

DISCOVERING YOUR NEW CITY: A GUIDE TO EXPLORING UNKNOWN PLACES



ABSTRACT

Ever wondered how to truly see a city, not as a hurried tourist, but as an unhurried observer, a flâneur perhaps? Our guide on 'How to Explore a New City' encourages you to meander, not march. Get lost in the streets, embrace the unexpected, and let the city reveal its secrets to you. Join us at the nexus of psychology, travel, and lifestyle design for this urban adventure.

INTRODUCTION

Do you ever get to a new city and wonder what other things you can do besides the traditional Free Walking Tour or exploring based on what a map tells you? Maybe you have done those things and want to try something new. Walking tours and maps aren't bad, but it's fun to experience a new city in different ways. Over the last few years, I have become a master at finding new and exciting ways to get to know the cities I visit and hopefully, you will find some of these fun activities worth trying when you visit a city for the first time.

I. 10 ways to discover a new city



Whether you're going in a city break, planning a long vacation or moving in a whole new city, learning your ways around and getting used to the new scenery can be a stressful transition. And I'm sure you've heard tons of suggestions so far, but they are often too general and sound something like: "Get out more". Well, that not enough, is it?



When I started college, I moved from my small, provincial town to the big, loud and scary capital. Even though I was excited to make a change in my life, the thought of leaving behind everything I've ever known and starting over in a new environment terrified me. As an introvert, I found the process even harder. That's when I first started to create the following list, that I found useful in my travels as well. So without further ado, let's start looking into 10 ways to discover a new city!

1. Go on a free walking tour

When I get in a new city, one of the first things I do is search for free walking tours. They are popular, easy to find and they are also free! With just a quick search over the Internet you can find these tours almost anywhere in the world, especially in major cities, but not only. Not even once! If you aren't familiar with the concept of free walking tours, here is how they work: You sign up for a tour at a certain date and time, you show up at the meeting point and you enjoy the next 2-3 hours in the company of a charismatic guide and a group of cool people just like you, eager to discover the city. During this time, you will walk around the city center, you will hear stories about the its history, architecture, culture, as well as fun facts about your surroundings.

All this knowledge gained in 2 hours will be your most solid starting point to further continue your exploration. The best thing about these kind of tours? You're not forced to pay a fee to participate, but if you do want to reward your guide, you can give him as much as you're willing. It's totally up to you. And one more thing: If you're scared of going alone, don't worry.

You will definitely not be the only one! Take the chance to initiate a conversation with someone, be nice and polite and by the end of the day you might end up with at least one new friend!

2. Move around with public transportation

Now that you know your way around the city center, let's get an idea of the city layout. One quick way to do this is by using public transportation. Take a random bus or tram and see where it takes you. Pay attention to your surroundings and try to remember the route.



If something catches your eye while looking out the window, get off and start exploring! If you are scared of getting lost, just make sure to check the bus itineraries and mark them on a map before starting your adventure. That way, you'll have at least an idea of where you are and how to get back to your starting point. There are many cities that have hop on hop off bus tours, so if you want further guidance around the city, you should consider the option.

3. Use travel apps

As you know, in the past years mobile apps had become more and more popular. They are convenient, easy to use, always within reach and free (most of them). When it comes to travel, there are many ways in which an app can make your life much easier when you find yourself in a new place. Whether you need an online/offline map, some help with the language barrier, indications for the public transport network or some ideas of what to do around town, a travel app can be a reliable companion.

4. Seek the best view in town

Scientific fact: humans are 90% visual beings. So let's see how you can use this in your favor. The trick is to find a place that offers panoramic views over the city. It can be a tower, a tall building or just a hilltop. Once you're there, locate where you are on a map and try to pinpoint parks, buildings, boulevards, neighborhoods based on what you see. Seeing the big picture will help you learn the city much faster. You can enjoy the experience while drinking a coffee in a rooftop restaurant or while having a picnic in an outdoor location. No matter what your preference is, this is a great idea for having a moment of relaxation.



5. Search for places to eat and drink

When you're out there exploring all day, you need to recharge your batteries from time to time. Whether you get hungry, thirsty or maybe both, you should start looking for places that match your preferences. Are you a coffee lover? Then go on a hunt for the best coffee shops in town.

