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PCS GUIDE 2021-2022

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INS & OUTS of being stationed in Bahrain

- ▶ FINDING A HOME
- ▶ GETTING YOUR KIDS ADJUSTED
- ▶ LIFE WITH PETS IN BAHRAIN
- ▶ PERSONAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES





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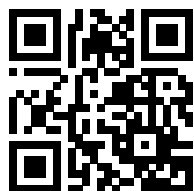
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“ Benjamin Irvin

Ever since coming to Bahrain, I've been looking for a chiropractor to help with my sore back. After some time the pain and discomfort was too much and I needed to find a chiropractor. I searched and found InTouch Clinic. The people here are so nice and friendly and make me feel welcome. The services here are very good and has helped me not only feel better, but feel that I am at my best. So happy I found this place, without their help I don't know how I would live without pain.



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LET'S GET STARTED!

CONTENTS

<i>First Steps</i>	06	18	<i>Medical</i>
<i>Cell Phones</i>	08	20	<i>Life</i>
<i>Money</i>	10	28	<i>Resources</i>
<i>Cars</i>	12	32	<i>Directory</i>
<i>Homes</i>	14	34	<i>Travel</i>



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FIRST STEPS

ONE-STOP CHECKLIST

Welcome to Bahrain! Here is your one-stop checklist to help you get settled in a timely manner:

✓ PRE-ARRIVAL

- ☐ Make contact with your command sponsor team and complete all documents required by your new command.
- ☐ Consider requesting a travel advance.
- ☐ Have official passports ready for travel.
- ☐ Review the prohibited goods page on the bahraincustoms.gov.bh webpage.

✓ ARRIVAL

- ☐ Attend the installation's Area Orientation and Inter-Cultural Relations Briefs (AOB/ICR).
- ☐ Attend Command Indoctrination Brief.
- ☐ Obtain tourist passport if planning to travel outside of Bahrain.
- ☐ Enroll in TRICARE and complete medical in-processing.
- ☐ Sign up for an FPO box if your sponsor has not already done so.
- ☐ Visit Fleet and Family Support Center for transition assistance.

✓ VISA

- ☐ For a PCS greater than three months, be sure the visa is issued in your official passport through the installation's Immigration Office. Use this passport each time you enter and exit Bahrain.

✓ CPR CARDS

- ☐ Apply for a local registry card (CRP card) at the installation's Immigration Office after attending AOB/ICR.

✓ MONEY

- ☐ Determine entitlements with Finance Office.
- ☐ Withdraw dinar.
- ☐ Research online bill-pay options.
- ☐ Contact U.S. banks to close accounts, as needed.

✓ CARS

- ☐ When car arrives or is purchased, get insurance, register and pass inspection.
- ☐ Before registering your vehicle, be sure to obtain a VISA and CPR card.
- ☐ Obtain a parking pass as it is required to park on-installation.

✓ HOMES

- ☐ Establish TLA and OHA.
- ☐ Prioritize needs and wants.
- ☐ Visit Housing Office for list of approved buildings.
- ☐ Schedule appointments to tour homes.
- ☐ Ensure Housing Office inspects property and reviews contract.
- ☐ Sign paperwork after review by Housing Office (all leases must be done by Housing Office).

✓ MEDICAL

- ☐ Add emergency numbers to cell phone.
- ☐ Register with TRICARE.
- ☐ Establish relationships with local medical providers.

✓ EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- ☐ Sign-up for AtHoc emergency alerts during AOB/ICR.
- ☐ Download the off-limits areas map available on Google.
- ☐ Complete the Noncombatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) package.

✓ KIDS

- ☐ Have vaccinations records, transcripts, PCS orders, passports and birth certificates readily available.
- ☐ Contact Enrollment Office to begin process for DoDEA.
- ☐ Contact SLO for information about home-schooling, referrals and transition assistance.
- ☐ Visit the installation's child care facilities to apply and get on waitlist.
- ☐ Ensure vaccinations are current and schedule wellness exams.

✓ PETS

- ☐ Register pet at the Veterinary Clinic.
- ☐ Find Bahraini clinic that provides emergency care.

✓ PERSONAL ENRICHMENT

- ☐ Update your resume and research job/volunteer opportunities at the Fleet and Family Support Center.
- ☐ Visit Navy College Office to learn about course offerings.
- ☐ Visit the Base Chapel and Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation (CREDO).

✓ EVERYDAY LIVING

- ☐ Make copies of important phone numbers and program cell phone.
- ☐ Learn basic Arabic phrases.
- ☐ Join spouses' clubs or other activities.

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GETTING CONNECTED

Upon arrival, getting service for your cell phone is vital and allows you to stay connected. The choice of service preferred by many is the pre-paid option.



► **Providers:** Zain, Batelco, Viva

► **Pre-pay option**

- Allows you to purchase a large number of minutes to use within the month.
- Add minutes at most grocery, convenience stores and Sadad machines.

► **What to bring to set up a cell phone plan:**

- Passport
- Military ID

► **Apps to communicate internationally for free:**

- Skype
- Facebook Messenger
- WhatsApp
- Facetime

Be sure to switch your phone to airplane mode to avoid unexpected charges.

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DINAR BANKING

Getting an account through the credit union will eliminate headaches when paying bills, transferring money, making purchases, getting cash and managing funds between U.S. dollars and Bahraini dinar.

DEBIT & CREDIT CARDS

- ▶ Most Bahraini businesses accept debit and credit cards, but some may not.
- ▶ It's always best to carry Bahraini dinar when off-installation.
- ▶ There are usually transaction fees when using debit cards, hence the reason why using cash is most efficient.

NAVY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Navy Federal Credit Union is the only financial institution on the installation. However, Western Union is available at the Navy Exchange.

▶ ATM Base Locations:

- **NFCU ATM #1 P911:** Ground floor next to Navy Federal Branch Credit Union
- **Citibank ATM #1 P911:** Ground floor next to Navy Federal Branch Credit Union and Fitness Center
- **NFUC ATM #2 P911:** First floor next to the Wi-Fi Lounge/Internet Café and Movie Theatre
- **NFCU ATM #3 Bldg 263:** Outside of the Housing Service Center at the Pavilion/Shawarma Truck

PAYING BILLS

The most common way to pay bills for Bahraini services, such as rent and utilities, is through your Navy Federal Credit Union account.

To pay for utilities and rent, you would need to:

- ▶ Withdraw funds in U.S. dollars equivalent to the amount in Bahraini dinar in the form of a cashier's check.
- ▶ Then, visit the Dinar Exchange and convert the cashier's check into a Bahraini dinar check.

MONEY TRANSFERS

- ▶ There are also options to wire funds.
- ▶ Use Western Union for money transfers.

BEWARE OF FEES

- ▶ Off-installation ATMs may require transaction fees depending on your account services.

NEX DINAR EXCHANGE

Located on the first floor of building P911 Freedom Souk, the NEX Dinar Exchange is a local currency exchange service available for base patrons. The Dinar Exchanges offers monetary exchange services such as currency exchange, rent and EWA cheques, vehicle registration, export, bill payments, driving license, CPR issues and renewals and traffic offenses. The Dinar Exchange is open seven days a week, from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.



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Manama, Bahrain

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Manama, Bahrain

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GETTING

A RIDE



SHIPPING YOUR VEHICLE OVERSEAS

- Ship your vehicle 90 days before you PCS to ensure it gets there soon after your arrival to Bahrain.
- Decide between selling your other vehicles, keeping them in storage (if you're in the Coast Guard), or leaving them with a friend or family member. If your car is older than five years, you are welcome to bring it on the island. However, local laws do not permit the sale of the vehicle should it be older than five years.
- As per JTR Entitlement, only one vehicle is allowed per active duty member along with their dependents during their tour in Bahrain.
- Electric or low-sulfur diesel cars should be stored as Bahrain does not support these vehicles.

LICENSE

Only a valid stateside driver's license is needed to drive your vehicle. No other local or international licenses are required to drive a personally-owned vehicle or a government-owned vehicle.

BUYING A CAR IN BAHRAIN

You have the option to buy a new or used car from dealers and private sellers in Bahrain.

