

# Manila



It's a pity that Manila is often disparaged, as there's much here to like. For one, all the adjectives often used to describe the Philippines – jovial, laid back, casual, corrupt, shambolic, earnest and more are on display here more than anywhere else in the country. It's a truly teeming metropolis that gets bigger each day, both in population, with people pouring in from the hinterlands, and size, as new developments in all directions swallow up villages and rice fields.

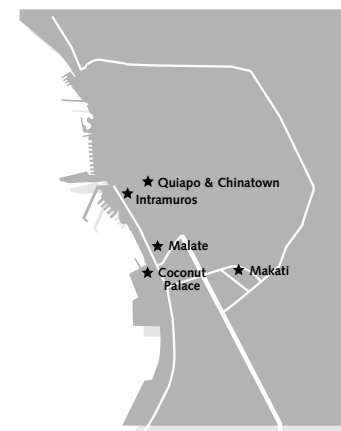
Manila can be a very discombobulated place, for it is really just a collection of towns with no definable centre. The walled Intramuros area was the traditional centre of Manila, but was mostly wiped out in WWII and has never recovered. Binondo, Quiapo, Ermita and Malate have never been more than a supporting cast for a star that doesn't exist. Still, you may well find lots of fun in Ermita and Malate, while Binondo and Quiapo have a certain raw energy and unique markets. And Intramuros is a good place to explore, just to find the bones of its past.

Other parts of town are more lively. At the centre of modern Manila is Makati, the commercial centre for the country. Here, in almost orderly surroundings, you can shop, eat and drink to your heart's content. It transcends the generic-mall syndrome by having its own unique vibe that comes from the hordes of locals who come here to work, relax and play. As many will tell you, 'this is the Manila we wish we had'.

Rather than seeing Manila as an amorphous mass, focus instead on enjoying its individual areas, and you will start to get a feel for the greater Manila, which really is a sum of its parts.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Hearing echoes of a lost past in **Intramuros** (p75)
- Prowling the markets and backstreets of **Quiapo** (p79) and **Chinatown** (p79)
- Revelling in the Imelda excess at the **Coconut Palace** (p83)
- Learning about a Manila you didn't know existed on a **walking tour** (p88)
- Bouncing between the bars and clubs of **Malate** (p104)
- Going on a spending spree in **Makati** (p108)
- Getting lost three times while careening about the streets in a **jeepney** (p114)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 02

■ POPULATION: 11 MILLION

## HISTORY

Under Spanish rule, Manila was known as 'The Pearl of the Orient', the jewel of Spain's empire in the Pacific. Early tourists, like the 19th-century traveller Fedor Jagor, described it as a splendid, fortified city of wide, cobbled streets and regal townhouses. Sadly, little remains of that splendid city today.

Manila was colonised by the Spaniard Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in 1571. Its broad sweep of fertile lands made it more attractive than Cebu, which had been the capital. King Philip II of Spain conferred on the city the illustrious title *Isigne y Siempre Leal Ciudad* (Distinguished and Ever Loyal City), but the city continued to be called by its pre-Hispanic name of *Maynilad* (presumed to be from *may*, meaning 'there is', and *nilad*, a mangrove plant that grew in abundance on the banks of the Pasig River), which was later corrupted to Manila.

From the late 19th century onwards, Manila was actually something approaching a Paris of Asia. It was a thriving trading centre, its multicultural mix providing a good entry point into China and other emerging lands. In 1905, Daniel Burnham, the master planner of Chicago, was hired to produce a master plan for the city. His grand vision included Roxas Blvd, which even today, under its somewhat shabby patina, echoes Lake Shore Dr in Chicago. Intramuros and the surrounding districts were busy with business and entertainment and the streets were lined with grand structures, many reflecting the best of Art Deco design.

WWII changed everything. Many claim the city has never recovered. The month-long Battle for Manila between the Japanese and the Americans resulted in the town's destruction, with over 150,000 locals killed (by comparison, the atomic attack on Hiroshima killed upwards of 140,000).

Rebuilding was sporadic, and the city was never able to reclaim either its regional importance or its sense of self. Present-day Metro Manila is a conglomeration of 17 cities and municipalities unified by Marcos' decree in 1976. Many locals complain about the scattered character of Manila; it's true that the various districts feel disunited and there is no sense of a whole.

## ORIENTATION

At the core of this vast urban sprawl is the City of Manila, which is formed by the districts of Intramuros, Ermita, Malate, Paco, San Miguel, Quiapo, Santa Cruz, Binondo, San Nicolas and Tondo, spread around the mouth of the Pasig River as it spills into Manila Bay.

Around this core are the other cities and municipalities. East of Pasay lie centres such as Makati, which is the centre of booming commerce and nightlife. Other areas include Pasig, Mandaluyong and the municipality of San Juan. In the north, Caloocan (also spelled Kalookan) and the Cubao district of Quezon City are important departure points for north-bound buses, while the terminals for many south-bound buses are south of the centre in Baclaran, Pasay. The Manila Domestic Airport is in Pasay, but the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) and Centennial Terminal (NAIA II) are located further south in Parañaque (pa-ran-ya-ke).

Fringing the centre are exclusive neighbourhoods, such as Forbes Park and Bel-Air, where Manila's wealthy citizens live in secluded luxury, guarded by their own security forces. In stark contrast, the coastline north of the Pasig River is home to sprawling shantytowns, the most infamous being Tondo, where some 200,000 people are crammed into an area of only 1.5 sq km. Successive governments have tried to improve living conditions and demolish the shantytowns, but the population of slum-dwellers continues to hover at around 1.5 million.

The 'tourist belt' formed by Ermita and Malate is the traditional base for tourists in Manila. Much of the budget and midrange accommodation is found here, as well as many good restaurants and nightspots. The area here of greatest interest to tourists is bound by Roxas Blvd, P Ocampo Sr St (Vito Cruz St), Taft Ave and the Pasig River. However, glitzy Makati to the east is fast emerging as the destination of choice for locals and travellers alike. Business travellers often end up in Ortigas Center, the second-largest area for commerce after Makati. Out on the Epifanio de los Santos Ave (the EDSA ring road) there's a vast collection of malls and office buildings.

The historic areas of Rizal Park and Intramuros are just north of Ermita and Malate.

## MANILA IN...

### Two Days

Wander historic **Intramuros** (p75) and **Rizal Park** (p78), then take in some of the nightlife of **Malate** (p104). On your second day, enjoy the contrasts between **Chinatown** (p79) commerce in the morning and the thriving shopping mecca of **Makati** (p108) in the afternoon. Stay in Makati for the evening and try to choose between the dozens of great places to eat and drink.

### Four Days

Follow the two-day itinerary, but on your third day, explore the camp and classic **Cultural Center of the Philippines** (p82), then take an entertaining **walking tour** (p88) around a city neighbourhood. Have a drink near **Remedios Circle** (p103) and spend the night finding little bars and cafés on the side streets of **Ermita and Malate** (p102). On your fourth day, return to Makati for the intriguing **Ayala Museum** (p85) and then feast at one of the many friendly spots in **Quezon City** (p102).

The old trading neighbourhoods of Binondo, Santa Cruz and Quiapo north of the Pasig River are home to numerous old markets and Chinatown.

With all the heat, noise, traffic and smog, getting around Manila can be quite an ordeal. The two Light Rail Transit (LRT) lines and the Metro Rail Transit (MRT; see p115) can provide efficient ways to get around, but there are large areas with no service.

To add to the general confusion, many streets are known by two, or even three, names. Rizal Ave, the main road from Santa Cruz to Monumento, is usually referred to as Avenida; A Arnaiz Ave in Makati is also called Pasay Rd, its former name; P Ocampo Sr St is alternately known as Vito Cruz St; and Sen Gil Puyat Ave is often referred to as Buendia Ave or simply Buendia. To make matters worse, street numbers are often unmarked. Instead, an address is usually specified as an intersection, eg corner Pedro Gil and A Mabini Sts.

## Maps

E-Z Maps, published by United Tourist Promotions, cover Manila, Makati, Quezon City and other areas in fine detail. They are kept up to date, have good indexes and are sold widely for P100. Nelles Verlag publishes a Manila map (1:17,500 scale) that shows important buildings in the metropolitan area. Periplus also publishes a good-looking Manila map (1:17,500 scale). The latter two are sold outside the Philippines. If you can wait, buy an E-Z Map after you arrive.

## INFORMATION

### Bookshops

There are numerous bookshops in Manila. Many sell more stationery than printed words, but you won't have a hard time finding a good one.

**Bibliarch** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 752 7107; ground level, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati) Selection focused on art and architecture; wide array of foreign magazines.

**Datelines Bookstore** (Map p88; ☎ 0920 901 0013; Marikina Shoe Expo, Gen Romulo Ave, Cubao) Small but carefully chosen collection of used Western and Filipino books.

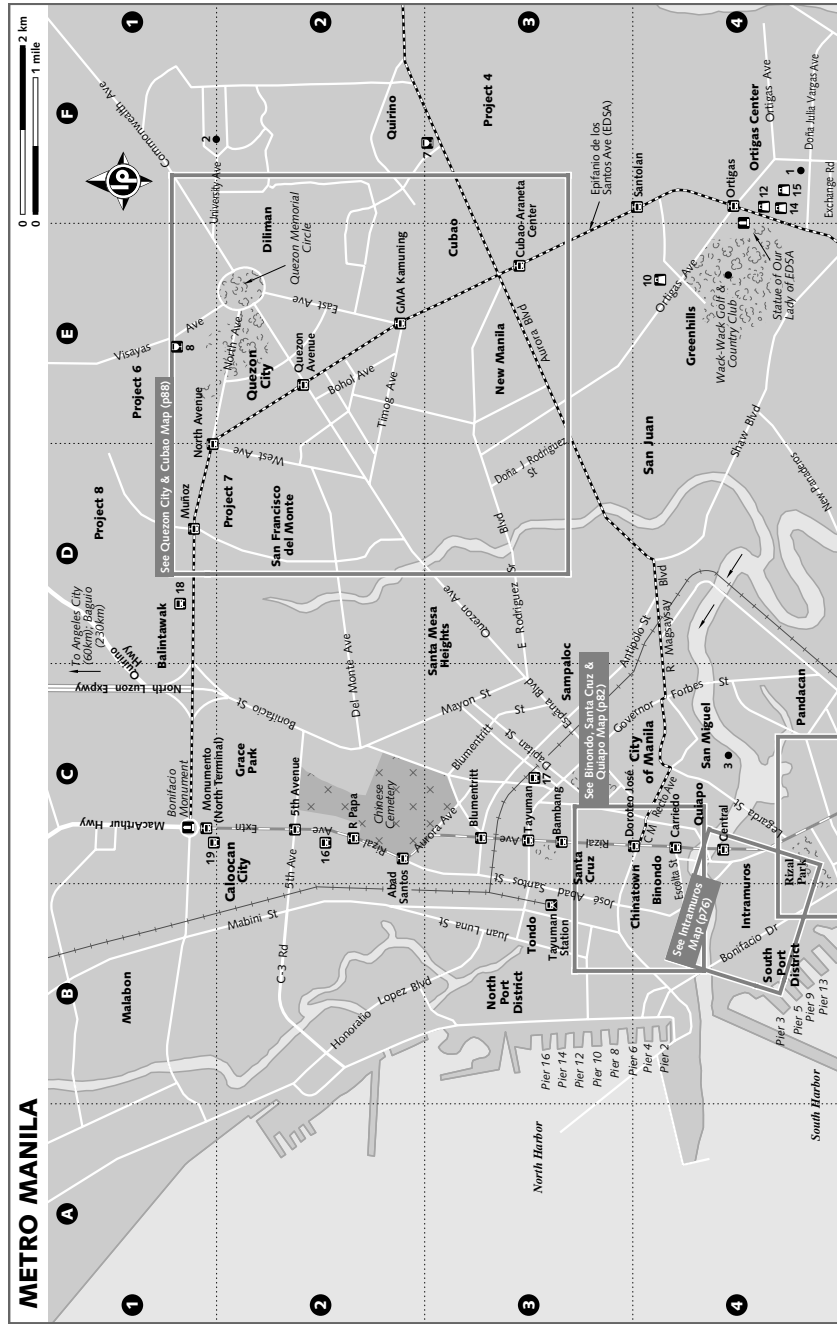
**Filipinas Heritage Library Bookstore** (Map pp86-7; Ayala Triangle Park, Makati Ave, Makati; 11 9am-4.30pm Tue-Sat) This small bookstore is one of the best places to go for books on all aspects of the Philippines.

**National Book Store** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 812 3950; ground level, Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati) Books, magazines and lots of stationery products. Excellent copy-ing services. Branches all over the city.

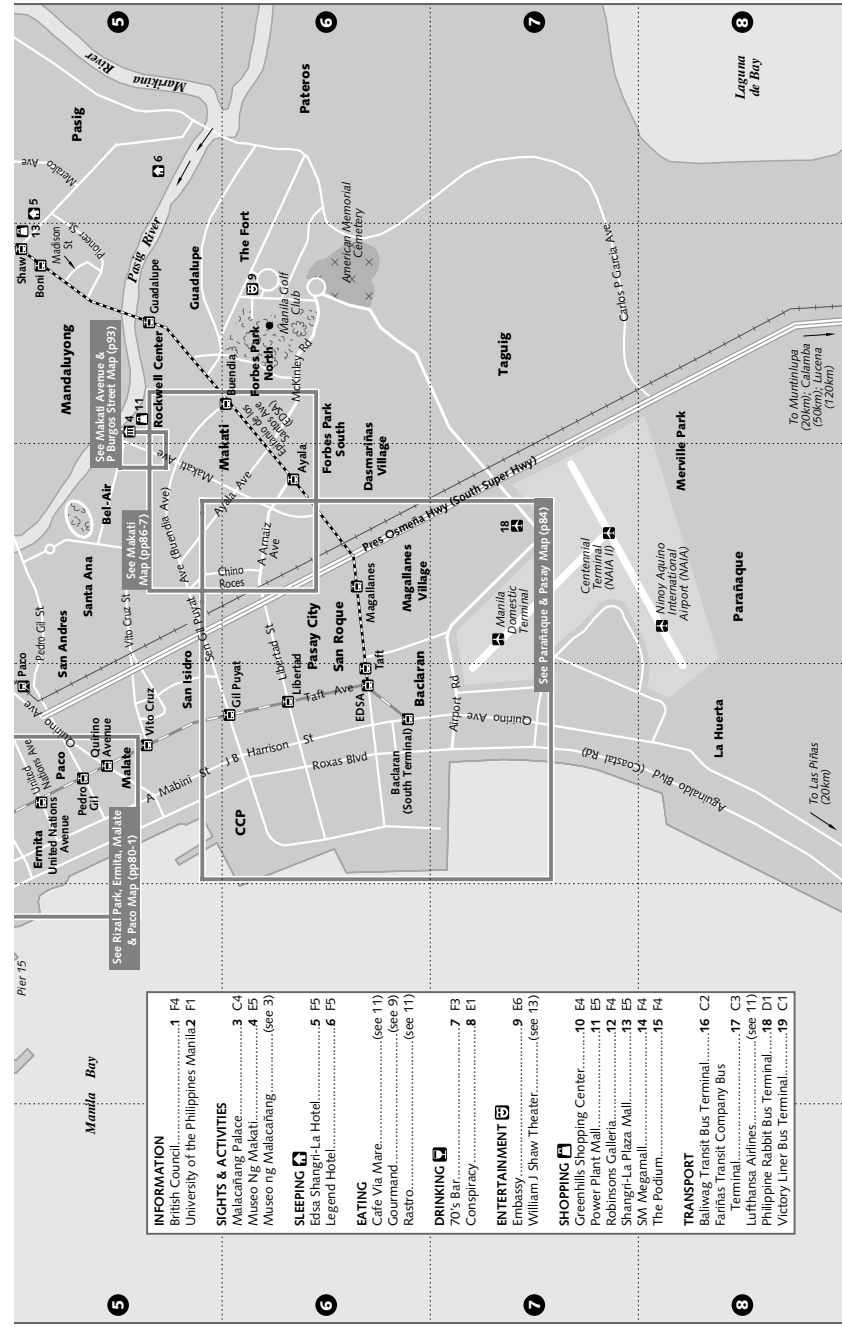
**Popular Book Store** (Map p88; ☎ 372 2162; 305 T Morato Ave, Quezon City) This eclectic shop sells new and used books. Titles range from *Suzanne Somers' Get Skinny to Freemasonry and Its Etiquette* to numerous academic tomes on Filipino culture.

**Power Books** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 757 6428; level 2, Greenbelt 4, Ayala Center, Makati) Poorest bookstore in town, with a huge selection and a little café with tables outside overlooking the park. There's another location nearby inside Tower Records, also at Ayala Center (level 2, Glorietta 3).

**Solidaridad Bookshop** (Map p90; 531 P Faura St, Ermita) Owned by the award-winning Filipino author Francisco Sionil Jose, it is well stocked with books on topics from history to existentialism. Among the titles on offer are the owner's own collections of short stories and essays.



**METRO MANILA**



<b>INFORMATION</b>	British Council.....1 F4
	University of the Philippines Manila.....2 F1
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>	
	Malacanan Palace.....3 C4
	Muséo Ng Makati.....4 E5
	Muséo ng Malacánang.....(see 3)
<b>SLEEPING</b>	
	Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.....5 E5
	Legend Hotel.....6 F5
<b>EATING</b>	
	Café Via Mare.....(see 11)
	Gourmand.....(see 9)
	Rastro.....(see 11)
<b>DRINKING</b>	
	70's Bar.....7 F3
	Conspiracy.....8 E1
<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b>	
	Embassy.....9 E6
	William J Shaw Theater.....(see 13)
<b>SHOPPING</b>	
	Greenhills Shopping Center.....10 E4
	Power Plant Mall.....11 E5
	Robinsons Galleria.....12 F4
	Shangri-La Plaza Mall.....13 E5
	SM Megamall.....14 F4
	The Podium.....15 F4
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	
	Railway Transit Bus Terminal.....16 C2
	Fast Transit Company Bus.....17 C3
	Lufthansa Airlines.....(see 11)
	Philippine Rabbit Bus Terminal.....18 D1
	Victory Liner Bus Terminal.....19 C1

**Tradewinds Books** (Map p76; % 527 2111; 3rd fl, Silahis Arts & Artifacts Center, 744 General Luna St, Intramuros) Varied assortment of books on the Philippines and Asia, including out-of-print or hard-to-find volumes.

### Cultural Centres

Several countries have cultural centres in Manila. Most have their own libraries and stage regular cultural events, such as film screenings.

**Alliance Française** (Map pp86-7; % 895 7585; 209 Nicanor Garcia St, Bel-Air II, Makati)

**British Council** (Map pp72-3; % 914 1011/14; 10th fl, Taipan Pl, Emerald Ave, Ortigas Center, Pasig City)


**Goethe Institut Manila** (Map p88; % 722 4671; 687 Aurora Blvd, Quezon City)

### Emergency

**Police, medical & fire** (% 117)

**Tourist Police Assistance Hotline** (% 524 1660, 524 1728) Can steer you to the closest police station and offer advice.

### Internet Access


Internet places are common along the streets and in the malls throughout town. Rates are cheap, often less than P60 per hour. Some places offer free wi-fi; also look for cafés in our listings that have the Internet icon , especially in Makati. If you need services beyond just browsing, **NeoComputer.Net** (Map pp86-7; % 840 3886; level 3, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati) has printing, disk-burning and other computing services.


### Internet Resources

**Click the City** ([www.clickthecity.com](http://www.clickthecity.com)) Manila's online directory of businesses is getting better all the time. Vast listings of telephone numbers and addresses that are mostly up to date as well as web links where available. Search by name, category, location or any combination of the three.

### Laundry

Though do-it-yourself laundromats are quite a rarity, there are plenty of places offering cheap laundry services throughout Manila. Walk around the area where you're staying and you will soon find a glass-fronted shop with rows of washing machines inside.


It usually costs from P30 to P50 per 1kg of washing. Two places in Ermita are **Sea Breeze Laundry** (Map p90; % 525 4971; 1317 M Adriatico St;  8am-8pm Mon-Sat, 8am-5pm Sun) and


**Fabulous Laundry** (Map p90; % 522 8438; 1647-D M Adriatico St;  7am-9pm Mon-Sat, 9am-5pm Sun).

Of course you can avoid carting your dirty laundry through the streets of Manila by having your hotel do your washing. Many places charge very little for this or include it in the room fee.

### Libraries

Several libraries in Manila are open to the public.

**Filipinas Heritage Library** (Map pp86-7; % 892 1801; Ayala Triangle Park, Makati Ave, Makati; admission to collections P80;  9am-4.30pm Tue-Sat) Contains good resources on Filipino history, art and culture, and is also the repository of thousands of images related to the Philippines. Good displays of artistic and historical photos (free); excellent bookstore.

**National Library** (Map pp80-1; % 524 0498; TM Kalaw St, Ermita; admission free with P50 lifetime membership;  9am-4.30pm Mon-Sat) Open to locals and foreigners alike.

### Media

Manila has more than a dozen daily newspapers. Quality varies sharply and even the best have lapses wherein advertisers come in for astonishing amounts of praise. The two that are generally regarded as the best in town are the *Manila Times* ([www.manilatimes.net](http://www.manilatimes.net)) and the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* ([www.inq7.net](http://www.inq7.net)).

The local radio stations reflect the national tastes in music. You haven't lived until you've listened to a broadcast of karaoke versions of the Carpenters, or Charlene's 'I've Never Been To Me'. Among the plethora of stations:

**DWBR** (104.3 FM) The Philippines Broadcasting Service, with news read with great portent, and music so old and mellow you'll be itching to push a button in an elevator or slacken your jaw for drilling.

**DWLS** (97.1 FM) College rock.

**DZRJ** (100.3 FM) All-Elvis weekends; regular live jams of oldies.

### Medical Services

A charity hospital, the government-funded **Philippine General Hospital** (Map pp80-1; % 521 8450; Taft Ave, Ermita) tends to be overcrowded but it does offer full service.

Reliable private medical services are provided by the following large centres:

**Makati Medical Center** (Map pp86-7; % 815 9911; 2Amorsolo St, Makati)


**Manila Doctors Hospital** (Map pp80-1; % 524 3011; 667 United Nations Ave, Ermita)

**Manila Medical Center** (Map pp80-1; % 523 8131; 1122 General Luna St, Ermita)

### Money

For general information on changing money in the Philippines, see p442.

Most banks in Manila have ATMs and these are usually your safest and most hassle-free way to get local currency. You can also change foreign cash and travellers cheques at most banks.


**American Express** (Map p90; % 524 8681; 1810 A Mabini St, Malate;  8.30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) Has affiliate offices in Manila and can offer exchange and replacement services to cardholders and travellers-cheques holders.

Malate and Ermita are peppered with moneychangers, and there are places all over the city where you can change foreign currency into Philippine pesos, but you should always be very careful with these services. See p442 for warnings.


### Post

Satellite post offices operate at both the domestic and international airports. There are also post offices throughout the city.

**Makati Central Post Office** (Map pp86-7; % 844 0150; Sen Gil Puyat Ave, Makati;  8am-5pm Mon-Fri) Near the corner of Ayala Extension.

**Manila Central Post Office** (Map p76; % 527 8561; btwn Jones & MacArthur Bridges, Intramuros;  8am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) A landmark, offers full services.

### Tourist Information

**DOT Information Center** (Department of Tourism; Map pp80-1; % 524 2384, hotlines 525 2000, 526 2257; Room 106, DOT Bldg, Rizal Park;  8am-6pm) Surrounded by SUVs and other expensive official vehicles, DOT offers relatively few services. It's best to go to the information desk with specific questions, but even then it's hit or miss: some staff are rude, others work tirelessly to help.

