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Chobi_Wala/Shutterstock.com

Hectic, bustling, chaotic, Dhaka is an enormous city of endless possibilities with energy to spare. Though it can seem a bit overwhelming at first, visitors who take the time to explore will find the experience most rewarding. Delicious food, bustling markets, serene parks and gardens, lazy river cruises and death-defying rickshaw rides, fascinating museums, temples and mosques to ease the soul, and tantalising musical and dance performances; all this and more awaits the adventurous traveller who dares to venture into this unique city.

NOTE: This Guide has been limited to 20 points of interest per section. For the full guide, please visit ArrivalGuides.com



Lumenite/Shutterstock.com



nasir khan

QUIZ

*What Type of Traveller
Are You Based on
Your Travel IQ?*

TAKE THE QUIZ

Top 5



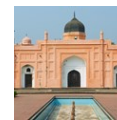
National Assembly of Bangl...

The construction of this masterpiece, designed by Louis Kahn, took 22 years ...



Ahsan Manzil (Pink Palace)

Perhaps the city's most iconic landmark, this impressive palace dates back t...



Lalbagh Fort

The fort and its beautiful gardens are a great place to escape the bustle of...



Sadarghat Boat Terminal

The Buriganga River, which runs peacefully through Dhaka, showcases a microc...



Dhakeswari Temple

Although this temple may seem modern, it stands on a most sacred spot, where...



THE CITY



Kuruman/Flickr (image cropped)

Dhaka is an enormous city, and it shows. It is crowded and always on the move, but that also makes it a dynamic and entertaining place to be. The city streets are a constant flow of traffic and rickshaws, and there is something new to discover at every turn.

Most of the city's historical monuments and points of interest can be found in the area of Old Dhaka, such as the Lalbagh Fort and the stunning Pink Palace. It is also an area of great spiritual importance, gathering the Hindu Dhakeshwari Temple, the Orthodox Armenian Church, and the Tara Mosque, among others.

The city's more modern side can be found in Gulshan, a more affluent neighbourhood where you can find large upscale shopping centres and international restaurants, mixing more tranquil residential areas with commercial buildings and businesses (similar to neighbouring Banani).

DO & SEE



Isa Ismail/Shutterstock.com

Dhaka offers a mix of people, cultures and religions, and the city's many temples and mosques could keep visitors occupied for days. Add to that the impressive monuments and historic buildings, palaces and forts, and a few fantastic museums, and there won't seem to be enough time to take it all in. And of course, don't miss the chance to take a ride down the Buriganga River for a glimpse at real Bangladeshi life.

National Assembly of Bangladesh (Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban)



The construction of this masterpiece, designed by Louis Kahn, took 22 years from 1961 until its completion in 1983, interrupted only by the war for liberation from Pakistan. Today, the structure is used as assembly grounds by the parliament of the country. The monumental building ranks among some of the finest examples of modern Bangladeshi architecture.

Photo: Jubair Bin Iqbal/Shutterstock.com

Address: Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, Dhaka

Internet: www.parliament.gov.bd/index.php/en?csrt=16231006766963951441

Ahsan Manzil (Pink Palace)



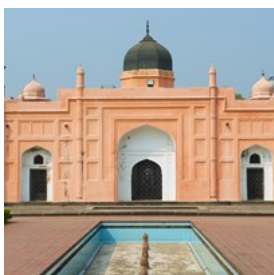
Perhaps the city's most iconic landmark, this impressive palace dates back to 1872 and is a must for any visit to Dhaka. Renovations in the 1980s have left all 23 rooms just as they looked at their most luxurious and grandiose, and a walk through the palace is like a trip through time. A standout feature is the enormous elephant skull, a former Nawab's favourite.

