Doha Travel Guide

Discover Doha: Where Tradition Meets Tomorrow

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Things to do in Doha

Landmarks & Monuments

Doha's skyline showcases an extraordinary fusion of **ultra-modern skyscrapers** and **traditional Islamic architecture**. These iconic landmarks define the city's identity as a global hub while honoring its Bedouin roots.



Must See

The Pearl-Qatar

3-4 hours No Booking Needed

Map

An **artificial island** spanning nearly 4 million square meters, The Pearl is Qatar's first land available for freehold ownership by foreign nationals. This luxurious development features *Mediterranean-style marinas*, upscale residential towers, designer boutiques, and gourmet restaurants. Walk along the picturesque Qanat Quartier with its **colorful Venetian-inspired architecture**, or explore Porto Arabia's vibrant waterfront promenade lined with yachts and cafés.



Must See

Katara Cultural Village

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A magnificent **cultural hub** celebrating Arabian heritage and international arts. Katara features traditional Qatari architecture with wind towers, an open-air amphitheater hosting world-class performances, art galleries, and the stunning *Blue Mosque* adorned with intricate Turkish tilework. The village hosts numerous festivals, exhibitions, and cultural events throughout the year. Stroll along the beach promenade and discover diverse dining options from around the world.



Top Pick

Aspire Tower (The Torch Doha)

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Standing at **300 meters tall**, Aspire Tower is one of Doha's most recognizable structures. Built for the 2006 Asian Games, this architectural marvel features a unique *latticed exterior* and houses a luxury hotel. The tower dramatically illuminates at night, creating a spectacular light show visible across the city. Visit the **revolving restaurant** at the top for panoramic views and fine dining experiences.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Lusail Stadium

1-2 hours Book Ahead

Map

The crown jewel of the **2022 FIFA World Cup**, this 80,000-capacity stadium features a stunning design inspired by traditional Arabic lanterns and decorative bowls. Located in the futuristic Lusail City, the stadium's golden facade creates a mesmerizing effect, especially when illuminated at night. Tours available showcase the world-class facilities and relive the historic moments from football's greatest tournament.

Tips for Landmarks & Monuments

- **Golden Hour:** Visit The Pearl during sunset for stunning photography opportunities with yacht-filled marinas
- **Friday Vibes:** Katara Cultural Village is especially lively on weekends with family events and performances
- **Dress Code:** While landmarks are tourist-friendly, modest dress is appreciated at cultural sites
- **Stadium Tours:** Book World Cup stadium tours in advance, especially during peak tourist season

Museums & Galleries

Doha has emerged as a **cultural powerhouse** in the Middle East, featuring world-class museums designed by renowned architects. These institutions house priceless collections spanning Islamic art, modern masterpieces, and Qatar's rich heritage.



Must See

Museum of Islamic Art (MIA)

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Designed by legendary architect **I.M. Pei**, this architectural masterpiece rises from its own island in Doha Bay. The museum houses one of the world's most comprehensive collections of *Islamic art*, spanning 1,400 years across three continents. Marvel at intricate ceramics, textiles, metalwork, and manuscripts. The building itself is a work of art, with geometric patterns and a stunning **five-story atrium**. The waterfront park and café offer breathtaking views of the Doha skyline.



Must See

National Museum of Qatar

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

An extraordinary building designed by **Jean Nouvel**, inspired by the desert rose crystal formation. The museum's interlocking disc-shaped galleries tell Qatar's story through immersive exhibitions using cutting-edge technology. Experience the nation's journey from *nomadic Bedouin life* through the pearl diving era to modern prosperity. The innovative architecture and multimedia displays create an unforgettable sensory experience. The museum also preserves the historic Palace of Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani.



Top Pick

Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The first institution in the region dedicated to **modern and contemporary Arab art**. Housed in a renovated school building, Mathaf showcases works by artists from across the Arab world, exploring themes of identity, politics, and social change. The permanent collection features over 9,000 pieces, with rotating exhibitions highlighting emerging and established artists. The museum's *minimalist architecture* provides the perfect backdrop for thought-provoking contemporary works.



Notable

Qatar National Library

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

More than just a library, this stunning space designed by **OMA** is an architectural wonder with pristine white interiors and diamond-shaped design. The vast reading room contains over one million books, including rare manuscripts and Qatar's heritage collection. Free to enter, it's a peaceful oasis perfect for visitors seeking air-conditioned respite. The innovative design creates different zones for learning, discovery, and quiet contemplation.

Tips for Museums & Galleries

- **Admission:** Check Qatar Museums for current admission and ticket requirements; museum policies vary.; some, like the National Museum of Qatar, charge visitors (check each site)
- **Timing:** Museums can be crowded on Friday afternoons; visit mornings for a quieter experience
- **Guided Tours:** Check MIA and NMoQ for guided tours for deeper insights
- **Photography:** Most museums allow non-flash photography, but always check specific exhibition rules

- **Climate Control:** Museums provide welcome air-conditioned breaks from Doha's heat

Religious Sites

Doha's religious architecture reflects **Qatar's Islamic heritage** through stunning mosques featuring traditional and contemporary designs. These sacred spaces welcome respectful visitors to appreciate their beauty and spiritual significance.



Must See

Imam Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab Mosque (State Grand Mosque)

45 minutes - 1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

Qatar's **largest mosque** and national house of worship, accommodating over 30,000 worshippers. The architecture exemplifies traditional Qatari design with clean lines and distinctive arches. Three monumental libraries contain Islamic texts, and the spacious courtyard features beautiful geometric patterns. Non-Muslims can visit outside prayer times with *modest dress* and respectful behavior. The mosque's pristine white facade glows beautifully against Doha's blue skies, creating stunning photographic opportunities.



Top Pick

Katara Mosque (Blue Mosque)

30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

An architectural gem within Katara Cultural Village, famous for its **exquisite Turkish-style tilework**. The interior walls shimmer with intricate blue and turquoise tiles creating a mesmerizing mosaic effect. Inspired by Ottoman mosque design, it features elegant minarets and a serene atmosphere. While primarily a functioning mosque, visitors can admire its exterior beauty and peek inside outside prayer times. The fusion of Turkish and Arabic architectural elements makes it unique in Qatar.



Notable

Al-Fanar Mosque (Spiral Mosque)

20-30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

Also known as the **Spiral Mosque**, this distinctive landmark along the Corniche features a unique minaret reminiscent of the Great Mosque of Samarra. The mosque's cylindrical tower with external spiral ramp creates an iconic silhouette on Doha's waterfront. While interior access is limited to Muslims, its exterior architecture and waterfront location make it a popular photography spot, especially illuminated at night. The adjacent Qatar Islamic Cultural Center offers educational programs about Islam.

Tips for Religious Sites

- **Dress Modestly:** Women should cover shoulders, arms, and legs; headscarves provided at entrances. Men should wear long pants
- **Prayer Times:** Visit outside the five daily prayer times; mosques typically welcome visitors after morning prayers until afternoon
- **Remove Shoes:** Always remove footwear before entering mosque interiors
- **Respectful Behavior:** Speak quietly, avoid pointing, and ask permission before photographing people
- **Guided Tours:** Fanar offers free Islamic cultural center tours explaining mosque architecture and traditions

Ancient & Historical Sites

Beyond its modern facade, Qatar preserves **millennia of human civilization**. Archaeological sites and heritage villages reveal the nation's deep-rooted history from prehistoric settlements to pearl diving traditions.



Must See

Al Zubarah Fort & Archaeological Site

2-3 hours (including travel) No Booking Needed

Map

A **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, Al Zubarah represents the Gulf's best-preserved example of an 18th-19th century pearling and trading town. The fort, built in 1938, stands as a military outpost with impressive defensive walls and watchtowers. The surrounding archaeological site reveals the remains of palaces, mosques, and merchant houses, offering insights into Qatar's prosperous pearl-trading past. Qatar Museums says an Al Zubarah Visitor Centre is being developed; check current visitor information before planning a visit.



Must See

Souq Waqif

2-4 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Doha's **historic marketplace** beautifully restored to its traditional 19th-century architecture with mud-rendered shops and wooden beams. This labyrinthine bazaar buzzes with life, offering spices, textiles, traditional garments, handicrafts, and souvenirs. Experience authentic Qatari culture through *falcon trading*, traditional coffee houses, and aromatic perfume shops. The evening atmosphere is magical with street performances, live music, and bustling restaurants serving Arabic cuisine. Don't miss the Falcon Souq and traditional animal market.



Top Pick

Msheireb Museums

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Four heritage houses in downtown Msheireb tell Qatar's modern history through **interactive exhibitions**. Bin Jelmood House explores the history of slavery, Company House chronicles the oil industry's impact, Mohammed Bin Jassim House showcases family life in 1950s Qatar, and Radwani House depicts traditional architecture. These beautifully restored buildings use multimedia displays to create engaging narratives about *social transformation*, making history accessible and compelling for all ages.



Notable

Barzan Towers (Umm Salal Mohammed Fort)

1 hour No Booking Needed

Map

These distinctive **watchtowers** dating from the late 19th century stand as excellent examples of Qatari military architecture. Originally built to sight the moon for Ramadan and guard freshwater sources, the renovated towers offer insights into traditional defensive structures. The site includes a reconstructed fort with barasti roofing and wind towers demonstrating traditional cooling techniques. Climb the towers for panoramic views of the surrounding landscape, imagining how guards once surveyed the desert approaches to Doha.

