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Centro de Investigaciones Científicas de las Huastecas “Aguazarca”, A. C.
Uniendo Ciencia Y Servicio/Bringing Science and Service Together

CICHAZ, A.C., Visitor’s Guide & Release Forms (updated 24-V-2022)

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Centro de Investigaciones Científicas de las Huastecas “Aguazarca”, A. C.
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Introduction

Centro de Investigaciones Científicas de las Huastecas “Aguazarca”, A. C. (CICHAZ) is a privately-owned federally registered research station (RENIECyT # 20083) located in Calnali, Hidalgo, México. Founded in 2005 by co-Directors Gil Rosenthal and Rhonda Struminger, CICHAZ has nonprofit status in both the USA and Mexico in order to help further its goal of “Bringing Science and Service Together,” and is a member of the Organization of Biological Field Stations (OBFS). The field station is set up to provide researchers with resources they need. We hope you have a fun, safe, and productive visit.

****We operate the field station out of a residence in a rural area of Mexico. Please work with safety in mind as there is only a minimal first-aid clinic in Calnali, a basic trauma center in Tlanchinol about 45 minutes away, and only marginally better care in Zacualtipán and Huejutla, each over an hour away. The nearest good hospitals are in Pachuca and Tampico, 3 ½ and 4 hours away, respectively. Make sure you have appropriate medication and training for any conditions or allergies you have and let us know about them ahead of time.**

The facilities we operate do not conform to U.S. or any institutional safety standards. By working, visiting, or volunteering at CICHAZ, A.C. you assume any and all risks and responsibilities and release the owners and users of CICHAZ, as well as their employers and affiliated institutions, from any and all liability.

For safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, CICHAZ visitors must be vaccinated.

Before arriving in Calnali, visitors should carefully review this guide and must register their trip using the CICHAZ visitor registration and agreement form at:

<https://forms.gle/ZL8JwnZK9DG8cNSF9>



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CICHAZ personnel

When we receive your online registration form

(<https://forms.gle/ZL8JwnZK9DG8cNSF9>), we will email you contact information for CICHAZ personnel who will be helping you throughout your visit.

- Co-Directors: Dr. Gil Rosenthal and Dr. Rhonda Struminger
- Administrative Coordinator: Ing. Gaby Vázquez
- Station Managers and neighbors: Don Clemente Hernandez and Doña Irma Perez
- Station biologist: Biol. Osvaldo Hernández Perez
- Fishroom staff: Doña Johaira Hernández and Doña Magda Melo
- Chef: Doña Magda Melo

Communication

WhatsApp is used for communication with CICHAZ personnel. We ask that all groups create a WhatsApp group for your team to use during your visit. Once you register your visit you will get the contact information for CICHAZ personnel and we request that you add Gaby Vázquez to your group so she can be in touch for logistics related to your trip.

Twitter

Follow CICHAZ on Twitter and when you visit CICHAZ be sure to tag us in your posts: @CICHAZ1

If you are interested in creating CICHAZ tweets, send your tweet idea to admin@cichaz.org.

Harassment and Discrimination Policy

CICHAZ is committed to maintaining an environment free from all forms of harassment and discrimination. Please bring any experiences to the attention of at least one member of the CICHAZ leadership team: Rhonda Struminger (rhonda@cichaz.org), Gil Rosenthal (gil@cichaz.org), Gaby Vázquez (aspacgaby@yahoo.com.mx), or Molly Schumer (schumer@stanford.edu) so appropriate measures can be taken.

If you feel that the CICHAZ leadership team will not be able to help or address the situation, please contact your institution’s ombudsperson or Title IX representative in the United States. If you are based internationally, please contact the appropriate person at your institution. Such concerns are taken very seriously by CICHAZ leadership.

All CICHAZ staff and management as well as visitors are required to work in a manner that prevents harassment or discrimination. If charges of harassment or discrimination are brought against an individual or group of individuals, there will be an investigation and



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the responsible parties may be asked to leave the property and could face additional (legal) consequences.

Health & Healthcare

- CICHAZ is located in the tropics. As in the subtropical U.S., the area is at risk for diseases like dengue, Zika virus, and Chagas disease. Avoid lowland areas near dusk and protect yourself from biting insects with non-DEET bug spray or lotion and long shirts and pants.
 - We recommend making sure you are up to date on all of your vaccines.
- Chances are you will get sick with an intestinal bug at some point. Prepare to have a miserable day or two, but the good news is that once it's over, you typically won't get it as bad, if at all. (If lots of locals are eating someplace, it's probably fine. But if it's your first time you will get sick no matter what you do).
- There are numerous pharmacies in the center of town with standard nonprescription medication such as Pepto-Bismol and Imodium, antihistamines, and acetaminophen.
 - At the station there is a first-aid kit with: aspirin, Pepto-Bismol, antacids, omeprazole, milk of magnesia, kaolin.
 - In Mexico, they also use remedies such as chamomile tea (for stomach inflammation), manrubio tea (for severe stomach pain), and a tablespoon of bicarbonate when there is air in the stomach. Doña Magda can make tea and soft food like rice or steamed vegetables for you upon request.
- If you need emergency medicines like antibiotics, you need to go to a pharmacy with a doctor who can prescribe it for you.

Travel and Health Insurance

You should have travel insurance to cover any unexpected medical expenses, trip interruption, medical emergency assistance and treatment services and more. Check whether your current health insurance will cover you for expenses incurred in Mexico. Often this insurance has a 24-hour assistance line. Insurance will also help you find an attorney if you get into trouble. Your home institution will most likely have purchased this for you when you registered your trip – you must check and confirm. Credit cards also often provide this insurance if you are flying, but check your credit card agreement. American Express and other organizations also offer such insurance.