Buying a vehicle in compliance with U.S. specification from another military member is tax free. Be aware that vehicles sold in local dealerships are not in compliance with U.S. specification. Contact NAVSUP FLC BAHRAIN Personal Property Shipping Office (PPSO) at DSN 439-4265 or email: m-ba-nsapersonal-propertybahrain@me.navy.mil for guidance.

► Keep in Mind

All vehicles are required to be insured and registered with the government of Bahrain prior to being picked up from the Vehicle Processing Center.

MOTORCYCLES

You are able to ship your motorcycle, but be sure to register it. Shipping motorcycles, mopeds, dirt bikes or quad bikes under 100cc to Bahrain is prohibited.

The Navy Motorcycle Rider Safety Course is a military-directed and local training requirement in order to legally drive a motorcycle as a U.S. service member in Bahrain. Please check in with either the base Safety Office or your command's motorcycle safety representative upon arrival to verify completion of the training and/or register for either the beginner's course (three day class) or the refresher course (one day class) to ensure that you are up-to-date with this requirement.

VEHICLE INSPECTION

Each vehicle is required to be inspected annually. Ensure that your vehicle always has the required equipment at all times, not just for its annual inspection.

REGISTERING YOUR VEHICLE

Contact the PPSO for vehicle registration process.

► What to bring to register your vehicle:

- ✓ PPSO/Bahrain customs generated documents and proof of insurance
- ✓ Local registry card (CPR)
- ✓ Registration cost (approx. US\$ 97)

Note: It's always best to call the installation's Pass and ID Office ahead of time to ensure you're bringing all necessary documents. You also will need to have local insurance before being able to drive your vehicle.

FUELING YOUR VEHICLE

There is no gas station on the installation, and you will have to fuel off the installation. There also are no fuel cards.

VOLVO MILITARY SALES- AVAILABLE FOR BAHRAIN DELIVERY



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From HOUSE HUNTING to FINDING A HOME



It's important to be open-minded as you search for your new home. Bahraini homes can be much different than what you may be used to. The houses can range from fully furnished to unfurnished, so it's best to always go in and take a look inside.

PRIVATE HOUSING

- ▶ Private homes are assessed by the installation's Housing Office or found by a realtor.
- ▶ You are responsible for rent and utilities.
- ▶ You will receive Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA).
- ▶ For an inclusive lease, inquire with the Housing Office.

Finding Private Housing

- ▶ **Searching online:**
 - Visit www.homes.mil
 - Make an account.
 - Look for private rentals that have been approved by the Housing Office and are not over the 25% FP threshold.
- Note:** Check the site daily, as houses will come and go easily — especially during peak PCS season, which is June-September.
- ▶ **Searching with a realtor:**
 - Make sure to stop by the Housing Office to get an approved listing of realtors. There will be more private rentals to select from than online. The Housing Office also has a house-showing service to assist you.
 - Service members do not need to pay any realtor fees. This is done by the landlord.
 - The Housing Office should help you negotiate your rental contract and finalize it.
 - A deposit is not required, but if the landlord insists, inform the Housing Office.

VIEWING A HOME

- ▶ Go in person to the Housing Office to request a day and time to view a home.
- ▶ If utilizing the real estate agency, which is also available in the Housing Office, the agency will be the one to show you a home.

LODGING ACCOMMODATIONS UPON ARRIVAL

Personnel E-5 and above will live off-base and will pay the first month's rent out of pocket. Make sure that you are financially prepared for this by



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saving beforehand. If you foresee a monetary shortfall before arriving on the island, you are authorized to request one month of an Advance OHA entitlement.

Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA)

- ▶ E-5 and above will be assigned lodging in a hotel off-base. Personnel residing off-base will receive a Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) entitlement for the actual cost of lodging for a maximum of 45 days.
- ▶ TLA is paid in 10-day increments. Members are required to pay TLA upfront to their hotel and provide a zero-balanced receipt to the Housing Office.

NO ON-BASE HOUSING

- ▶ Active duty paid E-5 and senior, accompanied E-4 personnel and DoD Civilians will reside off-base in a villa (house), or flat/three-high (apartment/condo). Before arriving on island, check online to view some of the housing choices available in the area.
- ▶ All frocked E-5 and below personnel will be assigned lodging in the barracks onboard NSA Bahrain. In the event that the barracks reaches full capacity (100% manning), personnel should ensure that they are prepared to handle the costs associated with temporarily living on the local economy. E-4 and below personnel who are initially placed in a hotel will be immediately moved into the barracks as space becomes available.

HOUSING SUPPORT CENTER:

- ▶ The Housing Support Center (HSC) is a one-stop shop for all personnel who reside off-base.
- ▶ The HSC provides detailed housing market information, leasing contract administrative services and a house-showing service.
- ▶ A period of two to three weeks is usually required to identify suitable housing and an additional week to complete leasing paperwork.
- ▶ HSC Counselors assist newcomers in locating a residence off-base by:
 - Providing a list of approved rental agents and managers.
 - Providing a house-showing service at specific times during the workweek to assist members in locating off-base housing.
 - Providing a pre-contract draft.
 - Negotiating rental contracts in coordination with landlords and prospective tenants.
 - Conducting a security inspection of housing before the move-in date.
 - Explaining lease agreements.
 - Providing copies of a lease agreement signed by you and the landlord upon completion of the lease contract negotiation process.

LEASE SIGNING

- ▶ Make all the necessary preparations before walking into your contract negotiation and lease signing.

OVERSEAS HOUSING ALLOWANCE (OHA)

Overseas Housing Allowance covers the following:

- ▶ Exclusive lease- Only covers the rent. The tenant will pay for water, electricity and municipality tax.
- ▶ Inclusive lease- Covers the rent, water, electricity and municipality tax.

Move-In Housing Allowance (MIHA)

- ▶ MIHA exists to cover the move-in costs associated with occupying a private sector lease and/or owned housing covered under the OHA program. MIHA is approximately \$260.
- ▶ Check the installation's Housing Office for an allowance that may be provided in order to improve the security of your new home.

PAYING BILLS

- ▶ The tenant pays the landlord directly. This includes utilities such as electricity and water.
- ▶ It is preferable to pay via a certified check or an electronic fund transfer via the Dinar Exchange.
- ▶ The first month's rent is due on the move-in date.
- ▶ Rent is due every month on the move-in date.
- ▶ Keep a record of all your rental and utility payments just in case they get lost or misrouted by the company billing you.

Electricity

- ▶ The Electricity Water Authority (EWA) bill will be maintained under the landlord's name.
- ▶ The landlord will provide the EWA bill to the tenant, and the tenant will pay the landlord.

INTERNET AND HOME PHONE SERVICE

Viva

- ▶ You can use the International Credit Transfer Service to send credit accounts back home using your VIVA line.
- ▶ You can make or receive collect calls from a VIVA line.
- ▶ You can make a video call.

Batelco

- ▶ Includes many options of services to choose from.

TELEVISION SERVICE

American Forces Network (AFN)

- ▶ Provides programming from current networks and prime channels.
- ▶ You will need a decoder and satellite for AFN, available at the NEX.

Satellite

- ▶ Visit www.osn.com
- ▶ You will need a satellite and a decoder.

Streaming Services

- ▶ Examples - Amazon Prime, Netflix, Hulu, etc.
- ▶ Show variety and availability may be limited because you are outside of the U.S.



HOUSEHOLD GOODS ARRIVAL

First Steps

- ▶ Lock in a delivery date for your household goods and remember that dates book fast during the peak summer PCS season.
- ▶ Since there is no temporary furniture program, consult with the Household Goods and Transportation Office to figure out which option is best for you.
- ▶ Once your household goods arrive, make sure every box that was shipped has arrived.
- ▶ Mark each item off your inventory list as everything is being unloaded.

Inspect your home

In order to not be held liable for damages done to your home and property that the movers may have caused, it's best to take note of the damages on your household goods paperwork. Note everything that isn't right such as missing boxes or damaged goods. Be sure to make copies of all the paperwork, and take pictures of any damages.

Filing a claim

- ▶ You have 75 days to submit a notice of loss or damage report in the Defense Personal Property System from the scheduled delivery date.
- ▶ From there, you will have nine months to submit your claim in order to be eligible for a full replacement value.
- ▶ Be sure to have photos and receipt purchases of your damaged goods.
- ▶ Keep any paperwork until all claims are processed.

