

Gulf Weekly

The community newspaper at the heart of Bahrain



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Music mania



LICENCE LOVE:
A unique option
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EATING OUT:
Pesto passion
SEE PAGE 11



FESTIVE FUN:
Winter Wonderland
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ARTISTS, producers and musicians from across the region and the US are set to showcase a series of workshops, panel discussions and performances, starting tomorrow, in a bid to engage like-minded individuals as well as create a platform for talents and music lovers alike.

The three-day conference, entitled Sound & Fiction, is an initiative supported by the US Embassy in Bahrain and conceptualised by Ali Al Saeed, the conference founder and director who is also the founder and creative director of Museland.

It was initially conceived as part of the Elham

COMMUNITY REPORT
By MAIAL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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Arts Festival, which was organised by an art collective that Ali was running at the time. He has been involved in the arts and music scene, locally and regionally, for the past 15 years, organising small and large scale events such as Elham Arts Festival and Museland Music Festival.

"The concept was developed by me and the project is carried through by Museland," said Ali. "Others on the organising team include project manager Sumit Sharma and programme curator Hasan Hujairi."

"We're lucky to have an eclectic group of people taking part from Bahrain, UAE, KSA, Kuwait, UAE and USA, ranging from producers to musicians to songwriters to record labels, talent managers and



community builders."

The event, which ends on Saturday, will include panels and talks, workshops and community activities during the day and live performances in the evenings.

"Topics covered will include community building in music, the creative process of finding your own voice and sound, mastering sound for live performances for musicians and collaborative works," added Ali. "It also focuses on more the theoretical and creative aspect of music, than the technical."

The conference will be staged at Bait Alsalmmaniya in Manama and Alliance Francaise. All events



are free to enter but it is recommended to register for workshops in advance.

For details, visit <http://soundandfiction.me/>

Full report – Page 2

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A musical line-up

MUSICAL entrepreneur and author Ali Al Saeed, who is the founder of Museland, has been staging a series of concerts and conferences over late – “to create and sustain a more engaged music community as well as to share the joy and thrill of discovering and experiencing new as well as original music”.

One of his latest events, which will start tomorrow and runs until Saturday,

COMMUNITY REPORT
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will allow the kingdom's aspiring artists and local musicians a chance to learn and grow through Ali's latest convention entitled Sound & Fiction.

The conference-type event will include talks, panels, workshops, film screenings, community activities and live performances at Bait Alsalmaniya and Alliance Francaise.

“The way we consume music has changed dramatically over the years, but it seems the more options we have to reach it, the more it becomes limited,” said Ali, conference director and founder. “Both musicians and listeners find themselves easily falling into their own comfort zone. Sometimes being disruptive is the way to push things forward again.”

“Having been involved in the music scene over the

past few years, I came to the realisation that there is a lack of an alternative narrative. There seems to be an over-commercialisation of music in Bahrain and across the region, which is natural to an extent.

“However, that tends to come at the expense of grassroots communities,

originality and new voices that challenge the status quo within the music scene.”

“I wanted to create an environment that brings together like-minded people, people I've worked with, met and know about, who I admire and respect and individuals and artists. In order to engage with each other, discuss relevant topics, exchange ideas, and network.”

“More importantly, I hope for Sound & Fiction to become a place for people - both musicians and music lovers - to experience that art medium in new and challenging ways. To discover and learn more.”

The line-up includes the likes of Hasan Hujairi, who is programme curator, a composer, sound artist, and independent researcher who divides his time between his native Bahrain and South Korea. His sound art performances and installations build on his academic interest in Historiography and

Ethnomusicology, which he presented in different venues in Seoul, Tokyo, London, Glasgow, Amsterdam, New York, Beirut, and Bahrain. Hasan participated in art residencies in the Korean National University of Arts in Seoul, in STEIM in Amsterdam and the Red Bull Music Academy in London)

for his activity in Sound Art and Music Composition.

Among other participants are US artist Christopher the Conquered, who has traveled North America and Europe

for more than 10 years sharing his self-proclaimed “interstellar soul” music with his piano, Bahrain's creative eclectic music duo Arababstract, Paxico Records founder Chris Hudd, Kuwaiti psychedelic rock outfit Galaxy Juice, Saudi DJ and producer Spceboi, Bahraini DJ, self-taught guitar and bass player Wadeah Al Meshkhas, electric DJ Kayan and more.

The various panels and talks will cover a wide range



Christopher the Conquered

of topics such as the current state of the music scene in the region, the importance of community building, developing your original voice as an artist, women in music and the rise of Arab hip-hop/rap.

Ali said: “Artists have the power to shape their own vision, their own culture, their own sound. It's about taking that power back and reclaiming the scene.”

“For the performances, Thursday night will feature band live performances including Arababstract, Offtrack and Aveora, and on Friday night the focus is on electronic music featuring performers Kayan, Hasan Hujairi, Na Der and PapaPush. On Saturday, we'll have a singer-songwriter session with the likes of Christopher the Conquered, We Speak in Colours and Faisal Amin.

“Sound+Fiction is an extension of what we're trying to do and what we believe in. I hope it becomes another stepping stone towards establishing a more relevant and current music scene that challenges our understanding of music and that reflects our cultural realities.”

All events and activities will be open to the public and free to attend.

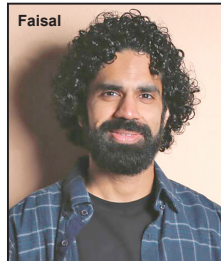
For more information about the event, full programming and how to get involved, send an email to info@museland.me or visit www.museland.me



Arababstract



Wadeeah



Faisal



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DJ Kayan



What's in a number?

THE release of a new series of memorable licence number plates drove well-to-do car lovers and 'numerophiles' to the fourth public Mazad auction held at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay last weekend.

Up for auction were unique 64xxxx and 65xxxx series number plates, divided into Gold, Platinum and Diamond categories, with a minimum bid of BD100, BD500 and BD1,000 respectively. Twenty five plates were auctioned at the event which attracted more than 250 enthusiasts, organised by Mazad, a subsidiary of Mumtalakat, in cooperation with UAE-based Arabian Auctions.

Talal Aref Aloraifi, CEO of Mazad said: "Licence plate numbers have always been items of fascination and symbols of affluence amongst Arabs in the GCC. The Mazad public auctions, which started in 2017, formalise this and give car lovers a chance to get a unique licence plate soon after it is released. A unique licence plate is like jewellery for your car. And since most of these plates end up on premium badges like Mercedes, Porsche and Ferrari, it adds a note of elegance to the car."

