



Bahrain

Photo: Eugene Sergeev/Shutterstock.com



Orhan Cam/Shutterstock.com

It is easy to overlook this small island-nation, having, as it does, such powerful and flashy neighbours as Qatar and the Emirates, but to ignore Bahrain would be a huge mistake. It is an emerging power in the region, with all the luxury and worldliness of a cosmopolitan destination and all the charm and personality of a small island. Add to this the growing arts scene and burgeoning international cuisine in the country, and you have the newest prime travel destination in the region, and the most socially liberal one, to boot.

NOTE: This Guide has been limited to 20 points of interest per section. For the full guide, please visit ArrivalGuides.com



Dr Ajay Kumar Singh/Shutterstock.com



Dr Ajay Kumar Singh/Shutterstock.com

Go where no one has
VENTURED BEFORE!

5 Off the Beaten Track
Destinations in Asia

ArrivalGuides

Foto: WhitefoxChen / Shutterstock

Top 5



Bahrain National Museum

Housed in a breathtaking and impressive building that seems to float effortl...



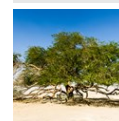
Bahrain Fort

Just outside of Manama lies this imposing, centuries-old fort, originally bu...



Al Fatih Grand Mosque

Bahrain's largest mosque, and one of the largest in the world, is a sight to...



Tree of Life

Some believe that Bahrain was the location of the Garden of Eden, and that t...



Bahrain National Theatre

Another astonishingly impressive architectural achievement, the National The...



THE ISLAND



Orhan Cam/Shutterstock.com

Bahrain more than holds its own in terms of the luxury and finesse one expects from a Gulf oil nation, yet it strongly holds on to its roots, boasting a long and rich history, spectacular desert vistas and some of the finest pearls on the planet. It offers a wonderful opportunity to experience an authentically Arab destination while also enjoying the socially liberal advantages that Bahrain provides. Dress norms for women are not as strict as in other societies in the region, and alcohol is legal for locals and tourists alike.

Though the expat population is growing, Bahrain receives far fewer tourists than some other, more "fashionable" destinations in the vicinity (such as Dubai and Doha). But travelers in the know are taking advantage of this fact and enjoying everything the island has to offer without worrying about big crowds of tourists putting a damper on the experience.

DO & SEE



Dr Ajay Kumar Singh/Shutterstock.com

Bahrain's long and rich history has left its mark wherever one looks on the island. The Bahrain Fort speaks to its colonial past, while the Dilmun Burial Grounds give us a glimpse of prehistoric times, and the Oil Museum is a testament to recent development. The stunning National Museum is world-class, the National Theatre gathers artists from around the globe. All this and more will keep the curious visitor busy and fascinated for days.

Bahrain National Museum



Housed in a breathtaking and impressive building that seems to float effortlessly on calm waters, Bahrain's National Museum is the country's most visited attraction, and for good reason. It provides a thorough and fascinating tour through the archeological, artistic and cultural history of the country, with its numerous exhibits housed in nine halls, including one for traditional handicrafts, one for documents and manuscripts, and even one for burial mounds.

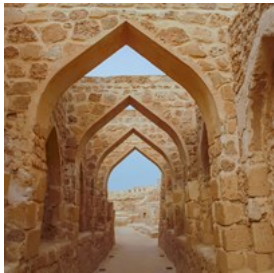
Photo: Denise Krebs (image cropped)

Address: Al Fatih Hwy, Manama

Opening hours: Daily 8am-8pm

Phone: +973 1729 8718

Bahrain Fort



Just outside of Manama lies this imposing, centuries-old fort, originally built by the Portuguese in order to defend their outposts in

the Gulf. The site has been in use for almost 5,000 years, and the archeological digs around the fort showcase the rich history of the area, including ruins of two earlier forts.

Photo: Kritkun/Shutterstock.com

Address: Bahrain Fort Complex, Bahrain

Public Transport: Bus 5 from Manama

Opening hours: Daily 8am-6pm

Phone: +973 17 567 171

Internet: www.culture.gov.bh

Al Fatih Grand Mosque



Bahrain's largest mosque, and one of the largest in the world, is a sight to behold. Covered by the world's largest fiberglass dome, its materials were

brought from all over the world and processed by local craftspeople. It can accommodate 7,000 worshippers, and visitors have been endlessly fascinated by the beautiful calligraphy ornamenting the walls.