Tips for Ancient & Historical Sites

- **Al Zubarah Timing:** This site is 105km from Doha; start early morning to avoid midday heat
- **Souq Waqif Best Time:** Visit after 4 PM when shops open and the atmosphere becomes vibrant; Fridays especially lively
- **Bargaining:** Haggling is expected at Souq Waqif; start at 50-60% of the asking price
- **Heritage Tours:** Consider joining organized heritage tours that combine multiple historical sites efficiently

- **Summer Caution:** Desert sites can be extremely hot; bring water, sunscreen, and hat

Squares & Streets

Doha's waterfront promenades and urban developments showcase the city's **pedestrian-friendly design** combining stunning architecture, public art, and leisure spaces perfect for strolling and people-watching.



Must See

Doha Corniche

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A magnificent **7-kilometer waterfront promenade** curving along Doha Bay, offering panoramic views of the futuristic skyline juxtaposed with traditional dhow boats. Perfect for jogging, cycling, or leisurely walks, the Corniche features palm-lined paths, parks, and recreational areas. Watch the sunset paint the skyscrapers in golden hues while traditional wooden boats bob in the harbor. The promenade connects major attractions including the Museum of Islamic Art, Souq Waqif, and Katara, making it the city's scenic thoroughfare.



Top Pick

Msheireb Downtown

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **sustainable urban regeneration project** blending contemporary architecture with traditional Qatari design elements. This smart city development features shaded walkways, public squares, heritage museums, and cultural venues. The district pioneered environmentally-friendly cooling systems and pedestrian-friendly streets. Explore trendy cafés, boutique shops, and public art installations. Msheireb represents Qatar's vision for sustainable urban development while preserving cultural identity through architecture incorporating traditional motifs and materials.



Notable

Lusail Boulevard

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The grand central avenue of Lusail City, Qatar's **futuristic smart city** built for the 2022 World Cup. This wide, landscaped boulevard connects entertainment districts, residential towers, and commercial areas. Experience cutting-edge urban planning with shaded walkways, water features, and architectural marvels. The avenue comes alive with events, festivals, and outdoor concerts. Nearby Lusail Marina offers waterfront dining and yacht watching, while the spectacular Place Vendôme mall provides luxury shopping experiences.

Tips for Squares & Streets

- **Best Walking Times:** Early morning (6-9 AM) or evening (5-10 PM) to avoid midday heat, especially October-April
- **Corniche Activities:** Rent bicycles available along the Corniche for a different perspective of the waterfront
- **Photography:** Sunset at the Corniche provides spectacular photos with dhows silhouetted against illuminated skyscrapers
- **Public Transport:** The metro connects to Msheireb and Corniche areas easily

Neighborhoods & Districts

Each district in Doha offers distinct character, from the **traditional heart** of the old city to luxurious modern developments and cultural hubs reflecting the nation's diversity.



Top Pick

West Bay

Half day No Booking Needed

Map

Doha's **central business district** dominated by gleaming skyscrapers housing international corporations, luxury hotels, and upscale residences. This neighborhood epitomizes modern Qatar with its futuristic skyline featuring iconic towers like the Tornado Tower and Burj Qatar. West Bay offers high-end shopping malls, fine dining restaurants, and pristine beaches. The area transforms at night when buildings illuminate in coordinated light displays. It's the heart of Qatar's economic power and architectural ambition.



Top Pick

Old Doha (Al Jasra & Mushayrib)

Half day No Booking Needed

Map

The **historic core** where Doha's story began, featuring narrow lanes, traditional wind-tower houses, and authentic atmosphere. This area includes Souq Waqif and surrounding neighborhoods preserving Qatar's architectural heritage. Experience local life in traditional coffee shops, discover hidden galleries, and explore family-run businesses operating for generations. The regeneration project has carefully restored historical buildings while maintaining the area's authentic character. It's where past and present coexist harmoniously.



Notable

Education City

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **14-square-kilometer campus** hosting branch campuses of prestigious international universities. This knowledge hub features stunning architecture with each university building designed by renowned architects. The area includes the spectacular Education City Mosque, Qatar National Library, and various research centers. Open spaces, parks, and bicycle paths create a distinct academic atmosphere. The district represents Qatar's investment in education and intellectual capital, welcoming visitors to explore its architectural diversity and cultural facilities.

Tips for Neighborhoods & Districts

- **West Bay Exploration:** Best experienced during evening when towers light up; many hotels offer rooftop bars with stunning views
- **Local Immersion:** Old Doha provides the most authentic Qatari experience; early mornings show local daily life
- **Education City Tours:** Check Qatar Foundation website for campus tours and public events
- **Transportation:** Metro conveniently connects major neighborhoods; consider metro day pass for extensive exploration

Parks & Gardens

Despite the desert climate, Doha offers **lush green spaces** and recreational parks providing respite from urban intensity. These meticulously maintained areas feature playgrounds, sports facilities, and family-friendly amenities.



Top Pick

Aspire Park (Aspire Zone)

1-3 hours No Booking Needed

Map

Doha's **largest park** spanning 88 hectares of beautifully landscaped grounds with tree-lined paths, Lake and traditional garden designs. Features include playgrounds, sports facilities, cafés, and the towering Aspire Tower (The Torch) as backdrop. The park becomes particularly vibrant during evenings and weekends with families picnicking, children playing, and joggers enjoying the circuit. An artificial lake with fountain shows adds scenic beauty. Perfect for outdoor activities, exercise, or relaxation under palm trees.



Top Pick

Al Bidda Park

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **waterfront park** The park beside the Museum of Islamic Art is MIA Park; Al Bidda Park is a separate park. This beautifully designed green space Richard Serra’s Seven is at MIA Park, beside the Museum of Islamic Art. The park's strategic location makes it perfect for combining museum visits with outdoor leisure. Watch traditional dhows sail past while enjoying picnics on manicured lawns. Evening visits offer magical views of illuminated skyscrapers reflected in the bay waters.



Top Pick

MIA Park

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

The **Museum of Islamic Art's park** is a serene waterfront space perfect for relaxation with unobstructed skyline views. Features include children's playground inspired by Qatari heritage, outdoor café with stunning vistas, and landscaped gardens. The park hosts outdoor exhibitions and cultural events. Watch the fountain synchronized light shows in the evening or simply enjoy people-watching. The combination of world-class art, stunning architecture, and peaceful outdoor space makes this a must-visit destination for all ages.



Notable

Oxygen Park

1-2 hours No Booking Needed

Map

A **fitness-focused park** in the Education City area featuring extensive jogging tracks, outdoor exercise equipment, and sports courts. The park's design emphasizes wellness with designated zones for different activities including yoga areas, cycling paths, and children's play zones. Lush landscaping provides shade and creates a refreshing atmosphere. Popular among fitness enthusiasts and families, it offers a healthy outdoor alternative in Doha's mostly air-conditioned lifestyle. Free entry and well-maintained facilities make it accessible to everyone.

Tips for Parks & Gardens

- **Best Visiting Hours:** Parks are most enjoyable from late afternoon to evening (4-10 PM), especially October through April
- **Friday Family Time:** Parks are busiest on Friday afternoons and weekends when families gather for picnics
- **Bring Supplies:** While cafés exist, bringing your own picnic items and mats enhances the experience
- **Summer Strategy:** In hot months (June-September), visit parks only during early morning or after sunset
- **Free Activities:** All parks offer free entry and are excellent budget-friendly options for families

Fountains & Public Art

Doha has transformed into an **open-air art gallery** featuring monumental sculptures by world-renowned artists. Public installations blend contemporary art with traditional themes throughout the cityscape.



Must See

Seven (Richard Serra)

30-45 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

Seven massive **steel plates**, each 24 meters high, installed in the desert landscape near the Museum of Islamic Art. Created by minimalist sculptor Richard Serra, these monolithic structures create an immersive experience as visitors walk between the towering forms. The installation explores themes of monumentality and the relationship between art, landscape, and viewer. The cor-ten steel surfaces weather naturally, developing rich rust patinas that evolve over time. A pilgrimage site for contemporary art enthusiasts.



Top Pick

East-West/West-East (Richard Serra)

2 hours (including travel) No Booking Needed

Map

Four monumental **steel plates** stretching across a one-kilometer span in the Qatari desert near Zekreet. This site-specific installation creates a dialogue between art and the vast desert landscape. Each plate rises from the undulating terrain, visible from great distances. The work explores perception, scale, and the relationship between industrial materials and natural environment. Visiting requires a desert excursion but rewards with one of the world's most dramatic contemporary art experiences in stunning isolation.



Top Pick

The Miraculous Journey (Damien Hirst)

30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

A controversial and stunning series of **14 massive bronze sculptures** depicting human development from conception to birth. Located outside Sidra Medicine, these monumental figures by Damien Hirst range from 4 to 14 meters tall. The installation celebrates the miracle of life through highly realistic representations. While provocative, it represents Qatar's commitment to displaying challenging contemporary art. Best viewed during cooler hours as the outdoor location offers limited shade.