QUICK APPLIANCE TIPS

- ▶ You will need a power converter/transformer to use your American electronics (110-v plug in) in your Bahraini home.
- ▶ Transformers are to be negotiated with the landlord.
- ▶ Check with your landlord for specifications on appliance size.



BAHRAIN HOUSING OFFICE

Phone:

011-973-1785-4104

Location:

BLDG 263

Hours of Operation:

Sunday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Tuesday: 8 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Thursday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.



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HEALTH and DENTAL CARE in Bahrain

During your time in Bahrain, the need may arise for you to visit the Naval Branch Health Clinic (NBHC). The clinic provides routine primary medical care and services to active duty military members and their families. For services other than primary care, patients are referred to a host nation medical facility for specialized care.

TREATMENT DIFFERENCES

While there may be some cultural and treatment differences in Bahrain, rest assured that the medical standard of care you receive is the highest quality. Although there are a few differences in medical practices, NBHC staff are in constant collaboration with the host nation medical partners, ensuring a positive outcome and experience for all patients.

GIVING BIRTH IN BAHRAIN

Giving birth in a Bahraini hospital can be a very wonderful experience. During your pregnancy, you can also receive prenatal care at NBHC if you are eligible for care. Please inquire with the clinic for eligibility requirements.

Delivery options

- ▶ Royal Bahrain Hospital
- ▶ King Hamad University Hospital

- ▶ Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany (This option is for women who have high-risk pregnancies.)

First steps after giving birth

At the start of your pregnancy, the clinic will provide you an informational package detailing the steps you must take in order to obtain your baby's passport and other documentation after birth. These steps include:

- ▶ Getting your baby's social security number.
- ▶ Enrolling your baby in DEERS.
- ▶ Getting a no-fee official U.S. passport.
- ▶ Getting a report of Birth Abroad (birth certificate).
- ▶ Adding your baby in the Command Sponsorship Database.

DENTAL CARE

The Dental Clinic on the installation provides comprehensive acute dental care for active duty members. Retirees and government employees may receive care on a space-available basis. Some dependents must rely on Bahraini providers for their dental needs. If there are any questions about healthcare, please refer to your established health insurance plan.

Preferred Network Dental Facilities

- ▶ Gulf Dental Specialty Hospital
- ▶ Seef Dental Clinic
- ▶ Al Mosawi Dental Clinic

EMERGENCY CARE

NBHC does not provide emergency care services. If you get injured off-base or need to be seen immediately for an emergency, it is recommended that you go to one of the preferred hospitals. If it is an emergency on base, dial 4911 if calling from a DSN line. If you are dialing from a Bahraini cellphone or local landline, the emergency number is +973-1785-4911.

Naval Medical Readiness and Training Unit Bahrain Military Health Clinic

Civilian Phone: +973-1785-6110

DSN: 318-439-4260/6110

Facebook: Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Unit Bahrain

Preferred Network Medical Facilities

- ▶ Royal Bahrain Hospital
- ▶ Bahrain Defense Force Hospital
- ▶ King Hamad University Hospital
- ▶ German Orthopedic Hospital

Be prepared

- ▶ Emergency Off-base dial 999
- ▶ Emergency On-base dial +973-1785-4911 or DSN 439-4911
- ▶ International SOS: 8000-4727, option 4
- ▶ Nurse Advice Line: 8000-0453
- ▶ Referrals Office: 439-8158
- ▶ Always carry a list of medications and allergies as well as your insurance card and ID card.



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Adjusting your KIDS to Bahrain

Moving to Bahrain is a big change for the entire family. Children certainly feel this impact as they leave behind familiar schedules, classrooms, friends and neighborhoods. Here are some ways to make the transition as smooth as possible for your kiddos.

ESTABLISH ROUTINES

The importance of routines in child development should not be understated. Establishing routines will help children handle the additional emotional and environmental changes as you get settled.

- ▶ Set sleeping schedules right away.
- ▶ Rehearse school or daycare routines.
- ▶ If possible, take your children to their daycare or school to meet caregivers or teachers in advance.
- ▶ Make sure your routine includes time for your children's favorite activities.

INVOLVE YOUR KIDS

Include your children throughout the transition. Even for toddlers, give them tasks and roles to instill a sense of responsibility and increase self-confidence.

- ▶ Let them help unpack and give them freedom to organize their living space.
- ▶ Schedule social time with classmates and new neighbors.

- ▶ Sign your children up for after-school activities
- ▶ Contact a School Liaison Officer (SLO) to request youth sponsors.

REMAIN IN TOUCH WITH LIFE BACK HOME

While adjusting to everything new, don't forget about life back home. Set regular video chat or phone call dates with family and friends. If your children are allowed online, encourage them to utilize social media and email to stay in touch with friends or have them send postcards from the destinations they visit. Continue the traditions that are important in your family, while creating new ones during your time in Bahrain.

EXPECT AN ADJUSTMENT PERIOD

Give your children time to process all of the changes, both good and bad, that come with their new environment. Be aware of expat child syndrome, a psychological condition that typically occurs in children ages 10 to 15, and can lead to isolative or unruly behavior.

Resources

- ▶ Military Family Life Counselors (MFLCs) - Free non-medical sessions with child behavioral specialists that are anonymous and may occur in individual, couple, family or group settings.
- ▶ School Liaison Officer (SLO)
- ▶ Military OneSource - Twelve free online sessions may occur in individual, couple, family or group settings.

EXPLORE BAHRAIN

- ▶ Maintain an enthusiastic outlook about your arrival in Bahrain, even if you are having doubts. Your children will look to you a great deal during this transition. If you're upset, they will be, too.
- ▶ Eat meals on the economy, attend local festivals and learn about Bahraini traditions. Address the differences between life in Bahrain versus back home, but move conversations in a positive direction. Your children will gain an appreciation for diversity while exploring.
- ▶ Enroll your children in Arabic lessons.

CHILD EDUCATION

While there are a few options in regards to child care options, keep in mind that many programs have waitlists, so don't delay the planning process! Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools typically accept enrollments throughout the year to accommodate military families. Consult with the SLO on what would be the best option for your children.

HOME SCHOOLING

Home schooling is a legal option open to all active-duty military, DoD civilians and contractors. Your children may be eligible for auxiliary services offered by DoDEA-Europe. Contact your SLO for more information and to connect with home schooling groups.

CHILD CARE

There are a few programs available through Child and Youth Programs. Contact the facility to enroll. Note that waitlists are probable, so get started early! Go to Militarychildcare.com to reserve your space now, for Child Development Center or the School Age Care Program.

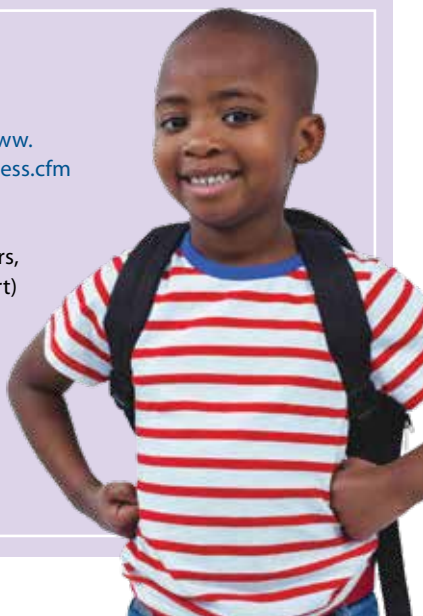
- ▶ Child Development Center (CDC) - These centers offer weekday child care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years or preschool.
- ▶ School-Age Care program (SAC), Youth Programs, Teen Programs - Offered for children in kindergarten through high school, these programs focus on a variety of enrichment activities. Some programs have before-and after-school care, as well as activities on holidays and during summer break.
- ▶ Teen Center - Open to eligible family members in grades 7-12. After becoming a member of the open recreation program, kids can participate in teen program activities. Membership is free and registration is taken directly at the facility. Some additional fees may apply.
- ▶ Check with the installation for specific registration information.

PARENT SUPPORT

Being a parent isn't always easy, especially when placed in a new environment. Many resources are available to you such as the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) Bahrain services and spouses' clubs. Also, look for community websites and social media resources to find support and friendship.

