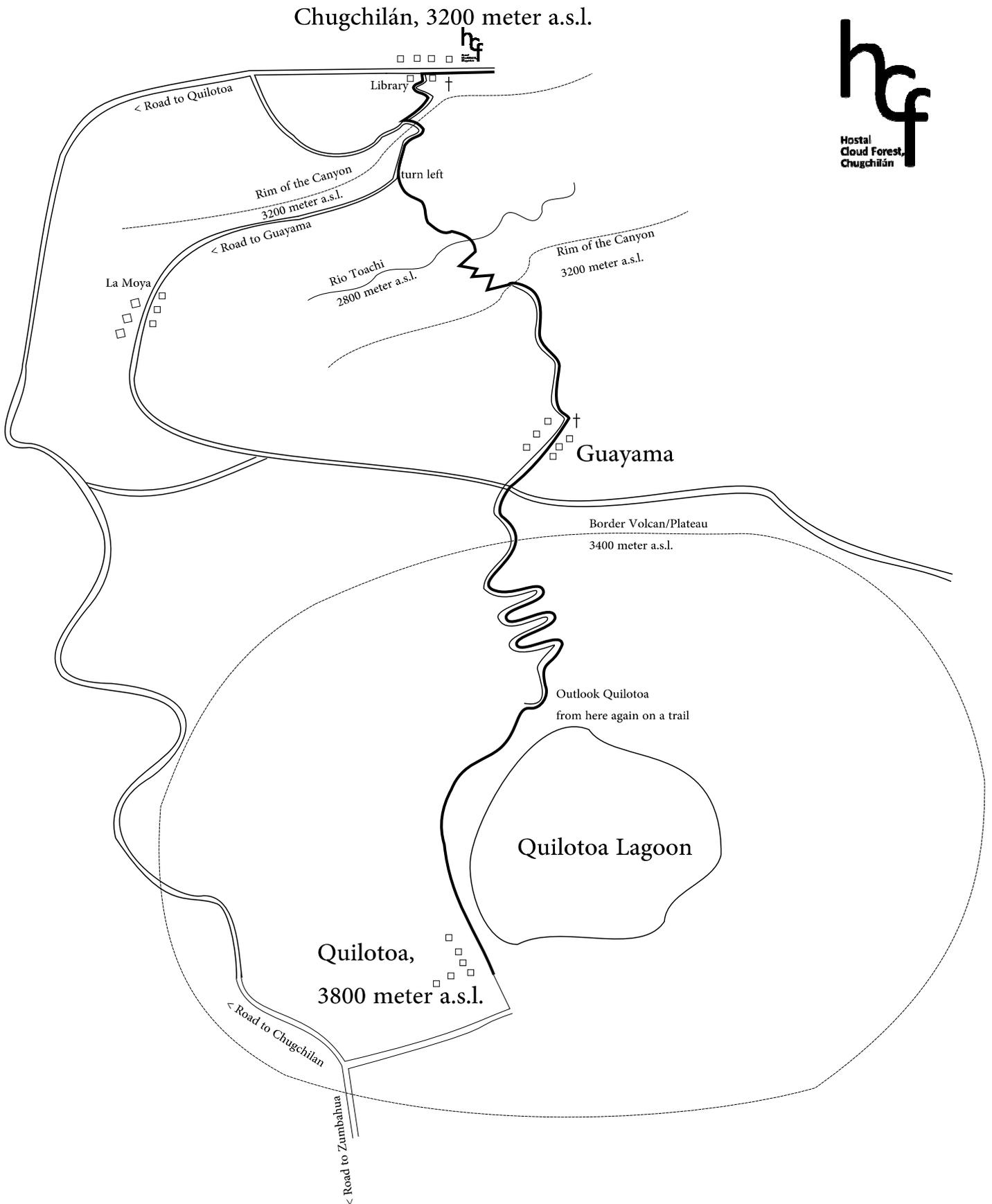


Hike from Chugchilán to Quilotoa

Hiking time. 4-6 hours

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Chugchilán to Quilotoa.

Begin your hike in Hostal Cloud Forest and go through the village, passing the square and the church. Just before leaving the village you meet the library on your left hand side (There is a big sign indicating the trail to Quilotoa). Follow the street going down to the left and follow it about 5 Minutes. You then will meet another street going sharp left. You can take that street or alternatively follow the trail, the sign is showing along.

15 Minutes will pass either on the street or on the trail and then you have to watch out for a trail leaving to the left (very important not to miss that trail!!) From here it's easy. Follow the trail until reaching the lowest point of your hike, the Rio Toachi canyon. Enjoy a break at the stream and cross the "river" using the little bridge we constructed recently.

Now the tiring part of the hike begins; the ascent from 2800m a.s.l. up to 3800m a.s.l. at Quilotoa Lagoon. There are no other trails going up to the other side of the canyon, so orientation is easy. Reach the plateau and follow the street which is beginning there up to Guayama where the people mostly speak Kichwa. Don't worry, they as well understand Spanish.

Walk across the village and 5 Minutes after leaving it keep straight on, crossing the intersection. Whatever point you see in front of you that is higher, that's part of the Crater. Simply follow the winding road up to the outlook at the Crater Rim.

Here you decide to go left around the Crater, in about 3 hours to the village of Quilotoa. Or turn right to reach the town in about 50 Minutes. In the town of Quilotoa you meet a few Hostals and a variety of restaurants.

There is a little market for handmade stuff and the trail descending to the lake begins here. We recommend considering sleeping either in one of the local's houses or descending and having an overnight in your tent at the bottom of the crater, right beside the shore.

Quilotoa to Chugchilán

The hike to Chugchilán begins in the town of Quilotoa at 3800m a.s.l. and is shorter if you go directly northwards, following the signs of our Hostal. You keep on one of the two or three trails but be sure not to descend neither to the left nor to the right. After 60 Minutes you reach an outlook, a great sandy place at the northernmost point of the rim. It is the last one of the three sandy places.

Alternative: Don't go northwards from the town but do the hike around the lake on top of the rim. You reach the outlook after a marvellous hike in about 3 instead of 1 hour.

At the outlook there is a road going down all the way to Guayama and that's easy to find. You will descend to Guayama in about one hour, reaching a crossing right in front of the town. You go left where you see a sign showing to "Centro Turístico" and directly after that go to the right to Guayama San Pedro where the people mostly speak Kichwa. Walk across the village and see a church on the right hand side. Follow the trail to Chugchilán, 6.6km to go!

The street will continue 15 Minutes and then reach the rim of the plateau, where it ends and turns into a trail winding down all the way to Rio Toachi. Lowest point of the hike, 2800m a.s.l. Cross the little stream on the bridge our team recently built.

From here go up again following the trail always up, disregarding the trails to the left and right. You will end up on the street Moya-Chugchilán. Easily follow it up to Chugchilán or follow the trail indicated by the signs. Arriving in Chugchilán, turn right on the only road and cross the village and its square. Our house is nearly the last one in the village and is easily to see. Enjoy a cup of hot chocolate and hamburger with French fries, right beside the stove.

After relaxing a little bit explore the tiny village with men playing Ecuavolley or rummy in front of the church, women selling little portions of fried meat with papas or children eagerly doing their homework in the library.

Our Hostal offers two kinds of rooms, priced at \$12 and \$15. Both include dinner and breakfast, private bathroom and hot water. Tax is included as well. The \$15 room is simply bigger and is two-story. There is free Wifi, a gaming room with ping-pong, billiard and Tischkicker. A Turkish bath is available for as little as \$3 per person. We would like to welcome you in our Hostal and wish you a nice stay on the Quilotoa Loop.