Notable

Urs Fischer Sculptures

15-30 minutes No Booking Needed

Map

Large-scale bronze sculptures including the famous **'Lamp Bear'** displayed at various locations including Hamad International Airport and around the city. Fischer's playful yet monumental works blend whimsy with technical mastery. The oversized teddy bear holding a lamp has become an Instagram favorite, representing Doha's embrace of contemporary art that's both accessible and sophisticated. These works demonstrate how public art can be simultaneously serious artistic statements and crowd-pleasing attractions.

Tips for Fountains & Public Art

- **Desert Installations:** Visiting East-West/West-East requires 4WD vehicle; consider joining organized art tours
- **Photography:** These sculptures are incredibly photogenic; golden hour provides dramatic lighting
- **Self-Guided Art Tour:** Create your own public art walking tour connecting MIA, Katara, and downtown installations
- **Airport Art:** Hamad International Airport itself is an art gallery with numerous installations – worth exploring even without flying
- **Respect:** While photographing art is encouraged, be mindful of others enjoying the works

Transportation

Doha offers **modern, efficient transportation** systems making city exploration convenient. From state-of-the-art metro to traditional water taxis, multiple options suit different preferences and budgets.



Essential

Doha Metro

Varies No Booking Needed

Map

A **world-class driverless metro system** with three lines (Red, Green, Gold) connecting major districts, attractions, and Hamad International Airport. Stations are architectural marvels designed by international architects, each unique in design. The ultra-modern trains offer comfortable, air-conditioned travel with Gold Class options. Affordable, clean, and efficient, the metro makes navigating Doha simple. Stations connect to Souq Waqif, Katara, Museum of Islamic Art, Education City, and Lusail Stadium. Perfect for budget-conscious travelers and avoiding traffic.



Essential

Hamad International Airport

2-3 hours (for exploration) No Booking Needed

Map

One of the world's **best airports**, serving as Qatar's main gateway. Beyond transportation hub, the airport features luxury shopping, fine dining, art installations (including Lamp Bear and ORYX sculptures), a swimming pool, spa, and hotel. The architecture itself is stunning with soaring spaces and natural light. Allow extra time to explore the terminal's amenities and art. Direct metro connection to the city makes arrival seamless. The airport exemplifies Qatar's commitment to world-class infrastructure.



Recommended Book Ahead

Dhow Boats

1-3 hours Book Ahead

Map

Traditional **wooden sailing vessels** offering authentic maritime experiences along Doha Bay. Take sunset cruises departing from the Corniche or near Souq Waqif, providing unique perspectives of the skyline. These boats, once used for pearl diving and trade, now serve tourism while maintaining traditional craftsmanship. Evening cruises often include dinner and entertainment. Shorter rides available for quick photo opportunities. Riding a dhow connects visitors to Qatar's maritime heritage while enjoying modern city views.



Useful

Water Taxi (Ferry Service)

15-45 minutes per trip No Booking Needed

Map

Modern **ferry services** connecting waterfront destinations including West Bay, Pearl-Qatar, Katara, and Lusail. These air-conditioned boats offer scenic alternatives to road travel while avoiding traffic. The service provides both regular routes and on-demand options. Enjoy spectacular views of Doha's skyline from the water while experiencing efficient public transportation. Affordable fares make this an accessible option for tourists. The ferry experience combines practical transportation with sightseeing opportunities.

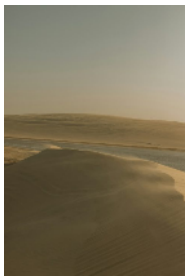
Tips for Transportation

- **Metro Cards:** Purchase rechargeable Karwa Smartcard for convenient metro and bus travel; day passes available for unlimited rides
- **Taxi Apps:** Use Karwa (official) or Uber for reliable taxi service; metered fares prevent overcharging
- **Dhow Booking:** Reserve sunset cruises in advance during peak season (November-March); prices vary significantly by operator

- **Metro Etiquette:** Family sections reserved for women and children; Gold Class requires premium ticket
- **Airport Transit:** Free WiFi throughout; airport hotel allows short-term bookings for long layovers

Tours & Activities

Experience Doha through **curated activities** ranging from adrenaline-pumping desert adventures to cultural immersions, offering unique ways to discover Qatar's diverse attractions beyond traditional sightseeing.



Must See Book Ahead

Desert Safari & Dune Bashing

4-8 hours Book Ahead

The quintessential Qatar experience: **high-octane 4WD adventures** across towering sand dunes in the Inland Sea (Khor Al Adaid) region. Professional drivers navigate steep dunes creating thrilling roller-coaster rides. Packages typically include camel rides, sandboarding, sunset viewing, and traditional Bedouin-style dinners with entertainment. The Inland Sea, a UNESCO-recognized natural reserve where desert meets ocean, provides stunning backdrops. Half-day and full-day options available. Essential for experiencing Qatar's dramatic desert landscape and adrenaline rush.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Banana Island Resort Day Pass

Full day Book Ahead

A luxurious **private island retreat** just 20 minutes by boat from Doha. Day passes grant access to pristine beaches, multiple swimming pools, water sports facilities, restaurants, and spa amenities. The crescent-shaped island offers overwater villas views, calm turquoise waters perfect for swimming, and various activities including kayaking, paddle boarding, and snorkeling. Ideal for families seeking resort-style relaxation without overnight commitment. The tropical paradise atmosphere contrasts beautifully with Doha's urban environment, offering complete escapism.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Kayaking in Mangroves (Al Thakira)

2-3 hours Book Ahead

Explore Qatar's hidden natural wonder: **serene mangrove forests** in Al Thakira. Paddle through winding channels surrounded by lush vegetation, spot herons, flamingos, and crabs in this unique ecosystem. The peaceful experience contrasts sharply with desert landscapes, revealing Qatar's biodiversity. Guided tours provide kayaks, safety equipment, and ecological insights. Best during cooler months with early morning or late afternoon departures. This eco-tourism activity appeals to nature lovers and photographers seeking Qatar's quieter, greener side.



Top Pick Book Ahead

Falcon Hospital Tour

1-2 hours Book Ahead

Visit the world's largest **falcon hospital** at Souq Waqif offering fascinating insights into Qatar's ancient falconry traditions. Witness falcon examinations, learn about breeding programs, and understand these magnificent birds' cultural significance. The state-of-the-art facility treats over 700 falcons daily during peak season. Guided tours explain training techniques, equipment, and the bond between falconer and bird. Hold a falcon for memorable photos. This unique experience showcases Qatar's living heritage where falconry remains both sport and cultural symbol.



Notable

Qatar Racing Club (Camel & Horse Racing)

2-3 hours No Booking Needed

Experience traditional **camel racing**, a beloved Qatari sport combining heritage with modern technology. Races occur Friday mornings during season (October-April) at Al Shahaniya track. Watch robot jockeys control camels reaching speeds of 65 km/h across desert tracks. Horse racing at Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club showcases thoroughbreds in world-class facilities. Both sports reflect Qatari passion for animals and competition. Free admission makes this accessible authentic cultural experience different from typical tourist attractions.



Notable

Film City (Zekreet)

2-3 hours (including travel) No Booking Needed

A surreal abandoned film set in the desert near Zekreet peninsula used for various productions. The **faux-Arabian village** with mosque, fortress, and houses creates post-apocalyptic atmosphere against barren landscape. Popular with photographers for dramatic compositions combining architecture and desert. Nearby attractions include the striking Zekreet Fort ruins and bizarre 'mushroom rock' formations created by erosion. Requires 4WD vehicle to access. The remote location offers solitude and otherworldly landscapes perfect for adventurous explorers.

Tips for Tours & Activities

- **Desert Safari Booking:** Research operators carefully; reputable companies prioritize safety and environmental responsibility
- **Best Season:** Desert and outdoor activities most enjoyable November-March when temperatures are moderate
- **What to Bring:** Sunscreen, sunglasses, closed-toe shoes, and cameras for desert trips; swimwear and towels for beach activities
- **Activity Combinations:** Many operators offer combo packages (desert safari + city tour) for better value
- **Safety First:** Always choose licensed tour operators for adventure activities; verify insurance coverage
- **Advance Booking:** Peak season (December-February) requires advance reservations for popular activities

Day Trips & Excursions

Beyond Doha lie **remarkable destinations** showcasing Qatar's diverse landscapes from UNESCO sites to pristine beaches, all accessible within a few hours' drive from the capital.



Must See

Sealine Beach & Inland Sea

Full day No Booking Needed

Map

Qatar's most spectacular natural wonder: where **towering sand dunes meet the sea**. Sealine Beach Resort area offers beach access, while the Inland Sea (Khor Al Adaid) requires 4WD to reach. This UNESCO-recognized natural reserve features stunning contrasts of golden dunes against turquoise waters. Popular for camping, dune bashing, swimming, and watching sunset over this unique landscape. The remote location provides escape from civilization. Day trips or overnight camping experiences available through tour operators or independent exploration with proper vehicles.



Top Pick

Al Khor & Purple Island

Half to full day No Booking Needed

Map

A charming **coastal city** 50km north of Doha known for fishing heritage and nearby Purple Island (Al Bin Ghanim). The mangrove-covered island, named for purple dye produced historically, offers kayaking trails through serene channels. Al Khor Museum showcases regional archaeology and maritime history. The Corniche provides scenic waterfront walks with traditional dhow boats. Al Thakhira Beach nearby offers natural beauty and birdwatching. The area represents Qatar's quieter, traditional coastal lifestyle away from Doha's modernity.