The highest winning bid at this year's auction was BD76,000 for Platinum plate number 655555. The lowest

COMMUNITY REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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winning bid was BD4,000 for Gold plate number 640640. In addition, plates 640065 and 655564 were raffled off to two lucky entrants for the evening's festivities.

Registering for the Gold and Platinum required a refundable deposit of BD1,000, while entry into the Diamond class demanded an open insurance cheque or credit card authorisation

Licence plate numbers have always been items of fascination and symbols of affluence amongst Arabs

upon registration.

The bidding itself got exciting, especially during the 655555-auction. When the bid crossed BD70,000, a new bidder who initially only signed up for the Gold and Platinum categories decided to enter the fray.

The bidder, who asked not to be identified, was authorised on the spot with a credit card machine being run over to his table.

In the first ever Mazad auction held, licence plate number 600000 was sold for

BD360,000, a record-high amount to this day. According to Talal, the plate was for a Rolls-Royce Phantom, which for comparison's sake, is sold fully loaded for BD225,000.

Mahmood Kelany, the principal of Arabian Auctions, the Bahrain subsidiary of Emirates Auctions, noted: "Across the GCC, there is a lot of interest in unique licence plates. Some people like to have a certain repeating number while others get the plate that matches their phone number."

Bidders from across the GCC region gathered to participate in this event and vehicle plate number 644444 came in second place, having been sold for BD67,000 followed by plate number 650000 with a value of BD65,000.

A specimen of the cars the plates are likely to end up on was exhibited outside, including a Rolls-Royce Dawn and Phantom.

Hassan Hujiri, who secured 654456 for BD4,500 intends to pin the prize on his Porsche, while Mohammad AlHalwachi was unsure whether he would use his two won plates, 655550 for BD6,500 and 644449 for BD5,000 for his Lexus or resell them in the highly active secondary market.

The numbers sold at Mazad auctions are all newly minted and are made available to winners as soon as their payment clears, often within ten business days.

A few of the attendees who requested anonymity were bidding on behalf of highly influential businessmen, staying in touch with them by phone constantly throughout the auction.

The organiser of Bahrain's online and offline auctions, Mazad was established in 2017 to facilitate market growth and optimise revenue for the sovereign wealth fund of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The revenue from its latest auction totalled BD564,000.

Talal concluded: "I would like to congratulate the successful bidders on their acquisitions and would like to thank Arabian Auctions for all their efforts and close cooperation with Mazad towards upgrading the auctions market in Bahrain through their expertise and in depth knowledge, which has enhanced the popularity of auctions and the substantial growth in returns. The procedures followed were implemented in accordance

with the best international standards."

Across the GCC, especially in Dubai, distinctive licence plates demand kingly sums. The record high in Dubai is AED33 million (BD3.4million) for a single digit Licence plate – D5, snagged by Dubai-based Indian businessman Balwinder Sahani, who considers himself "a simple man" – his two Rolls-Royce cars with single digit licence plates notwithstanding.



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The Land of Eternity

BAHRAINI fashion creator Ahad Rashid Fahad aims to educate, inspire and spread awareness about the kingdom's rich culture and heritage by incorporating historical elements in her eclectic designs.

The 30-year-old management and marketing graduate from University of Bahrain, who also has a certificate in human resources, has always had a passion for fashion and art; sketching looks and dreaming of someday starting up her own line.

Instead, she went into the banking sector and kept fashion as a hobby. However, when she saw that she was able to make her desire to design as more than just a hobby, she focussed on it full time. She then started her journey in the nine-month Dilmun Star programme with Bahrain Fashion Incubator (BFI) where she received a certificate of fashion design.

BFI, established in 2016, was formed as an incubator and

FASHION REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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accelerator in the MENA region to provide creative professional solutions and services to fashion startups through hands-on practical training, mentorship, workshops, seminars and access to a network of resources and strategic partnerships.

Ahad, from Riffa, said: "Fashion is a platform for expression for me and I always follow up with trends. A person can express themselves through the clothing they wear, highlighting their identity and character. Hence, I wanted to combine my passion for art and my love for fashion to make each garment a work of art that tells a story... and not only something to wear. I believe that my passion in creating art in an unconventional way was the main driver for me to become a designer."

"I can make collections inspired by life events, beliefs or even elements that I see and bring me joy."



Models wearing Ahad's designs

"After completing Dilmun Star programme, I felt that I had found my calling in life and decided to establish my own brand."

Ahad's fashion start-up brand LEO stands for Land of Eternity which she explains is

what Bahrain was called during the Dilmun era. She has a line for men and women featuring semi-formal and formal blazers, dresses, trousers, skirts and bags. She is also currently developing an accessories line and sourcing collaborations with fine jewellery brands in Bahrain. Her focus is to add touches of her heritage to spread the word of Bahrain on a global scale.

"My collection is about the story of Gilgamesh when he came to Bahrain looking for eternity," she said. "It started four years ago when I was searching for inspiration and started looking at heritage sights of Bahrain online. I was looking for something unique and not available in the market. That's when I learned about the story of Gilgamesh. I felt connected to his struggles and the fact that he was searching for uniqueness and I was searching for that too for my brand. He was a powerful man who lost his friend and decided to search for immortality. He was told to travel to Dilmun and find the flower of eternity (pearls), but the myth says the snake ate it and he couldn't get it. I want his story to be immortal through my designs."

"When I joined BFI, I was able to create a full collection based on that inspiration and I was able to incorporate elements of technology and sustainability in it as well. I wanted to come up with a name that Bahrain is known for even globally and since my inspiration comes from him, I named it Land of Eternity. When I got established and go international, I want people to know that this is a Bahraini fashion brand."

Ahad used laser cutting technology for the fabrics and attached accessories that went with her theme. She also used 3D printing technology for the cuneiform writing letters on bags and accessories.

"The signature element that you will see in my clothing line and bags is the shape of Gilgamesh's face apparent in the triangle cut as his nose," Ahad explained. "When it comes to the jacket, the elements that will capture your eye first are the colours. I chose red as it represents love, since Gilgamesh had so much love for his friend and love for my friends and family is something very important to me. Gold represents



jacket and recognised the Gilgamesh print.

Ahad was delighted with the ambassador's reaction that she happily designed a black version of it and bestowed it to her before she departed the kingdom.

