



Nohol Trail ~ This trail begins at the “El Pilar” sign and towering Ceiba tree, just off the Pilar Road as you come to the end of the Lakin Trail. The tour described in this guide begins in Plaza Duende and returns in a loop. This southern trail (nohol is the Mayan word for south) takes you to El Pilar’s welcoming public plazas and civic architecture. The trail is about 1/3 km (1/5 mile) long and can take up to an hour depending on your pace and interests in archaeology, panoramic view, birds and animals, and the park atmosphere.



The plazas and temples of Nohol Pilar provide superb photo opportunities and grand vistas that span to the distant western ridges of Guatemala, the eastern Lakin residential zone, and toward the Mennonite community in Spanish Lookout to the northeast. Many of the buildings along this route are still enveloped by the forest, evoking the mystery and discovery of early explorers. Partially exposed sections of these monuments reveal the awesome qualities of ancient constructions that are beneath your feet. You can encounter six major pyramids, a ball court, and an enclosed courtyard plaza along this trail. The main trail follows the perimeter of the major plazas and involves negotiating only a few gradual slopes connecting between plazas. The most difficult part of this trail, the climb to the top of the eastern pyramid—about 60-ft (20m) up a broad jungle stair—is optional, but the view overlooking the entire eastern realm of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve is well worth the climb.



The map illustrates the Nohol Trail route, starting at the 'Entrance to Main Plazas' near 'La Ceiba' (marked 1). The trail proceeds through 'Plaza Duende' (2), 'Plaza Copal' (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12), and 'Plaza Azaran'. Key features include 'Restrooms', 'Visitor Picnic Area', 'Buena Vista', 'View of Pilar Poniente', 'Bryan & Murphy Causeway', 'Ball Court', and 'Aguada'. The trail ends near 'To South Groups'. The map also shows 'LDF Chert Tool Production Site', 'Chikin Trail', 'Causeway Trail', and 'Vista del Atardecer'. A north arrow and the text 'EL PILAR Nohol Trail Total Length: 1/5 mile (1/3 Km)' are included.