feeling the effects of altitude but again Henk and Jenny will be on hand to ensure that you are feeling fine. Your Diamox tablets will be working their magic for you and tonight will be the last time that you need to take them as soon you will quickly make your way back from 5,895m to 2,000m and below. Diamox can cause side effects for some such as pins and needles, and cramp. If it becomes too much you will be advised to stop taking them and look to other methods to steer-off the effects of altitude.

Today is a tough day but a very exciting one. You will walk in the morning and then sleep in the afternoon, wake for dinner, and then sleep again for a couple of hours ahead of the big walk in the night. Temperatures at this altitude are very low - so much so that batteries start to fail and electronic equipment suffers.

In the evening we met with a German group who had arrived at the same time as us to Kibo Huts. This group attempted to reach the summit the previous night without acclimatising like our group – 4/10 failed to reach the summit – they also failed to take advantage of the use of Diamox and simply relied on personal fitness. It really showed us the advantages of being with Classic Tours.

Waking at 10pm to get dressed, you will take your Diamox tablet and prepare yourself for the summit walk. You will be very anxious and tired, but ready to go. The team have prepared you well and you just need to push on for around 11 hours. Typical summit night clothing:

- 2 pairs of socks (thick)
- Cycling shorts
- Long-johns
- Tracksuit trousers
- Waterproof trousers (ski salopets)
- 2 thermal long-sleeved shirts
- Jacket
- Winter jacket
- Scarf
- Gloves (ski type – it's best to wear a thin second pair underneath for extra warmth)
- Hand warmers (use at around 2am)
- Hat (very warm and thick where possible)
- Head torch

It seems like a lot but it's all very necessary! When I am arrives you will line up outside the hut behind the lead walker (Senai at time of writing) where you will receive a hug of encouragement from tour leader Henk prior to one of the toughest but greatest nights of your life.

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Day Eight – Trek Day 6, Summit Morning and descent

Starting with a walk to the acclimatisation point that you reached earlier in the day, you will then take your first break before walking on further to the next official stop point where you will then put your hand-warmers inside your gloves. The porters are with you every step of the way and generally you will have a porter either with you, or perhaps with you and one other. They will walk alongside you making sure that you are remembering to drink, helping you out where necessary, and keeping spirits up with their infectious singing. You are able to listen to your own music on the walk, but it is advisable to keep it low so you can hear the people around you.

The walk is long and tough, but nothing to fear and the feeling that you have when you reach Gilman's Point (5,685m) and are officially therefore on top of the mountain is indescribable. At this point you will find people in tears, fits of laughter, exhaustion, and so many different emotions as the relief and feeling of achievement comes over you. The sun is just starting to creep over the horizon and the stars are still out in force, more than you ever thought you would see.

The walk is therefore officially completed if you choose, but you will not want to stop there as the official point is around 1 hour and 45 minutes further on around the top of the mountain. This is a tough walk when you have released so much emotion after reaching Gilman's Point. Trekkers' bladders (camelbacks) are starting to freeze at this point (mine did not as I had it kept warm inside my coat), mobile phone and camera battery lives are plummeting thanks to the cold, and the end is always 'just over the next crest' – the sheer joy and pleasure at reaching Uruhu Peak (5,895m), the highest point in Africa is again unbelievable. When reaching the top do not expect to be in the greatest of shape, you will be exhausted, confused, and easily irritated! Photographs are in high demand at the Uruhu Peak sign, so expect to be rushed along as everyone wants their moment in the spotlight – the reason for this is as you climb there are many other groups joining you from different routes (there are six routes to the top) and as such it can be very busy. It is also not advised to spend more than 15 minutes at the peak as altitude sickness will really be kicking in at this point. Irrespective of illness, rushed photographs, irritation, and anything else that you may feel or experience at this point, it will undoubtedly be one of the proudest moments of your life – enjoy it!

Leaving the mountain is a time to recap everything that you have been through over the previous five trekking days – time to soak up the atmosphere of Mount Kilimanjaro and Tanzania; watch an incredible, breath-taking sunrise; and generally bask in the glory of your own success.

Heading down to Kibo Hut does of course take no time at all in comparison to reaching the summit but with the effects of altitude and the group having split up to head back down at your own pace it can seem like a life-time. It's nice to take your time to look out and down on Tanzania, see Mount Mawenzi in front of you looming large as you descend Kilimanjaro, and laugh and joke with your friends and porters. The scree running at this point is great fun, but hard work on tired legs. As always, your porter is with you throughout.

Reaching Kibo Hut was almost as exhilarating as reaching Gilman's Point, the knowledge that there is a bed waiting for you and that the quicker you reach it the more sleep you can have. Reaching the hut you have the chance to sleep until lunch time. This is only a short

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sleep but the reason for this is so you can quickly rest ahead of a walk back to Horombo Huts at 3,750m – a descent of 2,145m in one day; this obviously therefore removes any altitude sickness issues and the need for Diamox. For some trekkers it can take a little longer to return to Kibo from the summit meaning that there is sometimes very little rest ahead of a long walk back to Horombo.

Once all your items are packed away, your main bag is to be left as usual with the porters who will carry it down to the next stop. You are then free to walk back to Horombo at your own pace, there's no need to stick as one big group at this point. Some made it back to the hut in around two and a half hours, but most a little longer towards four hours. The huts are again ready for you and dinner is as always on the table before you can take the opportunity to get a proper rest in ahead of a final day of walking back to the start point via Maranda Huts.

