

# Unravel the Arabian mystique

Enjoy local Bahraini cuisine, cultural treats and race private cars writes Nimisha Tiwari

## SCENIC, FRIENDLY & INVITING

Region: Bahrain

Embracing tourism as its latest offering, the Kingdom of Bahrain promises a **personalised trip** for Indian travellers. Traditionally called the Land of Two Seas (In Arabic, *Bahr* means Sea and *Thnain* means Two), it is a beautiful archipelago of 33 islands. In its rich past, it was called the empire of **Dilmun**, then **Tylos** and later **Awal** (you will hear the story of **King Gilgamesh's** quest for eternal youth and why a serpent is depicted significantly in most sculptures).

There's enough reason why this peaceful, progressive society is respectful of all religions and inclusive in its international policies.

● **Embark on a Museum Tour:** India and Bahrain share historic ties and you can know more about its 6,000 years-old heritage at the slick **Bahrain National Museum**. **Stamps Museum** located at the Ministry of Transportation building, **Currency Museum** located on the Central Bank premises, **Oil Museum** and the **First Oil Well** located in the desert of Sakhir. **Museum for Pearl Diving** as the first location for Bahrain Courts prior to becoming a museum. **Bait al Quran** home to comprehensive and valuable collection of the Holy Quran and related Manuscripts, **Rashid Al Oraifi Museum** a where you can find artwork inspired by Dilmun culture and history.

● **Bab al Bahrain:** Gateway of Bahrain – marks the main entrance to the **Manama Suq**. Whether you are interested in Arabic perfume, class A designer watches, 24-carat gold jewellery, coveted antiques and regional handicraft,

or modern appliances, unusual trinkets, traditional clothing or bright coloured Indian fabric. Converse with the locals as English is widely spoken and Hindi is understood too. Try the nightlife and make new friends at **Block 338**, which is a pedestrian quarter teaming with international restaurants, art galleries and fabulous boutique shops.

● **Eat to your heart's content:** Every portion of a dish during meal time is large, so you'd better keep space in your tummy. Delicious vegetarian and non-vegetarian offerings include preparation with nuts, green cardamom and aromatic flavours for a perfect Bahraini meal. You must try the local breakfast (**Rawooq**) served along with flat bread called **Khubz** at a street-side cafe where old-world charm will overwhelm you, just as much as the taste of fresh items on a large traditional platter.

We suggest you try **Muhammar**, which is sweet rice serviced with fried **Safi** (rabbit fish) or **Chanad** (Mackerel fish); **Safi**, **King's Halwa**, **Machboos** and **Falafel**. Home-made jam and butter adds to the flavours.

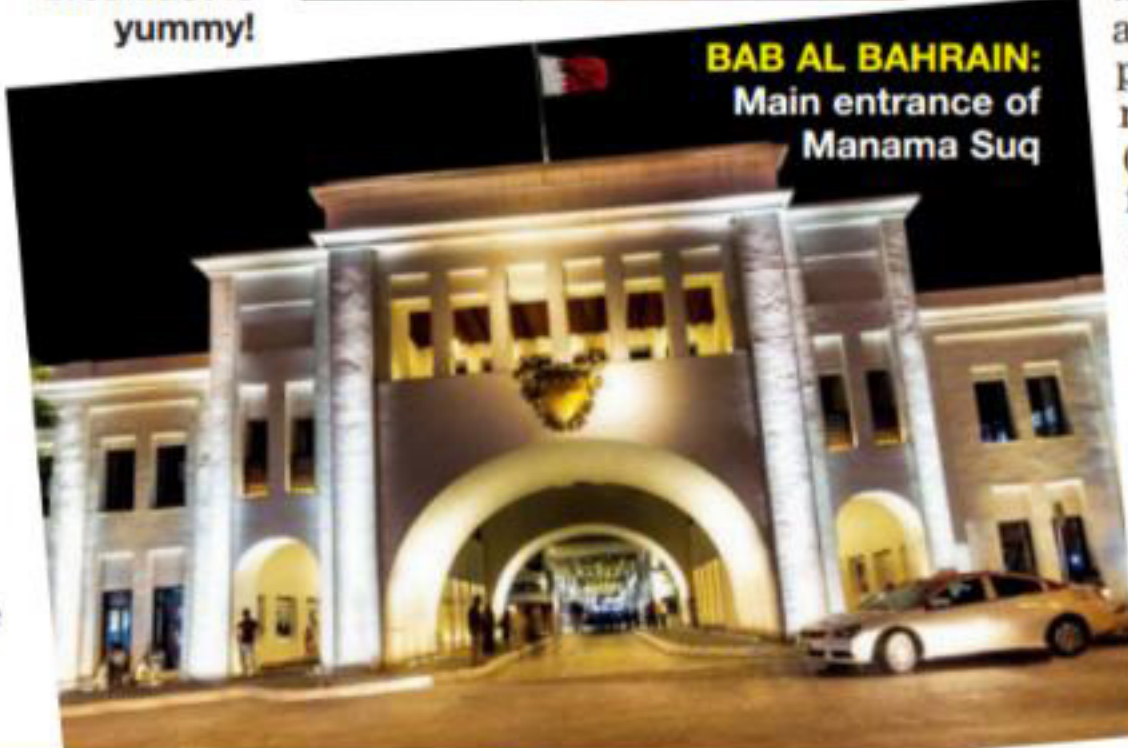
● **Must-visit:** **Manama** is the capital city and you must venture into the local stores here. The **Al Jasra Handicrafts Centre** is a fabulous spot to understand traditional craftsmanship including pottery, dhow or boat making and musical influences that have now created the

modern-day Bahrain. Say your prayers at 200-year old **Thattai Hindu Community Temple** in Manama. **Pearl Diving Trail** is UNESCO recognised and informative. As a preferred **Destination Wedding** venue, popular hotels all geared to host Indian weddings here with much love.

Traditional Bahraini breakfast is yummy!



**BAB AL BAHRAIN:** Main entrance of Manama Suq



**YOUR SLOT:** Did you know that you can book a private slot for racing with your friends at the Bahrain International Circuit



**BAHRAIN FORT:** Ancient Dilmun excavation site can also be seen adjacent to the Bahrain Fort