We request but do not require proof of travel insurance before you stay at CICHAZ, A.C. **BUT we assume no liability for any costs you incur associated with your trip to CICHAZ, A.C. You are ultimately responsible for any expenses or emergency costs.**



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Safety and Security

We stress that visitors use common sense when traveling to and from the field station, and around the area. Visitors are encouraged to register with their home-country embassy and obtain updated information from their national government on travel and security within Mexico.

Calnali itself is very safe but be mindful of pickpockets during the Sunday market. Items left lying around at night outside the station may disappear. Consult with locals and use common sense when it comes to activities like hitchhiking, walking, or jogging – **always go with at least one other person for these activities.**

Once at the station all visitors are asked to keep their valuables (e.g., computers, phones, purses, backpacks) in their room when they are not being used – especially at night (the rooms can be locked). Items left in common areas have occasionally gone missing.

We also suggest that visitors use a **buddy system and assign partners within their group** so everyone has one other person keeping an eye out for them throughout their visit. Also, **if you are going to go out into the field**, we recommend sending a message through the WhatsApp group to notify Gaby where you will be and when you are returning, so that in case of any issues we can activate emergency alarms and search parties.

Please securely lock entrances to the field station when leaving, including the upstairs door to the patio.

Getting There

By bus and taxi

From the **Mexico City airport**, the easiest thing to do is to take a first-class bus directly from the airport to the **Pachuca** bus terminal and then take a taxi to **Calnali**. Contact Ing. Gaby at least 72 hours in advance if you want to have a taxi meet you at the Mexico City airport or the Pachuca bus station. Bus information can be found here:

<https://estrellablanca.com.mx/>

From **Mexico City's Terminal Norte** bus station, there are several daily Estrella Blanca second-class (slow) buses to Calnali, about 5 hours. There are also frequent Estrella Blanca buses to Huejutla and Molango, both of which stop in Molango (about 4 hours) where you can take a taxi into Calnali (another 45 min). **Taxis stop running in the late evening.**



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The bus passes right by CICHAZ before entering downtown Calnali; ask the bus driver to look out for the building with the big watery murals on the left-hand side after crossing the bridge before Calnali. There is also an official blue CICHAZ sign on the right.

From **Tampico**, there are several first-class ADO buses from the downtown ADO terminal to Huejutla several times a day. From **Huejutla**, there are 1 or 2 combis (minibuses) to Calnali. You can also take a taxi from Huejutla to Calnali.

From **Cd. Valles**, take a bus to **Tamazunchale** and then ask for directions to the **Huejutla** bus stop; there are buses that take about an hour and run every half hour. Follow directions from Huejutla as above.

By car

Car Permit and Insurance

Any vehicle driven in Mexico needs to be insured with a Mexican company. Without insurance you will end up in jail if you cause or are involved in an accident and all expenses will be yours. A lawyer can minimally help if you do not have insurance.

For those bringing cars across a land border, you **MUST HAVE** a **permit** to travel this far into Mexico in addition to **car insurance**. To begin, get pre-authorized by the Mexican government to import a car temporarily. Get the authorization here:
<https://www.inm.gob.mx/sae/publico/en/pre-autorizacion.html>

To get your permit and insurance, go to **Banjercito**
< <https://www.banjercito.com.mx/registroVehiculos/>>. Note that trailers require their own separate permit and insurance.

To just get insurance (you can get your permit at the border at the Visa office), you can go to Sanborns: https://www.sanborns.com/?gclid=EAJalQobChMIjpydo-GM4gIVWv7jBx22Iw9LEAAYASAAEgLUnfD_BwE

Traffic Control Measures in Mexico City and Hidalgo (No Circular)

To control traffic on roads and highways, there is a calendar for when you cannot drive in Mexico City (<https://www.transporte.mx/hoy-no-circula-nuevo/>). You can get a temporary tourist visa to drive into Mexico City here:
<http://www.paseturistico.cdmx.gob.mx/pasetur/>

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Hidalgo also has started a NO CIRCULA program but it is variable – check the web for updates (<https://coronavirus.hidalgo.gob.mx/>)



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General tips when driving in Mexico – READ THIS CAREFULLY

Drive with caution and follow all traffic laws! Your insurance will pay for any injuries you may cause to others or yourself as well as damage to the vehicles **but** you will still be fined or imprisoned if you are found to be at fault in an accident. As is the case anywhere you may travel you should respect the law and customs of the area – YOU ARE A VISITOR.

The law in Mexico is that the at-fault driver of an incident must take care of the costs of the accident through insurance or out of pocket, and the Mexican authorities must have a guarantee that you will cover the expenses or you will be going to jail.

On rural roads, a **left turn signal** usually means "pass me," unless the car is slowing down to turn left, and a **right turn signal** means "do not pass". When turning left, we recommend not using your turn signal; slow down and stick your arm out the window to indicate a left turn.

Slow down for topes (speed bumps) through towns and small settled areas. **Be on the lookout for washouts and rockslides**. Branches on the ground and red cloths on vegetation mean there's danger ahead, as do hazard lights on the vehicle in front of you.

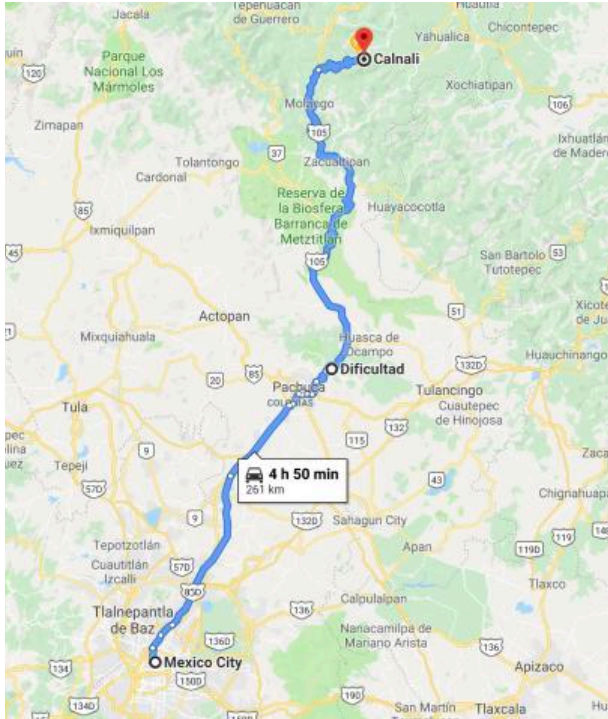
There is one gas station in Calnali on the road towards Atlapexco, the other nearby gas stations are in Ixtlahuaco, Molango, Tlanchinol, Atlapexco, and Huejutla.