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Day Nine – Trek Day 7, Horombo to Mandara to the Finish

Waking early once again you will walk at your own pace back to Mandara Huts for your lunch. The team waits for every member so if you have one or two slower trekkers you will be waiting on the grass outside the lunch hut for a while; this is of course a really appreciated break after six and a half days of trekking. The trek should take in the region of three hours to complete.

It's a nice feeling to be back down at cloud level (slightly above) and to enjoy a nice lunch before the remaining section through the jungle. To ensure that the group finish together, a front walker is employed from the porters to make sure that everyone waits for the group to gather back together before crossing the finish line.

The last trek is relatively short, again varying upon personal speed and comfort. It's a great experience to be trekking through jungle conditions where you can hear monkeys in the trees high above. With the trek only lasting two hours it's a nice leisurely stroll full of memories, laughter, and of course plenty of smiles. The group as said then gather together at the last bridge where as a team you will cross the line to a wonderful reception from Henk, Jenny, Classic Tours, and the porter team who are quite simply incredible people. At this point a few words are said, photos taken, and tips are given to the porters (collected from the participants the previous evening by the Classic Tours representative).

As you head back down to the buses there's an opportunity for you to buy further memorabilia from the locals, t-shirts, plaques, hats, bottles, so have a think and get ready to haggle.

As with all events there has to be an ending and Classic Tours well and truly make the most of it for you the fundraiser. There are a number of things that have been held back to make sure that you enjoy each and every moment, but only good surprises! The hotel at the end of the trip is a fantastic location and you are given the chance to either take on a safari tour (£100) or head into the local town of Moshi where you can buy souvenirs. Both were equally valuable and enjoyable trips.

Kilimanjaro is a wonderful experience as I hope you will have understood from this description. It's a life-changer and something that you will treasure for the rest of your life. It's an exclusive club and when you meet fellow 'Kili' climbers you will always enjoy the laughter and trip down memory lane. To end we were told:

“YOU DON'T CONQUER KILIMANJARO, YOU LIVE IT AND EXPERIENCE IT. IT'S KNOWN AS KILIMANJARO TO THE WORLD, BUT IT'S KILI TO YOU AND I”

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Equipment	Necessary	Optional
Sleeping Bag – 4 season (preferably with hood) this should be suitable for minus 17 °C or similar	✓	
Fleece or silk sleeping bag liner (optional)		✓
Telescopic walking poles (with rubber tips) – (if you bring these it is essential to use during training sessions before you go)		✓
Head torch and pocket torch with spare bulbs and batteries	✓	
Whistle and penknife		✓
Water bottles x 2 (2 litre) or 2/3 litre bladder (eg platypus)	✓	
Water purification tablets or iodine drops (with flavouring if you prefer)		✓
Sunglasses (suitable for snow and sun). For those taking contact lenses, remember to pack contact lens solution, your glasses and prescription sunglasses if you have them	✓	
Binoculars		✓
Camera	✓	
Money belt	✓	
Anti-bacterial wet wipes, tissues	✓	
Toilet paper (bio-degradable)	✓	
Ear plugs		✓
Hand warmers for summit night	✓	
Sun cream (minimum factor 15) and lip salve with high SPF	✓	
Bring a few of your favourite snacks e.g. dried fruit, chocolate and throat sweets (2 per day should suffice)	✓	
Travel towel and flannel	✓	
Padlocks are useful to keep luggage secure	✓	
Walking boots – must be worn in	✓	
Insoles / foot beds		✓
Trainers for general walking / late night toilet visits		✓
Warm walking socks (not cotton)	✓	
Layers of warm clothing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - base layer (long sleeved tops and long johns) - fabric e.g. knitted polyester - second layer: medium weight fleece and pullover 	✓	
Long nylon or acrylic walking trousers	✓	
Outer layer: waterproof jacket and trousers (preferably breathable ones)	✓	
1 pair of gaiters (to protect trouser legs on snow/scree)		✓
Warm jacket for nights at altitude	✓	
Good gloves – suitable for sub-zero temperatures	✓	
Thin gloves (possible to fit inside thicker gloves if very cold)	✓	
1 warm hat and/or balaclava	✓	
T-shirt and shorts for lower altitudes	✓	
1 Sun hat with broad brim	✓	
1 Scarf to protect the neck and shield face from dust	✓	
Swimwear (for the pool in the final hotel)		✓
Something slightly smarter for dinner on last night	✓	
Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation t-shirt	✓	

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Kilimanjaro from the aeroplane



The 2014 Kilimanjaro fundraisers at the hotel on day one



Roy Castle team ready for the off



Trekking through the jungle on day one



The team celebrating the end of day one



First full view of the Mountain while trekking



Getting colder at night time in Horombo, 3,750m



Acclimatisation day trek – Mount Mawenzi behind



First full view of the mountain



The daily morning warm-up!



Roy Castle in 2012



Roy Castle in 2014



Kibo Hut



Acclimatisation trek to 5,030m



Summit night briefing – now we can talk about it!



Break time on summit night



Sunrise from the summit



The glacier on one side of the summit



Views out to the clouds above Tanzania



The final trek to Uruhu Peak and 5,895m



Roy Castle fundraiser Terry Blake and his porter at the highest point in Africa, on top of the highest free standing mountain in the world



The squeeze to catch a photograph at the top!

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The 2014 Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation team



Mount Mawenzi in the background



Fundraiser Riyaz Assrafally and some of the incredible porters



On the way to Kibo Hut



Kilimanjaro memorabilia



A great group shot of RCLCF and other charity fundraisers on their way to Kibo Hut

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