



## Ever thought of climbing Mt. Elgon with Sipi River Lodge?

Ever considered climbing Mt. Elgon, one of the largest intact calderas in the world? If giant groundsels and lobelias have ever attracted you then this may perhaps be the place to see them. Sipi River Lodge offers a range of itineraries that can be moulded further to suit each individual trekker. We do plan, in the near future, to offer the trans-country Elgon trek, from Kenya across into Uganda.



### **The Flying Visit – US\$510**

2 nights at the lodge – 2 nights/3 days on the mountain – 5 Days total.

This trip is for those people short on time. After a night at the Lodge we drive you to the trail-head at Budadiri/Bumasola, and from there you start your ascent.

A strenuous first day leaves you to rest and make camp at Mude caves camp. (1770m – 3500m)

On the second day you leave the camp for the summit at Wagagai and then back to the camp (3500m – 4321m – 3500m). If you are fit and making good time then there are options to climb Jacksons peak (4165m) and spend more time in the caldera, or just to head back and chill out at the camp.

On day 3 you drop back down to Bumasola where we will pick you up and drive you back to the lodge for a hot shower some hearty food and a well deserved drink!

### **The Intrepid Explorer – US\$ 630**

2 nights at the lodge – 3 nights/4 days on the mountain – 6 Days total.

Our most popular route starts out at Budadiri and follows the Sasa trail to the summit, then loops around and follows the stunning Sipi trail back down. We will drop you off on the morning of day 1 and 4 days later you will literally walk back into the lodge for hot showers and warm, hearty food.

Please note that day one of this hike is a long and strenuous day.

Day 1. Budadiri/Bumasola – Mude Caves camp (1770m – 3500m)

Day 2. Mude Caves – Wagagai – Mude Caves (3500m – 4321m – 3500m)

Day 3. Mude caves – Kajere camp (3500m – 3383m)

Day 4. Kajere camp – Sipi River Lodge (3383m – 1795m)

### **The Full Monty – US\$ 820**

3 nights at the lodge, 4 nights/5 days on the mountain – 8 Days total.

For those wishing to either take a slower pace – or maximize their time on the mountain. Two options are available here: Either take an easier first two days (splitting day one of the Intrepid Explorer package into two days) then continuing on the same. Or push to Mude caves on day one and spend an extra day at the summit: Visit the two peaks and explore the hot springs at the entrance to the Suam Gorge.

Day 1. Budadiri – Sasa River Camp (1250m – 2900m)

Day 2. Sasa River Camp – Mude Caves Camp (2900m – 3500m)

Day 3. Mude Caves Camp – Wagagai – Mude Caves Camp (3500m – 4321m – 3500m)

Day 4. Mude Caves Camp – Kajere Camp (3500m – 3383m)

Day 5. Kajere Camp – Sipi River Lodge (3383m – 1795m)

Includes: Park entry, guides, porters, chef, transport, camping fees, food and accommodation at Sipi River Lodge

Does not include: Drinks at the lodge and tips for porters, chef and guides.

### **Mount Elgon Kit List.**

Temperatures, with wind chill, can drop to zero degrees centigrade so be prepared, bring some warm clothes...