Photo: Renee Vititoe/Shutterstock.com

Address: Ahsanullah Rd, Dhaka

Opening hours: Sat-Wed 10.30am-5.30pm, Fri 3pm-8pm

Lalbagh Fort



The fort and its beautiful gardens are a great place to escape the bustle of the city streets for a while. Dating back to 1684, the complex includes three monuments: the Quilla Mosque, the Tomb of Pari Bibi and the Hall of Audience. This last one, the only one visitors can enter, houses a small museum containing coins, carpets, paintings and more.

Photo: Dmitry Chulov/Shutterstock.com

Address: Lalbagh Rd, Dhaka

Opening hours: Mon 12pm-6pm, Tue-Sat 10am-6pm

Phone: +880 1721 802423

Sadarghat Boat Terminal



The Buriganga River, which runs peacefully through Dhaka, showcases a microcosm of the whole country on its banks. You can see people fishing by the shore as your vessel

navigates through the maze of boats making their way down the river. Taking a ride here is one of the best ways to get a true view of Bangladesh and its way of life.

Photo: Michael Stout (image cropped)

Address: Buriganga Riverfront, Dhaka

Phone: +880 1782 244558

Dhakeswari Temple

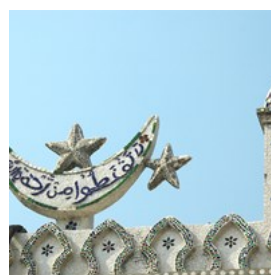


Although this temple may seem modern, it stands on a most sacred spot, where temples have stood for centuries. It is the centre of the Hindu religion in Bangladesh, dedicated to Dhakeshwari, the protector deity of the city, and gathers thousands of followers every year during the Durga Puja festival in September.

Photo: fritz16/Shutterstock.com

Address: Bakshi Bazar, Dhakeshwari Road, Dhaka

Tara Mosque



Another iconic monument of Dhaka, the Tara Mosque, or Star Mosque, has fascinated visitors and locals alike for years with its beautifully detailed mosaics. Interestingly, some tiles feature illustrations of Mt Fuji, since a renovation was done some 50 years ago using Japanese and English porcelain tiles.

Photo: YU MURAKAMI/Shutterstock.com

Address: Armanitola, Abul Khairat Rd, Dhaka

Phone: +880 1764 198966

Bangladesh National Museum



This fantastic museum takes visitors on a tour through the country's natural, social and art history, its geology, flora and fauna, and much more, with its high-quality displays and unique artefacts (a standout feature is the large river racing boat). It is well worth a visit to get an understanding of the country's fascinating history.

Photo: Marufish (image cropped)

Address: Shahbagh Rd, Dhaka

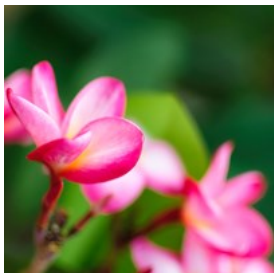
Opening hours: Sat-Wed 9:30am-4pm, Fri 3pm-7:30pm

Phone: +880 2 8619396

Internet: www.bangladeshmuseum.gov.bd

Email: dgmuseum@yahoo.com

Botanical Gardens



These beautiful and serene botanical gardens offer city-dwellers a tranquil and quiet place to escape the hectic and noisy city life. The gardens cover over 40 hectares and feature a rich array of thousands of examples of local and foreign plant life, as well as a wealth of birds that have made the gardens their home.

Photo: Mohammad Saiful Islam/Shutterstock.com

Address: Mirpur, Dhaka

Phone: +880 1731 148716

Liberation War Museum



Bangladesh's War of Independence from Pakistan in 1971 was a deadly and haunting conflict. This museum takes visitors on a

difficult but important recollection of the war and its tragedies, and though it can be quite graphic at times, it is essential to understanding the country as it is today.

