



# Steph's Quick Budget Fact Sheet

## The Philippines - Manila

### Quick Facts

- ✓ **Capital:** Manila
- ✓ **Language:** Filipino, English (*Spanish*)
- ✓ **Population:** ± 12,9mln (*city*)
- ✓ **Sq km:** ± 42,88 (*city*)
- ✓ **Currency:** Peso (₱ PHP)
- ✓ **Country code:** +63 (2)
- ✓ **Visa:** 30-59 days for tourism – [check!](#)
- ✓ **Emergency phone:** 117
- ✓ **Vaccinations:** Hep-A, Hep-B, Typhoid, Cholera, Japanese Encephalitis, Yellow Fever, Malaria Prevention



### History Recap Over 1 Drink

1380: Muslim Arabs. 1542: Spanish colonialists (Villalobos): named "Filipinos" after King Philip II. 1898: Independence under Aguinaldo. Brief Spanish-US War → Philippines to US → not recognized by Revolutionaries. Proclaim First Philippine Republic. Philippine-American War. 1901: Aguinaldo captured. '02: US Civil Gov. '07: Elected Philippine assembly under US rule. '35: Establishment Commonwealth of Philippines → Quezon 1<sup>st</sup> pres. '41: Japan seizes country. '44: US retakes. '46: Full independence: Republic of the Philippines. '47: US military bases. '51: Peace treaty with Japan → \$800mln in reparations payments. '65: Marcos pres. (*supports US policy in Vietnam*). Muslim separatists in south begin guerilla war. '72: Marcos → martial law: Parliament suspended, politicians arrested, censorship imposed → '81: Lifted, Marcos "wins elections". '83: Opposition leader Aquino shot dead. His widow takes over → mass protests: 'people power'. '92: Aquino's defense minister Ramos pres. '96: Peace Muslims MNLF, but Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) fights on. '98: Estrada pres. → corrupt. '01: Arroyo pres. '02: Bombs on Manila, Islamists blamed. '06: 1000 killed in mudslide Leyte. '08: MILF gets Muslim auton. region → Christians start fighting. '10: Aquino pres. '13: Typhoon Haiyan kills thousands. '14: Peace MILF. Birth control law. '16: Duterte pres. IS (Islamic State).

### Travel Seasons

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wet					hottest							
Dry	coolest											
Budget												

Altitude: 8m. Climate: Tropical Rainforest Climate (Af).

### Bucket List For Free

- ☺ **Sights:** Intramuros, Chinatown, Baywalk, [Malacañang Palace](#), [Santo Tomas University](#), Fort Santiago, Chinese Cemetery, Memorare Manila Monument, Baluartillo de San Jose.
- ☺ **Free museums:** [National Museum](#), [National Art Gallery](#), [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#) (*free Tue*), [Money Museum](#), Bonsai Library and Museum.
- ☺ **Nice parks:** Paco Park, Rizal Park, Arroceros.
- ☺ **Interesting churches:** San Agustin, Cathedral, ...

### Worth The Extra \$€¥

- 👍 **Museums:** San Agustin Museum, [Ayala Museum](#), [Cultural Center of the Philippines](#), [Museo Pambata](#), Yexel's Toy Museum, Light and Sound Museum.
- 👍 Indulge in the endless supply of shopping malls.
- 👍 Dinner cruise on Manila Bay.

... Quiapo, Greenbelt Chapel, Binondo, Malate, San Sebastian, Santa Cruz, Santuario de San Antonio, Santa Ana, San Miguel, Golden Mosque.

## Budget Bites

⌘ **Big supermarkets:** Savemore, Robinsons, Rustan's, Ever.

⌘ **Markets:** There are many. Some highlights: Divisoria, San Andres, Quiapo, Legazpi (*Sun*), Aani (*Sat-Sun*), Salcedo (*Sat*). Haggling necessary.

⌘ **Local food:** Halo-Halo (*cendol in Malaysia*), Chicharon, Ensaymada (*sweet cheese pastry*), Chicken Adobo, Chicken Inasal (*grilled*), Balut (*Warning! Boiled duck embryo in shell*), Kare Kare (*oxtail stew*), Kinalaw (*raw fish salad*), Sinigang (*sour meat stew*), Tapsilog (*beef breakfast*), Lechon (*pig*), Sisig (*pork cheeks, head and liver*), Pata (*pork knuckle*), Taba ng Talangka (*crabs fat*), Pancit Palabok (*noodles*), Arroz Caldo (*rice porridge*), Kamaro (*mole crickets*), Sinigang (*stew*), Dinuguan At Puto (*pig innards in blood*), Betute (*frog stuffed with pork*), Laing (*taro leaves in coco*), Pinakbet (*veggie dish*), Sinugno (*tilapia in coco*), Pancit Habhab (*noodles on banana leaf*), Longaniza (*pork sausage*), Lumpian Ubod (*spring roll*), Kuhol Sa Gata (*snails*), Sinanglay (*tilapia*). [Check extensive list here!](#)

⌘ **Go vegan:** Being vegan is a bit of a challenge in meat-centered Philippines, but not impossible. Supermarkets don't generally have typical vegan products, but fresh produce can be bought cheaply at the markets. There are quite some vegan/vegetarian-friendly restaurants: [Happy Cow – Manila](#).

## Mama Said

☠ What you heard is true: Manila is *not* a safe place in all perspectives, so be aware at all times. Specifically dangerous areas: Malate, Ermita, Navotas, Tondo, Baclaran.

☠ Boycott places like Manila Ocean Park and Manila Zoo and don't ever visit cockfights. If you care for animals at all, that is.

☠ Tap water isn't drinkable.

## Next?

➔ In The Philippines: Tagaytay, northern Luzon, the islands.

➔ International destinations close by: Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Taiwan, China.

## Sleep Cheap

❖ Hotels and resorts are very cheap in the Philippines and even cheaper if you book via [this Booking.com link](#) and receive a \$15 discount. No need to go into a hostel, especially not if you travel with 2-3 people... in that case a 4 or 5\* hotel might be even the same price.

❖ Camping isn't available nor recommended in the unsafe city of Manila.

❖ Go [Couchsurfing](#) or Housesitting. Also check [WorkAway](#).

## Nights Best Spent

◆ Nightlife areas: Makati, Taguig, Escolta, Intramuros, Quezon City.

◆ Theatres: Manila Metropolitan Theatre, Kia Theatre, Capitol Theatre, Gaiety Theatre, Life Theatre, Bellevue Theatre, Manila Grand Opera House, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Zorrilla Theatre & more.

## Free-Riding?

■ Manila is a metropolis, it's huge, so walking is only possible within areas (*which are already almost cities in themselves*). The heat makes long-distance walks hard.

■ Cycling is not recommended due to traffic madness. A motorbike might work.

■ Bus travel or per 'jeepney' is an experience. It cost next to nothing, but will take ages with the permanent traffic jams. You sit on wooden benches facing each other, there are no windows and it's common to hang out on the sides. Destinations are displayed up front and buses need to be hailed down. [Check this](#) for a manual. There are several bus terminals for intercity travel, [find an overview here](#).

■ The Manila Light Rail Transit System (LRTA) and Metro Rail Transit System (MRCT) is a cheap and efficient way to get around, without the traffic jams.

■ Uber is bought by Grab. It's about half price of the already cheap taxis. You can even find Grab stands ordering a ride for you if you don't have wifi.

■ Airport: Ninoy Aquino International Airport (MNL). *Check terminal before departure!*

■ Hitchhiking isn't recommended in Manila. This isn't a safe place to do it.