### Travel Agencies

There are travel agencies everywhere in Ermita, Malate and Makati, and most handle travel reservations as well as guided tours. You won't save any money by booking through these places, but they can facilitate things like getting a visa extension.

**Happy Travel** (Map p90; % 524 1861; 1453 A Mabini St, Ermita) Full-service travel agent.

**Rajah Travel** (Map pp80-1; % 523 8801; ground fl, Plywood Industries Bldg, cnr A Mabini St & T M Kalaw St, Ermita) Can help with most requirements, albeit gruffly.

### Universities

The vast campus of the University of the Philippines Manila is located near Quezon City (see p85).

### DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

With a total population of close to 11 million people, Manila has earned a reputation for being overcrowded. Traffic, crime, noise and air pollution are also major annoyances, though the last plays a critical role in producing Manila Bay's legendary sunsets.

As in any big city, crime is a part of life in Manila, with foreigners seen as easy prey by pickpockets and petty criminals. As much as possible, avoid walking around on your own at night and in deserted places.

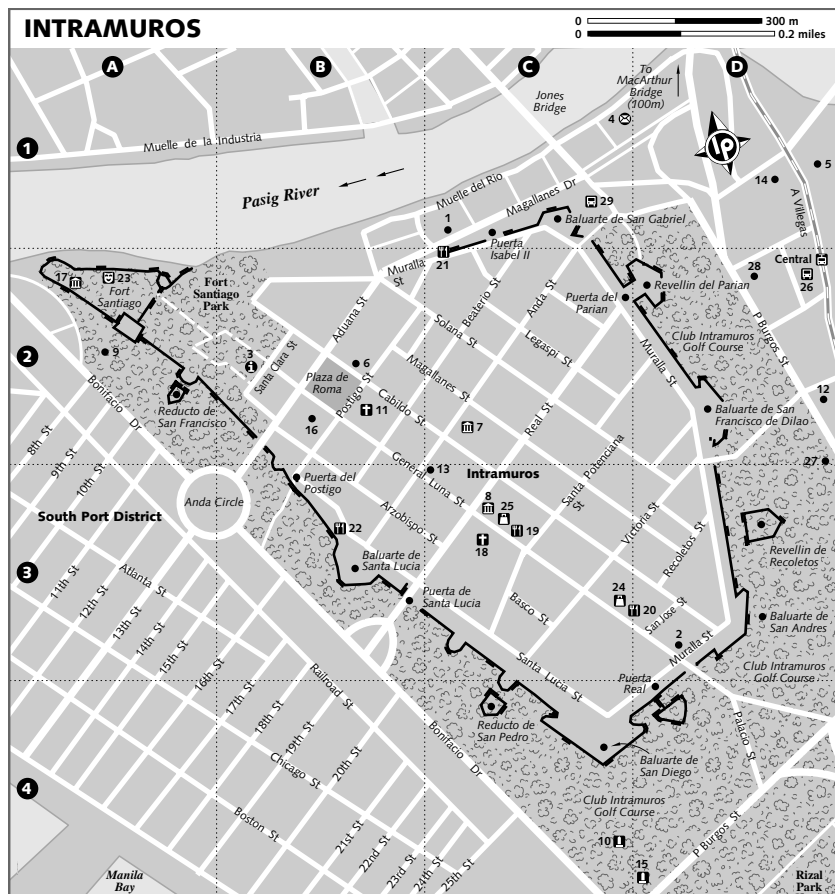
### SIGHTS

Manila has much to see, and it takes a while to see everything as sights are scattered about this large city. But as you explore, you'll get an appreciation for a city that has been at the pinnacle of Asia – and almost at the nadir as well. And you'll get a feel for the soup of cultural influences that combine to make Manila the free-wheeling metropolis it is today. Much of what's best to see isn't always at a traditional sight, but rather can be found in the life of the varied neighbourhoods.

### Intramuros

When Miguel Lopez de Legazpi wrested control of Manila, he chose to erect his fortress on the remnants of the Islamic settlement by the mouth of the Pasig River. Intramuros, as Legazpi's walled city came to be called, was invaded by Chinese pirates, threatened by Dutch forces, and held by the British, Americans and Japanese at various times, yet it survived until the closing days of WWII, when it was finally destroyed by US bombing during the Battle of Manila.

From its founding in 1571, Intramuros was the exclusive preserve of the Spanish ruling classes. Within its massive walls were imposing government buildings, stately homes, churches, convents, monasteries, schools, hospitals and cobbled plazas.



The native populace was settled in surrounding areas such as Paco and Binondo, while the 'troublesome' Chinese were kept under permanent supervision in a ghetto called the Parian.

Fortified with bastions (*baluarte*), the wall enclosed an area of some 64 hectares. Gates (*puerta*) with drawbridges provided access to and from the outside world.

At its height, Intramuros instilled fear in Spain's enemies as a mighty European city, the only one of its kind in Asia. By the end of WWII, the walls here were almost all that remained of the once-proud city, and 150,000 Filipino civilians had perished in the crossfire. Check out the simple but moving open-air *Memorare Manila* (Map p76;

cnr General Luna St & Anda St) which shows before-and-after photos of the battles.

Despite the devastation, one can still feel a strong sense of history on a visit to Intramuros. Most of the walls, gates and bulwarks are accessible, although they are weedy and a bit seedy. It is possible to walk on the 4.5km-long rampart. Start your walking tour by dropping into the Intramuros Visitors Center (Map p76; % 527 2961; 11 8am-noon, 1-6pm) at the entrance to Fort Santiago (see opposite). A tour is best done during the day as some sections of the walls are closed or inadequately lit at night. Anda St inside the walls is a good street for a wander; many of the buildings still have Spanish-tile street names.

INFORMATION		ENTERTAINMENT	
Bureau of Immigration.....	1 C1	Manila Cathedral.....	11 B2
Department of Labour & Employment (DOLE).....	2 D3	Manila City Hall.....	12 D2
Intramuros Visitors Center.....	3 B2	Memorare Manila.....	13 C3
Manila Central Post Office.....	4 C1	Metropolitan Theater.....	14 D1
Tradewinds Books.....	(see 24)	Ninoy Aquino Statue.....	15 D4
		Palacio del Gobernador.....	16 B2
		Rizal Shrine.....	17 A2
		San Agustin Church.....	18 C3
		San Agustin Museum.....	(see 18)
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		EATING	
Arroceros Forest Park.....	5 D1	Barbara's.....	19 C3
Ayuntamiento.....	6 B2	Ilustrado.....	20 D3
Bahay Tsinoy.....	7 C2	Ledan's Cafe.....	21 C2
Casa Manila.....	8 C3	Open-Air Barbecue Places.....	22 B3
Club Intramuros Golf Course.....	9 A2		
Legazpi Statue.....	10 C4		
		Alps Transit Bus Terminal.....	26 D2
		Buses, Jeepneys & FX to Makati & Pasay City.....	27 D2
		Jeepneys & FX to Quiapo & Santa Cruz.....	28 D2
		Saulog Transit Bus Terminal.....	29 C1
		Dulaang Rajah Sulayman.....	23 A2
		Silahis Arts & Artifacts Center.....	24 C3
		Vacop.....	25 C3

The area outside the moat is now a popular golf course (see p87). Beautifully illuminated at night, the clock tower of the Manila City Hall (Map p76; P Burgos St) is visible to the east. Further north, fronting the classic Manila Central Post Office (p75), one of the few survivors of Burnham's plan (see p70), stands the Metropolitan Theater (Map p76; Quezon Blvd). It's now in a state of disrepair but is still a stunning piece of Art Deco architecture.

#### SAN AGUSTIN CHURCH & SAN AGUSTIN MUSEUM

The San Agustin Church (Map p76; % 527 4060; General Luna St; 11 7am-5pm) was the only building left intact after the destruction of Intramuros. Built between 1587 and 1606, it is the oldest church in the Philippines. The present structure is actually the third to stand on the site, and has weathered seven major earthquakes, as well as the Battle of Manila. It's an active church and much in demand for weddings and other ceremonies.

The massive façade conceals an ornate interior filled with objects of great historical and cultural merit. Note the intricate trompe l'oeil frescoes on the vaulted ceiling. Be sure to check out the tropical cloisters as well as the slightly shabby gardens out back.

The San Agustin Museum (Map p76; % 527 4060; adult/child P65/45; 11 9am-noon & 1-6pm) is a treasure house of antiquities that give the visitor tantalising glimpses of the fabled riches of old Manila. Look for the vaguely Chinese-looking Immaculate Conception statue in ethereal ivory.

#### FORT SANTIAGO

Guarding the vital entrance to the Pasig River, Fort Santiago (Map p76; % 527 2961; Santa Clara St; adult/child P40/15; 11 8am-6pm) was once

the seat of Spanish military power. Designated a Shrine of Freedom in 1950, today it is a memorial to Dr José Rizal, who was imprisoned here in the final days before his execution in 1896 for inciting revolution against the Spanish colonials. It is also a memorial to all Filipinos who have fought or died for the cause of freedom.

The Rizal Shrine (Map p76; admission free; 11 8am-5pm), in the building where Rizal was incarcerated, contains various displays of Rizal memorabilia, including a reliquary containing one of his vertebrae, the first draft of his novel *Noli Me Tangere* (Touch Me Not) and the original copy of *Mi Ultimo Adios* (My Last Farewell), which was smuggled out of his cell inside an oil lamp.

At the far end of the fort you will find the infamous dungeon where prisoners were drowned in water seeping through the walls. The dungeon remains closed to visitors. A Spanish military barracks has been turned into an open-air theatre called Dulaang Rajah Sulayman (p105). Rizal spent his last night in a cellblock at one end of these barracks. Brass footprints set into the pavement mark his final steps to the execution spot in Rizal Park. For more information on Rizal see p26.

#### MANILA CATHEDRAL

The Manila Cathedral (Map p76; % 527 5836; cnr Postigo St & General Luna St; 11 8am-noon & 3-6pm) was destroyed in WWII, but the present edifice, erected in 1951, looks suitably ancient with its weathered Romanesque façade and graceful cupola. This is actually the sixth church on the site. Inside are a gilded altar, a 4500-pipe organ and rosette windows with beautiful stained glass.

The cathedral fronts Plaza de Roma, which was a bloody bullring until it was converted

### A PARK LOST

The **Arroceros Forest Park** (Map p76) was an unexpected pocket of untamed nature in the middle of the concrete jungle. At least it was until 2005, when the local government closed the gates and started digging up the stands of mature trees (rarities in central Manila). Activists were caught napping, and then it was too late; deals had been cut and the park, which was created with much fanfare in 1993, is now on the way to being replaced with an unspecified 'development'.

into a plaza. To one side lie the forlorn ruins of the **Ayuntamiento**, once the grandest building in all of Intramuros. **Palacio del Gobernador**, on the other side of the square, is a modern structure that houses the Intramuros Administration, custodians of the historic site.

### CASA MANILA

**Casa Manila** (Map p76; % 527 4084; Plaza Luis Complex, General Luna St; adult/child P40/15; 11 9am-noon & 1-6pm Tue-Sun) is another of Imelda Marcos' projects. It's a mostly faithfully restored Spanish colonial home (the ceilings were made much higher as Imelda is a well-above-average 178cm) that offers a window into the opulent lifestyle of the gentry in the 19th century. The three-storey house is furnished with antiques from the period.

### BAHAY TSINOY

The **Bahay Tsinoy** (Map p76; % 527 6083; Kaisa Angelo Heritage Center, cnr Anda St & Cabildo St; adult/student P100/60; 11 1-5pm Tue-Sun) features three-dimensional dioramas and a vast collection of photos that shows the role played by the Chinese in the growth of Manila. Present-day Chinese-Filipinos call themselves *Chinoys* or *Tsinoys*, hence the museum's name.

### Rizal Park

Still widely known as 'Luneta' (its name until it was officially changed in the 1950s), **Rizal Park** (Map pp80-1) is spread out over some 60 hectares of open lawns, ornamental gardens, paved walks and wooded areas, dotted with monuments to almost every Filipino hero you care to mention. It's a pretty area but also shabby in parts, danger-

ously so near the closed National Museum on P Burgos St.

Every day hundreds of Filipinos come here to stroll, jog, picnic, sing and play music, or just relax away from the swarming traffic. At dawn, various groups gather to practise t'ai chi or the local martial art of *arnis*, or *arnis de mano*, a pre-Hispanic style of stick-fighting. There are formalised displays of martial arts on Sunday afternoon. The long-running Concert at the Park also takes place at the **Open Air Auditorium** (admission free); it starts at around 6pm on Sundays.

The park is dedicated to the Philippine national hero, Dr José Rizal, who was executed here by the Spanish colonial authorities on 30 December 1896 for inciting revolution. The **Rizal Monument**, guarded by sentries in full regalia, contains the hero's mortal remains and stands as a symbol of Filipino nationhood (visiting heads of state customarily lay a wreath here). Across Roxas Blvd, directly in front of the Rizal Monument, the **0km Post** marks the spot from where distances in the Philippines are measured (secular-minded Americans moved it here from Manila Cathedral).

To one side of the monument you will find the **Site of Rizal's Execution** (admission P10; 11 8am-5pm Wed-Sun); at the entrance is a black granite wall inscribed with Rizal's *Mi Ultimo Adios* (My Last Farewell). Eight tableaux of life-size bronze statues recreate the dramatic last moments of the hero's life; at night these statues become part of a light-and-sound presentation entitled the **Martyrdom of Dr José Rizal** (admission P50; 11 in Filipino 7pm & in English 8pm, Wed-Sun).

At the western end of the park is the **Quirino Grandstand**, where Philippine presidents take their oath of office and deliver their first address to the nation. At the opposite end you'll find the **Relief Map of the Philippines**, which shows the entire Philippine archipelago in miniature (it's best appreciated from the elevated LRT1 line). The centre is dominated by the **Central Lagoon and Fountains**.

Along one side are three ornamental gardens – the whimsical **Chinese Garden** (admission P5), the austere **Japanese Garden** (admission P5) and the tropical **Manila Orchardarium** (adult/child P100/60; 11 8am-5pm Tue-Sun). The **Chess Plaza** is a shady spot where regulars test each other and look for new blood with shouts to visitors of 'Hey Joe, do you play chess?'

In the northwest of the park, the **Planetarium** (% 527 7889; P Burgos St; adult/child P50/30; 11 8am-4.30pm Tue-Sat) stages projections of the stars.

Near the waterfront seafood restaurants to the west (see p96), the forlorn **Museo ng Maynila** (South Blvd) is in the Old Army & Navy Club, a once-posh US officers' retreat. Sadly the mansion has been condemned, and the collection housed inside, which traces the history of Manila, has been closed. But as always in Manila, hope springs eternal and there are plans to someday reopen. Stop by and offer a few words of encouragement to the staff who remain on duty.

**The Museo Pambata** (% 523 1797; cnr Roxas Blvd & South Blvd; adult/child P60/40; 11 9am-5pm Tue-Sat, 1-5pm Sun) explores Manila through the eyes of kids. Efforts are made to bring everything down to size: there's even a pint-sized jeepney.

### NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE

This **museum** (Map pp80-1; % 527 1209; Former Finance Bldg, Teodoro Valencia Circle; admission P100, free Thu; 11 9am-5pm Tue-Sun) houses a vast collection, including the skullcap of the Philippines' earliest known inhabitant, **Tabon Man** (said by some to actually be a woman), who lived around 24,000 BC. A large section of the museum is devoted to porcelain plates, coins, jewellery etc recovered from the wreck of the *San Diego*, a Spanish galleon that sank off the coast of Luzon in 1600. Other treasures include a large collection of pre-Hispanic artefacts and musical instruments. In the central hall you will find the stunning *Spoliarium*, painted by Filipino master Juan Luna, which provides harsh commentary on Spanish rule.

### NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PHILIPPINES

Closed for renovation, a process that is proceeding at a glacial pace, this once-proud **museum** (Map pp80-1; % 527 0306; P Burgos St) is home to an amazing collection of Filipino art. But it's all locked away inside.

### Binondo, Santa Cruz & Quiapo

These are some of the oldest parts of Manila. It was always the centre for trading, and there are numerous markets in the warren of streets (see p107). The city's Chinatown is also here. The entire area is a great place to explore, especially on weekends when

the half of the population not in malls is shopping here. The LRT1 Carriedo Station is in the heart of the action.

### QUIAPO

**Quiapo Church** (Map p82; % 736 2854; Quezon Blvd; 11 6am-noon & 2-8pm) is a 1933 replacement of an older structure destroyed by fire. Its cream-coloured edifice is designed along baroque lines and the church is one of Manila's best-known landmarks. A Catholic parish since 1586, Quiapo is the home of the **Black Nazarene**, an image of Christ believed to be miraculous. The life-size statue, carved from ebony, was first brought to Quiapo in 1767. Twice a year the greatly revered image is carried on the shoulders of thousands of frenzied devotees in one of Manila's biggest religious festivals, the **Black Nazarene Procession** (see p88).

In front of the church lies **Plaza Miranda**, where the common folk came to watch beauty contests, political rallies and various events and festivities, until it was destroyed by a bloody bombing in 1971 that preceded Marcos' imposition of martial law. After many years of neglect, Plaza Miranda has been renovated into a Roman-style square with pillars, arches and decorative urns.

On a crowded side street just to the east, you will find **Bahay Nakpil-Bautista** (Map p82; % 734 9341; 452 A Bautista St; adult/child P20/10; 11 9am-noon & 1-5pm Tue-Sun), where the widow of Andres Bonifacio, father of the Philippine Revolution, lived after his death. A historic landmark in itself, the house is used for occasional cultural exhibits.

At the top of Hidalgo St, your attention will be caught by the soaring spires of **San Sebastian Church** (Map p82; % 734 8908; Hidalgo St; 11 5.30am-9pm), a Gothic structure that is actually constructed of prefabricated steel. The jewel-like interior is accentuated with lovely stained-glass windows.

The **Golden Mosque** (Map p82; % 734 1508; Globo de Oro St), erected on a site where a hotel named Globo de Oro used to stand, serves the growing Muslim community that has settled in the vicinity.

### CHINATOWN

After centuries of suppression by the Spanish, Manila's Chinese population quickly rose on the economic and social ladder under more liberal administrations. Today

**RIZAL PARK, ERMITA, MALATE & PACO**

**INFORMATION**

Department of Tourism (DOT)  
 Building.....1 D1  
 DOT Information Center.....(see 1)  
 Manila Doctors Hospital.....2 D2  
 Manila Medical Center.....3 E2  
 National Library.....4 C2  
 Philippine General Hospital.....5 E3  
 Rajah Travel.....6 C2  
 US Embassy.....7 B3

**SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES**

Okm Post.....8 B2  
 Central Lagoon & Fountains.....9 C2  
 Chess Plaza.....10 C1  
 Chinese Garden.....11 B1  
 Ermita Church.....12 C3  
 Japanese Garden.....13 C1  
 Malate Church.....14 D5  
 Manila Orchidarium.....15 C1  
 Manila Zoo.....16 E6  
 Museo ng Maynila.....17 B2  
 Museo Pambata.....18 B2  
 National Museum of the  
 Filipino People.....19 C1

**EATING** 🍴

Aristocrat.....37 D6  
 Farmacia Fatima.....38 E3  
 Harbor View.....39 A3  
 Pantalan Maynila.....40 B3  
 Sala Thai.....41 F4  
 Quirino Grandstand.....23 A2  
 Relief Map of the Philippines.....24 D1  
 Rizal Monument.....25 B2  
 Site of Rizal's Execution.....26 B1

**DRINKING** ☕

LA Café.....43 C4

**SLEEPING** 🛏

Bayview Park Hotel.....27 B3  
 Bianca's Garden Hotel.....28 E6  
 Boulevard Mansion.....29 C4  
 Celestine Citadel Hotel.....30 C3  
 Hotel La Corona.....31 C3  
 Hotel Miramar.....32 B3  
 Manila Diamond Hotel.....33 C5  
 Manila Hotel.....34 A1  
 Manila Pavilion.....35 C2  
 Pension Natividad.....36 D5

**ENTERTAINMENT** 🎬

Laffalooka.....44 B2

**SHOPPING** 🛍

Hiraya Gallery.....45 C2  
 San Andres Market.....46 F5

**TRANSPORT**

China Airlines.....47 C3  
 Jeepneys & FX to Ermita &  
 Malate.....48 D1

the centre of the vibrant Chinese community is Chinatown, which straddles Santa Cruz and Binondo.

Chinatown is demarcated by Goodwill Arches (Map p82). The main street is Ongpin St; walking its length – recommended – will take 10 minutes, but exploring the neighbourhood can take hours. As in any other Chinese enclave around the world, you'll find dozens of goldsmiths, herbalists, teahouses and shops selling mooncakes, incense, paper money to burn for ancestors, trinkets and other curios. There are numerous places for a snack or a meal (see p97).

As you emerge from the southeastern end of Ongpin St, you'll see a classic European-style fountain, behind which stands **Santa Cruz Church** (Map p82; ☎ 733 0246; 🕒 6am-10pm). A church was first erected here in 1608 to minister to the swelling ranks of Chinese Christian converts, but the present edifice only dates back to 1957, after its predecessor was destroyed in WWII.

**BINONDO**

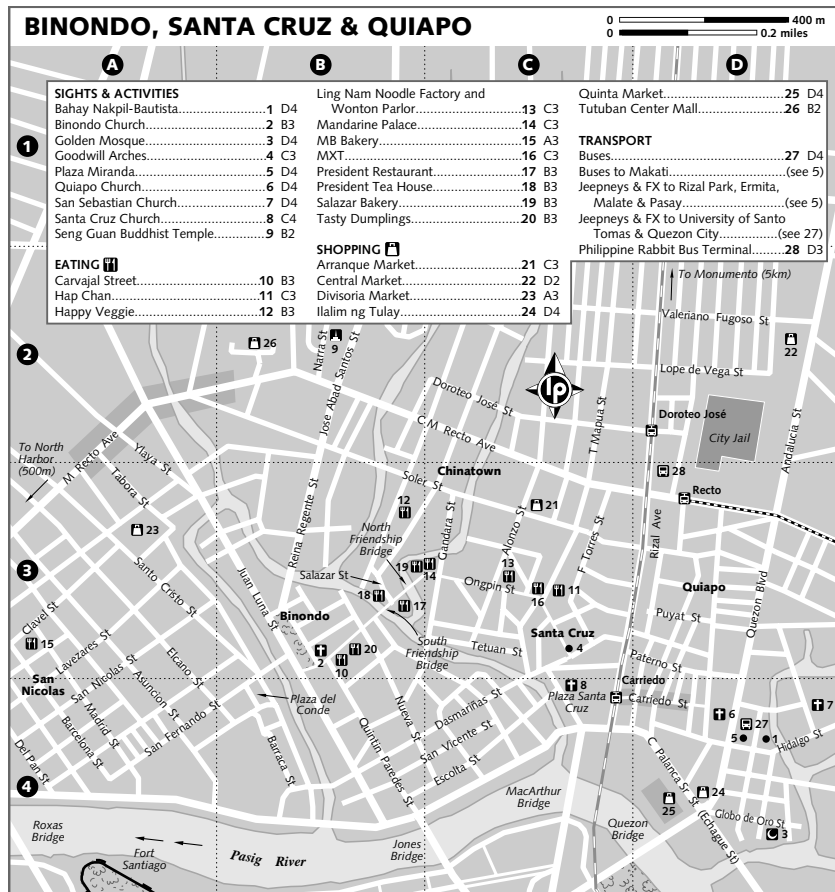
At the northern end of Paredes St stands the bell tower of **Binondo Church** (Map p82; cnr Quintin Paredes St & Ongpin St; 🕒 6am-7pm), an unusual octagonal structure dating back to 1596. The rest of the church is a modern replacement for war damage. Inside there is a lurid statue of a bloody Jesus that would do Mel Gibson proud. Inspirational banners include 'Support the Seminarists!' The plaza out front is being reborn.