Top Pick

Zekreet Peninsula & Fort

Half to full day No Booking Needed

Map

A remote **desert peninsula** on Qatar's western coast featuring surreal rock formations, abandoned villages, and historical fort ruins. The area's stark beauty attracts photographers and adventurers. Highlights include mushroom-shaped limestone formations, Film City's eerie film set, Zekreet Fort ruins, and Richard Serra's 'East-West/West-East' installation. The landscape feels otherworldly with barren plains meeting the Gulf. Requires 4WD vehicle. Perfect for those seeking solitude, dramatic landscapes, and off-the-beaten-path exploration away from tourist crowds.



Notable

Fuwairit Beach

Full day No Booking Needed

Map

One of Qatar's most **pristine and secluded beaches** on the northeast coast, about 90km from Doha. Famous as nesting ground for endangered hawksbill turtles (April-July), though viewing requires special permits. The undeveloped beach offers pure natural beauty with turquoise waters, white sand, and rolling dunes. Perfect for swimming, camping, and experiencing Qatar's coastline without commercial development. Requires 4WD for access. The remote location rewards visitors with tranquility and authentic desert-meets-sea environment. Respect environmental protections when visiting.

Tips for Day Trips & Excursions

- **Vehicle Requirements:** Many destinations require 4WD; rent appropriate vehicles or join organized tours
- **Preparation:** Bring plenty of water, snacks, sunscreen, and ensure phones are charged; remote areas have limited facilities
- **Navigation:** Download offline maps; GPS signal can be unreliable in desert areas

- **Timing:** Start early morning to avoid midday heat; allow 2-3 hours driving time for distant locations
- **Environmental Respect:** Pack out all trash; protect turtle nesting sites and mangrove ecosystems
- **Group Travel:** Desert trips safer with multiple vehicles; inform someone of your itinerary

Food & Dining

Real, highly-rated Restaurants in Doha, sourced from Google Places (rating above 4★).

The Square★★★★★ 4.9 (4,346)

1-2 hours

Map

The Square is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.9★ from 4346 reviews. Located at InterContinental Doha The City, Off Al Wahda Road West Bay, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 6:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 6:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 6:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 6:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 6:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 6:30 AM – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 6:30 AM – 11:00 PM

Berenjak Doha - Al Maha Island★★★★★ 4.9 (1,978)

1-2 hours

Map

Berenjak Doha - Al Maha Island is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.9★ from 1978 reviews. Located at Al Maha Island, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Friday: 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM

Twisted Olive & Naama’s Garden★★★★★ 4.8 (8,761)

1-2 hours

Map

Twisted Olive & Naama’s Garden is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.8★ from 8761 reviews. Located at برج الدوحة, Doha Tower, 15 Street 910، Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
- Tuesday: 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
- Wednesday: 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
- Thursday: 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
- Friday: 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
- Saturday: 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM
- Sunday: 7:00 AM – 10:00 PM

Mr. & Mrs. Hawker★★★★★ 4.8 (334)

1-2 hours

Map

Mr. & Mrs. Hawker is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.8★ from 334 reviews. Located at Diplomatic Street 23, Zone 61, Doha 3rd Floor, Andaz, الدوحة، Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:30 – 3:30 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 12:30 – 3:30 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 12:30 – 3:30 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 12:30 – 3:30 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 1:00 – 4:00 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 12:30 – 3:30 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 12:30 – 3:30 PM, 6:00 – 11:00 PM

Mosavali Doha★★★★★ 4.8 (334)

1-2 hours

Map

Mosavali Doha is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.8★ from 334 reviews. Located at Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 2:00 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 2:00 – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 2:00 – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 2:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 1:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 2:00 – 11:00 PM

La Mar Doha by Gastón Acurio★★★★★ 4.7 (770)

1-2 hours

Map

La Mar Doha by Gastón Acurio is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 770 reviews. Located at Bldg. No. 25, Zone، 61 Street 900، Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 5:00 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 5:00 – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 5:00 – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 4:00 – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: 5:00 – 11:00 PM

Carbone Doha★★★★★ 4.7 (999)

1-2 hours

Map

Carbone Doha is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 999 reviews. Located at al maha island, Lusail, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Tuesday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Wednesday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Thursday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Friday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Saturday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM
- Sunday: 3:00 PM – 12:00 AM

Desert Rose Restaurant, Doha★★★★★ 4.7 (2,889)

1-2 hours

Map

Desert Rose Restaurant, Doha is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 2889 reviews. Located at Abdullah Bin Jassim St, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 AM
- Tuesday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 AM
- Wednesday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 AM
- Thursday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 AM
- Friday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 AM
- Saturday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 AM
- Sunday: 8:30 AM – 1:30 AM

Nourlaya★★★★★ 4.7 (5,792)

1-2 hours

Map

Nourlaya is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 5792 reviews. Located at Sahat, Msherieb Down Town، 2، شارع الكهرباء، الدوحة، Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 PM – 12:30 AM
- Friday: 12:00 PM – 12:30 AM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM

Baith Maryam Brothers Restaurant, Qatar★★★★★ 4.7 (1,472)

1-2 hours

Map

Baith Maryam Brothers Restaurant, Qatar is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 1472 reviews. Located at Souq Waqif, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 8:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Tuesday: 8:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Wednesday: 8:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Thursday: 8:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Friday: 8:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Saturday: 8:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Sunday: 8:00 AM – 2:00 AM

Thalatheen★★★★★ 4.7 (249)

1-2 hours

Map

Thalatheen is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 249 reviews. Located at National Museum of Qatar, Museum Park St, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Tuesday: Closed
- Wednesday: 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Thursday: 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Friday: 1:00 – 9:00 PM
- Saturday: 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Sunday: 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM

REBERU Contemporary Cuisine★★★★★ 4.7 (1,141)

1-2 hours

Map

REBERU Contemporary Cuisine is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 1141 reviews. Located at Building 3, Rawdat Al Khail St, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Tuesday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Wednesday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Thursday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Friday: 12:30 – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 12:00 – 11:30 PM

Saffron Doha★★★★★ 4.7 (237)

1-2 hours

Map

Saffron Doha is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.7★ from 237 reviews. Located at Al Khaleej St, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Tuesday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Wednesday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Thursday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Friday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Saturday: 12:30 – 11:00 PM
- Sunday: Closed

Bayt El Talleh Restaurant★★★★★ 4.6 (15,154)

1-2 hours

Map

Bayt El Talleh Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.6★ from 15154 reviews. Located at Katara Cultural Village, Katara Hills, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Tuesday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Wednesday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Thursday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Friday: 9:00 – 11:00 AM, 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 11:30 PM
- Sunday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 1:00 – 11:30 PM

Yasmine Palace Restaurant★★★★★ 4.6 (9,015)

1-2 hours

Map

Yasmine Palace Restaurant is a highly-rated restaurant in Doha, rated 4.6★ from 9015 reviews. Located at Parcel 18, Fountain Round About, Pearl Qatar, Doha, Qatar.

Opening Hours

- Monday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Tuesday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Wednesday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Thursday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Friday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM
- Sunday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 AM

Practical Information

Optimal Travel Seasons

Peak Season (November - March): The absolute best time to visit Doha with *pleasant temperatures* ranging from 15-25°C (59-77°F). Perfect weather for outdoor activities, desert safaris, and beach visits. This period sees the highest tourist numbers and premium hotel rates, especially around major events like the Qatar International Food Festival and Doha Jewellery & Watches Exhibition.

Shoulder Season (October & April): Excellent compromise with temperatures around 25-32°C (77-90°F). Fewer crowds, better hotel deals, and still comfortable for most activities. October marks the beginning of pleasant weather while April offers end-of-season bargains.

Summer (May - September): Extremely hot with temperatures often exceeding 40°C (104°F) and high humidity. Not recommended for outdoor exploration, but indoor attractions (museums, malls) remain comfortable. Significant hotel discounts available for heat-tolerant budget travelers. Most activities shift to early morning or evening hours.

Monthly Breakdown:

Month	Avg Temp	Highlights	Crowds
November-February	15-25°C	Perfect weather, festivals, outdoor activities	High
March-April	20-30°C	Good weather, spring blooms, moderate prices	Medium
May-September	35-45°C	Indoor attractions, lowest prices, extreme heat	Low
October	25-32°C	Weather improving, pre-season rates	Medium

Ramadan Considerations: During the holy month (dates vary annually), restaurants close during daylight hours, and modest behavior is especially important. However, it's a unique cultural experience with special evening festivities, night markets, and Iftar celebrations. Hotels and tourist areas maintain services for non-Muslim visitors.

Getting Around Doha

□□ Doha Metro (Highly Recommended)

The **state-of-the-art driverless metro** is the most efficient way to navigate Doha. Three lines (Red, Green, Gold) connect major attractions, hotels, and the airport.

- **Fares:** Standard Class QAR 2 per trip, Gold Class QAR 6, Day Pass QAR 6

- **Karwa Smartcard:** Rechargeable card (QAR 10 deposit) used across metro and buses
- **The published Metro schedule lists Saturday–Thursday 5 AM–1 AM and Friday 9 AM–1 AM; check Qatar Rail for updates.**
- **Key Stations:** Souq Waqif, Katara, DECC (near MIA), Msheireb (interchange hub), Education City, Lusail
- **Benefits:** Air-conditioned, punctual, clean, safe, and extremely affordable

□□ Taxis & Ride-Hailing

Karwa Taxis: Official turquoise taxis with meters. Reliable but can be difficult to hail. Call center: 4458 8888

Uber & Careem: Widely available with competitive pricing. English-speaking drivers and cashless payment. Download apps before arrival.

