

Art and culture

New developments drive Manchester's evolution. Additional hotels, new shopping districts and exciting plans for its public spaces add to Manchester's internationally-renowned reputation for innovation and ambition.

With a calendar of city events covering everything from poetry and jazz to gay culture and comedy, there's always something to do in Manchester.

The city's theatre and arts venues play host to West End plays and world-premier performances of ballet, opera and much more. It stages some of the best concerts and musical performances in Europe – some of which take place in the spectacular Manchester Evening News Arena – while a range of smaller lounges across the city offer unique live performances from up and coming bands – quite appropriate considering the huge contribution Manchester has made to music's hall of fame.

Meanwhile, its museum and galleries include, among others, Urbis – the museum dedicated to urban living, The Lowry – home to an unrivalled collection of the works of Mancunian artist LS Lowry and the Daniel Libeskind-designed Imperial War Museum North. Manchester's museums and galleries are committed to being accessible to all, and entrance to most of them is free.

Outside the city centre, Greater Manchester has an array of delights to interest and inspire. And just down the road, you'll find Liverpool, the European Capital of Culture 2008.