



# WHO SAID THE CITY IS JUST FOR GROWN UPS?



If you're looking for intriguing, wonderful or just one-off things to do with the kids this summer, head to Manchester. From al fresco film to the world's smallest cinema, from a digital doll's house to a towering T.Rex, from tales of the high seas to solar-powered ice: this is your indispensable guide to the museums and galleries, the parks and gardens, the kid-friendly cafés and shops of Manchester.

It's the perfect antidote to a dull summer. It's everything you need for the perfect weekend break in this most playful of cities. And best of all, it's free.

**Find your free guide** to Manchester at **[www.creativetourist.com](http://www.creativetourist.com)** with downloads for kids, offers, competitions, travel information, maps and more.

# GO OUT & PLAY

Think Manchester and your mental images are likely to include mills, rain, football and shopping. And we'll not deny it - we have all of them in spades. But there's more to Manchester than the naysayers would have you believe. Take the countryside. We've got lots of it, from the dizzy heights of Winter Hill to the country mansions that litter the

Northwest like egg sarnies at a picnic. Consider Tatton Park, which this summer hosts the **Tatton Park Biennial**. Twenty artists have created new work for house, gardens and deer park - including Breda Beban's interactive doll's house, the world's smallest cinema and Marcia Farquhar's life-size rocking horse. Five metre-wide lilies lie in Tatton Mere, Fiona Curran's tree house collapses, two tons of Arctic ice keeps its cool and Austin Houldsworth's 'fossilisation machine' grinds out its own fossil. Surreal, thought-provoking and not without humour, the Biennial's setting within the National Trust's most popular property makes it worth the hop out of Manchester for.

## ROMANS VS. SPACEMEN

If you like your outdoors a little more urban, make for **Castlefield**. This 'urban heritage park' embodies Manchester's history in its architecture: Roman ruins, Industrial Revolution cobbles and canals, Victorian viaducts, contemporary bridges... Largely traffic-free, it's a great place to leg it about, while its canal-side pubs and restaurants (such as Dukes 92) are reliably good. Once you've exhausted Castlefield's cobbled delights, head to **MOSI** (the Museum of Science & Industry). Built on the site of the world's oldest surviving passenger railway station, it is the city's most visited museum - for good reason. Trainspotters can ride a steam train along part of the original Manchester to Liverpool tracks (dating from 1830), art lovers can catch the hugely popular **Da Vinci - The Genius** (it includes the premiere of the *Secrets of Mona Lisa*, which reveals hitherto unknown facts about the world's most famous portrait), and space explorers can get a glimpse into lunar exploits in **From Gunpowder to Space Rockets**, a showcase of the Chinese space race that features ancient rockets, satellites, space ships and a lunar rover.

## AL FRESCO FILM

If your idea of the great outdoors is none of the above, and only occurs so long as shops, cafés and galleries remain within scrambling distance, may we point you towards the **Family Friendly Film Festival**? For 17 days, the UK's only such event stages screenings all over the city, from an outdoor cinema (plus picnic) at Spinningfields to spooky films shown in some of the city's oldest buildings - including the neo-Gothic grandeur of **The Manchester Museum**. There's a Harry Potter Day in the Hogwarts-like **John Rylands Library** (rumour has it that magic lessons will be enhanced by the presence of real owls), 4D cinema at **MOSI** and special screenings for the under 5s. Which is a bonus for anyone with a toddler who can't remember the last time they saw the inside of a cinema. With nothing costing much over a fiver (and many events free), it's a hot ticket - book now or prepare to be mithered for missing out. PS. **The Jazz Festival** and **24:7 Theatre Festival** also run in unusual and often outdoor locations and, while they're geared up for grown-ups, there's no denying that watching live music or theatre is an experience even ankle-biters can enjoy.

# HONEY, I LOST THE KIDS

Daniel Libeskind's **Imperial War Museum North** is a thing of beauty: a shimmering aluminium building that defies architectural norms, perched proudly on the edge of the Manchester Ship Canal. It has a towering, er, tower that you can scale to get views across the water. *The Rough Guide* reckons it's one of England's top 10 buildings. Oh yes, and it's always a hit with the kids.

**All Aboard: Stories of War at Sea** promises to be action packed and interactive, includes true tales of watery adventure and features the feline derring-do of Simon the Cat. It also explains the origin of many a common phrase, including 'Pipe Down' (a bit of naval lingo that many parents may be all too familiar with). Elsewhere, a camouflage exhibition explains how to hide battleships and why, in the name of all things military, jeeps are painted pink. Later, walk across the water (via the bridge, we're not expecting miracles) and visit **Everyday People: Spencer Tunick at The Lowry**. Tunick's images feature hundreds of naked people but don't be shy: your kids might find the photographs taken in Salford and Manchester a little funny at first, but they are compellingly beautiful. And at the very least you'll get to see some of Manchester's best known destinations, from Castlefield to the Airport, in a whole new light.

## WIN A LUXURY TRIP TO MANCHESTER

*Take the Creative Tourist tour – win a family weekend break (for up to four people) in Manchester on 13–15 August 2010 and try out this guide for yourself.*

*All you have to do is enter our competition at [www.creativetourist.com/city-guides](http://www.creativetourist.com/city-guides) before 15 July to stand a chance of winning. Prize includes two nights' luxury accommodation at City Inn Hotel Manchester, a meal for four, Sunday lunch at the City Café and free entry to the Tatton Park Biennial, DaVinci – The Genius (at MOSI) and selected screenings at the Family Friendly Film Festival.*

*Terms and conditions apply. See website for details. No cash alternative is available. Prize is non-transferable, non-refundable and non-changeable and can only be redeemed on 13–15 August 2010. Our decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.*



*Download your own, free colouring-in sheet for the journey at [www.creativetourist.com/city-guides](http://www.creativetourist.com/city-guides)*



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## WALLPAPER WILDCARD

Don't climb the walls. Watch them.

