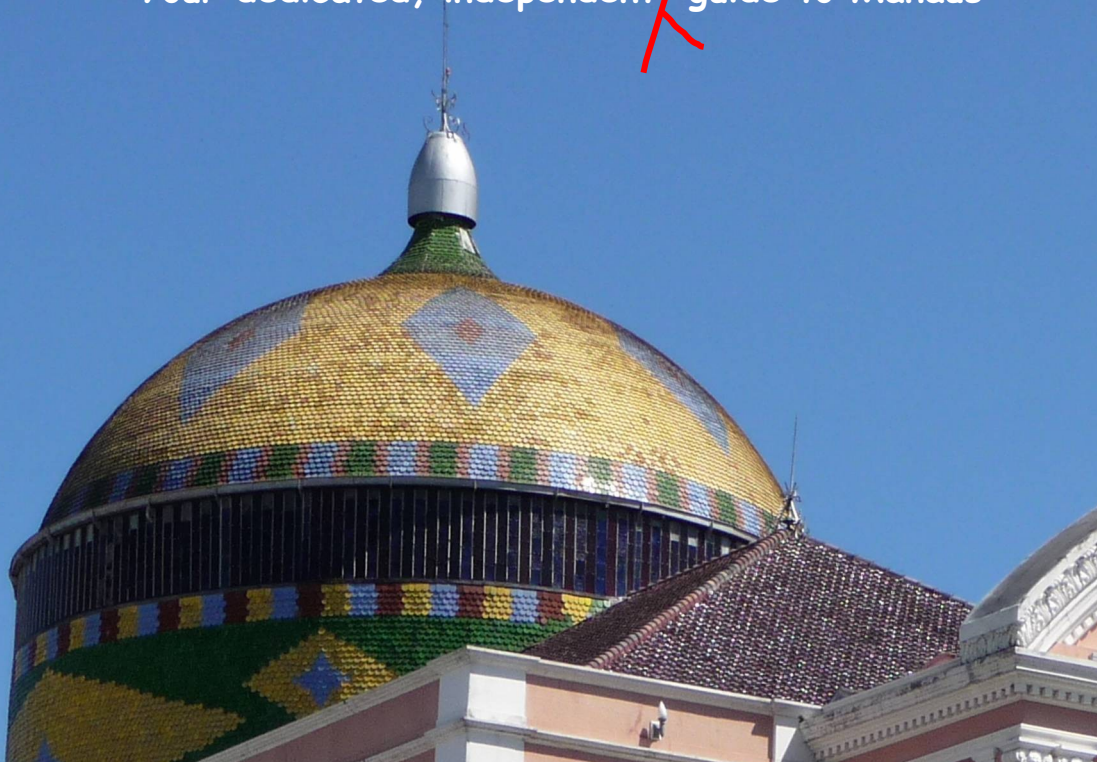


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Edition

Visit
Manaus
Gateway to the Amazon

24 hour

Your dedicated, independent *K* guide to Manaus



How this booklet is organised

With just a few hours - maybe an overnight - between flights and jungle tours, many people aren't sure what they can or should see in Manaus. Here's the low-down, packed into just a few pages. We've tried to boil it down to its essence, while still giving you a few choices depending on your particular interest. If you want all the detail, please have a look at the full 100-page Visit Manaus Guide; but if you just need the essentials for a quick visit, here they are.

First of all, what's so interesting about the place? What is Manaus all about? Well, the city's existence - certainly its size - is attributable originally to the rubber boom of the late 1800's, and this accounts for the interesting colonial buildings such as the Opera House or the Palace of Justice. On top of this its location ought to make it a centre for all things related to the rainforest and its people(s). Unfortunately while this is not (yet) really the case, there are still some interesting bits you might want to see, such as the Indian Museum, or the Science Park, not to mention the famous Meeting of the Waters. And finally, if you want to soak up a bit of the current culture you may want to spend some time at the local bars/restaurants or beaches.

We've broken it all down therefore into three colour-coded sections - **Rubber**, **Nature** and **Culture** - to try to simplify things a little. The Rubber trail covers the Rubber Museum and the principal colonial buildings built during the boom period. The Nature trail includes the Meeting of the Waters and the principal parks and relevant museums, and the Culture trail covers both the indigenous points of interest and the contrasting current local scene.

Towards the back of the guide you'll find some useful information which may help you while you're here, although we have avoided giving you detailed directions and routings as the assumption here is that with limited time on hand you are not going to want to spend much of it waiting for buses or commercial boat services. A little planning before you arrive goes a long way, and you may want to contact local tour operators who cover the area(s) you're interested in. If you're doing it on the fly, however, your best bet with limited time is to make use of the taxis (road or river).

The Guide is therefore organised into four sections - one for each of our 'trails', with a fourth one for general information. A map of Manaus and the surrounding area is included, and a map of the city centre where the majority of the buildings of interest can be found, is on the back page. We hope you find the Guide useful, and welcome any comments or suggestions you may have.

Have fun!
Clive Maguire

*This Guide is **Conscienceware** - if you like it, please consider paying GBP2.99/US\$5 via our Paypal facility to keep the struggling author's family in food.*

The Rubber Trail

Nestling on the banks of the quiet backwater of the *Rio Tarumã Mirim* (see map), and accessible only by river, the **Rubber Museum** provides a great back-drop to understanding the origins of the city.