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Directions from Mexico City, Pachuca, and points south and southwest



To go from Mexico City to Pachuca, take the 85D/85.

In Pachuca, get on Hwy. 105 north past Zacualtipán (for a great treat, stop for pastes at Dificultad just outside of Pachuca – buy extras and bring them to CICHAZ and you’ll have an instant fan club). There can be dense fog around Zacualtipán and through the mountains.

After Molango and before Ixtlahuaco, turn east (it’s a right turn) towards Calnali on the Lolotla-Atlapexco/Calnali-Atlapexco road. After about 20-30 min, you’ll cross a bridge over the Río Calnali (Calnali-mid). CICHAZ will be on your left, look for the big watery mural.

Directions from Huejutla, points north

Bypass Huejutla and follow signs towards Atlapexco. going straight through Tlalchiyahualica and Mecatlán (do not turn uphill towards Yahualica). You’ll go over a bridge after Mecatlán, and the kilometer markers now count down to the Calnali turnoff. There are frequent rockslides on this road, so be careful. Pass the town of Calnali, on your right, and pass both turnoffs for Calnali/centro. CICHAZ is on your right about 100 m after the second turnoff.

Directions from most of Veracruz state

From Álamo, Veracruz, follow signs to Chicontepec. At Benito Juárez, keep going straight on towards Atlapexco and Huautla (do not turn towards Chicontepec). Keep going straight towards Atlapexco, and stay on the bypass road to the right of the town of Atlapexco. Immediately after passing the town, turn left towards Yahualica and follow directions as above.

Arrival Information

We expect visitors to respect the CICHAZ property and the items within. As stated above, if you break something, use something, or get something dirty, please fix it,



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replace it, or clean it up. **For your own safety, productive research endeavors, and successful community living, we ask that you follow the instructional signs posted throughout the station and the instructions within this visitor’s guide.**

The neighborhood community and stores

1. Clemente Hernández (**Don Clemente**) and Irma Pérez (**Doña Irma**) are the primary caretakers of CICHAZ, A.C. They live across the street and to the right in the house with a mural featuring corn and the god Tlaloc. Their son Biol. Osvaldo is a biologist recently graduated from UAEH. Ask them for help with anything you need **but please be respectful and understand they do have lives so they can’t always do something ‘right now’.**
2. The store next door, Abarrotes San Antonio, is run by Karla and Rey Zapata. Theirs and similar stores in the neighborhood sell water, milk, and cold beverages of all types as well as some snacks and groceries.
3. Ernestina is the older woman who lives right on the other side of the CICHAZ; she and her daughter, Lupita, bake and sell sweet bread once or twice a week. You will know that there is freshly baked sweet bread when the delicious aroma reaches the CICHAZ. They also sell dough and if requested in advance, they can make lunch to take to the field. They can prepare bocoles, sandwiches, enchiladas, sausages for hot dogs and things like that. The earliest they deliver is at 7:00 AM.
4. Walk downhill down the street (towards Calnali Centro) and see the murals painted in 2018 by the Siqueiros Sinfronteras Foundation.
5. Continuing along the street towards downtown Calnali, are the following residences and resources:
 - a. **CICHAZ’s Administrative Coordinator Ing. Gaby Vázquez** lives down the alley to the right with a mural of the coffee harvest.
 - b. On the left is the **mechanic Don Gil.**
 - c. On the right and then the left (across from the last mural) are **tacos** (Bayos).
 - d. Further down at the intersection into town are two **tire repair shops. At the one that is a little wooden house, ask for Ever if you have a flat!**
 - e. If you turn right, about 500 m further towards Atlapexco is the only **gas station** (on the left).
 - f. If you turn left towards Calnali Centro, you will pass a terrific hardware store, **El Tigre** (run by Miriam and Chucho).

The House: General Rules, FYIs, and Recommendations

1. If you’re keeping aquatic creatures, refer to the aquatics protocol on the CICHAZ web site for details < <http://www.cichaz.org/investigación-research/plantel-acuático-aquatics-protocols/> >



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- a. Please note that the dish towels stored under the microwave are to ONLY BE USED IN THE KITCHEN.
- b. Dirty rags that have been used outside should be placed in the labeled container located outside in the bodega under the patio. If the rags are still wet, hang them on the side of the container or patio railing to dry.
- c. Rags used for research/any fish-related work should hang them to dry on the patio or balcony railings.
2. Leave all common spaces, lab, and fish room areas as you found them on arrival.
3. Follow all posted rules.
4. CICHAZ has two wall-mounted first aid kits – one downstairs next to the dish cabinet and one upstairs next to the bathroom.
5. Sunscreen and fish friendly bug spray are available on the back patio.
 - a. Biting gnats and mosquitoes abound, apply insect repellent liberally. **Do not get insect repellent anywhere near fish, fish tanks, or fish supplies.** Do not use products with **DEET** if you are going to be anywhere near a natural body of water or our fish facilities. We recommend Natrapel or other picaridin repellent. These repellents are still **TOXIC TO FISH** so **WASH YOUR HANDS** before handling any fish.
6. There are a lot of community spaces and CICHAZ expects a communal attitude
 - a. Respect public spaces by keeping them clean
 - b. Keep your belongings in your room or in a bathroom
 - c. Make sure anything that you do not want to share is labeled
 - d. Do not leave things on the patio! It quickly gets cluttered and items are lost.
7. If you are planning multiple trips to CICHAZ, you can leave your items in a box labeled with your name that will be stored in the upstairs storage room. If you have wet shoes at the time of your departure, make sure you have them labeled with your name on them and tell Don Clemente, Doña Irma, or Ing. Gaby so they can put them in storage once they are dry.
8. Items that go unclaimed after one month will be put in the donations box in the second-floor storage room.
9. Check shoes and drawers for tarantulas and scorpions.
10. Wash muddy and heavily spoiled shoes before entering the house.
11. Make sure Doña Magda know about any perishables you leave in the fridge on departure.

