



Travel to CNA-Qatar



College of the North Atlantic-Qatar Campus Map

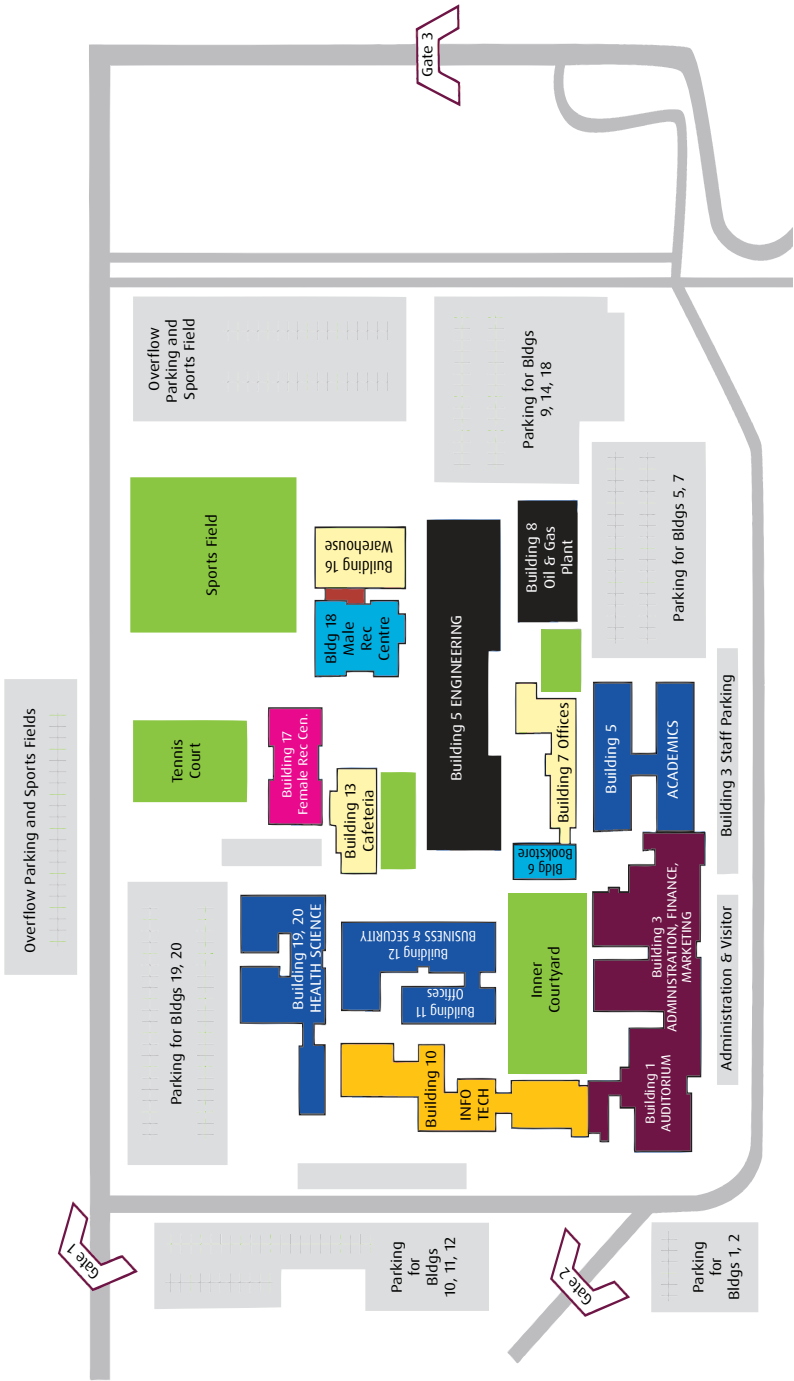


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“Smiles are passports through deserts and visas to all foreign countries.”

– Robert Darrah

Welcome–Marhaba!

This information guide is designed to help you prepare for your trip to College of the North Atlantic’s international campus in the Middle East State of Qatar – College of the North Atlantic-Qatar (CNA-Q), and help you adapt quickly so you can complete your work and still enjoy your time there. Doha, the capital city of Qatar, is an amazing city and CNA-Q is an extraordinary campus.

If something of interest to you is not covered in these pages, we invite you to send your comments, suggestions or questions to: tanya.alexander@cna.nl.ca.

