



POCKET ROUGH GUIDE **MANCHESTER**

written and researched by
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Manchester

Manchester has had a global profile for more than 150 years, since the dawn of the industrial revolution. But today's elegant core of converted warehouses and glass skyscrapers is a far cry from the smoke-covered sprawl of yesteryear. Its renewed pre-eminence is expressed in its football, as home to some of the world's most famous and wealthiest clubs – Manchester United and Manchester City, respectively – but also in a thriving music scene that has given birth to world-beaters as diverse as the Hallé Orchestra and Oasis. Moreover, the city's celebrated concert halls, theatres, clubs and cafés feed off the cosmopolitan drive provided by a large student population and a high-profile LGBTQ+ community. With regular TransPennine Express services from across the north of England and Scotland, Manchester is easy to explore. Find out more about travelling to Manchester with **TransPennine Express**.

Manchester Art Gallery

Mosley St, M2 3JL

🌐 manchesterartgallery.org. Free

Manchester Art Gallery attracts big-name exhibitions by contemporary artists, but don't overlook its own holdings, an invigorating collection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art. Worth checking out is the new Fashion Gallery, featuring one of the largest British collections of fashion and clothing, dating from the early seventeenth century to the present day. Floor 2 features temporary exhibitions and crafts, while the Ground Floor's Manchester Gallery is devoted to a visual history of the city. If you're travelling with family, the Lion's Den is fun for kids.

Science and Industry Museum

Liverpool Rd, Manchester, M3 4FP

🌐 scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk. Free

This city centre museum explores Manchester's pivotal role in the industrial revolution and its continued legacy in science and innovation. Highlights include the

world's oldest surviving passenger railway station, and interactive exhibits on textile production and the early development of computers. Temporary exhibitions keep it fresh and ensure there's

Manchester Art Gallery

Rich J Jones/Marketing Manchester



always something new to discover, in this fascinating look at how Manchester helped shape the modern world.

National Football Museum

Urbis Building, Cathedral Gardens, M4 3BG

📞 nationalfootballmuseum.com. Charge Manchester's National Football Museum, housed in a suitably spectacular structure – the sloping, six-storey glass Urbis building near Victoria train station – houses some true treasures of the world's most popular game. Here you can see the 1966 World Cup Final ball, Maradona's "Hand of God" shirt, and the only surviving version of the Jules Rimet world cup trophy. They also display the personal collection of Sir Stanley Matthews (1915–2000), considered one of the greatest English footballers of all time.

Victoria Baths

Hathersage Rd, Manchester, M13 0FE

📞 victoriabaths.org.uk. Charge

A stunning example of Edwardian architecture, Victoria Baths is a

beautifully restored former public bathhouse. Once considered "Manchester's Water Palace", it boasts intricate stained glass, rich mosaic tiling and grand, historic swimming pools. Guided tours tell the fascinating story of its past, and it now serves as a venue for exhibitions, vintage fairs and artistic events. Its distinctive character and historical significance make it a unique destination for lovers of Manchester's heritage.

Afflecks

52 Church St, Manchester, M4 1PW

📞 afflecks.com. Free

Afflecks is a haven for alternative culture and creativity, and a honeypot for independent shopping. Spanning multiple floors, it's home to stalls selling everything from vintage fashion and handmade jewellery to rare vinyl records and comic books. The building is covered in vibrant graffiti and murals, reflecting its place at the heart of Manchester's creative scene. Whether you're hunting for a one-of-a-kind

National Football Museum

Rich J Jones/Marketing Manchester





Lowry

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souvenir or just soaking up the eclectic atmosphere, Afflecks is an essential stop for visitors who love unique finds.

The Bridgewater Hall

Lower Mosley St, Manchester, M2 3WS

🌐 bridgewater-hall.co.uk. Charge

One of the finest concert venues in the UK, The Bridgewater Hall is home to the Hallé Orchestra and regularly hosts world-class performances of classical, jazz and contemporary music. Featuring a cutting-edge acoustic design, the hall provides an intimate yet powerful listening experience, if you bag tickets to a live performance. Guided tours offer a chance to learn about the space and an intriguing glimpse behind the scenes, showcasing the venue's history and architecture.

Co-op Live

Etihad Campus, Manchester, M11 3FF

🌐 cooplive.com. Charge

The UK's largest indoor entertainment venue, Co-op Live is revolutionising Manchester's live event scene. Designed with state-of-the-art acoustics and innovative audience experiences in mind, the

arena is now open for business, hosting major concerts, comedy acts and sporting events. Located close to the Etihad Stadium, home of Manchester City FC, it's already bringing some of the world's biggest names in entertainment to the city. Whether you're attending a concert or experiencing its cutting-edge facilities, Co-op Live is poised to become a must-visit destination in the city.

