Student's guide to Manchester

The start of your Manchester University experience is approaching, and you're probably excited about all the new and amazing things the city has to offer. However, it can also be a tiny bit overwhelming. So here is a broad guide to some of the 'best places' for all your wants and needs in Manchester:

1. Eating (because eating your way around a city is the best way to get to know it):

   - For breakfast - Solomon's, Alabama's All American Eatery, or Black Dog Ballroom (offering bottomless brunch at weekends).
   - For the veggies and vegans – V-rev, Ice Shack or Earth Café are all known for their cruelty free feasts.
   - For Indian food – Bundobust, This and That Café, or a variety of venues on the curry mile, including Mughli which will be sure to please your taste buds.
   - For Chinese food – Red Chili and more broadly the area of China town are the best place to go – with budget buffets to extravagant Teppanyaki available.
   - For something a bit different, other popular student eateries include Habesha (Ethiopian food), Pho (Vietnamese food), or the Northern Quarter for some comfort food such as Northern Soul Grilled Cheese, Black Milk or Almost Famous.

2. Relaxing (because sometimes its nice to take a step back)

   - For Culture- The Whitworth Art Gallery and Café, People's History Museum
   - For quiet reading nooks- Cat café, Chapter One Books, Teacup Kitchen.
   - For outside Ventures- Take a walk through Fletcher Moss botanical gardens, or Castlefields if you fancy something more urban!

3. Studying (because it's good to get an early start):

   - For a designated study space that’s not the library- try the Ali G (although you’ll need to be swift if you want a seat), Central Library or the historic John Ryland’s Library.
   - For Fallowfield based students – try Owen’s Park computer cluster (or source café), Ashburne Library or Withington library.
   - If you want somewhere a bit more relaxed (but still quiet) to complete your studies– try The Bright Building, The Atrium or Ziferblat in the Northern Quarter (maybe the ‘pay for your time’ scheme will spur you into working effectively).
4. Food shopping (because the takeaway budget may dry up)
- For Fallowfield – Sainsbury’s is the local supermarket. (however – keep in mind that this does get expensive).
- For saving pennies - there is Lidl by Uni and an Aldi in town and Didsbury – cutting your student expenses by a mile.
- For worldwide cuisine - there is also a large supermarket called ‘Manchester Superstores’ – incredibly cheap and full of great food, but perhaps a little harder to navigate.

5. Transport (because discovering your new city is essential):
- Bus - one of the best ways to get between Fallowfield, Uni, Oxford Road and beyond into town. I highly recommend the Unirider bus pass – as it will save you a significant amount of money over the year.
- The 142, 143, 141, 42 & 43 will get you pretty much wherever you need to go. It’s amazingly simple. They come frequently but if you want to check out Stagecoach’s journey planner, it can even tell you where the bus stop is: https://www.stagecoachbus.com/plan-a-journey. I highly recommend the Unirider bus pass – as it will save you a significant amount of money over the year.
- Uber and Streetcars - Just in case the bus can’t get you there! The university runs a scheme with Streetcars, where if you don’t have any money – your fare can temporarily be covered in exchange for your student card.
- Trains – the main stations are Piccadilly, Oxford Road and Victoria.
- Coach - If you want something a bit cheaper, you could always try Victoria Coach station which is open 24 hrs.

TOP TIP: If you purchase a bus pass – keep your receipt! In case you lose it at some point in the year (You can only get a new one with a receipt. Additionally you’re still only allowed a maximum of one replacement!)

6. Bars and Pubs and Clubs (for hanging out with your new mates):
- In the Fallowfield/Withington Area; Squirrels, The Font, 256 and Friendship all offer incredibly cheap drinks.
- Along Oxford Road - Big Hands, The Thirsty Scholar and Temple (an underground bar) are all popular student choices.
- In town – Secret (!) bars such as The Washhouse, Dusk til Pawn and bars featuring live music (Matt and Phreds or Night and Day Café) are great spots. Got something to celebrate? Students love Cloud 23 and the brand new 20 Stories.
- For a proper ‘night out’ close to home, Cubo and Indigo are both within the Fallowfield/Withington area. Event Nights- Soup Kitchen, White hotel and Hidden often host popular ones.
- Want a dressy Saturday night? Deansgate locks are always a good option.
- Fancy somewhere cheap and cheerful? Pick from 5th, factory or 42’s to guarantee the cheesy hits.
- Manchester has a night out for everyone – you just have to know where to look.
7. Entertainment (because there’s much more to student entertainment than drinking):

- Fancy something physical? Try Junkyard Golf (50% off student discount on certain days), Dog Bowl, ice skating in Altrincham, climbing in the Manchester Climbing Centre or Laser quest.
- Fancy something a bit brainier? Visit one of Manchester’s many escape rooms to use your brain power, or retain some information at one of Manchester’s many museum’s (such as the Manchester Museum of the Museum of science and industry.
- Football is also an obvious choice of entertainment in Manchester with it being host to two of the largest football teams across the country – even better; the SU often sells discounted tickets.
- If shopping is your thing – try the Northern Quarter for vintage and charity shops (Affleck’s is a must see for all things weird and wonderful), The Arndale for all your high street must haves and The Trafford centre if you want to make a day out of it.
- Throughout the year there are numerous festivals and celebrations in Manchester, including the Manchester food and drink festival, Oktoberfest, Manchester Pride and many more.

Whilst this is an extensive list – it can really only tell you so much. The only way you’ll ever really know the best places to go in Manchester is if you go out and look for yourself. Make Manchester your home away from home.