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INTRODUCTION

Marhaba! Welcome!

Volunteers from Saar Fellowship, specifically to help newcomers take their first steps in Bahrain, have compiled this booklet. Life will not be the same as where you came from but after a short time we hope you will begin to feel more at home.

The most important thing is to get out and meet people! Moving to a new country can be an exciting but daunting experience and it is not always easy to know where to start. We suggest that you buy a big map of Bahrain and, if you have driven elsewhere, start driving as soon as possible as this opens up the whole island to you.

Accept any invitation to an activity or event, including volunteering. You may enjoy yourself and better still, you may meet some new people who turn out to become good friends and we all need some of those!

Have fun on this new adventure!

This booklet is for internal distribution only

June 2017 Edition

HISTORY OF BAHRAIN

Bahrain is a collection of islands with a total area of approximately 700 sq. km, with under a million inhabitants. It has limited natural resources and considerably wealthier neighbours. Full independence from Britain came in 1971, but Bahrain is NOT a new country! It was first known as Dilmun, long before the Americas were discovered and when the British Isles were still mystery-shrouded lands. During subsequent periods of history, the islands were known as Tylos, Awal and finally Bahrain – now you know where all those odd names on shops come from! Bahrain is built upon the foundations of many earlier civilisations and cultures. Bahrain is a constitutional monarchy ruled by a king.

Bahrain is situated half way down the Arabian Gulf, 25km across the King Fahd Causeway from Saudi Arabia and slightly further from the Qatar Peninsula. Several causeways and bridges now link Manama with the neighbouring Island of Muharraq. You will find any maps of Bahrain soon go out of date, as there is constant reclaiming of land.

South of the main island of Bahrain, near the coast of Qatar, are 16 islands of the Hawar group, the largest of which is 40 square kilometres in area (Hawar is one of many words for camel in Arabic). Hawar is similar in shape to Bahrain and makes for a nice outing. An easy boat ride will give you the feel of another world where some of the world's largest colonies of cormorants have their habitat. There is a newly renovated hotel where you can spend time away from the busy life of Bahrain, and if lucky, also see rare dugongs.

Bahrain used to be largely free of crime, but sadly is now catching up with the rest of the world. Bahrainis are generally very friendly and helpful. Road rage is becoming a problem here, and break ins are becoming more common.

For car enthusiasts, the Bahrain International Circuit will be of interest. Shopping is on a par with most western cities and almost everything is available at a price. Local fish and fruit in season are good value. Public transport is minimal, but there are several taxi companies and by law, taxis must use their meters. Eating out is almost a hobby with a superb variety of choice and price – don't be afraid to eat in local establishments as well as the international hotels.

Bahrain is a great place for young children. Expatriate schools are good but can be expensive and often have waiting lists. There are clubs catering for most tastes and more than 70 different Christian congregations are free to worship here.

Ahlan wa sahan bikun fil Bahrain – Welcome to Bahrain

DISCLAIMER & ERRORS

Bahrain is a highly fluid society and things change quickly. Every possible care has been made to ensure the information contained in this booklet is accurate, but no responsibility is taken. The views recorded reflect the opinions and recommendations of the people who completed the survey and are naturally subjective. They do not constitute any formal endorsement of companies, products or services offered in Bahrain.

If something has changed or is incorrect please send an email to office@saarfellowship.com

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Each section gives business names, location and phone numbers or websites, plus the number of survey respondents who recommended the business. For example:

Saar Fellowship (*name of business*) St Christopher's School, Saar (*location*)

www.saarfellowship.com (*web address*) 39935354 (*phone number*)

Saar Fellowship is an international non-denominational church (*description*)

TOP TIPS

- Remember Bahrain is a Muslim country, so be respectful of customs and religious practices, especially during Ramadan. Consider learning Arabic.
- Dress appropriately i.e. no short skirts and shorts in public places, no low tops, bare midriffs etc. Modesty is highly recommended, especially for ladies and female teenagers.
- Remember it is a privilege for expatriates to live here and not a right!
- Accept all invitations initially as it will help you establish some friendships. We suggest focusing more on building relationships than on setting up house.
- Start driving straight away. Don't worry about getting lost; you're on an island and main roads are usually fairly straightforward.
- Sort out a mobile phone so you are always contactable. The camera could be useful in case of a traffic accident dispute.
- Enter important numbers (such as traffic police and "in case of emergency" numbers), your home address, including block number and other location details, into your mobile phone.
- Always carry BD20 with you, so you can pay the on the spot "fine" if you have a traffic accident.
- Keep a photocopy of your CPR and driving license in your car.
- Subscribe to local publications to get to know local events and happenings.
- Be patient, as many things take longer here.
- Wear your seatbelt and drive defensively.
- Take advantage of cultural events, as many are free.
- Take a guided tour of the island.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

General

Police	999
Ambulance	999
Fire	999
Traffic & Accidents	199
Electricity and Water	17515555

Hospitals

American Mission	17253447
Awali	17753333
BDF	17766666
Bahrain Specialist	17812000
Ibn Al Nafees	17828282
International	17598222
Salmaniya	17288888

Taxis

Arabian Taxi	17461746
Airport	17260208
Government Avenue	17223496
Speedy Motors	17682999
Bahrain Limo	17266266

Cinemas

Dana	17558558
Cineco, Bahrain City Centre	17864666
Seef Cineplex	17331900
Saar Cineplex	17793444
Awal Cinema	17274121
Al Hamra Cinema	17245411

Embassies

France	17298600
India	17712785
Italy	17252424
Japan	17716565
Kuwait	17534040
Pakistan	17244113
UAE	17748333
United Kingdom	17574100
USA	17242700

Directory assistance

Local numbers	181
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or www.181.bh

GETTING STARTED

On arrival

You and your family and friends can be met and escorted through passport control, customs through a 'meet and assist' service. This is especially good for first-time visitors and grandparents. Most travel agents can arrange this for you or you can arrange it by filling in a form at the following web address: www.bahrainairport.com/bia/aldana.htm.

Getting legal

Bahrain's eGovernment portal, found at www.bahrain.bh, is a good place to start, with progressively more services becoming available online. Very little can be achieved by telephone, so you should be prepared to spend a great deal of time going from place to place to sort everything out.

Sort out your legal paperwork through your company. You will need a residence visa and a 'CPR card' (Central Population Registration). When you get your CPR card, take a photocopy of it and keep it safe. You should carry your CPR card at all times as you will need it for many transactions. Retain all old documents such as expired passports, CPR cards etc. You will need them to apply for a Certificate of Good Conduct before you leave. Find out if you will need to renew your visa and the date this should be done. Make a note on a calendar so you do not forget. Most countries insist that there is at least six months validity left on an existing passport so make a note of its renewal date and don't forget!

Public holidays

These vary every year and are subject to confirmation:

Alwaqfa Day	Prophet's birthday
Eid Al Adha (usually three days)	1 May Labour Day
Al Hijrah New Year 1428	Eid Al Fitr (usually three days)
Ashoora (usually 2 day holiday)	16 & 17 December National Day

Helpful websites

www.clickbahrain.com
www.saarfellowship.com
www.mumsinbahrain.net
www.bahrainexplorer.com
www.whatsupbahrain.net
www.bahrainivent.com
www.expatriates.com
www.whatsappbahrain

Languages

The official language of Bahrain is Arabic but English is widely spoken and used for business communication. All traffic and road signs are printed in both Arabic and English.

