

travel



METRO LIFE

“DON’T BE OVER self-confident with your first impressions.” There’s a lot about Metro Manila’s urban sprawl and visible poverty to put off the first-time visitor, but beyond these first impressions lies a vibrant city with an abundance of fashionable restaurants, accessible shopping centres and luxury hotels. And with flying time less than two hours, Manila is an easy place to take a short break from Hong Kong.

Most foreign visitors to Manila will head to the Makati, Ermita or Malate districts, whose wide avenues of palatial homes and high-rises contrast sharply with the shanty-towns on the fringes of the city. Arrival at Manila’s Ninoy Aquino International Airport is much easier these days and a new security cordon around the airport means you’re no longer greeted by a morass of people, touts and traffic. The airport’s only about five miles south of the centre of Manila, so despite the heavy traffic, you can arrive at your hotel in half an hour, even during rush hour – important if you’re only visiting for the weekend.

Most visitors to the Philippines use Manila as a starting point for their exploration of the other provinces and islands but, if you’re only on a short visit, there are plenty of accessible day trips from the city and plenty to keep you busy in the city itself.

WHERE TO STAY

PENINSULA

The Peninsula Manila is the second-oldest hotel in Makati City and recently completed the first phase of a hotel-wide renovation. Located in the heart of the central business district on the corners of Ayala and Makati Avenues.

www.peninsula.com

SHANGRI-LA

Makati Shangri-La, Manila, is located at the centre of Manila’s most prestigious business, shopping and entertainment district. Just 20 minutes away from the international airport, the hotel offers four international restaurants and is walking distance from deluxe cinemas, premium shopping malls and trendy bars and restaurants.

The second Shangri-La property in Manila is situated at the Ortigas Centre in Mandaluyong City, and sits adjacent to two major shopping complexes (a short taxi ride from the Makati central business district and Manila International Airport).

The hotel has 632 guest rooms and suites, each with views of Manila’s city splendour or Edsa Shangri-La’s tropical garden. Four international restaurants, a bakeshop, coffee bar and two





lounges offer guests numerous dining choices. At the hotel's Garden Wing lies CHI, the award-winning spa. www.shangri-la.com

SHOPPING

In Makati, the Ayala Center, along Edsa and Ayala Avenue is the best-known commercial centre in the city with two shopping centres - Glorietta and Greenbelt.

The larger of the two shopping malls is Glorietta, which itself is a cluster of malls. Greenbelt shopping complex, just across Makati Avenue from Glorietta, is one of the most sophisticated and modern malls in the country and dozens of coffee stores and restaurants overlook a landscaped park. You'll find a wider variety of brands on offer than in Hong Kong.

The Rockwell Centre is also popular with tourists and expats and is four-level complex incorporating a mix of international and local.

Near Manila Bay, the Mall of Asia has 600 shops, a dozen cinemas and hundreds of restaurants. Forbes magazine ranks it as the third-largest in the world, while Shangri-La Plaza - by the Edsa Shangri-La hotel - is Manila's upscale shopping destination.

INTRAMUROS

Intramuros, the walled city built by the Spaniards during their occupation of Manila, was completed in 1606 and was the centre of political, military and religious power during the Spanish colonial period. Back then, Intramuros was considered Manila itself. Located along the southern bank of the Pasig River, it was built by the Spaniards in the 16th century and is the city's oldest district. Within its imposing walls were stately homes, churches, convents, monasteries, schools, government buildings, hospitals and cobbled plazas, but much of this was devastated during World War II.

CORREGIDOR

Corregidor is a small island (5 sq km) situated 48 km off the western coast of Manila. The island is a popular tourist destination as well as a historic monument to the battle of Corregidor, fought by the American and Filipino forces against the invading Japanese.

At the start of the 20th century, an American military base named Fort Mills was constructed on Corregidor. The isle was fortified by an intricate system of subterranean passages and emplacements, most of which can be seen today.

TAGAYTAY

Less than two hours drive from Manila, Tagaytay is considered the country's summer capital because of its year-round cool climate, making it an attractive place for a weekend getaway.

The area offers magnificent views of Taal volcano, the world's smallest active volcano. Hotels can arrange drivers to take you to Tagaytay, where you can get a boat ride and walk or ride a donkey to the volcano crater. In Tagaytay, Antonio's restaurant is well worth a visit - one of the region's top 20 eateries according to the Miele Guide - but make an advance reservation through your hotel concierge.



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CANCERFUND

PUT the CAN in CANCER

Help Make Life Better for People in Hong Kong Touched by Cancer through
DIY Fundraising

Cisco dragon
boat team raised
HK\$200,000 using
our online DIY
website



If you don't have
time to DIY, why not
make a monthly or
one-off donation?
Every little bit helps



Breast cancer
survivor rides 3,000
miles to raise money
for our free services



Every year in Hong Kong, more than 24,000 men and women are diagnosed with cancer. Hong Kong Cancer Fund believes that no one should face cancer alone. Thanks to public generosity, we provide **free cancer support services** to anyone living with or affected by cancer. You too can help make life better for those touched by cancer by creating your own fundraising event, or simply making a donation.

Simple, safe and effective.

Every dollar you help us raise ensures no one is left to face cancer alone.

START TODAY

Create your own campaign and invite your friends to make a direct donation in support of your cause. Cancer Fund is entirely reliant on voluntary donations.

www.cancer-fund.org/en/fundraising.html