The Backyard

1. Be mindful that live animal habitats are all around you. The half of the backyard closest to the house is full of freshwater fish. Please be mindful of the tanks when passing through there, especially if you are carrying cleaning supplies or chemicals.



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2. There are nests of Africanized honeybees around the backyard. Don't bother them and they won't cause problems.
3. There are often paper wasp nests on the roof of the house. They are generally harmless but can and sometimes do sting. Just be aware of them and keep your distance during the hottest parts of the day. The rounder nests with small wasps are honey-wasp nests...they are stingless and produce honey. Leave them alone
4. Introduced fire ants are a pest here just like in the southern USA. They are merely annoying unless you are allergic.
5. There is an abrupt drop-off to the river, exercise caution with young children or impaired adults. The steps down to the river can often be covered with leaves that can be slippery so be cautious with them as well.
6. Help yourself to fruit on the trees. We have fruit trees including sweet and sour oranges, tangerines, lemons, limes, "caca de rata" chiles, jackfruit, papaya, peaches, bananas, and *pomarosa* among a few others.
7. **Do not sample in the stretch of river behind the house**, as this is our long-term study population Talk to Schumer or Rosenthal if you want to work there. You are welcome to swim as long as you are free of sunscreen, bug spray and other chemicals. Take a shower right after.

Water

- **Please conserve water** as much as possible. Supply can be intermittent. FISH ARE THE PRIORITY over humans so be prepared to go without running water for up to 72 hours. You can use a fishroom bucket filled with water from a stock tank (as directed by CICHAZ staff) to flush the toilet during extended water outages.
- The black plastic reservoir (*tinaco*) on top of the roof is filled intermittently with chlorinated water for bath and kitchen use. This water is chlorinated and fine for brushing teeth and showering, **but don't drink it**.
- Karla (at the tienda across the street) and others sell 40 L jugs of drinking water. **You must return the bottle in order to buy a new one.**

Propane Gas

- There are propane tanks for kitchen/bathrooms and for the generator which are regularly filled by CICHAZ staff. If there is no hot water or gas going to the stove/oven please let them know immediately or, with an experienced CICHAZ visitor, you can go up to the roof and open the valve to the propane tank.
- Hot water is largely supplied by a solar water heater, so try to shower in the afternoons or evenings.
- In cold weather, if there is gas in the stove but there is no hot water for the shower, contact Don Clemente to replace the batteries of the on-demand water heater outside the bathroom.



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Electricity

- **Conserve energy as much as possible** – turn off fans, heaters, and/or lights when you leave a room.
- **CICHAZ runs on 110V current.** The plugs are the same as in the rest of North America. Bring adapters if needed.
- If power goes out check the **breakers** (make sure the switches are up) – it is located just inside the driveway door.

General Cleaning

- The kitchen floor should be swept regularly to avoid bugs (there should be a broom and dust pan on the patio or in the kitchen).
- Doña Irma will come to clean the house twice a week, but guests are expected to clean up after themselves.
- The garbage truck drives by on Mondays and Thursdays in the early morning (6:00 – 7:00 a.m.). They make their presence known by ringing a bell and Clemente is usually on the lookout for them. If for some reason Clemente has not already done this, take the trash from the side of the house to the curb in front of the field station; we like to tip the collectors 20 pesos if we see them.

Kitchen and Food basics

Do not use the kitchen or anything in it for biological research or fish care. There are sinks in the labs and fish rooms for research use – and the patio utility sink is also available. To be clear, **all plates, cutlery, and other kitchen items are to be used IN THE KITCHEN ONLY.** None are to be used for research.

*****Please clean up any food once you are done eating or preparing it. We are in the tropics and roaches love a dirty kitchen. ******

- Sra. Magda will prepare meals for large groups, please coordinate with Ing. Gaby well in advance of your visit.
- CICHAZ produces lots of citrus, papayas, beans, jackfruit, bananas, and herbs – try the caca de rata (rat poop) chiles – they are tiny and grow around the in-ground stock tanks. Help yourself to firewood, fruits, and vegetables. Be sure to try the pomarosa/rose apple (rose-flavored fruits in season in May/June) near the path to the river.



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- You can buy coffee beans and ground coffee through Ing. Gaby’s ASPAC coffee non-profit.
- There is a coffee grinder and several French presses.

Refrigerator

- Put anything not for human consumption in the “dirty fridge” located inside the door of the phenotyping lab
- Label anything you do not want to share (but we encourage sharing!)

Dishes

- Please minimize the soap and water used to clean dishes
- Dishes should be done after each meal to minimize ants, roaches, etc.
- Please do not use any metal utensils when cooking with the non-stick pots/pans.

Counters & Floors

- Please sweep after every meal (the broom and dustpan are on the patio or in the kitchen).

Dish Towels

- These are used to dry dishes **only** and are located under the microwave. Please add them to the pile of sheets and towels to be washed when needed.
- These should never leave the kitchen except to be washed.

Compost

- We have a compost bucket in the kitchen – please put kitchen waste in there including meat and dairy, which is fed to local livestock
- When the compost bucket is full, please empty it in the designated area near the concrete register beyond the driveway. We have a system and an experienced CICHAZ visitor can show you where and how to empty it (Marely, Don Clemente's daughter could show you what she does).

