**First Holocaust Survivor Climbs Kilimanjaro at Age 83**

*Nat Shaffir conquers Kilimanjaro to become the first Holocaust Survivor to summit.*

On August 24, 2019, Nat Shaffir was on top of the world.

He had reached to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, the tallest peak in Africa. His body was physically exhausted, but his spirit was overjoyed.

“I was in seventh heaven,” Shaffir recalled.

This was not the first struggle that he has had to overcome.

Shaffir is a Holocaust Survivor – the first to successfully climb Kilimanjaro.

**HIS EARLY YEARS**

In 1942, when Shaffir was just five years old, a priest showed up at his family’s dairy farm in Romania. The priest knew the family well. He visited weekly for donations. But this time, he was accompanied by a police officer and two soldiers.

“These are Jews,” the priest said to the officer.

The military confiscated the farm and cattle. The family was forced to relocate to the Jewish ghetto in Iasi. There, Shaffir lived in poverty in a crowded room with his two sisters and parents. His parents were given manual labor jobs while he and his sisters were forbidden to attend school.

His father was later taken away to a distant labor camp, leaving young Shaffir to care for the rest of the family. Before he left, his father told him that things would get harder.

“Never give up,” his father said.

Those three words have kept Shaffir going for his entire life.

**CLIMBING KILIMANJARO**

Mount Kilimanjaro stands 19,340 feet above sea level. Climbing the peak does not require any technical skills or special equipment. But it is a formidable test due to its extreme altitude. Reaching the top takes physical fitness and determination.

Shaffir kept a slow but steady pace on the mountain. He encountered adversity on some parts of the terrain. He also struggled to eat on nearly the entire hike due to a loss of appetite, one of the common symptoms of altitude sickness.

“Climbing Kilimanjaro at my age was tough,” Shaffir admitted.

But when things became arduous, he heard his father’s words, “Never give up.”

He knew that he would make it to the summit.

“Nat had great endurance and determination,” said lead guide Raymond Mandari of [Ultimate Kilimanjaro](https://www.ultimatekilimanjaro.com). “Climbing Kilimanjaro is a big accomplishment for anyone, but for an 83-year old, it is remarkable.”

**INSPIRING OTHERS**

Shaffir climbed Kilimanjaro to inspire others to challenge themselves to do the same, to conquer their own metaphorical mountains.

He has a message for those that find themselves in troubling times. “To people who are experiencing hardship, difficulties, atrocities, and hate – never give up.”

Russian soldiers liberated Iasi in 1945. By then, 32 members of Shaffir’s family had died in Nazi concentration camps.

Shaffir moved to the United States in 1961. He and his wife have five children and 12 grandchildren - all of them named after family members lost during the Holocaust.

**ABOUT ULTIMATE KILIMANJARO**

Ultimate Kilimanjaro® is the #1 guide service on Mount Kilimanjaro. With more than a decade of experience, Ultimate Kilimanjaro® has a proven expertise leading over 150 climbs per year with more than 1,000 adventurers annually.

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