



Gate of Fort Santiago, Intramuros
Eric Beltran

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Metro Manila is one of Asia's premier regions composed of 16 cities and 1 municipality, with major central business districts in the capital Manila, Makati, Quezon City, Parañaque, Pasay, Muntinlupa and Taguig City with its Bonifacio Global City dubbed the Metro's lifestyle hub.

WHERE TO STAY

Makati: The centrally located financial district but also a cultural and entertainment hub, home to Raffles and Fairmont hotels but catering to a variety of budgets.

Ortigas: Manila's second Central Business District, with two of the city's biggest malls and mainly upscale hotels.

Malate and Ermita: Handy Manila Bay districts just south of Intramuros, with popular attractions, lively nightlife scenes and plenty of options for budget travellers.

Pasay: The closest area to the airport, home to SM Mall of Asia, Baywalk, a vast array of dining and nightlife and a wide choice of accommodation for all budgets.

GETTING TO AND AROUND

Metro Manila, the Capital Region of the Philippines, can be reached through major airlines with direct flights from London's Heathrow Airport in 13hrs. Within the Philippines, Manila is linked to provincial centres by several domestic carriers; Palawan or Cebu from Manila are both about 70mins by air, for instance, while Siargao is about 2hrs 30mins.

Taxis from the airport to Makati or Malate take about 20mins and cost about £4 using a yellow airport metered taxi. Alternatively, there's the Airport Loop shuttle from Terminal 3 to Pasay and Baclaran. It starts as early as 5am and runs until 11pm. Fare one-way is about £0.30.

METRO MANILA



CLIMATE

Tropical Manila is hot and humid year-round, with daytime temperatures averaging 19-39°C. The coolest months are January to February and the hottest are March to May. The dry season lasts from late November to early March; the wet season the rest of the year features short intense spells of rainfall.

Regional Office
Department of Tourism, National Capital Region (NCR) Regional Office,
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METRO MANILA



Makati Central Business District



WELCOME TO METRO MANILA

Blending charming Spanish colonial architecture, world-class museums and galleries and the world's oldest Chinatown with some of the biggest and best shopping malls on Earth, the vibrant bay side Filipino capital Manila is also a foodie paradise that was much revered by celebrity chef, author and travel documentarian Anthony Bourdain.

It may be the smallest region in the Philippines but you'll never run out of fun things to discover in the 16 unique cities and one municipality of Metro Manila, also known as the National Capital Region (NCR).

Metro Manila is the country's economic, political and cultural capital. And it's chaotic in the best way possible. From the colourful, roaring jeepneys to the dancing traffic enforcers, to the karaoke machines blasting 80s ballads in the streets, everywhere you go is teeming with life.

There's never a dull moment, especially when you spend it with the fun-loving *Manileños*.

"A combination of artistic renaissance and economic boom has given the capital of the Philippines a new lease of life, with plenty to see, do and taste."

– The Telegraph



Intramuros Golf Club



Malate Church



Famous Filipino dessert Halo-Halo



Venice Grand Canal Mall, Taguig City

WHY IT'S MORE FUN IN MANILA

From bamboo-bike tours to artisan shopping, and from contemporary art venues to casinos, the Philippine capital is a world in itself, with something to appeal to all ages and tastes when it comes to things to see and do.

CULTURE AND FOOD

Manila packs a lot of culture into a small space – many of its major sites are in the walled Intramuros, including the Spanish-era Fort Santiago with its shrine-museum to José Rizal, Manila Cathedral, UNESCO-listed San Agustin Church (the Philippines' oldest), Casa Manila museum of Spanish colonial furniture and art, and Rizal Bagumbayan Light and Sound Museum of colonial and modern history. Other venues in which to learn about Filipino history and culture and art are the Bahay Tsinoy museum of Chinese history, Ayala Museum of Filipino history and artifacts, National Museum of Anthropology, Malacañang Palace presidential museum, and National Museum of Fine Arts, while for kids there's the Exploreum science museum, Museo Pambata children's museum and the National Museum of Natural History.

