The New York Times recently included Manchester in its **top 50 places to visit in the world**. No surprise to Mancunians, who have never been short of pride in a city that is home to two of England's best **football clubs**, the BBC's MediaCity, the Lowry and Imperial War Museum North. But it's a city where the advice of a local can be crucial.

The Hacienda hasn't survived the past two decades of regeneration but Manchester still boasts England's **most innovative nightlife**, the Warehouse Project, and its bohemian **Northern Quarter** has at least 20 record shops, plus galleries, live venues, bars and restaurants, and some great clothes shops. **Compiled by Luke Bainbridge**

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1. **STARGAZE FROM THE GODLIKE OBSERVATORY**
   - Emma Jane Omsterth author, Hungry, the Stars and Everything
   - There are some plants in a city, you go to the cinema, scenic places, and some you'd never know about. This building in Manchester once housed the Manchester Astronomical Society, but in 1869 it was sold to an appraiser for his son to study in. The former two-floor townhouse was built in 1935 and its grade II listing now protects it from being changed. It's open to the public. 

2. **EMOTIONAL TRADES AT THE ROYAL EXCHANGE**
   - Joan Moorehouse columnist
   - The Royal Exchange is in a very Bonded building, formal and romantic. It's not just the name; it's the place where street food battles with fine dining. For those who can afford the finest options in the city, this is the place. You can't beat a £90 steak for a romantic dinner, but if you're feeling adventurous, the place is where you'll find the best value.

3. **PUBLIC SPIRIT IN PLATT FIELDS PARK**
   - Mike Garry, journalist and broadcaster
   - Platt Fields Park is a local's paradise. It's a 10-minute walk from central Manchester or a 20-minute walk from the Docklands. You can enjoy a break from the city and take advantage of the fresh air and the green space. The park is a great place to unwind and relax.

4. **CHECK OUT THE ART AT CORNERHOUSE**
   - Phil Griffin, journalist and broadcaster
   - Cornerhouse is a great place to visit, especially if you're interested in art and contemporary culture. It's located in the heart of Manchester and is open to the public.

5. **READ AND RELAX AT THE PORTICO LIBRARY**
   - Stuart Macrae BD and broadcaster
   - The Portico Library is a beautiful place to read and relax. It's located in the heart of Manchester and is a great place to escape the hustle and bustle of the city.

6. **SIT WITH MARX AND ENGELS IN CHETHAM'S LIBRARY**
   - Jonathan Schneider, musician and editor of Manchester Confidential
   - Cheetham's Library is a beautiful library in Manchester. It's open to the public and is located in the heart of the city. It's a great place to sit and read a book or work on your laptop.

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1. **DRESS FOR THE WEATHER AT OI POLLOI**
   - Will Orchard, author, Hungry, the Stars and Everything
   - Oi Polloi is the best place to dress for the weather. It's located in the heart of Manchester and is open to the public.

2. **DRINK AT THE BRITONS PROTECTION**
   - Jane Weaver musician
   - The Britons Protection is a great place to grab a drink and relax with friends. It's located in the heart of Manchester and is open to the public.

3. **LOOK DOWN ON ALL THE CITY FROM WERNER LOW**
   - Johnny Beavon best of an Age
   - Werner Low is a great place to look down on all the city from a distance. It's located in the heart of Manchester and is open to the public.

4. **AN INTIMATE DRINK AT TERRACE BAR**
   - Jeremy Pritchard column in Everything Everything
   - Terrace Bar is a great place to have an intimate drink. It's located in the heart of Manchester and is open to the public.