You will find that CNA-Q, like most of Doha, is a community of friendly expatriates – in our case, Canadians – who are living and working outside of Canada. If you need something and you ask someone but they cannot help you, try, try again. Someone will be more than willing and able to help you!

Before You Leave Canada

What should you bring with you? You can purchase a wide variety of items in Qatar, albeit sometimes a different brand than you can purchase in Canada in terms of clothing, toiletries, food, kitchen utensils, household goods, equipment, etc. The prices, including food prices, are about the same as in Canada overall, with some things being more expensive and some things being cheaper.

For short term stays you will likely be accommodated in a hotel. For longer stays you will likely be housed in one of several furnished accommodation locations that the State of Qatar has provided for CNA-Q employees, depending on availability.

In terms of electrical devices, do not bring them unless they are rated 120/240 v and 50/60 Hz. You cannot bring any alcohol or pork products with you to Qatar – they are not permitted into the country. You should bring enough prescription or other medication to last you until you can get back to Canada.

Bring enough US cash to take care of your travel and get you through the first couple of days in Doha until you can visit an ATM (there is one at the campus, as well as at the local malls). Shops will also take most credit cards. *You will want to notify your card provider that there will be overseas activity on your account (they’ll want to

know exactly where – don't forget Europe, where you'll stop en route). Often, when strange activity shows up on your account, providers will cut off access to your card. This can be more than inconvenient!

Arrival

You will be greeted at the airport by a person from CNA-Q who will be holding up a sign with your name at the arrival area of the airport and who will take you to your accommodation. If for some reason you are not met at the airport, don't panic. It is only some 50 QR to the Intercontinental Hotel via taxi and only approximately 70 Riyal to CNA-Q campus at 68 Al Tarafa Street, Duhail North. There is a banking machine in Doha airport – you can use your Canadian bank card to withdraw Riyals. Taxis will be waiting outside the airport.

You will likely be suffering from jet lag and will need to rest for a day, maybe two. Sleeping on the plane, though sometimes difficult, is highly advised. It will help you adjust once you're on the ground. Qatar Airways provides you with an eye mask and some other items, but be sure to bring a neck pillow, eye shades, ear plugs – whatever will assist in helping you rest.

Civic Addresses of Living Communities

The civic addressing system is relatively new to Qatar. Mail is not delivered using your civic address; most people do not know their civic address and telephone books are not widely used. Emergency vehicles, taxis and take out delivery services do not use civic addresses but rather a description of where you are located.



Most people give directions according to the nearest landmark, which is often a roundabout. The roundabouts have interesting names such as Parachute Roundabout, TV Roundabout, Burger King Roundabout, and so on. Business cards often have a map on the backside to help the new customer find the business. A map of Doha is something even seasoned expats carry with them. Finding a specific location can be challenging but we all get by with a little help from our friends. Asking for help is common and of course, you'll be delighted when the person you ask actually speaks English.



ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CNA-Q EMPLOYEES

All employees live in State-provided villas or apartments.

State of Qatar



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What you see in Qatar today may be a different scene tomorrow, such is the speed of change in this small Gulf state of over two million people. Exploring both old and new Doha is a fascinating experience.

Qatar is situated halfway along the western coast of the Arabian Gulf. It is a peninsula, projecting northwards about 160 km into the Gulf. At its widest point it stretches about 80 km from coast to coast and covers an area of 11,437 square km. Overall, the country is very flat, rising to only 110 metres at its highest point; the landmass largely consists of scrubby desert terrain covered in sand and loose gravel. The country is largely formed of limestone deposits and clays, laid down in various geologically defined eras.

By far the majority of the country is surrounded by the waters of the Arabian Gulf. The coastline of Qatar extends for some 560 kms, while the only land border of 60 kms separates the country from Saudi Arabia. There are several shallow natural harbors – Doha, Wakrah and Messaieed being the most notable of these.

TIME

Qatar lies in the time zone Greenwich Mean Time + 3. Depending on our system, they are five-and-a-half or six-and-a-half hours ahead of us in Newfoundland. Their clocks do not change for the summer.

LANGUAGE

The official language is Arabic, and English is widely spoken in most environments.

POPULATION

The total population of Qatar is approximately 2.1 million and is currently increasing at a rate of about 2.4 per cent annually. It is estimated that 80 per cent of the population of Qatar lives in Doha. Most of the workforce in Qatar is made up of expatriates (expats), nationals of other countries who have come to work in Qatar from Asia, Europe, North America and other Middle Eastern countries. Approximately 250,000 of Doha's population are Qataris, all others are expatriates.