Reuse and Recycling

- Reuse containers as much as possible. Put the paper, plastic, and aluminum trash in the appropriate container in the kitchen and garbage areas.
- If you use any 500ml or smaller plastic bottles of soda or mineral water, we can reuse them – no need to recycle. When it is empty, rinse it out and put it in the mesh bag on the patio next to the oven. These smaller bottles are good for storing dead fish.



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Bedrooms and Sleeping Options

There are five bedrooms at CICHAZ; some guests prefer camping in the backyard and all visitors are welcome to do so. Gaby will let each visitor/group know which rooms/beds are available for use and specific requests will be accommodated whenever possible.

First Floor – Leaders’ Suite

- Reserved for trip leaders, special guests, and mobility-impaired visitors

Second Floor – Four bedrooms

- #1: The Bird (El Pájaro) Room (2 bunk beds, 1 double)
- #2: The Donkey (El Burro) Room (1 bunk bed, 1 single bed, 1 single bed)
- #3: The Needle (La Aguja) Room (1 bunk bed, 1 double bed)
- #4: The Flower (La Flor) Room (2 bunk beds)

Camping

- An outdoor bathroom, shower, and storage units are available on the ground floor of the directors’ residence for those who choose to camp in the backyard.

Bathrooms

There are three bathrooms at CICHAZ; one downstairs and two upstairs. If there is no toilet paper in them, please go to the upstairs storage room and grab two rolls (one for now and one for later) and put a roll on the dispenser.

If you want to keep your bathroom products in the bathroom, please label them and keep them together in a caddy so there is counter space for others.

Toilets

- Try to urinate in the garden rather than in toilets. Anything that goes down the drains ends up in the river downstream of town, untreated. Think of your downstream neighbors before you flush. When possible, please urinate discreetly in the backyard at least 15 m away from any in-ground fish habitats.
- Put toilet paper and other sanitarines in trashcans rather than down the toilet. The plumbing can handle a tiny bit of paper (one wipe).
- If the water is off, fill a bucket with water from the fish tanks outside and pour the water into the toilet when you are done.

Showers

- Try to keep them brief.

Sinks

- Tap water is chlorinated and fine for brushing teeth, but don't drink it.



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Sheets and Towels

- Towels, sheets and blankets can be found on the second-floor landing (in the corner storage room).
- These towels are **only** for personal use and we ask that you use **only one** during your stay; wash it as needed.
- When you leave, pile sheets and towels in the hallway in the clothes hamper.

Laundry

- The washing machine is located on the roof. Hang clean clothes on the roof or on the second-floor terrace to dry. If it is raining, hang clothes on the back patio and/or the staircase railing.
- Next to the washer is a sink where you can hand wash clothes if you like.

Internet and Cell Service

Internet

- CICHAZ has modest internet access. The wireless password is on the white board upstairs. Please avoid transferring large files and do not share the password with the neighbors.
- Please read a book from our library, watch a DVD from our collection, or talk to somebody rather than streaming anything entertaining. Essential communication and science take priority.
- **Please make sure wi-fi is turned off for all but one of your devices at a time.** You may have to take turns with other people when it comes to having your wi-fi on. There are several internet cafés in town and StarBit sells wireless minutes that you can access in most of the urbanized part of Calnali.

Phone

- Cell service and cellular internet can be spotty; at the field station, often you need to be on the roof to get the best reception.
- We don't have a landline, all communication is by cell phone. If coming from abroad, we recommend contacting your provider about an international data plan and plan to use WhatsApp that relies on data.
- If calling Mexico from outside Mexico, country code is +52 and then the number
- To call from Mexico to a foreign country, dial 00 and then the country code and number.



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Meeting and Work Spaces

On the second floor of CICHAZ there is a desk available for use. There is also a dining table downstairs that can be used for meetings, as well as the back patio and the palapa in the backyard. A projector and screen as well as extra chairs can be made available upon request.

Laboratories, Fish Rooms, and Outdoor Tanks

There is a shared molecular laboratory for genetic work, a phenological laboratory, and a behavior laboratory inside the main CICHAZ building. Outdoors we also have a space for behavior experiments and a multi-use space with a table (in the old pig sty). Regardless of which laboratory you use, please keep your work space clean, wash any equipment you use, and return any chemicals or materials to their proper place (shelves are now labeled so please respect this system). Since these are shared laboratories, don't assume that your research team is the only one needing access to a laboratory on a given day.

There are rags available for laboratory use. If you need additional rags, ask Magda, Johaira or another member of the CICHAZ staff. **DO NOT RAID THE KITCHEN FOR RAGS.** When you are done using a rag, if it is wet, hang it on the back-patio railing or the second-floor balcony railing. Once it is dry, put it into the rag hamper.

There are two indoor fish rooms. The small one is kept cold and is called Serrana. The larger room, Huasteca, is kept warm. There are also elevated, concrete outdoor tanks as well as large and small grounded tubs. Since there are many research projects going on simultaneously we have created the policies listed below to assure the best fish care possible. We encourage researchers to involve the CICHAZ staff who care for the fish (Osvaldo, Johaira, and Magda) in your work as much as possible – both for the success of your project and for their advancement.

Fish Tank Use Policy

1. Before you arrive at CICHAZ, we need to know any fish tank requirements you have and where (Serrano, Huasteca, and/or the outdoor tubs). On the online registration form to be completed before your arrival (<https://forms.gle/ZL8JwnZK9DG8cNSF9>) you can indicate how many tanks you need, what size(s), and in which location(s).
2. Once you arrive at CICHAZ, Osvaldo or Johaira will let you know which racks/fish tanks you can use and will let you know where to keep any materials you are using (she will give you a box or rack space).
3. **Osvaldo, Johaira and Magda are in charge of carrying out the protocol for the entry of field fish into tanks (deworming).**
4. If you detect water leaks, please mark them and notify CICHAZ staff.
5. Johaira and Magda are in charge of feeding the fish, let them know if they do not need to feed yours.