Photo: Adam Jones (image cropped)

Address: 5 Segun Bagicha Rd, Dhaka

Opening hours: Mon-Sat 10am-5pm

Phone: +880 2955 9091

Armenian Church

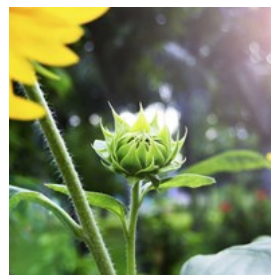


There was a significant Armenian community in Bangladesh for centuries, even if today their presence is minimal. Founded in 1781, the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection in Dhaka, in the neighbourhood of Armanitola, named for the Armenian community that settled there, is a remnant of that time. The beautiful church is worth a visit as a marker of the diversity that exists and has existed in the city.

Photo: Kuruman (image cropped)

Address: Armanitola Rd, Dhaka

Suhrawardi Park



Once a racetrack, and the place where the Bangladeshi Declaration of Independence took place, this vast park holds historical importance. A fine place to relax by day, it converts into an open-air market at night, so there is never a bad time to visit.

Photo: Mohammad Saiful Islam/Shutterstock.com

Address: Secretariate Road, Dhaka

Phone: +880 1960 609710

DINING



Paul_Brighton/Shutterstock.com

Bangladeshi cuisine has been largely shaped by the country's geography: a vast network of intertwining rivers and deltas with seasonal monsoons and floods. As such, rice is a staple in the country's diet, along with lentils and, of course, river fish. This is all served with fragrant curries and warm breads, and it is filling and delectable. Add in some fine international restaurants, and visitors will eat more than their share while in Dhaka.

Al-Razzaque

If you want to eat like the locals do, you can't miss Al-Razzaque. This place serves up local dishes, like curries, biryanis and enormous rotis at good prices. It is incredibly popular with locals, so it can be quite crowded, but the food is so good, it is definitely worth the wait.

Address: 29/1 North-South Rd, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 7am-12am
Phone: +880 2956 6412

Dhaba

Dhaba serves dishes from all over Asia, but their specialty lies with Indian street food. Anything you order is bound to be delicious and good value, and the setting is clean and modern. For the full experience, make sure to order a fresh fruit juice.

Address: House 104, Rd 12, Block E, Banani, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 11:30am-10:30pm
Phone: +880 1756 710097

Spaghetti Jazz

For something a bit less spicy, how about some Italian? Spaghetti Jazz offers some of the best pizza and pasta dished in Dhaka, as well as other Italian favourites like antipasti or meat dishes. The location is very convenient, and the ambiance is modern and pleasant.

Address: 43 North Gulshan II, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 12:30pm-3pm and 6:30pm-10:30pm
Phone: +880 2 882 2062

Gulshan Plaza Restaurant

Another favourite among locals, this conveniently located restaurant serves up some of the best meat dishes in the whole city, from beef and chicken to mutton. The bread is always fresh and delicious, and you can even try the delicious yoghurt drink, lassi.

Address: Gulshan DIT II, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 7am-12am
Phone: +880 1911 597257

Fakruddin

Some people claim that Fakruddin has the very best biryani in all of Dhaka. If the crowds that gather here are any indication, then that just might be the case. The servings are massive, and the delicious food keeps customers returning time and time again.

Address: 37 Bir Uttam AK Khandakar Rd, Gulshan Circle I, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 12pm-10pm
Phone: +880 1715 553330
Internet: www.fakruddin.com

Bamboo Shoot

For authentic Chinese cuisine, there is no better place in Dhaka than Bamboo Shoot. Not only is

the food worth the trip (the menu offers a huge variety of Chinese delicacies and favourite staples), but visitors can also enjoy and even participate in some karaoke.

Address: RM Centre, 2nd fl, Gulshan Ave, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 12pm-3:30pm and 6pm-10:30pm
Phone: +880 2988 8307

CAFES



Shaiith/Shutterstock.com

Coffee may not be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of Bangladesh, but local roasting has been happening for decades, and a whole array of high-quality coffee shops have sprung up around the city in recent times. Mostly following a Western cafe model, these coffee houses are great places to have a quick snack or dessert and enjoy a hot cappuccino or espresso.