Further north, the **Seng Guan Buddhist Temple** (Map p82; Narra St) is the centre of Manila's Buddhist community. It's not pretty but it's big.

West of the old Binondo area are parts of Manila that survived the war intact. Somewhat dodgy in character, the San Nicolas neighbourhood in and around Madrid St and Lavezares St has some run-down but amazing 19th-century wooden houses complete with mother-of-pearl windows, elaborate carving and tiled street signs.

**Ermita & Malate**

Sights are not the real purpose of these adjoining areas south of Rizal Park. Commerce, including the bulk of Manila's tourism infrastructure, is the story here. Close to the water and the aspiring-to-be-grand Roxas Blvd, you can get views of Manila Bay from here.



**Ermita Church** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 523 2754; MH del Pilar St & A Flores St, Ermita; 11 6am-7pm), a modern construction that replaced the original hermitage destroyed during WWII, is home to the widely venerated *Nuestra Señora de Guia* (Our Lady of Guidance). Legend has it that this richly robed image of the Virgin Mary was found by Legazpi on 19 May 1571, the day the Spanish forces took over Manila.

**Malate Church** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 400 5877; cnr MH del Pilar St & Remedios St, Malate; 11 6am-noon & 3-8pm) houses a greatly revered image of the Virgin Mary, called *Nuestra Señora de Remedios* (Our Lady of Remedies). It was first built in 1588; this version dates from the 1860s.

Nearby, Remedios Circle is the bull's-eye for numerous good restaurants, cafés and

bars, although the circle itself is a somewhat barren expanse of patchy grass.

The **Manila Zoological & Botanical Gardens** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 400 1885; entrance on M Adriatico St; admission P10; 11 6am-7pm), usually shortened to 'Manila Zoo', is home to a diverse collection of animals but the premises are badly in need of renovation.

### Cultural Center of the Philippines

Conceived during the era of Imelda Marcos' grand plans for Manila, the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) refers to both the vast collection of white elephants on the reclaimed land in the bay and the performing arts centre of the same name (see opposite). The decaying excess on dis-

play here is a fascinating and fitting lasting legacy for the Marcos era.

The cost was enormous, and was born by an economy that in the 1960s and 1970s could not properly supply the basic necessities of life to its people. There are numerous exhibition halls and other buildings scattered about the vast site. Some components, like the Westin Philippine Plaza (see p95) and the Philippine International Convention Center (Map p84) are surviving well. Others, such as the Manila Film Center (see p105) and the Coconut Palace (see the boxed text, right), struggle against inglorious fates.

Most successful is the centrepiece of the development, the **Cultural Center of the Philippines** (CCP; Map p84; ☎ 551 3725; Roxas Blvd; free admission to building, performance prices vary; 11 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun). It is set back from Roxas Blvd and constructed in the bombastic style favoured by dictators everywhere.

The CCP never quite lived up to its promise of being a centre of culture for the masses, but the building has a grand design by noted Filipino architect Leandro Locsin. Inside is an art gallery and a museum of musical instruments (☎ 832 1125; adult/child P30/20; 11 10am-6pm Tue-Sun). Three theatres regularly present performances by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, Ballet Philippines and local and visiting artists (see p105).

Nearby, the **GSIS Museo ng Sining** (Map p84; ☎ 551 1301; GSIS Bldg; admission free; 11 9-11am & 1-4pm Tue-Sat) houses an extensive collection of contemporary Filipino art. On display are paintings, sculptures and tapestries by such famous Filipino artists as Fernando Amorsolo and Hernando Ocampo.

To the north, **Star City** (Map p84; ☎ 832 0307; CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd; admission P50; 11 1pm-midnight Fri-Sun Feb-Aug, 4pm-midnight Mon-Fri & 1pm-midnight Sat & Sun Sep-Jan) is an amusement park with a few thrilling rides in the heart of the CCP.

Just north of the complex you'll notice the **Manila Yacht Club** (Map p84), where the moneyed few keep their pleasure craft.

Across the way, the **Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas** (Map p84; cnr Roxas Blvd & P Ocampo Sr St) oversees the country's monetary affairs. It's also home to the **Metropolitan Museum of Manila** (Map p84; ☎ 523 7855; adult/child P50/30; 11 10am-6pm Mon-Sat), which showcases a collection of gold ornaments and ancient pottery plus exciting changing exhibits of contemporary Filipino art.

South of the CCP and west of Baclaran is what looks like a barren wasteland. This is all landfill into the bay to allow yet more development. It looks bleak now, but there's a vast shopping mall (surprise!), condos and more on the way.

To get to the CCP from Malate or Ermita, take any Baclaran-bound jeepney on M H del Pilar St and get off at P Ocampo Sr St. You can then either walk to the CCP or take one of the jeepneys that ply a circular route around the complex.

### Chinese Cemetery

As in life, so it is in death for Manila's wealthy Chinese citizens, who are buried with every modern convenience in the huge **Chinese Cemetery** (Map pp72-3; Rizal Ave Extension or Aurora Ave; 11 South Gate 7.30am-7pm). There are

### THE COCONUT PALACE

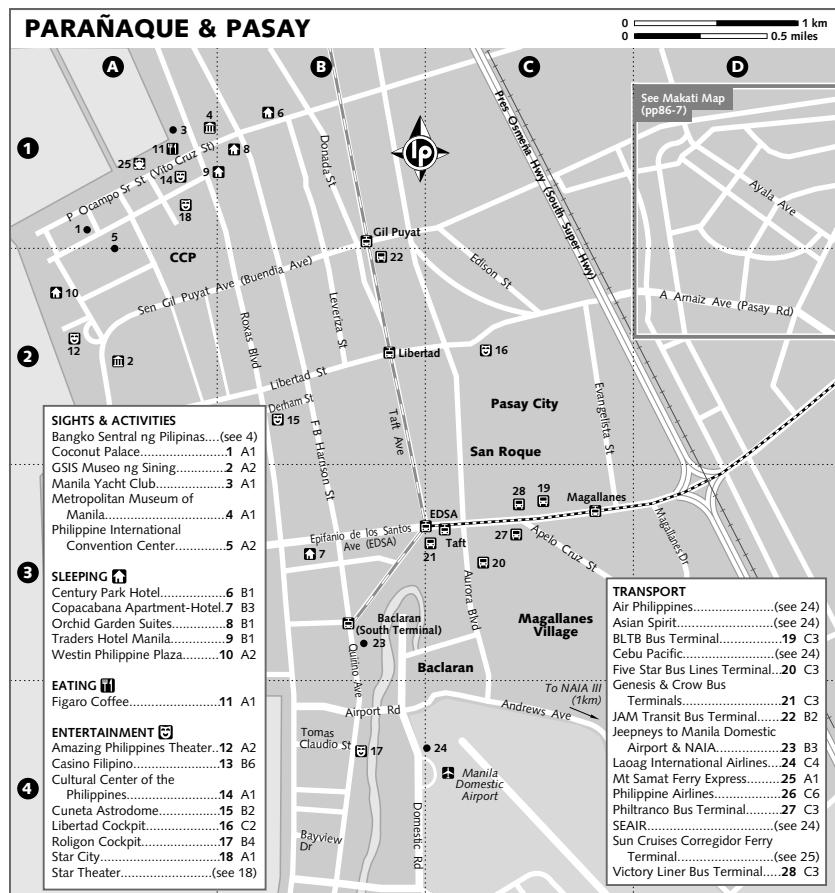
Of all of Imelda's wacky schemes, this one may be the wackiest. Hearing that Pope John Paul II was planning a visit to the flock in the Philippines, Imelda ordered that a grand palace be built. And not just any palace either, but one showcasing the nation's crafts and materials.

Huge teams of craftsmen laboured overtime to complete this edifice in time for the pontiff's arrival. As Imelda readied herself to throw open the door to welcome the pope, she got stiffed. After sternly chastising that the US\$37 million cost could have gone to better uses, such as clean water for the people, the pope went elsewhere.

Left with a palace (the name derives from the extensive use of coconut materials) and no guests, Imelda eventually seized upon a couple of C-level celebrities for a gala opening: Brooke Shields and George Hamilton. As camp goes, you can't do much better.

Today the palace is rented for wedding parties (P25,000 for a four-hour reception). But you needn't get hitched to enjoy the place; tours of the **palace** (Map p84; ☎ 832-1898; admission P100; 11 9am-4pm Mon-Fri) are available. Among other details, reverential attendants explain that on opening night, Brooke got pineapple-fibre sheets for her room while the ever-tanned George snuggled into banana-fibre sheets.





mausoleums with crystal chandeliers, air-con, hot and cold running water, kitchens and flushing toilets (in case the interred are caught short on the way to paradise).

The guards are knowledgeable and offer tours of the more ostentatious tombs for a fee (set the price beforehand). On 1 and 2 November (All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day), hundreds of Chinese-Filipino families gather to offer food and flowers to their ancestors, and have family reunions themselves.

To get to the cemetery from Ermita and Malate, take a 'Monumento' jeepney to Aurora Blvd (where Rizal Ave becomes Rizal Ave Extension), and walk east to Heurtes St, which runs up to the gate. Abad Santos is the nearest LRT station.

### Malacañang Palace

The official residence of the President of the Philippines, **Malacañang Palace** (Map pp72-3; % 734 7421; JP Laurel Sr St, San Miguel) was originally a Spanish grandee's summer house. It used to be possible to go on tours of the palace but these are no longer offered. Likewise, the **Museo ng Malacañang** (% 735 6201), which displayed memorabilia related to the Philippines' past 13 presidents, along with old photos of Manila, is now closed. Unlike some other recent presidents, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo actually lives and works in the palace. Given the propensity of the Philippine people to show up in the hundreds of thousands and ask that the president leave, executive branch prefers to keep the public

a bit distant. Check with the museum or the DOT Information Center (p75) in case you can once again wander the grounds.

### Makati

The business centre of Manila has also become its nightlife centre. The towers here house the nation's major corporations and most of the major hotels. It all came about after WWII when the Ayala family seized upon the destruction of the rest of the city as a chance to start building.

Makati, the former local airport (Ayala and Makati Aves were the runways), seems to have boundless growth ahead of it. But just when you think you're someplace like Singapore, a whiff of sewage will bring you down to earth. The excellent Filipinas Heritage Library (p74) is housed in the much-restored 1930s terminal for the former airport.

There's a famous **Ninoy Aquino Statue** (Map pp86-7; enr Paseo de Roxas & Ayala Ave) showing him right before he was shot. It's built on the spot where many pro-democracy rallies took place in the 1980s and 1990s.

On the north side of Makati is the P Burgos St area, a once-notorious area for girlie bars and the like. There are still some there (with names such as Rascals, Cuddles and Tickers), but the trade is moving elsewhere and new projects promise to change the area once and for all. Where the fake-perfume touts will go is anybody's guess.

Down by the river, the **Museo Ng Makati** (Map pp72-3; % 896 0277; JP Rizal St; 11 8am-5pm Tue-Sun) is a classic old Manila house from the 1800s (look for the mother-of-pearl windows), with rotating exhibitions relating to local history. It's not open between exhibitions, so check.

### AYALA MUSEUM

The **Ayala Museum** (Map pp86-7; % 757 7117; Greenbelt, Ayala Center; adult/child P350/250; 11 9am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun) moved into an impressive new building in 2004. It's now an excellent museum with exhibits on Filipino culture, art and history. Recent exhibits included a well-curated one on the proselytising of the early Catholic Church. At the heart of the collection are dozens of dioramas tracing the nation's history. Just as stained-glass windows were a way for churches to engage and educate the masses, so too are these

models. As you browse, it quickly becomes apparent just how violent local history has been. Number 17 showing early troubles for monks rivals anything in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* for colourful mayhem.

The guided tours (P100) of the museum are highly recommended.

### Quezon City

Quezon has almost 500,000 residents and it sprawls over the slightly hilly terrain north-east of the centre. It is known for its vibrant nightlife along T Morato Avenue. Some of the energy comes from the **University of the Philippines Manila** (Map pp2-3; www.upm.edu.ph), which has a vast campus about 1km east of Quezon City.

In the heart of the commercial action, in a traffic circle where Timog Ave and T Morato Ave meet, the **Monument to Boy Scouts** (Map p88) will not be winning any merit badges for appearance. Many of the life-size statues of scouts could use a few square knots in order to stay in one piece. Numerous nearby sidestreets are named after scouts – a mayor years ago was a big fan.

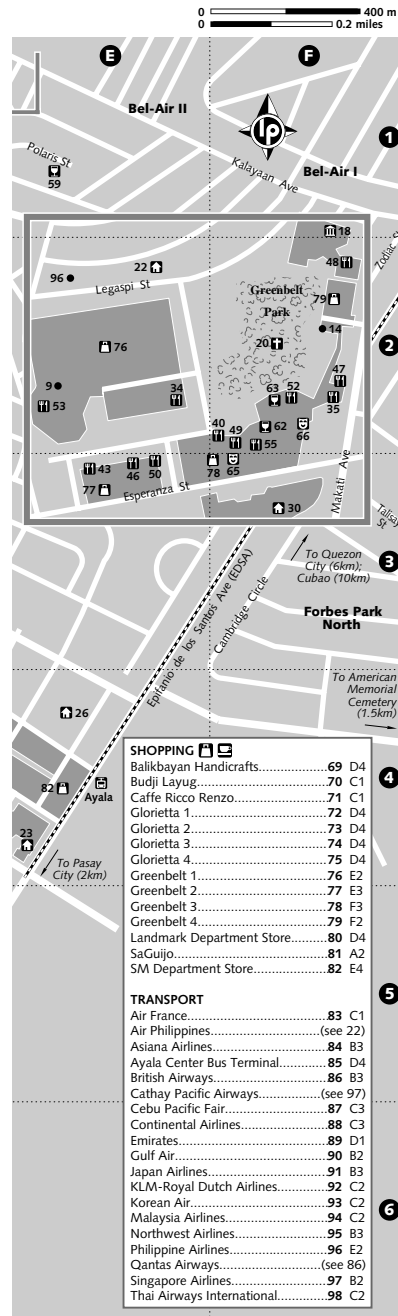
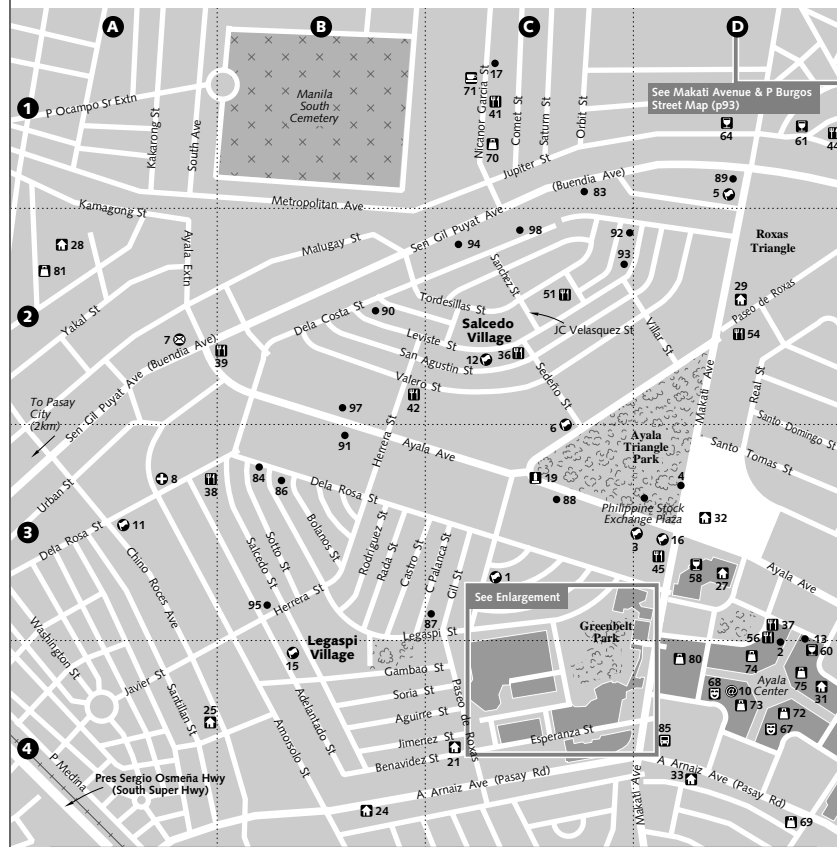
**Quezon Memorial Circle** (Map p88; 11 6am-10pm; admission free) is to Quezon City what Rizal Park is to Manila. Particularly on Sundays, people come here to stroll, jog, cycle, fly a kite or practise some ballroom dancing. One can spend the day contentedly reading a book, having a picnic or just relaxing amid the restful greenery. In the centre stands a towering monument honouring Manuel L Quezon, President of the Philippine Commonwealth, who died in exile in the USA during WWII.

At the nearby **Ninoy Aquino Parks & Wildlife Center** (Map p88; % 924 6031; adult/child P10/5; 11 9am-4pm) injured wildlife is nursed back to life. A few patients who never checked out are on display, including a Burmese python and various birds, reptiles and monkeys.

### ACTIVITIES Climbing

Although your greatest climb in Manila might just be the endless stairs to an LRT or MRT station, there are many good places to climb in the region, such as Mt Banahaw and Mt San Cristobal in South Luzon (see the boxed text, p127) and Mt Pinatubo (p134) north of Manila.

**MAKATI**



<b>INFORMATION</b>			
Australian Embassy.....	1	C3	
Bibliarch.....	2	D4	
Canadian Embassy.....	3	D3	
Filipinas Heritage Library.....	4	D3	
French Embassy.....	5	D1	
German Embassy.....	6	C3	
Makati Central Post Office.....	7	A2	
Makati Medical Center.....	8	A3	
National Book Store.....	9	E2	
Neo.Computer.Net.....	10	D4	
Netherlands Embassy.....	11	A3	
New Zealand Embassy.....	12	C2	
Power Books.....	13	D3	
Power Books.....	14	F2	
Singapore Embassy.....	15	B4	
U.K Embassy.....	16	D3	
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>			
Alliance Française.....	17	C1	
Ayala Museum.....	18	F1	
Ninoy Aquino Statue.....	19	C3	
Sto Niño De Paz Chapel.....	20	F2	
<b>SLEEPING</b>			
AIM Conference Center.....	21	C4	
Charter House.....	22	E2	
Dusit Hotel Nikko.....	23	E4	
El Cielito Inn.....	24	B4	
Herald Suites.....	25	A4	
Hotel Inter-Continental Manila.....	26	E4	
Makati Shangri-La.....	27	D3	
Makati YMCA International Hotel.....	28	A2	
Mandarin Oriental Manila.....	29	D2	
New World Renaissance Hotel.....	30	F3	
Oakwood Premier.....	31	D4	
Peninsula Manila.....	32	D3	
Tower Inn.....	33	D4	
<b>EATING</b>			
Banana Leaf Curry House.....	34	E2	
Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant.....	(see 23)		
Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf.....	35	F2	
Confusion.....	36	C2	
Dad's.....	37	D3	
Dome.....	38	A3	
Eat.....	39	B2	
Gaudi's.....	40	F2	
Grappa's.....	41	C1	
Il Ponticello.....	42	B2	
Italianni's.....	43	E3	
La Tienda.....	44	D1	
Lumiere.....	45	D3	
Masas.....	46	E3	
Max Brenner.....	47	F2	
Museum Cafe.....	48	F2	
My LK.....	49	F2	
Nuvo.....	50	B3	
Organic Farmers Market.....	51	C2	
People's Palace.....	52	F2	
Rustan's Supermarket.....	53	E2	
Schwarzwälder German Restaurant.....	54	D2	
Sentro 1771.....	55	F2	
Zen.....	56	D3	
<b>DRINKING</b>			
Caffe Ricco Renzo.....	57	C1	
Conway's Bar.....	58	D3	
Handlebar.....	59	E1	
Hard Rock Café.....	60	D4	
Heckle & Jeckle.....	61	D1	
Ice Vodka Bar.....	62	F2	
Merks Bar Bistro.....	63	F2	
Sid's Bar.....	64	D1	
<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b>			
Greenbelt 3 Theaters.....	65	F3	
Red Box.....	66	F2	
Repertory Globe Theatre.....	67	D4	
V Bar.....	68	D4	

**Power Up** (☎ 0918 902 0754, 631 4675) is a group of Manila climbers that can organise big and small climbs. Rates begin at about P1500 per person.

**Diving**  
Taking a plunge into the Pasig River, you might see some truly horrible things right before your body dissolves. The waters of Manila Bay are only somewhat better. But around the coasts in Subic and especially Anilao, there's excellent diving. **Diver's Network** (Map p88; ☎ 926 4466; www.diveph.com; 192 T Morato Ave, Quezon City) offers a range of daytrips and longer excursions. It's an excellent and knowledgeable centre; equipment rentals and lessons are available (PADI open-water certification P10,000).

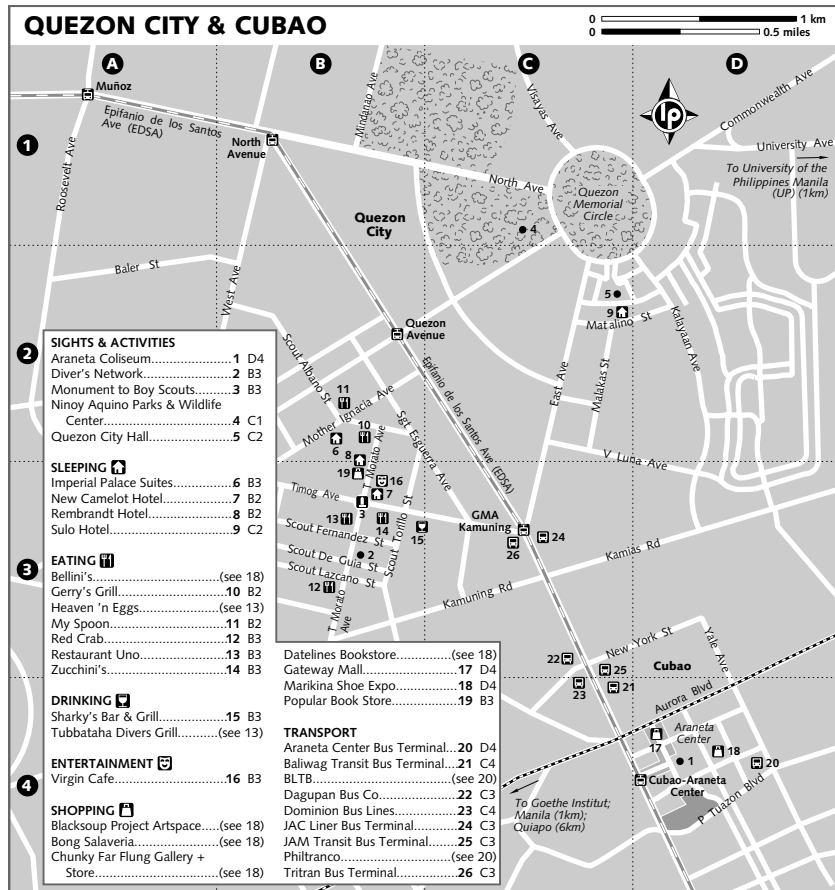
**Golf**  
Just outside the walls of Intramuros, on what used to be the moat surrounding the city, is the manicured 18-hole, par-66 **Club Intramuros Golf Course** (Map p76; ☎ 527 6612; Bonifacio Dr; green fees P1300-2100). It's a uniquely urban venue and in a nod to the local ethos, you can obtain the shady services of an 'umbrella girl' for P200 as well as rent clubs.