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Entertainment/Fun Activities

While we expect everyone to be working hard we know you need some down time and some fun! Please take advantage of the facilities but we ask that **during the week any loud activities are wrapped up NO LATER than 10:00 PM and on weekends, 1:00 AM.** Please be respectful of your neighbors and colleagues who need a good night's sleep.

Books

Over the years CICHAZ has gained a collection of books in English, Spanish, and Italian. These can be found in the hallway of the second floor of the main CICHAZ building. Feel free to leave a book or borrow a book.

TV/ DVD Player

To enjoy our movie collection, use the region-free DVD player in the living room. Return DVDs to their proper cases when you are done and file them alphabetically (if you find them in disarray, please feel free to organize them!).

Groceries and Eating Out

Abarrotes/Miscelanea/Mini-Super (convenience stores) in Aguazarca

- You can get general staples here (milk, basic veggies, eggs, beer, flour, water, snacks, packaged tortillas, etc).
- 20-L water bottles can be exchanged for ~15 pesos. Bring your empty in exchange for a full one.
- Santa Clara and Lala milk are all milk, most other brands are cut with vegetable products.
- Most things in glass bottles, like beer, carry a deposit. Neighborhood vendors usually won't charge you, but **you need to return them** before you leave.

Abarrotes El Coyote is the main supermarket in town. You can get all the basics here, including alcoholic beverages - except pharmaceuticals, fresh meat, and veggies. They *intermittently* accept major credit cards so plan to have cash on hand.

Market

- Fruit and vegetable stands are set up most days of the week. A butcher shop by the *presidencia* (town hall) has fresh meat. The chicken stands sell both fresh chicken and tasty rotisserie chicken.
- If you want fresh corn tortillas, you'll have to go to tortillerías in town or beg for them in the neighborhood. Everyone in the neighborhood has their own family cornfield (*milpa*) and makes them by hand at home.
- The fresh *pan dulce*, available next door and in town, is very good.



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Market day is **Sunday**. Show up by 11 am to ensure you’ll find everything you need. See glossary for specific items available in the market. The most unusual items are sold by elderly indigenous ladies sitting on the ground, mostly in the central plaza. Be sure and try *zacahuil*, the meter- long tamale, as well as chickpea empanadas and *guisos* by **Doña Gelasia**, near the center of the market.

You can ask Doña Magda to prepare something from what you find. She also makes tortillas and sometimes surprises us with bocoles (corn dough with beans or cilantro or just salt) and fresh enchiladas.

Eating out

- Some of the best food is sold at taquerias and other small family stands – see glossary for specifics.
- We recommend taking a few nights during your visit to eat out:
 - **Taquería Bayos** is right down the street
 - **Hotel Oviedo/Restaurant La Jarochita** has substantial and delicious meals for about \$120. It’s best to give them a heads-up in the morning or earlier if you plan on a meal there.
 - **Restaurante Calnali y La Florecita** offer “plato huasteco” that consist of *cecina* (meat that has been salted and dried by means of air, sun, or smoke) with *enchiladas*.
 - Calnali Centro - next to the main zocalo – has a few options as well: Rotisserie chicken, quesadillas and tacos (Doña Lulú – in front of the Presidency), tortas, etc.
- If lots of locals are eating someplace, it’s likely to be tasty and pretty safe. But if it’s your first time visiting Mexico you will get sick no matter what you do.

Vehicle Use

If you use one of the CICHAZ vehicles, after each use we ask that the car be wiped down, vacuumed, and generally left clean for the next crew. There should be a crate of cleaning supplies behind the stairs under the patio.

Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, contact Ing. Gaby Vazqu ez and/or Don Clemente’s family immediately as they are up to date on local changes. If you are traveling as a representative of an institution, you should be aware of their emergency support systems and have relevant contact information easily accessible.



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1. CLINICS AND HOSPITALS

- a. A very basic clinic is located in Barrio Tlala southeast of downtown. For minor emergencies, you can also look for a physician’s office, often connected to a pharmacy. Here are two private doctors you can contact:
 - i. Dr. Enrique Montaña – Cel. 771 333 4833
 - ii. Dra. Corina Melo – Para citas: 7711318032
- b. There are also dentists in Barrio Tlala, near the Zócalo.
 - i. Dra. Yuri Pelcastre – Cel. 7712342352
- c. The next closest 24-hour clinic is called **Hospital Ilusión/Hospital Regional Tlanchinol** located in Barrio Unidad Deportiva en Tlanchinol, Hidalgo (about 45 minutes away without fog). Phone number +52 7749740242
- d. The next closest hospitals with somewhat better facilities are as follows:
 - i. Huejutla de Reyes (2 hours away towards Tampico)
 1. Lopez Santos Jorge (~90 min away)
Carretera México-Tampico 215
43000 **Huejutla de Reyes, Hidalgo**
Phone number +52 78 989 64196
 - ii. Zacualtipán (90 min away towards Pachuca)
 1. Centro de Salud de Zacualtipán**
Galeana #2 , Col. Centro, C.P. 43200
Zacualtipán de Ángeles, Hidalgo, México
Teléfono: (774)-742-0599
 2. Hospital IMSS Oportunidades HRS No 22 Zacualtipán
Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social
Ocampo #S/N , Col. Centro, C.P. 43200
Zacualtipán de Ángeles, Hidalgo, México
(774)-742-0487

For international-class hospitals in Pachuca, Mexico City, or Tampico, call your travel insurance provider.

Fees

As a part of its nonprofit goals, CICHAZ is working towards achieving a model of financial sustainability through collection of user fees. The fees paid by those who use CICHAZ facilities will cover operational and maintenance costs of physical infrastructure, equipment and basic supplies and services that are available to visiting researchers and students. Researchers planning work at CICHAZ should budget US\$65/person/day for housing and bench fees when planning to visit CICHAZ or preparing grant applications for work at CICHAZ. Financial assistance is available for researchers without dedicated funds. Please contact us with questions or for more information about financial assistance, if it is needed.



