



Living in Qatar

Qatar is an exciting, ambitious and fast-developing country that welcomes large numbers of expats from around the world. With the vast majority of people living in and around the capital, Doha, you will find plenty of things to do on your doorstep, many similar to what you are already used to and some very different and unique to this part of the world.



Qatar is a safe, welcoming country, in stark contrast to the often, inaccurate portrayal, presented by international media outlets. A significant number of our staff have been living in the country for a number of years and have made their home here. The quality of life that our teachers experience is generally of a higher standard than that in their home countries, with the advantages of school provided accommodation, tax-free salaries, private healthcare, access to new travel destinations, excellent working conditions and professional development opportunities to name just a few.

The following information is intended to give you a feel of some of the events, activities and experiences you could enjoy if you were to make Doha your home. It is by no means an exhaustive list, because as you often find in such a rapidly developing place, there are new things becoming available all the time.

Sporting Events in Qatar

We are very fortunate to have lots of world class sporting events here in Qatar such as:

- FINA Swimming World Cup
- European Masters Golf
- Qatar Classic Squash Championship
- Qatar International Show Jumping
- ITF World Tennis Championship
- World Super Bike Championship
- Pan Arab Football Cup
- Formula 1 Grand Prix
- And of course the... FIFA World Cup





For the ones amongst you who participate in sport yourselves you will not be disappointed. Blessed with some outstanding sports facilities in Doha there are many active sports clubs and groups for you to get involved in. These include but are not limited to: Football, Rugby, Netball, Tennis, Padel, Triathlon, Golf, Paddle Boarding, Yoga and fitness, Scuba Diving etc.

Out and About in Doha

Doha is a modern city still influenced by a traditional Arabic past that resonates through its sights and sounds. There are many family-friendly attractions for expats to see and do in Doha. There are also various markets that will excite the senses, and great nightlife spots where expats can let their hair down at the weekends. There is no shortage of opportunities to explore the rich Middle Eastern culture of Qatar. Below are some of the must-see attractions in Doha.

Kayaking in the Mangroves

If you enjoy being active and in nature, there is no better place than visiting Purple Island for a spot of kayaking. Surrounded by peace and tranquillity within the mangroves, Purple Island is approximately a 1 hour drive north of Doha and is well worth the visit.



Kite Beach - Fuwairit



Situated on Qatar's northern coast you will find the newly renovated Kite Beach. Famous for perfect wind and warm, crystal clear waters, Fuwairit Kite Beach has the longest kitesurfing season in the world. FKB is a lifestyle resort and a paradise for those who love life on the water regardless of ability level or experience.

Banana Island



A short 20 minute boat ride from Doha, you can experience luxury at Banana Island Resort, by Anantara. Situated on the crescent shaped island with its own marina and reefs, this is your go to destination for entertaining and relaxing. From underwater activities such as diving to land activities such as bowling and golf, the Banana Island Resort will make your stay a memorable one.



Beaches – There are a number of options when it comes to visiting the beach, spanning both public and private beaches, with the latter found in exclusive hotel complexes. Qatar is predominantly surrounded by the sea, so there are many different beach spots around the coast both within Doha and further afield. These beaches are generally family orientated and free to access, although likely to have limited facilities. The private beaches that are found in hotel complexes are widely used amongst expats as they offer food / beverage services, sun-loungers, sea and swimming pool access etc. in a luxury environment. You can pay for a 1 day pass to use these facilities as a walk-in guest.



Parks - Don't be fooled by the notion that living in desert will mean no green spaces. There has been significant investment in the development of a number of community parks in and around Doha for the public to access. Most include places for walking and jogging, refreshment facilities, children's play areas, picnics etc. and are set in well-manicured gardens. If you are wanting some peace amongst the hustle and bustle of city life, these parks offer the perfect place right on your doorstep.



The Corniche - One of Doha's most iconic attractions, the Doha Corniche is a seven kilometre stretch of promenade overlooking the serene waterfront and Arabian Gulf. With a crescent shaped walkway around the Doha Bay, the Corniche offers the best views of the city's modern skyline. On an evening, watch the dhow light up and take a boat ride to soak in the vista of the city.