**Spas**  
Many top-end hotels have spas that welcome daytime patrons. One of the best is at the **Mandarin Oriental Manila** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 750 8888; www.mandarinoriental.com; cnr Makati Ave & Paseo de Roxas; packages from P3200), where the treatments are lavish and diverse.

**Sanctuario** (Map p90; ☎ 450 1127; 1829 J Bocobo St, Malate; h 2-11pm) is an upscale spa set in an elegant old house, with lap and whirlpools out back in the garden. Treatments span the gamut from simple massage (P900 for 90 minutes) to much more esoteric treatments like a honey-and-tangerine facelift (P600). A café serves organic refreshments.

**Swimming**  
Many of the bigger hotels have their own pools, but if you are billeted at budget accommodation without one, you can (for a fee) use the facilities at the following places.  
At **Seafood Wharf** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 400 5066; South Blvd, Rizal Park; admission P300; h 7am-5pm) you can pretend you're swimming with the fishies in this large, clean pool, then have one for lunch in the seaside restaurant (p96).

<b>SHOPPING</b>	
Balikbayan Handicrafts.....	69 D4
Budji Layug.....	70 C1
Caffe Ricco Renzo.....	71 C1
Glorietta 1.....	72 D4
Glorietta 2.....	73 D4
Glorietta 3.....	74 D4
Glorietta 4.....	75 D4
Greenbelt 1.....	76 E2
Greenbelt 2.....	77 E3
Greenbelt 3.....	78 F3
Greenbelt 4.....	79 F2
Landmark Department Store.....	80 D4
SaGuijo.....	81 A2
SM Department Store.....	82 E4
<b>TRANSPORT</b>	
Air France.....	83 C1
Air Philippines.....	(see 22)
Asiana Airlines.....	84 B3
Ayala Center Bus Terminal.....	85 D4
British Airways.....	86 B3
Cathay Pacific Airways.....	(see 97)
Cebu Pacific Fair.....	87 C3
Continental Airlines.....	88 C3
Emirates.....	89 D1
Gulf Air.....	90 B2
Japan Airlines.....	91 B3
KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines.....	92 C2
Korean Air.....	93 C2
Malaysia Airlines.....	94 C2
Northwest Airlines.....	95 B3
Philippine Airlines.....	96 E2
Qantas Airways.....	(see 86)
Singapore Airlines.....	97 B2
Thai Airways International.....	98 C2



There are also pools at **Century Park Hotel** (Map p84; ☎ 528 8888; 599 P Ocampo Sr St, Malate; admission P275; ⌚ 7am-8pm) and the **Ninoy Aquino Memorial Stadium** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 525 2408; M Adriatico St, Malate; admission P30; ⌚ 8-11.30am & 1-5pm Tue-Sun).

## TOURS

There are two locals offering walking tours of Manila. Both are captivating and entertaining, offering a variety of walks around the city. They may be the best thing to happen to Manila tourism in decades.

**Carlos Celdran** (☎ 0926 259 7506; www.celdrantours.blogspot.com; tours P200-400) Possibly the most entertaining ticket in town. Carlos is a one-man show of history, criticism and trivia. Flamboyant to the extreme, some of

his walks come with recorded 'mood' music blasted from a boombox. Highly recommended.

**Ivan Mandy** (☎ 0917 329 1622; www.oldmanilawalks.com; tours P400) Ivan has a deep knowledge of Manila and its history and culture. He's an expert at ferreting out the often overlooked gems of the city.

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Manila's best events are pegged to the religious festivals found throughout the country. See p437 for details of countrywide festivals.

**Black Nazarene Procession** The Quiapo Church (p79) houses the Black Nazarene, a black image of Christ, which is paraded through the streets in a massive procession on 9 January and again during Holy Week (the week between Palm Sunday and Easter).

**Independence Day** A huge parade in Rizal Park celebrates Independence from Spain on 12 June.

## SLEEPING

Manila has accommodation to suit all price ranges, from spartan P500 box-like rooms to luxurious US\$1000 penthouse suites with several rooms, a private swimming pool and a butler. In between, you should expect to get a decent midrange room with cable TV, a refrigerator and maybe a pool in an interesting part of town for somewhere between P1400 and P3000. Hotels at the top end are as luxurious as any in Asia, and often quite a bit cheaper; deals abound.

Malate and Ermita have traditionally been popular choices for travellers, but the rise of Makati means that many people now stay there also.

## Rizal Park

**Manila Hotel** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 527 0011; www.manila-hotel.com.ph; 1 Rizal Park; s/d from US\$200/250; a s ) One of Asia's grand hotels, the Manila Hotel has been a place of history, from MacArthur to Marcos (ask the concierge if you can see the archives). The lobby reeks with heritage, right down to the huge armchairs and glass-topped tables perfect for conducting your correspondence. But this is the Philippines and not Singapore, so don't expect the hotel to be stuffy – it isn't. There's a hint of fraying around the edges, but that only adds to the charm. Some rooms are in a modern tower.

## Ermita & Malate

The one place in town where you'll see lots of other travellers are these old neighbourhoods stretching south from Rizal Park and east from the bay. Accommodation is available in every price range.

## BUDGET

Most budget accommodation is found in Malate and Ermita, particularly along M Adriatico St, A Mabini St and MH del Pilar St. The cheapest rooms are fan-cooled and share a bathroom; air-con rooms with private bathroom are available at higher rates.

**Pension Natividad** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 521 0524; 1690 MH del Pilar St, Malate; dm P300, d with fan/air-con P800/1000) This is the pick of the budget places. Set back from the street, the rooms here are clean and fresh. There's a long shady area outside, perfect for meeting other travellers

or chatting with the charming owners. The inexpensive coffee shop does good breakfasts and is open 24 hours.

**Malate Pensionne** (Map p90; ☎ 523 8304; www.mpensionne.com.ph; 1771 M Adriatico St, Malate; dm P300, d with fan/air-con P900/1100; j ) The longest-standing travellers' centre in Malate has gone a bit upscale. It's now sheltered from the road by, of all things, a Starbucks. It is still something of an oasis for global travellers, and has many rooms at various prices.

**Mabini Pension** (Map p90; ☎ 523 3930; 1337 A Mabini St, Ermita; r with fan and shared/private bathroom P550/600, r with air-con and private bathroom P900) In one of the gracious residences that used to line A Mabini St, this is a long-running pension with 30 basic rooms. Reception is bright and cheery and there's even statuary.

**Adriatico Pensionne Inn** (Map p90; ☎ 404 2300; 1612 M Adriatico St, Malate; r P580-920; a ) There are 29 dark but sparkling clean rooms here, some only with fans. The staff are charming and there is a nice little café off the attractive entrance. Splash out for the penthouse (P2000) and you get two floors and a terrace.

**Friendly's Guesthouse** (Map p90; ☎ 0917 333 1418; www.friendlysguesthouse.com; cnr M Adriatico St & J Nakpil St, Malate; dm P250, s/d P400/450; a ) This is a new four-room, fourth-floor place run by some enthusiastic local travellers. There's a nice communal kitchen and a small terrace where you can observe the Malate action. The dorm room has air-con, the others don't.

**Ermita Tourist Inn** (Map p90; ☎ 521 8770; 1549 A Mabini St, Ermita; s/d P660/720; a ) Offers 30 clean rooms and the added advantage of helpful staff. The rates include breakfast, private bathroom and air-con.

**Richmond Pension** (Map p90; ☎ 525 3864; 1165 Grey St, Ermita; dm P200, s/d with fan P250/430, d with air-con P700) Tucked away in a tiny street between A Flores St and Arquiza St, this is a family-run place with 14 simple rooms, sharing a bathroom.

**Pension Filipina** (Map p90; ☎ 521 1488; 572 Engracia Reyes St, Ermita; s/d with fan P400/500, with air-con P600/700) Near Richmond Pension, this has 11 rooms, all sharing a bathroom. Management is a bit more on the ball than at some other cheap places.

If you're broke and other places are full consider the following.

**Victoria Mansions** (Map p90; ☎ 525 9444; 600 J Nakpil St, Malate; tw with air-con P700) Has 30 OK rooms in a 1960s building. Each has kitchenette, TV, fridge and bathroom.

**Joward's Pension House** (Map p90; % 338 3191; 1730 M Adriatico St, Malate; s/d with fan P220/308, s/d with air-con and shared/private bathroom P440/550) Well located, but you supply your own soap, towels and more. **Midtown Inn** (Map p90; % 525 1403; 551 P Faura St, Ermita; s/d with fan P600/750, with air-con P850/1000) Centrally located within the tourist belt; don't expect a warm welcome.

**MIDRANGE**

Rooms at this level usually have cable TV, room service and a front desk staffed by professionals.

**Hotel Miramar** (Map pp80-1; % 523 4484; mira marh@i-next.net; 1034-36 Roxas Blvd; r P1400-3000; a i ) In an Art Deco building overlooking the US Embassy, this is the pick of the neighbourhood's midrange places. Rooms are smartly furnished and although fully modern still have some pre-war charm. The café is excellent.

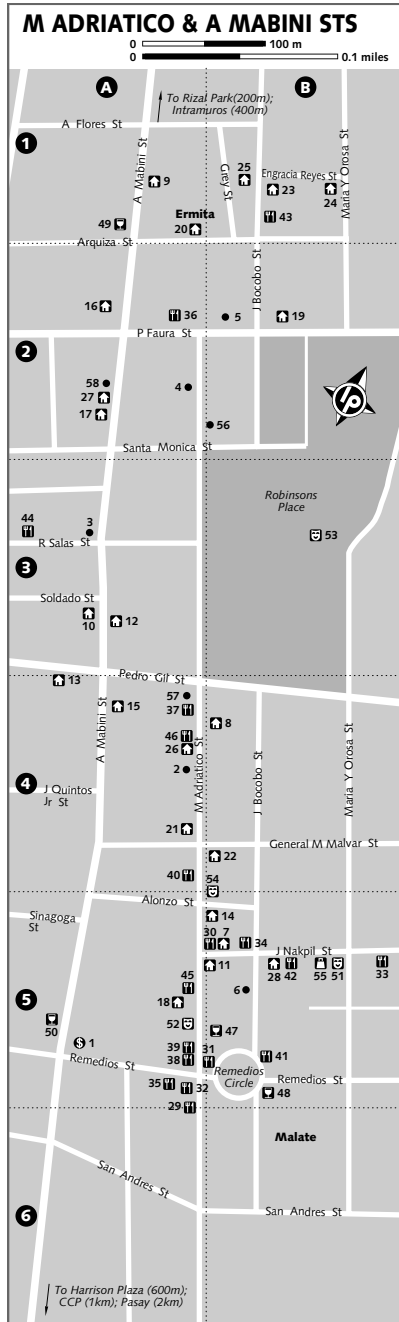
**Adriatico Arms Hotel** (Map p90; % 524 7426; 561 J Nakpil St, Malate; r P1500-1800; a ) A small boutique hotel right in the midst of trendy J Nakpil St. The rooms are excellent value; larger deluxe ones have a fridge. There's wrought-iron detailing throughout.

**Pearl Garden Hotel** (Map p90; % 525 1000; www.pearlgardenhotel.net; 1700 M Adriatico St, Malate; r from P1800; a i ) Among the best midrange choices, the Pearl Garden is fairly new and has 83 well-appointed rooms. Each has high-speed Internet, a minibar and more. Management is on the ball. If the name of the café (Moonriver) doesn't tell you what to expect in the entertainment department, you probably haven't spent long in the Philippines.

**Rothman Hotel** (Map p90; % 523 4501; www.rothmanhotel.com; 1633 M Adriatico St, Malate; d P1300-2400; a s ) Most of the rooms here have balconies. More expensive ones have full kitchens. The décor is motel standard although the soothing comfort of the small fountain in the lobby is blasted away by the bad cover music.

**Las Palmas Hotel** (Map p90; % 524 5602; www.laspalmashotel.com.ph; 1616 A Mabini St, Malate; r P1700-2000; a ) The 89 modern rooms here are comfortable and have a bright décor. Recently renovated, this 1970s veteran has a business centre and helpful staff.

**City Garden Hotel** (Map p90; % 536 1451; www.citygardenhotels.com; 1158 A Mabini St, Ermita; s/d from P1600/1800; a i s ) The 160 rooms are well equipped and large, and boast Italian-



<b>INFORMATION</b>		Pearl Garden Hotel.....22 B4	Shwama Snack Center.....44 A3
American Express.....1 A5	Fabulous Laundry.....2 A4	Pension Filipina.....23 B1	Sidebar.....45 A5
Happy Travel.....3 A3	Sea Breeze Laundry.....4 A2	Ralph Anthony Suites.....24 B1	Zamboanga Restaurant.....46 A4
Solidaridad Bookshop.....5 B2		Richmond Pension.....25 B1	
		Rothman Hotel.....26 A4	
		Showerdown Centerpoint Hotel.....27 A2	<b>DRINKING ☑</b>
		Victoria Mansions.....28 B5	Anthology.....47 B5
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>			Castro at Firma.....(see 55)
Sanctuario.....6 B5			Ciboney.....48 B5
			Cowboy Grill.....49 A1
			Hobbit House.....50 A5
			Sonata.....(see 51)
<b>SLEEPING ☑</b>		<b>EATING ☑</b>	<b>ENTERTAINMENT ☑</b>
Adriatico Arms Hotel.....7 B5		604 Cafe Gallery.....(see 48)	Bed.....51 B5
Adriatico Pensionne Inn.....8 B4		Bistro Remedios.....29 A5	FAB.....52 A5
City Garden Hotel.....9 A1		Bravo!.....30 B5	Robinsons Movieworld.....53 B3
Ermita Tourist Inn.....10 A3		Cafe Adriatico Premiere.....31 B5	Suburbia.....54 B4
Friendly's Guesthouse.....11 B5		Cafe Havana.....32 A5	The Library.....(see 52)
Hotel Frendy.....12 A3		Cafe Nakpil.....33 B5	
Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila.....13 A4		Casa Armas.....34 B5	
Joward's Pension House.....14 B5		Demitasse Cafe Bar.....35 A5	
Las Palmas Hotel.....15 A4		Kashmir.....36 A2	
Lotus Garden Hotel.....16 A2		Kink Cakes.....37 A4	
Mabini Pension.....17 A2		Las Palmas Hotel.....15 A4	
Malate Pensionne.....18 A5		Las Palmas Hotel.....15 A4	
Midtown Inn.....19 B2		Lotus Garden Hotel.....16 A2	
Pacific Place Apartelle Suites.....20 A1		Mabini Pension.....17 A2	
Pan Pacific Hotel.....21 A4		Malate Pensionne.....18 A5	
		Midtown Inn.....19 B2	
		Pacific Place Apartelle Suites.....20 A1	
		Pan Pacific Hotel.....21 A4	
		Sea Food Market.....43 B1	
			<b>SHOPPING ☑</b>
			Firma.....55 B5
			<b>TRANSPORT</b>
			JB Rent A Car.....56 B2
			Pacific Place Apartelle Suites.....20 A1
			Pan Pacific Hotel.....21 A4
			Puerto Galera Ferry Office.....58 A2

inspired accents. There's a spa and whirlpool. Right off the lobby is a nice, small sushi bar.

**Hotel La Corona** (Map pp80-1; % 524 2631; www.bestwestern.com; 1166 M H del Pilar St, Ermita; r P1600-2200; a i ) Affiliated with Best Western, this gem of a hotel features an eye-catching exterior that extends to the Mediterranean-themed common areas and rooms. Expect all conveniences; there's a bounteous morning buffet included in rates.

**Sundowner Centerpoint Hotel** (Map p90; % 400 7351; tower@i-manila.com.ph; 1315 A Mabini St, Ermita; r P1250-1850; a ) A small high-rise hotel, its 40 rooms are solid midrange standard. There's nothing overly exciting here but the staff are friendly and the rates are good.

**Boulevard Mansion** (Map pp80-1; % 521 8888; www.mansiongroup.com.ph; 1440 Roxas Blvd, Ermita; studios/ste from P1200/1800; a ) The 184 units at this long-stay property are very good value. All come with kitchens, the staff are eager to please and there's daily maid service. Deluxe corner suites (P3000) offer views of Manila Bay. Monthly rates are equal to about 20 nights.

**Lotus Garden Hotel** (Map p90; % 522 1515; www.citygardenhotels.com; 1227 A Mabini St, Ermita; r P1400-2700; a i ) There are 80 newly decorated rooms at this, the former Royal Palm Hotel. The staff are helpful and professional. The cheapest rooms can be dark but as you rise through the price range you gain light and amenities like a kitchen.

**Hotel Frendy** (Map p90; % 526 4211; hotelfrendy@yahoo.com; 1548 A Mabini St, Ermita; r P1300-2000; a ) Rooms on the high floors have views of Manila Bay. Otherwise there's a bit of a *Miami Vice* gone-to-seed quality about this friendly (not frendy) place. The hotel boasts a generator in case the power poops out.

**Pacific Place Apartelle Suites** (Map p90; % 521 2279; 539 Arquiza St, Ermita; r P1400-1900; a ) The 24 clean, modern apartments make this one of the better choices in this price range. Standard and superior units are designed for one to two people, deluxe suites for two to three people. Monthly rates are equal to about 20 nights. You might, however, feel you are coming home to an office block.

**Ralph Anthony Suites** (Map p90; % 521 1107; www.ralphanthony.com.ph; 1440 Roxas Blvd, Ermita; studio/1-bedroom ste US\$25/35; a i ) This upmarket long-term accommodation is secluded from the hubbub of Ermita. One-bedroom suites have kitchenettes. Monthly rates are equal to about 20 days' rent; ask about the specials.

**Bayview Park Hotel** (Map pp80-1; % 526 1555; www.bayviewparkhotel.com; 1118 Roxas Blvd, Ermita; r P2800-4000; a s ) Some 12 floors up, the rooftop pool and gym overlook glorious Manila Bay. Rooms are of a 1980s international standard.

**Celestine Citadel Hotel** (Map pp80-1; % 525 3347; soirie\_dantes@yahoo.com; 430 Nuestra Señora de Guia St, Ermita; r P1350-1600; a ) You'll be feeling

blue at this little charmer, due not to your mood but to the deeply azure-tinted windows. Several old trees out front add a leafy charm not often found in Ermita. Rates include a good breakfast.

#### TOP END

The best places here have good views of the city and the bay.

**Pan Pacific Hotel** (Map p90; % 536 0788; www.panpacific.com; cnr M Adriatico St & General M Malvar St, Malate; s/d from US\$230/310; n a i s ) In a sleek steel-and-glass tower, the Pan Pacific features all the usual luxuries plus a computer in each room and British-trained butler service. The staff have panache; bellboys regularly break into dance and song.

**Manila Diamond Hotel** (Map pp80-1; % 526 3000; www.diamondhotel.com; cnr Roxas Blvd & J Quintos Jr St, Malate; s/d from US\$200/220; n a i s ) Japanese owned and much patronised by Japanese tourists, this bustling 26-floor place boasts an excellent pool and a top-floor lounge that offers great views of the city. The 485 rooms are very nicely appointed in serious tones with kabuki influences. This is the pick of the Roxas Blvd hotels.

**Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila** (Map p90; % 245 1234; www.manila.casino.hyatt.com; 1588 Pedro Gil St, Malate; r from US\$180; n a i s ) Not to be confused with the tatty Hyatt in Pasay, this stunning new property has ice in its veins: the public spaces are all polished surfaces and could be in an office building. Of the 378 rooms, those on high floors have sweeping views and the décor continues the

#### THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

**Bianca's Garden Hotel** (Map pp80-1; % 526 0351; biancasg@skynet.net; 2139 M Adriatico St, Malate; r P800-2000; a i s ) Formerly the residence of a wealthy family, this Spanish-style house is furnished with traditional Filipino furniture and works of art. The 11 rooms feature numerous antiques. Set back from the street and surrounded by walls, the whole place feels like an oasis. There's shady trees and flowing plants that put you in a different place from the madness of Malate outside. After a hard day ferreting out Manila's charms, take a dip in the pool out back, then sit in the shade and enjoy a drink. Ahhh, now you're travelling.

minimalist motif. The casino is the largest in the Philippines.

**Manila Pavilion** (Map pp80-1; % 526 1212; www.manilapavilion.com.ph; cnr United Nations Ave & Maria Y Orosa St, Ermita; r from US\$60; n a s ) The Holiday Inn has been reborn as this slightly more stylish version of its former self. There's Asian design cues scattered about, but underneath this is still a huge international hotel with 567 rooms. Popular with tour groups; many lose their spare change at the Casino Filipino.

#### Makati

Upscale Makati is home to most of Manila's five-star hotels. But there are also good midrange choices, some near the action of Ayala Center, others up near the somewhat sleazy streets around P Burgos St.

#### BUDGET

**Makati YMCA International Hotel** (Map pp86-7; % 899 6101; 7 Sacred Heart Plaza St; s/d from P865/1150; a s ) In a quiet residential neighbourhood, the Y is in its own compound away from the already quiet street. The rooms are basic but clean, and deluxe ones have a fridge and TV. What's easily the largest pool at any Manila hotel is right outside. It's a tight ship, and this is not the place to bring home bar girls for 1am highjinks.

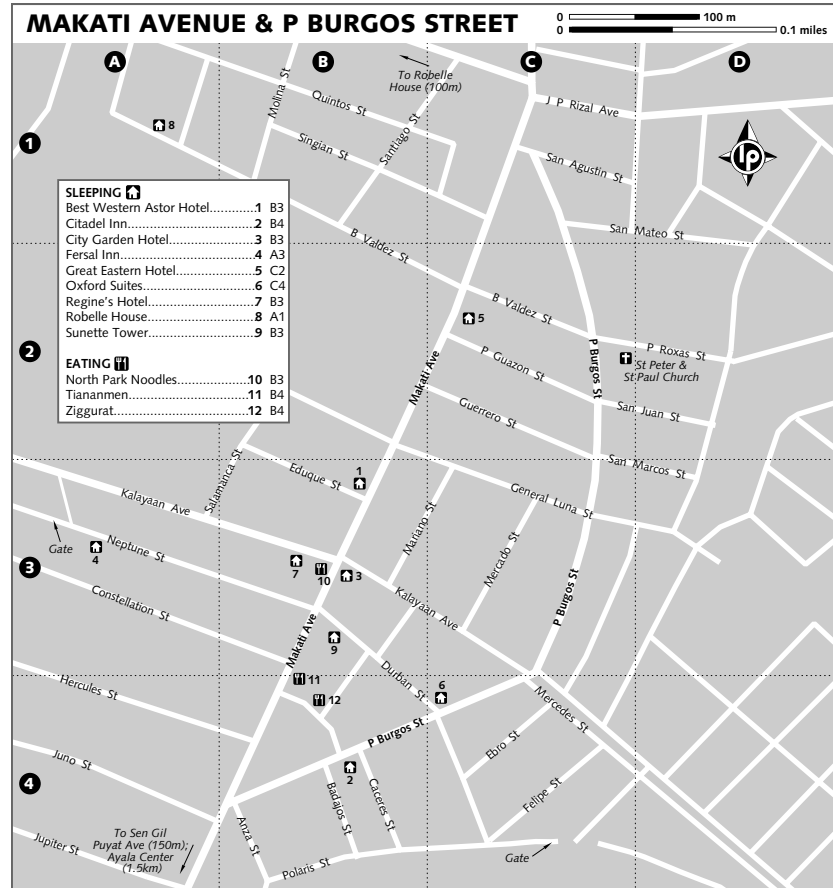
**Robelle House** (Map p93; % 899 8209; robelle@i-manila.com.ph; 4402 B Valdez St; r P650-1300; a s ) One of the better cheap hotels in Makati. The 38 basic rooms have air-con although the cheaper ones share bathrooms. The pool is a cool respite right off the lobby. It's a quiet, low-key place in a residential neighbourhood.