Go out to eat, whether it is from a street vendor's cart or from a fancy restaurant. Search for cool pubs, listen to some music, get a drink. Don't be scared to make mistakes and don't say no to something just because you assume you won't like it. Follow advice from others, but make sure to pick random locations too, because you can never know where your next favorite place might be hiding.

6. Turn to social media groups

Maybe you're planning a trip, searching for interesting things to do or looking to make new connections. Or maybe you just have a bunch of questions about a place that you can't seem to find a trustworthy answer to. If you have friends or family that have already been to that destination, you will ask them for recommendations. But what if you find yourself in a new ground that nobody seems to know much about? Who do you ask then?

The answer is simple: find some social media groups (you can start with Facebook) and just introduce yourself. Write some info about who you are, what your background is, what is your current (or future) location and what your questions are. If you're bold enough, tell them that you're new in town and that you would like to grab a cup of coffee with either a local or a traveler that happens to be around too.

7. Attend local events

There are times when you want a specific reason to leave the house, not just to wander the streets without an aim. If that's the case, do a quick search for local

events such as concerts, festivals, movies, fairs, art shows, sports events and so on. And since I mentioned sports events, may I give you a particular suggestion? If you have the chance, run a marathon. This will give you a new perspective of the city, while it will also keep you in shape. Depending on how strong and confident you feel, you can choose a full marathon or you can begin with a half marathon. There are just so many options when it comes to local events! Pick one or more, according to your interests, find its program and location and discover the city's true spirit.

8. Take your camera everywhere

Over the time, I've heard some people say: "When you want to really explore a place, leave your camera and your phone at home. No distractions. Just fully emerge in the experience". I normally agree with the words, but only if we were to speak about a city somehow familiar. In this case, where you get to experience a new scenery with every step you take, I recommend going for a different approach: take your camera everywhere and use it on anything that stirs your interest.



Taking pictures of your surroundings will help you document the itinerary and retrace your steps if necessary. Still, don't look at everything only through your camera's lens. After you take a photograph make sure you take a minute to look around and let all your senses create a vivid memory of that place.

Useful tip: Before you leave the house make sure you have a picture of your address or at least a picture of a nearby popular sight. If you get to a point where you can't find your way back, you can show the picture to a local and ask for directions. For me this was a lifesaver on countless occasions!

9. Ask locals for advice

Locals are gold mines if you want to find the non touristy side of the city. There are always great places that you can't find in any brochures, travel guides or blogs.

Moreover, locals' recommendations are even more useful when you have very specific inquiries. For example, if you want to start a street art hunt, if you're searching for the tastiest burgers in town, best places to play board games or the best jazz clubs, you should just stop and ask somebody. If you're not too invasive, people will help you and sometimes will even volunteer to be your guide.

Useful tip: Usually people are proud of their city and feel good when others appreciate it too. Therefore, you can think about making a subtle compliment about their city, before actually asking a question or firing a request.

10. Trust your instincts

This is one of the most valuable lessons I've learned while travelling. There were times when people told me to stay away from certain neighborhoods, not talk with certain types of people or not get out of the house after dark. I guess there is no need to say that most of the times these pieces of advice are simply misconceptions. Make sure you listen to what they have to say, weigh the arguments, but in the end do what your instincts tell you. Don't be reckless, but don't be paranoid either. If you still want to do it, then do it!

There are also other aspects of trusting your instincts when exploring a new place. For example, I often feel the need to change my course or to have a closer look at something. This is how I found many hidden gems of the cities I explored, so I learned to trust my gut more and more over time

II. How To Make A Budget: 5 Time-Tested Approaches

You know a lot more about budgeting than you probably think. Even if you've never done any kind of household budgeting at all, you almost certainly already have had significant experience with it.

If you were ever a child counting up a pocketful of change to see which candy bar you would get, you've budgeted. If you've ever sat with a handful of playing cards and tried to decide how best to deploy your aces and trumps, that's a budgeting experience as well. So is saving your energy so you can finish a 5K or considering whether a fatty dessert will blow your diet.



Budgeting, broadly speaking, is deciding how to expend resources so they'll produce the most good. It's as central to human behavior as just about anything, and you've been doing it almost since you were born. You are a budgeting expert, even if you don't know it. But there's almost certainly a lot more you can profitably learn about it.

Economists have studied household budgets for many decades. As far back as 1927, participants at a roundtable at the American Economic Association debated the merits of family budgeting techniques.