"I was so happy and I felt that it was surreal," said Ahad. "This encouraged me to take a step further and work harder to represent Bahrain's heritage to the global market. I had a conversation with madame Cecile after I gave her the jacket and I felt the amount of appreciation and encouragement from her. Especially that she mentioned the jacket was one of the most beautiful presents she received during her time in Bahrain because it represented a story about the island's heritage and was especially made for her. "I want the world to know that Bahrainis are creative and have the skills to form innovative brands. My dream is to become a global brand that appeals to a wide group of audience."

Ahad is currently working on expanding her lines to fit more tastes for different segments of people. She is also working on creating smart bags that combine technology and sustainability along with Bahraini heritage.

"I am developing prototypes for of a women's hand bag that comes in three different sizes; appealing to different personalities and all boasting the signature triangle shape (heritage). One is trendy and easy to carry, the second is classy for the woman who is intrigued by creativity and modern style and the third is luxurious for those who like to be unique and own an item that is different than what is available in the market. All these bags are made of different types of leather."

People can snap up her designs at BFI or through Instagram @LOE_bh.

royalty since Gilgamesh was a king. You will also notice that the other half of the jacket does not have embroidery. This is because Gilgamesh lost his other half and I wanted that to show that in the clothing. The embroidery features the symbol of a crown, pearls, Razi flower and Dilmun stamps. As far as my latest collection, I used cuneiform writing from Dilmun's era. You will see the letters on the clothing spelling Bahrain in cuneiform. You will also see it 3D printed as jewellery.

"I love mixing up the elements of Bahraini heritage, modern technology, and sustainability all in a single piece that tells a story and reflects the past, present, and the future."

Ahad's daring designs caught the eye of former Ambassador of France to Bahrain, Cécile Longe during Dilmun Star's Finale Gala dinner. The former ambassador took notice of her



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BD 32 net with selected beverage package

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INTERCONTINENTAL
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Fun and frolics

COMMUNITY REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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A fun two-day festival will be staged in the kingdom this Friday and Saturday to celebrate womanhood featuring an array of activities for the entire family to enjoy.

CreaTree Service is collaborating with Adhari Park, Bahrain to host Womania Winterfest event at its premises from 4pm to 10pm each day. The women-centric carnival, which boasts the tagline "Why shouldn't women have all the fun?" will boast an open-air festival filled with food, entertainment, music, shopping options, games and competitions including a talent show.

While entry is free, people can avail three hours of unlimited rides for BD5 each, as part of a one-off offer for this festival and CreaTree Services will donate a part of their proceeds from this event to Mother and Child Welfare Society, Bahrain.

Vaijayantee Bhattacharya, Founder and Owner of CreaTree Services, who is also an author, poet and journalist, said: "CreaTree services dedicates itself to at least one event a year to support the cause of women's empowerment. In 2018, we conducted a panel discussion on domestic violence on the sidelines of a book launch.

"This time around, we are glad to collaborate with Adhari Park in organising this festival that celebrates women in all their glory.

"We hope to be able to provide a refreshing change



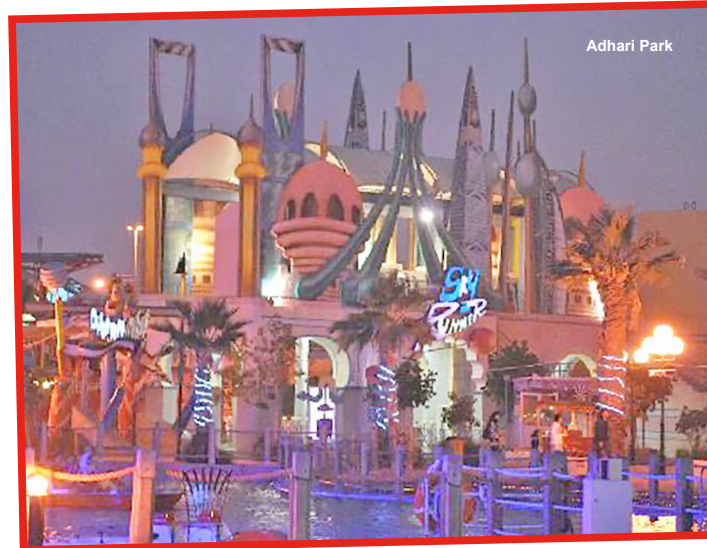
Adhari Park

for all women through this festival where they can enjoy themselves thoroughly through food, music, entertainment, and rediscover the child in them. This is our noble endeavour to connect all

women across cultures and communities, and empower them through shared knowledge, visions and experiences."

Omer Sabir, marketing manager of Adhari Park Development added: "The women of Bahrain are the bedrock of our society and we are happy to be able to partner on this carnival that celebrates them."

The weekend bonanza will include live painting sessions by different artists and poetry presentations focused on the glory of womanhood by poets from the Bahrain Writers' Circle as well as



Adhari Park

Arabic poems from local poets. There will also be free workshops by the Bahrain Women's Association. There will also be games, activities, performances and food vendors.

Other organisations participating in this event

include the American Women's Association, the Women's Crisis Care International, the Indian Ladies Association and the HV Holistic Health and Corrective Training healthcare clinic, to name a few.

HV will be hosting a talk after the inauguration on holistic health and will stage an in body assessment and a mini postural analysis. The group will also be handing out vouchers for their infrared sauna and providing holistic advice on how to

cope with stress as well as how to correct your posture. This is besides the free health-checkups for women that is being organised by Kim's Hospital.

Mona Almoayyed, managing director of Y K Almoayyed & Sons, will inaugurate the event. She is a businessperson, a women's right campaigner, a philanthropist and an environmentalist voted as third in the most influential Arab Women's List in the MENA region.

The Inaugural programme on Friday will start-off with a one-off parade in which women will display their unity in multicultural diversity. Women are being asked to show up in their traditional garbs to highlight their culture and walk the parade in colourful style.

Vaijayantee added: "It will be an exciting festival for everyone to make the most of the cool winter weather here in the Island!"

For more information, call 36996869 or email at info@creatreeservices.com





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TUMI OPENS BAHRAIN STORE

PREMIUM business, accessory and travel lifestyle brand, TUMI, opened their new store at Moda Mall last week, in the presence of media and influencers as well as Banan Yaquby and Maryam Hamza, the granddaughters of Yaquby Stores founder Mohamed Saleh Yaquby and the owners of TUMI Bahrain.

TUMI is known internationally for

its high quality, bold refined functionality and incredible customer service, according to Dr Hassan Ghoneim, the brand ambassador for TUMI.

TUMI creates iconic backpacks, like the Ashton Marlow Backpack in Carbon with relaxed luxury as well as a sporty and urban vibe.