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Declaration on COVID-19 – CICHAZ Visitor responsibility and Liabilities

I declare that ...

- I am aware of the existence of a global pandemic caused by the spread of a virus, which causes a contagious disease called COVID-19 (Coronavirus).
- I am solely responsible for taking preventive measures to take care of my health, that of my family and that of the people around me.
- When deciding to travel to Calnali and make use of the facilities of CICHAZ, A.C., I assume with responsibility that I am healthy **AND HAVE BEEN VACCINATED**.
- If before traveling I presented symptoms, **I have had a negative antigen test within the last 48 hours. If positive I will delay or cancel my trip.**
- If during my trip to Calnali I present symptoms of Covid-19, I will immediately notify my trip leader as well as Gabriela Vázquez and / or Clemente Hernández electronically, isolate myself, and will take a COVID test locally at my own expense.
- I know that if I test positive for COVID-19, I will only be able to receive basic medical attention (telephone medical consultation) that depends on existing resources in the municipality of Calnali.
- To work at CICHAZ during the time of COVID-19, I will adhere to the following sanitation measures:
 1. Wash my hands WITH SOAP when entering and / or leaving the CICHAZ facilities
 2. Sneeze or cough into my elbow (I will also not spit into the air or on the ground).
 3. Use only my assigned room and bathroom.
 4. Clean all surfaces, appliances and handles after use.
 5. Follow the directions of the local, state and federal authorities of Mexico.
- I release CICHAZ, A.C., co-directors and/or legal representatives from all responsibility for my care and any major medical solutions.



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Statement of Consent

I certify that I have read and fully understand the contents of the CICHAZ, A.C. Visitor’s Guide and will use the facilities of the field station as requested, as well as comply with the checklist of responsibilities upon arrival and departure of CICHAZ, A.C. I understand and acknowledge that I am responsible for my own travel to and from CICHAZ, A.C.

CICHAZ A.C. does not conform to U.S. or any institutional safety standards. By working, visiting, or volunteering at CICHAZ, A.C. I assume any and all risks and responsibilities and release the owners and users of CICHAZ, A.C., as well as their employers and affiliated institutions, from any and all liability.

To register for your CICHAZ visit and agree to these terms go to the following online form: <https://forms.gle/m1wrFbZgTAvibaAD6>



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Appendix A. What to Pack

CICHAZ has a washing machine but if there are water shortages due to pipe back-ups, low water reserves, or other unforeseen problems, water for the fish takes priority over the washing of bodies or clothes. Visitors should plan to wear clothes multiple times before washing and all clothes are line dried; once the summer rains start this often means drying clothes inside the house.

Some visitors bring the same personal supplies and some of us tend to leave our things in public spaces – **if you want something to stay in your possession, label it.**

Essentials

- Cash (Mexican pesos). It’s easy to change cash at the airport or on the U.S. side of the border, but very difficult to do within interior Mexico. Keep small change around for public restrooms.
 - Market vendors do not take credit cards, some tiendas in Calnali (e.g., the main supermarket in town, Abarrotes El Coyote, does take credit cards but that is the exception).
 - NOTE: U.S. credit cards do not work at most gas stations.
- ATM card (make sure you know your pin!)
 - Calnali has one ATM machin that accept most international ATM cards but they do run out of cash on market days (Sundays) and often are not replenished for a few days.
- Credit card (know the PIN for ATM use)
 - Contact credit card company before travel to authorize international use
 - Most common international cards are Mastercard, Visa, Amex
- Phone and phone charger

International Visitors:

- Passport
- Color photocopy of passport, stored in a place separate from passport.
- Adapters for 110V North American electrical sockets, if needed

Basic Checklist

- Toothbrush/toothpaste.
- Shampoo/conditioner.
- Tampons / Pads / Menstrual cup.
- Soap.
- Deodorant
- Extra underwear and socks.



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- Bug spray (**REMINDER:** Do not bring any **DEET** products to the field station. We recommend Natrapel or other picaridin repellent. These repellents are still **TOXIC TO FISH** so **WASH YOUR HANDS** before handling any fish).
- Hand sanitizer.
- Sunscreen (especially in spring and summer but avoid getting it in the water. Zinc based is best).
- Headlamp.
- Toilet paper or Kleenex for emergencies. Most pay-for-use bathrooms supply toilet paper, many free bathrooms don't.
- While the field station supplies towels, we ask each guest to use just one. If you need more than one you may want to bring a fast-drying towel with you.

No need to bring sheets - the field station has a generous supply.

Clothes

Temperatures can range between near-freezing at elevation in winter to 45 C in the lowlands in summer. Plan accordingly.

- Water shoes (Chacos or Keenes work well for water activities and short hikes).
- Walking/ hiking shoes (water resistant recommended for bad weather).
- Socks.
- Shorts.
- Undergarments.
- Long hiking pants (convertible pants recommended).
- Bathing suit.
- T-shirts.
- Light short and long-sleeve shirts (long sleeve shirts recommended in evening when the gnats start biting or for walking on very hot days to avoid skin burns).
- Long pants/Jeans (quick-dry recommended).
- Light rain jacket.
- A sweatshirt, sweater, and/or a warm-weather quick drying jacket (it can get cool in the evenings, especially in winter and at high elevations).
- For longer visits you may want to bring one nice outfit (for visits to local schools, meeting with officials, or making public presentations). Local *huipiles* are always appreciated for both men and women, paired with dress slacks or skirt.

Field Gear

- Hat! Broad-brimmed recommended but minimally a baseball cap.
- Sunglasses.
- Small day bag/backpack.
- Water bottle (or Camelback).
- Ziploc bags or small dry bags to store gear if it rains.
- Large ziplocs to store wet/dirty clothes and shoes.