Photo: Orhan Cam/Shutterstock.com

Address: Al Fatih Hwy, Manama

Opening hours: Sun-Thu 9am-4pm (for non-Muslims)

Phone: +973 17 727 773

Internet: www.alfateh.gov.bh

Tree of Life



Some believe that Bahrain was the location of the Garden of Eden, and that this majestic tree is all that is left of it. At over 400 years old,

this solitary mesquite tree has survived in the desert for centuries, and it believed to be the site where ancient cults practiced worshipping rituals.

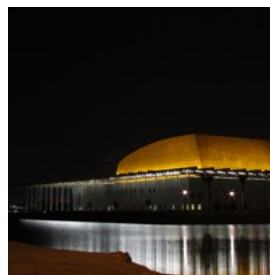
Photo: Joakim Lloyd Raboff/Shutterstock.com

Address: Tree of Life, Southern Governorate, Bahrain

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 7am-6:30pm

Phone: +973 3947 5566

Bahrain National Theatre



Another astonishingly impressive architectural achievement, the National Theatre is the third largest theatres in the Arab world, after the

Cairo and Muscat opera houses. It hosts performances by some of the foremost artists in the world, ranging from classical music and ballet to contemporary shows. Like the nearby National Museum, it seems to float on the water, and interestingly, it has exactly 1,001 seats.

Photo: Rory (image cropped)

Address: Sheikh Hamad Causeway, Manama

Dilmun Burial Mounds



This burial site complex is believed to be the largest prehistoric cemetery in the world, encompassing thousands of burial mounds spread

throughout the island's northern area. Dating as

far back as the Dilmun era (3rd to 1st millennium BC), some of the tombs are incredibly well preserved, particularly those around the village of A'Ali.

Photo: Philip Lange/Shutterstock.com

Address: A'Ali, Bahrain

Opening hours: Daylight hours

Oil Museum



Bahrain owes much of its wealth to the oil reserves present on the island, and this museum, housed in an impressive white building at the site where

oil was first discovered, provides insights into the oil industry in Bahrain through interesting exhibits and photographs. The country's first, rather primitive oil well, dating from 1932, can also be admired.

Photo: Philip Lange/Shutterstock.com

Address: Jebel Dukhan, Southern Governorate, Bahrain

Phone: +973 17 753 475

Shaikh Isa bin Ali House



This breathtaking building was once the seat of power for the ruling Sheikh, and it is one of the finest and best-preserved traditional

Gulf buildings found anywhere. A marvel of architecture, the rooms are kept quite cool in the summer heat through an inventive system of draft towers. Though unfurnished, the meticulous decoration in the different rooms deserves hours of examining.

Photo: John Grummitt/Shutterstock.com

Address: Shaikh Abdulla Avenue, Al Muharraq

Opening hours: Sat-Wed 7am-2pm, Thu 9am-2pm, Fri 3-6pm

Phone: +973 17 293 820

DINING



Rus S/Shutterstock.com

Bahrainis enjoy a wealth of varied and tasty eating options on the island. Local flavours rich in spices are available at small and large eateries alike, and international cuisine from across the globe can be enjoyed at any of the numerous high-end restaurants found in the country, from Italian and Mexican to Iranian and Japanese.

Batsa 23

If you want to discover the local flavours of Bahrain, there is no better place than Basta 23. This intimate little restaurant serves traditional Bahraini cuisine with a twist in a modern and edgy setting that somehow remains a firmly Bahraini experience.

Address: Rd No 3206, A'Ali

Opening hours: Sun-Thu 11am-10:30pm, Fri-Sat 9:30am-11pm

Phone: +973 7757 5757

Veranda Restaurant and Cafe

A longtime favourite in Bahrain for both locals and visitors, Veranda is a beautifully-decorated restaurant that invites its guests to linger for hours over the homely Arabic dishes and some shisha. Thursday and Friday nights there is a barbecue buffet, the best way to discover and sample wide array of local specialties.

Address: Shop 372, Block 327, Sheikh Isa Avenue, Manama
Phone: +973 17 715 868
Internet: www.verandabahrain.com
Email: info@verandabahrain.com

Maki Bahrain

One is first struck by Maki's modern design, and then by how equally sleek the dishes are. Japanese cuisine is taken a step further here, combining typical Japanese ingredient to make innovative Asian fusion meals. It is located on the ground floor of the World Trade Center, in an area that is great for shopping and lounging well into the evening hours.

