

Manila Quick City Guide

At a Glance

Manila (Filipino: *Maynila*) is the capital of the Philippines and the historic core of the sprawling Metro Manila metropolis. Located on the eastern shore of Manila Bay on the island of Luzon, the city proper is home to 1,902,590 residents as of the 2024 census, making it the country’s second-most populous city after Quezon City. However, as the anchor of Metro Manila—a region of 24.9 million people—Manila functions as the administrative and cultural heart of one of Southeast Asia’s largest

First 48 Hours

Where to Stay

Area	Best For	Vibe	Budget
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Getting Around

Manila’s transport network is a vibrant mix of heritage and modernity, offering everything from WWII-era jeepneys to air-conditioned point-to-point buses. While the city’s size and traffic can challenge newcomers, understanding the hierarchy of options—from hyper-local jeepneys to inter-district rail—will make your 90-day stay manageable and affordable. The system operates primarily on cash, though a reloadable card is gaining traction on select services.

Eat This

- Adobo
- Sinigang
- Lechon
- Kare-kare
- Halo-halo
- Filipino breakfast (tocino/tapa/longganisa)

Top 10 Sights

#	Place	Why Go
1	Ayala Malls Manila Bay	Shopping mall; Near MOA complex
2	Glorietta	Shopping mall; Connected to Greenbelt
3	Greenbelt	Shopping mall; Upscale; cinemas, dining, park
4	Power Plant Mall	Upscale shopping mall
5	SM Mall of Asia	Shopping mall; One of largest in Philippines
6	SM Megamall	Shopping mall; Cinema, food court, department store
7	Venice Grand Canal Mall	Themed shopping mall; Dining and photos

Remote Work / Coworking

While the City of Manila proper serves as the historical and administrative capital, remote workers typically gravitate toward the surrounding Metro Manila business districts—particularly **Makati** and **Taguig** (Bonifacio Global City)—where commercial infrastructure rivals or exceeds that of the capital city proper. These modern centers host the region’s primary concentration of serviced offices and flexible workspace providers, distinct from the older, more congested districts of Manila its

Safety & Etiquette

Manila requires standard big-city vigilance. While violent crime against tourists is uncommon, petty theft and scams flourish in crowded areas. The metropolis presents a stark contrast between heavily secured business districts and dense neighborhoods where caution is essential. At first glance, the Philippines can seem less immediately exotic than other Asian destinations. English is spoken almost everywhere, Western clothes are standard, malls are common gathering points, and Catholicism is the dominant religion. Combined with the famously sunny Filipino disposition, this familiarity can lull visitors into a false sense of security. However, beneath the surface lies a complex web of social rules that govern daily interactions. Failure to grasp these nuances can quickl

Day Trips

Budget Snapshot (Daily USD)

Tier	Accommodation	Food + Transport + Misc	Total Daily
Accommodation (studio/Airbnb)	₱50,000 / 90 days (~\$850)		₱100,000+ / 90 days (~\$1,700+) (~\$1700015329)
Food	₱30,000 / 90 days		₱55,000 / 90 days (~\$93502)
Transport	₱8,000 / 90 days		₱18,000 / 90 days (~\$30602)
Coworking / internet	₱6,000 / 90 days		₱15,000 / 90 days (~\$25502)
Fun / shopping	₱8,000 / 90 days		₱20,000 / 90 days (~\$34002)
Misc / buffer	₱8,000 / 90 days		₱12,000 / 90 days (~\$20402)

Quick Links

- Manila tourism: <https://www.dot.gov.ph>
- Weather/PAGASA: <https://www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph>
- MRT/LRT: <https://dotcmrt3.gov.ph> / <https://lrnc.ph>
- Immigration: <https://immigration.gov.ph>
- Manila city government: <https://www.manila.gov.ph>

Source: Manila 90-Day Survival Guide (The Lean Nomad)