

L'autre face du Kilimandjaro

The other face of Kilimanjaro

A Marc-Grégor Campredon and Jean-Benoit Gamichon documentary.



52 minutes - Moshi, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, Africa
Vidéo HD – English / Swahili with English subtitles

To reach the summit of Kilimanjaro, tourists need the help of porters. David is one of many Tanzanians who climb the slopes of the mountain in the hope of earning enough money to secure a future for his family.

Far from the African adventure experienced by thousands of tourists, David must face the difficult working conditions and growing corruption.

Summary

David loves Kilimanjaro, the sensation of cold and smooth when he touches the snow. However, it is out of necessity that he climbs regularly to the top. When his father died when David was only 15, he had to quit school and start working to help his family at home.

Not speaking English, the only work that David can get in Moshi is carrying gear and luggage to the top of 'Kili'. Every journey he carries a bag of twenty pounds (20 pounds? Or 20 kilos?) up to Barafu Camp, at 4800m elevation, so that tourists do not miss anything on the mountain.

His salary, when he has one, is not bad, but the work is irregular and difficult. Tourist agencies seem only interested in their customers. Whatever happens, tourists have to leave Tanzania with the feeling that on Kilimanjaro, there is no problem 'hakuna matata'. However porters are often mistreated with a disturbing indifference: too little food, no equipment, no real shelter, and often carrying bags that are too heavy.

Mountain guides, who are often brothers and cousins of the porters, participate fully in the exploitation, often accepting bribes to ignore the actual working conditions. Some go so far as to take a portion of the porters' tips and wages themselves.

This film aims to present the other side of Kilimanjaro, which is not seen or understood by tourists. In order to do this, with the help of a few companies and guides who really feel concerned about the working conditions the Kilimanjaro porters are subject to, we lent David one of our cameras during 6 months to help us record this documentary with the hope that it will help change the future of their profession and every day life.

Purpose

By Marc-Grégor Campredon

For me, Africa is a wild land, uncharted territory! During my first trip to Tanzania, I immediately wanted to climb Kilimanjaro, influenced by the adventure novels of Jules Verne, Kessel or Hemingway ...

During my phase of preparation, I discovered that Kilimanjaro had become a big tourist attraction. With so much traffic, the easiest and most popular route is called the Coca-Cola route. This global recognition is seen in the fact that there are so many films on this big climb and the men and women who have succeeded to overcome the challenge to climb Kilimanjaro.

In the shadows of these exploits the porters work and carry out their everyday lives: David, Philip, Godwin, or Harry have told us "their Kilimanjaro". These touching stories expose a different side of tourism 'on Kili' that is rather dark.

The tourism industry is important on this continent with 50 million visitors per year, generating one out of every twenty jobs. As always, the development of this industry is done with disparities in treatment for those involved. There are good examples such as Rwanda with their Mountain Gorillas which generated \$200 million to contribute to the improvement of schools, roads and infrastructure.

In neighboring Tanzania, the model is symptomatic of a corrupted Africa where hyper individualization motivates some people to raise money for their own profits at the expense of their brothers. The system is well made and protects the tourist from an awareness that would ultimately be fatal to corrupt officials.

Every trip to Tanzania, as elsewhere, our presence will have a direct positive or negative result. Providing you with Africa even for a brief travel, you become an actor in the disparities and inequalities. Being ignorant does not change the situation; in fact to be aware and be responsible is a must.

By recounting the daily lives of the porters, we hope to inspire future travelers to commit to fair and responsible tourism: With great adventures, great responsibilities.