Address: Bahrain World Trade Center, West Tower, King, Faisal Highway, Manama
Opening hours: Sat-Tue 12pm-1am, Wed-Fri 12pm-2am
Phone: +973 17 522 733
Internet: www.olivermaki.com

Curry Country

The name pretty much sums it up: Curry Country gathers a huge selection of curry dishes from all around the world, including Indian, Iranian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Indonesian, among others. Temporary menu additions are constantly being introduced, making it exciting and worthwhile to return time and time again.

Address: Shabab Avenue, Manama
Opening hours: Sat-Wed 11:30am-2am, Thu-Fri 11:30am-3am
Phone: +973 17 537 555
Internet: www.currycountry.com/loc_juffair.html

Masso

Masso provides one of the best fine dining experiences to be had anywhere in Bahrain. Located in the Palace Boutique Hotel, the menu consists of southern European cuisine, and it is all organic, healthy and delicious. Guests can choose individual dishes or one of the sharing platters.

Address: Shaikh Isa Ave, Manama

Opening hours: Daily 12pm-3pm and 7pm-2am
Phone: +973 1772 1061
Internet: www.massorestaurant.com
Email: reservations@massorestaurant.com

CAFES



Sophie James/Shutterstock.com

The blazing desert heat is not enough to stop the people of Bahrain from enjoying a hot cup of coffee. There is an abundance of stylish cafes throughout the island that serve delicious coffee and tea drinks and fresh pastries and desserts.

Cafe Lilou

A taste of Paris in the Persian Gulf, Cafe Lilou is the best place in town to enjoy afternoon tea. The cosy sofas invite visitors to linger and laze the evening away over a hot cup of coffee and a fresh pastry. The food options range from refreshing salads and warm sandwiches to more hearty soups and full dinner platters.

Address: Adliya & Al a'ali Mall, Seef District, Manama
Opening hours: Sat-Wed 8am-11:30pm, Thu-Fri 8am-12am
Phone: +973 17 714 440

Aroma Cafe

A great way to immerse oneself into the Bahraini way of life is to spend a hot afternoon enjoying shisha at a place like Aroma. It is a casual, but beautifully decorated place, complete with reclining divans and cushions, that serves Arabic dishes and offers a great selection of shisha flavours.

Address: Seef District, Manama
 Opening hours: Daily 8am-12:30am
 Phone: +973 17 582711
 Internet: www.aromabh.com
 Email: info@aromabh.com

Cafe Amsterdam

Another traditional European-style cafe, Cafe Amsterdam takes pride in making everything they serve in-house, even the most basic ingredients like bread and jam. The coffee is fresh and the menu is varied, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, and all kinds of snacks for in between.

Address: Rd No 3801, Seef District, Manama
 Opening hours: Daily 8am-2am
 Phone: +973 17007404
 Internet: www.cafeamst.com
 Email: tkarrenbeld@cafeamst.com

Cafe Delices

The best of Parisian patisseries can be enjoyed half a world away, in the middle of the Persian Gulf, at Cafe Delices. Mouth-watering pastries, cakes and cookie, homemade chocolates and delectable macarons are all available here, within the Gulf Hotel, the very best desserts in the desert.

Address: Road No 3801, The Gulf Hotel Barhain, Manama
 Opening hours: Daily 7am-11pm
 Phone: +973 17 713 000

Chawan Authentic Japanese Tea House

Chawan greatly respects the role that tea plays in Japanese traditions and life. Under the shadow of a cherry blossom tree, guests can perform a traditional tea ceremony and let the professional staff guide them along the process of attaining peace and balance through this practice. Other Japanese customs can be practiced here as well, from karaoke to calligraphy.

Address: Amwaj Islands, Muharraq

Public Transport: +973 3366 8994
 Opening hours: Mon-Fri 4pm-10pm, Thu 5pm-12am. Brunch: Fri-Sat 10am-2pm
 Phone: +973 3366 8994
 Internet: www.chawanbh.com
 Email: info@chawanbh.com

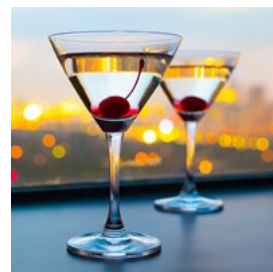
BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Dr Ajay Kumar Singh/Shutterstock.com

Bahrain is somewhat more socially liberal than some its neighbouring countries when it comes, for example, to drinking. Alcoholic beverages are legal in the country, even for Muslims, so it is not surprising that it is a favourite destination for citizens of other Gulf nations. This also means that nightlife on the island is much more lively than other places in the region, and there are plenty of bars, lounges and nightclubs to be found throughout.