DODEA SOUTH

- ▶ Enrollment requirements: www.dodea.edu/registration-process.cfm
- ▶ Documentation needed:
 - ✓ PCS orders
 - ✓ Age verification (PCS orders, birth certificate or passport)
 - ✓ Child's transcripts
 - ✓ Immunization records
- ▶ School Liaison Officer (SLO): invaluable resource during transition; www.dodea.edu/Europe/resources/slo.cfm



Our services: Excursions for small and big groups, VIP tours, Incentive tours, Escorted tours, Cultural induction session for newcomers to Bahrain (Do's & Don'ts), Shore excursions and Tourism Consultation.

Special rates for Groups or long-term contracts.

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The gathering spot of luxury in Bahrain, Black Angus located at Seef that offers an exceedingly satisfying dining experience unlike anywhere else. The location covers an area of 10000sq ft offers a unique ambience.

Food lovers can enjoy a whole new world of dining with never seen attractions spread over two floors which includes authentic & conceptual interiors along with rich furnishing, flat screens showcasing sports & events, exceptional & stylish lighting and more. Interestingly, the venue is quite musical ensuring the dining most enjoyable.

The steak house brings the best service & royal taste to the diners. Moreover, the menu is intensely impressive serving a wide variety of scrumptious dishes, appetizers & desserts. American certified steak, Tomahawk, BBQ ribs, Grills, Buffalo Wings, Sea food are more prominent. Also Black Angus offers the diners an extensive collection of signature cocktails & beverages too.

Black Angus is known for its signature hospitality & commitment. Highly qualified & well-experienced team provides the first rate service to the guests!

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Black Angus is the place to be..*

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AL SEEF DISTRICT, KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

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Life for Your PETS in Bahrain



If you've brought your furry friend to Bahrain, you must register them at the veterinary clinic within one week of arriving.

REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ You must provide documentation/proof of at least one dose of all required vaccines during the pet's lifetime.
- ✓ All pets must have a 15-digit ISO-compliant microchip implanted.
- ✓ Your pet must be older than four months of age upon entry.

Vaccinations:

Update: Bahrain now accepts 1, 2 and 3 year vaccines. Please provide your pet's complete vaccination information to nsabahrain.vetclinic@gmail.com

- For dogs - Proof of at least one valid/current:
 - ✓ Rabies vaccination
 - ✓ Distemper combo vaccination (DA2PP)
 - ✓ Leptospirosis vaccination in the pet's lifetime. Two doses of leptospirosis vaccine is recommended (primary and booster).

- For cats - Proof of at least one valid/current:
 - ✓ Rabies vaccination
 - ✓ Feline distemper (FVRCP) vaccine in the pet's lifetime

IMPORTING YOUR PET

- ✓ Your pet(s) must receive a Health Certificate within 10 days of travel.
- ✓ Once your pet's vaccination and microchip information have been verified, NSA Bahrain VTF will prepare your import memorandum and your sponsor may pick it up during regular business hours.
- ✓ Your sponsor must take the import memorandum to the Kingdom of Bahrain Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Wealth Directorate Veterinary Quarantine Office, who will issue your Animal Import Certificate (only valid for 30 days).
- ✓ Your sponsor must meet you at the airport with the original import permit.

BAHRAINI VETERINARY CLINICS

Taking your pet to a Bahraini veterinarian clinic is recommended for emergency and specialty needs. Because the veterinarian clinic on the installation has tight mission demands, many individuals utilize the veterinarians off-installation.

TRAVELING WITHOUT YOUR PET

If you plan on getting traveling done while in Bahrain, be sure to register your pet at the clinic on-installation, where they will provide you a list of local boarding facilities.

BEAT THE HEAT

During the summer months, be sure to keep your furry friend hydrated and provide booties to protect their paws on the hot ground. For airline travel, note that most airlines will not ship pets during the summer months.

For any further questions or information on adopting a pet while in Bahrain, email nsabahrain.vetclinic@gmail.com



Dr Nonie Coutts



Veterinary Surgery



We are a long established (1981), full service animal hospital staffed with compassionate vets, nurses and animal care assistants who provide the most complete diagnostic, surgical and wellness care available for pets in Bahrain.

All our veterinary surgeons were trained at British and European Universities and are Members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in UK, and we also have two University trained veterinary nurses and a team of experienced animal care assistants to support the Veterinarians.

Our Hospital is well equipped with a fully digital Xray Imaging room, Ultrasound, Separate Dental suite with its own digital dental xray equipment, in house laboratory, dedicated operating suite with state of the art monitoring equipment, separate cat and dog hospital wards and clean airy consultation rooms and reception areas.

Our Vets have special interests and experience in Surgery and Orthopaedics, Internal Medicine of cats and dogs, the Medicine and Surgery of birds, exotics and small pets, Dentistry, Ophthalmology, Cardiology and Ultrasound.

As well as these core services we also provide Boarding of cats in individual large cat chalets, and Documentation and procedures for Pet Passport, Import and Export of animals around the World.



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10% off Consultation fees for each visit after that

* terms apply. Must show valid Military ID each visit.



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PERSONAL ENRICHMENT

Like many other overseas locations, it can be a challenging environment for spouses who are seeking employment. It is common for applicants to wait six months or longer to land a job that aligns with their education and/or experience. It is important to look for job opportunities before PCSing and soon after you arrive.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES ON THE INSTALLATION

- ▶ **NAF Positions:** NAF positions support installations through services in Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR). Hours range from regular, full-time to flexible part-time with varying employment benefits. Federal positions and NAF jobs are listed through the Office of Personnel Management at www.usajobs.gov.
- ▶ **DoDEA-Europe:** These schools offer full-time positions, substitute teachers, administrative

staff and educational aids. Go to www.dodea.edu/BahrainEHS/Employment.cfm.

- ▶ **Navy Exchange (NEX):** Apply at www.mynavyexchange.com/nex/work-for-us or through the local human resources office.
- ▶ **Defense Contractors:** Job opportunities in technology, management, accounting and administration are available with contracting firms. The installation's Contracting Office and Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) or MWR office will have information about vacancies.

HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

While dependents and DoD personnel may run home-based businesses while stationed in Bahrain, consult with the Legal Office to ensure you're following the correct guidelines.

VOLUNTEERING

While many may feel more qualified to hold a volunteer title, there is so much to take away and learn as a volunteer. More often than not, this is the main avenue people take to eventually land a great job. Volunteering can help you gain experience and network to land a paid position in the future.

Start making connections

- ▶ Look in to the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society
- ▶ Visit the installation's FFSC/MWR, the American Red Cross and the United Service Organizations (USO).
- ▶ Reach out to various offices across the installation that align with the career field you're interested in. You never know if they need volunteers or are willing to let people shadow them.



FOREIGN SERVICE BENEFIT PLAN

It's good to know your options.

Enroll in the Health Plan that Covers You and your Family Worldwide

- Generous massage therapy, acupuncture, and chiropractic benefits
- Wellness program with up to \$400 in rewards
- Competitive rates and low annual deductible
- Keep this health plan if you return to the U.S.
- 24/7 nurse advice and emergency translation line
- Worldwide coverage, 200+ direct billing partners
- All overseas providers treated as in-network
- Online claim submission and paperless reimbursement

afspa.org/fsbp

FEHB plan offered to eligible Federal Civilian employees

All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the Foreign Service Benefit Plan's Federal brochure (RI 72-001)



EDUCATION

Taking the time to advance your education can help you excel in the future. Educational opportunities on the installation come with a variety of programs at universities partnered with DoD.

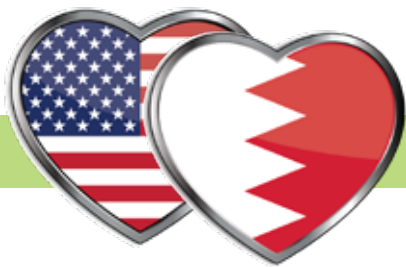
- ▶ **Central Texas College Europe (CTC)**
www.ctcd.edu/locations/europe
Primarily associate degrees and practical training. The Advanced Skills Education Program develops leadership qualities within noncommissioned and junior officers. Face-to-face and online classes.
- ▶ **University of Maryland Global Campus**
www.europe.umgc.edu
Undergraduate and graduate certificates as well as associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs. Online, face-to-face and hybrid courses.
- ▶ **Navy College Program (NCP)**
www.navycollege.navy.mil
Accredited degrees and courses for qualified personnel.