WORKING DAYS AND HOURS

Rest days for CNA-Q are Friday and Saturday. Business hours during the week vary from company to company within Qatar, although government offices and banks tend to open only in the morning to early afternoon. Stores are often open until 10 p.m. Some stores are open from 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and again from 4 p.m. - 10 p.m. On Fridays, major stores open at 1 p.m. and most stores open at 4 p.m.

QATAR FLAG



The flag of Qatar is maroon with a broad-banded white hoist of nine zigzagged points.

- The white colour reflects the internationally recognized symbol of peace.
- The maroon colour symbolizes the bloodshed during the several wars Qatar had undergone, particularly in the second half of the 19th century.
- The nine-point serrated line indicates that Qatar is the 9th member of the “reconciled Emirates” of the Arabian Gulf in the wake of concluding the Qatari-British treaty in 1916. This information on design and colour of Qatar flag was mentioned in the Archives of the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1931.

CURRENCY

Legal tender in Qatar is the Qatari Riyal (QR). All currency is issued in the name of the Qatar Central Bank (see banking section). The exchange is officially 3:1 to the US dollar, about a third to our money – for example, if you see an item for 90 Riyal, it’ll cost around \$30 Canadian.

WEATHER

It can actually be quite cool during the winter months in Doha. Most individuals are surprised by the temperatures. When arriving from Canada in January, it is true that Doha will be warmer than what we’re used to, but light jackets, long pants and long sleeve shirts will be needed. Because the villas are made of concrete and with the shortened sunlight hours during winter months, inside will actually



be cooler during the day than outside. Rain is almost nonexistent. To be prepared, bring these from home (in small quantities):

- Jeans
- Long sleeve shirts
- Light jackets
- Sweatshirts
- Warm pajamas
- Socks
- Closed toe shoes/sneakers

DOHA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (DOH) TEMPERATURE CHART

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Avg. |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Max °C | 20 | 23 | 26 | 33 | 38 | 42 | 43 | 43 | 40 | 35 | 26 | 22 | 33 |
| Min °C | 8 | 11 | 14 | 21 | 25 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 25 | 22 | 16 | 11 | 20 |

| Max °F | 68 | 73 | 79 | 91 | 100 | 108 | 109 | 109 | 104 | 95 | 79 | 72 | 91 |
|--------|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----|----|
| Min °F | 46 | 52 | 57 | 70 | 77 | 81 | 82 | 84 | 77 | 72 | 61 | 52 | 68 |

Personal Safety in Qatar

While in Qatar, every person is subject to Qatar’s laws and regulations, which sometimes differ significantly from those in Canada and may not afford the protections available to the individual under the Canadian laws. Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in Canada for similar offences. Persons violating Qatari laws, even unknowingly, may be arrested, expelled, and/or imprisoned. The laws are very clear in banning alcohol and illegal drug-related activities. Homosexual activity is also considered to be a criminal offense, as is co-habitation, even temporarily, with a person of the opposite sex who is not a family member.

Crime in Doha is minimal compared to many other large cities in the world. The Government of Qatar maintains a large number of police and plain-clothes Criminal Investigation Division (CID) units on the street. While incidents of street crime are rare, they do take place. Incidents of items being stolen from vehicles are increasing but are still low. Qatar has a very low incidence of females being accosted or verbally harassed but this does take place. It is advised that you dress conservatively and do not walk alone after dark. If something does happen, do not hesitate to call the police (999). The act of dialing your mobile may be enough to stop the behaviour.

SECURITY TIPS

1. Dress conservatively outside of the living communities. This means keeping the knees, torso and upper arms covered whether you are male or female.
2. Doha is a big city and you should use the same caution when living in any big city around the world, such as being cautious driving in areas of the city with which you are unfamiliar.
3. Do not get into cars with people you do not know. It is quite common for the drivers of the unmarked, white taxis to stop and offer you a drive.
4. When using taxis, you should not allow the driver to pick up other passengers en route. Women should always sit in the back seat of the taxi.
5. Although unlikely, should you encounter a hostile or abusive person of any nationality, simply leave the area. Again, dialing on your mobile may stop the behaviour. Public places such as restaurants, hotels, and shops can be used as temporary safe areas.
6. Always carry a copy of your passport.
7. If directed to stop by a police, STOP! Do not attempt to run or evade a checkpoint or roadblock.