The 19 Degree Aluminum in Bayon Leaf travel case is a true standout amongst the line-up, with its beautifully contoured

angles, complemented with elegant interior and elevated details including a custom-designed luggage tag and leather wrapped handles.

Banan said: "As a family, we have focused on consumer electronics. We wanted to add to our Breitling watches brand in the premium division. Recently, as a new subsidiary owned by the grandchildren of Yaquby, we decided to venture into new luxury opportunities, the first of which is TUMI."



Alosra Supermaket

1. Avocados US per kg – BD2.875
2. Beef stroganoff strips per kg – BD3.750
3. Blueberry pre-packed 125gm – 650fils
4. Carrots per kg – 295fils
5. Kellogg's corn flakes 500gm – BD1.295
6. Mushrooms Holland pre-packed 250gm – 750fils

Ansar Gallery

1. Al Kabeer breaded chicken fillet 3x450gm – BD2.895
2. Al Kabeer chicken pop-corn 1,000gm – BD2.995
3. Al Kabeer chicken meatballs 1,000gm – BD1.995
4. Pert shampoo asst 400ml+200ml – BD1.150
5. Anchor toothpaste 3x120gm+free toothbrush – 995fils

Al Jazira Supermarket

1. Cauli rice original – BD1.700
2. Cauli rice veggie sweet potato – BD1.700
3. Eatwater slim pasta penne – BD1.900
4. Eatwater slim pasta spaghetti organic – BD1.900
5. Eatwater slim noodles organic – BD1.900

Lulu Hypermarket

These offers are available until Monday.

1. Twinings green tea assorted 25x2 – BD2.450
2. Pasta Toscana pasta 500gm assorted/pc – 625fils
3. The berry juice 1ltr assorted/pc – 750fils
4. Almarai milk powder pouch 1.8kg+25% extra – BD3.690
5. Cole's Christmas pudding 110gm 2's pack assorted – BD1.590
6. Fox's chocolate biscuit selection tin 365gm – BD3.490

REVIEW: A THANKSGIVING FEAST – FOUR SEASONS HOTEL BAHRAIN BAY



THANKSGIVING is one of those American holidays that has found its way to every country with a strong American expat presence, and despite its dark roots, today it has become more about the gluttonous feasting, food comas, gravy with a side of turkey and pumpkin pie.

To celebrate all this and more, we headed to the Thanksgiving dinner at Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay, which took place by the Azure Pool. We were welcomed with a seasonal mulled beverage and led to the elevated patio, giving us a behind the table look at the chefs preparing the spread for the evening.

We chatted with Chef Brian Becher about his favourite offerings this year. He said: "There are over 25 different dishes tonight. We have taken the classic Thanksgiving dinner recipes and put our own spin on them. So definitely try the jalapeno cheddar biscuits, the cornbread stuffing and of course, the gravy and the three kinds of sauces."

With our instructions in place, we sampled the entire spread, and I



have to say even though I am not a fan of cornbread, something about the stuffing topped with gravy and alongside the turkey also topped with gravy, just worked. I have a sneaking suspicion it was the fresh preparation and definitely not the gravy.

But for me the highlight was definitely the jalapeno cheddar biscuits, which were soft and spicy, with a hint of sweetness that just brought the entire plate together. And after trying some of the brisket, we quickly got down to the real business of Thanksgiving – desserts.

While I took the night off the dessert cart, my dinner companions decided on the pumpkin pie, the

vanilla custard and at least a couple of helpings of ice cream to round off the evening.

As midnight approached and we felt the oncoming food coma, Clare Bromilow, the hotel's director of public relations and communications stopped by to chat and ruminated: "The dinner was quite successful. We were a bit worried about the rain, but it's been a wonderful evening. The chefs have showcased their finest Thanksgiving offerings. This is just the start of the festive season. Coming up, we have the Nutcracker afternoon tea as well as the Unwine-d dinner at CUT, where chefs base their meals around a selected beverage instead of the other way around. And we will also have Jordanian guest chef Moen, joining us from the US, for the New Year's Eve party, which should be glitzy *Great Gatsby* themed affair."

As we walked back to our cars, we excitedly talked about the festive season to come and if this dinner was any indicator, I can barely wait for what's next!

– Naman Arora



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Taking a look at the world of financial technology and beyond ...



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Weekend venture



STARTUPS

By NAMAN ARORA
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CODERS, entrepreneurs and finance industry professionals worked together over 54 hours starting on November 21, as part of a special edition of Startup Weekend focused on developing Fintech solutions.

Startup Weekend is a global event during which participants work in teams over a weekend to develop a minimum viable product (MVP) to pitch to judges after the weekend. Those who participate become part of the world's largest community of passionate entrepreneurs with representation in over 1,475 cities in 156 countries around the world, running for a decade with 410,000 participants and 7,000+ Startup Weekend events.

The three-day event in Bahrain highlighted the current FinTech landscape, and outlined how customers' expectations are changing, with the ever increasing demand for services and goods to be provided through digital channels.

Education and knowledge partners conducted workshops and mentorship sessions to support the teams in all the stages of creating an idea from forming the team, building an actual product, and pitching their ideas.

Khalid Saad, CEO of Bahrain FinTech Bay (BFB) stated "FinTech has emerged as one of the key themes driving Bahrain's financial services sector over the past few years. The outcomes of FinTech Startup Weekend Bahrain 2019 highlight the growing interest in not only participating in this ecosystem, but also addressing industry's current and future needs. Bahrain FinTech Bay will continue supporting such key initiatives to drive the FinTech ecosystem forward."

Fintech Startup Weekend was hosted by Bahrain FinTech Bay in Strategic Partnership with the National Bank of Bahrain, the Economic Development Board and Tamkeen.



Additional partners for the event included Supporting Partner Batelco and educational partners; University of Bahrain and Bahrain Polytechnic.

12 mentors were present at the event from various sectors such as marketing, technology, design thinking and consultancy, data analysis and more

Three teams with the best pitches were selected by 4 judges from the National Bank of Bahrain, Central Bank of Bahrain, Tamkeen, Bahrain FinTech Bay, and the Economic Development Board.

First place was won by FORK: an automatic payout interface for corporates and multi-vendors. In addition to a residency at BFB, the team won a cash prize of BD 1500.

BasmaBot, a WhatsApp integrated chatbot that simplifies applying for the loan process, won second place and a cash prize of BD1000.

Third place and a cash prize of BD500 was won by LAMMA, a bill splitting app that integrates multiple applications.

Jaibk, an app that helps users perform enhanced budgeting, aiming to fulfil a serious regional gap in the ecosystem, received an honourable mention.