OTHER PERSONAL ENRICHMENT AVENUES

- ▶ Start DIY projects you've always wanted to do.
- ▶ Spend time in the gym and establish healthy habits.
- ▶ Travel! Living in Bahrain means traveling between other Middle Eastern and Asian countries is easier than ever.
- ▶ Start a blog – whether it be travel, fitness, military living, etc. Contribute your articles to www.europe.stripes.com for a chance to get published online and in various magazines.

Find what works for your goals and dreams — whether you land a great job, volunteer with an amazing organization, further your education or find other ways for personal enrichment. What matters is utilizing your time in Bahrain to benefit your future to the best of your ability.





LIVING LIKE

A LOCAL

As things start to settle down with your move to Bahrain, it's best to immerse yourself into the culture as soon as you can. It may seem intimidating at first, but with the installation's resources, understanding Bahraini culture and learning easy Arabic phrases — you'll be adjusted in no time!

WELCOME TOUR

Contact the Fleet and Family Support Center Bahrain for information on their "Welcome Tour."

This tour is designed to introduce you to your new home. You may stop in a restaurant, the Mosque, a museum and other shops. The goal is to show you the ins and outs of how to order food and drinks, barter with the merchants, learn about Islam and embrace the Arab culture overall.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BAHRAIN

► Dining

- Many people in Bahrain drink bottled water.
- The tap water on the installation is filtered and safe to drink.
- Restaurants are mostly open until midnight.
- Most restaurants may not serve alcohol and pork due to Muslim religious practices.

► Shopping

Although there is no commissary on the installation, the Navy Exchange has a small section dedicated to food and household items. Additionally, the major local stores to get groceries from are LuLu, Carrefour, Mega Mart and Al Jazira. Many small, local businesses run their shops through a barter system and even encourage you to barter with them.

► Driving

- Many drivers in Bahrain tend to follow the traffic regulations a bit less than what we're used to.
- Follow traffic laws and regulations as you would anywhere else in the world.

► Attire

Base personnel and their dependents should follow the Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) instruction regarding clothing. If you are off the installation, you will see the local men and women dress differently than what we are used to due to local customs.

APPROVED ATTIRE

- Ball caps, beanies, visors
- Collared shirts / casual or dress shirts that cover shoulders and midriff
- Sleeves that cover at least 3 inches from shoulder seam
- Skirts / dresses / shorts worn at or below the knee
- Jeans / slacks / capri pants (must not be frayed/torn)
- Running shoes / sneakers / dress shoes
- Flip-flops with leather or cloth straps, or wooden sole

ALWAYS REMEMBER

- Some may find it offensive for service members to wear traditional host nation attire.
- Uniforms are not to be worn off-installation.
- Clothing should be appropriate, neat, and conservative, without political / religious imagery or offensive logos / slogans.
- Personnel should always carry their ID card, but never display it in plain sight.



Local Men:

- Thobe - a loose, ankle-length robe made from cotton.
- Ghutra - a white and red, checkered head covering.
- Agal - a strong cord to hold the Ghutra in place.

Local Women:

- Abaya - a traditionally black ankle-length garment with long sleeves and a high neckline. You may also notice women wearing colorful abayas without a head cover.
- Hijab - a religious head covering.
- Niqab - A garment where women have their faces covered.

► Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. During this month, Muslims are prohibited from eating, drinking, smoking and any other vices from dawn until sunset. Base personnel are not obligated to fast. However, eating or drinking in public during the day may incur fines or jail time. Please note that many restaurants, parks, stores and services may have different hours. Some five-star hotels serve food during regular hours.



USEFUL ARABIC PHRASES

Ready to learn Arabic? Local nationals will appreciate that you are attempting to speak their native language. Remember, practice makes perfect!

Welcome Ahlan wa Sahlan/Marhaba
Good Morning Sabah el khayr
(Reply) Sabah ennoor
Good Evening Masaa el Khayr
(Reply) Masaa ennoor
Hello Assalaamo Alykum
Reply Wa alykum assalaam
What is your name? Maa Ismak?/Maa Ismik?
My name is Ismi...
Are you American? Inta amreekee?
Yes Na'am

Are you Bahraini? Inta Bahraini?
No Laa
If God wills Inshallah
God's willing Mashallah
Congratulations Mabrook
Goodbye Ma assalaamah
(Reply) Fi Aman Allah
Thank you Shukran
You're welcome Afwaan
How are you? Kaif Halak?/Kaif Halik?/Kaif halkom?
Thank God Al hamdulillah

LEARNING THE LANGUAGE

Although the basics are great - nothing beats hearing the language spoken well. Make the most of your tour in Bahrain by trying to learn the language.

► Google Translate App

This app allows you to "say" the word in Arabic and hear how it is pronounced. You can also turn on the image feature and hover your phone over the Arabic text to translate in real-time to English without typing a word.

► Fleet and Family Support Center Bahrain

The installation's FFSC provides common Arabic classes to get you comfortable being off the installation and having a basic conversation with the locals. These classes are held three to four times a month. For more information, contact Fleet and Family Support Center.

**Do you SPEAK
Arabic?**

GENERAL

RESOURCES

BAHRAIN PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2021

1 January
New Year's Day

12 April - 12 May
Ramadan Observed

1 May
Labor Day

13-15 May
Eid al-Fitr

31 July - 2 August
Eid al-Adha

9 August
Islamic New Year

17-18 August
Ashura

18 October
The Prophet's Birthday

16-17 December
National Day

WOMEN'S SIZES

Shoes

US	EU
5	35-36
5.5	36
6	36-37
6.5	37
7	37-38
7.5	38
8	38-39
8.5	39
9	39-40
9.5	40
10	40-41
10.5	41

Dresses/Shirts/Pants

US	EU
2 (XS)	32
4 (XS/S)	34
6 (S)	36
8 (M)	38
10 (M)	40
12 (L)	42
14 (L-XL)	44
16 (XL/1X)	46
18 (1X-2X)	48-50
20 (2X)	50-52
22 (3X)	52-54

Bras (Cups AA-E)

US	EU
32	70
34	75
36	80
38	85
40	90
42	95
44	100
46	105

MEN'S SIZES

Shoes

US	EU
8	41
8.5	42
9	43
10.5	44
11.5	45
12	46
13	47
14	48

Suits/Coats

US/UK	EU
36	46
38	48
40	50
42	52
44	54
46	56
48	58

Pants

Inches	CM
28	71
30	76
32	81
34	86
36	91
38	97
40	102

CHILDREN'S SIZES

Clothing

US	EU/UK
2T	92
3T	98
4	104
5	110
6	116
6X	122
7	128
8	134
9	140
10	146
11	152

Shoes

EU	US
11	28
12	30
13	31
1	32
2	33
3	34
4	36
5	37
6	38
7	39
8	40
9	41

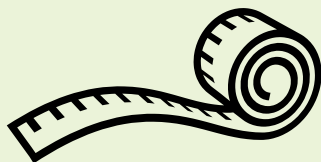
INFANT SIZES

Clothing

US	EU/UK
NB	56
3 MO	62
6 MO	68
9 MO	74
12 MO	80
18 MO	86

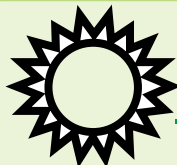
Shoes

US	EU
0	15
1	16
2	17
3	18
4	19
5	20
6	22
7	23
8	24
9	25
10	27



LENGTH

1 kilometer = 0.6 miles
1 meter = 3.3 feet
1 centimeter = 0.39 inches



WEATHER TEMPERATURE

°C	°F	°C	°F
-20	-4	20	68
-10	14.0	25	77
0	32.0	30	86
5	41	40	104
10	50	50	122
15	59	60	140

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STARS  STRIPES®



BAHRAIN

GET TO KNOW

YOUR NEW
HOME



BAHRAIN

The Kingdom of Bahrain is an island in the Arabian Gulf off the coast of Saudi Arabia. It is a treasure trove filled with gold jewelry, delicious local and international cuisine, tall skyscrapers, wreck and pearl diving and is home to the Formula One Grand Prix. Filled with friendly locals and a mix between traditional and modern elegance, Bahrain will be a country you will come to love and call home.