Museum of Islamic Art



The Museum of Islamic Art is at the edge of Doha Harbour. It has been built to look like a fortress with its own moat and avenue of palm trees. It is a beautiful building to visit and somewhere that you can go to many times. Visitors to the museum will find the largest collection of Islamic art in the world, as well as a gallery, library and restaurant. Exhibitions change regularly and so you can see different exhibits on subsequent visits.

Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al Thani Museum

This museum houses exhibitions that allow expats to see how the Bedouins lived, including displays of their clothing and other belongings. There are also displays of what a traditional Qatari house looks like, Islamic art and some of the largest and smallest Qurans in the world. Other exhibitions include Islamic weapons, both traditional and modern, as well as displays of cars and artefacts previously belonging to Sheikhs. The museum is situated about 40 minutes from Doha off the Dukhan Road.

Katara Cultural Village



Katara Cultural Village is in West Bay and was created to resemble a traditional Qatari settlement. Here you can shop, eat and experience traditional Qatari life. Many festivals are held here, such as the Dragon Boat Festival and National Day celebrations. You can buy local arts and crafts, clay pots and jewellery, as well as seeing how they are all made. There is also an amphitheatre in the middle of the village.

The Grand Mosque

The Grand Mosque is near the Corniche and the Emiri Diwan Palace and is one of the biggest mosques in Qatar. It was built in the 1950's combining traditional and modern architecture. This is a must-see for visitors wanting to experience a beautiful part of Islamic culture but you will need to be culturally sensitive with your dress; men should wear long trousers and women should cover their heads and wear clothing that goes to the wrists and to the ankles - no leggings.



The National Museum of Qatar



The National Museum of Qatar gives voice to the unique story of Qatar and its people from earliest times to the present day and onwards towards the future. It is designed to be both immersive and experiential; visitors can expect to encounter a rich environment to explore. Organised in three sections - Beginnings, Life in Qatar, and The Modern

History of Qatar, with each section presented across eleven highly individual galleries. Spread over 1.5km, visitors walk through an exciting mix of all-encompassing environments and compelling storytelling that will engage all the senses.

Camel Racing

All camel racing takes place at the purpose-built racetrack just north of Shahaniya, a 30-minute drive to the west of Doha on the Dukhan road. A visit provides a unique opportunity to observe this traditional sport and witness local people in harmony with their surroundings. Race season begins in October, when training programmes begin and minor races are held, culminating in several prestigious events in March and April. Call them before you plan to go and they will tell you when the next races are and what time to be there.

Water Parks

Aqua Park is located about 40 km outside of Doha. There are slides, a wave pool, lazy river and a pool for toddlers. Tuesdays are known as 'Ladies Day', where boys taller than 3.9 feet (1.2m) are not allowed entry. The park also recommends Islamic swimwear on these days as a mark of respect, although many women wear Western swimwear on other days.

Desert Falls Water and Adventure Park features 18 attractions and 56 rides and slides, including the water park's signature ride "The King Cobra". It is located in Salwa Beach Resort Junction 84 Salwa Road.

Forts

Qatar has many remaining historical architectural wonders like towers, castles and forts. They are all scattered over the country and most of them are found near or on the shore. Most of them were built between the 17th and 19th Century. Some of them are either in or close to Doha but others are the other side of the country and provide a great day out.





Souqs

Souqs are Arabic markets and offer a great place to do your day-to-day shopping as well as buy some memorable souvenirs.

Souq Waqif



Souq Waqif is centuries old and used to be a trading post for the Bedouin to bring their livestock. While it has changed a lot over the decades, it has recently been refurbished and attracts many tourists. It is a good place to buy some souvenirs or gifts to take 'home'. Expats shopping at Souq Waqif will be able to buy

traditional Qatari dress, perfumes, incense and spices. You can also take a break from shopping and enjoy a cup of mint tea or 'Arabic Coffee' at one of the cafés.

Jayda Souq

This large Souq is almost an extension of Souq Waqif. It showcases traditional Qatari culture and specialises in hunting and falconry, two very important parts of Qatari heritage. Many shops sell hunting paraphernalia and it provides the opportunity to explore this interesting part of life in Doha.

Gold Souq

The Gold Souq is the place to visit to find beautiful jewellery and precious metals in Doha. The Gold Souq is part of Souq Waqif.

