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Edition

Visit **Manaus** Gateway to the Amazon

Transport • Food • Hotels • Jungle Lodges
What to see • Events • Language • Culture



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Samaúma Tree
Jardim Botânico Adolpho Ducke

Visit Manaus

Manaus Quick Reference

Founded:	1669
Population:	2,006,870 (IBGE 2008)
Status:	Capital of the state of Amazonas. 8th largest city in Brazil .
Location:	3° south of the equator, 60° west of Greenwich.
Climate:	Monsoon Rainforest (Koppen cli- mate classification) - hot and hu- mid, average temperature 27°, Annual rainfall 1670mm (66 inches)
Inhabitants:	Manauaras or Manauenses
Time zone:	GMT - 4
Business hours:	08:00 - 18:00 Mon - Fri
Electricity:	127v +/-10%
Currency	Real (pl. Reais) R\$
Transport links:	North - Road & Air; South, West & East - River & Air only
Economy:	1.4% of total GDP of Brazil. Brew- ing, shipbuilding, chemicals, elec- tronics, timber
Vegetation:	Tropical rainforest - mixture of seasonally flooded and terra firma forest
Religion:	Predominantly Catholic
Language:	Portuguese
Main Holi- days/events:	February - Carnival May - Opera Festival June - Folk Festival July - Jazz Festival September - State Anniversary October - Anniversary of Manaus November - Film Festival December - New Year's Eve

2. About Manaus

Orientation • Past • Present • Future

Orientation

Many people arriving in Manaus take a while to get their bearings. Here's the low-down (also see the map of Amazonas on page 4):

Let's say you're standing at the port of Manaus with your back to the river. You're facing roughly north. Manaus is as near as you can get to the middle of the Brazilian Amazon - it is (very, very roughly) around 1,000km inland from the Atlantic Ocean to the east (to your right), and around 1,000km from the border of Brazil with Colombia and Peru to the west (your left). It is also around 1,000km from the next nearest town of any size either to the south (Porto Velho - behind you) or to the north (Boa Vista - in front of you). It lies just west of the confluence of the two rivers Negro and Solimões, which join together to form the Amazon (that is to say that here, the name "Amazon" is given only to that part of the river that flows from Manaus to the Atlantic).

The city lies just south of the equator (roughly 3 degrees) - and if you travel north to Boa Vista, you will cross the equator. For those preparing their GPS, the centre of Manaus - as marked by the Inland Revenue Building opposite the port - lies at S3° 8.196' W60° 1.521' (Datum WGS84)

There is currently only one genuine (functioning) interstate road from Manaus, which is the BR174 running north; however if you cross to the south of the Rio Solimões, there is a tenuous link south along the BR319 to Porto Velho. For the average visitor, the BR319 is not currently a practical proposition much beyond the town of Careiro do Castanho, at km 110.

From this, it should be obvious that the principal modes of transport are either air or river.

Historical Perspectives

The Past

Manaus' most visible history dates back to the late nineteenth century and the fleeting rubber boom which led to a development bubble that had already burst by the early twentieth century, but which left a legacy of grand colonial-style buildings. Although many of these have been sadly neglected over time, some have been either preserved or refurbished to a high standard, and are worth a visit - most notably of

Medical and health

Vaccinations

As far as we are aware, at the time of printing the only inoculation you may be officially required to have for entry to Brazil is Yellow Fever - otherwise you should be guided by the appropriate health authority in your own country. Having said this, you may find that (for example) your local doctor knows just as much as you. If you want to decide for yourself, there are several good sites on the internet, one of which is www.thetraveldoctor.co.uk. Currently, the regimen specified on this website is as per the table above, but you should check independently - Visit Manaus is no medical authority.

Malaria	Recommended
Yellow Fever	Recommended / <i>may be required</i>
Hepatitis A	Recommended
Typhoid	Recommended
Tetanus	Recommended
Polio	Recommended

In any case, you will want to select the specific anti-malarial currently recommended for this area (see note on malaria and dengue below).

One thing you can't vaccinate against is **dehydration**, and this is probably the one ailment that most affects visitors to the region. Perhaps this is because in the ambient humidity people may not feel so thirsty, but the fact is that dehydration is perfectly easy to avoid by drinking plenty of fluids, and there are plenty of fluids available here. So there's no excuse. Remember that dehydration can make you feel seriously unwell (as well as potentially being a killer), so make a mental note (or write it on a piece of paper - or on your forehead) to **DRINK MORE WATER**.

If you do become dehydrated, there are plenty of rehydration solutions you can buy, or you can make up your own disgusting (but effective) mix by adding sugar and salt to mineral water.

Also note that if you get diarrhoea, you should drink even more fluid, to avoid dehydration. On the subject of **dodgy tummies**, you are not that likely to get food poisoning here, provided you're sensible. If you do though, it should pass (literally) within 24 - 36 hours or so. If symptoms persist - and particularly if you have a temperature - you should consider the small chance that you have malaria or dengue, and take appropriate action to monitor or test this.