North End Coffee Roasters

North End Coffee is famed for serving the best coffee in Bangladesh. They were the first roasted in the country and clearly care about the quality of their drinks and service. Prices might seem a bit high, but anyone who has visited any of their locations can tell you it's worth it, not just for the great coffee, but also for the excellent pastries.

Address: 53, Gulshan Ave, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 7am-10:30pm
Phone: +880 1737 130629

George's Cafe

Customers never fail to comment on the great ambiance at George's Cafe. The service is warm and welcoming, the decor is pleasant and the coffee is hot and tasty. They also serve pastries and some snack foods, as well as hamburgers and other fast options.

Address: House-2, Road-10, Sector-1, Uttara, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 9am-11pm
Phone: +880 1784 436743

Terra Bistro

This cosy place has a nice small cafe feel to it, but offers a good selection of drinks, snacks and desserts, and the price to value ratio is generally very good. It is the kind of place that will make you want to linger for a while and escape the busy city streets outside.

Address: H#58, R#11, Block-F, Banani, Dhaka
Phone: +880 2883 1409

Kiva Han Cafe

Kiva Han Cafe claims to be inspired in the very first coffee shop in the world, in 1475 Constantinople. The quality coffee is complemented by the fusion food offerings and the tasty sandwiches and burgers. You can also choose from a variety of teas and dairy and chocolate drinks.

Address: House 1/A (1st Floor), Road 23, Gulshan 1, Dhaka
Phone: +880 2881 3399
Internet: www.kivahancafe.com
Email: info@kivahancafe.com

Gloria Jean's Coffee

Originally from Australia, this coffee shop chain has greatly expanded and now has over 1,000 locations in 39 countries worldwide, including three in Dhaka. Known for its hearty coffee drinks and decadent desserts, it is also a great place for a quick snack, as the sandwiches here

are quite tasty.

Address: S.W(a), House-35, Gulshan Ave, Dhaka

Opening hours: Daily 8am-1am

Phone: +880 1929 333888

Internet: www.gloriajeanscoffees.com

BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Atique Rahman (image cropped)

If you're looking for a crazy night of dancing until dawn at a sweaty nightclub, Dhaka may not be the best city for you. That's not to say that it doesn't have great bars and places to enjoy a good drink, but you're more likely to find a place to enjoy a spectacular dance performance or some live fusion music, which usually provide a more memorable experience for visitors on their evenings out.

Jatra Biroti

This hip rooftop lounge showcases the city's best offerings of art and music, and it is the coolest place to spend a night out. It hosts tons of events and always strives to promote local folk art and artists. Musical fusion abounds where traditional Lalon and Tagore sounds mix with jazz, blues and rock.

Address: 60 Kemal Ataturk Ave, Banani, Dhaka

Opening hours: Thu-Sun

Phone: +880 2 890 0840

Internet: jatrabd.com/jatra-biroti

Sakura Bar

One of the most famous bars in Dhaka, Sakura has a bit of a mysterious allure to it. Located above a handicraft shop, you must enter the dark space through the back after it closes. It is a popular place among locals, with cheap local beer and some imported ones as well.

Address: D.I.T Super Market, 1st Floor, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Paribagh, Dhaka

Opening hours: Sat-Thu 11am-10pm

Chhayanaut Cultural Center

This fantastic auditorium is one of the best places in the city for performing arts. Typically showcasing performances of traditional folk music and dances from the region and its surroundings, some of the most prestigious orchestras and dance troupes come here to perform.

Address: Satmasjid Road, Dhaka

Internet: www.chhayanaut.org

Star Cineplex

Cinema-lovers can spend an evening enjoying a great film at the Star Cineplex, located on top of the Bashundhara City shopping centre. Visitors can choose from the latest Hollywood super-productions (usually in English), or settle in for a Bollywood hit.

Address: Level 8,13/3 Ka Panthapath, Dhaka

Phone: +880 2 913 8260

Internet: www.cineplexbd.com

Blue Moon Recreation Club

The Blue Moon Recreation Club is a dark bar and nightclub, more or less resembling an American bar experience. It is bathed in neon lighting, giving it a very particular feel and vibe, and certain days bring live music performances, and you can even have some typical bar food.