Judges Pakiza Abdulrahman and Khalid

AT A GLANCE

Focus on trends

THE 26th annual World Islamic Banking Conference, held at the Gulf Hotel concludes today. The three-day conference focused on the theme of "Mega Trends in Banking & Finance." Key dignitaries including Godwin Emeziele, Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria and Jihad Azour, Middle East & Central Asia Director at International Monetary Fund (IMF) presented a global outlook on banking and the growing resurgence of Islamic banking. Other topics discussed included corporate sustainability within Islamic banking, the role of Small and medium sized enterprises and value creation via mergers and acquisitions in the GCC Financial Sector.

Strategic tie-up

BANKABLE, the global provider of "Banking as a Service" solutions, and Visa announced a strategic collaboration within the Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa (CEMEA) region. Bankable aims to work with Visa to accelerate the digital capabilities of financial institutions, build and launch digital banks, reduce cash usage and increase Fintech sponsorship in CEMEA. To accommodate this collaboration, Bankable is opening an office at the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), which will be Bankable's Middle Eastern hub. Bankable's presence in Dubai will allow the company to engage with the Dubai International Financial Centre, the leading financial centre of the Middle East, Africa and South Asia, comprised of more than 2,000 active registered firms. Bankable will complement and address the already strong fintech ecosystem in the region. The company will look to foster partnerships that enable faster time-to-market and relevant digital banking initiatives.

Eric Mouilleron, CEO and founder of Bankable said, "Bankable has served prestigious global clients headquartered in Dubai for the last three years. Following our global partnership in April 2019 with Visa, Bankable is committed to increase its alignment with Visa. Not only is Dubai home to global head offices and Visa's CEMEA base, but some of our existing clients in Europe and North America are now looking to expand in the region. We will be able to support our clients directly and Visa's CEMEA financial institutions members as well as provide European and US access to UAE based organisations."



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Listings, lifestyle, travel, entertainment and sporting events by Naman Arora

Today (December 4)

The Jumeirah Royal Saray Bahrain invites you to embark on a Mediterranean food adventure with Chef Claudio Dielli every night at Brasserie Royale from 6pm to 11.00pm. It is the perfect menu for a romantic dinner, an intimate celebration or just if you love Mediterranean cuisine!

Take a virtual trip down the streets of Italy every Wednesday at the Intercontinental Regency's Medzo restaurant with a special Market dinner featuring Italian street food from different kiosks. Priced at BD12net for the soft drink package and BD19net for the Italian grape package. Call 17227777 for details.



Reef Resort's Tokyo Reef restaurant features a specially-created set menu that is offered on weekdays (Saturday-Wednesday, closed on Mondays) from 3pm to midnight where guests can watch as the chef prepares sushi, sashimi, maki and other Japanese fare before their eyes. Set menu priced at BD18+++ inclusive of a select Asian beverage. For details, call 13110110.

Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain's Baharat restaurant hosts a stylish yet rustic BBQ night every Wednesday featuring ribs and Wagyu prime rib steak from 7pm-11pm. The entertainment is performed by Twin Band. The BBQ buffet is inclusive of soft drinks and water for BD22net and the free-flow select beverage package is priced at BD28net. For details, contact 17171144.

Designed for your absolute relaxation, the Lagoon Beach boasts serene views from sunrise till sunset and is one of Reef Clubhouse's most scenic spots in the kingdom. The Reef Clubhouse's new indoor pool is now open! The large-scale indoor pool is a sight to behold with every detail designed to make being here a delightful experience. Whether enjoying the warm water, a drink at the poolside bar, soaking in the jacuzzi, or relaxing on deckchairs, the pool offers a world-class environment in which to spend moments of leisure. Enjoy their Pre-Launch Special and relax and unwind every day until Sunday. For only BD10 net/person at the food savoury area, guests can enjoy free access to Lagoon Beach facilities including the new indoor pool while children under five are free of charge.

Located at the Reef Island, the scenic Clubhouse & Lagoon Beach are perfectly positioned overlooking the panoramic view of Bahrain skyline where guests can create memories with loved ones aboard the Lagoon Moon floating restaurant as they witness the striking view. The Clubhouse is a vibrant hub of lifestyle amenities placing you at the heart of a world where dining, well-being, leisure, socializing and relaxation are all yours in luxury surroundings. It also has a playroom area where a sphere of entertainment and educational fun will keep younger guests amused in a safe and engaging environment. For inquiries, call: 77900700.



Tomorrow (December 5)

Savour live stations of seafood and meat cuisine every Thursday at the Intercontinental-Regency's Selections Restaurant from 7pm to 10:30pm priced at BD19net for food and BD29net inclusive of selected beverages. For details, call 17227777.

The Bizarre Lounge at Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain invites you to a Latino dance party hosted by talented instructor Jaffar. Enjoy a chill atmosphere and salsa the night away to contemporary Latin American music every Thursday from 10pm - 2am. For details, contact 17171144.

The Ritz-Carlton Bahrain's Primavera restaurant invites you to get down to business with its two-course power lunch, with daily special menus, set by Chef Delfino. Priced at BD12net, you can combine your choice of mains, salad and/or desserts.

Friday (December 6)

Check out Jumeirah Royal Saray's brunch 'The Brasserie Way' every Friday from 1pm to 5pm, priced BD27net with soft drinks and BD35net with selected beverages. The little guests will love their dedicated buffet and the special activities organized by the Bulbul Kids Club team exclusively for them! Call 77707070 for more details.

Enjoy the Four Seasons Hotel's Friday Brunch at CUT by Wolfgang Puck. Enjoy this spectacular brunch featuring some of the chef's favourite dishes. The event runs from 12pm to 3:30pm and is priced at BD32net per person including soft beverages (and select beverages for ladies) and BD44net per person for the select beverage package. For reservations, call 17115500.

Spread across three of InterContinental Regency Bahrain's finest restaurants is the unforgettable Brunchism experience, a brunch buffet featuring live food stations and culinary choices from around the world, accompanied by live entertainment and kids activities, with food and music around the pool area. Priced at BD22net for the soft drink package and the BD32net for the select beverage package. Call 17227777 for details.

Check out the Gulf Hotel's award-winning Al Waha Friday Brunch at the Al Waha Restaurant. Explore the world of Arabic food culture and experience a remarkably fun family activity over a sumptuous buffet of mouth-watering delicacies, complimented by the live tunes of the QBA Band for BD23net inclusive of soft beverages and BD28net inclusive of select beverages. For more details, contact 17173000.