A note on **malaria (and dengue)**. Laugh heartily when people tell you there's no Malaria (or Dengue) in Manaus, on the Rio Negro, at their lodge/hotel/home etc. It is true that the incidence (on black water) is lower, but it is not true that it does not

Customs House and Customs Authority



The customs building stands near the floating docks, next to the main port building. It was shipped over from Liverpool, England, as specially-made pre-fabricated blocks and was inaugurated in 1909.

The building is not open to the public.

Municipal Clock (*Relógio municipal*)



The clock can be found in the pedestrian area called the *Largo da Matriz*, in front of the Port and close to the Cathedral.

It was made by a Swiss watchmaker, and assembled and adjusted in Manaus. It was completed in 1927, and unveiled as part of the celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the City of Manaus.

Adolpho Lisboa Municipal Market (*Mercado Municipal*)



The market was built on the banks of the Rio Negro in an art-nouveau style, and was inaugurated in 1882. The intricate cast-iron work is an impressive feature of the building, whose architecture is sometimes compared to that of Paris' *Les Halles* market

At the time of writing, the market is closed for renovation, however the area surrounding it now has much of the original markets that the building used to host, and is a fascinating area for most tourists, who like to see the hustle and bustle and the huge quantities of fresh produce being bought and sold.

In spite of the chaotic and frenetic activity on market days, the area has always been remarkably safe for tourists, and as with most market traders throughout the world, most people there are a warm and friendly bunch.



The market has an interesting backdrop, as the riverside behind the market is one of the busiest informal passenger ports.

It should be said in the context of tourism that the substantial improvements made to the Provincial Palace make it potentially one of the main points of interest for tourists, and a visit is recommended - although it is a shame there is no exhibit related more to the history, culture and/or geography of Manaus and the Amazon. We should also point out that prior to the improvements, the square in front of the Palace was one of the worst places for drunks and drug-addicts - so although the whole place has been wonderfully cleaned up and is currently policed much more rigorously, until we've had enough time to see what happens, visitors are advised to be on the alert for beggars and pick-pockets in the square.

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. Telephones 3622 4922 and 3656-5832.

Also housed within the Provincial Palace:

The Museum of Numismatics houses a collection of coins, notes, decorations and important historical documents. It also holds rare books on numismatics, and displays facts about money, and various world collections.

The Museum of Image and Sound provides access to a large catalogue of image and sound archives, as well as displaying information and artefacts relating to the history of image and sound in Manaus.

The Tiradentes Museum (*Museu Tiradentes*) contains many items relating to the old Military Police, including period furniture, armour, uniforms, medals and photos.

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.

7. Events

All the arts in the wider Amazon region have their own distinct flavour - the result of the assimilation over time of Indigenous, European, and North-eastern Brazilian cultures. The following is a list of some of the more significant events, all of which represent the unique Amazonense take on life.

Date	TOWN/CITY	EVENT	Dist.		Access
JAN					
31	Barcelos	Ornamental Fish Festival	550km		 
FEB					
varies	MANAUS	Carnaval and Carnaboi	-		
varies	Presidente Figueredo	Carnaval	100km		
varies	Rio Preto da Eva	Carnaval "Eva me Leva"	80km		
MAR					
25 - 28	Presidente Figueredo	Cupuaçu Festival	100km		
31 - 2/4	Urucará	Tucumã Festival	400km		
APR					
varies	MANAUS	Amazonas Opera Festival	-		 
03 - 05	Codajás	Açaí Festival	250km		
16 - 19	São Gabriel da Cachoeira	FESTRIBAL - Indigenous Peoples' Week	850km		 
MAY					
1	Urucurituba	Cocoa Festival	270km		
7 - 9	Anorí	Orange Festival	200km		
varies	Presidente Figueredo	Cupuaçu Festival	100km		
JUN					
Varies	Most towns	Major Folk Festivals	-		 
14 - 21	Itacoatiara	Folk festival	170km		
28-30	Parintins	BOI folk festival	370km		 
29th	MANAUS	St. Peters Day River parade	-		
JUL					
1st wk	Apuí	Cocoa & Watermelon Festival	450km		 
16	Tabatinga	Folk Festival	1100km		 
28-30	São Gabriel da Cachoeira	Folk Festival	850km		 
varies	Careiro	Pineapple Festival	30km		
29-31	Rio Preto da Eva	Orange Festival	80km		

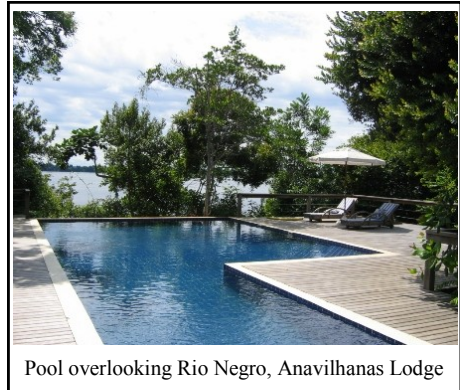
able to identify plants unless they have a specific indigenous use (medicinal, hallucinogenic, water-giving, constructional etc), so if you're really keen, you'll need a sketch book and a tropical plant reference guide. But even if you can't identify it all, you can still marvel at the fantastic varieties around you and consider that you are standing in the middle of one of the toughest survival-of-the-fittest battlegrounds on earth - and the battle is raging all around you.

