

Locals' Guide To Manchester

Calendar
 England: what's on where and when
guardian.co.uk/travel/england



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 nightclub**, 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**

1 STARGAZE FROM THE GODLEE OBSERVATORY

Emma Jane Unsworth author, *Hungry, the Stars and Everything*

"There are some places in a city you go to for drama, some for peace, and some you're just glad are there. The Godlee Observatory in the roof of Manchester University's Sackville Street Building was built in 1902 and its white timber dome is still operated by rope and wheels. As if that wasn't romantic enough, access to the telescope is via a thin spiral staircase: the stuff of fairytales (and vertigo). I love how this secret little stalwart (most Mancunians don't even know it's there) has survived technological advances and the rapidly changing cityscape. I give it a little salute whenever I pass."
 ● Godlee Observatory (Floor G, Sackville Street Building, Manchester University; see manastro.org). Follow Emma Jane Unsworth on Twitter @emjaneunsworth

2 EMOTIONAL TRADES AT THE ROYAL EXCHANGE

Justin Moorhouse comedian

"The Royal Exchange is my favourite building, theatre and employer. It's not just the seven-sided glass and steel theatre that sits like an alien craft in the cavernous hall. Ghosts of the men who traded there when cotton was king echo round the high ceilings. Cotton prices from 1968 are frozen on the board that hangs above the actors. I've seen some amazing things here. More than anything though, it's the Mancunian cheer that runs through everyone, from the box office to the green room. It's alive all day. Pop in, have a cup of tea and a slice of cake, look around - you'll be very welcome."
 ● Royal Exchange (St Ann's Square, royalexchange.co.uk); see justinmoorhouse.com for tour dates

3 PUBLIC SPIRIT IN PLATT FIELDS PARK

Mike Garry performance poet

"Platt Fields opened as a public park in 1910, after local author William Royle saved it from being turned into a housing estate. There used to be a statue of Abraham Lincoln with a quote from his letter thanking 'the brave men and women of Manchester' for refusing to take slave-picked cotton. The park fell into disrepair in the Thatcher years but has been maintained by volunteers. As well as its Shakespearean gardens, it hosts skate festivals and Manchester City's youth academy. I was commissioned to write a poem for its centenary celebrations: it is now on a brass plate in front of Platt Hall."
 ● Platt Fields (plattfields.org, rusholmearchive.org); Mike Garry, *Cheers Ta (cgit)*. formidable.plus.com/cheers

4 CHECK OUT THE ART AT CORNERHOUSE

Phil Griffin journalist and broadcaster

"There are better cafe-bars in Manchester these days, but this was the first place in town where you could buy a pint and a coffee in the same round. It dropped the definite article long ago. As a 'centre for contemporary visual arts', as much painted and photographed as any of the subjects it has exhibited, it has fared remarkably well. Over the years you might well have clocked performance artist Laurie Anderson, Steve Coogan sharing quiche with Henry Normal, or Eric Cantona watching movies in the long afternoons of his suspension. Visit now, before collective stupidity on the part of the city council causes it to move down the road to a new building in 2014."
 ● Cornerhouse (70 Oxford Street, cornerhouse.org)

5 READ AND RELAX AT THE PORTICO LIBRARY

Stuart Maconie DJ and broadcaster

"A couple of years ago I was nominated for an award called the Portico prize. I didn't win, except in a way I did, as I found out about its parent institution, the Portico Library, and became a member. It's in the heart of the city, but is an oasis of calm and academe. The staff are marvellous and the food is gutsy northern. You can sit by the fire and catch up with swanky periodicals, work at the leathered desks or write a thesaurus, as Roger did years ago. It's arty, feisty, welcoming and very Manchester."
 ● Portico Library (57 Mosley Street, theportico.org.uk); Stuart Maconie's *The People's Songs: The Story of Modern Britain in 50 Records*, is on Radio 2 every Wednesday at 11pm