If you wish to learn Arabic you will need to decide which version as there are several, the main two being spoken Arabic (the Bahrain version of the Gulf Arabic dialect) and classic Arabic. Spoken Arabic tends to use little grammar and is unstructured whereas classic Arabic involves grammar, which often makes it easier for people who speak several languages. Language classes are available from several centres. Private tutors are often difficult to find, try looking for advertisements on supermarket noticeboards or clubs.

Language Centres

Berlitz, Saar and Adliya www.berlitz.ae

17827847

Classes in Arabic, English, Japanese and other languages offered.

Time

Bahrain is GMT plus two/three hours (two hours ahead in summer/three hours ahead in winter of the UK)

Working hours

Working hours vary considerably but as an indication:

- Government offices are open five days a week from 7am to 2pm Sunday to Thursday inclusive. They are closed on Friday and Saturday.
- Private companies normally operate from 8am – 5pm Sunday to Thursday. They are closed on Friday and often Saturday as well.
- Souks are normally open six days a week from 9am – 12pm and then from 4pm – 8pm. Very few shops in the Souk are open on Friday mornings.
- Supermarkets are open seven days a week from 8am – 10pm or even later on Fridays and Saturdays.
- Banks usually open for 5 days a week Sunday to Thursday inclusive. Check with each branch to ascertain exact hours.

Climate

Winter (December to March) often has night temperatures of between 10-15°C and daily temperatures range between 8-29°C. Summer, June to September, is mostly very hot with daily temperatures over 35°C and the minimum temperature rarely below 25°C. Humidity is normally very high during this season making it often feel hotter than it actually is. Rainfall normally occurs during the winter months but is rather limited with an average of 70mm per year only. However when it rains, it really rains and flooding often occurs!

Driving license

International driving licenses are permitted in Bahrain for a temporary period only so we advise obtaining a Bahrain driving license as soon as possible. For some nationalities this is automatically granted after taking an eye test, showing a copy of your international licence, your normal driving license from your home country, one colour passport photo, your passport and copy of your residency visa and paying a fee. Licenses can be obtained at the Traffic Directorate in Isa Town (at the building furthest away from the entrance gate).

Housing

If your company does not provide accommodation, check the Gulf Daily News for available housing and real estate agents. Check what flexibility you have on the lease if you change your mind and try to negotiate on price. We suggest you get the 'Diplomatic Clause' included in your lease. This clause allows you to leave the country without you being liable for the rest of the lease. Also include a clause, which allows you to give one month's notice after the first year of the lease, even if the lease is valid for longer. We also suggest inserting a clause, which allows you to break the lease and move should you change sponsors/employers.

Estate agents

The agent's commission is usually the equivalent of one month's rental and the landlord pays this, not the renter.

Al Hanaa Real Estate 17250102 Gill 39839727
Remax 17813666 Orla 39804509

Communicating

Local telephone calls are cheap and prepaid options are readily available in shops and supermarkets. Post paid is usually even cheaper but you may have to pay a deposit up front and pay a monthly fee on top of the call costs. If your phone is stolen you can prevent the thief from using your phone by calling your service provider and giving the serial number of your phone. To get this number press: *#06# then record this number somewhere safe. Store the numbers 199 for traffic accidents, 999 or 112 for general emergencies: fire, ambulance and police. Store an emergency contact number under ICE1, ICE2 etc. ICE stands for In Case of Emergency.

Sending & receiving letters and parcels

Stamps can be purchased and letters weighed at Post Offices. Every mail items should carry the correct postage plus a charity stamp (the charity stamp is optional, depending upon the post office). For important documents, use registered mail; your letter will be traced through its journey and will need to be signed for by the recipient. Letters and small parcels are usually delivered to a post office box. You can rent a box at your chosen post office for an inexpensive annual fee. Parcels can be sent and received through the postal service. Alternatively, international courier services such as FedEx and DHL have offices here and will deliver to your home address. Some courier companies offer customers a US mailing address for online shopping orders, with the shipments then being forwarded to the customer in Bahrain.

TRANSPORT

Buying a car

Cars, new or second hand can be bought through dealers or adverts on supermarket notice boards, club boards and in the newspaper. Cars can be hired for any period from a day to many years. Some people rent or lease rather than buy a car. When insuring, consider whether you might want to take your car into any other Gulf state, as some policies do not allow this even at extra cost.

Bahrain is a hot and dusty place that takes its toll on cars. Generally, cars don't last as long here as they do in other countries – about ten years at the most. When buying a car consider the age of the car and how long you plan to stay. Resale values for used cars can be low as when people know that you are leaving they have the upper hand in negotiation.

Taking out a loan

We **strongly** urge you to be very careful if you decide to **borrow money** for **anything** here in Bahrain. Any loans will need to be undersigned by your employer and the employer is then legally bound to notify the financial institution should they terminate your employment or you choose to leave. This usually results in your bank account being frozen until all loans are immediately and fully repaid. Even if you have the money in a current or savings account you would need to find funds from elsewhere to settle the loan before they unfreeze your bank account. If you are unable to settle any outstanding amounts then a travel ban is usually implemented and this means the person who took out the loan is not allowed, under **any** circumstances to leave the country. It used to also mean that you couldn't find new employment so it is a vicious, vicious circle. Please, please be very careful, as the law in Bahrain is definitely not on the side of any expats.

Car registration

Your car will need re-registering every year and will need to be inspected annually after it is four years old. First you will need to get your car insurance renewed for 12 months. Once this is done you will need to take proof to the Isa Town offices of the Directorate of Traffic and get an inspection done. Then you can renew on line and the charge is approx. BD20. Henry Owen can help with this. Contact him on 33771820, as he comes highly recommended.

Petrol

Most cars use 'Mumtaz' petrol. The petrol attendants will fill up your car and do not expect a tip. Petrol is subsidised and is the same price everywhere.

Safe driving

Each country has a different driving culture and Bahrain may take some getting used to. People can be very polite and sometimes give you right of way when you don't have it, especially if you are a woman. This is very nice but a bit confusing.

The best tip we can pass on is to start driving immediately, as people who don't drive here can feel very isolated. Try driving when you have an empty car with fewer

distractions but full tank of petrol. Fridays and mid-morning seem to be the quietest times. Armed with a map we suggest you drive, drive, and drive. Bahrain is an island so you really cannot get lost!

In heavy traffic, keep your distance. If the car behind hits you and bumps you into the car in front, experience has shown that you will be held responsible for damage to the car in front of you. Be careful on roundabouts. There is no hard and fast rule about which lane to take for which exit. Other drivers may exit or change lanes at any time from any lane without indicating. We encourage you to use your indicators, but be aware that others will not. At traffic lights a flashing indicator often means the driver is doing a U-turn rather than turning across the traffic. The maximum speed on the freeways is 100km/h but some people go much faster. Even if you are doing 100km/h in the fast lane you will find people zooming up behind you with lights flashing. It is wise to get out of their way rather than have them swerve around you. Be careful at traffic lights as some drivers go across at red. If you need to brake check in your rear view mirror that the car behind you will stop too! Do not take it for granted.

It is illegal to drive with ANY alcohol in your system and the slightest trace of alcohol will result in you being found guilty, fined and possibly jailed and/or deported.