Despite all this study, no single approach to budgeting has been found to be best for every person. That's likely because people, as well as their individual financial situations, vary so widely. As a person who wants to make the most of your pocketful of change, it's up to you to evaluate the various ways to budget and find one that you are comfortable with and that works for you.

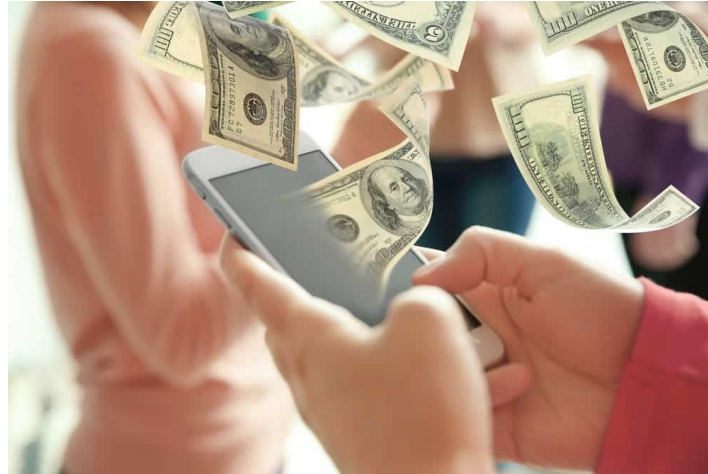
This may seem daunting—and the economic upheaval brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic has made people hyperaware of their personal financial situations.

Seemingly endless varieties of personal budgeting techniques have been devised. Celebrities promote some; accountants favor others. It may be overkill to learn about all of them, but it does make sense to survey some of the most popular approaches and see which ones appeal to you. Then, try a few out and put one into practice as your tried-and-true favorite.

Time-Tested Approaches to Budgeting

Learning about budgeting and other aspects of financial management is an excellent idea, as much research has shown. For instance, a 2016 study published in the

American Economic Journal compared Army recruits who'd completed a financial literacy course with those who hadn't. It found the course reduced the likelihood of recruits who carried credit card balances having delinquencies. Financially literate soldiers also substantially increased retirement savings rates and average monthly contributions for at least two years after taking the course.



With that in mind, here are five time-tested approaches to budgeting.

1. The 50-20-30 Budget

- **Mandatory must-haves.** These account for half (50%) of your after-tax income. They include essentials such as rent, mortgage, utilities, food, transportation, health costs and childcare.
- **Savings and debt.** Another 20% of your take-home goes into the savings and debt bucket. You'll use these funds to create a rainy day fund, pay down credit card balances and other loans and save for retirement.
- **Wants.** The remaining 30% bucket pays for stuff you just want, rather than need. That includes restaurant meals, cable TV subscriptions, movie and game tickets, gym memberships, fashionable clothing and the like.

2. Zero-Based Budgeting

Zero-based budgeting is a method that probably gets less attention than it deserves. Despite its label, zero-based budgeting is fairly intuitive and easy to do. And it can be highly effective.

To do zero-based budgeting, start with a number representing your monthly take-home. Then make a list of your expense categories. These will be things like rent or mortgage, groceries, health insurance, utilities and the like. Remember to include categories such as building an emergency fund and saving for retirement.

The nice thing about zero-based budgeting is that it makes sure that every dollar you have to spend is accounted for. As you do it at the start of each month, you'll get better at making estimates and have more understanding of why you are limiting some expenses. It's more labor-intensive and time-consuming than some other techniques. But if you desire the most financial efficiency you can get, zero-based budgeting is a good place to look for it.

3. Envelope Budgeting

The envelope budget technique gets its name from the paper containers that help to organize your cash. It can be used with the zero-based budget method and other budgets, but it only works with hard cash. With this approach, instead of labeling a line on a piece of paper, you label an actual envelope with spending categories including must-haves such as a mortgage, doctor bills and groceries, as well as potential wants like restaurant meals, shopping and entertainment. You'll also have savings categories, including an emergency fund, retirement and perhaps a home down payment.



4. The Weekly Allowance

The above budgeting techniques aim to account for all your income and expenses for the month. The weekly allowance approach breaks it down to a weekly time period, and focuses on discretionary expenses. It's essentially the same as the weekly allowances collected by many people as a teenager: You get this much to spend as you like, but, when it's gone, there is no more until next week.

