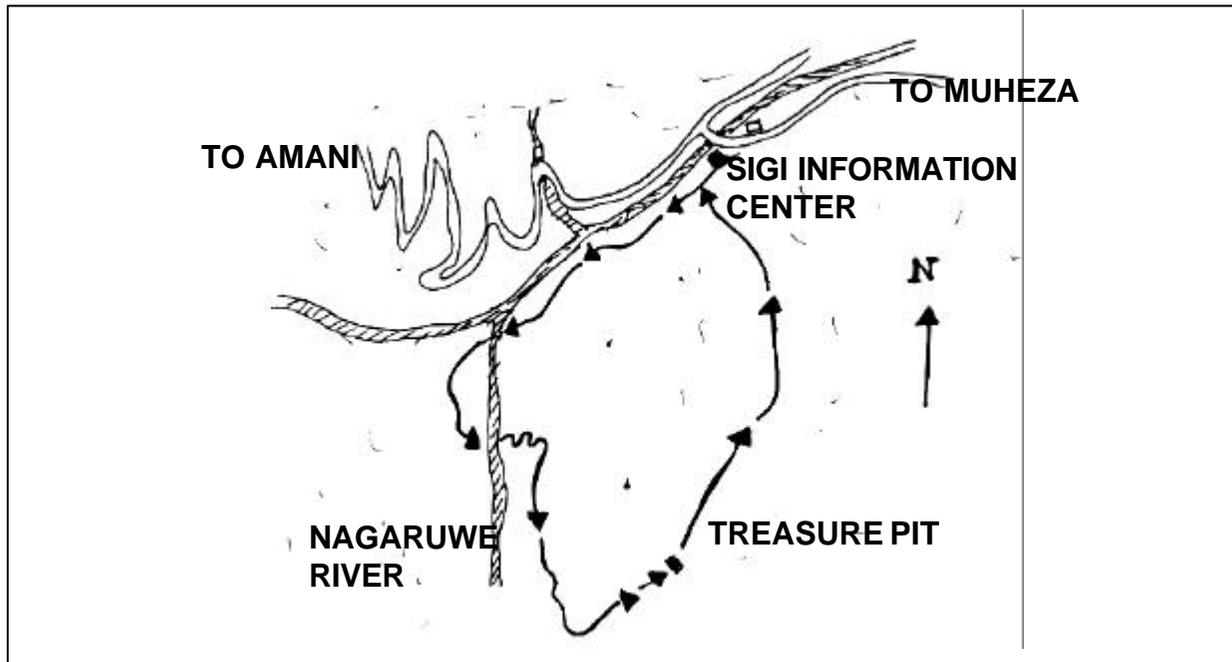


SIGI MOUNTAIN TRAIL MAP



Amani Nature Reserve:

Sigi Mountain Trail

...IN A NUTSHELL

The Sigi Mountain Mountain Trail is a 4-6 km circular trail through dense forests of Sigi Mountain. It is recommended only for the physically fit and adventurous. Its steep descents and ascents can become dangerously slippery - especially during rainy season.

Total time required is about 3-5 hours.

The trail passes the picturesque Sigi and Nangaruwe rivers, relics of German colonial times, local village plantations, dense rainforests and a seemingly bottomless pit on top of the mountain where fortune-hunters have dug for German treasures believed to be buried in the area.

Many people have gotten lost on this trail! It should never be attempted without a guide who is experienced of the area.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The East Usambara Area Conservation Management Programme (EUCAMP) aims at protecting biodiversity and water sources while sustaining villager's benefits from the forest. The project is implemented by the Forestry and Beekeeping Division of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism with financial support from the Government of Finland and European Union.

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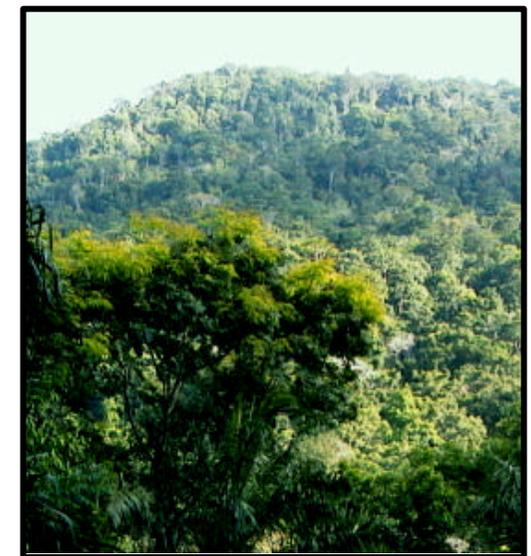
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TRAIL GUIDE

Similar to the Sigi Spice Garden and Chemka Village Tour, the Sigi Mountain trail begins from the Sigi Information Center located at the entrance to Amani Nature Reserve. The Information Center is located inside an old building that used to house the railway station-master and has now been restored to its original glory. During German times a branch of the Tanga-Moshi railway reached all the way to Sigi to carry the extracted timber out of the lush forests of East Usambara to the mills on the coast. Today, the Information Center hosts an permanent exhibition about Amani Nature Reserve and a curio shop selling local handcraft.