RESOURCES

BAHRAIN



FACEBOOK PAGE RESOURCES

NSA Bahrain
 NSA Bahrain Ombudsman
 MWR Bahrain
 Bahrain Community Schools
 Bahrain Family Readiness Group
 Bahrain Fleet & Family Support Center
 Naval Branch Health Clinic-Bahrain
 Navy Exchange (Navy Exchange Bahrain)
 NSA Bahrain Veterinary Services
 Personnel Support Detachment Bahrain
 Navy College Office Bahrain
 RLSO Bahrain
 Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society Bahrain
 Bahrain Red Cross
 Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central
 U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet
 Naval Amphibious Force, Task Force 51/5th
 Marine Expeditionary Brigade

PHONE DIRECTORY

CIV PHONE

BLDG

Operator	011-973-1785-4000	
Child & Youth Programs	011-973-1785-9092/9119	267
Dental Front Desk	011-973-1785-4211 (option 2)	110
Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)	011-973-1785-4787	100
Fleet & Family Support Center	011-973-1785-4046/9796	100
Household Goods	011-973-1785-4132	422
Housing Office	011-973-1785-4104	263
Human Resources	011-973-1785-4763	100
ID/CAC Card Processing	011-973-1785-4029	36
Library	011-973-1785-4062	70
Medical Front Desk	011-973-1785-4211	265
Navy College	011-973-1785-9446/3305	100
Navy Exchange	011-973-1785-6931/6885	P911
Navy Federal Branch Bahrain	011-973-1785-4313	P911
Navy Gateway Inns & Suites	011-973-1785-2100	264
Postal Service	011-973-1785-3199	261
Region Legal Services Office	011-973-1785-4237	100
School Liaison Officer	011-973-1785-6719	267
TRICARE	011-973-1785-4332/9054	265



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Base Police/Fire/Medical	1785-4911
Dispatch (Non-emergency)	1785-5555
Bahrain Police	999



Bahrain's Top Gems

By Amanda Palumbo and NSA Bahrain

Bahrain might be small in size but it carries a tremendous charm with its history and culture. Bolster your knowledge of this island and discover its wonders through these must-do attractions. Here are some amazing things to do while in the Kingdom of Bahrain.



ABSORB THE CULTURE

Bab Al Bahrain

If you're looking to experience the real culture of the island, this is definitely the first place to start. Built in 1949, "Bab al Bahrain" which translates to "Gateway of Bahrain", is the main entrance to the city's vibrant "Souq" downtown where you will find traditional cafes, restaurants and a wide range of rare spices, fabrics, kaftans, dry fruits, regional unique handicrafts, nuts, and more. It's a good place to stock up on souvenirs to send home.

Al Jasra Handicrafts Centre

Located in Al Jasra village, Al Jasra Handicrafts center is considered one of the most important craft centers in the Kingdom of Bahrain and offers a look into the traditional arts and crafts that many of the villages in Bahrain have historically produced. Watch as craftsmen demonstrate pottery making, textile weaving,

wood working, model-boat building, basket weaving and many other crafts.

The small workshops where the handicrafts are produced represent an admirable attempt to preserve skills that might otherwise be lost. They overlook a pleasant central garden, and there is also a gift shop where a purchase goes a little way to helping Bahrain retain some of its traditional handicraft skills.

Al-Fatih Mosque (Great Mosque)

The Al-Fateh Mosque (also known as Al-Fateh Islamic Center & Al Fateh Grand Mosque) is one of the largest mosques in the world, encompassing 6,500 square meters and having the capacity to accommodate over 7,000 worshippers at a time. The mosque was built by the late Sheikh Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifa in 1987 and was named after Ahmed Al Fateh. In 2006, Al-Fateh became the site of the National Library of Bahrain. Set against a backdrop of palm trees and the sea, the Grand Mosque strikes a beautiful picture. With its exquisite Bahraini architecture, crowned by the world's largest fiberglass dome and blessed with tranquility reserved for the holiest of holy places, the Grand Mosque truly lives up to its name. Though non-Muslim visitors are welcome, it is important to dress modestly, cover your head (for women) and take your shoes off before entering. Another mosque to check out is Khamis Mosque.

Manamat Al Gossaibi

"Manamat Al Gossaibi" is a tribute to Saudi beloved public figure Dr Gazi Abdul Rahman Al Gossaibi in the heart of Manama. The legacy of the poet whose memory is split across two locations, one of which is his homeland Saudi Arabia, and the other is the home of his heart Bahrain, is recalled by the Shaikh Ebrahim Center through The Manama of Al-Gossaibi project in Farij Al-Fadel in Manama. Through this splendidly renovated cultural heritage building, the Center dedicates a place to the works and sayings of Ghazi Al-Gossaibi, his poetry, novels, literature and thought, all of which have enriched and influenced thought throughout the Arab world. If you like this place, make sure to visit Ibrahim Al Arrayed House of Poetry, Khalaf house and take a tour in the old houses of Muharraq.

TRAVEL THROUGH HISTORY

Bahrain National Museum

Situated between Manama and Muharraq, Bahrain National Museum is considered one of the finest museums of its kind in the Gulf region and offers a deeper understanding of the fascinating history of the island. The 20,000-sqm building houses 9 main halls with a wonderful collection of exhibits, from contemporary Bahraini paintings, sculptures



and ceramics to scenes depicting life in the Dilmun civilization and even a reconstructed burial mound. A section on Arabic calligraphy, including a beautiful display of illuminated Qur'ans and other religious documents can be found. Visitors can indulge in the history and have a closer look at traditional trades and crafts, which are cleverly displayed in a reconstruction of a typical Souq of the 1930s. There are also photographs and models of pearl exhibitions, artifacts and many more exhibits that add up to a memorable experience.

Qal'at al Bahrain

Qal'at al Bahrain, also called Bahrain Fort or Portuguese Fort, is perhaps one of the most prolific archeological sites you'll see in Bahrain. Once the capital of the Dilmun civilization, this fort is registered today as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and carries 4000 years of history between its arches from 2300 BC until the 18th century from its various occupants, including Kassites, Greeks, Portuguese and Persians. You can walk through different parts of the fort to transport yourself through layers of its historical legacy further highlighted with the use of an audio guide available to visitors. There is also a museum connected to the fort that explains the area's history and contains artifacts from the past civilizations. A seaside café offers a stunning view of the fort and the surrounding palm groves, with a view of flying kites from the festive beach just steps away with food trucks and various activities, including horse rides. If you like your experience here, make sure to check out Riffa fort and Arad fort as well.

The Pearling Path

Discover the UNESCO-listed Pearling Trail of Bahrain that stretches up to 3.5 km through the old alleyways of Muharraq. Before the oil boom,





pearl divers were a big source of economic prosperity in Bahrain. Get to know more about the pearling lifestyle as you visit a local market, Bin Matar House (the diver's House), and the dhow building yard. There's even a chance to shop for this precious "jewel of the sea" and get one for yourself or a loved one as a souvenir.

Boat Trips to Bu Maher Fort

Bu Maher Fort, which was built in 1840, served as the main fishing harbor and gateway to and from the sea. The Bu Maher Fort Visitor's Center is the starting point to discovering more about the Pearling Path that has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The center contains a three-dimensional display that guides the viewer through the history of the path and the houses that formed it from the early beginnings to the main pearling traders. The visitor's center can be accessed via the sea by boats that depart from Bahrain's National Museum harbor.

Archaeological Sites

Bahrain is home to numerous archaeological digs around the island starting with the "Aali Burial Mounds" located on the north side of A'Alia. This archeological paradise is considered one of the largest prehistoric cemetery sites in the world with more than 85,000 Dilmun and Tylos burial mounds, dating back about 4500 years. Saar Settlement is another gem featuring

an entire residential quarter comprising well-preserved courtyard houses, a temple and a very unique honeycomb-shaped cemetery. This 3rd-millennium BC site offers fascinating insights into the daily life of the ancient inhabitants of Bahrain. Lastly, the "Barbar Temples" and "Diraz Temple" are some impressive archaeological discoveries dating back to the 2nd and 3rd millennium BC. These sites are well worth some of your time, as they represent the earliest examples in existence of the dawn of human civilization.