Sky Bar



Sky Bar gets packed on weekends, and with good reason. The views from this 20th-storey rooftop bar are quite simply unmatched. It's the perfect place to watch the sunset with a refreshing cocktail in hand, or admire the view of Bahrain as it lights up after dark.

Photo: KieferPix/Shutterstock.com
 Address: The Hotel Diva, Manama
 Opening hours: Daily 12pm-2am

Phone: +973 3971 8101
 Internet: www.thedivahotel.com
 Email: reservation@thedivahotel.com
 More Info: Floor 20

Downtown Bar



Something of a favourite among locals and visitors alike, Downtown, a part of the Intercontinental Regency Hotel, attracts huge crowds, especially on nights with live music. They host local bands, jam sessions and open mic nights, and Wednesday is Ladies' Night.

Photo: Wollertz/Shutterstock.com
 Address: Building No 150, 1507 King Faisal Highway, Manama
 Opening hours: Daily 4pm-2am
 Phone: +973 1722 7777
 Internet: intercontinental.com/intercontinental/hotels/gb/en/manama/bahha/hoteldetail

Bushido Lounge



On the second floor of the Bushido Restaurant you can find one of the most suave and sophisticated lounge/bar areas in all of Bahrain. The elegant decor and intimate lighting beg you to linger and enjoy one of the many varieties of specialty Sakes available. Don't miss the chance to take your drink to the refreshing terrace.

Photo: GWImages/Shutterstock.com
 Address: Building Nr 52, Road 38, Block 428, Seef Area
 Opening hours: Daily 12pm-3am
 Phone: +973 1758 3555
 Internet: www.bushido.com.bh
 Email: bushido@bushido.com.bh

Bizarre Lounge



The decor and ambiance at Bizarre are exactly that: strange but beautiful, bizarre but welcoming. The violet cushions, baroque-style tables and fantastic lighting make it one of the most interesting places on the island. At night it transforms from a lounge to a nightclub, where every Friday is Salsa Night, where avid dancers can work up a sweat.

Photo: Minerva Studio/Shutterstock.com
 Address: Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Highway, Al Seef, Manama
 Phone: +973 1717 1111
 Internet: www.lemeridienbahraincitycentre.com
 More Info: Located at Le Méridien Bahrain City Centre

The Warbler



The Ramee Hotel is home to the Warbler, a popular British-style sports pub with events almost every night. There is dancing, live music, important sports matches streaming on-screen, Ladies' night on Tuesdays, and a fully-stocked kitchen serving up a varied menu.

Photo: wavebreakmedia/Shutterstock.com
 Address: Building No. 176, Road No. 2005, Block No. 320, Manama
 Phone: +973 1729 0600
 Internet: www.warblerpubnbarbahrain.com
 Email: fnbbaisan@rameehotelsbahrain.com
 More Info: Located at The Ramee Hotel

SHOPPING



Philip Lange/Shutterstock.com

Bahrain's modern tastes and sensibilities means that there are plenty of massive air-conditioned shopping centres with all the amenities and facilities one would expect. But Bahrain's best shopping takes place in the souqs and markets, where shops, stalls and vendors peddle everything from clothing and souvenirs to spices, herbs and Bahrain's famous pearl jewellery.

The Bahrain Mall



With its red brick facade and fortress build, this huge mall was designed to evoke the history and tradition of Bahraini architecture, along with

the palm trees, torches and water features found within. It contains everything the modern shopper could need, department stores, boutiques, restaurants and more.

Photo: ceiling (image cropped)

Address: The Bahrain Mall, Seef, Manama

Phone: +973 17558101

Internet: www.thebahrainmall.com

Email: info@thebahrainmall.com

Manama Souq



For an authentic local shopping experience, there is no better place than Manama Souq. It is the place to look for electronics, clothing, spices, souvenirs and just about anything else you can think of. Popular items include perfumes, pearls and gold wares.

Photo: Paul Cowan/Shutterstock.com

Address: Manama Souq, Manama

Opening hours: Sat-Thu 9am-1pm and 4pm-9pm, Fri 4pm-9pm

Kingdom of Perfumes



One of the most popular shops with tourists in the Manama Souq, Kingdom of Perfumes has a dizzying array of fragrances from around the world. All the popular brands are represented, and the real jewels here are the locally created perfumes with all manner of fresh ingredients from the area.