9.2 Lodges

Introduction

We have no statistics to prove it, but experience suggests that the lodge is currently the preferred option for a majority of tourists. For this reason we devote considerable attention to them here (and it also explains the large and growing number of them). Choosing a lodge is a compromise for most people based on four things - price, level of comfort, time available and importance of primary forest. Lodges vary greatly in terms of all these factors, and it all comes down to a personal choice at the

end of the day. However there are a few things which can be generalised (but like all generalisations there are exceptions - sorry): 1) the further away you get from the city, the more likely you are to find yourself in primary forest; 2) higher prices normally are either for increased comfort and better service OR for a more personalised service; and 3) if you only have 1 night, you are limiting yourself to those lodges within a 50km radius of Manaus.



Pool overlooking Rio Negro, Anavilhanas Lodge

Some visitors arrive hoping to "do" Manaus and the rainforest in two or three nights, without having pre-booked a lodge and with no clear idea of what they want. It is of course possible to book something when you arrive, but finding and organising it will not only eat into your available time in Manaus, but also potentially limit your choices. More importantly, you'll find that a 1-night tour/lodge/package is both expensive (some lodges don't do them) and potentially disappointing - when you consider that it can take 4-6 hours of travelling time just to get to and from some lodges, you can see what the problem is. We recommend that you allow for a minimum 2-night excursion (although many people report that 3 nights seems to be the optimum length) plus 2 nights in Manaus, to give you 1 night in Manaus after your arrival, 2-3 nights in the jungle and a further night in Manaus to recover before you fly out. This works for most people, although of course you may have specific requirements or constraints which will affect this.

given the additional cost and logistics involved (particularly if the water made available is mineral water). For your part, you may need to balance the risk of picking something up by drinking potable water (water either treated chemically or boiled) against your own environmental footprint.










Most lodges, cruises and excursions offer some or all the following in their programmes: caiman spotting, piranha fishing, a jungle walk, and a visit to a local village. Due to their location (or route), some also include a visit to the meeting of the waters, and where this is the case we have indicated it.

We have tried to include as many operators as possible in our listing, but the actual situation remains fairly fluid and you may find new operators entering the market or existing ones leaving. Your best bet in all cases is to use one of the holiday review sites or forums to find recent comments on the package(s) you're thinking of. We should also say that there are probably a large number of operators in addition to those we have listed, but who do not have any website or independent advertising or marketing. You will only find these by talking to agents in Manaus. While quality, service and price are likely to be extremely variable for these operators, you might strike it lucky.

The distance of the lodges from Manaus in our listing is the geographical (straight-line) distance - note that some lodges advertise their distance based on the actual route they use (tsk, tsk).

Finally, our facilities information is based either on information provided by the lodge itself, in response to our enquiries, or on other publicly available documents where the lodge failed to respond (basically, those lodges which supplied a photo are the only lodges which replied to our enquiries).

Key to facilities icons

 Generator &/or partial electricity	 Mains and/or 24-electricity
 Air-conditioned rooms available	 Restaurant
 Bar	 Pool
 Shop/gift shop	 Internet access
 Potable or mineral water provided free	

Anyway, here's our list, in alphabetical order and split between city-centre hotels and those outside the centre. If you're trying to book, see how quick their responses are and how they respond (if at all) to your queries. If you want to be in the city centre, then just expect the worst and concentrate on the experience of being in the middle of a fascinating city; if you want something a bit more refined, then forget about the exact location and budget an extra few hundred Reais in taxi fares.

City Centre Hotels

Ana Cassia - Central Manaus	
📍hotelanacassia.com.br ✉️hotelana@argo.com.br ☎️(+55 92) 3303 3637	
Older hotel with poor reviews	Av. Rating ★☆☆☆☆
Guest Comments “rooms dark & small” “poor service” “can be ok”	
Best Western Lord Manaus - Central Manaus	
📍lordmanaus.com.br ✉️reservas@lordmanaus.com.br ☎️(+55 92) 3622 2844	
Older hotel in the centre. In spite of the name, no longer part of Best Western. Mixed reviews.	Av. Rating ★★☆☆☆
Guest Comments “dated” “adequate” “basic” “dirty” “good location”	
Dez de Julho Manaus - central Manaus	
📍hoteldezdejulho.com.br ✉️manaushotel@hotmail.com ☎️(+55 92) 3232 6280	
Another older hotel near the opera house.	Av. Rating ★★☆☆☆
Guest Comments “clean” “basic “ok” “great location” “deplorable” “nice staff”	
Ideal Manaus - central Manaus	
Basic central hotel. No recent reviews.	
Av. Rating ★★☆☆☆	
Guest Comments “poor breakfast” “unhelpful staff” “simple but clean”	
Manaos Manaus - central Manaus	
📍hotelmanaos.com.br ✉️manaos@vivax.com.br ☎️(+55 92) 3638 5744	
the opera house.	Av. Rating ★★☆☆☆
Guest Comments “poor value” “dated” “average” “good location”	

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