EXPERIENCE AN ADVENTURE

Al Areen Wildlife Park

This nature reserve and zoo, located in Sakhir, is one of five other protected areas in the country and is the only designated protected area on land in the country. The park covers a total area of 7 km sq and was first established in 1976. Species native to Bahrain, both plants and animals, as well as species originating from Africa and south Asia are present in the zoological park. It houses rare and endangered species. Persian gazelle, Impala and Arabian Oryx (nearly extinct in the wild) are among the featured enclosures in this small wildlife reserve that cares for over 500 different species. For agricultural lovers the park offers over a 100,000 different species of plants and trees to enjoy.



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Pearl Diving

Pearl diving is a part of Bahrain's past and current heritage, and this is a hands-on way to experience a piece of local culture. This adventure gives you the chance to search for pearls underwater. Either snorkeling or scuba diving, you'll collect oysters in the hopes of finding some that contain that desirable mineral. Professional dive instructors will guide you according to your ability and teach you the process of gathering oysters and cracking them open to find pearls. All pearl diving trips take place from Ras Rayyah Port and can only be done in the company of government-approved dive centers licensed for pearl diving.

Bahrain International Circuit

Even if you are not a motor racing fan and even when Formula One is not taking center stage at the Bahrain International Circuit, you are guaranteed a thrilling experience in the state-of-the-art circuit. Located 20 miles south of Manama, The Bahrain International Circuit is a motorsport venue opened in 2004 and hailed as one of the best and most advanced in the world, from its design to its safety measures. The circuit has many activities such as the Land Rover experience, the Jaguar experience and the Clio Cup experience in addition to open track days where you can take your own car and drive on the track. The venue also has the biggest Karting circuit in Bahrain where you can have

your own Karting experience with your kids and friends. You can also have open track days where you can take your own car on the track.

"Dive Bahrain" Dive park

The world's largest underwater theme park opened to the public in September 2019 and covers an area of 100,000 square meters. The dive site has a 70-meter long decommissioned Boeing 747 as its centerpiece, the largest aircraft ever to be submerged. You can book a tour through one of the official dive centers listed for an exceptional dive experience in its artificial reef.

Al Dar Island

Al Dar Island is a resort island near Sitra that lies 12 km southeast of the capital Manama and is a ten-minute offshore trip from the dhow harbor in Sitra. It offers beautiful beaches and a variety of facilities, such as palm leaf huts, tents, or chalets, and a restaurant offering delicious dishes and refreshing drinks. The island also offers jet skiing, snorkeling and other water sports. Visitors to the island can also enjoy pearl dives and cruises to the stunning Jarada Island which affords one the opportunity to see up to 30 different types of coral, more than 200 species of fish, and the chance to watch the always delightful dolphins.

Hawar Island

A trip to Bahrain would not be complete without a visit to Hawar Islands. Located 20 kms south of Bahrain, the Hawar Islands are a renowned wildlife reserve of international significance. The islands are home to pristine beaches, indigenous fauna and flora, and migratory birds. Take a sea voyage about 45 minutes from Al-Dur Jetty on Al Fateh and enjoy a weekend stay in the resort where you can see approximately 150 species of birds, desert species like the Reem Gazelle, Arabian Oryx and Nubian Ibex and marine species such as the endangered Dugongs, Green Turtles & Bottle-nose Dolphins.

Royal Camel Farm

This is a sanctuary for several hundred camels, where visitors have the opportunity to get up close and personal with the camels, feeding and touching them. The farm is home to over 600 camels of all ages and sizes. The farm was created by the King of Bahrain, Sheik Mohammad, as a means of preserving camels in Bahrain. Before the introduction of cars to the country, camels were the primary means of transport for the people of Bahrain and they hold a deep-rooted cultural connection to them. This farm is open every day from sunrise to sunset, with free entry and free parking on-site as well as washroom facilities. ■



Beyond Bahrain: Venture to Oman

By Stacy Roman



Now that jetlag and the sea of never-ending cardboard have subsided, you're ready to start exploring the fantastic spots around you. Ready to venture outside the kingdom? Just a short 90-minute flight from Manama, lies the spectacular country of Oman. With vast, rippling sand dunes, unspoiled breathtaking coastlines, dramatic peaks and canyons, this nation is full of wondrous surprises around every corner.

Located on the southeastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, Oman began as a humble nation of Bedouins, fishermen, seafarers and frankincense trading. Cultures from India, Persia, Zanzibar, Britain and Portugal lend themselves to the unique blending of ancient and modern, which permeates through the country and Omani people.

Muttrah Corniche and Souq

The sprawling capital of Muscat stretches out along the Gulf of Oman. With brilliant blue water lapping at the shore, take a stroll along the Muttrah Corniche. This artfully paved seawall winds its way through the former commercial center. Old mercantile shops and vendors line the narrow alleys. Practice your haggling skills at one of the oldest "souqs," or marketplaces, in the world at the Muttrah Souq. Get lost as you peruse colorful piles of trinkets, find one-of-a-kind treasures and alluring perfumes and frankincense.

Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque

Piercing the blue sky with a 50-meters-high dome is the impressive Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque. This stunning place of worship took six years to complete and was finished in 2001. The enormous, hand-loomed Persian rug took four years to finish and was once the largest in the world. Hanging in the center of the main prayer hall is a jaw-dropping Swarovski crystal chandelier, embellished with more than 600,000 jewels. The mosque can accommodate up to 20,000 worshippers, including 750 women in a private prayer room. Non-Muslims are invited to visit between 8 and 11 a.m., women must dress appropriately and conservatively.

Nizwa Fort and Birkat Al-Mawz

Situated approximately an hour southwest of the capital, the Nizwa Fort is a perfectly preserved piece of history. This cylindrical fortress was built in the 17th century, upon a foundation dating back to the 12th century. Visitors can wander through the labyrinth of rooms and hallways, discovering ancient artifacts and examples of what life was like for early Omani soldiers.

The enchanting village of Birkat Al-Mawz is home to another similar restored architectural gem, Bait al Redidah. The town is nestled in the crevasse between the mountain and plain. A prehistoric falaj irrigation system still exists and has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Hike through nearby Wadi Al Muyadin and take in the striking copper-colored cliffs, deep green palm trees and clear water below.

Jebel Shams

Approximately 3.5 hours southwest of Muscat, Jebel Shams is the highest peak in Oman and third-tallest in the Arabian Peninsula. Translated to "Mountain of Sun," the spectacular views of Wadi Guhl and sheer cliffs dropping below. Deep rifts and fissures cutting between smooth plateaus are reminiscent of the Grand Canyon. Hikers and those looking for a little more adventure can trek along the canyon rim on the well-marked Balcony Walk while drinking in gorgeous panoramas.

Bat, Al-Khutm and Al-Ayn Necropolises

Just west of Jebel Shams, near Jebel Kawr, lie peculiar beehive-shaped outcroppings dotting the desert. These ancient structures date back to 3,000 BC and are listed as UNESCO World



Heritage Sites. Unsure of their true purpose, it is believed they were once used either as ritualistic tombs, or as silos and/or holding tanks. Be sure to bring a map and four-wheel drive. There are no posted signs or placards, and you may need to go off-road a bit to find them.

Bimmah Sinkhole, Wadi Shab and Wadi Tiwi

Situated 90 minutes southeast of Muscat is a spot full of beautiful turquoise water and plenty of lore. Measuring 50- by 70-meters wide and 20 meters deep, locals believe a meteorite caused the impressive natural formation. Newly constructed concrete stairs provide easy access for visitors to enjoy the warm, calming waters.

Even further south are Wadis Shab and Tiwi. Wadi Shab is the more well-known between the two. Brilliantly hued fresh water pools between sheer limestone gorges. Palm trees grow among the stone, creating a magical oasis. Wadi Tiwi is lesser-known and requires four-wheel drive to access. You can drive all the way into the wadi; however, it is frowned upon by the locals who live nearby.

Wahiba Sands

The picture-perfect wind-swept undulating dunes of Wahiba Sands are well worth a visit. Located on the eastern side of the country, it provides a slightly otherworldly feel. Drifting upwards of 350-feet tall, the rich terra cotta colored desert stretches an impressive 12,500-square kilometers. Between glamping, camping, traditional camel rides, or going for a ride in a dune buggy, there is no shortage of activity in this unforgettable and pristine site.