#### MIDRANGE

You can find a number of midrange hotels around Makati Ave and P Burgos St. There are also a few good choices close to Ayala Center.

**Herald Suites** (Map pp86-7; % 759 6270; www.heraldsuites.com; 2168 Chino Roces Ave; s/d from US\$60/70; a i ) Here modern convenience mixes with old-world charm. Every one of the 54 rooms in this boutique hotel is artfully furnished. The foyer's décor is classic European and the entire place feels a bit like a retreat. There's a good Japanese-style café off the lobby.

**Charter House** (Map pp86-7; % 817 6001; 114 Legaspi St; r P2300-2500; a i s ) The 104 clean, comfortable rooms are in an older high-rise



right across from Ayala Center. The rooms are fairly unadorned but have all the comforts you might expect, including cable TV. There is a rooftop pool and sundeck.

**AIM Conference Center** (Map pp86-7; % 867 4033; www.accm.aim.edu.ph; Benavidez St; r from P1800; a i s ) Great value, this high-rise hotel is part of the Asian Institute of Management. Rooms are small but comfortable and have good bathrooms and broadband Internet. Amenities aren't lavish but staff are friendly, and if you need an intern the lobby is often filled with MBA students collaborating on case studies. Long-term rates available.

**City Garden Hotel** (Map p93; % 899 1111; www.citygardenhotels.com; 7870 Makati Ave; s/d from P2200/2400; a i s ) This large place has 160 comfort-

able rooms spread out over 21 floors. It's got a rather slick style and its own health club. The pool is on the roof; views are great.

**Tower Inn** (Map pp86-7; % 888 5170; www.towerinn.com.ph; 1002 A Arnaiz Ave; s/d from P1800/2400; a i ) A modern and well-run place right across from Ayala Center, the Tower Inn has 48 rooms of varying luxury, but all are clean and well furnished. There's a rooftop whirlpool where you can let the day's cares bubble away.

**Best Western Astor Hotel** (Map p93; % 750 7564; www.bestwestern.com; 7835 Makati Ave; r from P3000; a i ) This new place is very attractive and has good service – that's the good news. The bad news is that this stretch of Makati Ave is a bit trashy. This is a good choice for business travellers on a budget.

**Sunette Tower** (Map p93; % 897 1804; www.sunette.com.ph; Durban St off Makati Ave; r from P2000; a i ) A condominium with a variety of 83 studios and apartments, all with kitchenettes. Rooms have broadband Internet and if you don't want to dirty your hands in the kitchen, you can arrange for a cook. Long-stay rates are available.

**Oxford Suites** (Map p93; % 632 6700; www.oxfordsuitesmakati.com; cnr Durban St & P Burgos St; r from US\$50; a ) This is an oasis of calm in the midst of seedy P Burgos St. The 147 rooms are spread over 27 floors. Service is very good and there's an in-house gym and business centre.

**El Cielito Inn** (Map pp86-7; % 815 8951; www.elcielito.inn.com; 804 A Arnaiz Ave; s/d from P1240/1500; a ) This simple workmanlike 60-room hotel is close to Ayala Center. Deluxe rooms feature fridges and extra room. The coffee shop is popular.

**Citadel Inn** (Map p93; % 897 2370; www.citadel-inn-makati.com; 5007 P Burgos St; r from P1950; a s ) This newish place is a sign that P Burgos St is gentrifying fast. There's a nice atrium pool. Part condo, many of the 118 rooms here are actually small apartments.

**Regine's Hotel** (Map p93; % 897 3888; www.regineshotel.com; 8429 Kalayaan Ave; studios daily/monthly P2200/45,000, 1-bedroom ste P3600/75,000; a ) This simple place is good for long-term stayers on a budget. You can usually get a discount on the published rates. The apartments aren't posh but are comfortable and popular with families.

**Great Eastern Hotel** (Map p93; % 898 2888; www.greateasternhotelmanila.com; 7842 Makati Ave; s/d/tw from P1399/1599/1699; a s ) This flashy high-rise has 75 nicely appointed rooms spread across five floors. Amenities include a health club and several restaurants. The pool is indoors on the 10th floor. If you get bored you can go for a joyride in the glass-walled elevator.

**Fersal Inn** (Map p93; % 897 9123; 107 Neptune St; r P1680; a ) The 33 rooms here are rather simple, although they're clean and comfortable. The outside is not promising but the staff are friendly and the low rates keep customers coming back (some taking advantage of the partial day rates).

#### TOP END

Manila's finest hotels are located in close proximity to each other in Makati. There's a decent rivalry between them and you can

often secure rates well below those published. Each of these hotels is a destination in itself and all have cafés, restaurants and bars popular with well-heeled locals.

**Peninsula Manila** (Map pp86-7; % 810 3456; www.peninsula.com; cnr Ayala Ave & Makati Ave; r from US\$280; n a i s ) A Makati veteran, the Peninsula has aged gracefully thanks to frequent facelifts. The café in the soaring lobby is a destination for many local movers and shakers. The 498 rooms boast every luxury from marble bathrooms to many electronic gadgets.

**Makati Shangri-La** (Map pp86-7; % 813 8888; www.shangri-la.com; cnr Ayala Ave & Makati Ave; r from US\$260; n a i s ) With a commanding position at this busy corner, the Shangri-La shelters its guests from the noise with compact but lush grounds. The public spaces bustle with comings and goings; the lobby café and various bars are quite popular. The 699 rooms are roomy and posh. Conway's Bar (see p103) is a favourite place to hear cover bands.

**Mandarin Oriental Manila** (Map pp86-7; % 750 8888; www.mandarinoriental.com; cnr Makati Ave & Paseo de Roxas; r from US\$280; n a i s ) The 371 rooms here have an eclectic décor right out of *Architectural Digest*. Service reaches legendary levels and most demands can be accommodated. There are almost a dozen top-flight cafés and restaurants.

**Dusit Hotel Nikko** (Map pp86-7; % 867 3333; www.dusit.com; cnr EDSA & A Arnaiz Ave, Ayala Center; r from P4500; n a i s ) These 542 well-appointed rooms are in one of the first five-star hotels to locate in Makati. Not overly elegant, the rates reflect its slightly more humble pretensions. The Ayala Center's delights are mere steps away.

**New World Renaissance Hotel** (Map pp86-7; % 811 6888; www.renaissancehotels.com; cnr Esperanza St & Makati Ave, Ayala Center; r from US\$250; n a i s ) Part of the vast Marriott family, this Ayala Center high-rise has 598 rooms. Such is the scale that the public spaces feel a bit like an office building. It's a good place for business and meetings. Rooms on high floors have sweeping views.

**Hotel InterContinental Manila** (Map pp86-7; % 815 9711; www.intercontinental.com; 1 Ayala Ave, Ayala Center; r from US\$140; n a i s ) One of Manila's oldest luxury hotels, the architecture recalls a time when windows were best kept small lest political upheaval break them. There's a large but slightly barren pool area and gardens.

The lobby, with its well-known coffee shop, is the setting for a pivotal scene in the seminal Manila novel *Dogeaters* (see p42).

**Oakwood Premier** (Map pp86-7; % 729 8888; www.oakwood.com; Glorietta 4, Ayala Center; studios from US\$200, 1-/2-/3-bedroom ste from US\$250/310/415; a i s ) This is pure corporate territory and has been the first home in Manila for many expat professionals. The plush apartments in the twin towers come with 24-hour concierge, daily maid service, health club, tennis courts, business centre and more. A side note: this is the place rogue elements of the army threatened to blow up in 2003.

#### Pasay

Hotels here that are close to Malate are good choices as they are not too isolated. The Westin is an exception, it succeeds *because* of its isolation. Beware of properties going south towards Baclaran and the airports; some are set along dusty, charmless streets.

#### MIDRANGE

**Orchid Garden Suites** (Map p84; % 523 9870; orchid@mydestiny.net; 620 P Ocampo Sr St, Malate; s/d from US\$55/60; a s ) An excellent and elegant choice that's also convenient to Malate. Guests stay in a modern tower block which has 89 very comfortable rooms, some with balconies. The lobby, bar and restaurant are located in a 1930s mansion designed by Pablo Antonio Sr. One of the highlights of staying here is breakfast on the terrace with a breeze blowing in from Manila Bay.

**Copacabana Apartment-Hotel** (Map p84; % 831 8711; www.copasuites.com; 264 EDSA Extension; studio/aprt from US\$36/49; a i s ) Convenient for the airports and EDSA, the units here vary from studios to three-bedroom apartments. There are balconies and delightful staff, which make up for the somewhat bleak locale. Monthly rates yield 40% savings over the daily rates.

#### TOP END

**Westin Philippine Plaza** (Map p84; % 551 5555; www.westin.com/manila; CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd; r from US\$180; n a i s ) Located right beside Manila Bay, the Westin is one of the successes of Imelda's CCP orgy: it's still standing and it remains popular. A refit in 2005 has given it new public spaces and even locals drop by for the dreamy sunsets over the bay. A lagoon-shaped swimming pool,

an 18-hole putting green and tennis courts heighten the feeling of being in a resort. Rooms are quite comfortable.

**Century Park Hotel** (Map p84; % 528 8888; www.centurypark.com; 599 P Ocampo Sr St, Malate; r from \$200; n a i s ) An All Nippon Airways (ANA) hotel with well-maintained rooms, courteous service and a full range of amenities such as wi-fi. The Top of the Century piano bar on the 19th floor offers stunning views of Manila Bay. There's balconies overlooking a verdant pool area.

**Traders Hotel Manila** (Map p84; % 523 7011; www.shangri-la.com; 3001 Roxas Blvd; s/d from US\$110/120; n a i s ) Run by Shangri-La Hotels, this large property with 219 rooms straddles Malate and Pasay. The hotel is popular with Japanese business travellers and boasts a high level of service and a front-row view of the CCP.

#### Quezon City

This area is removed from more central parts of Manila such as Makati and Malate, but it has a neighbourhood feel and there is a thriving nightlife.

#### MIDRANGE

**New Camelot Hotel** (Map p88; % 373 2101; cameloth@edsamail.com.ph; 35 Mother Ignacia Ave; r P1300-1800; a ) Easily the most incongruous hotel in Manila, this faux Ye Olde England place is all Knights of the Round Table. If they just could add a dose of Monty Python's *Spamalot* they'd be on to something. The 127 rooms feature fake suits of armour and the like – this is the place to indulge your Lancelot fantasies.

**Imperial Palace Suites** (Map p88; % 411 0116; www.imperial.ph; cnr Timog Ave & T Morato Ave; r US\$70, ste from US\$80; a i s ) Now part of French behemoth Accor, the Imperial offers 130 studios and suites with kitchenettes. There is a gym and rooftop pool; the hotel is close to Quezon City's nightlife.

**Rembrandt Hotel** (Map p88; % 373 3333; www.hotelrembrandt.com.ph; 26 T Morato Ave; r P2300-2700; a ) This is a good choice if you have business in the area. The heavy drapes and blankets would have done right by the hotel's namesake during a dreary Dutch winter; you may just wish to turn up the air-con.

**Sulo Hotel** (Map p88; % 924 5051; www.sulohotel.com.ph; Matalino St; s/d from P1800/2200; a s ) A business hotel with excellent service near

Quezon City Hall and the corner of East Ave. The 68 rooms are set back from the tree-lined street. There are discounts for long stays.

### Ortigas Center

With its dense concentration of shopping malls and high-rises, Ortigas Center (which sits on the border of Quezon City, Mandaluyong and Pasig) has become Manila's second-biggest business and commercial hub. However, it's still got a lot of work to do to find its soul.

### MIDRANGE

**Legend Hotel** (Map pp72-3; % 633 1501; www.angel-fire.com/id/legend1/welcome.html; cnr Pioneer St & Madisson St, Mandaluyong City; r P2200-3400; a i s ) Offers 117 spacious, comfortable rooms in a complex of three-storey buildings. Next to the reception area is a compact pool surrounded by tropical plants. Rates are inclusive of buffet breakfast. There are Jacuzzi baths in the deluxe rooms.

### TOP END

**Edsa Shangri-La Hotel** (Map pp72-3; % 633 8888; www.shangri-la.com; 1 Gardenway, Mandaluyong City; r from US\$180; n a i s ) The 658 rooms here have a simple elegance. Spread out over two high-rises, many overlook the hotel's extensive gardens. Service is excellent and the Shangri-La is the area's business hub.

### EATING

The range of food options in Manila befits a huge city. You can truly get anything. Quality at the best places is superb and prices are relatively low, even at exclusive establishments aimed at the well heeled.

Neighbourhoods most likely to yield a great meal include Malate, Makati and Quezon City. But you can find good places all over and it's worth seeking out good restaurants in Intramuros, Ermita, Chinatown and elsewhere.

If you just want a snack there's the whole crowd of fast-food options led by the ubiquitous Jollibee, but you can usually find a locally owned option close by. Markets, too, especially in the older parts of town, can yield all sorts of unpolished wonders.

Most restaurants have some tables in air-con dining rooms while others will be open-air. Casual wear is the order of the day everywhere.

### Intramuros

There's a few good choices here – but fewer than you would think. To go really casual, look for the **open-air barbecue places** (Map p76; Santa Lucia St; meals from P50; h after dusk) near the Baluarte de Santa Lucia.

**Ilustrado** (Map p76; % 527 3674; 744 General Luna St; mains P300-1000; a ) Set in a reconstructed Spanish-era house, it has a popular coffee shop which is open through the day and a more formal dining area (open for lunch and dinner). The Spanish and Filipino food at both is elaborately prepared; specialities include pork chops in a spicy sauce.

**Barbara's** (Map p76; % 527 3893; Plaza San Luis Complex, General Luna St; meals P250-600; h lunch & dinner Mon-Sat; a ) Here diners sit under a huge crystal chandelier in a room that looks like a 19th-century European salon; it's regal but a bit stuffy. The food is a traditional combination of Spanish and Filipino. The lunch buffet is popular.

**Ledan's Cafe** (Map p76; % 523 3128; Chamber 12, Murralla St; meals P100-300; h 10am-midnight Mon-Fri; a ) Built into the side of the walls, this simple coffee place has good local food and drinks.

### Rizal Park

A string of waterfront restaurants serve up fresh fish from holding tanks. The breezes can be delightful on sweltering days, but just check the wind direction as sometimes it sends the bay's insalubrious flotsam into malodorous piles along the piers.

**Harbor View** (Map pp80-1; % 524 1532; South Blvd; dishes from P150; h 11am-midnight) Hard to beat for its combination of hearty Filipino fare and laid-back ambience. The restaurant is actually on a jetty, but you'll be under the illusion you're out cruising on the bay. This place has the best trash-free location.

**Seafood Wharf** (Map pp80-1; % 400 5066; South Blvd; meals P200-600) The cooks here will prepare whatever selection you make from the fresh seafood on display. Hostesses helpfully point out that the offerings *don't* come from the bay. Sunday breakfast buffets (P200) lure in expat throngs. The complex also has an impressive swimming pool (see p87).

**Pantalan Maynila** (Map pp80-1; % 400 4371; South Blvd; mains P300-600) Locally a favourite, the menu is as long as the ocean is deep. The seafood is pretty reasonable (ask for lots of garlic) except for that huge lobster in the corner; he'll set you back P3000.

### Binondo & Santa Cruz

These old neighbourhoods across the river from Intramuros are home to Chinatown and several large markets. The whole area is made for wandering and stopping at will for sustenance.

### RESTAURANTS

**President Restaurant** (Map p82; % 244 7235; 746-750 Ongpin St, Santa Cruz; mains P120-600 h 10am-11pm; a ) The President holds the distinction of being the oldest restaurant in Chinatown. Gather a group of 12 people and come here for a *lauriat* (banquet). They start at P6000. Otherwise you can order off the typically ginormous menu. Birthday parties abound.

**Mandarin Palace** (Map p82; % 736 5767; 789-793 Ongpin St, Santa Cruz; meals P150-600; h 6am-10pm; a ) One of the big restaurants in Chinatown, it specialises in seafood dinners, as you might infer from the tanks of fish swimming at the door. A bit stark, but the lunch buffets are popular.

### CAFÉS

These teahouses range from the traditional to modern.

**Hap Chan** (Map p82; % 733 3710; 649 T Mapua St, Santa Cruz; dishes P100-200; h 6am-3am; a ) One of the more popular teahouses, it specialises in hotpot dishes, but also serves dim sum, noodles and rice dishes. It's small, clean and unadorned.

**MXT** (Map p82; % 734 4193; 965 Ongpin St, Binondo; dishes P25-100; a ) Offers *mami* (noodles in soup), its specialty *siopao* (steamed dumplings with meat filling) and various dim sum for very low prices. A window lets you buy from the pavement.

**President Tea House** (Map p82; % 243 9079; 809-813 Salazar St, Santa Cruz; dishes P50-200; a ) No relation to President Restaurant, this place is boldly decorated and is as neat as a red-and-white pin. The dim sum is great and there's much more on the menu.

### QUICK EATS

**Ling Nam Noodle Factory and Wonton Parlor** (Map p82; % 733 5231; 616 Alonzo St, Santa Cruz; meals P100; a ) The name alone should tell you that the noodles are fresh here. Pots steam like mad, air conditioners roar and happy patrons lap up tasty and simple fare.

**Tasty Dumplings** (Map p82; % 244 8654; 960 Magsangay St, Binondo; meals P50-80; h 10am-9pm; a )

The name says it all at this modern little place. The meatball soup is excellent.

**Happy Veggie** (Map p82; % 245 9257; 958 Magsangay St, Binondo; meals P50-150; h 10am-8pm; a ) The interior here is as brightly coloured as a ripe melon. Like so many local places, the name leaves little doubt as to what's on offer here. Many items have more appealing names than the 'Fungus & Ball Soup'.

### SELF-CATERING

The many markets in the area (see p107) are good places to grab a snack. Off Quintin Paredes St in Binondo is a small alley – Carvajal St (Map p82) – lined on both sides with stalls piled with fruits, sweets and freshly roasted chestnuts.

**Salazar Bakery** (Map p82; % 733 1392; 783 Ongpin St, Santa Cruz; rolls from P20; h 6am-9pm; a ) This immaculate store is redolent with the smell of freshly baked treats. All manner of filled rolls are sold individually wrapped and ready to go.

**MB Bakery** (Map p82; cnr Clavel St & Madrid St, San Nicolas) An ancient bakery still selling treats and bread to the neighbourhood. Come during daylight hours.

### Ermita & Malate

The variety here is enormous, with all kinds of food for all kinds of budgets. The streets in and around J Nakpil St are popular at all hours and some of Manila's best places can be found here. Unlike other parts of Ermita and Malate, the pavement here is in top repair and there's almost a genteel feel at night. Remedios Circle is funkier and has many places good for sitting outside and absorbing the action.

### RESTAURANTS

#### Filipino

**Aristocrat** (Map pp80-1; % 524 7671; cnr Roxas Blvd & San Andres St, Malate; meals P150-400; h 24hr; a ) First opened in 1936, this institution has served Filipino food at reasonable prices to several generations of customers. It feels like a huge, brightly lit coffee shop, and it's hugely popular (just to stay thematic, the menu is huge too).

**Cafe Adriatico Premiere** (Map p90; % 525 2509; 1790 M Adriatico St, Malate; meals P200-400; h 24hr; a ) A good place for a snack or a meal, the small tables here have views of the action on Remedios Circle. Serves a wide array of Filipino

and Spanish dishes in a converted old house done up in traditional Filipino style.

**Bistro Remedios** (Map p90; % 523 9153; M Adriatico St, Malate; h lunch & dinner; a ) Country specialities from Pampanga province, which is renowned for its barbecued meats such as spare ribs, star here. If you like it rich, try some *bulalo*, chunks of tender beef shank and marrow in a steaming hot broth.

**Zamboanga Restaurant** (Map p90; % 525 8828; 1619 M Adriatico St, Malate; most dishes P200-500; h 10am-11pm; a ) Sup on a variety of spicy Zamboangan seafood dishes (try the crab) – then enjoy a dinner show of traditional Filipino dance at 8.30pm nightly.

## Asian

**Sea Food Market** (Map p90; % 521 6766; 1190 J Bocobo St, Ermita; meals from P400; h lunch & dinner; a ) Probably the best-known seafood place in town. You select the raw ingredients from an iced-down counter or a fish tank, after which a team of chefs will cook your meal in the flaming wok-filled kitchen (a show in itself, especially from the pavement in front).

**Kashmir** (Map p90; % 523 1521; P Faura St, Ermita; meals P200-400; h 11am-11pm; a ) The dining room is appealing from the moment you enter, with a rich mix of décor that reflects the menu which travels from Malaysia to India. The roti melt in your mouth and the curries fire up the tastebuds.

**Korean Palace** (Map p90; % 521 6695; cnr M Adriatico St & Remedios St, Malate; meal P200-500; h 10am-1.30am; a ) Still the best Korean restaurant in town, as shown by its popularity with the local Korean expat community. The simple interior is abuzz with gossip and feasting.

**Cafe Nakpil** (Map p90; % 524 1093; 644 J Nakpil St, Malate; mains P250-400; h 6pm-2am Mon-Sat; a ) A cascade of paper lanterns draws you in from the street to this stylish little Asian bistro. The curries are excellent, with fragrant Thai spices enlivening the atmosphere. Pavement tables are the pick and smooth jazz sets the mood.

**Korean Village** (Map p90; % 524 4958; 1783 M Adriatico St, Malate; meals from P200; h lunch & dinner; a ) This place is huge, but the service is friendly, the beer is cheap, and the beef barbecue meal hits the spot.

**Mey Lin** (Map p90; % 450 0262; 1717 Adriatico St, Malate; mains P100-200; h lunch & dinner; i a ) Hand-pulled noodles prepared in the front

window are the draw at this smart little place. The décor is as bright and sparkly as the service. There are 20 kinds of fresh noodle soups plus much more, including free wi-fi.

**Sala Thai** (Map pp80-1; % 522 4694; 870 J Nakpil St, Malate; meals P100-150; h lunch & dinner Mon-Sat; a ) One of the oldest Thai restaurants in Manila, it's as faded as the sign out front. But the flavours aren't faded; recall a time when beer came in a can and you were happy it was cold.

## Western

**Sala** (Map p90; % 524 6770; 610 J Nakpil St, Malate; meals from P1300; h lunch & dinner; a ) One of Manila's finest restaurants, Sala is a refined European bistro. The décor is done in shades of green and cream, the perfect backdrop for the flattering lights. The changing menu features fusion dishes with an emphasis on simple mains seasoned creatively with organic herbs. Sunday brunch features Eggs Benedict and other treats.

**Patio Guernica** (Map p90; % 521 4415; cnr J Bocobo St & Remedios Circle, Malate; meals P200-400; h lunch & dinner; a ) A long-established Spanish eatery that specialises in Iberian dishes such as paella. Although patrons are casual in attire, the place is nicely dressed in beige tablecloths and dark woods.

**Bravo!** (Map p90; % 303 3508; cnr J Nakpil St & M Adriatico St, Malate; mains P250-500; h noon-midnight Sun-Thu, noon-2.30am Fri & Sat; a ) There's a touch of stylish Milan at this bustling place, which has nice pavement tables surrounded by plants. The menu of pasta and pizza is long and authentic. Many deli items are available for takeaway.

**Komiks Cafe** (Map p90; % 526 2547; cnr J Nakpil St & Maria Y Orosa St, Malate; mains P200-300; h 6pm-6am; a ) Part of a trendy tribe of places that includes the infamous Bed (see p104), this cute café lives up to its name with murals of Filipino comic characters leaping from the walls. The food is excellent, especially the house speciality, chicken with mango.