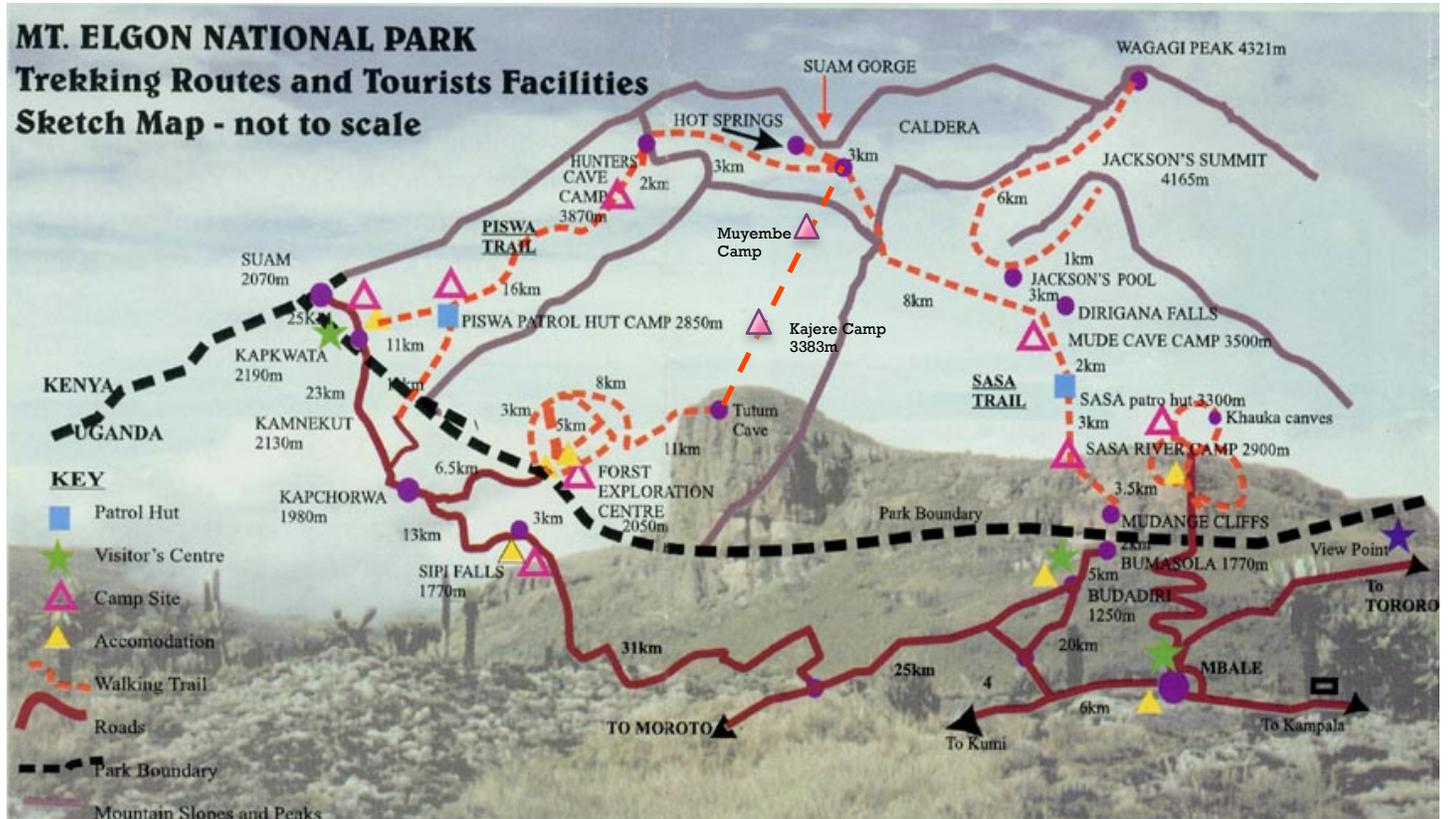
- Waterproof rain Jacket and wind blocker with hood
- Soft shell jacket
- Waterproof trousers (optional)
- Thermal layers – tops and leggings
- Fleece jumper/hoodie
- Warm socks, some clean for sleeping in
- Under layer gloves
- Good hiking boots/shoes and 2 pairs hiking socks
- Warm extra set of clothes to wear in the evenings
- Beanie hat (needed)
- Camp shoes for evening
- Long-sleeved walking shirt and one pair shorts
- Buff or bandana to stop wind going down your neck
- Tent – it may well rain so a decent tent is advised
- Sleeping bag – down to zero degrees
- Sleeping mat / thermarest
- Head torch
- Camera
- Walking poles (or cut bamboo)
- Sunglasses, wide brim hat and suncream
- Handwipes or sanitizer/lip balm/plasters/antihistamine cream/Diamox/pain relievers/anti biotic cream or powder/anti diarrhea
- Water bottles/camel pack (4L minimum)
- 30L day pack
- 65L pack for the rest of your gear (your porter will carry this)
- Waterproof inner linings to **BOTH** these packs

**Mt. Elgon 5 Day Menu**

<b>DAY 1</b>	Breakfast: Full Breakfast at Sipi River Lodge Lunch: Packed Lunch (ham and cheese sandwiches, bananas, cake, juice) Dinner: Soup/sausages (veggie burgers) and mashed potatoes with vegetables
<b>DAY 2</b>	Breakfast: Muesli + boiled eggs Lunch: Crackers, cheese, and tin of tuna Dinner: Soup/pasta & tomato based sauce with garlic and chickpeas
<b>DAY 3</b>	Breakfast: Eggs, baked beans, mushrooms and fruit Lunch: Crackers, bread rolls, cheese and fruit Dinner: Soup/corned beef with rice, garlic and vegetables
<b>DAY 4</b>	Breakfast: Museli, boiled eggs and fruit Lunch: Crackers, bread rolls, cheese and apples Dinner: Soup/pasta and tomato based sauce with garlic and chickpeas
<b>DAY 5</b>	Breakfast: Muesli, boiled egg and fruit Lunch: Crackers, Cheese and (lunch at SRL) Dinner: 4-course dinner at Sipi River Lodge

Chocolate bars and biscuits will also be supplied each day to snack on

Talking of Trails ...



Mount Elgon National Park lies on the Kenya/Uganda border and is named for the extinct volcano that dominates the park itself. The caldera caused by the collapse of the volcanic cone is reckoned to be the world's largest and creates an impressive feature viewable from the summit of Wagagi, which, at 4321m is the highest mountain in the park. The most commonly taken route from the Ugandan side of the border is the route via Sasa River and Mude Cave camps. It's a spectacular route that leads through farmland, jungle and heather country before emerging onto the edge of the caldera itself and following the rim all the way to the summit.

**Budadiri – Bumasola – Sasa River Camp:** Please be prepared for a hot, long day. We recommend long-sleeved shirt and shorts or at least lots of sun cream!