Once you have this perspective, it makes a little more sense of the impressive colonial money-no-object infrastructure implanted at the turn of the 20th century - and your walk around the centre to see the **Opera House**, the **Palace of Justice**, **Provincial Palace**, the **Adolpho Lisboa Market** and the **docks** is likely to mean a little more.

The Nature Trail

The number one side-trip is undoubtedly the **Meeting of the Waters**, the confluence of the muddy-brown *Rio Solimões* and the black *Rio Negro*. This can be (and usually is) combined with a visit to **Lago Janauari** to see the *Vitoria Regia* lilies, try to spot some animals (especially birds) and perhaps to have some lunch on one of the floating restaurants in the lake. After this, if you still have time, you may opt to visit one of the zoos or the nature parks dotted around the city. These include the **Bosque da Ciência**, the **CIGS Zoo** and/or the private zoo at the **Hotel Tropical**.

The Culture Trail

It is possible, depending on the tour/excursion you choose, to visit a local indigenous community, although you should realise that you cannot expect to see native Indians living in isolated communities this close to Manaus. The reality is that nearby indigenous communities have mostly been assimilated into the extant culture by now. Over the decades, with the vast influx of a whole mixture of peoples from Brazil and further afield, the communities outside Manaus are best described as Cabóclo, meaning 'river-dweller', usually (but not always) of mixed blood.

Nearer to the city, it is possible to visit the **Indian Museum** and maybe the **Peoples of the Amazon Cultural Centre**, where you can see indigenous and cabóclo artefacts and learn a little more about the wide variety of cultures and cultural influences. And if you want to get a better feel for the contemporary culture, then all you need do is visit a few **restaurants and bars**, perhaps take a turn around the **Ponta Negra** or visit one of the **beaches along the Rio Negro** for lunch and a few beers.

Note: if we haven't included something here, it's generally either because it's too far away to fit in a whistle-stop itinerary, or it's currently closed to the public. You are advised to **check opening times** before travelling far to see anything.

The Palace is open from Tuesday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm, on Saturday from 10:00am to 7:00pm and on Sunday from 4:00pm to 9:00pm.

Rio Negro Palace (*Palácio Rio Negro*)

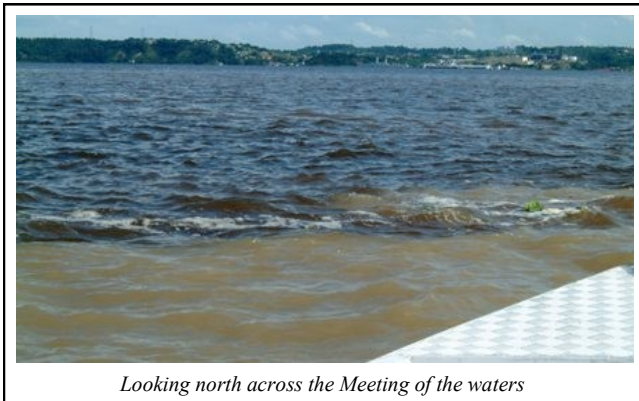


The Rio Negro Palace was originally built for a rich rubber baron called Waldemar Scholtz, at the turn of the 19th century. It was later sold to the State and served as the State Governor's residence from 1917 - 1995. It was modified in 1945, with an extra wing of rooms to the right, and a rather incongruous tower over the left side of the building.

The Palace is now a centre for exhibitions, concerts and theatre performances, although at the time of writing some construction work was taking place to both this building and the adjoining Vila Ninata. The Palace is located on *Avenida Sete de Setembro*, within comfortable walking distance of the Provincial Palace (heading east out of the centre). It is supposed to be open Tuesday to Friday 10:00am to 5:00pm; and Saturday and Sunday from 4:00pm to 10:00pm.

The Nature Trail

The Meeting of the Waters (*Encontro das Águas*)



Looking north across the Meeting of the waters

(Nearly) everyone wants to see the 'meeting of the waters', or more technically the confluence of the rivers Negro and Solimões - and together with the Teatro Amazonas, the confluence is synonymous with Manaus.

The two rivers involved differ fundamentally from each other. The Solimões is the name given locally to that part of the Amazon river that flows from the border with

Section 4 - Useful pointers

People often ask about the **climate** in relation to when the best time to visit Manaus is. Officially, being south of the equator, Brazilian seasons are: Spring - 22 September to 21 December; Summer - 22 December to 21 March; Autumn - 22 March to 21 June; and Winter - 22 June to 21 September. However since Manaus is only 3 degrees south, it's fairly moot - and in any case, the two things you really need to know is how hot and wet it's going to be (or not) and how high or low the river's going to be. So here you are:

Rainfall												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Total (mm)	260	288	314	300	256	114	88	58	83	126	183	217

Sunshine & humidity												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Sunshine (h)	114	88	99	112	149	185	214	225	156	171	141	131
Rel.Humidity %	86	87	88	87	87	83	80	77	77	79	81	85

River levels (Port of Manaus)												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Metres amsl	22.3	23.4	23.6	25.2	27.0	28.0	27.7	26.0	21.7	18.2	18.6	20.4

Temperatures												
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Maximum	31	30	31	31	31	31	31	33	33	33	32	31
Minimum	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	24	24	24	24
Average	26	26	26	26	26	26	27	27	28	28	27	27

You can see that there's no great variation in temperature, and the temperatures don't look so extreme - but how you'll feel on the day is just as much a function of the high levels of humidity and how much sunshine there is, as the actual temperature itself. With this in mind, you can probably see that the months of July - December are hot and sunny, while those of January - June are hot and wet.