Navigating

Buy a big map and sort out a means of getting around. Map sites such as www.maps.google.com and www.wikimapia.com can be useful, and www.bahrainexplorer.com can give “point A to point B” directions. Many people, when giving directions, will refer to major roundabouts as a point of reference i.e. Burgerland roundabout, etc. The quicker you are able to identify these landmarks the easier it will be to find your way around the island.

Accidents

If you are involved in an accident telephone 199. For minor accidents you will be directed to the nearest of five traffic department offices located on Exhibition Road, Seef area, Muharraq post office, Isa Town and Riffa to file a report. Always get a copy of the police report, as this has to be presented to the insurance company. All parties have to pay a fine on the spot (BD6 if you are not guilty and BD16 if you are).

However, you need to be wary as you might end up being blamed for an accident, which wasn't your fault, and once the car has been moved you have less proof. You may want to have a disposable camera in your car to record what actually happened, or use your mobile phone camera, as memories may become confused after the cars have been moved. Never move the vehicle if someone has been hurt. Even if it is blocking traffic just leave it where it stopped. Call the traffic police on 199 and wait for them to arrive. It can take up to two hours, especially in the middle of the day.

It is always wise to drive with:

Mobile phone

Spare money (BD20) in case of accident

Your driving licence or CPR. You can be asked to produce your licence by any police officer at any time. Occasionally roadblocks are set up and every car checked to catch unlicensed drivers. I keep copies of all drivers in each car so that we can swap cars easily.

Vehicle Care

Henry Owen	33771820
We highly highly recommend Henry for all your vehicle needs: servicing, brakes, tyres, battery, body work, shocks, exhaust, etc. Henry can also arrange car registration and licensing. He will collect and return the car to you. Henry is South African and will do the work himself. Quality guaranteed!	
Flash Car Services Budaiya- car wash available	17690301
Kwik Car Care Various locations	17466102
Speedy Motors Isa Town, near shopping centre	17682999

Taxis

There are three reliable metered taxi services, Speedy Motors (17682999), Arabian Taxi (17461746) and Bahrain Limo (17266266). By law taxis in the street are required to have meters, but often they are mysteriously 'broken.' Ask to see the meter switched on before you start your journey. Only pay the registered fare after you have arrived. If an argument seems to be developing, don't pay until you, your children and all your belongings are out of the car.

Buses

There are good clean buses covering the island, run by CARS Transport Corporation. If a group of you is going out for the evening, it is possible to hire a bus and driver who will wait for you and take you home when required (try Capital Transport, 17701116).

PERSONAL SAFETY

Bahrain is a safe country by world standards. Bahrainis are honest people and the strong community spirit limits antisocial behaviour. Violent crime or property invasions are unusual. Car theft is unusual but it is still wise to lock your car. Sadly, there are always a few troublemakers. Purse snatching is becoming increasingly common in large shopping centres. Thieves particularly target busy mums with small children. Never put your purse/wallet in the shopping trolley or the push chair/stroller– always keep it with you. Be careful when loading your shopping and children back into the car – do not leave your purse on the front seat while you are busy at the back. If you like to jog or bike ride, avoid going through smaller villages. Many are quite conservative and may not be used to the sight of foreign people, especially women, in exercise clothes. It is better to exercise at one of the gyms rather than on the street.

First aid

First aid courses are available, including courses specially tailored to the needs of domestic staff and those for who English is a second language. Contact First Aid Box Bahrain on 39363622 or see email firstaid@batelco.com.bh

HOME AND LIVING

Internet

Some apartments and villas include broadband and satellite television so we suggest you check first. There are three major telephone companies Batelco, Zain and Viva, plus several internet cafes. Skype links computer to computer free of charge enabling you to chat away for as long as you like without the worry of a huge telephone bill (the only cost is your internet time). You can also use Skype to call landlines in other countries from your computer and the rate is far cheaper than local providers. Download Skype online.

Help in the home

Many people in Bahrain have domestic help and/or a gardener and this is a real bonus. If you can offer accommodation, you may want to sponsor someone yourself. There are rules governing this and you need to take advice from the Ministry of Labour. See their website at <http://www.lmra.bh/en/portal.php> Although many expats have part-time help in the home (paid by the hour) this is legally a grey area. Houseboys/housemaids often operate on a 'free visa' system. This means that they have paid their sponsor an exorbitant amount of money for their residency visa and the sponsor has agreed that they are free to work for other people. This is illegal but many people operate like this. Ask any employee for a copy of their CPR. They may not have their passport as some sponsors hold this as a form of security.

Preliminary questions

Decide beforehand what you need:

- Hours of work and time off including public holidays
- Babysitting and household duties
- Previous experience especially with children and pets (if applicable)
- Salary (we recommend you start at a lower rate and increase it after 3 months.
- Communication – is it necessary that he/she can read and write English?
- Accommodation – room, electricity, gas, etc.

Terms and conditions

Rates of pay vary enormously depending on the employer's nationality and whether they are responsible for sponsoring the worker. Typically a gardener working half an hour a day, five days a week, gets BD10 per month. For casual labour the going rate is BD1.500 to BD2 per hour. It is always a good idea to ask around to check the current rates of pay. When you pay them, we suggest you keep a record and get them to sign a receipt. Be generous as these people are often the only source of income for their families back home and they send the majority of their salary back to their dependants.

Finding the right person

You will often have many people ringing your doorbell once you have moved into new accommodation. We advise you to take your time to make sure you find the person who is right for you. Ask your neighbours who they have working for them. You are strongly advised to only employ someone who is recommended to you.

Interviewing

Set all interviews for one particular day and ask prospective employees to come at a set time (take their name and contact number). This will help you judge whether they are going to be reliable. Always ask for a reference. Set out the terms and conditions before employing anyone and establish rules about visitors.

Communicating can be difficult at first so interview the person alone where he/she has to answer the questions themselves. Allow for the fact she/he may be nervous or shy but don't rely on their English. Be especially careful if you have children to be cared for. Most housemaids/houseboys cannot swim so it is sensible to make a rule that your children are not allowed to swim in your absence.

Working together

It will take time for you to learn to work together. People are often working in their second or third language and come from a different culture, so be patient. Every home is different; so don't take it for granted that people know exactly how you want things done in your house. If they can read and write, we recommend making a daily list of duties for them to refer to.

Unless you are sponsoring your worker, we suggest you don't give a house key straight away, until they've had a chance to prove themselves trustworthy. In addition, it is a good idea to employ them on one month's trial. If the person is to live in, try to have them work one week's trial before allowing them to move in. Once a person is living with you it is more difficult (emotionally) to terminate their employment.

Having home help here is an absolute bonus. Always treat your employees with respect and dignity.

Appliances

If you have purchased your appliance in Bahrain, the warranty may only be valid locally and in the GCC states. Some major manufacturers have fully trained staff to repair their products while others only claim to. Be careful if buying appliances and computer equipment that the voltage is the same, as you need.

Water

Unless you have a fresh water supply to your home, you will need to purchase water. Your property may come complete with a water cooler but if not, one can be bought. Water supplies can be delivered weekly – try Al Manhal 17404435 or Aqua Cool 17784101. A water truck visits some compounds, which refill bottles much more cheaply – ask your neighbours about this.

Bottled gas

Several companies deliver bottled gas. Expect to pay a deposit on your gas bottle and make sure you get a receipt otherwise you will not be able to get a refund when you leave. Bahrain Gas (17531111) and Nader Gas (17702622) will deliver directly to your home.