Every Friday afternoon, Al Areen's Saffron Restaurant welcomes you to its pool barbecue buffet from 1pm to 5pm, featuring modern Khaleeji and Indian dishes, priced at BD15net including soft drinks and pool access. For details, call 17845000.

At the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's La Table Krug by Y from 12:30pm to 3:30pm, experience an elegant buffet of the most exquisite culinary delights tastefully unveiled for an afternoon of indulgence, Krug-style. And enjoy a surprise dish prepared exclusively by Executive Chef Yann Lejard. Priced at BD55, includes a selection of premium beverages. For details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com.

Saturday (December 7)

Enjoy a delectable International buffet spread every Saturday from 12:30pm to 4pm over Fum Bistro at The Westin Bahrain City Centre, while revelling in the Rotunda's ambience. Priced at BD8net. For more information, call 17171441.



Spice up your Saturday with Asian selections and live jazz as you join the fun-loving chefs at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's re/Asian Cuisine, who will be turning their hands to mouth-watering Asian selections like Korean Fried Chicken Bao Buns, Wok Fried Shrimp Dumplings and Brisket Wontons during this hugely popular brunch from 12:30pm to 3:30pm. Priced at BD32net including soft beverages and BD44net including select beverages. For reservations and more details, contact 17115046.

Lounge at InterContinental Regency Bahrain's Legendz Steakhouse and enjoy the Lazy Legendary Lunch in a relaxed cosy setting every Saturday from 11:30am to 4pm. Priced at BD19net. For details, call 17227777.

Sunday (December 8)

Feast on a tasty Mediterranean Business lunch amidst the busy Seef district at Jumeirah Royal Saray's Brasserie Royale from Sunday to Thursday with a three-course menu and delicious options to choose from. Priced at BD15net per person. For more information and reservation, contact 77707070 or email jrbs.brasserie Royale@jumeirah.com.



Enjoy a selection of international and Middle Eastern cuisine at Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain's Baharat restaurant every Sunday to Thursday from 12:30pm to 3pm. The lunch buffet is priced BD16net, the soup and salad buffet is priced BD7net and children aged six to 12 dine at half price. For details, call 17171144.

Monday (December 9)

Relish four of the best pasta recipes by Chef Perbellini every Monday with a delightful degustation at Gulf Hotel's La Pergola. The menu features a selection of spaghetti with pesto and calamari, homemade gnocchi with tomato & basil, deconstructed lasagne moderna with beef ragout and much more! Priced at BD10+++. For more details, contact 17173000.

Enjoy all-you-can-eat Asian bite and bao from the menu every Monday at the Intercontinental Regency's

Elements Pool and Lounge from 7pm to 11pm. Priced at BD9.9net for the bite package and BD 12.9net for the bite and bao package. For details, call 17227777.



The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Mamma Mia Mondays at Primavera will feature Chef Delfino cooking up a menu just like grandma would have wanted it. Gather the family or your best group of friends and savour the afternoon with a variety of sharing dishes. The cost is BD25 for adults, including beverages and BD10 for children, ages 4 - 12. For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Tuesday (December 10)

Experience a sensory journey through a 5-course tasting menu with optional blind beverage pairing. The daily Degustation Dinner at the Ritz-Carlton Bahrain's Plums restaurant from 7pm to 11:30pm is perfect for culinary enthusiasts. Priced at BD45net per person or BD65net including a blind beverage pairing. For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Dates for the Diary

Celebrated Jordanian chef Moen Abu Zaid crosses the Atlantic to team up with Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's Wolfgang Puck executive chef Brian Becher at CUT by Wolfgang Puck and re/Asian Cuisine, inspired by the flavours of Arabia. Chef Moen is at re/Asian Cuisine on December 19 and CUT by Wolfgang Puck on December 20. For reservations, call 17115500.



The Manama Theatre Club invites you to join them at the British Club for the Beauty & The Beast pantomime, starting this evening. Come by for an evening of fun, music and more! The evening show starts today at 7:30pm and Friday at 7pm. Matinees start on Friday and Saturday at 3pm. Tickets are available for sale at the British Club.

At Jumeirah Royal Saray Bahrain (JRSB), starting December 4, take a midday respite in the luxurious comforts of The Palm Lounge from 1pm to 7pm from Saturday to Wednesday or until 8pm on Thursday and Friday. Enjoy warm scones with clotted cream and homemade chocolate spread, savoury bites, Christmas-inspired pastries and more. Complete the afternoon with your choice of hot beverages. Priced at BD 25 net for 2 people. Today at 6pm, JRSB will host a beautiful outdoor tree lighting festivity to celebrate the opening of the resort Festive Village and Winter Wonderland. Shining fairy lights, hot beverages, live music and Santa's visit will definitely bring the festive magic to life. Learn more about the Winter Wonderland at Jumeirah on Page 12-13.

For those hoping to impress guests in the comfort of their home, Jumeirah Royal Saray's succulent turkeys (Mustard honey glazed or Apple and honey glazed) are a perfect choice and come with all the trimmings from roasted brussels to cranberry sauce, gravy and traditional stuffing. An advanced order of minimum 24 hours is required. Whole roast turkey (6-8kg)/Ribeye (2kg) priced at BD 80net and festive turkey/beef full set menu priced at BD 130net.

Celebrate the joyous season with a special Christmas Eve buffet on December 24th from 7:30pm and a Christmas Day feast on December 25 from 1pm to 5pm. Priced at BD36net including soft beverages and BD48net including selected beverages. Enjoy a New Year's Eve Gala Dinner on December 31 from 8:00 pm as you step into the New Year with a bang at Jumeirah Royal Saray and relish a delicious hearty epicurean spread including a buffet of delectable appetisers, seafood, premium imported cheeses and decadent desserts. The ballroom elegantly turned into a white wonderland will create the perfect atmosphere to celebrate while the very talented singer Banah and her 7-piece band will make you dance till the early hours. Priced at BD80 net including soft beverages and BD90net including selected beverages.

Start off the New Year with the right food with the exclusive Detox Brunch from 1pm to 5pm at Brasserie Royale. Enjoy the beautiful ambience in tranquil surroundings and indulge in a sumptuous buffet and live cooking stations accompanied by relaxing live music. Priced at BD36net including soft beverages and BD48net including selected beverages.

For reservations call 66720026.

Tomorrow, from 5pm onwards, the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain is summoning the magic of the season starting with the annual lighting of our grand Christmas tree and festive tunnel of sparkling lights. Feel the holiday spirit as Christmas medleys and the aroma of gingerbread and hot

cocoa fill the air.