If you're building your Bahrain bucket list, travel outside the border. With stunning scenery, historic and ancient sites, warm and welcoming people, Oman is beckoning. ■





Venture Outside of Bahrain: to Dubai

By Jessica Zen



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The World's Largest

Let's start with a few of the "world's largest" places to visit. Almost everything here is bigger and better. Dubai is home to the world's largest indoor snow park, Ski Dubai. Located in the Mall of the Emirates, you can ski, snowboard, toboggan and zip line in this eternal winter. If you love penguins, now is your chance to get up close and personal! The Peng-Friend Encounter lets you spend around 40 minutes learning about penguins and how to protect them. You'll also get to interact with two species of penguins!

Leave the cold weather behind and head to the Dubai Mall, the largest in the world based on total area, containing over 1,200 shops. It also holds the world's largest candy store, an ice rink, a 5-star luxury hotel, a movie theater

You've made it to Bahrain and are getting ready to start your new life in a foreign country. How exciting! There's no time like the present to start planning all of the places you want to explore for your next set of adventures. Why not add Dubai to the list? The city of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates boasts more "world's largest" titles than most. Here you'll find the world's largest indoor snow park, choreographed fountain system, shopping mall, buildings and much more. Add luxury shopping, modern architecture, the beach and a busy nightlife scene and you are certainly in for a good time!

and 150 eateries. Don't forget to visit one of the largest aquariums in the world, the Dubai Mall Aquarium. It holds 2.64 million gallons of water and 33,000 living animals. There are over 400 sharks and rays peacefully swimming here.

Burj Khalifa is the world's tallest building, standing tall and proud at 2,723 feet with 160-stories. The building houses suites, a sky lobby, restaurants, residential homes and a hotel. Head to the observation deck on level 124 for stunning view of the city. The world's largest choreographed fountain system is located on the man-made Burj Khalifa Lake in downtown Dubai. With 6,600 lights, 50 colored projectors and water shooting up to 500 feet, the Dubai Fountain is truly spectacular.

In case all of these "world's largest" titles just weren't enough for you, there are more! Palm Jumeirah is a palm-shaped, man-made island and one of the largest artificial islands in the world. You can stay at a high-end hotel here and have easy access to the mainland with the monorail system. Other beachside accom-

modations include staying at the Madinat Jumeirah, a luxury resort complex modeled after an ancient citadel. This mini city is its own destination with hotels, summerhouses and villas, as well as over 50 restaurants and lounges. Take a tour around the area in a traditional abra boat on the river system or lounge on the private beach. Hit up the spa for a relaxing massage or work up a sweat at the fitness center. You really don't even have to leave this little slice of heaven!

Kite Beach

If a private beach doesn't tickle your fancy, head to Kite Beach, where water sport enthusiasts and sun bums alike can enjoy the area. Try kitesurfing, wakeboarding or paddle boarding if you want to stay active. Grab some friends and play a game of beach volleyball, walk along the track or grab some food and just relax. There's a little something for everyone at this free beach just off Jumeirah's main street.



Dubai's History

You can't venture to Dubai without learning a little something about the fascinating history. Visit ancient trade routes on the Dubai Creek, where the Bani Yas tribe settled in the 19th century and made a living pearl diving and fishing. You'll also find a labyrinth of gold, spice and textile bazaars near the creek. Hop on a traditional abra boat for a ride and imagine how people survived long before all the modern marvels were added to this city.

Delve even deeper into Dubai's past by visiting Al Fahidi, one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city. Over a century of history is on display here, including traditional wind towers, twisting alleys and food. Visit the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding where you can take guided mosque tours or even participate in an Arabic class. The bustle and buzz of the city fades away here as you get acquainted with the old way of life, its values and principles.

The Arabian Desert

Once you've seen what the luxury of the city has to offer and learned about the fascinating past of Dubai, venture outside the city to the Arabian Desert. Take a desert safari by going off-roading, quad-biking or sandboarding. If you are feeling extra adventurous, go for a camel ride. Adorn your hands with a henna tattoo and experience a traditional feast. Make sure you stay for a sunset, after which you'll be astounded by the brightness of the stars in the sky. The desert is a quintessential Arabian experience and not to be missed!

With such a vast array of entertainment options in Dubai, everyone can find something to keep them happy. Whether you want to experience some of the world's largest buildings or bask in the sun, there is a plethora of opportunities. Experience cultural history along the creek or stargaze in the desert. Regardless of what you choose to do, use Bahrain as a starting point to explore the fascinating city of Dubai. ■





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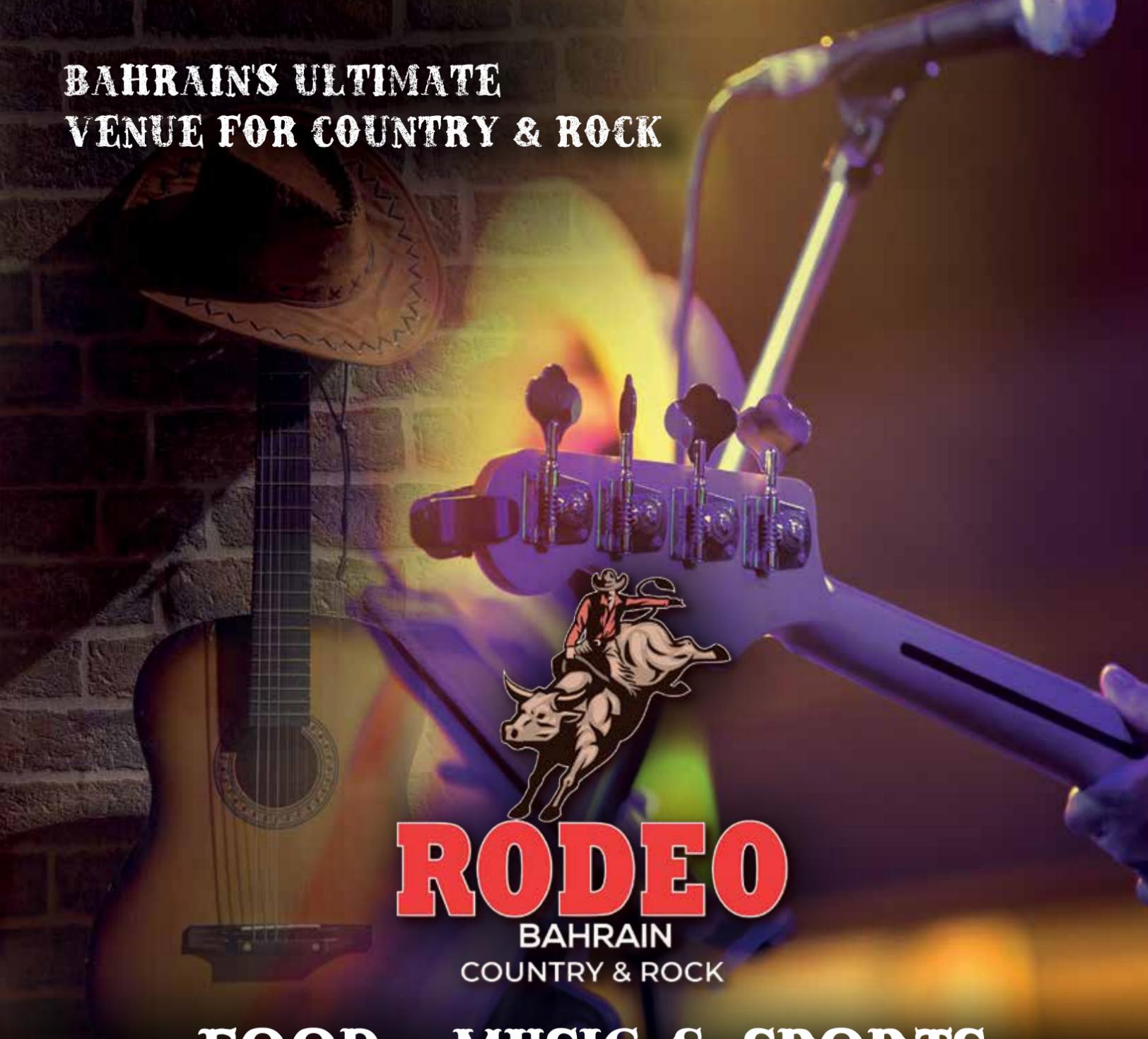
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