Equipping your home

If you are looking for second hand items, these can be found advertised on the notice boards at most of the supermarkets, the British Club and the Dilmun Club or sometimes in charity shops e.g. Awali Ladies, BSPCA, St Christopher's Cathedral. The small ads at the back of the Gulf Daily News also have notices on occasions. Bahrain Auctions, Manama Auctions are second hand shops – not auction houses – so be prepared to haggle!

Recycling

There are recycling bins located in most neighbourhoods, often close to supermarkets and schools. Sturdy multi-use bags are available for purchase at major shopping centres.

Hardware Stores

Al Anwar General Trading Tubli

17874141

Good for cheap household items

Manazel Isa Town, parallel to main road

17786727

Hardware supplies such as paint, tools, picture hangers, seasonal decorations, home decorating supplies, pool toys, gardening items, car items, basic key cutting service

MONEY MATTERS

Currency

The currency in Bahrain is the Bahrain Dinar (BD) where one Bahraini Dinar is divided into 1,000 fils. The Bahraini Dinar is pegged to the US Dollar at a rate of BD1 = US\$2.65. Other exchange rates are given daily in the local newspaper (GDN).

Banking

You usually need your CPR and other official documents such as your passport and residency visa before you can open a bank account. Money can be transferred electronically, through banks and money exchanges. Automatic telling machines are well located. Credit cards are widely accepted.

Utilities

Electricity is heavily subsidised by the government. Electricity and water bills for a three bedroom villa can range from BD20 during winter to BD150 in summer, depending on how much you use the air conditioning and what temperature you set it at. A 'municipal tax' worth 10% of your rent is added to your electricity bill. Contact Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) for connections. Their website is www.mew.gov.bh

SHOPPING

Food

Food costs vary according to your tastes and lifestyle. A wide range of imported products is available. The Gulf Weekly News regularly publishes a comparison of the major supermarkets in its sample shopping basket column.

There is a range of supermarkets offering different products; some stock the home brands of popular British or US supermarkets. Al Jazira is also known as AJ's; Alosra is also known as Spinney's. Bargains may be found at hypermarkets such as Lulu, Geant and Carrefour. The central market near the Pearl Roundabout in Manama has a huge fruit and vegetable area and a fish market. As with all markets, do your homework so you know the usual retail price and be prepared to haggle. If you don't have time to go to the market yourself, check out the Bahraini-run roadside stalls selling fruit and vegetables. Visit them early in the day for the freshest produce. Some food supplies can be erratic as they are dependent on the arrival of shipping containers. Think about buying extras when you see non-perishable items you like. Food labelling is not bound by the same regulations as you may be used to, so be careful.

General Goods

As in most countries, there are bargains to be had in Bahrain; while other goods are much more expensive than where you have come from. Brand-name beds can be much cheaper than elsewhere but be aware that sizes of beds and bedding vary. Plastic products are cheap – local markets can be even cheaper than supermarkets.

Upholstery & furnishings are a real bargain and the workmanship is good. Many people buy curtain material here and have curtains sewn to take back to their base country. Suites and chairs can be recovered.

Pharmacies here sell items which might only be available on prescription elsewhere. Some drugs/medications are cheaper here. Warranty and return policies vary widely and you should check at the time of purchase.

Tipping

This varies according to our own cultures. Many people here are on a low income and appreciate a "top up" tip for extra services you want them to perform.

Books

The Bookcase Budaiya Highway, near Alosra 17690566
Excellent selection of educational books also gifts, stationery, etc.

Words Jannusan 17690790

Ethnic arts/crafts and carpets

A'Ali village potteries

See potters at work and buy unique souvenirs from these small businesses

Adliya shops

Lots of carpets and crafts Explore Adliya on foot
Al Jasra Handcraft Centre Al Jasra village 17611900

Basket weaving, instrument making and handicraft demonstrations. Phone first, they're often not open
Woodland Crafts Dana Mall; Manama Souk; Juffair 17827075

Wide variety of crafts and souvenirs be prepared to barter

Manama Souk Manama, behind Bab Al Bahrain

You can find all sorts of local craft items here as well as electronics, kitchen appliances sheets, baskets, fabric, furniture, toys, and gold, lots of gold. A good rule is to price items at a supermarket first to make sure you can bargain for a fair price.

Muharraq Souk Muharraq

This is one of the least changed areas and a good place to take visitors. In the back streets you can see much of the old style architecture. On the main street you can visit fabric shops, sweet shops, etc.

Peacock Carpet Centre “Shawarma Alley”, Adliya 17713152
Red Sea Hand Made Carpets Adliya 17717785

Photography

Fair Photos Bahrain Mall (Geant) 17550940
Developing, printing and reproduction services, passport photos

Picture framers

Arabesque Art Gallery Umm Al Hassam 17722916

Good paintings available by popular local artist. Excellent picture framers, known for its selection of Bahraini art and antique maps

Bashar Art Gallery Adliya 17727326

Sheema Framing Adliya 17713235
Reasonable prices, quality workmanship and can pay in BD or US\$

Toys

Carousel Isa Town 17685012

Fantastic selection of Arabic and European toys which holds dance and craft classes for children in the afternoons

Mothercare UK Bahrain City Centre; Seef Mall; Bahrain Mall 17179738

Also have baby and toddler furniture and accessories

Toys Us Outside Seef Mall 17580860

Has good range of toys and games and stocks major brands

The Toy Store Bahrain City Centre 17179232

Middle East chain noted for its huge stuffed animals

Tailoring

Try a tailor as they are cheap and are excellent at copying

Hilton Tailors Manama Souk 17245689

Very professional and great attention to detail

Miscellaneous shops and services

Alosra, Najibi Centre, Budaiya Highway/Saar Avenue roundabout 17697558

This supermarket is popular with western expats. It sells pork products and is a convenient place to buy stamps. The centre also has an optometrist, hair salons, and DVD outlets, key cutting service, dry cleaner, insurance/banking and a McDonalds

Ambassador Stores Government Rd, Manama, close to Bab al Bahrain. 17225513

Musical instruments and sound equipment

Bahrain City Centre Mall

Major shopping mall with Carrefour hypermarket, Debenhams, Virgin Megastore, Home Centre, etc. Many international brand stores and youth oriented fashion outlets. Also has Wahoo Water Park, bowling alley, amusement park, cinemas and restaurants

Bahrain Mall

Shopping mall with easy parking including Geant hypermarket, Home Store etc.

BSPCA Thrift Shop Busheiri Gardens, Budaiya Highway, opp. Wholesale Restaurant

17593479

The main source of income for the Bahrain Society for the Prevention Of Cruelty to Animals. Sells clothing, books and household goods. Volunteers are always needed.

Hours: Sat-Sun 2-5pm, Mon/Tue/Thurs 9am-2pm, Fri 9-5pm, Closed Wednesday.

Celebrations Budaiya Highway, Budaiya

17595791

Scrapbooking, wood painting, card making classes and supplies; gifts and birthday parties. Has nice adjoining café (A Piece of Cake) with English-style baked potatoes, cakes, and sausage rolls

Jassim's Agricultural Budaiya Highway Budaiya

17599000

Garden supplies and plants. Has a good range of indoor plants and pots

Jawad Dome Off Budaiya Highway

Small shopping centre with shaded car parking. Supermarket and other UK stores

Pleasant food court and upmarket home decoration store called Article

Sage and Sirloin Hamala, near British School

17611949

Australian butcher with high-quality meat, "Aussie" meat pies and pork section

Seef Mall Seef

Upmarket mall with fashion and jewellery, lots of restaurants and eateries, two cinemas complexes, Marks and Spencer etc.