Address: 3rd floor, 67/D Rd 11, Banani, Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 11am-11pm
Phone: +880 1732 806662
Internet: www.bluemoonclubbd.com
Email: info@bluemoonclubbd.com

Blaze Entertainment Lounge and Bar

For a more upscale bar experience, hotel bars generally offer a touch of elegance and sophistication to a night out. This bar at the Radisson Blu Hotel near the airport offers a great environment, as well as great and elaborate drinks, live entertainment and even the chance to play billiards.

Address: Airport Road, Dhaka
Opening hours: Sat-Thu 6:30am-12:30am
Phone: +880 2 983 4555
Internet: www.radissonblu.com/en/hotel-dhaka/bars

SHOPPING



Kuruman (image cropped)

Shopping in Dhaka can be quite an experience. The noise and crowds of the markets can be overwhelming, but very rewarding, smaller boutiques offer truly unique items, clothing and accessories, and the large shopping centres provide just about anything one could need. Clothing is perhaps the most sought-after product, from the high-quality designer items, to the brand-name excesses straight from the factories.

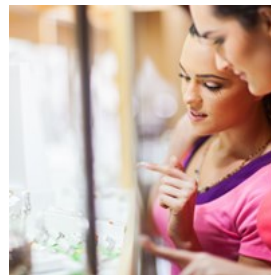
Aarong



Aarong takes pride in selling "ethnically made handcrafted products", which include everything from men's, women's and children's clothing to home decor and jewelry. Their products have a predominantly traditional look to them, but with a distinctly modern twist that really sets them apart.

Photo: [SurangaSL/Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com/user/SurangaSL)
Address: Intersection of Mirpur Rd. and Manik Mia Ave., Dhaka
Opening hours: Daily 10am-8pm
Phone: +880 2889 1404
Internet: www.aarong.com

Bashundhara City



Bashundhara City claims to be the 12th largest shopping centre in the world, and whether or not that is true, it certainly boasts and dizzying 2,000+ shops and restaurants, plus a cinema and a bowling alley. If you can't find what you're looking for here, then it likely can't be found.

Photo: [michaeljung/Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com/user/michaeljung)
Address: Pantha Path, Dhaka
Phone: +880 911 1440
Internet: www.bashundhara-city.com
Email: admin.bcdl@bg.com.bd

New Market



Dhaka's New Market was Bangladesh's first attempt at creating a modern, family-friendly open-air shopping centre, and has been a central

hub for all shopping in the city for over 70 years. You can pretty much find anything and everything here, and often bargain down the price, too.

Photo: Kuruman (image cropped)

Address: Mirpur Rd, Dhaka

Opening hours: Wed-Mon 10am-8pm

Internet: www.dhakanewmarketbd.com

Bongo Bazar



The Bongo Bazar is loud, chaotic and at times overwhelming, but that only adds to the experience. Vendors here sell the excess

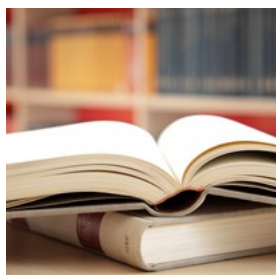
brand-name clothes that you would end up buying at expensive boutiques in America and Europe for a fraction of the price (if you're good at bargaining, that is).

Photo: Don Mammoser/Shutterstock.com

Address: College Rd, Dhaka

Opening hours: Sat-Thu 8am-8pm

PBS Bookshop



PBS is Bangladesh's largest bookstore, located in a modern and well-lit shop. They have a very good selection of English-language books,

as well as music and DVDs, stationary and gift items. There is also a small cafe with free WiFi, making it the kind of place to linger and browse an afternoon away.