PERSONAL SAFETY WITHIN LIVING COMMUNITIES

Most of the living communities have security personnel assigned to them. The main function of the security personnel is to limit access to the compound or building by non-residents. They may also enforce the landlord's rules for using the common areas such as the club house and pool, including the prevention of destruction of the landlord's property. In Qatar, for the most part, the security personnel tend to be more passive than assertive or aggressive. Should you encounter a situation

whereby the security personnel cannot control or contain a situation, you should not hesitate to call the police (999), even if it involves a fellow Canadian.

Skills That Make a Difference

Relax and enjoy the experience of visiting Qatar. Your stay will be what you make it; incorporating these skills will serve you well:

Patience – not everything will go smoothly. Things take longer and the delays and requirements can seem endless. An ability to accept obstacles without letting them get to you is important. Be prepared for the unexpected – have contact information for emergencies.

Affability – be ready to develop relationships quickly; be open to feedback and enjoy meeting people in new situations.

Sense of Humour – the ability to see something funny in nearly everything will help you keep a sense of perspective.

Banking

Debit and credit cards are widely used in Qatar and ATM machines are at all major locations. There is also a Qatar National Bank ATM machine at CNA-Q in Building 3.

*Note: neither the CNA-Q Bookstore nor the cafeterias are set up for debit.

There may be daily service charges and limits on how much you can withdraw per day – check with your service provider before you depart for your trip.

There are 100 Dirhams in one Riyal. The paper money includes both English and Arabic and is a different size and color. The denominations include 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, 500 QR. **Coins are not widely used in Qatar. Your amount owing will often be rounded up or down to the nearest Riyal and you may be offered a piece of candy.**

For more exact valuations between Riyal and Canadian dollars, please visit an on-line conversion site: www.xe.com.

Telephone/Internet Services

Mobile phones are very popular in Qatar – some students have two and three of them. You will find it quickly becomes your best source for telephone numbers. And if you miss a phone call, you shouldn't hesitate to call the number back to inquire.

MOBILE (CELL) PHONE:

Upon arrival, you will receive a basic mobile (cell) phone with a pre-paid time credit (Hala) card from the college. You can purchase additional Hala cards at some villa convenience stores and at public vendors. Blackberries taken from Canada will work in Qatar. *It is unlikely that you will have a landline at your apartment or villa accommodations.

CALLING QATAR FROM ABROAD:

To call Qatar from Canada or the USA dial 011-974 plus the required eight numbers. To call Qatar from other countries, you dial that country's international key, followed by 974 plus the required number. If you are not sure what the international key is for a given country, dial 150 for international inquiries and assistance. To call Canada from Qatar, call 001 then the area code and required numbers. (*Please note, telephone numbers in Qatar now have an extra number; simply repeat the first digit after the area code twice. For example, 495 2222 becomes 4495 2222.)

CALLER INFORMATION:

To obtain telephone numbers of individuals, companies and institutions in Qatar, both in Arabic and English, call 180 for directory assistance. Some exceptions for Westerners.

Shopping



MALLS AND CENTRES

There are modern shopping centres in Doha with a wide range of consumer and luxury goods. There are nine main shopping malls. Normally, malls are open from 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

The Mall - D-ring road, close to the Airport

Villagio - close to Khalifa Stadium

Hyatt Plaza - next to Villagio (www.hyattplaza.com)

Centerpoint - close to Al Saad Street

The Centre - just down from the Ramada Hotel on Salwa Road

Royal Plaza (luxury designer shops) - Al Saad Street
(www.royalplazadoha.com)

Landmark - close to the College (www.landmarkdoha.com)

City Center-Doha - close to the Corniche

Lulu Hypermarket - one on D-Ring Road, close to the Airport and another by Landmark mall

There are also several other smaller plazas and complexes, supermarkets, local co-operative societies and shopping complexes in many residential areas of Qatar that sell pretty much everything except pork.

SOUQS AND MARKETS

(Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.)

Souqs, Arab markets, are a feature of life in the Gulf and are fun to visit for their novelty value, as well as being useful places to shop for certain items.

Many souqs specialize in fabrics. As most Arabic women have their clothes made by tailors rather than buying ready-made items, fabrics are much in demand in the Gulf. These range from the incredibly cheap artificial fibers to the more expensive silks, linens and cottons. A huge range of patterns and types of fabric is available.



