

Title:

Manila, Philippines

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Summary:

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Before you decide against a trip to Manila, you should bear in mind that the newspapers do not always give an accur...

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Article Body:

The Philippines has recently gained itself a bad reputation due to all the political on-goings in the country. Clashes between rebel forces and the government, rumors of coup, status of emergency declarations, and even suspected links to the al Quaeda - no wonder some Western governments cannot help but release travel advisories against visiting this country.

Before you decide against a trip to Manila, you should bear in mind that the newspapers do not always give an accurate picture of a situation. Sensationalism is their business, and sensationalized news is what you usually get.

Manila is located in the northern island of Luzon. The terrorist stronghold is located in the southernmost part of the Philippines - two big islands away - in Mindanao. The status of emergency was indeed declared but civilians basically continued to live their normal lives even as it was in place.

It is very easy to get around in Manila. The jeepney is the Philippines' most common form of transportation. It is actually based on the US Army jeep but is longer and fits about 16-20 people. You can also get on buses, the Metro Rail Transit, and hire cabs. Language is not a major problem as even the people on the streets can speak rudimentary English.

Manila is well-known for its nightlife. You can find bars open until 3 or 4 in

the morning. The Makati and Malate areas are where you can find the hottest clubs and bars. Makati is a bit more expensive but safer as well.

Malls abound in the metro. You can find anything from designer brands to nondescript but very cheap brands. Food is not a problem. Filipino food, American fast food, Japanese food - you can find anything there.

Filipinos are very hospitable by nature. You will be surprised at how friendly and helpful most of them are. It's actually a different form of racism - they seem to treat Caucasians in a much better way.

Cost of living and traveling is so much lower than in western countries. So if you have dollars or euros, chances are you will have no problems availing services that meet your standards. Hotels and other accommodations are abundant and easy to find.

If it is the beach you want, then you can opt to go out of the city. The nearest beach can be reached in about 4 hours from the city. You can take a plane to other parts of the country if you want to see more.

Whether you are traveling alone or with your family, Manila is a good place to visit. It will be a rich cultural experience for you.