The allowance tactic works best when used in conjunction with something like zero-based budgeting. That's because you only give yourself an allowance for discretionary items, so you need another way to make sure you can pay for the essentials. To set up a weekly allowance, take whatever is left over after you've

zero-based all your must-spends and divide it into four. Each of these quarter amounts is your allowance for that week.

It's a little more complicated most of the time because discretionary expenses include more than trips to the mall and Sunday brunch dates. Other discretionary expenses such as premium cable television subscriptions and fitness club memberships are paid monthly but need to come out of the allowance funds.

5. The Gig Worker's Budget

Budgeting is easiest when income is predictable. But, for many freelancers, independent contractors, 1099 workers and other members of the gig economy, income can fluctuate substantially from month to month. How to handle this? To budget effectively as a gig worker requires some simple arithmetic in the form of averaging.

Instead of looking at a single month for your income, look at the entire year. Add it up and divide by 12. Do the same for variable expenses, such as gasoline for a ride-sharing driver. You'll use these averages to do your planning.

Budgeting is a big topic, but only because there are so many ways to go about it. With a modest amount of study and experimentation, it's possible to find a budgeting technique that fits your personality and needs.

As noted above, you probably already know more about budgeting than you think and have prior experience with it as well. The truth is, budgeting is already your best financial friend. You just didn't know it until now.

III. Relocating to the Gold Coast? Here's 10 steps to a smooth move

10 Steps to a Smooth Move without Regrets

From making sure the entire family is on board to choosing a location and getting your paperwork in order - this guide has got you covered.



Relocating Interstate

We spend a lot of time helping our clients with moving to the Gold Coast from southern states (Sydney and Melbourne dwellers mostly), and we haven't met someone who regrets the move yet. I've summarised the top 10 things you should thinking about before you make the decision to move to the Gold Coast.

In this comprehensive guide, you'll learn: Everything you need to know about the beautiful places on the Gold Coast PLUS Ways to help you move from Sydney to Gold Coast without stress

What to Consider Before Moving to the Gold Coast

We do believe that a planned move is a good move – so apart from finding the ultimate family home (we can help you with that), we've summarised the top 10 things you should think about before you move and live on the Gold Coast.

01 – Lifestyle

There's a good chance this is the reason you thought about moving from Sydney to Gold Coast in the first place. Keeping in mind what is possible with life's

commitments, think about **what type of lifestyle you want**. How can you support that by relocating to the Gold Coast?



02 – Affordability

Consider the price differences in housing and basic living expenses – food, gas, electricity, and water. You also have to think about transport, including fuel prices, education and how you'll pay for world-class universities.

If you like to unwind after a long day of work, will you be able to afford things like restaurants, shopping centres, entertainment like sea world, theme parks, national parks, and other sporting activities?

03 – Location

Where are you going to live? What do you need to be close to when living on the Gold Coast?

Your ideal house may be a walking distance, close to the sandy and glorious beaches of Main Beach, Mermaid Beach, Palm Beach, Surfers Paradise, and Burleigh Heads. Or maybe you're looking for a tree change, and the solace you'll find in the likes of Mudgeeraba, Tallai, Tallebudgera Valley, Bonogin, Austinville, Mount Tamborine, and Lower Beechmont appeal to you.



To make the moving process hassle-free, weigh up the distance from places you need to be with places you want to be. If you surf in Surfers paradise every morning, then maybe a half-hour commute is worth the hassle. But if you only want to visit the stunning beaches for Gold Coast stretches on weekends, maybe a 10-minute tram ride each weekday morning is the better option.

In simple words, narrow down your priorities when relocating to the Gold Coast.

04 – Income

Where are you going to work? Can you get a transfer? Will your business survive a move interstate, and what will the downtime be?

05 – Timing

When's the best time to buy, start the kids at a new school, take time off work to relocate, or acclimatise?

06 – Budget

House prices aside, **how much is it going to cost you** to actually do the move to the Gold Coast? I'm talking about factoring in those other – less obvious – costs.

For example:

- **Moving costs** to the Gold Coast such as moving vehicles, flights, petrol or any short term accommodation.
- **Purchase costs** include stamp duty, solicitors or conveyors, and independent valuers.
- **Costs for exiting your current property**, such as renovations to ready it for sale, rental cleaners, or the real estate agent's fee.