Bargaining is a good-natured affair and can be fun, if you've got the patience to go along with it. Bargaining does not apply to all retail outlets in Qatar however. Many of the more modern shops, especially food outlets, deal only in fixed prices.

GROCERY STORES

Several of the large supermarkets carry a wide range of western products, though some may be slightly higher prices than in Canada. Food products are imported from Canada, America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand as well as the Far East. Fresh fish, meats, fruits, and vegetables are plentiful. Some supplies disappear from the shelves quickly and you may have to inquire as to which day of the week delivery of a desired item is made.

The major grocery stores are open all day with the exception of Fridays, when they close for an hour-and-a-half in the late morning. Most shops not located inside a mall are open from around 9 a.m. until 12 noon, and then reopen around 4 p.m. until around 8 p.m.

NEWSPAPERS

There are three English daily papers in Qatar: The Gulf Times, The Peninsula and The Qatar Tribune. All three of these newspapers have websites and are available for home delivery.

Dining Out in Qatar

There is no shortage of places to dine out in Qatar. The variety of types of food is unlimited – Arabic, Indian, French, Moroccan, Japanese, Pakistani, Thai, Italian, Chinese, general European and American, to name a few. And many of the American fast food outlets are found in Doha as well – Dairy Queen, McDonalds, Burger King, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Chillis, Applebees and Ponderosa, etc. You can dine at a bargain establishment or in a first-class hotel. Many restaurants do not open until 7 p.m. You will quickly discover that the wait staff will not give you the bill for the meal until you ask for it. The bill may include a 17 per cent “service charge.” You should not presume that this is for the wait staff. If you wish to tip the wait staff, you should add an amount to your total bill. Tipping is not expected but is enjoyed by the wait staff.

You are encouraged to try the local foods. Doha has countless cheap, cheerful and clean restaurants that serve quality food. And some of them provide curbside service usually by attracting the server with a wave. For around 40 QR (approximately CA\$11) you can enjoy Arabian grills, local fish, local sweet desserts and coffee. There are also numerous juice bars where you can buy a fresh juice cocktail or a milkshake.

Once you try Arabic food, you’ll quickly find favourites. Specialties include:

HUMMUS: a dip made from chick-peas and tahini (sesame seed paste).

TABBOULEH: chopped parsley, mint and crushed wheat.

MOTABEL: Lightly cooked eggplants mixed with tahini and garlic and made into a paste.

WARAQ ENAB: vine leaves stuffed with rice.

KOUSSA MAHSHI: stuffed baby zucchini.

Local dishes include:

MATCHBOOS: spiced lamb or chicken with rice.

HAREES: a rich delicacy of wheat and tender lamb cooked and beaten until it has the texture of a thick paste. Usually served during the month of Ramadan.

SEAFOOD: you will enjoy fresh fish from the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman lobster, cigale, crab, hamour (grouper), shrimp, tuna, kingfish, pomfret and red snapper.

GHUZI: a whole roast lamb on a bed of rice mixed with nuts.

BIRIANI: very sweet smelling spiced rice mixed with lamb or chicken.

Delicious regional desserts include:

UMM ALI (literally “Mother of Ali”): a type of bread pudding that is full of nuts and white raisins.

ESH ASRAYA (meaning “bread of the harem”): a sweet kind of cheesecake with a cream topping.

MEHALABIYA: a pudding sprinkled with rose water and pistachios.

Traditional Snacks:

A traditional and very delicious Middle Eastern snack is the **SHAWARMA** which is sold at many small outlets around Doha. It consists of grilled slices of delicately spiced lamb, chicken or beef, mixed with salad and tahini (mixed with lime juice), with some pickles and/or French fries thrown in and rolled inside a pocket of Arabic bread then wrapped in a wafer thin paper.



Appropriate Behaviour and Dress

BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES

Working at College of the North Atlantic-Qatar is a wonderful opportunity both personally and professionally. It also presents some challenges because of the fact that you are working in a foreign country with different customs, laws and religion than Canada.

College of the North Atlantic has a formal agreement with the State of Qatar. As part of this agreement the CNA-Q campus and its employees agree to respect the cultural, religious and social customs, and obey the laws of the State of Qatar.

Your behaviour can affect the college's reputation and can have an impact on its future in Qatar. We are often mistaken for other nationalities and can seize the opportunity to change people's stereotypical opinion of westerners. Living in Qatar is such an opportunity!