6 SIT WITH MARX AND ENGELS IN CHETHAM'S LIBRARY

Jonathan Schofield tour guide and editor of *Manchester Confidential*

"If pushed to recommend one thing, it would be Chetham's Library. It's a 1421 building with a 1650s library, the oldest free public reference library in the country. This is pure history. You can sit at the table where Marx and Engels wrote the first draft of the Communist Manifesto, surrounded by the same books. Daniel Defoe, Benjamin Franklin, Elizabeth Gaskell, Winston Churchill and Damon Albarn are among the others who used it. It's still a working library, free of charge, and beautiful."
 ● Chetham's Library (Long Millgate, chethams.org.uk); Jonathan Schofield Tours (jonathanschofieldtours.com); *Manchester Confidential* (manchesterconfidential.co.uk)

BREAKFAST

The Northern Quarter's Home Sweet Home (0161-833 1248, cheeseburgertoastie.co.uk), or Cicchetti (sancarlocicchetti.co.uk) at House of Fraser

LUNCH

Pick up a hearty plate of rice and three curries for about a fiver in the Northern Quarter. There are plenty of cafes to choose from, but This & That (3 Soap Street, off High Street, 0161-832 4971, thisandthatcafe.co.uk) and Yadgar (71 Thomas Street, 0161-831 7753) remain firm favourites

DINNER

The Mark Addy, where chef Robert Owen Brown's menu has trotters, bone marrow and other gutsy delights (Stanley Street, off Bridge Street, Salford, 0161-832 4080, markaddy.co.uk). Run by the Moreau family, 63 Degrees brings sophistication to a Northern Quarter dominated by burger joints (20 Church Street, 0161-832 5438, 63degrees.co.uk)

PUBS AND BARS

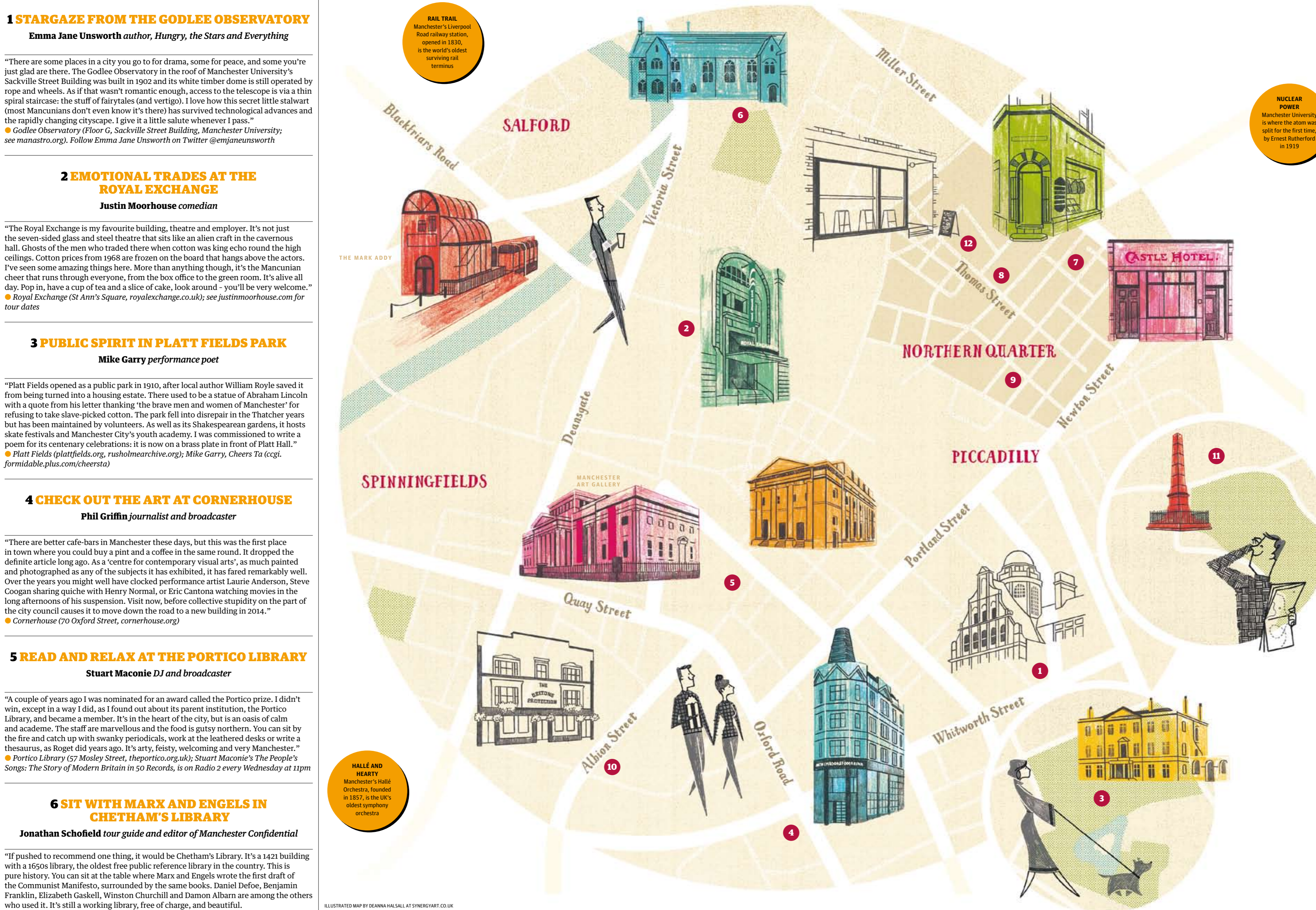
Mr Thomas's Chop House (52 Cross Street, 0161-832 2245, tomsmanchester.thevictorianchophousecompany.com) has stood here since 1867, serving proper pub food such as corned beef hash

