



Magicfest Birmingham
Travel guide – 16th-18th
August 2019



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General Tips

Weather:- Rain is forecast for the upcoming weekend, We recommend a water proof coat/bag and an umbrella, especially for Friday, even if it feels a little warm! Luckily a lot of the NEC is indoors, so there's plenty of protection from the elements at the venue.

Electricity:- 240V, 3 pin UK/Irish plug. European plugs require a simple adaptor, available for purchase in most convenience stores, supermarkets, and hotels. 110V countries require a transformer

International phone code:- +44

Time zone:- British Summer Time (UTC+1)

Emergency Services:- 999

Non-emergency police:- 101

Non-Emergency medical help (minor or non-life-threatening injuries):- 111

Hotel Advice

Hotels very close to the event site:-

- Crowne Plaza Birmingham NEC 4*
- Novotel Birmingham Airport 4*
- Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel 4*
- Genting Hotel at Resorts World Birmingham 4*
- Ibis Styles Birmingham NEC and Airport 3*
- Premier Inn Birmingham NEC/Airport
- Ibis budget Birmingham International Airport 2*

Budget hotels

The best suggestion for a budget hotel with easy access to the venue is within the birmingham city centre. There are a number of AirBnB's in the area as well as various hostel options too!

- Hatters Hostel offers free breakfast, and is highly recommended amongst backpackers
- Central Backpackers is also highly rated.
- Britannia Hotel New Street Station 3*
- Holiday Inn Express 3*
- Ibis Budget Birmingham Centre 2*

Sights and Attractions

There is plenty to see in and around Birmingham, if you find yourself looking for something to do one of the evenings or have some time to kill post event, why not check one of these out?

Bullring Shopping Centre



Well signposted and easy to navigate, this is a great place to get some shopping done and there's various markets to peruse too! There are also plenty of fast food places and restaurants in walking distance too!

Jewellery Quarter

A lovely bit of architecture, this area hosts more than 200 jeweller's workshops, accompanied by a museum about the Quarter. There's also a very nice Clock tower so you'll never lose track of time there.



Cadbury World



Got a sweet tooth? Then you'll love this tour of the original factory grounds of Cadbury's chocolate. Experience the history of this confectionary giant and watch the creation of Cadburys many types of chocolaty goodness.

LEGOLand Birmingham

Everyone's got an inner child, and there's no better way to let them out than with Lego! There's rides, giant structures, building workshops and even a 4D cinema showing various Lego themed movies. The Lego shop also has a huge range of builds and box sets for you to take home!



Birmingham Thinktank



For the science lovers, the ThinkTank is perfect, incredible exhibits on everything to the steam engines that powered the industrial revolution to space exhibits and medical marvels powering our future. There's even a 4K planetarium to boot!

Escape rooms!

There are a number of different escape rooms to try within a train trip distance of the NEC, In Birmingham city centre, there's Escape live

<http://www.escapelive.co.uk/escapegames/birmingham>

and in the other direction, a short train trip to Coventry can get you to Escape Reality

<https://www.escapereality.com/escape-rooms-uk/coventry/>

Public Transport

Bus services connect all parts of Birmingham to the city centre. A single journey costs £2.40-3, a short hop (up to a mile) ticket is £1-1.50, and day tickets are £4 or more. If you are paying on board, you need to give exact fare to the driver, as they are unable to provide change.

Midland Metro is a tram service connecting the New Street Station to Wolverhampton. Tickets range from £1 for a short hop to £6.50 for a return day ticket to Wolverhampton. Fares are purchased on board.

Taxis – hailing a cab works out to be a lot more expensive than booking one in advance.

- Uber
- TOA Taxis: 0121 427 8888
- Birmingham City Taxis: 0121 285 3672
- Birmingham Taxis: 0121 702 2000

Trains from Birmingham international can take you to Birmingham new street station which is right next to the City centre and the bullring shopping centre, and only cost's £2.50 one way, £5.00 approx. for an open return. Handy as the train station for Birmingham international is connected to the NEC, over the sky bridge.