07 – Education

For buyers who have, or want kids, researching the schools in your new area (or finding a house close to private schools) is **incredibly important**. This also applies to daycare centres, TAFEs, and universities.

Above all, **be clear about what you and your child want** out of their education – and emphasise academics, sports, the arts, and pastoral care.

08 – Life Admin

AKA all the paperwork that you're going to have to do as part of the move, driver's licenses, mail redirection, you get where I'm going with this. Unless you're planning to smuggle apples into Tasmania, crossing state borders is pretty easy. You might not even notice when you cross the border from NSW to South East Queensland.

However, different states (and Gold Coast City Council) have different regulatory systems, including licenses and registrations. **Make sure you factor this** into how much time you've got to move.

09 – Networks

Making social and professional connections **can take time**, even when you've lived somewhere before. People change, move away, find relationships, have kids, and the list goes on. This is the same for kids, even when they have ready-made networks at school.

Remember, **be intentional** about how you spend your leisure time so that you **increase your chances** of meeting like-minded people.

10 – Family

How will moving from your current location to the Gold Coast affect your family relationships? On the plus side, you may be moving closer and renewing relationships.

If you're moving further away, you may need to think a bit longer term. Are your parents likely to need living assistance in a few years? Will any kids you have, have the opportunity to know cousins and their extended family if you move away?

IV. Moving To A New City: A Guide To Adjusting And Exploring New Neighbourhood

Changing your residence and moving to a new city is one of the most challenging tasks. It takes a toll on you mentally, emotionally and physically. Therefore, adjusting to and exploring the new neighbourhood before and after moving is crucial to have a successful relocation.



However, not everyone is extroverted or a people's person which is why the journey to settling in a new city can take time. To motivate yourself and have the energy to socialise, plan and prepare for your move by hiring professional removalists in Gold Coast. Since the professional can handle your packing, moving and unpacking needs, you can focus on making social connections.

Thus, if you plan to move to a new city soon, here is your complete guide outlining tips to adjust and explore your new neighbourhood.

Have a look.

Research About The City's Suburbs

When people plan an interstate relocation, they often move to a suburb of the city rather than the main area because suburbs are cheaper and offer a higher quality of life. Gold Coast has some of the best suburbs in Queensland, like Currumbin, Coolangatta, Ashmore, Coomera and more.

These in-demand suburbs in Gold Coast have great schools, affordable housing, great connectivity and much more to offer. Moreover, you can easily hire professional removalists in Gold Coast to move to these areas.

Find Out If You Know Someone In The City

Talk to family members, friends, neighbours and other near or dear ones to find connections in a city. Usually, you can find acquaintances and relatives who are

willing to share knowledge about the city. You can choose to meet with these mutual connections or simply maintain contact to learn about the city place.

Visit Popular Tourist Attractions

Visiting the popular tourist attractions of a place is one of the best ways to learn about its culture and history. You can gain valuable insights about a city through its most visited places.

These attractions can be buildings, museums, beaches, structures, eateries, parks and more. You can take your family to them to acquaint yourself with the city and make a move less stressful and emotionally taxing.

Compare The Cost Of Living

Moving to a new neighbourhood or city without learning about its cost of living is a great mistake. Going in blindly can go wrong if the rent or prices of houses/units are higher than in your current city and make adjusting extremely challenging. Additionally, you have to factor in the cost of groceries, transportation, healthcare, leisure activities, eating out etc.



The cost of living in Gold Coast is estimated to be AU\$2,311 monthly. It is less than Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra but more than Perth, Adelaide and other cities in Australia. Therefore, do your research before moving to the golden strip to make an informed decision.

Learn About The Local Authorities

Knowing about the local authorities is crucial when you move to a new city because you will contact them for various things. You need to update/change your address, register your vehicle, get parking permits, etc. Therefore, gather details of the authorities and keep their contact numbers handy.

Check Places To Eat & Hang Out

Food has the miraculous power of making you feel good, which is why you must prepare a list of places to go and eat local dishes from restaurants with good food safety and standards. You must read reviews and see ratings of restaurants whether you want to dine in or order take-out. Moreover, look at cafes because Gold Coast is known for its dining experience and breakfast culture.

Chat With Locals On Reliable Forums

One of the best ways to learn about a city is via its people. However, when you are planning a move, time is a precious commodity, and you cannot have enough time to go and talk to locals, even if you have hired removalists in Gold Coast.