CULTURE

City or United? Regardless of your affiliation, football dominates the city, making it the perfect spot for the National Football Museum (Cathedral Gardens, 0161-605 8200, nationalfootballmuseum.com, admission free). Manchester Art Gallery (Mosley Street, manchestergalleries.org, admission free) is also unmissable

HOTELS

The Great John Street is a cosy boutique hotel, opposite what used to be Granada Studios (Great John Street, 0161-831 3211, eclectichotels.co.uk/great-john-street, late deals: doubles from £130). The Hilton is located within Beetham Tower and offers stunning views (303 Deansgate, 0161-870 1600, hilton.com, doubles from £139)



ILLUSTRATED MAP BY DEANNA HALLSALL AT SYNERGYART.CO.UK
 FACT BOXES BY CHRISTOPHER WINN
 MORE INFORMATION: VISITMANCHESTER.COM

RAIL TRAIL
 Manchester's Liverpool Road railway station, opened in 1830, is the world's oldest surviving rail terminus

NUCLEAR POWER
 Manchester University is where the atom was split for the first time, by Ernest Rutherford in 1919

THE MARK ADDY

7 DOWN A PROPER PINT AT THE CASTLE

Danny Brocklehurst scriptwriter on *Shameless*

"In the early 1990s, I worked at a comedy club at the end of Oldham Street. In those post-Madchester days, Oldham Street was youthfully cool: home to Afflecks Palace, Dry Bar, Eastern Bloc Records and Vinyl Exchange. But the far end was all tatty old men's pubs. The Castle Hotel was my favourite. It still is. Nowadays, it attracts a fashionable crowd but has retained its character. Hand pumps offer an imaginative collection of real ales. There's a jukebox stocked with classics, a snug, and a backroom venue for live music. It's even got a tiny terrace where smokers are forced into conversation. In short, it's a proper city-centre pub."
 ● The Castle Hotel (66 Oldham Street, thecastlehotel.info)