Photo: ambrozinio/Shutterstock.com

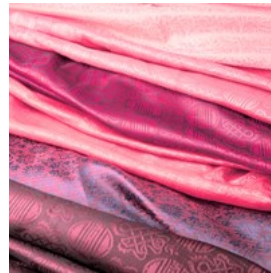
Address: 43 Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Sarak, Dhaka

Opening hours: Sat-Thu 9am-6pm

Phone: +880 1710 218151

Internet: www.pbschain.com

Aranya



Aranya is perhaps the best place to get high-quality traditional Bangladeshi clothing. Silk, cotton and other yarns are hand-dyed here

and then woven and embroidered into saris, ready-to-wears and other accessories. They take great pride in having revived two traditional garments: Jamdanis and Kanthas.

Photo: Fribus Mara/Shutterstock.com

Address: 60 Kemal Ataturk Ave, Dhaka

Opening hours: Daily 10am-10pm

Phone: +880 2 9882542

Internet: www.aranya.com.bd

TOURIST INFORMATION



David Mckee/Shutterstock.com

Airport



Located about 20 km north of Dhaka, in the area of Kurmitola, the Shahjalal International Airport (DAC) is the country's largest airport.

The easiest way to get to the city is by taxi, which should take about 30 minutes. Travelers are recommended to take an approved taxi from the pre-paid booth inside the terminal. It is also

possible to walk to the main road to catch a bus to the city. They are very affordable, but often over-crowded. Lastly, there are car rental services available at the arrival terminal.

Photo: Juan Garces
Address: Airport Road, Sector 1, Kurmitola
Phone: +880 2 7911042
Internet: hsia.gov.bd

Public Transport



Traffic in Dhaka can be overwhelming, often involving deadlock traffic jams taking hours to clear up. City buses are the most common form of

transport in Dhaka. They are cheap, but often so crowded you'd be lucky to squeeze through the door. And the routes can be confusing, so unless you know exactly which bus to take, it might be best to stick to private transport.

Taxis are most easily found at busy intersections or hotel lobbies. They are seldom metered, so be sure to settle on a price before getting in. Alternatively, pedal- and motor-rickshaws (CNGs) are everywhere, and they are a very inexpensive way to get around, but be prepared to haggle and endure a lot of traffic.

Photo: Pierre-Luc Auclair
Address: Dhaka

Taxi



Taxis can be a good way to get around Dhaka. To best find one, head towards a busy intersection or a hotel lobby. They seldom have

meters, so be sure to agree on a price before

getting in. BDCabs is one reputable taxi company.

Photo: ArrivalGuides
Address: Dhaka
Phone: +880 9612 666 666
Internet: www.bdcabs.com
Email: bdcabshq@gmail.com

Post Office

Dhaka General Post Office



Photo: Andy Fuchs
Address: Banga Bandhu Ave, Dhaka
Opening hours: Sat-Thu 9am-7:30pm
Phone: +880 2 9555531
Internet: www.bangladeshpost.gov.bd
Email: srpm_dhkgpo@bangladeshpost.gov.bd

Pharmacy

Care Pharmacy



Photo: Gemma Garner
Address: House 116, Road 11, Block E, Banani
Phone: +880 2 883 6745

Telephone



Country code: +880 Area code: 2

Photo: Jardson Almeida

Electricity



Voltage: 220 V
Frequency: 50 Hz Power
sockets: type C / D / G / K

Photo: Stirling Tschan

Population

7,000,000

Currency

Bangladeshi Taka
1 BDT = 100 poisha

Opening hours

Most businesses generally open at about 9am and remain open until around 6pm. Restaurants close later, between 8pm and 10pm, and bars at about 11pm or midnight.

Newspapers

The Bangladesh Today
The Daily Star
Dhaka Tribune

Emergency numbers

Emergency: 999

Tourist information

Bangladesh Tourism Board
Bangladesh House Building
Finance Corporation Bhaban (7th floor)
22, Purana Paltan, Dhaka
+880-2-9513328
btbnto@gmail.com