Lowry

Pier 8, Salford Quays, M50 3AZ

🌐 thelowry.com. Free

Perched on the water's edge, Lowry is the quays' shiny steel arts centre. The Galleries, which host sixteen different exhibitions each year, are largely devoted to the paintings of Lawrence Stephen Lowry (1887–1976), the artist most closely associated with Salford. The earlier paintings – those somewhat desolate, melancholic portrayals of Manchester mill workers – are the most familiar, while later works, repeating earlier paintings but changing the greys and sullen browns for lively reds and pinks, can come as a surprise.



Manchester Craft & Design Centre
Alastair Wallace/Shutterstock

Shops

Manchester Craft & Design Centre

17 Oak St, Northern Quarter, M4 5JD
🌐 craftanddesign.com

The city's best place to pick up ceramics, fabrics, earthenware, jewellery and decorative art, many an hour can be spent here exploring the myriad crafts on display. There's also a good little café that encourages you to stay even longer.

Piccadilly Records

53 Oldham St, Northern Quarter, M1 1JR
🌐 piccadillyrecords.com

The enthusiastic staff, many of them DJs themselves, are more than willing to help you navigate the shelves of collectibles and vinyl, whatever your taste.

Restaurants

Climat

8th Floor, Blackfriars House, M3 2JA
🌐 restaurantclimat.co.uk

The daily changing menu at this rooftop restaurant has garnered a loyal following, focusing on what head chef Luke Richardson dubs “Parisian expat cooking”. Expect perfectly executed dishes such as monkfish tail in a mussel velouté and aubergine with miso. The wine is excellent to boot, so plan in advance and book a table.

Mughli Charcoal Pit

30 Wilmslow Rd, M14 5TQ
🌐 mughli.com

Located by the Whitworth Art Gallery, this stylish Indian restaurant is a standout in the area traditionally known as “curry mile”. Mouthwatering meat, veggie and vegan dishes include butter paneer and charred lamb chops – there's even a mild “little mughal” for children.

Street Urchin

72 Great Ancoats Street, Manchester, M4 5BG
🌐 street-urchin.co.uk

Ancoats' culinary landscape is all the better for this space, strung with house plants and dishing up exceptional seafood and locally sourced dishes. The menu changes all the time, but one constant seems to be the crispy buttermilk grey squirrel, which attracts diners from across Manchester and beyond.

Bars and cafés

Band on the Wall

25 Swan St, Northern Quarter, M4 5JZ
🌐 bandonthewall.org

This legendary Northern Quarter joint remains true to its commitment to “real music”: it's one of the city's best venues to see live bands – from world and folk to jazz and reggae – and it hosts club nights to boot. Many a new Manchester band has gone on to fame and fortune after performing here, often alongside tried and tested top acts. The beer is good too.



The Deaf Institute

135 Grosvenor St, M1 7HE

📍 thedeafinstitute.co.uk

This rightly popular bar and music hall sits in a funky makeover of the elegant Victorian former deaf institute. Acts tend to focus mostly on folk, indie and r'n'b, with lots of up-and-coming talent, and a raft of great club nights. Sister venue *Gorilla* (📍 thisisgorilla.com) on Whitworth Street is also excellent.

Federal Café Bar

9 Nicholas Croft, Northern Quarter

📍 federalcafe.co.uk

The beauty of this Antipodean-themed coffee shop-cum-bar lies in its sustainable and ethically sourced ingredients which make up wildly popular all day brunch dishes. Try the smashed avocado on sourdough toast with bacon, or for something sweeter, the toasted banana bread topped with vanilla mascarpone.

Pot Kettle Black

Barton Arcade, M3 2BH

📍 potkettleblackltd.co.uk

Mixing antipodean coffee culture with a northern accent, this laidback café inside the beautiful Barton Arcade is a top pick for brunch lovers. Expect quality coffee, inventive takes on breakfast classics and a vibe that's effortlessly cool without trying too hard.

Richmond Tea Rooms

46 Sackville Street, M1 3WF

📍 richmondtearooms.com

Without question the most brilliantly conceived tearoom in Manchester, with an amazing Tim Burton-esque *Alice in Wonderland* theme. The sumptuous afternoon teas are the stuff of local legend, while the adjoining cocktail lounge is a super-stylish place to kick off an evening. It's a popular spot, so book early to guarantee a table, especially when the burlesque events are taking place.

Schofield's Bar

3 Little Quay St, M3 3JZ

📍 schofieldsbars.com

This might just be one of the best cocktail bars in the entire region, if not the UK, from two brothers who honed their craft in London before opening this sceney bar in the iconic Art Deco Sunlight House. It's the height of sophistication and a real example of Manchester's confidence, serving superb classic cocktails, alongside a choice selection of wines, beers and British tapas.

Stray

1 Eagle St, Northern Quarter, M4 5BU

📍 instagram.com/straybar

Low lighting, luxe interiors and a grown-up drinks menu – think tomato margaritas and rhubarb gimlets alongside more unusual creations, such as a vino colada – make this Northern Quarter bar a go-to for cocktail lovers. It's walk-in's only, but well worth chancing your arm.

Live music at Band on the Wall

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