Typical fares: Airport to city center QAR 50-70, Cross-city trips QAR 20-40

□□ Public Buses

Extensive **Mowasalat bus network** covering the entire city. Very affordable (QAR 2-4 per trip) but less convenient for tourists. Useful for reaching areas without metro coverage. Karwa Smartcard accepted.

□□ Water Transport

- **Ferry Services:** Modern water taxis connecting waterfront destinations (West Bay, Pearl, Katara, Lusail). QAR 5-10 per trip.
- **Traditional Dhows:** Tourist cruises departing from Corniche. Sunset cruises QAR 50-150 depending on duration and inclusions.

□□ Car Rental

International agencies available at airport and throughout city. Recommended for day trips to remote areas.

- **Requirements:** International Driving Permit, credit card, minimum age 21-25 (varies by company)
- **Costs:** Economy cars from QAR 80/day, 4WD for desert trips QAR 200+/day
- **Driving:** Right-hand traffic, well-maintained roads, highway speed limits 100-120 km/h
- **Important:** 4WD essential for desert/beach destinations; insurance coverage crucial

□□ Alternative Transport

Bicycles: Rental bikes available along Corniche and major parks. Best used early morning/evening. Some hotels offer free bike rentals.

Walking: Pedestrian-friendly areas include Corniche, Souq Waqif, Msheireb, Katara, and The Pearl. Summer heat limits walking to indoor-connected areas.

> **Pro Tips:** Metro is fastest for tourist attractions. Combine metro with taxis for optimal flexibility. Book Uber/Careem during rush hours (7-9 AM, 5-7 PM). Always negotiate dhow cruise prices or book through reputable operators.

✈ Airport Transfer

Hamad International Airport (DOH) to city center:

- **Doha Metro Red Line:** Direct from the airport station to Msheireb (city center) in about 20 minutes, standard fare QAR 2
- **For the airport–DECC route, Route 777 is listed at QAR 5, about every 20 minutes, with service 5 AM–midnight.**
- **Karwa Taxi:** Metered taxi to downtown Doha takes about 25 minutes and costs roughly QAR 60 to 90
- **Private Limousine Transfer:** Pre-booked private car to the city center in about 25 minutes for a fixed rate of around QAR 180 to 250

Shopping in Doha

□□ Luxury Malls

Villaggio Mall: Venetian-themed mall with gondola rides, 200+ stores including international luxury brands, family entertainment, and diverse dining.

Mall of Qatar: One of the region's largest with 500+ retailers, luxury fashion, IMAX cinema, indoor theme park, and the massive Carrefour hypermarket.

Place Vendôme: Opulent French-inspired luxury mall in Lusail with high-end boutiques, fine dining, and stunning architecture worth visiting for aesthetics alone.

Doha Festival City: Major shopping destination with international brands, VOX Cinemas, entertainment zones, and excellent dining options. Features both luxury and mid-range retailers.

□□ Traditional Markets

Souq Waqif: The *must-visit traditional market* for authentic shopping experiences:

- **Spices & Herbs:** Fragrant stalls selling saffron, cardamom, dried limes, baharat blends
- **Textiles & Clothing:** Traditional Qatari thobes, abayas, pashminas, embroidered fabrics
- **Perfumes & Oud:** Arabic attars, oud wood, incense, traditional fragrances
- **Handicrafts:** Pottery, carpets, metalwork, wooden items, camel leather goods
- **Souvenirs:** Miniature dhows, Arabic coffee sets, dates, traditional jewelry

Gold Souq (within Souq Waqif): Dazzling displays of gold jewelry. Qatar's gold purity standards ensure quality. Prices based on weight plus craftsmanship.

□□ What to Buy

Top Souvenirs & Gifts:

1. **Dates:** Premium Qatari dates beautifully packaged, especially from local farms
2. **Arabic Coffee Sets:** Dallah (coffee pot) with finjan cups, often ornately decorated
3. **Oud & Perfumes:** Traditional Arabian fragrances, oud chips, bakhoor incense
4. **Saffron:** High-quality threads sold by weight at competitive prices
5. **Textiles:** Pashmina shawls, embroidered fabrics, traditional garments
6. **Pearl Jewelry:** Reflecting Qatar's pearl diving heritage
7. **Camel Milk Products:** Chocolates, soaps, skincare items
8. **Traditional Handicrafts:** Khoos (palm frond) items, pottery, wooden crafts

□□ Bargaining Tips

- **Where to Haggle:** Expected at Souq Waqif and traditional markets; NOT in malls or fixed-price shops
- **Starting Point:** Begin at 50-60% of asking price for textiles/souvenirs, 70-80% for expensive items
- **Technique:** Be polite, friendly, and patient. Express interest but not desperation. Walking away often brings better offers.
- **Cash Advantage:** Paying cash may secure better prices than card payments
- **Bulk Discounts:** Buying multiple items gives stronger negotiating position

□□ Shopping Districts

The Pearl-Qatar: Upscale boutiques, international designer stores, waterfront shopping with marina views.

Msheireb Downtown: Contemporary shopping mixed with cultural spaces, local designers, and modern Qatari retail concepts.

□ Shopping Hours

Malls: Daily 10 AM - 10 PM (extended to midnight on weekends). Some close Friday mornings.

Souq Waqif: Most shops open 8 AM - 12 PM, then 4 PM - 10 PM. Busiest and most atmospheric in evenings.

Ramadan Hours: Adjusted schedules with many shops closing during day, opening after Iftar until late night.

> **Shopping Pro Tips:** Visit Souq Waqif in the evening for best atmosphere and cooler temperatures. Major malls offer VAT refunds for tourists (13% - claim at airport). Exchange rates at malls typically less favorable than banks. Thursday-Friday are busiest shopping days when locals have time off.

Annual Events & Festivals

□□ Major Cultural Events

Qatar National Day (December 18): The nation's biggest celebration commemorating the unification of Qatar. Expect spectacular *fireworks displays*, military parades, traditional performances, street festivals, and patriotic decorations citywide. Many attractions offer free entry. The Corniche becomes a massive celebration zone.

Eid al-Fitr & Eid al-Adha: Major Islamic holidays marked by prayers, family gatherings, special meals, and festivities. Shopping festivals, fireworks, and extended celebrations. Dates vary annually based on lunar calendar. Expect businesses to close or operate reduced hours.

Ramadan: The holy month transforms Doha with special night markets, Iftar tents, traditional entertainment, and spiritual atmosphere. Souq Waqif and Katara host Ramadan festivals with cultural activities, traditional foods, and evening festivities. Unique opportunity to experience Islamic culture, though daytime restaurant closures affect tourists.

□□ Arts & Culture

Doha Jewellery & Watches Exhibition (DJWE) - February: Prestigious international exhibition showcasing luxury timepieces and exquisite jewelry. Held at Doha Exhibition and Convention Center, attracting collectors and luxury enthusiasts worldwide.

Qatar International Food Festival - March: Multi-week culinary celebration at various venues featuring international chefs, food trucks, cooking demonstrations, and tastings. Family-friendly event showcasing global cuisines alongside traditional Qatari dishes.

Ajyal Film Festival - November: Organized by Doha Film Institute, celebrating cinema for young audiences with screenings, workshops, and industry discussions. International films, family movies, and emerging filmmakers featured at Katara Cultural Village.

Qatar International Art Festival: Biennial event transforming public spaces with installations, performances, and exhibitions by international artists. Features contemporary art across various mediums throughout Katara and city locations.

□ Sports Events

Qatar Racing Events (October - April): Horse racing at Qatar Racing Club and camel racing at Al Shahaniya. Weekly races during season, culminating in major international competitions. Free admission to most races.

Qatar Marine Festival - February/March: Celebrating maritime heritage with dhow races, pearl diving demonstrations, traditional boat displays, and water sports at Katara Beach. Family activities and cultural performances.

Qatar International Boat Show: Luxury yacht exhibition showcasing maritime technology, water sports equipment, and sailing opportunities. Held at Old Doha Port.

Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe Meeting - October: World-class horse racing event at Longchamp Racecourse, attracting international thoroughbreds and racing enthusiasts.

□□ Active Events

Standard Chartered Doha Marathon - January: Annual marathon with full, half, and 10K distances along scenic routes. Attracts international runners and local fitness enthusiasts.

Qatar International Bike Tour - February: Multi-stage professional cycling race through Qatar's landscapes, part of UCI calendar.

□□ Family & Entertainment

Eid Festival (Various Locations): Dedicated family festivals during both Eid holidays featuring rides, games, performances, and cultural activities at parks and venues citywide.

Shop Qatar - January/February: Month-long shopping festival with mega sales, promotions, entertainment, raffle draws for luxury prizes (cars, gold, cash). All major malls and retail areas participate.

Sealine Beach Festival - Winter Months: Desert camping festival with activities, entertainment, food stalls, and family zones near the famous sand dunes.