Newcomers to Qatar must be aware that unless you are married and have the documentation to prove that, it is illegal to live with someone of the opposite sex. Furthermore, gestures of excessive affection in public should be avoided. If they are deemed to infringe on moral values, individuals concerned may be prosecuted.

There are refreshment facilities and discos available in the main hotels, and these are lively, well-attended places frequented by the young, the not so young and those in pursuit of a fun evening out. When out for a night on the town, it is not acceptable to be loud or to publicly display drunkenness. All drugs (other than strictly medicinal ones) are banned and their use, purchase and sale are harshly dealt with.

Expats who choose to ignore these behavioural expectations are taking risks that can have serious consequences. We may not feel this is fair or right, but we are guests in

this country. One should always remember that we are ambassadors of both Canada and CNA-Q and we are guests in Qatar, so we must respect the local culture.

DRESS GUIDELINES

While in public, men and particularly women should take care to dress in an appropriate manner or they will appear to be inviting, and may get undesirable attention. Women should wear clothing that covers their upper arms and legs, and avoid revealing or tight-fitting clothing, short skirts or shorts, and low-cut necklines. Men should not wear brief shorts or tank tops. Swimsuits are perfectly acceptable around the hotel pools or public beaches, but bring a cover-up to use when away from the pool or beach area.

- International standard business dress – no denims/jeans, no tight fits;
- For men, at least long-sleeve shirt with collar and standard tie, full-length dress pants, closed shoes and socks;
- For women, blouses that fully cover the torso, sleeves near the elbow, pants, skirts or dresses below the knee;
- Managers, and those expecting to meet guests, are reminded to have a jacket handy.

While in your living community, the standards are similar to those you would expect to see in any community in Canada – shorts and sleeveless tops are acceptable. Shorts are also acceptable at the Doha Golf Course.

“WORKOUT” CLOTHES

You should definitely bring your workout clothes. The college has fine fitness facilities including a weight room and pool. At least three of the living communities also have fitness equipment and pools. The health clubs in Doha not only offer fitness equipment and swimming pools but also sauna, jacuzzi, personal training, nutritional advice, Pilates, and/or yoga. Walking on



Doha's Corniche (harbour front) is also a favorite fitness activity, albeit with your knees and upper arms covered.

International Travel Checklist - Qatar

TRIP PREPARATION CHECK LIST

- Passports – apply for one or check the expiration date to ensure there is six months of validity beyond the date of your expected departure from the Qatar and two empty pages.
- For travel reservations, booking flight (forwarding it for review and approval) take along airplane tickets and itineraries.
- Leave copies of itinerary and passport data page: Leave copies of your itinerary, passport data page and visas with family or friends, so you can be contacted in case of an emergency.
- Hotel reservations or other accommodations
- Visas (arrange with the Qatar Project Office)
- Travel insurance to cover “non-work” aspect of your trip
- Activity plans
- Local transportation contact numbers
- Do not pack your travel documents or money in a suitcase that may get lost. Take your important documents and money in a wallet or purse that you can access at all times.
- Vaccinations
- Debit and credit cards
- Make sure that your luggage has a tag with your name, address, and telephone number.
- Driver's licence, registration, insurance cards (leave unnecessary cards at home)
- Car keys, house key (leave unnecessary keys at home)
- Probiotic supplements, if you have a sensitive stomach

PERSONAL ITEMS

- shirts, blouses, pants, dresses, hats, coats, sweaters

- ❑ rain protection – travel umbrella or raincoat
- ❑ underwear, socks
- ❑ toiletries, cosmetics, shaving needs, deodorant, shampoo
- ❑ dental floss, toothbrush, nail clippers, nail file
- ❑ contact lens preparations
- ❑ camera, batteries, recharger, small flashlight, travel alarm clock, hair drier
- ❑ swimming suit, beach towels, sun block cream
- ❑ slippers
- ❑ sleeping bag, backpack
- ❑ travel alarm clock

FIRST AID

- ❑ aspirin or analgesic
- ❑ decongestant or cold/sinus medication
- ❑ antiseptic spray
- ❑ mosquito repellent, anti-itch cream
- ❑ anti-diarrheal
- ❑ special medications

FOOD

- ❑ food supplements
- ❑ vitamins

ELECTRICAL DEVICES

Hair dryers, curling irons, hair straighteners, razors and even laptops/notebooks (any unit that indicates the following input **100-240V ~ 50-60Hz 2.0A**) can be used in Qatar along with adapters. If not, leave them home.