**Cafe Havana** (Map p90; % 521 8097; cnr M Adriatico St & Remedios St, Malate; mains P200-300; h 11am-3am; a ) Conjure the illusion that you're in Havana just before the city's fall to Castro. You can opt to have an all-Cuban evening starting with Cuba Libre and ending with a Cuban Cohiba Esplendido cigar, with some Arroz a la Cubana in between. It's busy

serving local partiers until late and many revitalize with the good fresh fruit drinks.

**Casa Armas** (Map p90; % 523 0189; J Nakpil St, Malate; meals P300-600; h 11am-2am Mon-Sat, 6pm-midnight Sun; a ) This spot has built a dedicated following since it opened more than a decade ago. There's a long tapas menu and the bar is popular for a relaxing *rojo*. There's very much the atmospheric feel of a bodega here.

**Ciboney** (Map p90; % 450 1178; Remedios Circle; mains P200-400; h 5pm-3am; a ) Named in honour of Cuba's Ciboney tribe, this place has colourful cocktails, danceable live music and an exotic menu of snacks and mains. Infectiously happy, it has Caribbean ambience and tables on a veranda overlooking Remedios Circle.

## CAFÉS

**604 Cafe Gallery** (Map p90; % 303 7355; 604 Remedios St, Malate; snacks P50-100; h 6pm-2am Tue-Sat; a ) A funky place right off the circle, with pillows on the floor and local art on the walls.

**Demitasse Cafe Bar** (Map p90; % 400 6415; 548 Remedios St, Malate; snacks P50-100; h 5pm-3am) Another funky café off Remedios Circle, Demitasse has lots of shady tables in front and plenty more in the long, cool, dark interior.

**Sidebar** (Map p90; % 523 2063; 1771 Adriatico St; snacks P50-150; h 4pm-midnight; a ) Overlooking a strip of bars, Sidebar is a good place for a drink or a snack while you strategize your night. Tables outside are separated from the hustle by a row of sturdy palms.

## QUICK EATS

**Robinsons Place** (p108) has the usual enormous food court littered with fast-food choices as well as family-run outlets.

**Shwarma Snack Center** (Map p90; % 525 4541; 485 R Salas St, Ermita; meals P50-150; h 24hr) This simple open-air Middle Eastern place could be an MBA case study: a sign proclaims 'It takes months to find a customer; seconds to lose one'. And they surely haven't lost any as the food is fresh and tasty and the surroundings spotless.

**Kink Cakes** (Map p90; % 404 1693; cnr Pedro Gil St & M Adriatico St, Malate; cakes from P100; h 10am-6pm Mon-Sat; a ) Eat in or out at this home to anatomically correct treats. An eight-inch penis cake will set you back a stiff P850. More diminutive treats are available for on-site consumption.

**Farmacia Fatima** (Map pp80-1; % 524 4705; 1428 Taft Ave, Ermita; meals P50-100; h 6am-9pm) Amid a row of open-air pharmacies, this classic soda fountain is ready to serve everything from a whole fried fish to a tasty *halu-halo* (flamboyant fruit dessert).

## SELF-CATERING

**Bravo!** (opposite) has Italian deli items for take-away. There are large supermarkets in Robinsons Place (p108).

## Makati

You are only limited by your ability to choose when you eat in Makati. There's something for every budget and taste. In fact the restaurants in the Greenbelt 2 and 3 shopping malls (p108) are among the best and most popular in Manila. On any night, hordes of people stroll past the many fine restaurants on various levels pondering which one to select. It's a fun scene.

The up-and-coming Fort Bonifacio area (aka The Fort), technically part of Taguig but really an extension of Makati, is also becoming a culinary hot spot. There are numerous good restaurants in The Fort. Almost every place in Makati, especially those in Greenbelt, has both air-con dining rooms and large outdoor patios that are perfect for people-watching.

## RESTAURANTS

### Filipino

**Sentro 1771** (Map pp86-7; % 757 3940; level 2, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; meals from P300; h lunch & dinner; a ) This is the best place in Makati for local food. The setting is upscale but the food remains true to its roots. Dishes are served with flair and among the many winners are the garlicky *adobo* with chunks of meat that are both crispy and meltingly tender. Sit outside and enjoy the passing parade.

**Masas** (Map pp86-7; % 757 4030; ground level, Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center; meals P300-600; h 11am-midnight Sun-Thu, 11am-3am Fri & Sat; a ) A high-concept version of local food is served in this trendy spot. Look for elaborate dishes like the seared tuna belly. The patio is often mobbed.

**Dad's** (Map pp86-7; % 892 8898; level 2, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center; meals P200-500; h lunch & dinner; a ) At noon on weekdays nearby offices empty out and crowds descend here for what's dubbed 'the ultimate buffet'. It is vast, and pretty much every Filipino dish you can think



of then some is on offer. And it's not just steam-table classics; the salads, fresh fruit and desserts are yummy.

### Asian

**Zen** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 892 6851; ground level, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center; mains P200-300; 11am-11pm; a ) There's a lively energy laid over traditional Japanese décor at this hip and popular place. The sashimi, sushi and curries are popularly priced.

**Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 867 3333; cnr EDSA & A Arnaiz Ave, Ayala Center; meals from P600; 11am-11pm; a ) Manila's best Thai restaurant is hidden away on the second level of the Dusit Hotel Nikko. The dining room is elegant, befitting the 'royal' moniker. The cuisine is both lavish and inventive.

**Tiananmen** (Map p93; ☎ 897 1992; cnr Dapo St & Makati Ave; meals P300; 5pm-3am; a ) The Chinese food here is spicy; that may be your primary sense of it, as the surroundings are moodily dark in this hip little restaurant-cum-bar. Infidels will find a few pizzas and local dishes bringing up the rear of the menu. Drinks are predictably good and varied.

**Banana Leaf Curry House** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 812 8618; ground level, The Plaza, Greenbelt, Ayala Center; meals P300-500; 11am-3pm & 6-10pm; a ) This long-running Makati veteran has an attractive dining room overlooking Greenbelt Park. The flavours are both subtle and complex. The curries are much loved as are the many spicy crab dishes.

### THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

**People's Palace** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 729 2888; ground level, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; meals from P400; 11am-11pm; a ) When this popular Thai restaurant moved from Malate to Makati it signalled the shift in the balance between the two popular entertainment areas. Dishes here are sprightly and the emphasis is on form over function; the design inside and out is high concept. But the real pleasure here is sitting at one of the terrace tables outside and letting the Greenbelt parade pass you by. The trees of the park are at your back, in front is a great scene of people out to see and be seen, to find some fun, make a connection or just enjoy who they're with. It's Filipinos in their element.

**Ziggurat** (Map p93; ☎ 897 5179; just off Makati Ave; meals from P200; 11am-11pm; a ) Half open-air restaurant, half pillow-covered bazaar, Ziggurat takes its inspirations from India, the Middle East and Africa. Outside you can enjoy a hookah in a setting that manages to slightly evoke a desert tent somewhere. The menu is long and includes kebabs, chutneys, curries and Moroccan *tajines*.

### Western

**Gourmand** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 815 8801; G/F Net One Center; mains P400; 11am-11pm; a ) The most notable place to eat in The Fort, this is a delectable little French bistro with a menu of classics like *steak frites*.

**Nuvo** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 757 3699; ground level, Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center; meals P500-1000; 11am-11pm; a ) An attractive curved bar welcomes you to this temple of modern fusion cuisine. One of Manila's best restaurants, Nuvo emphasises seafood on its changing menu that melds east and west. Stuffiness is kept at bay by whimsical touches amid the elegance.

**Il Ponticello** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 887 7168; level 2, 121 Valero St; meals P300-500; 11am-11pm; a ) Hidden away in a nondescript office block, this authentic Italian trattoria has a long menu of favourites including pizza and risotto. It's a good alternative to the proliferating chains and there's a bit of Old World formality about the place.

**Italianni's** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 728 0283; ground level, Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center; mains P200-500; a ) New York-style Italian food stars, which means thick tomato sauce, great meatballs and big portions. One of the most popular places on this popular strip of restaurants, the staff here takes motivation seriously: group cheers are common.

**My LK** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 757 4802; level 2, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; meals P200-500; 11am-11pm; a ) The LK stands for Little Kitchen but that doesn't stop chef Melissa Sison from creating some wonderful fresh dishes such as salads and sandwiches. The pasta menu is good and there are many specials depending on what's fresh. The interior is a nice study in soothing white and green.

**La Tienda** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 890 4123; 43 Polaris St; mains P200-600; 11am-11pm; a ) A real find, this authentic bodega is set back from the street in its own little compound. The bar is popular and many come just to savour a fine glass of red wine. The menu is vast

and includes tapas, paella and a long list of steaks. There's a good, small deli.

**Gaudi** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 757 2710; level 4, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; meals P300-600; 11am-11pm; a ) The sinuous style of the eponymous Barcelona architect is much on display at this dramatic Spanish restaurant, which enjoys sweeping views of the Makati skyline. The menu is authentic and features paella, grilled meats and tapas.

**Rastro** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 898 0957; ground level, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center; dishes P150-300; 11am-11pm; a ) A star among the Rockwell Center restaurant row, this tapas place has a long list of plates to choose from. There's a rich interior that opens onto a nice patio. Over it all is a good mix of jazz.

**Dome** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 813 6672; Dela Rosa St; meals P200-300; a ) A French bistro in a part of town that's not blessed by many restaurants, Dome has good breakfasts, sandwiches and salads served through the day as well as pasta and pizza.

**Grappa's** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 499 6976; 215 Nicanor Garcia St; mains P300-600; a ) In a neighbourhood of interior-design shops, Grappa's is a huge place with a menu of Italian classics to match. The wood-fired pizzas are tops as are the many pastas. Its high ceiling helps disperse the noise from the many families who flock here. The short breakfast menu will get you started as well.

**Schwarzwälder German Restaurant** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 893 5179; ground level, The Atrium, Makati Ave; mains from P200; a ) Schnitzel abounds at this long-standing German restaurant. Baked goods are sought by European expats, and the salad bar is popular. This is a good spot for a real 'continental' breakfast.

### CAFÉS

**Lumiere** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 812 2976; A Locsin Bldg, cnr Makati Ave & Ayala Ave; snacks from P100; 11am-10pm Tue-Sun; a i ) Lumiere is luminescent in sashes of white and is a little refuge away from the Makati hustle. Popular with local artists and creative types, it is a good place to while away a few hours lost in thought or discussion.

**Museum Cafe** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 757 3000; Ayala Museum, Greenbelt 4, Ayala Center; dishes P200-300; a ) Enter the pages of *Vogue* at this light-as-a-feather café across from the Ayala Museum. The nibbles are sublime and drinks come with fresh veggies and spicy dips. Be beautiful

inside or at the tables overlooking Greenbelt Park. More substantial food includes hearty breakfasts and good lunch sandwiches.

**Caffe Ricco Renzo** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 898 2542; 210 Nicanor Garcia St; meals P200-300; a ) Part cultural centre, part gallery (p106) and part café, this delightful place oozes charm from the moment you walk in and hear the soothing fountain. You won't be surprised that the menu is eclectic; salads and sandwiches are excellent. There's live jazz on Friday night.

**Max Brenner** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 728 8801; ground level, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; snacks P200; a ) This jazzy outlet of the revered chain of chocolate shops has all the rich drinks and treats you'd expect. There's also a small menu of breakfast items and heartier fare served through the day.

**Confusion** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 887 5203; cnr Alfaro St & Sedeño St; snacks P200; 11am-9pm; a ) Finding this little place tucked into an area of residential high-rises may well have been the name's inspiration. Enjoy a drink at the tables inside or out. There's a short menu of snacks and meals, the most notable of which are the superb cheese sticks, redolent with garlic.

**Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 757 6002; ground level, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; drinks P50-100; i a ) Part of the chain found throughout town, this is a better choice than the chain whose name rhymes with 'sucks'. It's a smart setting inside and out, and the drinks are many and varied. Good iced tea and free wi-fi.

**Cafe Via Mare** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 898 1305; ground level, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center; meals from P200; a ) You can get a snack or a meal at this trendy little spot on a busy corner of the Rockwell Center. The coffee is authentically Italian while the dishes are an upscale mix of Filipino standards.

### QUICK EATS

Makati is home to every sort of fast-food place imaginable. In the malls, the centres of Glorietta and Greenbelt 1 (see p108) have the greatest variety. Up near Makati Ave and P Burgos St are a bunch of little places that are not part of any chains.

**North Park Noodles** (Map p93; ☎ 896 3475; 1200 Makati Ave; meals P110-220; 11am-11pm Sun-Thu, 24hr Fri & Sat; a ) Get what some consider to be the best bowl of Chinese noodles in town. It's a sleek little place with a minimalist stainless-steel style.

**Eat** (Map pp86-7; level 3, RCBC Plaza, cnr Ayala Ave & Sen Gil Puyat Ave; h lunch Mon-Fri; a ) The name is helpful to workers at the surrounding banks who, dazed by a morning of spreadsheets, turn up at lunch and don't know what to do. This vast circular food court features a myriad of stalls serving fresh and cheap fare. You pay as you exit.

#### SELF-CATERING

There are large supermarkets in the shopping malls. **Biggest by far is the SM Department Store** (Map pp86-7; % 810 7677; Ayala Center) between Glorietta Mall and the Ayala MRT station. Smaller but useful is **Rustan's Supermarket** (Map pp86-7; % 813 3739; Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center).

**La Tienda**, the Spanish restaurant (p100), has an excellent small deli (open 10am to 10pm). There's an **organic farmers market** (Map pp86-7; h Sat) in a tiny park at the corner of Leviste St and Toledo St.

#### Pasay

There's a surprising lack of restaurant options outside of the Pasay hotels in and around the CCP. You can always try the hotels, which each have numerous options (see p95), or hit one of the myriad fast-food places along Roxas Blvd or EDSA.

**Figaro Coffee** (Map p84; % 833 7595; P Ocampo Sr St; meals P50-150; a ) This local chain has a delightful outlet right across from the CCP. The coffee, as usual, is good and there are fresh sandwiches and other meals. The building echoes the look of the CCP on a Lilliputian scale.

#### Quezon City

Quezon City has great nightlife. T Morato Ave is lined with an energetic mix of places serving a huge variety of cuisines. Things are a bit more relaxed here compared to the often frantic feel of Makati.

**Restaurant Uno** (Map p88; % 374 0774; 195 T Morato Ave; mains P300-600; h lunch & dinner; a ) This gem of a restaurant is slightly off the T Morato strip, which is all for the better as you can dine on the seductive upper balcony in relative peace. Inside, the seasonal fusion menu is complemented by a minimalist style. Recommended.

**Heaven 'n Eggs** (Map p88; % 376 2674; cnr T Morato Ave & Scout Rallos St; meals P120-200; h 7am-1am; a ) This tasty coffee shop avoids the shtick of the '50s American diner motif, albeit at the

cost of the staff having to wear little angel wings. The gorgeous omelettes, waffles, sandwiches, pasta and more are served in a soothing blue and yellow interior.

**Zucchini's** (Map p88; % 925 0789; 66 Timog Ave; meals from P400; h lunch & dinner; a ) A small and inviting restaurant with an open kitchen, Zucchini's takes global inspiration although there's always a few pastas and risottos on the changing menu. There's a good wine list with choices from US\$22.

**My Spoon** (Map p88; % 929 9965; 143 Mother Ignacia Ave; mains P150-500; h lunch & dinner; a ) The soaring ceilings inside and the tables outside give My Spoon an environmental feel that melds with the large trees out front. Black with accents of magenta provide a dramatic backdrop for global cuisine served with great attention to presentation.

**Red Crab** (Map p88; % 374 8406; 104 T Morato Ave; mains P200-400; h lunch & dinner; a ) This outlet of the small Manila chain is all things crab, from the crab origami decorating the stylish dining room to the myriad of crab preparations on the menu. There's lots of other seafood items on the menu but you can never go wrong with Thai chilli crab.

**Gerry's Grill** (Map p88; % 373 9166; cnr T Morato Ave & Scout Albano St; meals P100-250; h 11am-1am; a ) This outlet of the popular local chain packs 'em in with a long menu of Filipino favourites plus burgers, salads and more. Families love the place and you can catch the odd TV personality ducking in for a drink from the ABS-CBN studios across the street.

**Bellini's** (Map p88; % 913 2550; Marikina Shoe Expo, Gen Romulo Ave, Cubao; meals P150-250; h lunch & dinner; a ) This hip little Italian café serves good pizzas under the watchful gaze of an eclectic wall of fame (photos of purported customers). It's popular with local artists, many of whom have shops in adjoining storefronts.

#### DRINKING

As well as the many bars in this section, many cafés are good places to enjoy a couple of drinks. Across most of these listings, you can assume that on at least some nights of the week, there will be cover bands belting out their own special versions of tunes you've heard a few times before.

#### Malate

The area around J Nakpil St is the centre of Manila's new young bar scene. Due to the

fickleness of fashion, many of these bars disappear after just one season. There are other good choices throughout the area including a strip of places on M Adriatico St near Remedios Circle.

**Sonata** (Map p90; % 523 9680; Maria Y Orosa St; h 5pm-1am Mon-Thu, 5pm-4am Fri & Sat) The genteel front bar for notorious Bed (p104), Sonata features acoustic live music from 9pm Thursday to Saturday. You can enjoy the good menu of snacks and pasta on the patio.

**Castro at Firma** (Map p90; % 525 5001; 616 J Nakpil St; h 7pm-5am; a ) Downstairs it's a beguiling shop of Filipino arts and crafts (see p107), upstairs the lights go low and it's a gay-friendly bar with low-slung sofas and a long list of smooth drinks. It's a popular haunt with the post-club crowd.

**Suburbia** (Map p90; % 450 1685; 1718 M Adriatico St; cover from P300; h 7.30pm-1am Mon-Thu, until 2.30am Fri & Sat; a ) This live-music venue features well-known local artists playing acoustic and pop; it's best late.

**Hobbit House** (Map p90; % 521 7604; A Mabini St; h 5pm-3am; a ) Riding on the fame of *The Lord of the Rings*, this long-running folk-music club is staffed by little people. Some people find it a delight, others snap a lot of photos and others find it a bit exploitative.

**Anthology** (Map p90; % 523 4975; M Adriatico St; h 5pm-3am Mon-Sat; a ) This large, multi-level place has an old prop plane sticking out of its second story. There's live acoustic music nightly.

**Ciboney** (Map p90; % 450 1178; Remedios Circle; h 5pm-3am; a ) This fine place for a drink is also a good restaurant (see p99).

**LA Café** (Map pp80-1; h 526 7592; M H del Pilar St; h 24hr; a ) A long-running favourite with expats looking not just for a game of pool, but a rowdy crowd and a raunchy atmosphere. There's lots of unattached people (at least while they are inside the bar) and it's a good question as to who is picking up who.

**Cowboy Grill** (Map p90; % 525 1474; cnr A Mabini St & Arquiza St; h 6pm-4am; a ) This huge place fills its two levels nightly with fans of country and western music. There's several bands every night. The energy is fuelled with cheap pitchers of beer and cheap slabs of steak.

#### Makati

There are some good nightspots in Makati, specifically at Ayala Center and north along Polaroid St.

#### STREET FOOD

The kind of food stalls commonly found in some Southeast Asian countries are conspicuously absent from the streets of Manila, but there are roadside *carinderia*, or canteens. These basic eateries, often family owned, display a selection of pre-cooked dishes on a counter or in a glass case. They usually include *adobo* (pork and/or chicken cooked in vinegar, soy sauce and garlic), *sinigang* (pork, fish or prawns in sour soup) and various preparations of *bangús* (milkfish, native to the Philippines). These places are called *turu-turó* (literally point-point) as ordering is a simple case of pointing at whatever takes your fancy.

**Ice Vodka Bar** (Map pp86-7; % 757 4472; level 3, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; h 6pm-3am; a ) As the icy image of vodka might suggest, things are a stark black and white here. But that only helps set off the many beautiful people who flock in nightly.

**Handlebar** (Map pp86-7; % 898 1976; 31 Polaris St; h noon-2am; a ) An unusual combination of locals and expats mingle here to the beat of high-end cover bands. The motif is Harley and there's pitchers of beer you can use to wash down a steak – or pour on your neighbour. Tables under the big tree in front are leafy delights.

**Heckle & Jeckle** (Map pp86-7; % 890 6904; Jupiter St; h 2pm-5am; a ) A good, mellow bar that's almost free of décor. The jovial regulars, occasional stand-up comedy, live football on TV, pool tables and delightful staff are the real atmosphere. A good place to kick back with a few beers.

**Conway's Bar** (Map pp86-7; % 813 8888; Makati Shangri-La, cnr Ayala Ave & Makati Ave; h 5pm-midnight Mon-Thu, 5pm-1am Fri & Sat; a ) Gets packed with yuppies, expats and all sorts of characters out to hear top cover bands, like the self-defined Spirit of '67. Many people book tables.

**Merks Bar Bistro** (Map pp86-7; % 757 4720; level 3, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; h 5pm-2am; a ) This breezy place on a terrace has good views of the park and Makati skyline. Happy Hour runs 5.30pm to 8.30pm and there's live music most nights.

**Sid's Bar** (Map pp86-7; % 898 3522; 114 Jupiter St; h noon-2am; a ) This could be a British expat bar anywhere the world over. Cross

through the shaded doors and enter a world of pints and football. Huge-screen TVs show matches non-stop.

**Hard Rock Café** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 893 4661; Glorietta 4, Ayala Center; h 11am-3am; a ) Manila's own contribution to the grievous global chain. It has a good rep for live rock and jazz almost every night.

### Quezon City

The nearby University of the Philippines Manila means that there's no shortage of youthful exuberance in bars here. Besides the places on T Morato Ave, there are several more rowdy joints on Timog Ave. Many would do any college spring-breaker proud with all-you-can-drink tequila contests and the like. Think of it as a chance to get blotto and then find out your friends have taken mobile-phone pictures of your shame and sent them everywhere.

**Sharky's Bar & Grill** (Map p88; ☎ 928 5696; 98 Timog Ave; h 4pm-2am; a ) Totally open air, this one packs 'em in with cheap beer and the lure of local snack fave, the chicken lollipop (a sort of Chicken McNugget with an even less noble heritage).

**Tubbataha Divers Grill** (Map p88; ☎ 372 4761; 295 T Morato Ave; h noon-2am) Have a beer and soak up the Morato action from this open-air throwback to a time when faux-Polynesian style was all the rage. There's nothing pretentious here.

### ENTERTAINMENT

Thanks to the country's free-wheeling ethos and to the Filipinos' essentially easygoing nature, Manila's nightlife is probably the most diverse in Southeast Asia. Finding out what's going on will be your greatest challenge. The newspapers cover pop culture sporadically and there's no comprehensive listings magazine or website. Your best bet is the free monthly pamphlet 24/7.

### Nightclubs

Manila clubs span the gamut – from the hyper-trendy to the funky. The best ones are scattered all over town, so you may need a taxi if you want to go hopping. Cover charges vary from nothing to as much as P200 or more at hotspots.

**Bed** (Map p90; ☎ 536 3045; cnr J Nakpil St & Maria Y Orosa St, Malate; h 9pm-6am; a ) This infamous place is known for its wild gay and straight

crowds who dance with abandon till dawn. Given the dominant colour it could be called 'Red'. And yes, go exploring and you'll find the eponymous furnishing – maybe occupied, maybe not.

**Laffalooka** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 400 7435; South Blvd, Rizal Park; h 4pm-2am; a ) You numbskull! With the Three Stooges as a motif, how can you go wrong? This small club out by the seafood restaurants near Rizal Park has live comedy (Thursday to Saturday) as well as jazz, R&B and acoustic. It's a friendly place with a delightful staff.