**The Whitworth Art Gallery** hosts the summer's most talked about show: ***Walls Are Talking***. As the name suggests, it's all about wallpaper – but rather than looking at its cosy, domestic history, the exhibition illustrates how artists have subverted it for artistic purposes. Alongside 30 international artists you'll find commercial samples, such as a Spice Girls paper, digital designs projected onto walls (stand in front and you become part of the pattern) and a few risqué offerings (one room isn't suitable for the under 18s). The gallery itself is worth a visit, a fusion of Victorian red brick design and mid-century modernism framed by the swaying trees of the Whitworth Park. The gallery has its own award-winning café run by chef-turned-entrepreneur Peter Booth, a foodie who loves local produce and quite likes kids, too (he adjusts his seasonal menu for young palates). Just down the road you'll find **The Manchester Museum**. Its graphic novel-style summer show features objects collected by Charles Darwin, such as a finch ensnared during the voyage of *The Beagle*. Permanent exhibits include a full-size T.Rex (rargh), more Egyptian mummies than you can shake a scarab beetle at (woo) and the skeleton of Maharajah, an Asian elephant with a Mancunian past (aw...).

## DEMOCRACY IS FUN (HONEST)

**Spinningfields** is a riverside, mostly car-free area that comes complete with grassy hillock – the location for *Screenfields*, a 17-week-long programme of outdoor film screenings (it's one of the venues for the film festival described above). It's also home to a clutch of solid, family oriented places to eat, such as Wagamama and Giraffe. Close by is the **People's History Museum** – a newly re-opened museum that tells the story of British democracy. It handles political reform lightly, bringing historical fact to life via unusual exhibits (such as a kitchen table where you make up flat pack boxes – and then work out how little you'd be paid if you were eking out a living this way). The building itself is a showstopper, the scrubbed-up Grade II listed Pump House connected to a new Corten-steel crafted wing. It is also home to the sunny riverfront **Left Bank** café, whose wartime-inspired menu is not only unusual but really rather good. Opposite is the **Civil Justice Centre**, a building nicknamed the 'filing cabinet' that apparently houses the largest plate glass window in Europe. Stand beneath it and squint up at the sky. Feeling dizzy yet?

# AT A GLANCE

## **Tatton Park Biennial**

Tatton Park *Until 26 Sep*  
[www.tattonparkbiennial.org](http://www.tattonparkbiennial.org)

## **From Gunpowder to Space Rockets**

MOSI *Until 7 Aug. FREE.*  
[www.mosi.org.uk](http://www.mosi.org.uk)

## **Da Vinci – The Genius**

MOSI *Until 12 Sep*  
[www.mosi.org.uk](http://www.mosi.org.uk)

## **Family Friendly Film Festival**

Venues across Manchester  
*30 Jul-15 Aug. Many events FREE.*  
[www.familyfriendlyfilmfestival.org.uk](http://www.familyfriendlyfilmfestival.org.uk)

## **All Aboard: Stories of War at Sea**

Imperial War Museum North  
*17 Jul - Apr 2011. FREE.*  
[www.iwm.org.uk/north](http://www.iwm.org.uk/north)

## **Everyday People: Spencer Tunick at The Lowry**

The Lowry *Until 26 Sep. FREE.*  
[www.thelowry.com](http://www.thelowry.com)

## **Walls Are Talking**

The Whitworth Art Gallery  
*Until 30 Aug. FREE.*  
[www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)

## **Charles Darwin: Evolution of a Scientist**

The Manchester Museum  
*Until 30 Aug. FREE.*  
[www.manchester.ac.uk/museum](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/museum)

## **The People's History Museum**

*FREE entry.*  
[www.phm.org.uk](http://www.phm.org.uk)

*For special offers and deals from Manchester's museums and galleries, visit [www.creativetourist.com/city-guides](http://www.creativetourist.com/city-guides)*

# HOW TO GET HERE

**Manchester Airport** (to the South of the city centre) is served by a regular rail connection to Piccadilly Station (every 15 minutes or so; journeys take around 20 minutes). [www.manchesterairport.co.uk](http://www.manchesterairport.co.uk)

**Piccadilly Station** is the main railway station; the Metroshuttle ([www.gmpte.com](http://www.gmpte.com)) operates a free bus service connecting this, and the other city railway stations, to the city centre. Buses run every 5-10 minutes. Oxford Road, Deansgate and Victoria are the other city centre rail stations.

**The Metrolink** (tram) connects the city centre to many parts of Greater Manchester – lines run from the centre to Altrincham, Bury and Eccles. [www.metrolink.co.uk](http://www.metrolink.co.uk)

**Trains to Manchester.** First TransPennine Express offers reliable and comfortable rail travel throughout the North of England. [www.tpexpress.co.uk](http://www.tpexpress.co.uk)

**Visitor Information.** For the best deals on family friendly hotels, special offers and all tourist information, go to [www.visitmanchester.com](http://www.visitmanchester.com), email [touristinformation@visitmanchester.com](mailto:touristinformation@visitmanchester.com) or call 0871 222 8223. Or drop into the new Manchester Visitor Information Centre during your stay at Piccadilly Plaza, Portland Street, Manchester M14BT (open Mon-Sat 9.30am-5.30pm, Sun & Bank Hols. 10.30am-4.30pm).

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