The One Al Ali Mall, Seef

17587178

Stylish home furniture and décor like an "upmarket Ikea" with helpful staff

Things To Do, Burgerland Roundabout

17590409

Crafts and equestrian goods

PETS

Bahrain is regarded as a rabies free island and therefore strict regulations are in force regarding the import and export of pets. Be aware that the process of exporting an animal from Bahrain to a rabies free country may take at least six months. All the vets have the necessary information and some can arrange to export your pet when you leave. All animals will need to be micro chipped, given a pet passport and vaccinated against Rabies. Current inoculations are essential too.

Veterinary and pet services

Al Ahli Animal Clinic Block 646, near Sitra

17622102

Clinic and cat boarding

Bahrain Government Vet Budaiya, next to Post Office

Good for vaccinations and so much cheaper than other vets. For hygiene reasons make sure the syringes are drawn in front of you

Animal Care Clinic Near Midway Supermarket, Pipe line Road, Hamala
Reasonable service and prices

17612459

Dr Nonie Coutts Manama & Saar

Friendly, professional service but rather expensive. Immunisations, surgery, pet grooming, general medical care, total pet relocation management, www.noniecoutts.com

Dog grooming Jane Jones, Saar

Jane is a UK trained dog groomer and loves dogs big and small!
She is willing to collect and return dogs as necessary

37780699

Tails Animal Clinic, Um Al Hassan Sun-Thurs. 8am-5pm www.tails.co

77113334

Advances Vet Clinic

Dr Ahmed is wonderful. Located in Tubli

17271003

Delmon Pets Relocators Barbar

Worldwide relocation, IPATA Approved, www.delmonpetsrelocators.com

(Tim Richards)

39729868

17691095

Kennels

Delmon Boarding Kennels, Barbar

English style dog and cat boarding, play days, training, www.delmonkennels.com

17694066/39717609

Saar Kennels Saar (two minutes from Alosra, Saar)

Dog and cat boarding. Dogs are taken out of their kennels several times daily to run in a play area. Cats have a nice set-up as well, www.impact-unleashed.com

17792064/17790017

Pet Supplies

Pet Arabia Pet products and grooming

Budaiya Branch

17592288

Amwaj Island Branch

16010501

Sanad Branch

17005006

Jassim Garden Centre Budaiya

Pet food and Veterinary supplies

17552808

Buying/obtaining pets

BSPCA Animal Welfare Centre Askar www.bspca.org, <http://preview.tinyurl.com/nw7z5be>

17591231

Animal welfare organisation runs almost entirely by volunteers. They always need helpers and dog walkers. Hours: Sun-Thurs 9a-5p, Fri-Sat 9a-1p. Animals are accepted 24 hours a day.

[Note: the website is currently under construction, but information can be obtained at the very active BSPCA Facebook Group.]

Fish World Budaiya Highway

Aquariums, fish stocks and supplies

17593733

MEDICAL MATTERS

There are many private hospitals operating in Bahrain. Many have 24 hour facilities although expect to pay a lot more for out of hours service. There are private and government services available here. Most employers provide medical cover – check with your company. Anyone with a valid CPR card is entitled to attend a local clinic or hospital. In some hospitals, doctors are paid for the work they bring in, not by a salary. This has resulted in doctors pressuring patients to be admitted unnecessarily. Remember you can always get a second opinion. Check with your insurer for the level of refunds they will pay for treatment at different hospitals as these vary.

Ambulance response times can be slow. If safe to move the injured person it may be better to transport the patient to the nearest clinic or hospital where they can be stabilised. We **STRONGLY** advise against stopping and giving medical help at a road accident unless you are a qualified medical person.

Dentist/Orthodontist

Al Mosawi Dental Clinic Adliya	17717199
AMH Manama Clinic Manama	17253447
Awali Hospital Dental Clinic Awali Efficient clinic with dental hygienist	17753588
Bahrain Specialist Hospital Juffair	17812000
Dr Ali Mattar Dental Centre Manama	17714877
Dr Hammad Hassam bin Shams Adliya	17828205
Dr Zahra Majid , Saar Dental Dr Zahra is very kind especially patient with children and adults and we all love her!	17596444
Saar Clinic (AMH) Saar Avenue	17790025
Seef Dental Seef	17587991

Hospitals/Clinics

American Mission Hospital Manama Be prepared to wait, even if you have an appointment	17253447
Awali Hospital Awali Small, well-run hospital with friendly and helpful staff with personal attention and good maternity section	17753333
Bahrain Defence Force Hospital West Riffa Good for Accident and Emergency. You need a valid CPR card	17766666
Bahrain Specialist Hospital Juffair This hospital is known for its exorbitant prices and treating patients unfairly. Many medical schemes will not reimburse you 100%	17812000

International Hospital of Bahrain Off Budaiya Highway 17591666
Expensive hospital. Check costs on arrival otherwise you might be in for a nasty surprise.
Many medical schemes will not reimburse you 100% for attending this hospital

Saar Clinic, American Mission Hospital, Saar Avenue 17790025

Salmaniya Medical Complex Salmaniya
Best equipped A&E department. Make sure you have your valid CPR card

Ophthalmology

American Mission Hospital, Manama 17253447

Bahrain Optician Branches around Bahrain
Various qualities of glasses ranging from inexpensive to top-quality, in both lenses and frames

Bahrain Specialist Hospital Juffair 17812000

Ibn Al Nafees Medical Complex Adliya 17828282

Yateem Optician Branches around Bahrain - Alosra branch is recommended 17691244

Rehabilitation

In Touch Integrated chiropractic spine centre 17690100

EDUCATION

There are a lot of private schools in Bahrain offering different curricula. We suggest you find other people from your country and find out their opinion or ask your embassy.

Bahrain School Juffair – American curriculum 17727828

British Preparatory School Rahim Villas, Saar Avenue - British curriculum 17792010

British School of Bahrain Hamala 17610920

Ibn Khuldoon Isa Town – American curriculum 17682451/17780661

Little Gems Pre School Budaiya 17694356

Madeleine's Pre School Adliya 17270290

Multinational School Adliya 17711444

Nadeen School Manama 17728886

Riffa International School Riffa Views – American curriculum 17757999

St Christopher's School Saar – British curriculum 17598600

Music Centres

Bahrain Music Institute Manama 17721999
Daytime instrumental classes for both children and adults.

Harmony Music Gate Budaiya 13622002 / 36464360
Private courses: Piano, Violin, Guitar, Theory, Cello, Keyboard, Drum, Voice
Dance lessons: Creative, Ballet, Street. Group and home courses available.