□□ National Holidays

Holiday	Date	Impact
Qatar National Day	December 18	Major celebrations, possible closures
Qatar National Sport Day	Second Tuesday of February	Nationwide fitness activities, business closures
Eid al-Fitr	Varies (lunar calendar)	3-4 day holiday, most businesses closed
Eid al-Adha	Varies (lunar calendar)	3-4 day holiday, most businesses closed

> **Festival Tips:** Book hotels well in advance for National Day and major events. Check event calendars at Visit Qatar website for exact dates. Many cultural events offer free admission. Katara Cultural Village hosts year-round weekend events and performances worth checking.

Sample Day-by-Day Itineraries

Day 1: Doha Classics - Culture & Heritage

Morning (8:00 AM - 12:00 PM):

- **8:00 AM:** Start at *Museum of Islamic Art* (opens at 9 AM). Spend 2 hours exploring the magnificent collection. Early visit avoids crowds.
- **10:30 AM:** Walk through adjacent MIA Park for skyline photos and coffee at the waterfront café.
- **11:00 AM:** Take short taxi/walk to *National Museum of Qatar*. Explore Jean Nouvel's architectural masterpiece and immersive Qatar history exhibitions.

Afternoon (12:30 PM - 5:00 PM):

- **12:30 PM:** Lunch at National Museum café or nearby restaurant in Old Doha.
- **2:00 PM:** Explore *Souq Waqif* - the labyrinthine traditional market. Browse spices, textiles, handicrafts. Visit Falcon Souq.
- **4:00 PM:** Enjoy traditional Arabic coffee at a souq café, people-watching as the market awakens.

Evening (5:30 PM - 10:00 PM):

- **5:30 PM:** Walk along the *Doha Corniche* as temperatures cool. Watch traditional dhows and modern skyline.
- **7:00 PM:** Sunset dhow cruise from Corniche (1 hour) for unique city perspectives.
- **8:30 PM:** Dinner at Souq Waqif - try traditional Qatari cuisine at Al Jasra or Damasca One.

Day 2: Modern Doha - Architecture & Luxury

Morning (9:00 AM - 12:30 PM):

- **9:00 AM:** Visit *The Pearl-Qatar*. Stroll the Venetian-inspired Qanat Quartier, explore Porto Arabia marina.
- **10:30 AM:** Coffee at waterfront café watching superyachts.
- **11:30 AM:** Explore *Katara Cultural Village* - traditional architecture, Blue Mosque, galleries, and beach promenade.

Afternoon (1:00 PM - 5:00 PM):

- **1:00 PM:** Lunch at Katara - diverse international restaurants with sea views.
- **2:30 PM:** Visit *Aspire Zone & Park*. Walk through Doha's largest park, see Aspire Tower (The Torch).
- **3:30 PM:** Shopping at *Villaggio Mall* (nearby) - Venetian-themed luxury shopping with gondola rides.

Evening (5:30 PM - 10:00 PM):

- **5:30 PM:** Head to *West Bay* to admire futuristic skyscraper district.
- **7:00 PM:** Rooftop dinner at hotel in West Bay with panoramic city views.
- **9:00 PM:** Evening stroll through illuminated *Msheireb Downtown*, experiencing smart city design.

Day 3: Desert Adventure & Ancient Qatar

Morning (7:00 AM - 1:00 PM):

- **7:00 AM:** Early departure for *desert safari to Inland Sea (Khor Al Adaid)*. Join organized tour with 4WD.
- **8:00 AM - 12:00 PM:** Dune bashing, camel rides, sandboarding. Visit the spectacular Inland Sea where dunes meet water.
- **12:00 PM:** Traditional Bedouin-style lunch in desert camp.

Afternoon (2:00 PM - 6:00 PM):

- **2:00 PM:** Return to Doha, rest at hotel.
- **4:00 PM:** Visit *Msheireb Museums* - four heritage houses exploring Qatar's transformation.
- **5:30 PM:** Explore surrounding Msheireb Downtown district's architecture and cafés.

Evening (7:00 PM - 10:00 PM):

- **7:00 PM:** Dinner at contemporary Qatari restaurant like IDAM by Alain Ducasse at MIA.
- **9:00 PM:** Evening return to Souq Waqif for vibrant nighttime atmosphere, street performances, and shopping.

Day 4: Northern Excursion - Nature & History

Morning (8:00 AM - 1:00 PM):

- **8:00 AM:** Drive to *Al Zubarah Fort* (90 minutes) - UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **9:30 AM:** Explore fort and archaeological site with visitor center exhibitions.
- **11:00 AM:** Continue to *Al Thakira Mangroves* for kayaking through serene channels (book in advance).
- **12:30 PM:** Lunch at Al Khor coastal town.

Afternoon (2:00 PM - 6:00 PM):

- **2:00 PM:** Visit *Al Khor Museum* showcasing regional archaeology.
- **3:00 PM:** Relax at Al Thakhira Beach or Purple Island nature area.
- **4:30 PM:** Return journey to Doha.

Evening (7:00 PM - 10:00 PM):

- **7:00 PM:** Dinner at The Pearl-Qatar's waterfront restaurants.
- **9:00 PM:** Evening stroll along Porto Arabia, enjoying marina atmosphere and luxury yacht displays.

Day 5: Leisure & Shopping - Customize Your Experience

Option A - Beach & Relaxation:

- **Morning:** *Banana Island Resort* day pass - private island with beaches, pools, water sports.
- **Afternoon:** Continue island relaxation or return for spa treatment in city.
- **Evening:** Sunset at Katara Beach, dinner at beachfront restaurant.

Option B - Shopping & Modern Attractions:

- **Morning:** *Place Vendôme Mall* in Lusail - luxury shopping in opulent French setting.
- **Midday:** Explore *Lusail City* - futuristic smart city, Lusail Stadium tour, Lusail Boulevard.

- **Afternoon:** *Mall of Qatar* or *Doha Festival City* for extensive shopping.
- **Evening:** Dinner at mall restaurants, cinema, or entertainment venues.

Option C - Art & Culture Immersion:

- **Morning:** *Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art* - contemporary Arab artistic expressions.
- **Late Morning:** *Qatar National Library* - architectural wonder, peaceful reading spaces.
- **Afternoon:** Visit *Fire Station Artist in Residence* (Mathaf) for local artist studios.
- **Late Afternoon:** Explore public art installations including Richard Serra's 'Seven'.
- **Evening:** Cultural performance at Katara or Opera House (check schedule).

Itinerary Tips: Adjust timing for summer heat - start earlier, longer midday breaks. Book desert safaris and boat trips in advance. Fridays see crowds at popular spots - plan accordingly. Allow flexibility for prayer times when some venues close briefly. Combine nearby attractions to minimize travel time. Metro efficiently connects many Day 1 and Day 2 attractions.

Best Photography & Instagram Locations

□□ Iconic Skyline Shots

1. Museum of Islamic Art Park:

- **Best Time:** Sunset (golden hour) and blue hour after sunset
- **Shot:** MIA building with West Bay skyline in background. Symmetrical architecture reflects beautifully in calm days.
- **Pro Tip:** Use the park's walkway for foreground interest. Night shots capture illuminated buildings reflecting in water.

2. Doha Corniche (near Sheraton):

- **Best Time:** Early morning or sunset
- **Shot:** Panoramic West Bay skyline with traditional dhow boats in foreground. The curve of the Corniche creates leading lines.
- **Pro Tip:** Golden hour provides warm light on buildings. Include dhows for cultural context. Long exposure at night for light trails.

3. Katara Cultural Village Beach:

- **Best Time:** Late afternoon to sunset
- **Shot:** West Bay skyline from beach perspective with water reflection. Pigeons and traditional architecture add foreground interest.
- **Pro Tip:** Silhouette shots work beautifully at sunset. Capture traditional fishing boats against modern backdrop for contrast.

□□ Architectural Marvels

4. National Museum of Qatar:

- **Best Time:** Midday for dramatic shadows, late afternoon for warmer tones
- **Shot:** Desert rose-inspired interlocking discs creating abstract patterns. Multiple angles from different distances.
- **Pro Tip:** Get close for architectural details or step back for complete structure. The courtyard offers interesting perspectives.

5. State Grand Mosque (Imam Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab):

- **Best Time:** Early morning or late afternoon to avoid harsh overhead sun
- **Shot:** Pristine white architecture against blue sky. Symmetrical arches and courtyard patterns.
- **Pro Tip:** Wide-angle lens captures scale. Geometric floor patterns create stunning overhead shots. Respectful photography only.

6. Katara Mosque (Blue Mosque):

- **Best Time:** Late afternoon when sun illuminates the blue tiles
- **Shot:** Intricate Turkish tile work, minarets, and colorful facade details.
- **Pro Tip:** Close-ups of tile patterns are Instagram gold. Exterior only for non-Muslims. Beautiful against sunset sky.

□□ Public Art Installations

7. Richard Serra's 'Seven':

- **Best Time:** Golden hour for dramatic lighting and shadows
- **Shot:** Monumental steel plates against desert landscape. Walk between plates for scale and perspective.
- **Pro Tip:** Human figure adds scale. Experiment with angles - looking up creates powerful compositions. Rust texture details fascinating.

8. Lamp Bear (Hamad International Airport):

- **Best Time:** Anytime - indoor location
- **Shot:** Urs Fischer's giant yellow teddy bear holding lamp. Playful, whimsical, instantly recognizable.
- **Pro Tip:** Stand back for full sculpture or get close for creative angles. Works great as travel arrival/departure post.