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- Sunscreen.
- Bug spray (non-DEET).
- Pocket knife or tool.

Suggested

- ‘Just in case’ medicines such as Pepto Bismol, aloe vera, aspirin PM...
- Talcum powder/baby powder.
- If there are any clothes that are still in good shape that you no longer need at the end of your stay, please consider donating them. There is a donation box in the storage closet on the second floor. Anything left at the station that goes unclaimed after a month will be added to the donations box.
- You are encouraged to bring other items for donation such as old phones or clothes you don’t plan to use while at the station.



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Appendix B. Departure Checklist

Kitchen	
	Leave any perishables you purchased on the kitchen table when you leave.
	Put spices/pastas/rice/beans in refrigerator.
Bathrooms	
	Empty trashcans into can in the back.
	Gather sheets and towels for the laundry and leave them in the hallway in the clothes hampers – DO NOT PUT WET TOWELS IN THE CLOTHES HAMPER. If towels are wet leave them hanging on the railing in the hallway and let CICHAZ personnel know.
Bedrooms	
	Strip beds.
	Lock windows.
Office	
	Lock windows.
	Lock balcony door.
General	
	Leave all lab and fishroom areas as you found them on arrival.
	Lock up the house.
	Turn off all lights.
	First time visitors need to sign the wall.



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Appendix C. Glossary for non-Mexicans

Transportation

Camión: bus

Central or *Terminal*: bus station

Food and drink

Vino: wine and also hard liquor, e.g. tequila, rum

Quelites: catch-all term for any leafy vegetable

Empanada: called a gordita in northern Mexico and Texas, thick cooked corn masa stuffed with something yummy. Try the *empanadas de alberjón* in the market.

Tamal: corn masa with something yummy in the middle, wrapped in corn, plantain, or (best) *papatla* leaves.

Zacahuil: A megatamal stuffed with pork and spicy sauce. Not to be missed.

Tacos al pastor: deliciousness of Mexican-Lebanese origin: seasoned pork (sometimes chicken) on a shish kabob spit and a little piece of heaven on earth, available at Taquería Bayos and downtown next to the town hall, particularly on weekends.

Quesadilla: a grilled cheese taco.

Gringa: a grilled cheese taco with *pastor* meat. People will be amused if you are a *gring@* and order this.

Elote: whole ear of corn. The elote guy's route goes in front of CICHAZ in the summertime.

Esquite: whole corn mixed with mayonnaise, cheese, salt, chile and lime. A lot yummier than it sounds or looks. *Elotes y Esquites* carts are common.

Camote: sweet potato, sold by guys pushing carts that sound a forlorn steam whistle.

Atole: A thin corn porridge, usually flavored with *elote* or chocolate. Lots of artificial flavors too.

Carnitas, suadero: meats sold in taco stands at market, which you should try although better ones are available in Mexico City.



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Guanábana: soursop. Sporadically available fresh; often available as a popsicle; exquisite.

Beer (*chela*): personal ranking: *Indio* = *Negra Modelo* > *Bohemia* > *Victoria* > *Modelo* > *Tecate*

Michelada: any of the above plus lime juice, chile, salt, and often Worcestershire sauce, over ice. The best thing ever for outdoor work.

Tequila: *Herradura Reposado* > *Cazadores* > *Jimador* > *Centenario* >>>> *Ranchito Viejo* et al.

The *pulque*, sold across the river from the town square in Tlala on market days, is worth trying, along with the flavored *pulque curado*, if you can stand the crowd of drunks surrounding the place. You can buy also buy *aguardiente* (artisanally distilled sugarcane liquor) for cheaper than gasoline at some venues if you bring your own container. A questionable choice that can lead to more questionable choices.

Mole, adobo: a rich sauce based on chiles, tomatoes, tomatillos, chocolate, etc. Every one is a bit different. Always worth trying.

Jicama: (also common in Texas): crunchy root vegetable peeled and eaten raw by itself, with lime, salt and chile or in salads. A perennial favorite.

Epazote: An aromatic herb used in cooking. Fills the curry-leaf niche for Asian food.

Tomate (verde): tomatillo.

Jitomate: tomato.

Milk: *Santa Clara* (real milk) >> *Mileche*, *Nutrileche*, et al. (milk plus veggie).

Chiles

Fresh, from mildest to hottest

morrón (green pepper), *poblano*, *serrano*, *jalapeño*, *piquín*, *habanero*.

Dried

Smoky, not too spicy, fills the sundried tomato niche: *Ancho*.

Not smoky, *spicy*: *Guajillo*, *cascabel*, *piquín*.

Smoky and spicy from mildest to hottest: *Pasilla*, *güero*, *morita*.

Birria or *barbacoa de borrego*: stewed lamb and consomé, not to be missed; hard to find in Calnali itself.



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Barbacoa de res: steamed cow face, sublime.

Barbacoa de pollo: chicken steamed in maguey leaves – interesting but not spectacular.

Limón – lime.

Lima o lima-limón – lemon.

Tuna – cactus fruit (prickly pear).

Nuez – pecan.

Nuez de Castilla – walnut (good luck finding it).

Paste: mexican descendant of Cornish pasty, brought to Pachuca by miners along with soccer.

Menudo, mondongo, or pancita: tripe soup, usually found on weekends only.

Fauna and flora

Tlacuache: possum (Virginia opossum and other didelphids). Sometimes can be found in *adobo*.

Mapache: raccoon

Mahuaquite: fer-de-lance (never actually seen).

Mala mujer: broad leaved stinging plant. Don't touch it!

Escuintle: literally, little dog, also applied to obnoxious child.

Vampiro: bat.

Miscellaneous

La Llorona: legendary ghost-mother who wanders the river bottom at night, crying for her drowned children.

Tianguis – market.

Papalote – kite.