Therefore, the next best thing to do is get online to chat with locals and people who moved there recently.

Explore Professional Connections

If you are relocating for a job, which is a common reason for moving to a new city, you must connect with HR. Also, plan a visit to the new office and form professional connections to ensure you can settle in faster. Until you make a social connection, explore the city with your colleagues.



Take The Public Transport

Gold Coast as a great public transport system and you can use it to learn a lot about the warmth and friendliness of a city by travelling to various destinations with locals.

Take time to visit the city you plan to move to and hop on buses, trams and trains to reach destinations. It will also give you an idea about the accessibility of the city's various parts and learn about the neighbourhoods.

Explore Places Of Interest

Want to meet like-minded people who enjoy the same things you do? Research places of interest to visit once you are in the city. Do this before you book removalists in Gold Coast or start packing. You can look up libraries, art galleries, places to shop in Gold Coast, sports centres and more.

Moving to a new city is always daunting, but if you follow the tips shared above, you can easily adjust in a new neighbourhood and explore it well. Just remember to take professional help for packing and moving to have the time to go city scaping.

V. The local secret spots to explore on the Gold Coast



Keen to get off the beaten track?

While the Gold Coast is a haven of hot spots, sometimes it's nice to indulge in a little slice of heaven that's not teeming with tourists.

Check out these areas of untapped natural beauty that only the locals know about.

Tchoobey Reserve at Tallebudgera Creek, Burleigh Heads

If you love the idea of kicking back beside Tallebudgera Creek but loathe the idea of sharing the space with countless others, Tchoobey Reserve could be your new favourite haunt. This secluded nature reserve adjacent to Tallebudgera Creek Conservation Park skirts the creek and is an ideal spot to unpack a picnic, drop in your kayak or walk around the shoreline. To get there, park at David Fleays Wildlife Park and head to the very end of Loman Lane, which culminates at a boardwalk. From here you can continue walking along the sandy path, which stretches about 3km around the shore, and find yourself a quiet, hidden piece of Tallebudgera Creek.

Lily's Beach, Palm Beach

Another secluded section of Tallebudgera Creek, Lily's Beach offers a placid place to enjoy one of the Gold Coast's most loved waterways. To get there, head to 102 Tallebudgera Drive, Palm Beach, then walk below the bridge to the boat ramp. From here, simply follow the sandy shoreline to find your own private oasis. The cool, calm waters of the creek are ideal for swimming, fishing, kayaking and paddle-boarding, while the tree-lined banks provide plenty of shade to relax and take in the majesty of this tranquil blue estuary.

Little Clagiraba Reserve, Clagiraba

Lying low at the base of the Mount Nathan on the edge of the Gold Coast, Little Clagiraba Reserve offers a top spot for a fun day out. The park's large, grassy field sets the stage for family sports matches or a pop-up picnic, while immediate views of forested hinterland inspire instant serenity. If you venture just inside the thicket of trees skirting the park, you'll find a Clagiraba Creek—a crystal clear stream that flows on to the Coomera River.

There's also a small children's playground on site and plenty of parking available nearby on the side of Clagiraba Road, just before you walk onto the reserve. There are no facilities on site, but The Historic Rivermill is just a short drive away and is definitely worth a visit while you're in the area. With a riverside café, petting zoo and a small museum showcasing the venue's history, the Rivermill provides something for everyone and is the perfect pitstop to refuel and recharge.

Gorge Falls, Springbrook

If you're up for a bit more of a rugged outdoor adventure, Gorge Falls at Springbrook could be calling you! Comprising a 6km-return trail through rainforest at Springbrook National Park, the walk to Gorge Falls is not your typical serene Sunday stroll. In fact, you'd best come prepared to get a little wet—even if you don't plan on taking a dip in the area's picturesque swimming hole below the falls.

The track involves some shallow creek crossings, boulder scrambling and rock hopping, and can be a little physically demanding as you navigate the trail's uneven and sometimes slippery terrain. You may also encounter leaches after recent rains. However, this experience is totally worth the effort!

CONCLUSION

As we close our exploration of how to explore a new city, we hope you've enjoyed the journey.

Much like absorbing the ambiance of their surroundings, we've strolled through the art of city exploration, uncovering the subtle nuances that make each urban landscape unique.

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