

Soak up the history, sporting prowess and contemporary culture of this vibrant northern city



Shaking off its industrial image, Manchester is fast emerging as one of the UK's hottest prospects, with fantastic shopping, world-class restaurants and striking contemporary architecture adding to the city's impressive sporting resume.

Start your exploration of the city on Deansgate. Historic Castlefield, Deansgate Locks and the Beetham Tower sit at one end while Exchange Square and The Arndale shopping centre sit at the other.

This isn't a history lesson but it's worth knowing that, following the 1996 IRA bomb, a large area of Manchester was redeveloped. This included the Arndale and surrounding streets and resulted in the formation of what is now known as Exchange Square and the adjoining New Cathedral Street.

Think posh shopping on New Cathedral Street – Harvey Nichols Selfridges and upmarket boutiques. The square itself is a hub between the Arndale, Printworks and Urbis and is a location in its own right. Hop on The Wheel for a great view of the city or hop around the clutch of pubs that have become very popular for their large outdoor drinking areas. One of these ‘pubs’ the Sinclair’s Oyster Bar was literally picked up and moved 100 metres following the IRA bomb, to its current location.

### **Boho chic**

Despite ever-increasing gentrification, the city’s Northern Quarter remains one of the most interesting areas of the city centre. Music fans will find themselves spoilt for choice with a host of live venues, including old-school indie haunts dotted on or around Oldham Street. It’s also home to some of the city’s cooler club nights, if that’s more of your thing.

Take a stroll round the Northern Quarter and you’ll find over a host of boutique shops and stalls as well as some great record stores. A favourite stop-off for the streetwise gent is Oi Polloi, the original home of scruffy chic. Nearby The Richard Goodall Gallery is an interesting spot to browse a collection of music portraits and memorabilia.



**Follow your stomach**

No trip to Manchester would be complete though without a visit to a traditional caff (café) for a brew and a butty (cup of tea and a sandwich). We love Teacup, formerly known as Cup, which is DJ Mr Scruff's vegetarian teashop (on Thomas Street) – their all-day breakfasts are legendary.

A visit to Abdul's for a 'chip naan' is also a must – there are various branches throughout the city – if you can handle the carbs of course! Another delicacy is available at The Castle on Oldham Street: The Manchester Egg – combining pickled egg, sausage and black pudding (shudder). For a late night snack – that you may have more chance of keeping down – head to some of the amazing curry cafés on the world famous Curry Mile.

It's not actually a mile long, perhaps half a mile, but there is lots of curry on it. Basically one street with a massive concentration of central and eastern Asian cuisine – from Afghan takeaways to Pakistani sweet shops and of course curry. Take a walk down here on a summer afternoon, smell the smells and watch the bustle of life and you could easily be in Lahore. Handily, it sits between Oxford Road and Fallowfield, on the route into the city centre.

Right in the city centre, Albert Square is home to Manchester Town Hall. It is, of course, also a square of sorts – a large space that gets used for a variety of events throughout the year, notably the focal point of the Manchester Christmas Markets. It is often used as a reference point for directions to a club or restaurant, which you will no doubt be given at some point.

**For the summer**

There are plenty of great reasons to visit Manchester this summer as the city's inhabitants get out and about to enjoy the sunshine. One event not to miss is Screenfields at Spinningfields – huge outdoor movie screenings, which are shown every week until 26th July at 8pm.

Manchester Jazz Festival will also be returning for its 17th year (from 13th to 21st July) with nine days of the best and the newest in contemporary jazz from the North West, the UK and abroad.

This is a great celebration of Manchester's native music scene, as MJF hand-picks some of the hottest new international artists to debut in the UK. There are dozens of free gigs at The Festival Pavilion in Albert Square, the perfect place to soak up the music and catch up with friends ( [www.manchesterjazz.com](http://www.manchesterjazz.com) ).

Nearby Bolton will also come alive this summer for its annual food festival (from 24th to 27th August). This four-day August Bank Holiday spectacular serves up a series of live cooking demonstrations from top-flight celebrity chefs.

The festival also features a fantastic specialty market with over 70 stalls – a must for those wanting to sample the local cuisine - plus free family entertainment including music and street theatre ( [www.boltonfoodanddrinkfestival.com](http://www.boltonfoodanddrinkfestival.com) ).



**Etihad's on the ball**

Etihad Airways led the cheers of celebration in May for Manchester City as the club was crowned Barclays Premier League champions with victory over Queens Park Rangers at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester.

It was the first time since 1968 that Manchester City had won the title in England's top tier of football and the first time the club had lifted the Barclays Premier League trophy.

The City of Manchester Stadium was renamed the Etihad Stadium in July of last year, forming the centre piece of a newly-named Etihad Campus, which encompasses a large part of the Sportcity site in East Manchester, the popular City Square entertainment space and additional existing and planned facilities.

The Etihad Airways logo has been on the Manchester City shirt since 2009 and the Abu Dhabi-based airline became naming sponsor of the club's Etihad Stadium and Campus in August 2011.

Etihad Airways operates twice-daily flights between Manchester and Abu Dhabi. The airlines also has a call centre in the city employing up to 160 people as well as a new Business Class lounge at Manchester Airport, which opened last November.

### Where to stay?

#### **Marriott Manchester Victoria & Albert Hotel**

Set in the city centre on the banks of the River Irwell, the hotel is located across from Granada Television Studios adjacent to Spinningfields.

**Mustn't miss:** A night of people spotting at the V&A Lounge



the Victoria and



the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Whitworth Art Gallery and the Lowry are all within walking distance of the city's shopping



More to Manchester  
The Manchester City Council has approved the plans for a new park inn hotel in the city centre. The hotel will be a 150-room building, which will be the largest hotel in the city. The hotel is expected to be completed in 2013. The hotel will be a 150-room building, which will be the largest hotel in the city. The hotel is expected to be completed in 2013.