Souq Waqif in Al Wakra (not far from the school)

As far back as the 1700's, Al Wakra was a thriving pearling village at a time when the country's economy relied almost entirely on pearling. As concrete and air conditioners came to the Gulf, the village began to empty and was left to go to ruin. However, the Wakra Municipality decided not to allow this to happen and recently have sensitively renovated the village as a new souk. Most of the buildings are currently empty but both traditional and modern coffee shops and restaurants occupy the units on the sea front.

The wholesale markets

The wholesale markets lie between Salwa and Haloul streets in Doha. There is a vast collection of markets and shops selling vegetables, fruit, meat, seafood, plants and herbs and spices. These markets are a good place to haggle for a bargain. Shopping at markets is a great way to save money while living in Doha but more importantly, the produce is very fresh and has rapid turnover.





Inland sea



Lying about 100km south of Doha, the last 30km of the trip are off road, across the sand dunes. Only go with experienced off-road drivers or you could end up stuck, lost or both! During the journey and once you get there, the scenery is stunning.

Shopping

Doha has a wide range of shopping malls with many international brands evident. Malls here contain a wide variety of shops and most also have a supermarket. Supermarkets range from Lulu's to Mega Mart, Carrefour, Monoprix and even Marks and Spencers, the latter two being slightly more expensive with high end imported items from the UK and USA. During the week individual shops open early in the morning but most close during the afternoon between 1.00 - 4.00pm, staying open until 9.00 or 10.00pm giving you plenty of time for shopping. Shopping Malls as a rule open Sunday to Wednesday, 09:00 – 22:00; Thursday & Saturday, 09:00 – 23:00, Friday, 10:00 –11:30 and 13:30 until 23:00; the shops close on a Friday morning for morning prayers, but the Malls themselves remain open

Shopping Centres with all the amenities

Villaggio Mall



This is a large mall with 220 stores including: Carrefour, cinema, restaurants and coffee shops, a fast food court, ice rink, pharmacies, and many familiar retailers like Sephora, Body Shop, Marks & Spencer, Top Shop, Virgin Megastore, and others. Villaggio Mall is designed on a Venetian theme and even has a canal with gondolas.

Mall of Qatar

The Mall of Qatar is one of the largest malls in Doha, in Al Rayyan, next to Ahmed bin Ali Stadium, a host stadium for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. It has a variety of shops and restaurants including the renowned Cheesecake Factory and a cinema with the first 4D screen in Qatar.

Festival City

In this Mall there is also an IKEA. It has over 500 international and local retail stores as well as numerous entertainment options, cafes and restaurants. It also has a good size Marks and Spencer's food court. Other Malls include, Landmark Mall, Dar Al Salam, City Centre, Lagoon Mall.



Place Vendome

For the epitome of luxury, Place Vendome is poised to be THE fashion capital of Qatar. The newest and largest of the Qatar Malls boasts stunning architecture and all of the main international brands, all under one roof. Opened in mid-2022, Place Vendome is one of Lusail's pride and joy, with a whopping 1,150,000 sqm meters over 4 floors that includes over 500 retail outlets, luxury hotels, showrooms and entertainment options. It is also situated next to the newly developed Lusail Boulevard and very close to the Lusail Stadium, the venue that will host the FIFA World Cup Final 2022.

Restaurants

As with most modern cities, you have a huge variety of options for food and drink that covers every budget. Only restaurants in the larger hotels are licensed and able to serve alcohol with lunch or dinner. You can find virtually any type of food with the choice to pay 5* hotels rates for fine dining but equally you can have a great curry very inexpensively. Many people go for a 'brunch' at the weekends, which can be at lunchtime or in the evening. Hotel brunches normally have the option to have non-alcoholic or alcoholic beverages included in the package and are generally excellent value for money.

What Our Amazing Staff Say



Alvaro Cano – Spanish teacher

For me working in GEMS is the best experience ever.

Since I joined GEMS Wellington I have enjoyed my teaching every single day.

My experience in Qatar is priceless. You can do a lot of things at an affordable price and enjoy the Arabic culture in a great country.



Cathal Tighe – Business Studies teacher

Moving to GEMS Wellington School has started out as a really exciting experience. The professionalism of the staff creates a great team and positive working environment. The atmosphere within in the school makes it an excellent place to work and I am really looking forward to being part of the school's next phase of development.