RELIGION

Saar Fellowship St. Christopher's Infant School, Saar	39935354
Saar Fellowship is an inter denominational friendly church with lots of different nationalities. Services held in English on Friday mornings at 10am. Age appropriate children's classes and crèche run at the same time as the service. We also offer mid week Bible studies and our Teens meet most Thursday evenings.	39270413

Email: office@saarfellowship.com
Website: www.saarfellowship.com

Holy Trinity Chapel American Military Base, Juffair 17854507
Service held in English on Friday mornings

National Evangelical Church Behind American Mission Hospital, Manama 17254508
Parking can be difficult so get there early and find a side street to park in

Sacred Heart Church Manama 17253598
Many services held in different languages most days of the week. Parking can be difficult so get there early and find a side street to park in

St. Christopher's Cathedral Near Police Fort, Manama 17253866
Various services held throughout the week at Manama and Awali. The facilities are used by other Christian groups whose first language is not English

KEEPING BUSY AND HAVING FUN

The easiest way to find out about activities is to ask someone with children of similar age. The local English paper, Gulf Daily News (GDN) has a section listing daily activities. This is a starting place; however, it might not be totally correct. Phone the organisers of the event to check details. Taking out a GDN subscription is an excellent way to quickly get to know what is happening. Contact them on 17290000 or www.gulf-daily-news.com

SAFETY WARNING: Although staff may be on hand at various clubs and hotels they are unlikely to hold any suitable safety qualifications so you need to be responsible for your children's safety especially regarding water-based activities.

Social organisations

There are many social organisations in Bahrain and particular nationalities often have their own social groups. Here are some suggestions:

American Women's Association	www.awabahrain.org
Australian Association of Bahrain	http://preview.tinyurl.com/qxqtcpo
Bahrain Garden Club	www.bahraingardenclub.com
Bahrain Irish Society	www.bahrainirishsociety.com
Bahrain Kannada Sangha	www.kannadasangha.com.bh
Bahrain Round Table	brt1.net/brt/index.php
Caledonian Society Awali	awali-callies.com
Filipino Club	www.facebook.com/filipino.clubbahrain
Indian Ladies Association	ilabahrain.org
Manama Singers	www.manamasingers.com
Pakistan Club	pakistanclub.org/bahrain/
Royal Society of St George	www.royalsocietyofstgeorge.com/bahrain.htm

Activities for pre-schoolers

Al Areen Wildlife Park Al Markh (2 km south of the Bahrain International Circuit) Air-conditioned bus tour of the park and an informative film included with entrance fee	17845480
Camel Farm Janabiyah Private camel farm, but visitors are able to walk around the camel enclosures. Stay on the paths. Late afternoon is best as the camels may spend the day elsewhere	
Local parks Various neighbourhoods Great places to meet local families	
Magic Planet Bahrain City Centre Indoor Fun Park	17584444
Mainly Music Saar Musical activities and education for tots and their mums/grand-mothers/carers Contact Alison Perkins	36420131
Mum and tot Various Groups Playgroups are available at various locations, including the British Club in Adliya, the Bahrain Rugby Football Club in Saar, the Dilmun Club in Saar (see listings under "Clubs" for contact details)	
My Gym Seef Learn, create and explore	Sarah – 39442388/17566566
Studio Ceramics Off Budaiya Highway near Harley Davidson Workshops, birthday parties, pottery painting, crafts etc.	17599026

Beauty and hair

Ann's Beauty Salon Sanad, opposite HSBC	17623704
Beauty Spot Jasra, near Batelco	17611888
Dessange Adliya	17713999
Elie and Jean Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Seef; Regency Intercontinental, Manama Gilbert at Ritz-Carlton salon is recommended for men's; Regency salon is recommended for women's. Modern salons with top stylists and colourists, but expensive	17580798/17227300
Ghaya Budaiya Highway	17595135
Mazyanah Beauty Centre East Riffa	17775525
Novel Beauty Two Saar locations: Saar Avenue and Miami Park Good for waxing, threading, manicures and pedicures, competitively priced	17791222
Pineapple Spa Adliya	17712000
Reflections Alosra (Najibi) centre, Budaiya Highway	17695594
Regency Salon Manama	17227300
Style 2 Beauty Gufool	17252515
Style 3 Beauty Seef Residence, Seef	17582007

Bikes

Skate Shack Budaiya Highway near Alosra, also in Amwaj & Juffair www.skate-shack.com	17697176
Toys Us Seef Mall Car Park	17580860

Clubs

Bahrain Rugby Club Saar, www.bahrainrfc.net Popular expat club offering bar, meals and a range of sporting and social activities including swimming, cricket, football and (of course) rugby. Non-members welcome if signed in by a member	17695809
Bahrain Yacht Club Sitra, http://tbyc.club/ Water sports and social activities	17700677
British Club Um Al Hassam (Adliya), britishclubbahrain.com British expat club with variety of activities including darts, tennis, squash and swimming lessons, bar and meals available. Non-members welcome if signed in by a member	17728245
Country Club Budaiya, countryclubbahrain.com Established gardens with pleasant restaurant/bar and a variety of club activities and sports	17593593
Dilmun Club Saar, dilmun-cub.com Social club popular with expats offering horse stables, tennis courts, squash courts, swimming pool, children's play area. Good pub food and restaurant offering reasonable prices. Fitness classes such as pilates, football, diving, etc. Non-members welcome if signed in by a member. Also recommended for outside catering	17692986/17690926
Ritz-Carlton Beach/Health club Seef Health club members and hotel guests can enjoy what is usually considered the best beach in Bahrain, www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/Bahrain/Spa/FitnessCenter.htm	1758000
Road Runners Club Various venues, Bahrainroadrunners.com Fitness and social group	

Other Activities / Sports / Hobbies

American Women's Association

(See listing under Social Organisations)

Art classes

Mallen Gallery, Awali, www.awaliarts.moonfruit.com

Artist Seana Mallen runs a variety of classes for adult painters of all skill levels. Highly recommended

Australian (& New Zealand) Association, Bahrain

(See listing under Social Organisations)

Dancing and fitness

Bahrain Ballet Centre, Budaiya, Bahrainballetcentre.com

17693232/36332714

Ballet, tap, modern, Irish dancing, musical theatre, piano and karate for children & adults

Ballare School of Performing Arts, www.ballarestudio.com

17300021

Latin Dance Studio, Saar, www.facebook.com/LatindanceBahrain

33889821/33042202

Scottish Country Dancing, Bapco Club, Awali, Contact Nancy Shepherd

39176909

Victoria Dance, Saar

39876215

Offers various styles of dance lessons for children of all ages and adults, taught by qualified dance instructor

Golf

Awali Golf Club, awaligolfclub.com

17756770

Royal Golf Club Riffa,

17750777

theroyalgolfclub.com

Horse riding

Awali Riding Club Desert rides, qualified instructors

17756525

Bahrain Riding School

17690448

Dilmun Club Stables, Saar

17693766

Shakhoora Riding Centre

17591103

The Country Club

17593593

Twin Palms, twinpalmsridingcentre.com

39687755

Netball

Bahrain Rugby Club, Saar, www.bahrainrfc.net/sport/netball/

17695809

Rugby

Bahrain Rugby Club, Saar, www.bahrainrfc.net

17695809

Men, women and kids' rugby lessons and games

Sailing and water sports

Marina Club, Al Fateh Corniche, Manama,

17007007/17291527

www.marinaclub.info

Into the Blue Dive Centre, intothebluebh.com

37757373

Bahrain Yacht Club, Sitra, <http://tbyc.club/>

17799677

Tennis

Dilmun Club, Saar

17692986

Walking/biking

Bahrain Ramblers Association cjpprice@hotmail.com

Group of people who walk together once a week on Friday mornings when cool [then Friday evenings when it gets hotter] in various areas of Bahrain.

