

Bahrain checks into a new era of luxury

With 12 new five-star hotels in the pipeline, room capacity surpasses 24,000

● 7.4 million overnight visitors chose Bahrain in 2025.

● 20.1 million hotel nights recorded across the Kingdom last year.

● Major events, business travel and leisure tourism continue to fuel demand for premium accommodation.

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Bahrain's luxury hospitality sector is entering a new phase of growth, with 12 new five-star hotels in the pipeline as the Kingdom's hotel room capacity surpasses 24,000 rooms, underscoring its rising prominence as a regional



tourism and business destination.

The expansion will add to Bahrain's existing portfolio of 39 five-star hotels and resorts

and further strengthen a hospitality sector that has seen steady growth in recent years. Nearly 140 hotels and resorts are now operating across the Kingdom,

up from about 135 in late 2023, reflecting continued investor confidence in Bahrain's tourism industry.

The growth comes amid

strong tourism performance. In 2025, Bahrain welcomed more than 7.4 million overnight visitors, who generated approximately 20.1 million overnight stays. January recorded the highest monthly total, with around 2.08 million hotel nights.

Visitors are also spending more time in the Kingdom, with the average stay reaching 2.76 nights. The trend points to Bahrain's increasing appeal not only as a weekend getaway destination but also as a hub for business travel, international events and leisure tourism.

A packed calendar of sporting competitions, entertainment events, exhibitions and conferences has helped drive hotel occupancy throughout the year, attracting visitors from across the Gulf region and beyond.

Global hotel groups

Bahrain's hospitality landscape is also becoming increasingly global, with many of the world's leading hotel groups

expanding their footprint in the Kingdom. International brands including Marriott International, Accor, Hilton, IHG Hotels and Resorts, Wyndham Hotels and Resorts, Rotana and Melia Hotels International operate properties across key tourism and business districts.

Among Bahrain's best-known luxury destinations are The Ritz-Carlton, Four Seasons, Sofitel, InterContinental, Westin, Le Meridien, Hilton and Art Rotana, offering a range of high-end experiences for leisure and corporate travellers alike.

Industry observers say the combination of rising visitor numbers, expanding room capacity and continued investment in premium accommodation highlights Bahrain's growing status as a competitive tourism destination in the Gulf. With more luxury hotels on the way and visitor demand remaining strong, the Kingdom's hospitality sector appears poised for another phase of expansion.

Why should rental firms pay for someone else's speeding?

Traffic fines may soon follow drivers, not rental companies

● An electronic link would be established between the Ministry of Interior and Cos

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Car rental firms could soon be spared from paying for traffic offences committed by their customers under a parliamentary proposal that would place responsibility squarely on the driver behind the wheel.

The proposal, submitted by MP Abdulwahid Qarata, is being reviewed by Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Security Committee. It seeks to ensure that traffic fines are recorded against the person renting a vehicle rather than the rental company that owns it.

Under the proposal, an electronic link would be established between the Ministry of Interior and car rental companies. Once a rental contract is signed, the customer



Abdulwahid Qarata, MP

would be registered in the traffic system as the vehicle's user until it is returned.

The move aims to address a longstanding challenge facing the car hire industry, where fines are often issued against vehicles registered in a company's name, regardless of who committed the offence.

According to the proposal's explanatory note, rental firms frequently find themselves paying penalties for violations committed by customers and then face difficulties recovering the money. The problem becomes more complicated when expatri-

ate renters leave Bahrain before settling outstanding fines.

The proposal also notes that accumulated fines can delay vehicle licence renewals and create additional administrative and financial burdens for rental companies.

To support the system, rental firms would be required to upload electronic contracts, including the renter's personal details, driving licence information and rental period. Any traffic offence committed during that period would automatically be recorded against the renter.

The proposal further calls for an online platform allowing rental companies to monitor fines linked to their vehicles and resolve issues before they accumulate.

Mr Qarata said the system would be based on a model already used in a neighbouring Gulf country, where legal responsibility for a vehicle is transferred electronically to the renter for the duration of the hire period.

Supporters say the change would clarify legal liability, improve fine collection and provide greater protection for Bahrain's vehicle rental sector.



Dr. Jaleela bint Al Sayed Jawad Hassan, Minister of Health, during talks with Oleksandr Balanutsa, the newly appointed Ukrainian Ambassador to Bahrain, residing in Abu Dhabi. The Minister highlighted the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation in the health sector and expanding the exchange of expertise between Bahrain and Ukraine. The two sides also discussed topics of mutual interest.

Youth leading fight against hate and extremism

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Bahraini youth are playing an increasingly important role in countering hate speech, extremism and violence while promoting values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, Minister of Transportation and Telecommunications Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa said yesterday.

Marking Gulf Youth Day, Dr. Shaikh Abdullah, who is also Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence, said young people are essential partners in building peaceful societies and strengthening social harmony.

He highlighted Bahrain's commitment to supporting youth-led initiatives and ex-



spect and understanding.

Dr. Shaikh Abdullah added that the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence continues to empower young people through specialised programmes and partnerships with local and international institutions.

These include the King Hamad Fellowship for Peaceful Coexistence, the joint postgraduate diploma programme in coexistence, and support for the King Hamad Chair for Interfaith Dialogue at Sapienza University of Rome.

He stressed that investing in youth remains essential to advancing Bahrain's vision of promoting dialogue, coexistence and peace at both the regional and international levels.

