

The Time of Your Life

If the thought of staying away from home for four years seems daunting, a couple of semesters in Manipal will change your mind. Manipal has been home since the day I stepped out of the comfort of the rusty bus into Manipal's infamous downpour. The funny thing about college experiences is that even though they can never be pinned down, they remain etched in your memory forever.



The day you arrive will be exhausting, to say the least. Running back and forth from NLH, while braving torrential rains, is just the beginning. Attending countless orientations and making multiple trips from NLH to the hostels is something the college is preparing you for, on the first day itself. People will talk about the popular destinations around Manipal. Everybody has their own description of this quaint town, and the day you begin describing Manipal in your own words, your college life truly begins.



You start your journey at the haunting remains of what once used to be Kamath Circle (popularly known as KC. P.S: Keeping up with abbreviations is necessary to survive Manipal). From here, you branch out into every nook and corner of the campus. The Food Court will stand, clear-cut and colossal, as soon as you enter the KC gate. As a first year, you will spend a significant amount of time here, and at times, even eat food there. Once here, you can see the towering edifices of the boys' hostel blocks and endless acres of the lush green valley succeeding them. On the other side of the food court is a path that you will tread often (if you are an early riser). The boulevard that leads to the academic blocks will seem eternal-flanked by four Girls' hostels on one side and the ever useful Campus Stores on the other. On further seeking, you will discover the Academic Blocks One, Two and Five (we're still trying to figure out the order behind these buildings ourselves). And when you find yourself stuck in the maze that is AB-5, fear not; everyone has been through the process of self-discovery and profound enlightenment while trying to find their way out.



Evenings in Manipal are worth the heat and exhaustion that the mornings bring. End Point is a popular destination for the athletically determined. Boasting of a 1.5 km jogging track, two football fields, and a park to take your mind off things, End Point is frequented by students and professors alike. Manipal's fitness complex, Marena, has an endless list of facilities to offer, including a well-equipped gym, a running track, basketball courts, tennis courts, table tennis, and several other activities.

You may feel like you're swimming in unfamiliar waters when you first settle into your hostel. But leaving your block for vacations is easier said than done. You will not only forge your strongest friendships in these hostels but also find a rather effective alarm clock in your roommate/neighbour. From washing clothes and battling mutant cockroaches, to panicking about an exam the night before while simultaneously making eight cups of coffee, hostel life is a bittersweet combat.



If we ever wrote a book called '*The Hitchhiker's Guide to Manipal*', an umbrella would be the equivalent of the prodigal towel. They say there's only ever two types of weather in Manipal: summer with rain and summer without rain. It's true, trust us, and an umbrella will come in handy in both scenarios. As a new kid on the block, you may feel confused, excited, and sometimes, both at the same time. The Manipal Experience will leave you awestruck, nostalgic, and wanting more.

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