Advice from Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada

CRIME

The crime rate is low in Qatar and violence is rare, including against foreigners. Petty crime could occur, including banking and credit card fraud. To reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim, showing signs of affluence should be avoided and personal belongings, passports, and other travel documents should be secure at all times.

COPING WITH CULTURE SHOCK

Many people who travel or live overseas experience what is commonly referred to as “culture shock.” Although its intensity varies from one individual to another, most people experience a period of adjustment.

During the first stage, often described as the “honeymoon,” most encounters are perceived as exciting and positive. But in the second stage, known as “culture shock,” foreigners feel a sense of dislocation and general unease. Symptoms include:

- feelings of anger, discomfort, confusion, frustration or irritability and loss of a sense of humour;
- withdrawal, spending excessive amounts of time alone, spending time only with Canadians or other foreigners and avoiding contact with locals;
- negative feelings about the people and culture of the host country;
- compulsive eating and drinking or a need for excessive amounts of sleep; and
- boredom, fatigue and an inability to concentrate or work effectively.

During the third and final stage, called “adjustment,” foreigners start to accept their new surroundings and make a compromise between the “honeymoon” and “culture shock” phases.

To cope with culture shock, learn to recognize its symptoms. Also be aware that you might experience “reverse culture shock” after living abroad. Be prepared for a period of readjustment when you return to Canada.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

A smart traveller finds out everything she can about the culture, customs and role of women in the countries she plans to visit. She learns what to expect and prepares for as many situations as possible.

It is best to travel light. As a woman alone, you will be far less vulnerable and much more independent if you are not loaded down with heavy luggage and extra bags. Depending on your style of travel, a small suitcase on wheels or a backpack is a good choice. A tote bag or small day pack is useful for shorter excursions. Try to have at least one hand free at all times.

It is wise to keep your luggage locked at all times. Carry several small locks and two sets of keys.

Avoid expensive-looking camera bags and other showy accessories, which may mark you as a wealthy tourist.

Luggage tags with flaps that hide your name and address from inquiring eyes are a smart idea. They protect your anonymity and thwart would-be thieves who may try to identify the empty home you have left behind.

The ideal handbag, if you are taking one, has zippered inner compartments for added security and a thick shoulder strap that goes over your head and shoulder. The best way to carry your handbag is in front of you, next to your stomach, where it is not easily accessible to pickpockets.

A valid Canadian passport is required for Canadians intending to visit Qatar.

*The passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the date of your expected departure from the country. In addition to a passport, Canadians must be in possession of a visa (obtained through the Qatar Project Office) prior to departure.



Cultural/Personal Quick Tips

- When greeting Qatari men, it is always appropriate to put out your hand to shake hands. It is common among male friends to hug when greeting. If this happens, respond in a like manner.
- Men will sometimes hold hands. This is a sign of friendship and admiration. This may not happen, but if it does, accept the gesture as a sign that they are comfortable with you.
- Qatar men are generally very polite, calm and quiet. Hospitality is usually second-to-none. Higher officials are well educated and are excellent negotiators. Generally higher officials speak English very well – many have received their education in western culture. You will have to listen closely sometimes as many tend to speak softly with strong accent. They may put words together that at first may be difficult to interpret. For instance, if someone said – “today night,” they mean “tonight.”
- When greeting a Qatari woman, it is only appropriate to extend your hand to shake once she has extended hers. Otherwise a verbal greeting is appropriate. You must never touch a Qatari woman. A common mistake would be to put your hand on a woman’s shoulder while in conversation.
- Qatar women are generally very polite, calm and quiet. Often they will be accompanied by a female attendant.
- Men – suit and tie is appropriate for all meetings and formal functions. Ladies’ business attire – dresses below the knee and suit jacket/blouse to, or ideally below, the elbow.
- For both men and women, after hours casual attire as you would wear in Canada, however no shorts outside the hotel or housing compounds. Light-weight clothing is recommended. Temperatures can reach into the mid to high 40s, depending on the time of year.
- For meal time, everything from McDonald’s to five-star dining is available. Pork is not permitted in the country. Alcohol consumption is not permitted outside the hotel or living quarters.
- U.S. currency is used in Qatar and it can be purchased prior to your trip or locally. You will have to pay to buy U.S. in Canada and then pay to convert it when you arrive in Qatar. Your debit card can be used at the ATMs to take out any local cash you may require. The bank will do the conversion for you automatically. Also, VISA and Mastercard can be used pretty much anywhere.