Kerri-Ann Larkin – Head of Primary Maths

Working for GEMS Wellington School is a great opportunity to work abroad while developing your teaching skills. GEMS have a network of schools across the world to collaborate with and learn from. I have had the opportunity as Head of Maths to meet and work with members from the other schools, which is a great experience. For me, Qatar is a great balance of a busy city with a home community feel, there are numerous places to go and things to see, yet you could still bump into someone close to home.



Andrei Clark – Head of P.E. Department

I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience during my three years working for GEMS Wellington. It is great to have the security of working for a reputable international organisation as well as having the opportunity to work under such an ambitious and driven management team at WSQ. I am really seeing progress in my own development as a professional. In relation to living in Qatar, it provides me with everything I want and need from the great weather to the 'five star lifestyle' as well as the abundance of sporting activities that are on offer. I have loved my time here and I am in no rush to move on any time soon as I start my 4th year!



Samira Rokadia – Humanities teacher

The whole process was really smooth and despite there being a gap from being recruited to the start date, there was communication every few weeks and this was really nice to feel so welcomed. It was really reassuring to have Michelle keeping in touch so you felt like part of the GEMS Wellington community before even starting at the school. You also had things like calendar dates for the next academic year and if there was any information to be shared you were kept in the loop.



Amie Sherrard – Year 3 teacher

Teaching in Qatar is a great experience as you interact with children from all over the world who are invested in their own education. Within GEMS Wellington School, you get to work alongside a supportive team and children, with access to wonderful facilities and specialist classes



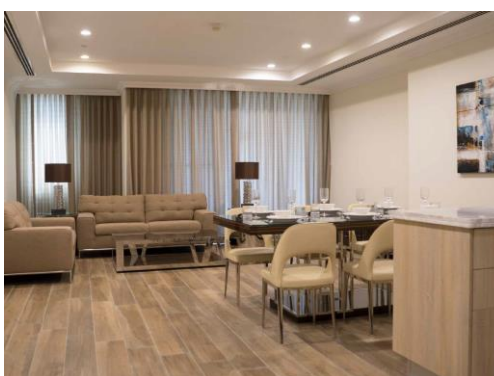
Staff Accommodation

We understand that time spent away from work plays an extremely important part on our overall wellbeing. It is therefore important that we are comfortable, safe and secure in where we live and its surroundings. We have invested significant time and resources to ensure that as a GEMS Wellington teacher, you will have access to some of the best accommodation options in Doha.

Currently, we have two main complexes where our teachers live: Viva Bahriya for our single and married staff and Al Fardan Gardens for our families.

Viva Bahriya

Viva Bahriya 26 is a purpose-built block situated on The Pearl. The apartments are very modern with high quality fixtures and fittings including walk in showers and usually an open plan living area. Single staff are provided with a one-bedroom apartment and married staff a two-bed apartment. There is a pool and gym located in the building, which are free for residents to use. The building management company is onsite and they deal with any maintenance issues immediately. The Pearl is exclusive man-made island and has a wide variety of restaurants, bars, hairdressers, shops, hotels, and a large Monoprix supermarket within easy reach.





Al Fardan Gardens

Al Fardan Gardens (AFG) is one of the most sought-after communities for families within Qatar and receives extremely positive reviews on the expat community Facebook groups.

AFG is a gated community residence and is the current location for our staff with families. Families live in apartments appropriate to the size of their family. The AFG complexes are quite near to malls and other facilities, where you can find many of the shops you would find at home. Within the compounds there are other amenities such as a swimming pool, gym, a designated play area for young children and a club house. The journey to school is approximately 30 minutes



Note: Please note that the accommodation locations mentioned above are the ones currently used and could change in the future. However, we would always endeavor to ensure a like for like quality and overall standard of living is maintained.

Other Useful Sites

Websites

<https://www.timeoutdoha.com/>
<https://www.iloveqatar.net/>
<https://newindoha.com/>

Instagram

@newindoha
@youhadme_atbrunch.qa
@kidsloveqata
@ilqlive

We hope this information has given you a glimpse into life at both GEMS Wellington School and Qatar. If you are an ambitious, hard-working and a dedicated professional with a commitment to aspiring to excellence as part of a diverse and talented team, then this could be the school for you.

This is an extremely exciting time as the school embarks on the next stage of its development. We look forward to receiving your application.