Starting on Sunday, teatime at The Ritz-Carlton takes on a festive flavour. Enjoy traditional scones and pastries with your favourite tea variety complemented by a selection of festive treats – an excellent opportunity to share picture perfect #RCMemories with family and friends. Priced at BD25net.

On Friday from 12:30pm to 3:30pm, La Med's weekly super brunch turns into the ultimate festive spread of succulent meats, heavenly delights as well as a sampling of dishes from their premium restaurants, including Plums, Primavera and Nirvana. Priced at BD30net with soft beverages. BD38net with select beverages.

Celebrate with a festive super brunch every Friday until December 20 from 12:30pm to 3:30pm and devour the ultimate festive spread of succulent meats, heavenly delights as well as a sampling of dishes from Ritz-Carlton Bahrain's premium restaurants, including Plums, Primavera and Nirvana. Priced at BD30 including soft beverages and BD38 including select beverages.

Dine with a Christmas brunch feast fit for a king on December 25 from 12:30pm to 4:30pm and celebrate a family hallmark tradition with a special Christmas themed buffet of the finest of creations, all amidst a sea-inspired ambience. Priced at BD38 including soft beverages and free flow of sparkling beverages. BD20 for kids, ages 5-12.

There is a family-style festive menu at Nirvana on December 24 and 25 from 7pm to 11:30pm, including Indian classics and modern dishes fit for a Maharaja. Venture through an eight-course festive EXPeRIMENCE at La Table Krug By Y on December 24 and 25 from 7pm to 11pm and gift yourself an epicurean journey that truly keeps on giving. Savor the finest of creative dishes to playful desserts in one of the most elegant of settings. Priced at BD90 including soft beverages and BD120 including a Krug pairing.

Enjoy a festive brunch celebration from 12 pm to 4 pm with traditional Mexican favourites and entertainment, all within a vibrant and colorful setting at the Cantina Kahlo every Saturday in December. Priced at

BD23 including soft beverages and BD36.5 including select beverages.

Experience the holiday spirit in a traditional Italian setting at Primavera on December 24 and 25 from 1pm to 11pm with a four-course set menu especially crafted by Chef Delfino Sanfilippo Chiarello. BD29 and BD15, additional for select beverage pairings. For details on any of the above call 17580000 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

From December 12 to 26, the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's Bay View Lounge gives its traditional afternoon tea a Nutcracker-inspired makeover, honouring Tchaikovsky's classical ballet in the form of delicious pastries and the Four Seasons touch.

The Four Seasons Hotel has a slew of unique Christmas events to get guests in the holiday spirit, complete with the thrill of Santa's arrival, plus the twinkling Christmas decorations in the lobby and more.

Get into the holiday spirit with a Christmas brunch at Bahrain Bay Kitchen on December 20 from 1pm to 4pm.

On Christmas Eve (December 24), dine at Bahrain Bay Kitchen or at CUT by Wolfgang Puck from 7pm to midnight as Santa delivers his presents worldwide.

Make your Christmas extra special with brunch starting at noon and dinner starting at 7pm at CUT by Wolfgang Puck.

For New Year's Eve, the roaring 20s comes to Bahrain, complete with riveting performances, endless cocktails, live music and fireworks. Guests are invited to dine at any of the Hotel's signature restaurants and step into a heart-racing immersive adaptation of F Scott Fitzgerald's seminal jazz-age novel for a hedonistic night complete with live bands, devilish cocktails and dressing to the nines.

New Year's Eve Dinner at re/Asian Cuisine starting at 7pm New Year's Eve Dinner at CUT by Wolfgang Puck starting at 7pm Masquerade Dinner at Bahrain Bay Kitchen starting at 8pm Great Gatsby New Year's Eve Party at Azure Pool & Lounge starting at 8pm Recupera from the previous night at the New Year's Day Brunch at Bahrain Bay Kitchen I starting at 1pm on January 1, 2020.

Enjoy the Orthodox Brunch at Bahrain Bay

Kitchen starting at 1pm on January 7, 2020. To reserve a memorable festive experience, call 17115000.

On December 25 starting at 12:30pm, at the Gulf Hotel, enjoy a Christmas brunch that has it all! Unwrap a festive feast in a beautiful setting with the ones you love as the elves at Gulf Convention Centre deliver the Christmas magic to fill you with good cheer as you enjoy the live band, Santa Claus and fun activities for the whole family. Priced at BD32net per person inclusive of selected beverages. Up to 50% off for children ages 6 to 12.

The Gulf Hotel's Al Waha invites you to indulge in their lavish Christmas Day dinner buffet which will include roast turkey & trimmings and a delectable festive buffet. Priced at BD16+++ per person. Up to 50% off for Children ages 6 to 12. On December 31 at the Gulf Convention Center, mark the end of year with the most daring show in Bahrain. Get ready for five amazing acts that will take your breath away, including magic, aerial performances and show-stopping dancers. The dress code is formal and doors open at 8pm. The early bird price of BD55net per person ends this Saturday. The regular price at the door is BD60net per person. The ticket price is inclusive of unlimited beverages.

On New Year's Eve, enjoy a romantic candle lit dinner at the Rasoi by Vineet, Margarita Mexicana or La Pergola by Perbellini as you toast to the year ahead at the stroke of midnight. Priced at BD26+++ per person inclusive of one glass of toast. Enjoy a private balcony dinner for two at the Royal Thai on December 31. The table is set for two overlooking the Gulf Hotel's tropical gardens and kol ponds, making this the most unique and intimate dining experience with the perfect city skyline view backdrop to your candle lit dinner. Priced at BD55+++ for two. Enjoy an exquisite New Year's eve dinner buffet at the Al Waha Restaurant with a lavish spread of the finest selection for a special occasion. Priced at BD35+++ inclusive of select beverages. Up to 50% off for Children ages 6 to 12. The recovery brunch at Al Waha Restaurant on January 1, starting at 12:30pm is the perfect way to recover your appetite and rejuvenate from the night before. Priced at BD25net per person, inclusive of select beverages. For details and reservations, call 17113000.

On Sunday at 11am, at the Intercontinental Regency, enjoy a two-course meal with coffee while learning how to entertain a crowd for the holidays with Chef Luigi's fun festive class. Priced at BD9.9net per person.

Revel in Christmas Eve Brunchism at the Intercontinental Regency's Selections, Medzo and Legendz restaurants from 7pm to 10:30pm. Priced at BD22 or BD 32 for select beverage package. Bring the family along for a Christmas lunch at the Selections restaurant starting at 12:30pm. Priced at BD15 for the soft drink package and BD22 for select beverage package.