9. ORYX Sculpture (Hamad Airport):

- **Best Time:** Anytime - indoor location
- **Shot:** Colorful mosaic oryx symbolizing Qatar. Intricate tile details up close or full sculpture from distance.
- **Pro Tip:** The sculpture's colors pop beautifully in photos. Less crowded than Lamp Bear for clear shots.

□□ Natural Landscapes

10. Inland Sea (Khor Al Adaid):

- **Best Time:** Sunset - absolutely spectacular
- **Shot:** Towering sand dunes meeting turquoise water. UNESCO natural reserve offers unique desert-sea contrast.
- **Pro Tip:** Climb dunes for elevated perspective. Footprints in sand add texture. Sunset reflection on water is magical. Requires desert safari tour.

11. Sealine Beach & Dunes:

- **Best Time:** Sunrise or sunset for golden sand tones
- **Shot:** Rolling dunes, 4WD vehicles creating drama, endless desert meeting sky.
- **Pro Tip:** Silhouettes work beautifully. Capture dune textures and ripples. Action shots of dune bashing add excitement.

12. Al Thakira Mangroves:

- **Best Time:** Early morning for calm water and golden light
- **Shot:** Kayaking through green mangrove channels, wildlife (herons, flamingos, crabs).
- **Pro Tip:** Waterproof camera/phone case essential. Reflection shots in still water. Aerial perspective if possible for pattern view.

□□ Urban & Cultural Scenes

13. The Pearl-Qatar - Qanat Quartier:

- **Best Time:** Evening when lights illuminate colorful buildings
- **Shot:** Venetian-inspired colorful architecture, canals, luxury yachts, European-style plazas.
- **Pro Tip:** Reflections in canal water. Architectural details and vibrant building colors. Marina with yachts at Porto Arabia.

14. Souq Waqif Alleyways:

- **Best Time:** Late afternoon to evening for activity and warm light

- **Shot:** Traditional architecture, colorful spice displays, bustling market atmosphere, local culture.
- **Pro Tip:** Capture authentic moments - vendors, shoppers, traditional clothing. Spice piles offer vibrant colors. Falcon Souq unique. Always ask permission for portraits.

15. Msheireb Downtown Streets:

- **Best Time:** Late afternoon for architectural lighting
- **Shot:** Contemporary sustainable architecture blending tradition and modernity. Clean lines, geometric patterns.
- **Pro Tip:** Symmetry and leading lines abound. Modern interpretation of traditional Qatari design elements. Evening illumination beautiful.

□□ Sunset & Night Photography

16. Al Bidda Park:

- **Best Time:** Sunset to blue hour
- **Shot:** West Bay skyline with MIA in foreground, dhows, palm trees.
- **Pro Tip:** Long exposure captures light trails from boats. Skyline reflections in calm water. 'Seven' sculpture nearby for additional shots.

17. Aspire Zone at Night:

- **Best Time:** After dark when The Torch illuminates
- **Shot:** Aspire Tower's stunning light displays, reflections in park lake, illuminated pathways.
- **Pro Tip:** The tower's LED displays change colors creating dynamic photo opportunities. Use park lake for mirror reflections. Tripod for long exposure night shots.

18. Lusail Boulevard at Night:

- **Best Time:** Evening after sunset
- **Shot:** Futuristic smart city architecture, illuminated buildings, modern urban landscape.
- **Pro Tip:** Architectural lighting creates sci-fi atmosphere. Wide boulevards offer perspective shots. Lusail Stadium nearby for sports architecture.

□□ Hidden Gems

19. Zekreet Film City:

- **Best Time:** Sunrise or late afternoon for dramatic shadows
- **Shot:** Abandoned film set village, desert landscape, post-apocalyptic atmosphere, mushroom rock formations nearby.
- **Pro Tip:** Eerie, otherworldly location perfect for creative photography. Minimal crowds. Combine with Zekreet Fort ruins. 4WD required.

20. Education City Mosque:

- **Best Time:** Late afternoon to capture golden light on facade
- **Shot:** Stunning contemporary Islamic architecture with geometric patterns, massive columns, innovative design.
- **Pro Tip:** Less touristy than other mosques. Modern interpretation of traditional design. Interior photography if permitted during open hours.

□□ Instagram-Specific Tips

- **Golden Hour Magic:** Doha's desert light creates incredible golden hours. Plan key shots 1 hour before sunset.
- **Contrast Themes:** Juxtapose traditional (dhows, souqs) with modern (skyscrapers) for compelling storytelling.
- **Symmetry & Patterns:** Islamic architecture offers endless geometric patterns - fill your frame with details.
- **Color Pop:** Blue Mosque tiles, Souq Waqif spices, Pearl's colorful buildings - vibrant colors photograph beautifully.
- **Scale & Perspective:** Include people in architectural shots to show massive scale of buildings and sculptures.
- **Cultural Respect:** Always ask permission before photographing people, especially women. Be respectful at religious sites.
- **Drone Photography:** Requires permit from Ministry of Transport. Don't fly without proper authorization.

Photography Essentials: Bring sun protection - you'll spend time waiting for perfect light. Download offline maps to locate spots. Consider sunrise shoots to avoid crowds and heat. Respect prayer times at mosques. Best months for photography: November-March with clear skies and comfortable temperatures. Many locations free, making Doha excellent for budget photography enthusiasts.

□□ Bonus Video Content Spots

- **Corniche Walk:** Walking footage with skyline pan - perfect for travel vlogs
- **Souq Waqif Atmosphere:** Capture bustling market sounds, spice vendors, falcon displays
- **Dune Bashing:** Action camera footage of desert safari creates exciting content
- **Dhow Cruise:** Smooth boat footage with sunset backdrop, timelapse of changing light
- **Metro Journey:** Futuristic stations and sleek trains showcase modern Doha

Electrical Standards & Connectivity

⚡ Voltage & Frequency

- **Voltage:** 240V AC
- **Frequency:** 50 Hz
- **Standard:** Same as UK, Europe, Australia, and most of Asia

□□ Plug Types

Primary Types Used in Qatar:

- **Type D:** Three large round pins in triangular pattern (old Indian/South African standard) - most common in older buildings
- **Type G:** Three rectangular pins (UK standard) - increasingly common in newer developments and hotels
- **Occasionally Type A/B:** Some outlets accept American-style flat pins, but don't rely on this

Important: Qatar uses mixed plug standards. *Bring a universal adapter* for guaranteed compatibility across all accommodations and public charging points.

□□ What Travelers Need

From North America (US/Canada):

- Voltage converter AND plug adapter required (US uses 110V/120V)
- Most modern electronics (phones, laptops, camera chargers) have built-in converters - check device label for "100-240V" rating
- Hair dryers, shavers, and heating devices typically need voltage converters unless dual-voltage

From UK/Europe/Australia/Asia:

- Only plug adapter needed (voltage compatible)
- UK visitors: Type G plugs work in many places but bring Type D adapter as backup
- European visitors: Need adapter for both Type D and Type G sockets

□□ Hotel Accommodations

Most **international chain hotels** provide:

- Universal outlets accepting multiple plug types
- USB charging ports in rooms (increasingly common)
- Adapters available at front desk (limited quantity - bring your own)
- 110V outlets in bathrooms for shavers (often labeled)
- Voltage converters available on request

□□ Where to Buy Adapters

- **Hamad International Airport:** Electronics stores in departure/arrival halls (expensive but convenient)
- **Carrefour/Lulu Hypermarkets:** Affordable adapters widely available
- **Electronics Souq (Souq Waqif area):** Budget options, bargaining possible
- **Major malls:** Electronics retailers carry quality adapters

Cost: QAR 10-50 depending on quality and type

□□ Charging & Connectivity

Public Charging:

- Metro stations have USB charging ports
- Many cafés and restaurants offer outlets and USB ports
- Shopping malls provide charging stations
- Airport has extensive charging facilities throughout terminals

Power Banks:

- Useful for day-long sightseeing in heat (drains batteries faster)
- Must be carried in hand luggage on flights
- Malls and electronics stores sell if forgotten

□□ Energy & Sustainability Notes

- **Air Conditioning:** Qatar's extreme heat means AC runs constantly - expect higher energy consumption
- **Solar Initiatives:** Qatar investing in solar energy; some facilities use renewable power
- **Energy Efficiency:** Many hotels participate in towel/linen reuse programs

□□ Internet & WiFi

Connectivity:

- **Hotels:** Free WiFi standard in most accommodations (verify when booking)
- **Public WiFi:** Available in malls, museums, airports, cafés - often free with registration
- **Mobile Data:** Excellent 4G/5G coverage throughout Doha
- **SIM Cards:** Available at airport and telecom shops (Ooredoo, Vodafone Qatar). Tourist SIM packages with data available.

Mobile Networks:

- Ooredoo and Vodafone Qatar are main providers
- Tourist SIM cards: QAR 55-100 for 7-30 day packages with data
- Purchase at airport arrivals or any telecom shop with passport
- Excellent coverage across Qatar, including desert areas

  Essential Recommendations: Bring universal adapter from home (cheaper and more reliable). Check if your hotel has universal outlets before traveling. Bring power bank for desert trips where charging unavailable. Most modern device chargers handle voltage automatically - check label before buying converter. Download offline maps and content before desert excursions where connectivity may be limited.