Food and drink

Britain's worldly cuisine reflects its colonial past, and many exotic dishes found their way to the British Isles. Indian curry and tandoori dishes are a must try for any food lover. Plenty of vegetarian options are available. Birmingham hosts a number of excellent Indian restaurants. Try one of these places, although booking in advance is recommended:

- Lasan Restaurant, St Paul's Square, B3 1SD
- Viceroy Tandoori, 108 Ickniel Street, B18 6RZ
- Royal Watan Kashmiri Restaurant, 602 Pershore Road, Selly Park, B29 7HQ
- Rajdoot, 79 George Street, B3 1PY

For fans of more traditional British food, there are a variety of excellent pubs that will provide you with great British dishes: try fish and chips, a Shepherd's Pie, a beef burger, and wash it down with a pint of excellent beer on tap. Note that it is common for food orders to be taken at the bar, just remember your table number. Tipping is not common, but some restaurants will automatically add a 10% gratuity. Try one of these places:

- The Old Contemptibles, 176 Edmund Street, B3 2HB
- Beefeater, 3-6 Waterloo Street, B2 5PG
- All Bar One, New Street Station, B5 4AH

Of course, as a world city, major food franchises operate in Birmingham. Grand Central, which hosts the New Street rail station and the surrounding area will welcome you at Five Guys, Square Pie, Tortilla, Café Rouge, Giraffe, Wagamama's, Ed's Easy Diner, Yo-Sushi!, Pho, Handmade Burger Co., and many more are available to satisfy any particular craving. Or you can always pop in for a cheeky Nando's at the Bullring Shopping Mall, if only to have a slightly better understanding of that one particular internet meme. Cheaper options include Gregg's, McDonald's, Burger King or Tesco sandwich deals.

The NEC does not seem to have too many great options for dining, and they appear to be higher priced. If you wish to not to travel to the city centre, I would recommend Gourmet Burger Kitchen, Nando's or Las Iguanas.

Ways to get here

If you are flying to UK, or are a non-Brummie UK resident, you will need to take advantage of the excellent and dependable UK public transportation system. Birmingham is well connected to the rest of the country by rail, road or air.

Easiest way to fly in to the city

That would be Birmingham Airport (IATA code BHX, not to be confused with Birmingham, Alabama, which is BHM!). If you arrive here, you are within walking distance to the Magicfest venue, as the airport has a direct shuttle to the Birmingham International Railway station.

By Rail

There are three rail stations in the city centre that provide fast and frequent connections to national destinations. The busiest one and the one you will probably arrive at is New Street Station (code BHM). Travellers from London might wish to look into travelling to Moor Street (BMO) or Snow Hill (BSW) stations as the tickets are frequently cheaper for the slower services going to these stations.

By Coach

There is a wide range of National Express services that call at the Digbeth Coach Station, just a few minutes from the city centre.

By Road

Birmingham is linked to the M5, M6, M40, and M42 motorway networks, as well as M6 Toll road. Be aware that there are ongoing major roadworks all around M5 and M6, and take that into account for your travel time estimations.

Tournament venue location, and how to get there from the airport/s. Expected time of travelling.

National Exhibition Centre – Hall 11
North Ave
Marston Green
Birmingham
B40 1NT
United Kingdom



Magicfest Birmingham will be held at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham. The NEC is a 10-minute walk from Birmingham

International Railway Station, where direct services to Birmingham run all day. On Sunday, 13th May, the last train to Birmingham New Street will depart at 23:14. A single ticket from New Street to Birmingham International will cost from £3 up to £5, and a return ticket will cost around £7. Taking a taxi from the Birmingham city centre to the venue will set you back around £30.

Local game stores?

There are a few local game stores in Birmingham.

One of the largest ones is Manaleak Tournament Centre, located about 10 minutes away from Birmingham New Street Station, at Unit 109, The Jubilee Centre, 130 Pershore Street, B5 6ND.

Geek Retreat is also located centrally, also 10 minutes walk from Birmingham New Street Station, at 38 The Priory Queensway, B4 7LA

There is also Global gaming, a smaller store approximately a ten minute walk from Birmingham New Street station at 15 Shaw's Passage, Birmingham B5 5JG

Helpful information about local security rules to follow carefully when arriving at the airport.

Birmingham is like any other major city in a western European country, generally safe, but awareness of surroundings helps, and common sense is recommended to avoid trouble. Pickpockets exist as they do everywhere. Beggars asking for spare change are usually polite, and will leave you alone if you just say 'Sorry mate'. Smile, nod, keep calm and carry on.

Local and other contacts

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