Photo: Kzenon/Shutterstock.com

Address: Sheikh Abdullah Ave, Manama

Opening hours: Daily 9am-1pm and 4pm-9pm

Phone: +973 39 628 006

Email: kingdom_of_perfumes@yahoo.com

Gold City



Bahrain is famous worldwide for the quality of its pearls and work in gold. The exclusive showrooms at Gold City showcase some of the country's very best precious metals and gems, worked with incredible skill into true works of

art. You are assured to find only natural pearls at Gold City.

Photo: ShashiBellamkonda (image cropped)

Address: Government Ave, Manama

Phone: +973 17210404

Internet: www.bahraingoldcity.com

Email: info@bahraingoldcity.com

Spice Souq



One of the best parts of the souq experience is the feast for the senses that are the spice sellers.

Their stall feature heaps of colourful and fragrant

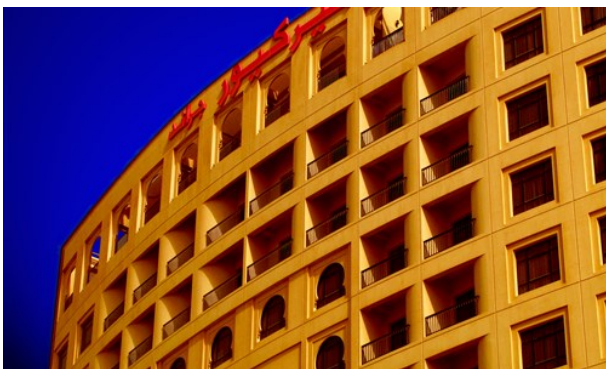
herbs and spices from around the world, along with other treats like seeds, dried fruit, lentils and countless other delicacies.

Photo: Zhukov Oleg/Shutterstock.com

Address: Road 439, Manama

Opening hours: Daily 9am-1pm and 4pm-7pm

ACCOMMODATION



abcdz2000 (image cropped)

Visitors to Bahrain will seldom lack for luxury. The island is home to a plethora of high-end hotels and resorts that afford guests all the comforts they could wish for. For those not wishing to spend a fortune, there is also a great selection of mid-range and budget options throughout the island.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION



Philip Lange/Shutterstock.com

Bahrain International Airport



The Bahrain International Airport (BAH) is located about 7km northeast of Manama, in Muharraq, and serves as the hub for Gulf Air, the national

airline. The easiest way to get to Manama or anywhere else in Bahrain is by taking a taxi from the terminal. They are safe, fast and comfortable. Make sure the driver uses the meter.

Photo: Juan Garces

Address: Bahrain International Airport, Muharraq

Phone: +973 3602 6125

Internet: www.bahrainairport.com

Public Transport



Bahrain has a network of public buses that connect most areas of the island, but it is mainly meant to be used by expat workers. Information can be found

at the Manama bus station. Of more use to tourists are the taxis, which make getting around much easier.

Photo: Pierre-Luc Auclair
Address: Bahrain
Phone: +973 663 11111
Internet: www.mtt.gov.bh/en/land-transport/public-transport/public-buses

Taxi



Taxis are the most efficient and convenient way for tourists to get around. They are readily available and fast. Make sure the driver uses the

meter.

Speedy Motors: +973 17682999
Bahrain Limo: +973 17266266
Arabian Taxi: +973 17461746

Address: Bahrain

Post Office

Muharraq Post Office



Photo: Andy Fuchs
Address: Rd No 1535, Muharraq
Opening hours: Sun, Tue, Thu 7am-2pm. Mon, Wed, Sat 7am-2pm and 4pm-6pm
Phone: +973 1734 3996

Pharmacy



Bahrain Pharmacy & General Store

Photo: Gemma Garner
Address: Central Market Ave, Manama
Opening hours: Sun-Thu 8am-5:30pm
Phone: +973 17264088
Internet: www.bahrainpharmacy.com
Email: bahpharm@batelco.com.bh

Telephone

Country code: +973



Photo: Jardson Almeida

Electricity

Voltage: 230 V
Frequency: 50 Hz Power sockets: type G



Photo: Stirling Tschan

Population

Bahrain: 1,343,000
Manama: 330,000

Currency

1 Bahraini Dinar (BHD) = 1,000 fils

Opening hours

Most businesses open at about 8-9am and close between 6-8pm. Restaurants open later, closer to 11am, and often close in the afternoon for a few hours, before opening again for dinner. Bars, cafes and restaurants stay open late, usually until 2-3am. Many establishments close on Friday or Saturday or work only half the day.

Newspapers

Bahrain This Week
Gulf Weekly
Voice of Bahrain

Emergency numbers

Emergency (Police, Fire and Ambulance): 999