For independent walks, try the path and park near Riffa Views International School

Wednesday Ladies Lunch Club

Informal expat ladies social group astridarmstrong@btinternet.com

Water Sports/Extreme Sports

Rob Jones, fully licensed and experienced British Captain offers extreme sports including flyboard, hoverboard, x-jetpack & Jetovator . Also equipment hire

Family fun

Adhari Park, Sheikh Isa bin Salman Highway, Adhari, www.adharipark.com.bh
Theme park popular with locals

17407300

Funland ice skating & bowling Al Fateh Corniche, Manama, funlandbahrain.com

17292313

Geo caching Various locations geocaching.com

Fun family activity enabling you to get to know Bahrain better

Gulf Dolphin Company Al Fateh Corniche, Manama

Dolphin aquarium with dolphin shows several times daily. It is possible to swim with the dolphins, but use your own judgement as there are no lifeguards and the pool is deep

17290900

Lost Paradise of Dilmun Water Park Al Areen

Kids love it but it is more expensive than Wahoo. Has “dive-in movies” over summer and regular ladies’ nights

17845100

Magic Island kids’ play area Seef Mall

More fun than shopping with mum!

Movies Bahrain City Centre, Seef Mall, Saar Cineplex and Dana Mall. See daily listings in the Gulf Daily News

New Corniche Park, near Arad Fort Muharraq Island

Take a picnic and go for a walk

Picnic on Amwaj Beach Amwaj Island

Beach created on reclaimed land

Water Sports/Extreme Sports

Rob Jones, fully licensed and experienced British Captain offers extreme sports including Flyboard, hoverboard, x-jetpack & Jetovator . Also equipment hire

Wahoo Water Park Bahrain City Centre Mall

Slides and pools for children of all ages and adults, indoor and outside

Sight-seeing

A’Ali Pottery workshops (See listing under Ethnic arts/crafts)

Al Areen Wildlife Park (See listing under Activities for tots and pre-schoolers)

Al Dar and Jarada Islands aldarislands.com

Accessible by sea taxi, island tours; tours dependent upon weather conditions. Call before going.

17704600

Al Jasra Handicrafts Centre Al Jasra Village

The centre, established in 1991, houses various craft industries, including weaving, pottery, ship building, doll making, gypsum engravings, palm tree products and musical instrument making. You can make purchases from the vendors or the gift shop

17611900

Al Khamis Mosque ruins Khamis/Tashan

The remnants of the original building are among the oldest relics of Islam in the Gulf region. According to local legend, the establishment of this mosque **dates** back to 717- 720 AD

Ancient Dilmun sites/burial grounds Saar, Shakura, A’ali and others

There are 11 burial ground sites on the western part of the island, extending 25km. Most were built between the middle of the third millennium BC and the middle of the first millennium AD. A’ali is interesting because of its giant "Royal Mounds", which have become part of the village’s urban fabric

Arad Fort Muharraq

17672278

The current fort was built in the 13th Century, but Dilmun era remains dating back to 2300BC have been found on the site. It is best not to go on a windy day. Hours: 7am-2pm

Bahrain International Circuit Gulf of Bahrain Ave, Sakhir

17450000

This is the home of the Bahrain Grand Prix and has plenty of activities for motor enthusiasts. Go carting available but booking advisable

Bahrain National Museum Al Fateh Corniche

17298718

Nine separate exhibition halls feature permanent and temporary exhibits about Bahrain’s heritage and culture

Beit Al Jasra (Al Jasra House) Al Jasra village

This fine example of a traditional Bahraini courtyard house, built in 1907, was the birthplace of the late Amir, Sheikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa. Furnished in the style of the period

Beit Al Quran (House of the Quran) Manama, opp. Diplomatic area

17290101

This is home to one of the most comprehensive collections of Holy Quranic manuscripts in the world. The building’s exterior features engraved Quranic verses and a minaret based on the design of the 12th century minaret. Dress appropriately – no shorts or sleeveless tops

Camel Farm (See listing under “Activities for tots and pre-schoolers”)

Desert excursions/picnics/camping (See listing under Other activities/sport/hobbies)

Grand Mosque (Ahmed Al Fateh Mosque) Juffair

17727773

Open 9am-4pm, closed during prayer times. No prior appointments needed unless a large group or special arrangements are needed. The Grand Mosque, which can accommodate up to 7000 worshippers, is the largest and most imposing of Bahrain’s Muslim worship centres. No shorts or sleeveless tops. Women must wear an abaya, which can be borrowed there

Hawar Islands South of Bahrain www.hawarresorthotel.com

17252000

Iftar meal during Ramadan Local – see “Eating out”.

Iftar signifies the breaking of the fast during the holy Islamic month of Ramadan. Iftar banquets are a feature of Bahrain social life during Ramadan

Lost Paradise of Dilmun Water Park (See listing under Family Fun)

17845100

Manama Souk Manama (See listing under Ethnic Arts/Crafts)

Muharraq historic houses Muharraq

Sheikh Isa bin Ali House, Seyadi House, Kurar embroidery house, coffeehouse, children’s library, Sheikh Ebrahim bin Mohammed Al Khalifa Centre for Culture and Research, Abdulla Al Zayed Press Heritage House and Mohammed bin Faris House for Sout Music are among the museums and historic houses open to the public in what was once the capital of Bahrain. See functioning wind towers at Sheikh Isa’s house

Qal'at Al Bahrain Fort and Museum Karbabad

Open seven days, 8am-8pm. Admission to museum is minimal. World Heritage-listed since 2005, this Islamic fort dates back to the 16th century AD on a site, which may have been the location of the old capital of Delmon. Evidence has been found of habitation dating back 4000 to 5000 years. Efforts have recently been made to transform the site into a major tourist attraction, with paved pathways, audio guides and a modern museum

Riffa Fort Riffa

Built on a strategic hilly position, the current fort was built in 1812 AD on the ruins of a 17th century fort

Royal Golf Club Riffa Views

17750777

Rounds can be booked for play from 7.30am to late afternoon. There is a beautiful clubhouse with fine dining, bars, snack and pro shops. Club rules and etiquette apply

Saudi Causeway tower/restaurant King Fahad Causeway

17690674

There is a restaurant and observation tower near the mid-point of the Saudi Causeway. Be warned though, that the causeway can often be very chaotic

Tree of Life Sakhir

This mature tree has become known as the Tree of Life because of the mystery surrounding its existence in the middle of the desert without any known water source. Go in the cooler months and take a picnic. Take plenty of water and a mobile phone. Be wary of youngsters riding around on quad bikes at high speeds

Getting away

Bahrain is strategically placed for short and longer trips around the area. When you feel “island fever” coming on, a short break can revitalise you.

Travel agents

Bahrain International Travel Chamber of Commerce building, Manama

17223315

Dadabhai Travel

17223181

House of Travel Manama

17578578

Kanoo Travel Manama, Awali, Mahooz, Sitra, Muharraq

17578200

Sunshine Travel and Tours Manama sunshinetoursbahrain.com

17744755

World Travel Bab al Bahrain, Manama

17225650

Top picks for a weekend away

Dubai

Hint: Don't speed in Dubai!