8 DRESS FOR THE WEATHER AT OI POLLOI

Will Orchard club promoter, the Warehouse Project

"Oi Polloi is Manchester's best independent menswear boutique, with functional yet individual clothes, including collaborations with Henri Lloyd, and its own Pica-Post fanzine. This time of year there's a particular emphasis on the damp Manchester weather: heavy-duty waterproofs from Patagonia and Penfield, Mt Rainier rucksacks and sturdy Danner and Fracap boots plus offerings from the likes of Norse Projects and Dockers. The accessories section has Brooks England's polished leather cycle saddles and Fox umbrellas. For out-of-towners, the store has brilliant and innovative website."
 ● Oi Polloi (63 Thomas Street, oipolloi.com); for details of forthcoming Warehouse Project club nights see thewarehouseproject.com

9 HIT THE SHOPS IN THE NORTHERN QUARTER

Kevin Cummins music photographer

"I go 'home' from London regularly to watch Manchester City, and Manchester today is a very different city from the one I left 25 years ago. I love the vibrancy and eclectic mix of the Northern Quarter - which didn't exist then. There are two dozen restaurants and bars within a couple of hundred yards, plus galleries and independent shops. After a visit to Piccadilly Records, I generally head for Odd Bar on Thomas Street, to review the credit card slips. I love Odd, it reminds me of the alternative New York bars of the 1980s: good, unpretentious food and a well-stocked bar. It's a place to while away the afternoon. Which is something I'm particularly good at."
 ● Northern Quarter (northernquartermanchester.com); Odd Bar (30-32 Thomas Street, oddbar.co.uk); Kevin Cummins (kevincummins.co.uk)

10 DRINK AT THE BRITONS PROTECTION

Jane Weaver musician

"The Britons Protection pub on Great Bridgewater Street - the BP to locals - is traditional and charming, but my affection stems from when I arrived in Manchester, signed to a record label owned by Rob Gretton, co-founder of the Hacienda. The BP is just around the corner from his office (now apartments) so it was great for 'meetings' and drinks after work that turn into nights out. It's also where I met my husband."
 ● Britons Protection (50 Great Bridgewater Street, britonsprotection.co.uk); janeweavermusic.com

11 LOOK DOWN ON ALL THE CITY FROM WERNETH LOW

Johnny Bramwell lead singer of *I Am Kloot*

"Werneth Low is a hill in Hyde, on the outskirts of the city. From its cenotaph you get incredible views of Manchester, Lancashire and Derbyshire. I can remember, as a kid, looking down on Manchester and thinking: 'I want all those people to hear my songs.' It can be spooky at night: it's under the airport flight path, so it can look like there's an illuminated cloud right above you, and then a plane will appear. There's a great pub, the Hare and Hounds, half a mile away, which also has glorious views."
 ● Werneth Low Country Park (Higham Lane, Hyde, tameside.gov.uk/wernethlow/guide); Hare and Hounds (48 Shudehill, chefandbrewer.com/pub/hare-and-hounds-inn-werneth-low-hyde); for details of *I Am Kloot's* European tour see iamkloot.com

12 AN INTIMATE DRINK AT TERRACE BAR

Jeremy Pritchard bassist in *Everything Everything*

"Terrace Bar in the Northern Quarter is my new favourite drinking hole. I've only been a handful of times, but the low lighting and brick walls remind me of dive bars in New York and Austin. The floor is interesting - it took me a while to work out that the planks had been lifted from a school gym, with sports markings, and put down in no particular order. The thing I like about Terrace is that, despite its double-doored municipality and large interior, the small wooden tables with a seat either side and a single dim lamp hanging overhead retain an intimacy that's pretty rare in this part of town."
 ● Terrace (43 Thomas Street, facebook.com/TERRACENQ); *Everything Everything's* album *Arc* was released in January; for tour dates see everything-everything.co.uk