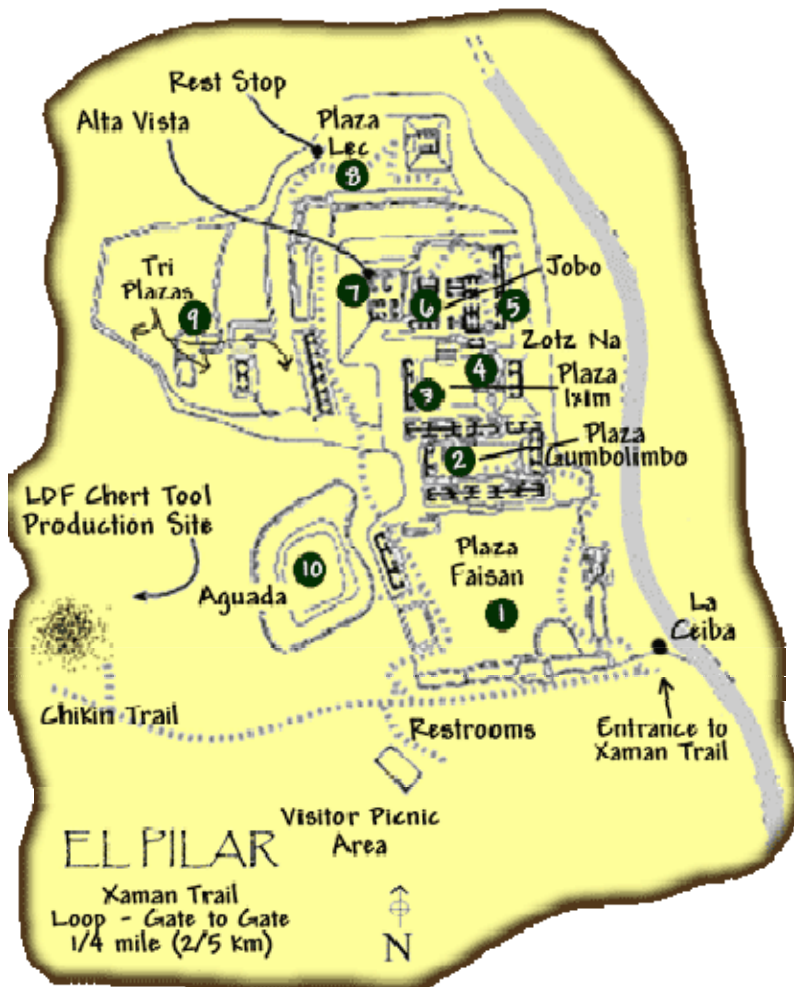




Xaman Trail ~ The Northern trail

(xaman means north in Mayan) is a journey through the power center of ancient El Pilar featuring a series of enclosed plazas, looming temples, cloistered palaces and an intricate acropolis. Although a good part of these remains are shrouded under the protective mantle of the regenerative forest, the sights are still magnificent to behold. The Xaman Trail takes you north from Plaza Faisan and winds in a large loop across the acropolis returning you to the picnic shelter in Plaza Duende. The whole trail is 2/5 km (1/4 mile) but will take at least 45 minutes to enjoy. In addition, there is a short spur trail near the end of the loop, approx. 1/6 km (1/10 mile) that gives you the unique opportunity to see an ancient stone tool production site.



While not a very difficult trail, the Xaman trail does climb upward at a steady rate until you reach the acropolis. From the highest point there is a long staircase down the back of the acropolis to a level trail that returns back through Plaza Faisan. The trail meanders under a luxuriant, high forest canopy that is beautiful and surprisingly cool. The trees are the ultimate solar collectors and the shade beneath offers protection from harsh UV rays. Along the trail there are notable sights such as the passageway from Plaza Faisan to Gumbolimbo, the profound Plaza Ixim, the mysterious Zotz Na corridor, the labyrinth of rooms of Plaza Jobo, and the impressive western vista from the tallest pyramid at El Pilar.