**Library** (Map p90; ☎ 522 2484; 1179-A M Adriatico St, Makati; h 7pm-2am Mon-Thu, until 4am Fri & Sat; a ) This tiny stand-up comedy and karaoke bar has a very loyal following among gay and straight nightowls. It's funky, thrilling and eccentric all at once.

**FAB** (Map p90; ☎ 523 8776; 1179 M Adriatico St, Makati; cover P250; h 9pm-2am Mon-Thu, until 4am Fri & Sat; a ) The home of Manila's foam parties is a gay-friendly place that doesn't get going until well past midnight. There are theme parties through the week.

**V Bar** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 813 6967; ground level, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati; h 8pm-5am; a ) Looking both dark and lush at night, this trendy place lures in clubbers from across town. DJs play a mix of house and R&B.

**SaGujo** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 897 8629; www.sagujo.com; 7612 Guijo St, Makati; h 6pm-3am; a ) This is as unpretentious yet clued in as it gets in Manila. Downstairs this music club mixes famous music acts with an eclectic mix of new and experimental performers. Upstairs there's a gallery with works by local artists, many of whom can be found hanging out right here.

**70's Bar** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 434 3597; 46 Anonas St, Quirino; h 8pm-2am; a ) Classic rock-and-roll is the religion at this groovy club set in an old house. Themes include Beatles Night and Stones Night. The classic cover band The Jerks has been playing every Friday night for a decade. There are vegetarian snacks.

**Conspiracy** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 453 2170; 59 Visayas Ave, Quezon City; h 5pm-2am; a ) Owners Cynthia Alexander and Joy Ayala play folk, jazz and various global tunes. You may wish for something tie-dyed here as the inside is non-smoking and the snacks are vegetarian. The garden is a good place to chill with a dark San Miguel.

**Virgin Cafe** (Map p88; ☎ 926 7982; 308 T Morato Ave, Quezon City; h 7pm-3am; a ) A fabled place

to hear local bands one step below the big time. Styles vary from rap to rock to jazz through the week. Sunday is devoted to blues.

**Embassy** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 816 4195; The Fort Entertainment Complex, Makati; cover P300; h 10pm-6am Wed, Sat & Sun; a ) The Manila club scene is fickle, but at the time of writing this club in The Fort was enjoying an extended run as the late-night rave den of choice for Manila's cool kids. There's a late-night diner inside in case you get the munchies.

### Performing Arts

Manila has an active cultural community. There are theatrical performances throughout the year and the choice is great: everything from Broadway musical imports (*Cats*, *Cats* and more *Cats*) to cutting-edge drama. As the nation's capital, Manila is also home to a number of premiere cultural institutions.

At the Cultural Center of the Philippines (see p83), Manila's major cultural guns perform, including: **Ballet Philippines** (☎ 832 3689), the nation's premiere dance troupe; **Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra** (☎ 832 1125), the nation's main classical orchestra; and **Tanghalang Pilipino** (☎ 832 1620), a major theatre group that performs classic and original local work, often in the original language.

Another important local group is **Repertory Philippines** (☎ 887 0710), which performs at the **Repertory Globe Theatre** (Map pp86-7; h 750 4180; Onstage, Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center).

There are numerous large venues for performances, from big-name rock concerts to, well, *Cats*:

**Araneta Coliseum** (Map p88; ☎ 911 3101; Araneta Center, cnr EDSA & Aurora Blvd, Cubao)

**Dulaang Rajah Sulayman** (Map p76; ☎ 722 6911; Fort Santiago, Santa Clara St, Intramuros)

**Star Theater** (Map p84; ☎ 512 5031; Star City, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd, Malate)

**William J Shaw Theater** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 633 4821; 6th level, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, cnr EDSA & Shaw Blvd, Mandaluyong City)

On the lowbrow side, the haunted-looking former Manila Film Center is now being put to 'good' use by **Amazing Philippines Theatre** (Map p84; ☎ 833 5785; admission P500-1100; h 7.30pm & 9pm), an over-the-top transvestite revue of lovely 'ladies' decked out in feathers and sequins.

### Cinemas

Manila boasts hundreds of movie houses. Many feature state-of-the-art facilities, particularly those in the upmarket malls. Hollywood blockbusters are often shown at the same time as their US release, yet it costs only P50 to P100 to watch a movie here. All of the local newspapers have extensive film listings. English-language movies are screened with their original English dialogue.

If you're feeling more adventurous, the Philippines has the world's third most prolific film industry, though most of the films are formulaic action movies and sentimental romantic comedies. All of the mall theatres show some local movies.

Popular choices with the latest projection gear include **Greenbelt 3 Theaters** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 893 6779; Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center) and **Robinsons Movieworld** (Map p90; ☎ 536 7809; Robinsons Place, Ermita).

### Karaoke

Belting out versions of ballads is a national pastime, and you won't so much need to find karaoke as eventually try to get away from it. It's common in bars, cafés, stores, buses, almost anywhere there's a person, a microphone and a dream.

One place where you can see all the cultural forces behind karaoke in overdrive is **Red Box** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 757 6188; level 3, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center; h noon-3am; a ). Ray Charles, Kylie and Prince are all represented on the vast playlist at this slick place. There are public and private spaces for you to belt out your tunes. Entrance fees (P200 to P400) include drinks, food and music. Even if you're only passing by, check out the posted lists of the most requested songs.

### Casinos

**Casino Filipino** (Map p84; ☎ 854 1605/09; Ninoy Aquino Ave, Parañaque City; admission P100; h 24hr) Operated by a government agency in charge of legalised gambling, this casino is located in front of NAIA. At this huge gambling palace, players try their luck at craps, blackjack, roulette, stud poker, bingo and so on. This is one way to kill time if you want to stay up all night to catch a very early morning flight, although you won't want to be wagering your plane ticket.

There's are branches of Casino Filipino at various hotels, including the Manila Pavilion

in Ermita (p92). The new Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila (p92) in Malate says it all in its name. Its posh casino is meant to be the largest in the country.

## Sport

### COCKFIGHTING

Bloody cockfights take place at several venues around Manila and the atmosphere is always highly charged (for more information on this activity see the boxed text, p44). The huge **Libertad Cockpit** (Map p84; Dolores St, Pasay City; 1-5pm Sun-Wed & Fri) is close to Malate. Sunday is the best day to visit. To get there, take the LRT1 to Libertad station and change to an eastbound Evangelista-Libertad jeepney.

The **Roligon Cockpit** (Map p84; 96 833 1638; 505 Quirino Ave, Tambo, Parañaque; admission P150-300; 1-11am-6pm Thu-Sun) is another popular venue. To get there, take LRT1 to Baclaran and change to a jeepney bound for Sucat Hwy. Tell the driver to drop you off at Roligon Cockpit.

### BASKETBALL

The **Araneta Coliseum** (Map p88; 96 911 3101; Araneta Center, cnr EDSA & Aurora Blvd, Cubao) and **Cuneta Astrodome** (Map p84; 96 832 7000; Derham St, Pasay City) are popular venues for professional basketball games managed by the PBA (Philippine Basketball Association), the Philippines' equivalent to America's NBA. Like football in other countries, basketball is a national passion in the Philippines. The professional league follows a yearly season – check with either the Araneta Coliseum or the Cuneta Astrodome for the current schedule of games.

## SHOPPING

Manila is a bargain-hunter's paradise, with everything ranging from simple street markets to ritzy boutiques.

The largest variety of stores can be found in Manila's many shopping malls, which also have the advantage of being air-conditioned. But for a real taste of Filipino life, be sure to check out one of Manila's many excellent markets.

## Clothing

You can buy authentic brand-name clothes in Manila for a fraction of the prices charged in Europe, Australia, Japan or the USA. Lo-

cals happily note that the designer stores stock this year's collections, so you won't have to worry about looking like last year's sensation. Many brand names operate a counter in department stores; some have stores or boutiques of their own. Look for them at Ayala Center (p108) or at Ortigas Center (p108). If you're after authenticity, these are the most reliable sources, but if you don't care about authenticity, you can pick up cheap copies in practically any market.

The *Barong Tagalog*, the traditional dress-shirt (which usually includes an embroidered front) worn by Filipino men, is a popular purchase among tourists. The best *barong* are made from *pinya*, a fabric woven from pineapple fibres. *Jusi* (*hoo-see*), from ramie fibres, is more common and less expensive.

The long-sleeved *pinya* or *jusi barong* is usually worn at formal occasions, while the cotton version, with either long or short sleeves (the latter is called *polo barong*), is suitable for everyday use.

Ready-to-wear *barong* are available at most handicraft shops and department stores, and most tailors will gladly sew one to your specifications. Most shops also carry womens' wear made from the finely embroidered material.

A cheaper form of *jusi* is made into elegant tablecloths and napkins.

## Galleries

There are numerous art galleries scattered throughout Manila. One large concentration of quality dealers can be found on Level 4 of the Glorietta 4 Mall (p108) in Makati.

Along M H del Pilar St in Ermita there are numerous shops selling paintings by local artists. The standard is often quite good and the subject matter varies (puppies and sunsets are faves), even though the artists turn these things out at an alarming rate.

**Hiraya Gallery** (Map pp80-1; 96 523 3331; 530 United Nations Ave) This long-established gallery has a museum-quality selection of Filipino art. A fine example is the polychromal carving of rubber by Leonard Aguinaldo. The owners are veteran travellers and their experience shows.

**Caffe Ricco Renzo** (Map pp86-7; 96 898 2542; www.riccorenzo.com; 210 Nicanor Garcia St) Part cultural centre, part gallery and part café (p101), this multifaceted place displays works by Manila artists, some of whom trained right

here. There are regular art lessons as well as seminars on writing and other pursuits.

**SaGuijo** (Map pp86-7; 96 897 8629; www.saguijo.com; 7612 Guijo St, Makati; 1-6pm-3am) This top music club (see p104) has a great gallery with works in many different mediums.

**Blacksoup Project Artspace** (Map p88; 96 439 8838; Marikina Shoe Expo, Gen Romulo Ave, Cubao) Local art, films and installations are all part of a varied and erratic line-up.

**Vacoop** (Map p76; 96 527 3993; Plaza San Luis Complex, General Luna St, Intramuros; 1-10am-6pm) Filled with all kinds of works by local artists.

## Handicrafts & Souvenirs

Manila has a reputation as an arts and crafts centre. You can find some very attractive examples of Filipino craftsmanship such as countless varieties of basketry, lamps and chandeliers made of translucent Capiz shell, and the colourful *parol* (lanterns) that Filipinos traditionally hang outside their houses at Christmas.

Shells, too, are a popular purchase, but environmentalists have serious concerns about the impact of uncontrolled shell harvesting. In particular, trident shells and certain giant clams are protected under international laws governing trade in endangered species.

You should also be aware that the *Batangas* or Laguna *balisong* (fan or butterfly knife), a popular handmade souvenir sold at numerous stalls in the Central Market in Quiapo, is banned in many countries.

**Silahis Arts & Artifacts Center** (Map p76; 96 527 2111; 744 General Luna St, Intramuros; 10am-7pm) It's almost more cultural centre than store here. Authentic crafts from around the country are sold next to beautiful antiques. All of the merchandise is very high quality.

**Budji Layug** (Map pp86-7; 96 896 6316; 235 Nicanor Garcia St) New takes on traditional styles is the theme at this serene showroom for a leading local interior designer. There's exquisite craftsmanship in the wood and rattan items.

**Firma** (Map p90; 96 525 5001; 616 J Nakpil St) There's everything from kitsch to elegant artworks designed by the owners of this delightful store. The tassels in their many forms are a must-purchase. At night, the upstairs is a trendy bar, Castro at Firma (p103).

**Balikbayan Handicrafts** (Map pp86-7; 96 893 0775; 1010 A Arnaiz Ave, Makati) The kind of place that pulls in tourists by the busload. Piles of stuff, from hideous carved fish to charming wind

chimes. At least at this tourist joint – unlike others elsewhere in the world – the 'Made in the Philippines' tag is appropriate.

## Markets

Traditional markets are, not surprisingly, found in the oldest parts of town.

### BINONDO, SANTA CRUZ & QUIAPO

This was always the trading centre of Manila and the tradition continues today. The markets below are the antidote to antiseptic air-con malls.

The lively stalls around Carriedo St near Quiapo Church (p79) sell thickly padded bras, hardware, porn DVDs and just about anything else. Nearby, under Quezon Bridge, otherwise known as *Ilalim ng Tulay* (literally 'under the bridge'; Map p82), you can find really cheap junk for tourists. Across the road, at **Quinta Market** (Map p82), you'll find vendors boisterously peddling fish, meat, vegetables, fruits and other foodstuffs.

Around Quiapo Church are dozens of dubious apothecary stalls selling all manner of herbal and folk medicines, as well as amulets (carved stones and medallions believed to have magical powers). Showing admirable initiative, vendors will tell you that the 'Pampa Regla' potion is good for everything from weight loss to curing erectile dysfunction, depending on how you look. *Langis Ng Ahas* is literally snake oil – maybe.

Further north of Quiapo Church, along Andalucia St, the dingy **Central Market** (Map p82), by the Manila City Jail, sells clothes, military uniforms, knives and hardware.

On M Recto Ave, in the direction of the harbour, are hundreds of stalls selling household goods and bale clothing. The **Tutuban Center Mall** (Map p82) is a former train station converted into a shopping arcade. Also in the area, **Divisoria Market** (Map p82) is a major centre for bale clothing and textiles, with cheap fakes of practically every brand name on the market. **Arranque Market** (Map p82) on Soler St has an ancient and murky collection of food stalls.

### MALATE

**San Andres Market** (Map pp80-1; San Andres St; 1-24hr) looks like one big cornucopia of fruits including exotic *guyabano* (soursop) and durian. It's a dark warren of treats ripe for exploration.

## Shopping Malls

Shopping malls at times seem to have eaten Manila. Many are thronged on weekends as residents escape their jammed and steamy abodes for a walk through the air-con comfort. You can find a range of department stores such as Shoe Mart at most, and, depending on the neighbourhood, the selection of stores can be startlingly upscale. Most include a supermarket and food court.

Ermita and Malate are served by **Robinsons Place** (Map p90; 10am-9pm). It's a vast place and it's getting bigger. Is this glitzy change from the broken pavements of Ermita good or bad? And does this point to a Makati-like future for the area? The hordes inside have voted with their feet.

In Makati, **Ayala Center** (Map pp86-7; www.ayala malls.com.ph) at times seems to have taken over the entire town. It is a vast complex of interlinked buildings, shops, hotels and enclosed malls. Its humble origins are rapidly being replaced by a new, much more upscale incarnation. The main focus has been **Glorietta Mall** (10am-9pm), which is actually four malls (Glorietta 1 to Glorietta 4) under one cross-shaped roof. There are hundreds of mostly midrange shops and stores here. Certain areas are devoted to electronics, art and other specialities. There are dozens of restaurants at all prices. The **Landmark Department Store** (810 0990) is a delightfully dated place where you can get three hankies for your sweaty brow for P30.

Across Makati Ave is **Greenbelt**, an upscale development that encircles pretty little Greenbelt Park. Amid the commerce is the **Ayala Museum** (p85) and the open-air **Sto Niño De Paz Chapel** (Map pp86-7). This is the high end of the Ayala Center and there are scores of delightful cafés and restaurants. The four main buildings here are as follows:

**Greenbelt 1** Fast food and simple restaurants, a supermarket (see p102) and theatres.

**Greenbelt 2** Upscale restaurants with large patios.

**Greenbelt 3** Upscale restaurants, cafés, bars, theatres and designer boutiques.

**Greenbelt 4** Luxury stores such as Gucci.

North towards the river, the ritzy new development **Rockwell Center** is anchored by a large mall called the **Power Plant Mall** (Map pp72-3; 890 6888; cnr Rockwell Dr & Estrella St, Makati; 10am-9pm). It has over 100 high-end shops, restaurants, theatres, offices and condos.

In Cubao, the **Gateway Mall** (Map p88; Aurora Blvd) has a large and glitzy collection of shops. Its real value is as an elevated transfer point between the LRT 1 and 2 lines.

Easily the oddest collection of stores in Manila is at the **Marikina Shoe Expo** (Map p88; Gen Romulo Ave, Cubao), a once open-air collection of discount shoe vendors. Some of the shops in this old single-level complex remain (with inventory unchanged since Imelda was in her prime), but now some of the storefronts have been taken over by an uber-hip assortment of kitschy shops and galleries who have discovered the cheap rent. There's a gallery, **Blacksoop Project Artspace** (p107), a bookshop, **Datelines Bookstore** (p71) and a funky Italian café, **Bellini's** (p102). Shops (most open in the afternoon) include **Chunky Far Flung Gallery + Store** (485 8307) for figurines and other goofy toys including Astro-boy gear, and **Bong Salaveria** (500 3460) for authentic retro 1950s and 1960s décor collected by a local film editor.

Many fans with Broddingnagian fantasies should head east to Ortigas Center. Here there are no less than four malls, including the biggest one of all: **SM Megamall** (Map pp72-3; 10am-9pm). Stretching over a kilometre, **SM Megamall** sprawls between two other malls, **Shangri-La Plaza Mall** (Map pp72-3; 10am-9pm) and **Robinsons Galleria** (Map pp72-3; 10am-9pm). And just behind Megamall is the **Podium** (Map pp72-3; 10am-11pm). Virtually every chain store and restaurant and fast-food joint can be found in this retail blight, which is as suburban as you can get in Manila.

**Greenhills Shopping Center** (Map pp72-3; Ortigas Ave, Greenhills, San Juan; 9am-10pm), not far from Robinsons Galleria, is somewhat like a flea market, with stall after stall selling everything from dubious CDs to antiques.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### Air

With the exception of Philippine Airlines (PAL), international flights to and from **Manila Airport** (MNL; Map p84; 877 1109) use the **Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal I** (NAIA or NAIA I) in Parañaque. International and domestic PAL passengers use **NAIA II** (also known as the **Centennial Terminal**).

NAIA I is long in the tooth but functional. NAIA II is relatively new and gleam-

ing white. Both have currency-exchange counters and ATMs after customs in the arrival areas. Passengers changing terminals can use shuttles inside the airports before they exit the terminals.

Note that someday an entire new terminal will open at the airport. NAIA III will be a cutting-edge replacement for most of the international services at ageing NAIA I. But when will it be done? Actually it was completed in 2003, and has since sat vast and empty. The tale of what went wrong here is a fable for the rest of the Philippines. There's plenty of gossip and lawsuits but the real facts are lost in a swamp of cronyism and corruption. Should NAIA III open, it can be found on the airport's east side, near the South Super Hwy.

A P550 departure tax is payable for international departures. See p113 for details of transport options to and from NAIA I and NAIA II.

Many airlines have city ticket offices in addition to those at the airport. Also, several Asian discount carriers are now flying to **Diosdado Macapagal International Airport** (CRK; see p133) at the **Clark Special Economic Zone** near Angeles, some two hours drive north.

**Air France** (Map pp86-7; 887 7581; Trident Tower Bldg, 312 Sen Gil Puyat Ave, Makati)

**Asiana Airlines** (Map pp86-7; 892 5698; Salcedo Tower, 169 Dela Rosa St, Makati)

**British Airways** (Map pp86-7; 817 0361; Filipino Merchants Bldg, cnr Dela Rosa St & Legaspi St, Makati)

**Cathay Pacific Airways** (Map pp86-7; 757 0888; LKG Tower, 6801 Ayala Ave, Makati)

**China Air Lines** (Map pp80-1; 523 8021; Golden Empire Tower, 1332 Roxas Blvd, Ermita)

**Continental Airlines** (Map pp86-7; 816 0527; 6760 Ayala Ave, Makati)

**Emirates** (Map pp86-7; 811 5278; Pacific Star Bldg, cnr Sen Gil Puyat Ave & Makati Ave, Makati)

**Gulf Air** (Map pp86-7; 817 8383; 100 Alfaro St, Makati)

**Japan Airlines** (Map pp86-7; 886 6868; Standard Chartered Bank Bldg, 6788 Ayala Ave, Makati)

**KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines** (Map pp86-7; 819 5680; The Atheneum, 160 Leviste St, Makati)

**Korean Air** (Map pp86-7; 893 4909; LPL Plaza Bldg, 124 Leviste St, Makati)

**Lufthansa Airlines** (Map pp72-3; 580 6400; Rockwell Center, Makati)

**Malaysia Airlines** (Map pp86-7; 867 8767; World Centre, Sen Gil Puyat Ave)

**Northwest Airlines** (Map pp86-7; 841 8800; La Paz Center, cnr Salcedo St & Herrera St, Makati)

**Qantas Airways** (Map pp86-7; 812 0607; Filipino Merchants Bldg, cnr Dela Rosa St & Legaspi St, Makati)

**Singapore Airlines** (Map pp86-7; 756 8888; LKG Tower, 6801 Ayala Ave, Makati)

**Thai Airways International** (Map pp86-7; 812 4744; Country Space I Bldg, Dela Costa St, Makati)

### DOMESTIC

Domestic PAL flights leave from NAIA II, and other carriers operate from the **Manila Domestic Airport** (Map p84), just north of NAIA I and very close to Baclaran. There is a P200 departure fee.

The domestic terminal barely qualifies as such; you'd think it was the terminal for one of the smaller of the 7000 islands in the Philippines. The waiting area for those greeting passengers is a tent across from the terminal.

PAL has ticketing facilities at NAIA II and at ticket offices in town. Other domestic carriers have ticket offices at or near the domestic terminal and some also have city offices.

**Air Philippines** Makati (Map pp86-7; Legaspi St); Pasay City (Map p84; 855 9000; Manila Domestic Airport Passenger Terminal, Domestic Rd; 24hr) Destinations:

Bacolod, Cagayan De Oro, Cebu, Davao, Dumaguete, General Santos, Iloilo, Puerto Princesa, Tuguegarao, Zamboanga.

**Asian Spirit** Pasay City (Map p84; 855 3333; cnr Domestic Rd & Andrews Ave, Pasay City; 3am-7pm)

Destinations: Antique, Baguio, Basco, Busuanga, Calibayag, Catarman, Caticlan, Marinduque, Masbate, Ormac, Pagadian, Puerto Princesa, San José, Surigao, Taytay, Tuguegarao, Virac.

**Cebu Pacific Air** Makati (Map pp86-7; 132 C Palanca St); Pasay City (Map p84; 636 4938; Manila Domestic Airport Passenger Terminal, Domestic Rd; 24hr) Destinations:

Bacolod, Butuan, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu, Cotabato, Davao, Dumaguete, Iloilo, Kalibo, Puerto Princesa, Roxas, Tacloban, Tagbilaran, Zamboanga.

**Laoag International Airlines** Pasay City (Map p84; 551 9729; Manila Domestic Airport Passenger Terminal, Domestic Rd; 7am-4pm) Destination: Laoag.

**Philippine Airlines** Makati (Map pp86-7; Legaspi St); Parañaque (Map p84; 855 8888; Centennial Terminal NAIA II, NAIA Rd; 3am-8pm) Destinations: Bacolod, Butuan, Cagayan Cebu, Cotabato, Davao, Dipolog, General Santos, Iloilo, Kalibo, Laoag, Legaspi, Naga, Puerto Princesa, Roxas, Tacloban, Tagbilaran.

**SEAIR** Pasay City (Map p84; 851 5555; Manila Domestic Airport Passenger Terminal, Domestic Rd; 3am-5.30pm) Destinations: Batanes, Busuanga, Caticlan, Clark, El Nido, Puerto Galera, San José.