Culinary Experiences in Doha

□□ Must-Try Qatari & Arabic Dishes

1. Machbous (National Dish):

Qatar's signature *spiced rice dish* with tender meat (chicken, lamb, or fish), slow-cooked with aromatic spices including saffron, cardamom, and dried limes. The rice absorbs rich flavors and turns golden. Often garnished with fried onions and

nuts. **Where to try:** Al Tawash, Al Mourjan, traditional restaurants at Souq Waqif.

2. Harees:

Traditional *porridge-like dish* of wheat and meat slow-cooked for hours until creamy consistency. Especially popular during Ramadan. Topped with ghee and cinnamon. Comfort food with ancient Bedouin origins. **Where to try:** Local Qatari restaurants, hotel Ramadan tents.

3. Madrouba:

Creamy rice and chicken dish with distinctive thick, porridge-like texture. Seasoned with turmeric and other spices, creating golden color. Labor-intensive preparation shows hospitality. **Where to try:** Authentic Qatari family restaurants.

4. Saloona:

Hearty *vegetable stew* with meat, rich broth flavored with tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, and spice blend. Served with rice or bread. Everyday Qatari comfort food. **Where to try:** Local cafés and home-style restaurants.

5. Kousa Mahshi (Stuffed Vegetables):

Zucchini, eggplant, or peppers stuffed with spiced rice and meat mixture, cooked in tomato sauce. Common across Arab world with Qatari variations. **Where to try:** Lebanese and Arabic restaurants throughout Doha.

6. Balaleet:

Unique *sweet and savory breakfast* dish combining sweetened vermicelli noodles with cardamom, saffron, and rose water, topped with savory omelet. The sweet-salty combination surprisingly delicious. **Where to try:** Local breakfast spots, hotel breakfast buffets.

7. Thareed:

Bread soaked in meat and vegetable stew, creating satisfying layered dish. Traditional Bedouin meal with ancient origins. **Where to try:** Traditional Qatari restaurants.

8. Ghuzi (Khuzi):

Whole roasted lamb served over rice mixed with vegetables and nuts, slow-roasted until tender. Festive dish for special occasions. **Where to try:** High-end Arabic restaurants, special event venues.

□□ Breads & Sides

- **Regag:** Thin, crispy flatbread cooked on dome-shaped griddle, served with cheese, honey, or savory toppings
- **Karak Chai:** Sweet, strong milky tea with cardamom - quintessential Qatari beverage found everywhere
- **Arabic Coffee (Gahwa):** Lightly roasted coffee with cardamom, served in small cups. Symbol of hospitality
- **Hummus, Falafel, Fattoush:** Levantine staples found throughout Doha
- **Fresh Dates:** Qatar produces premium dates - try at souqs and specialty shops

□□ Desserts & Sweets

- **Umm Ali:** Warm bread pudding with nuts, raisins, and cream - Egyptian origin but beloved in Qatar
- **Luqaimat:** Sweet dumplings drizzled with date syrup or honey, crispy outside, soft inside
- **Baklava:** Layers of phyllo pastry with nuts and honey syrup
- **Kunafa:** Shredded phyllo pastry with sweet cheese filling, soaked in syrup
- **Camel Milk Chocolate:** Unique Qatari specialty - creamy, slightly salty, surprisingly delicious

□□ Where to Eat - By Budget

Budget-Friendly (QAR 20-50 per person):

- **Souq Waqif Food Court & Restaurants:** Authentic Arabic food at reasonable prices with atmosphere
- **Parisa Souq Waqif:** Iranian cuisine, generous portions, great value
- **Turkish restaurants:** Abundant throughout city with affordable mezze and grills

- **Chapati & Karak stands:** Street food style, super cheap, very local experience
- **Shopping mall food courts:** International chains and local eateries

Mid-Range (QAR 100-200 per person):

- **Al Tawash:** Authentic Qatari cuisine in elegant setting
- **Damasca One (Souq Waqif):** Syrian cuisine with beautiful décor
- **Katara restaurants:** Diverse options from Mediterranean to Asian along cultural village
- **The Pearl-Qatar dining:** Waterfront restaurants with international cuisines
- **Bandar Aden (Souq Waqif):** Yemeni food with rooftop seating

Fine Dining (QAR 300+ per person):

- **IDAM by Alain Ducasse:** French-Mediterranean fine dining at Museum of Islamic Art
- **Morimoto Doha:** Celebrity chef Japanese fusion at Mondrian Hotel
- **Nusr-Et Steakhouse:** Famous Salt Bae restaurant at The Pearl
- **Market by Jean-Georges:** Contemporary American at W Doha
- **Hakkasan:** Michelin-starred Chinese at St. Regis
- **La Spiga by Paper Moon:** Upscale Italian at The Pearl

☕ Café Culture

- **Traditional Arabic Coffee Houses:** Souq Waqif cafés serving gahwa, karak chai, shisha
- **International Chains:** Starbucks, Costa, Tim Hortons everywhere
- **Specialty Coffee:** Flat White, Espressamente, %Arabica for quality brews
- **Shisha Cafés:** Popular evening activity, especially at Katara and Pearl

□□ International Cuisine

Doha's **multicultural population** ensures world-class international dining:

- **Indian/Pakistani:** Exceptional subcontinental cuisine reflecting large expat community
- **Filipino:** Authentic restaurants throughout city
- **Japanese:** From budget sushi to high-end kaiseki
- **Italian:** Numerous trattorias and fine dining establishments
- **American:** Burgers, steaks, BBQ widely available
- **Asian Fusion:** Pan-Asian restaurants in hotels and malls

□□ Beverages & Alcohol

Non-Alcoholic:

- Fresh juices and smoothies abundant everywhere
- Jellab: Sweet date syrup drink with raisins and pine nuts
- Laban: Salted yogurt drink, refreshing in heat
- Tamar Hindi: Tamarind juice
- Vimto: Popular sweet drink, especially during Ramadan

Alcohol:

- Qatar is Islamic country with *restricted alcohol sales*
- Available only in licensed hotel restaurants and bars (expensive)
- NOT sold in regular restaurants, shops, or supermarkets
- Visitors can purchase at Qatar Distribution Company (QDC) with permit, but process complicated for tourists
- Public intoxication strictly illegal with severe penalties
- Many enjoy Doha's culinary scene without alcohol; mocktails sophisticated

□□ Dining Etiquette & Tips

- **Ramadan:** Restaurants closed during daylight hours; eating/drinking publicly not allowed. Hotels serve guests discretely. Evening iftar feasts special experience.

- **Modest Dress:** While hotels relaxed, traditional restaurants appreciate covered shoulders and knees
- **Right Hand:** In traditional settings, eat with right hand (left considered unclean)
- **Tipping:** 10-15% becoming standard, though service charge often included
- **Reservations:** Book ahead for popular restaurants, especially weekends and Thursday nights
- **Prayer Times:** Some restaurants pause service briefly during prayer times
- **Friday Brunches:** Popular social tradition at hotels - book ahead, expect crowds

□□ Food Shopping & Markets

- **Souq Waqif:** Spices, dates, nuts, traditional foods
- **Central Market (Souq Al Wakra):** Fresh fish, vegetables, authentic market experience
- **Carrefour/Lulu Hypermarkets:** Western and international products
- **Specialty stores:** International foods from home countries

Foodie Tips: Souq Waqif offers best authentic experience at reasonable prices. Try karak chai at every opportunity - it's addictive! Friday brunches at hotels expensive but all-inclusive with entertainment. Dates from Qatar are world-class souvenirs. Don't miss trying camel milk chocolate - unique local specialty. Food delivery apps (Talabat, Rafeeq) widely used. Tap water safe to drink but most prefer bottled. Dining out major social activity - restaurants lively, especially evenings and weekends.

Tourist Passes

Doha Metro Travel Card (Karwa Smartcard)

Rechargeable **contactless smartcard** for seamless travel across Doha Metro and Mowasalat bus network. The card costs QAR 10 (non-refundable) plus any amount you wish to add. Standard metro trips cost just QAR 2, making it incredibly affordable. Goldclub single journeys cost QAR 10; its day pass costs QAR 30. Day passes available for QAR 6 offering unlimited Standard Class travel - excellent value for sightseeing days. Doha Metro and Lusail Tram Travel Passes are not valid on Mowasalat (Karwa) buses. *Purchasing:* Available at all metro stations and bus terminals. Top-up at stations or through mobile app.

Pricing: Card QAR 10 + travel credit. Single trip QAR 2, Day Pass QAR 6

Best for: Budget travelers, frequent public transport users, environmentally conscious visitors, those staying multiple days.

www.metroexpress.com.qa

Qatar Explorer Pass (Seasonal/Event-Based)

Occasionally Qatar Tourism offers **special promotional passes** during major events or peak seasons providing discounts on attractions, dining, and activities. These passes vary in availability and typically coincide with events like National Day, Shop Qatar, or major sporting events. Check Visit Qatar website before traveling for current offers. Past versions included discounts at restaurants, shopping vouchers, tour packages, and attraction bundles. *Note:* Not always available - check official tourism website for current promotions and packages.

Pricing: Varies by promotion and season

Best for: Visitors during promotional periods, those seeking deals on multiple experiences.

www.visitqatar.qa