- If you are a Rogers customer, your mobile phone will work in Qatar if you have the International Roaming feature activated. Cell phones will be provided for local use and phone cards can be purchased at the hotel and at most variety stores around Doha. These phone cards can be used to recharge your mobile phone account.

BASIC ARABIC WORDS AND PHRASES:

As taken from Qatar Visitor.com

<http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?CID=412&PID=1051>

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| If you please | Min fad lak |
| Thank you | Shukran |
| Thank you very much | Shukran Jazeelan |
| You're welcome | Afwan |
| Yes | Naam (formal) Aiwa (informal) |
| No | La |
| Sorry | Asif |
| Today | Al Yaum |
| Yesterday | Ams |
| Tomorrow | Bukrha |
| Please | Minfadlak/ Lau Samaht |

BOOKS TO READ:

- **Understanding Arabs-A Guide for Westerners** by Maragaret Nydell. USA 1996 174 pages ISBN 1-877864.
- **Saudi Customs and Etiquette** by Kathy Cuddihy Copyright 1990 Peregrine Publishing, B-57, 101 Repulse Bay Road Hong Kong
- **Culture Shock! United Arab Emirates** by Gina L. Crocetti
- **Lonely Planet Arabian Peninsula** by Frances Linizee . 2004 ISBN 1741042941
- **From Boston to Beijing: Managing with a World View** by Nancy J. Adler
- **Don't They Know It's Friday?** by Jeremy Williams
- **The Middle East for Dummies** by Jr. Davis Craig

WEBSITES:

- **Qatar Visitor:** <http://www.qatarvisitor.com/>
- **Foreign Affairs and International Trade:** <http://www.voyage.gc.ca/>
- **Wikipedia**, the free online encyclopedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qatar>

Call to Prayer

Adhan, or the Muslim call to prayer, is a sound which has reverberated, five times a day, around the cities of the Middle East for centuries. Sung correctly, it is a thing of beauty, whether or not you are a believer.

The prayer call you are likely to hear in Qatar is the Sunni version, as Qatar is predominantly Sunni. Adhan is heard five times a day, calling the Muslims to Salat, a prayer which is compulsory and must be performed. Traditionally a Muezzin climbed a prayer tower to deliver the prayer call. However, nowadays the prayer call is often delivered by loudspeaker (taken from Qatar Visitor.com <<http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=422&pID=1152>>).

Islam

The word “Islam” isn’t simply the name of a religion, it is an Arabic word that means submission; for Muslims it means to surrender oneself to God. The majority of Qataris are devout Muslims, and their religion follows the Five Pillars of Islam <<http://www.qatarvisitor.com/index.php?cID=412&pID=993>>. These five duties, which every Muslim should carry out, are of great importance to most Qataris.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Lunar Calendar; every day during this month, Muslims engage in a complete fast during daylight hours. It is a time of spiritual and physical reevaluation, when peace is made, bad habits are done away with and great generosity is shown. Fasting is also one of the five pillars of Islam. When in Qatar during Ramadan, it is expected that visitors will show respect for this religious observance and refrain from drinking water, and eating and smoking in public during daylight hours.



PHOTO CREDIT: ERIK HERSMAN

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Notes



Map of Doha, Qatar

Shopping - City Centre
 Landmark Mall (The One)
 Lulu Centre
 Lulu Hypermarket
 Exhibition Centre
 Qatar Airways
 Qatar Foundation
 Doha Golf Club
 Khalifa Stadium
 Inter Continental Doha
 Mövenpick Tower and Suite
 Sheraton Doha Resort and
 Convention Hotel
 Museum of Islamic Arts
 Doha Academy

- 1 C6
- 2 C2
- 3 E4
- 4 G6
- 5 C6
- 6 F7
- 7 D1
- 8 A4
- 9 F1
- 10 B6
- 11 E6
- 12 D6
- 13 E6
- 14 G4

Doha College
 Qatar Academy
 Texas A&M University
 University of Qatar
 Virginia Commonwealth University
 Canadian School
 College of the North Atlantic-Qatar
 Souqs (Markets)
 Medical facilities

- 15 F3
- 16 D1
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