Before climbing up Sigi Mountain, the walk follows the same route as the Sigi Spice Garden and Chemka Village Tour. Start from the Information Center, follow the path below it towards Sigi River. There is a signpost for Sigi Trail after which the trail begins to follow alongside Sigi River. The railway used to extend all the way to a water tank alongside the river where the trains filled their water tanks. A short walk further you may also see a dam on Sigi river. The dam was a powersource for the timber industry during the colonial times.

Some distance ahead you will cross a small stream. Many of the species here have escaped from the Sigi Spice Garden on the other side of the river - and now blend in to the lush forests. If you look around you might see some of the colorful tree-hole crabs scrounging in the tree litter by the trail. They are very common on the damp places alongside Sigi Mountain Trail. Look out also for the large green slugs on tree trunks. As you walk further, you may also see - or at least hear - a variety of birds that shelter in this area. Among some of the more common on this trail, The Green-headed oriole and the Green barbet are endemic to the Easter Arc Mountains, which the East Usambaras and Amani Nature Reserve are a central part of.

Further up the path you will cross the Nagaruwe river, which landmarks the boundary between Amani Nature Reserve and the public lands of the Chemka village.. Cross the river carefully, as the stepping stones can get dangerously slippery. At the other side of the river, climb a path that zig-zags up a small hill. Notice the village cultivation of coconut, cassava, cardamom, bananas, pawpaws, sweet potato, black pepper and cocoyams on both sides of the path.

Before the top of the hill, a small trail winds to the left back towards the dense wall like canopy of Amani-Sigi Forest Reserve. Ignore another trail that sweers more towards the right. It goes towards Chemka Village.

A little ahead on the trail leading towards the Sigi Mountain you will recross the Nagaruwe River with small rapids below you. Watch you step again on the slippery rocks. The river marks your re-entry back into the Amani-Sigi Forest Reserve. Follow a track up the steep slope on the left side of the river valley through typical lowland rainforest. The dense undergrowth of the forest here - often obstructing and obscuring the trail - consists of many plants of *Dracaena usambarensis* with cane-like leaves and terminal bunches of lily-like leaves. You will also see many large trees alongside the steep trail. Because of the steep slope of Sigi Mountain, the forest has not been heavily logged in the past. Some of the valuable timber species preserved here include *Cephalosphaera usambarensis* (Mtambaa), *Newtonia buchananii* (Mnyasa) and *Milicia excelsa* (Mvule).

The trail continues to ascend very steeply. Sometimes the path is obstructed by fallen trees; sometimes it dissappears completely. The guide will know the way through the dense forest. Continue upwards and grab the trees and branches for support if necessary.

As the path leves out a bit, the understorey of the dense forests opens up. This indicates that the forest is in very good condition - with a closed dense canopy and low levels of light below at the ground level. While there has been some low-intensity manual pitsawing here, it has not taken place for years. If you see scrapings and shallow diggings on the soil, these are definite signs of the Bush pig, somewhat common to the area. Another fairly common (but extremely shy) creature that finds shelter in the dense forests is the duiker, a small forest antelope.

At an indistict junction on the path sweer rightwards. As you gain altitude the path begins to enter a submontane forests with more epiphytic ferns visible on the trees. Also some of the typical submontane trees of Amani begin to be find at this altitude such as *Allanblackia stuhlmannii* (Msambu) and *Greenwayodendron suavelones* (Ng'weti).

As you ascend upwards the slope will soon level out at the ridge of the mountain. 300 meters towards the right on the ridge you will come suddenly next to a huge pit with its bottom invisible at about 15-20 meters deep. The pit was dug by treasure seekers in 1992-1993 under a trigonometrical station here whose pillar now lies in the side of the pit. It is a common belief that Gemans left treasures behind when the British took over East Africa. Though none have been found - this has not deterred eager treasure-seekers.

From the pit you can tum south along the ridge and in 2 km reach the highest point of Amani-Sigi (1070 m). Or alternatively: you can begin the descent down all the way back to the Information Center. The route down depends on which way the guide will think is the easiest and most safest to descend down this exhilarating and demanding mountain. Be extremely careful, especially in the rainy season.