A densely populated city melding many different cultures and influences, Manila is unsurprisingly lively all-year-round, with religious processions, live music, theatre, famous drag shows or plenty of speakeasies and videoke/karaoke bars.

Traditional and new-wave Filipino, Spanish and Chinese fare lead the eclectic dining scene in Manila, but locals are also mad about Japanese food, American diner classics and global food in general – meaning everyone will find something to please and new flavours to experience, all of it stunningly great value. Don't miss seafood made to your taste at a *dampa* such as Pasay, where you buy ingredients to be cooked at an on-site restaurant.

Manila Bay sunsets are legendary

TOP EVENTS & FESTIVALS

- **Black Nazarene Procession, 9 Jan & Good Friday** – the carrying of the life-sized image of a dark-skinned Jesus Christ, housed in the city's **Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene**.
- **Bamboo Organ Festival, late February** – global musicians paying homage to **Las Piñas'** iconic organ.
- **Fringe Manila, February and March** – a 2-3 week event showcasing local artists and performers in the city's galleries and theatres.
- **Aliwan Fiesta, April and May** – dance parades and float competitions in Pasay City.
- **Philippine Independence Day, 12 June** – celebrations and a parade in Rizal Park to mark independence from Spain.
- **Fête de la Musique, mid-June** – celebration of music organised by the Alliance Française, with two main stages and 30+ themed stages hosting reggae, blues, punk and more.
- **Philippine Travel Mart, September** – annual event showcasing Philippines destinations
- **Christmas celebrations, from 1 September**



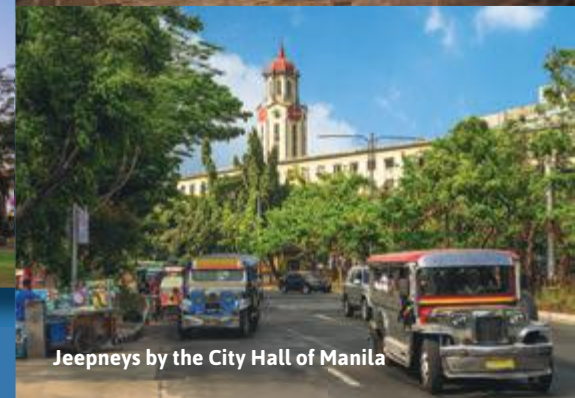
Greenbelt, Makati



Manila Cathedral



Casa Manila, Intramuros



Jeepneys by the City Hall of Manila

TOP 10 ACTIVITIES

- Tour the **Walled City of Intramuros** (the colonial walled city) by horse-drawn carriage or eco-friendly bamboo bicycle or practice your swing at the **Intramuros Golf Club**
- **Sample the city's famous street food** at venues including **Shipyards** in **Malate**, discover the authentic hole-in-the-wall restaurants of **Binondo-Chinatown**, or go on a food and pub crawl of the trendy **Poblacion** neighbourhood in **Makati**. Another foodie hotspot is the **Mercato Centrale** in **BGC, Taguig**.
- Take a **Pasig River** tour or **Manila Bay** cruise for a different view of Old Manila and Makati.
- Roam **Rizal Park** ('Luneta') with its open-air chess, monument to national hero **José Rizal** and **National Museum of Natural History Philippines**.
- Soak up contemporary Filipino art and the **Philippine Gold Exhibit** at the **Metropolitan Museum of Manila**, and at **1335 Mabini Art Gallery** located in Makati.
- Shop 'till you drop, whether at the vast bayfront **SM Mall of Asia** or discover the **Venice Grand Canal Mall**.
- Explore quirky architecture ranging from the **Coconut Palace** (by prior booking only) to the **Art Deco First United Building**.
- Discover **Cubao Expo**, an alternative village with boutiques, bars and cheap eats. Let off steam at the **Upside Down Museum of Illusions**, **Art In Island** museum and the casinos.
- Take a day-trip to **Corregidor Island**; **Tagaytay Ridge**, **People's Park in the Sky** and **Taal Volcano**; or **Mount Pinatubo** crater lake.
- Stroll the waterfront **Baywalk** for its sunset views over Manila Bay and open-air cafés and food stalls.