From the UWA office at Budadiri you will get boda-bodas (motorbikes) to the end of the road at Bumasola (1,790 feet). This is still in community land. Here the trail becomes a single gravel track that requires concentration on foot placement so don't slip! You will thread your way along narrow paths amongst maize fields and cross small streams as you climb gradually through the farmland and hamlets. The views, even at this early stage, are fantastic. Every inch of land is being used to grow maize, coffee, onion, bananas, tomatoes and potatoes and there are goats, chickens and cows blocking the pathway at regular intervals. Then you hit the ladders at the magnificently named "Wall of Death". In times gone by the only way to climb this part of the route was via frayed rope ladders, now, however, there are well maintained metal staircases that make the ascent of the cliff faces far easier. Now you enter the forest. This area of forest has been selectively logged, bamboo is stolen often and sadly poaching continues. You may see some monkey species, butterflies and lots of birds ... think back a hundred years ... there would have been elephant here! The climb up to camp from here is cooler and less steep, very do-able. Sasa River Camp has basic toilets and wooden 'A' frame huts. We suggest that you put up your tent *inside* the hut as this will provide extra warmth.



All the camps on the mountain are rudimentary in nature. The long drop toilets are not maintained so please don't expect luxury. Most of the camps consist of a kitchen, which also doubles as the quarters for the porters and guides. At each camp there is also a big dormitory hut structure, made of wood and covered with iron sheets, which is supposed to act as a rest house for the climbers. Most of these structures are still incomplete. They have bunk beds inside, but the beds have no mattresses - just bare wood so wrap up warm with good sleeping bags and thermals. We hope that UWA can work fast to make these structures much better. If you can stand icy water you can wash in the stream with a cup and sponge.

**Sasa River Camp – Maude Caves Camp:** Although this day is shorter, this section is where the altitude will begin to affect you. From the forest zone you enter the heather zone, tall, scratchy heather plants with red-hot poker flowers and giant lobelias. Maude Caves camp has phenomenal views into a still forested valley. The wind may get up and keep you cold here so be prepared. This trail again wanders through areas that have been harangued by poachers as they try to burn out the last remaining small antelope. Keep a look out for fresh scats though, civits, hares and hyrax scats are seen often.

**Maude Caves Camp – Jackson's Peak:** Here you really get a feel for the afro-montane vegetation with the giant lobelias, giant groundsels, everlasting flowers, mosses and lichens. The wind may be cool and rain may be accompanied by hail. You could do Jackson's Peak and Wagagai in the same day.

**Maude Caves Camp – Wagagai Summit – return:** The same is true about the weather on the way to and from the summit. The climb is relatively steep and at altitude feels harder than it really is. Take it slow and you will summit. The fantastic views are well worth the climb. Try to hit the summit in the morning to avoid cloud and hopefully get the best weather.

**Maude Caves Camp – Kajere Camp – Tutum Caves:** This is a long walk with many up's and down's but the walk is ultimately worth it if you feel you can manage. Muyembe camp is a proposed camp and so there is nothing yet there. This is a 9hr 32km walk with steep ascents and descents. There is an option to stay at Kajere Camp and not walk quite so far but here you will pitch your tent outside as the hut facilities will be used by the support team. If you want to stop here then please strongly inform your support team as they are inclined to push you further.

**Tutum Caves – Forest Exploration Centre – Sipi River Lodge:** Downhill and home! This a quick and not too hard walk that brings you back through the forest to the Forest Exploration centre from whence it is another hour down through the communities to Sipi River Lodge, hot showers, warm food and a much needed drink!

**Further Information for your climb:** Once you get to camp each evening the porters will gather wood and make a fire as well as boil the water and set up the tents, so we suggest that you pack some entertainment; a pack of cards or your book would be good. If you have wet clothes you can string them out to dry in the porter's cabin, this means you don't have to pack too many spares!! There is phone reception up the mountain so if you

want to take your phone, feel free, just make sure it does not get wet! If you feel you have extra gear we suggest you bring an extra back-pack for the porters although Sipi River Lodge does provide a pack for food and tent/sleeping bag rental.

**A note on the temperatures and mud:** It is important to have warm sleeping bags (-5 degrees centigrade) and a ground mat that will stop the cold seeping through. The wind can bring the chill factor down even lower. Pack warm clothes, gloves, scarfs and beanies for sleeping. The trails do become very slippery when wet and sometimes step downs can be more than 40cm so walk carefully and watch each step.

**On Water Treatment:** We use boiling and water purification tablets that may leave a metallic taste in your mouth. If you do not like this please bring your own water purification method(s) or pack some powdered flavouring that can be mixed with the water to make juice.

**Guidance on Tipping:** Guides, porters and cook are paid by UWA. Generally we recommend two porters for each person so as to spread the load of your gear, the food, the guides gear and the food for the support team. We would suggest the following tipping (but please decide this based on the feedback form attached, we are trying to discourage certain behavior such as talking loudly on phones all the way up and we can only do this by reducing tips). Guide – 100,000ugx Porters – 60,000ugx each Chef – 60,000ugx

If you do not have all items on the kit list please do not hesitate to let us know as we are able to provide, at a small cost, some of it, such as waterproofs, warm fleeces, jackets and trousers.