Jordan

Oman

Hint: Avoid the city and go for the cultural experience

EATING OUT

Bahrain has a wealth of good eateries. Phone the restaurants for bookings and directions, as some can be hard to find. Restaurants and cafes are usually closed during the day in the holy month of Ramadan, even eateries in major shopping malls, only opening after Iftar. Some restaurants will close completely for the whole month. Cafes in the airport departures area and inflight catering are usually not affected. Hotel coffee shops and restaurants are often open throughout the day too.

American/Mexican

Casa Mexicana Adliya	17715521
Chilli's Seef; Juffair; Jawad Dome, Bahrain City Centre Cheerful chain with family-friendly American and Tex-Mex foods	17581221
Fuddruckers Various locations	17742266
Johnny Rocket's Seef 1950s-styled diner, complete with individual jukeboxes	17566565
Ric's Kountry Kitchen Juffair Popular restaurant with Americans	17725550
Senor Paco's Seef Mall food court; Adliya Mexican food	17725873

Arabic/Lebanese/Turkish

Al Abraaj Al Ali Mall, Muharraq, Budaiya, Hamala and other locations Popular, low- cost chain of restaurants and take aways with excellent Middle Eastern food and a variety of international dishes	17714222
Isfahani Exhibition Rd Manama; Bahrain City Centre Unpretentious, but with a reputation for quality food	17290027
Isis Café Adliya Local food	17826266
Takht Jamsheed Gulf Hotel, Adliya	17713000

Asian

Banana Leaf Adliya Thai	17744171
Bushido Seef Contemporary Japanese restaurant with Samurai warrior themed décor, 12pm-2am	17583555
Central Café Manama Indian food	17263271
Century International Adliya Indian	17710100
Copper Chimney Umm Al Hassam Authentic Indian food with nice atmosphere	17728699
Hash House Adliya Standard Thai food in cheerful surroundings	17715094
Hong Kong Adliya, off Umm Al Hassam Ave Popular Chinese restaurant	17715094
Lanterns Budaiya Highway, next to Burgerland roundabout. Adliya, Riffa Views This offers great Indian and Anglo-Indian food with a nice atmosphere and excellent service. Also offers a buffet on certain evenings	17590591
Mirai Adliya Popular and trendy Japanese	77366333
Monsoon Adliya This award-winning restaurant with lovely gardens and beautiful food presentation is licensed	17713113

Nu Asia Seef (Budaiya Road and outside Al Ali Mall) and soon on Budaiya Highway 17749222
Large, colour-coded menu offers Indian, Thai, Japanese and Chinese food. Can appear closed because the front door is really heavy

Swagerts Manama Souq 17587171
No frills South Indian vegetarian restaurant with family room upstairs
Good value restaurant and take-aways

Cafés

Café Lilou Adliya & Al Ali Mall 17714440
Wonderful café serving European food including quiche, croissants, soups, salads

Camille's Diplomatic area; Exhibition Road Manama; Bahrain Financial Harbour 17216388

Cappuccino Café Saar Avenue, next to Hi-Mart 17790404
Open throughout the day with an extensive menu

Coco's Adliya, in lane between Gulf Hotel and main street 17716512
Excellent fresh food and reasonably priced for teas, lunches or light suppers but you often have to wait for a table

The Dome Juffair 17810180
Australian chain which offers a good selection of food and drinks

Le Chocolate Seef, diagonally opposite Seef Mall 17111144
Tasty breakfast and lunch menus, good for pizzas and great choice of desserts

Veranda Gallery Café Tubli; Adliya 17715868
Popular coffee shop, especially with locals

European

Camelot Adliya 17717745
Fresh, French food served in "chateau" surroundings 39977540

La Fontaine Manama 17230123
This is a tranquil refuge from the hustle and bustle of Manama with an art centre, cultural Centre and expensive French restaurant, which is poorly rated

International

Bapco Club Awali 17753377
Great value Friday brunch plus small coffee shop serving light meals.

British Club Umm Al Hassam 17728245
British favourites, and you can eat by the pool. Need to be signed in if not a member

The Country Club Barbar Offers a great outside play area for the kids 17593593

Curry Country Juffair 17537555

Dilmun Club Saar 17690926
Great for Friday brunch with various restaurant and family-friendly casual eatery

JJs Adliya 17742323

La Mediterranee Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Seef 17586499

Muju Dragon Hotel, Amwaj Island 16033833

Rendezvous Buffet Restaurant Seef Mall 17587708
Popular family buffet restaurant with local favourites and international dishes

Silks Movenpick Hotel, Muharraq 17460000
Upmarket international restaurant

Italian

Café Italia Adliya; Seef Stylish restaurant with good pizza menu	17744774
Chico's Adliya This Italian offers excellent food and service but bookings necessary	17713710
Pastorito Bahrain City Centre Modern Italian eatery in the mall's restaurant zone	17179300
Primavera Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Seef Expensive and you will need to book.	17580000
Roma Restaurant Umm Al Hassam	17725885

Other

The Butcher Shop and Grill Bahrain City Centre Modern steakhouse in mall restaurant zone	17172323
Jawad Dome food court Barbar, off Budaiya Highway Deli France café, Chilli's, pizza, Thai, Chinese, burgers	17506070
The Meat Company Adliya Popular up market steakhouse chain with the best steaks in town	17742080
Trader Vic's Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Seef This large Polynesian restaurant has sea views and lush garden surrounds	17586555
Friday Brunches , various hotels and clubs These offer an amazing selection of food and beverages for an all inclusive price	

TIME TO LEAVE

Leaving is always a stressful time, but to make it as smooth as possible, give yourself at least six weeks. Prepare to move out of your home and stay elsewhere for the last few days. Here are a few points to consider:

Certificate of Good Conduct

We strongly advise you to get this, as it may be required for any police, employment and security checks in future. You must organise it before you leave Bahrain and your current visa is cancelled. You need to go to the Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of Crime, Licenses and Certificates Division, opposite the Alumni Club in Adliya. Wear appropriate clothing when you attend and take with you:

- Photo taken on a dark blue background
- Passport: original and copy
- Visa: original and copy
- CPR: original and copy
- BD1 per copy of the certificate you are seeking
- All your old passports with copies of previous Bahrain residency visas.

Change of Address

For an annual fee you can ask the Post Office to redirect your mail.

Deposits

Collect the deposits that you gave to the DVD libraries and to any regular supplier e.g. water, gas supplier. Cancel your telephones and get your deposit back.

Clubs

Cancel memberships to clubs and associations, as they will appreciate being told. There may be a refund of the fees for the part year outstanding.

Selling your car/No claim bonus

It is easier to sell your car early and hire a car for the remaining time, than to risk being left with an unsold vehicle. When you sell your car, we recommend you ensure YOU go with the purchaser to change the registration, as you may not be allowed out of the country if they have an accident and it is still in your name. Try placing notices on supermarket noticeboards, advertising in the GDN and placing a sign in your car window. Be careful about leaving your car at popular roadside “car sale” points, as police occasionally issue parking tickets. Get a statement of your no-claim bonus from your insurer.

Settling Utilities and Telephone bills

Pay your electricity/telephone bills final account and get a receipt stating that the account is now closed. This often takes a week so allow plenty of time. Getting back your deposit can take more time than you would like, so do allow for this.

Medical records and insurance

Get copies of your medical records from your doctor and dentist.

**We hope that you will be able to look back on your Bahrain adventure
recalling happy times spent in good company**