## Boat

The port of Manila is divided into two sections, South Harbor and North Harbor. Unfortunately for the traveller, two of the shipping lines use the hard-to-reach North Harbor. It's best to take a taxi to North Harbor, as the area isn't a place for a foreigner to be wandering around with luggage.

There are three major shipping lines handling inter-island boat trips from Manila:

**Negros Navigation** (☎ 245 5588; www.negrosnavigation.ph; Pier 2, North Harbor) Destinations: Bacolod, Boracay, Cagayan de Oro, Dumaguete, Dumaguait, Estancia, General Santos City, Iligan, Iloilo, Ozamis, Puerto Princesa, Roxas, Tagbilaran.

**Sulpicio Lines** (☎ 245 0616; www.sulpiciolines.com; Pier 12, North Harbor) Destinations: Baybay, Cagayan de Oro, Calubian, Cebu, Cotabato, Dadiangas, Davao, Dipolog, Dumaguete, Estancia, Iligan, Iloilo, Maasin, Masbate, Nasipit, Ormoc, Ozamis, Surigao, Tagbilaran, Zamboanga.

**SuperFerry** (☎ 528 7000; www.superferry.com.ph; SuperTours hotline 528 7100; reservations@wgasuperferry.com; Pier 15, South Harbor) WG&A Destinations: Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu City, Coron, Cotabato, Davao, Dipolog, Dumaguete, Dumaguait, General Santos City, Iligan, Iloilo, Nasipit Butuan, Ozamis, Puerto Princesa, Roxas City, Surigao, Zamboanga.

All three shipping companies have ticket offices at their piers and in town, although nowadays you needn't go to the shipping offices to make a reservation or buy a ticket. Travel-ticket agents can make bookings and issue tickets. All three companies have excellent websites for checking schedules and buying tickets.

Note that shipping schedules are prone to change; adverse weather conditions or renovation work on one ferry can totally disrupt or alter the sailing times and boats specified for the scheduled trips.

Ferries to the Bataan village of Orion are run by **Mt Samat Ferry Express** (Manila Map p84, ☎ 551 5290; Bataan ☎ 0917 873 2425) five times a day in each direction. The one-hour trip costs P300/150 per adult/child.

## Bus

Getting out of Manila by bus is harder than you might expect, as there is no central bus terminal and no central source of information. Bus information seems to seep into the collective conscious by a weird osmosis. Ask around and you'll find the right answer. Two good resources (besides your hotel) are

taxi drivers and www.clickthecity.com. The former often have an amazing knowledge of the myriad of bus lines. Tell the driver the city you want to go to and you'll be taken to the right bus station. The latter serves as a good online guide. You can search for 'bus lines' and add in the name of the city that's your destination. Often the correct company will come up. Alternatively, search for 'bus lines' and 'Manila' and you'll get a list of over 100 bus companies with services to and from Manila.

The myriad of private operators have their own terminals scattered around the city. Most are close to EDSA (Manila's ring road), which connects the highways going north and south of the capital. All the terminals are accessible by public transport; the suggested routes (jeepney or LRT/MRT) to the terminals are from Ermita and Malate. From Makati, the companies are often just an MRT ride away. It should be noted that Filipino bus drivers are among the most maniacal on the face of the earth, although the number of accidents is surprisingly low. If you're not used to travelling at breakneck speed, you may well be in for a white-knuckle ride.

What follows is a list of some of the more important bus companies. Note the headings below refer to the suburb from which your journey originates.

### MALATE

A daily bus leaves the **Sundowner Centerpoint Hotel** (Map p90; ☎ 400 7352; 1315 A Mabini St) to connect with a boat to Puerto Galera (P350 for bus and ferry).

### INTRAMUROS & SANTA CRUZ

Close to the tourist belt, there are bus terminals offering services to destinations such as Batangas City pier (for ferries to Puerto Galera), Cavite, Ternate, Angeles and the Bataan peninsula. To get to the terminals, catch a jeepney from Taft Ave or A Mabini St.

**No 1 Alps Transit** (Map p76; A Villegas St, Intramuros)

Alps Transit has buses to Batangas City pier every 20 minutes. To get to the terminal, take the LRT1 to the Central stop.

**No 2 Saulog Transit** (Map p76; ☎ 442 5391; Anda St, Intramuros) These companies, near Baluarte de San Gabriel, have buses to Cavite and Ternate every seven minutes. To get to the terminal, take a Divisoria jeepney and get off just before Jones Bridge.

**No 3 Philippine Rabbit** (Map p82, ☎ 734 9836; cnr Oroquieta St & Rizal Ave, Santa Cruz) Philippine Rabbit has buses every 20 minutes to Angeles in Pampanga province, and Balanga and Mariveles in Bataan province. All buses go via San Fernando (Pampanga). To get to the terminal, take a Monumento jeepney or the LRT1 to Doroteo José station.

### SAMPALOC

In Sampaloc there are a number of bus companies serving northern destinations. To get to the terminals, catch a jeepney from Taft Ave or A Mabini St.

**No 4 Fariñas Transit Company** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 731 4507; cnr Laong Laan St & M de la Fuente St) Fariñas has hourly buses that leave for Vigan (Ilocos Sur), Bagabag (for Banaue) and Laoag (Ilocos Norte). On the way, the drivers make stops in San Fernando (Pampanga), Tarlac (Tarlac), Dagupan (Pangasinan) and San Fernando (La Union). To get to the terminal, take a Governor-Forbes-via-España jeepney.

### CALOOCAN

Caloocan is an important departure point for north-bound buses. Destinations include Olongapo in Zambales province, San José del Monte and Baliwag in Bulacan province, and Cabanatuan in Nueva Ecija province, as well as Vigan, Laoag and Baguio.

**No 5 Baliwag Transit** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 912 3343; 199 Rizal Ave Extension) Baliwag Transit has buses every 40 minutes to Cabanatuan (a jumping-off point for the surfing beaches of Baler), as well as regular services to Baliwag and San José del Monte. Take a Monumento jeepney to the corner of 2nd Ave; the terminal is about midway between R Papa and 5th Ave stations of the LRT1.

**No 6 Philippine Rabbit** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 364 3477; 1240 EDSA, Balintawak) Philippine Rabbit has hourly buses to Baguio and Bangued, and buses every few hours to Laoag and Vigan. Take the LRT1 to Monumento, then a south-bound bus for Cubao.

**No 7 Victory Liner** (Map pp72-3; ☎ 361 1506; www.victoryliner.com; 713 Rizal Ave Extension) Victory Liner has four daily buses to Baguio. There are half-hourly buses to Olongapo, Iba and Santa Cruz in Zambales. Take a jeepney or the LRT1 to Monumento; the terminal is just before the Monumento roundabout.

### CUBAO (NORTH-BOUND)

Most buses from Cubao head north to San Fernando (La Union), Baguio, Tuguegarao, Vigan or even Aparri, at the top of Cagayan province. The bus terminals are clustered near **Araneta Center** (Map p88; cnr EDSA & Aurora Blvd); there's one terminal in the centre itself. Take a Cubao jeepney or FX van to Araneta

Center or take the MRT to Cubao-Araneta Center station.

**No 8 Baliwag Transit** (Map p88; ☎ 912 3343; EDSA) Near the corner of Aurora Blvd. Baliwag Transit has buses leaving for Cabanatuan via Baliwag every 20 to 30 minutes. A few doors away is another Baliwag terminal from where buses bound for Tuguegarao (via Cauayan) depart every two hours and buses leave for Aparri twice daily.

**No 9 Dagupan Bus Co** (Map p88; ☎ 727 2330; cnr EDSA & New York St) Dagupan Bus Co has buses every hour to Dagupan, Alaminos and Lingayen in Pangasinan province. There are also hourly buses to Tuguegarao and Baguio.

**No 10 Dominion Bus Lines** (Map p88; ☎ 741 4146; EDSA) Dominion has hourly buses to San Fernando (La Union), Bangued and Vigan.

### CUBAO (SOUTH-BOUND)

Services also run south from Cubao, including buses to Batangas, Lucena in Quezon province, Naga in Camarines Sur, Legaspi in Albay, Tacloban and Ormoc in Leyte, and Davao in Mindanao. From the Araneta Center Bus Terminal, in addition to BLTB and Philtranco, several smaller operators run buses to Bicol, the Visayas and Mindanao. Take a Cubao jeepney or FX van to Araneta Center or, alternatively, take the MRT to the Cubao-Araneta Center station.

**No 11 BLTB** (Map p88; ☎ 913 1525; Araneta Center Bus Terminal) Behind Ali Mall. BLTB has buses to Sorsogon (Bicol) and Catbalogan (Visayas).

**No 12 JAC Liner** (Map p88; ☎ 928 6140, 929 6943; cnr EDSA & East Ave) JAC has buses to Batangas City and Lucena every 20 to 30 minutes from 2am to 9pm daily.

**No 13 JAM Transit** (Map p88; ☎ 924 7712; cnr EDSA & New York St) JAM has buses every 30 minutes to Batangas City, Lucena and Santa Cruz (Laguna).

**No 14 Tritran** (Map p88; ☎ 925 1758; cnr EDSA & East Ave) Tritran has half-hourly buses to Lucena and Dalahican, and buses to Batangas City every 20 minutes.

**No 15 Philtranco** (Map p88; ☎ 913 5666; Araneta Center Bus Terminal) Behind Ali Mall. Philtranco has daily buses to Sorsogon, Bulan, Tabaco, Legaspi, Naga and Iriga (Bicol); Cebu, Tacloban, Ormoc, Caticlan, Kalibo, Iloilo and Roxas City (Visayas); and Davao and Cagayan de Oro (Mindanao).

### PASAY (NORTH-BOUND)

A couple of bus companies head north from Pasay for destinations like Baguio, Cabanatuan and Olongapo. To find your way to these terminals, take a Baclaran jeepney from M H del Pilar St or the LRT1 to EDSA station and change to a north-bound bus for Makati and Quezon City.

**No 16 Five Star Bus Lines** (Map p84; ☎ 833 4772; Aurora Blvd) Five Star has regular buses to Cabanatuan. There are also buses to Bolinao and Dagupan in Pangasinan every half-hour.

**No 17 Victory Liner** (Map p84; ☎ 833 5019; www.victoryliner.com; EDSA) Victory has at least hourly services to Baguio (Benguet), Tarlac (Tarlac), Alaminos, Bolinao and Dagupan (Pangasinan) and Tuguegarao and Aparri (Cagayan). Buses to Olongapo and Iba (Zambales) leave every half-hour.

### PASAY (SOUTH-BOUND)

Most buses out of Pasay head south, with some connecting by ferry to other islands. Destinations include Batangas, Lucena, Nasugbu and Santa Cruz. A few buses go further afield to Daet, Naga, Legaspi, the islands of Samar and Leyte, and on to Mindanao.

**No 18 BLTB** (Map p84; ☎ 833 5501; EDSA) BLTB has buses every 15 minutes to Batangas City, Nasugbu and Lucena. There are also hourly buses to Dalahican Port,

Calatagan (near Matabungkay beach) and Santa Cruz, as well as long-haul trips to Bicol, Samar and Leyte. For Leyte, there's a service to Ormoc, two buses to Maasin, and one to Tacloban. To get to the terminal, take a Baclaran jeepney from M H del Pilar St or the MRT or LRT1 to EDSA station and change to a north-bound bus for Makati and Quezon City or walk 10 minutes.

**No 19 Crow Transit** (Map p84; ☎ 551 1566, 804 0623; cnr Taft Ave & EDSA) Crow has buses to Nasugbu every 30 minutes and buses to Tagaytay (for Lake Taal) every 15 minutes. To get to the terminal, take the MRT or LRT1 to the EDSA station.

**No 20 Genesis** (Map p84; ☎ 551 0842; cnr Taft Ave & EDSA) Genesis has buses to Mariveles in the Bataan peninsula via San Fernando (Pampanga) and Balanga, leaving every 15 minutes. There is also an early-morning bus to the surfing beaches of Baler in Aurora province. To get to the terminal, take a Baclaran jeepney from M H del Pilar St or the MRT or LRT1 to EDSA station.

**No 21 JAM Transit** (Map p84; ☎ 831 8246; cnr Taft Ave & Sen Gil Puyat Ave) JAM has buses every 15 minutes to Lucena and Santa Cruz in Laguna. To get to the terminal, take the LRT1 to Gil Puyat station or a Baclaran jeepney to the corner of Taft Ave and Sen Gil Puyat Ave.

**No 22 Philtranco** (Map p84; ☎ 851 5818; cnr EDSA & Apelo Cruz St) Philtranco has daily buses to Davao and Cagayan de Oro, both in Mindanao. There are services to Tacloban (four daily) in Leyte, stopping at Calbayog and Catbalogan in Samar. There is also a bus to Catarman (three daily) in Northern Samar. Buses stop in Daet, Naga, Legaspi and Sorsogon. To get to the terminal, take a Baclaran jeepney from M H del Pilar St or the MRT or LRT1 to EDSA station and change to a north-bound bus for Makati and Quezon City or walk 10 minutes.

### Car & Motorcycle

If you are driving, the North and South Luzon Expressways are the quickest ways to disentangle yourself from Manila. They are relatively expensive tollways (priced even by Western standards) but that just serves to cut way down on traffic. See p452 for details on car rental.

### Train

The ramshackle **Philippine National Railways** (☎ 361 1125) has its main Manila station just north of Binondo at Tayuman St and Dagupan St. As such it is commonly just referred to as Tayuman (see Map pp72–3). Services at the station – like trains – are few. The one rail line from Manila goes south as far as Legaspi (p190) in Southeast Luzon, passing through Lucena (p128) and other points along the way. Schedules are

nonexistent and are more a matter of the overworked and underfunded staff trying to get enough cars working to form a train. For information and fares, your best option is to visit the station, which is a 10-minute walk west from the LRT1 Bambang Station.

### GETTING AROUND

For many the worst part of Manila will simply be getting around. Like many Asian metropolises it has enormous traffic problems. Add in rush hour, rain or both and you've got a quagmire. Fortunately there's one thing local transport isn't: expensive. Even a cab will seldom cost more than P200 for even the longest journey. So when traffic grinds to a halt, you can sit back in the air-con and read a book or talk to the driver about favourite cover bands.

Even cheaper are the jeepneys, which go everywhere in a confusing muddle, but also find themselves stuck in the same traffic despite the best kamikaze-like efforts of the drivers. The LRT and MRT trains are an excellent way to soar over and past traffic. The only downsides are the lack of comprehensive coverage of the city and the mobs using the trains at rush hour.

### To/From the Airport

Ninoy Aquino International Airport is quite close to the city and barring traffic you can get to Malate or Makati in 20 minutes. The options for doing so are many. They are given here in descending order of price (and convenience).

Prepaid taxi is by far the easiest way into the city. You go to a hassle-free desk near the arrivals area of the terminal, state your destination and get a ticket telling you the fare. Soon you are in a clean air-con cab being whisked to your destination. Rates are P345 to P375 to most popular destinations like Malate or Makati. This is the only option where you are protected from inclement weather.

Meter taxis have to be sought outside the terminal and a warning applies: never get one from the departures area at NAIA I or II as they may try a scam. Catching one with the locals means you should pay meter rates (make certain of this, see p115) which can average P70 to P100. The downside is you have to heft your bags a short distance.

### SELECTED BUS DESTINATIONS FROM MANILA

Fares are average costs for air-con buses.

Destination	Km	Duration (hrs)	Bus Co Number	Fare (P)
Alaminos (Pangasinan)	254	6	9, 17	329
Angeles	83	1½	3	88
Aparri	596	13	8, 17	700
Baguio	246	6	6, 7, 9, 17	385
Balanga	123	2½	3, 20	161
Baler	—	7	20	467
Bangued	400	8	6, 10	540
Batangas City	111	3	1, 13, 14, 18	136
Bolinao	283	6	16	366
Cabanatuan	115	2½	5, 8, 16	155
Cagayan de Oro	—	72	15, 17, 22	2062
Calatagan	—	4	18	150
Calbayog	—	12	22	1050
Catarman	—	20	22	1013
Catbalogan	—	16	11, 22	1158
Cavite	—	1	2	40
Daet	350	7	22	532
Davao	—	72	15, 22	2180
Iba	210	5	7, 17	283
Laoag	487	10	4, 6	648
Legaspi	550	12	15, 22	762
Lingayen	227	5½	13, 17	218
Lucena	136	3	12, 13, 14, 18, 21	171
Maasin	—	28	18	1605
Mariveles	—	3½	3, 20	220
Naga	449	9	15, 22	603
Nasugbu	102	2½	18, 19	121
Olongapo	126	3½	7, 17	170
Ormoc	—	26	15, 18	1485
San Fernando (La Union)	269	7	4, 10	355
San Fernando (Pampanga)	66	1	3, 4, 20	88
Santa Cruz/Pagsanjan	101	2½	13, 21	115
Tacloban	—	24	15, 18, 22	1318
Tagaytay	56	1½	19	78
Tuguegarao	483	10	8, 9, 17	647
Vigan	407	9	4, 6, 10	540

To catch a jeepney, look for one that says 'Baclaran' which will take you to the big transport hub about 3km from the terminals. Here you can switch to another jeepney, bus or LRT. The fare is about P20, and dealing with your luggage is a hassle.

Specifics for each terminal are as follows:

**NAIA I** Prepaid taxis are at a booth marked 'Coupon Airport Taxi' outside of the customs area near the rental car offices. This is still a somewhat secure area, so the waiting mobs are kept at bay. For metered cabs and jeepneys, proceed outside the terminal and down the ramp to the greeters area. Walk three minutes across the parking lot and to the right (follow other travellers) to an unsheltered area where you can get a Baclaran jeepney or a metered taxi.

**NAIA II** A transport area next to arrivals has car-rental counters and a prepaid-taxi desk. For taxis, walk to the right as you exit the terminal and follow the sidewalk to the point where taxis from the departures level are leaving the airport. For jeepneys, walk to the left as you exit the terminal, to a stop near where the road goes up a ramp to the departures level.

**Domestic Terminal** Things are very simple at this bare-bones facility. A traffic island outside of the terminal is where you can get both a prepaid taxi and a meter taxi. For a jeepney, walk two minutes to the right as you exit the terminal and catch one on Domestic Rd.

## Bus

Local buses are only really useful to get to places on the main roads such as Taft Ave, España Blvd or Epifanio de los Santos Ave (EDSA), as they are prohibited from most streets in the centre of town. Depending on the journey, ordinary buses cost from P10 to P15; air-con buses cost from P10 to P25.

Like jeepneys, buses have their destinations written on signboards placed against the front windshield, for example 'Ayala' (for Ayala Center) and 'Monumento' (for Caloocan). Probably the most useful local bus is the air-con PVP Express bus from Quezon Blvd by Quiapo Church to Ayala Center in Makati.

## Car & Motorcycle

Your first experience of Manila traffic may put you off the idea of renting a car permanently, but if you don't mind the traffic jams and unorthodox local driving habits, a rented car is probably the best way to visit the attractions around Metro Manila. Remember, though, that you are prohibited from driving your car in the capital on certain weekdays: number-plates ending in 1 and 2 are banned

on Monday, 3 and 4 on Tuesday and so on, through to 9 and 0 on Friday.

International car-rental companies have offices at the airport terminals and some major hotels. These include the following:

**Avis** (☎ 851 9274; www.avis.com)

**Budget** (☎ 776 8118; www.budget.com)

**Dollar Rent A Car** (☎ 893 3590; www.dollar.com)

Local car-rental companies include the following:

**JB Rent A Car** (Map p90; ☎ 526 6288; Midland Plaza Hotel, M Adriatico St) Cars from P1200 per day.

**KEI Transport** (Map p90; ☎ 524 6834; ground fl, Palm Plaza Hotel, cnr Pedro Gil St & M Adriatico St) Hires out Toyota Corollas for P1600 per day.

## FX

Manila has numerous air-con Toyota Tamraw FX vans, sometimes bearing a Mega-Taxi sign, which follow similar routes to the jeepneys, picking up and setting down passengers en route.

The fare is P25 for long rides and P15 for shorter hops. They can also be hired as taxis, at pre-arranged flat rates, to places like the airport or tourist destinations outside the metropolitan area.

## Jeepney

For the uninitiated, Manila jeepneys can be a challenging experience. The long wheel-base jeeps offer a bewildering array of destinations and, though these destinations are written on signboards stuck in the window, few people arrive exactly where they intend to on their first jeepney ride. However, if you stick to the more common routes, some of which are listed here, you shouldn't go too far astray.

Heading south from Ermita/Malate along MH del Pilar St, jeepneys to 'Baclaran' pass close to the CCP.

Heading north from Baclaran, jeepneys pass along A Mabini St or Taft Ave, heading off in various directions from Rizal Park. 'Divisoria' jeepneys take Jones Bridge, passing close to the office of the Bureau of Immigration (Map p76); 'Santa Cruz' and 'Monumento' jeepneys take MacArthur Bridge, passing the Manila Central Post Office; and 'Quiapo' and 'Cubao' jeepneys take Quezon Bridge, passing Quiapo Church.

Useful final destinations include: 'Divisoria' for Divisoria Market; 'Monumento' for

Santa Cruz, the Chinese Cemetery or the bus terminals in Caloocan; and 'Cubao' via 'España' for the bus terminals in Cubao.

Note that jeepneys are cramped, even for diminutive locals. For more on riding jeepneys in the Philippines, see p453.

## Kalesa

Horse-drawn carriages known as *kalesa* are still a form of public transport in some rural areas, but in Manila they're confined to Chinatown and Intramuros, where they're mainly used to take tourists for a ride (sometimes in the figurative sense). If you wish to use one of these carriages, agree on the price before you board. Try offering P50 for 30 minutes and let the bargain go from there.

Note that the conditions of the ponies used for *kalesas* can be quite sad. Also the little carts may not hold more than one person.

## LRT & MRT

The LRT (Light Rail Transit) has two elevated lines. L1 runs from Monumento in the north to Baclaran in the south. It has interchanges with the MRT at EDSA/Pasay. This is the most useful line for visitors as it's convenient for Santa Cruz, Intramuros and the east edge of Ermita and Malate. The new L2 runs from Recto in the west (where it's a short walk to interchange with L1 at the Doroteo José station) east past Cubao (where there's an interchange with the MRT) to Santolan. Electronic farecards are used with fares dependent on distance (P12 to P15).

The modern MRT (Metro Rail Transit) travels a south-north route along EDSA. As with the LRT, electronic farecards are used with fares varying by distance (P10 to P15). It is handy for the Ayala Center in

Makati, Ortigas Center (use the Shaw stop, not Ortigas), Cubao and Quezon City.

For both of the systems, buy enough value for more than one ride as ticket lines can be long. Avoid weekday rush hours when the trains are jammed and you will find that the LRT and MRT are an excellent way to get around.

## Taxi

Manila taxis are cheap. A trip across town from Intramuros to Makati won't go over P200 on the meter. The key is to get your driver to use the meter. Most automatically turn it on as you get in, but a few will try various ploys to pad their fare such as 'forgetting' or refusing to and then suggesting a lump sum that is always more than a metered trip. But don't fret; these practices are not prevalent and should the meter not go on (or in rare cases a previous fare not be erased), a good-natured reminder to the driver to 'turn your meter on' will usually do the trick.

The one exception to this rule is when traffic is jammed due to rush hour or rain. In these cases you may give your driver a break and agree to a fare in advance. However it shouldn't be more than P100 over what the fare would normally be.

The official flag-fall rate is P30 plus P2.5 for every 500 metres or two minutes of waiting time. Tips of roughly 10% are always appreciated. And do like the cabbies: lock your doors.

## Tricycle

Tricycles (also known as pedicabs) are bicycles or motorbikes with sidecars, which are useful for short hops around town, though they aren't the cheapest way to get around. Short journeys can cost anywhere from P15 to P50, depending on how well you bargain.

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