Enjoy Christmas day dinner at the Legendz Steakhouse from 7pm to 11pm, starting at BD4.5.

Celebrate New Year's Eve in the Golden 20's style with a glamorous evening party at the Al Riiffa Ballroom, including a sumptuous gala dinner, unlimited beverages, and a live dance show. Priced at BD70net per person or get an early bird rate of BD59net if you book and pay by December 15th.

For more information, please call: 17227777.

From December 1-26, at the Westin's Furn Bakery and Le Meridien's Longitude 50, enjoy sumptuous handpicked selections like Yule logs, homemade Christmas cookies, ginger bread and Christmas inspired pastries.

From December 1-24, make your own gingerbread house every Saturday between 3pm and 5pm at the Westin's Furn Bakery. Priced at BD14net for the gingerbread house kit and BD16net per child for the gingerbread house decorating class. Limited seats.

Savour a pre-National Day brunch on December 13 from 12:30pm to 4:00pm at Le Meridien's Baharat restaurant and a National Day dinner at The Westin's Furn Bistro from 7pm to 11pm. Priced at BD28net per person with soft beverages and BD36net per person with selected beverages. 50% discount for Bahraini nationals only.

Devour a pre-Christmas brunch on December 20 and a Christmas brunch on December 25 from 12:30pm to 4pm at Le Meridien's Baharat restaurant. Priced at BD28net per person with soft beverages and BD36net per person with selected beverages. Children under 6 years old eat for free. 50% discount for kids from 6 years to 12 years.

Relish your Christmas Eve dinner from 6:30pm to 11pm at Le Meridien's Baharat restaurant. Priced at BD28net per person with soft beverages and BD36net per person with selected beverages. Children under 6 years old eat for free. 50% discount for kids from 6 years to 12 years. Stop by Le Meridien's Baharat restaurant for a New Year's Eve Spanish themed party December 31 from 7:00PM to 1:00AM and enjoy culinary delights from BBQ, Seafood and Sweetest Brunch specialties as we bid farewell to 2019. Priced at BD30net per person with soft beverages and BD40net per person with selected beverages.

For more information or to make a festive reservation, please call 17171441.



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Fashion Weekly

Keeping you in on the latest trends and what they wore in the past

Family fashion



FASHION REPORT

By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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MANGO is helping parents bundle up their little ones in stylish attire with the launch of its autumn winter 2019 line.

The Barcelona-based brand has designed a series of snugly sweaters, cosy coats and joyous jumpers for boys and girls to help stay warm whilst running outdoors and playing with friends.

The collection features sweaters and coats in prints, patterns, solid colours and comfy faux fur styles. There are also classic patterned shirts and jumpers for boys, to super-cute tops and fuzzy overcoats for girls. The edit offers an array of quirky outfits perfect for the holidays!

To find out more, visit <https://shop.mango.com/bh-en>



Jalal's timely tips on the latest trends

TO pay tribute to one of the most renowned Formula One champions and mark 25 years since his untimely death, TAG Heuer has launched two timepieces that celebrate Ayrton Senna.

The designers included features reminiscent of Senna's preferred watch style and love of his home country, Brazil. As much a legend in TAG Heuer's past as in the sport of Formula One racing, Senna was the face of the avant-garde watchmaker's first "Don't Crack Under Pressure" campaign in 1991 – a fitting role for a racer as ambitious, fearless and committed as the Brazilian driver.

The 45 mm TAG Heuer Carrera Calibre Heuer 02T automatic chronograph features a matt black ceramic case and matching tachymeter bezel and is subtly accentuated by the yellow and green colours of the Brazilian flag. There is green stitching on the black rubber and leather strap and a yellow "S" for Senna on the chronograph counter. "SENNA" is written in yellow on the fixed black ceramic tachymeter bezel.

Meanwhile, TAG Heuer's Formula 1 Calibre 16 Ayrton Senna Special Edition 2019 features an engraving of Senna's iconic helmet on its steel screw-down caseback and his name in white at 1 o'clock on the fixed polished black ceramic bezel with a tachymeter scale.

This timepiece is fitted with a sporty S-shaped bracelet, which Senna was personally fond of, and also features a driver's extension to allow it to be worn over a racing suit.



Young designers on catwalk

Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Berlin for autumn/winter 2020 will take place for the first time at Kraftwerk from January 13 to 15 to offer fashion lovers with a bigger and better show, focusing on fresh young designers. The building in central Berlin, part of the city's industrial and cultural history, has space for a 45-metre long catwalk thanks to its size. This will enable designers and brands to stage larger and more exciting fashion presentations for their new collections.

This week will be the opening event marking the 25th anniversary of the global fashion commitment of Mercedes-Benz.

Mercedes-Benz Fashion Talents presents



The fashion fun will begin with a group show by four designers from South Africa as part of the young talent promotion programme Mercedes-Benz Fashion Talents. Clive Rundle, Floyd Avenue, Viviers Studio and Rich Mnisi will represent the breadth of contemporary South African fashion with a modern interpretation of culture, craftsmanship and tradition.

EatingOut

The places to dine in Bahrain plus culinary tips for the food connoisseur

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Dignitaries at the demo



The pesto makers at the competition

Pesto perfection

GOURMET REPORT
By NAMAN ARORA
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MOST of our Eating Out reviews involve dining at some of the finest establishments and sampling the finished products. However, this week, in celebration of the World Week of Italian Cuisine, we decided to focus on a quintessentially Italian sauce, done in a quixotically Italian way.

Last weekend, Roberto Panizza, president of the Palatitini Cultural Association and founder of the Pesto World Championship as well as Emilio Pescarolo, winner of the 2018 World Pesto Championship were in town to promote proper pesto preparation.

They conducted two events, in partnership with Lulu Hypermarket and the Italian Embassy. The first was a pesto demo conducted at Lulu's Atrium Mall location and the second was a pesto competition at the Darseen Café at Bahrain Fort.

Pesto is another one



of those culinary delights I discovered overseas, specifically when my aunt made fresh pesto using freshly picked basil, nuts, garlic, parmesan cheese, salt and olive oil. On its own it tasted like something a deer, cow or alternative herbivore would enjoy at an upscale fine dining restaurant, but mixed with farfalle pasta or in a sandwich, it transcended every other sauce.

I encountered it a few years later again when a friend's mum went in search of

authentic European pine nuts and I got a shock when I saw the price label. It was \$100 (BD40) per kilogram! But the flavour difference was evident.

The thing I enjoy about Italian cuisine and what sets it apart from most Asian cuisines is the focus on simplicity. There are usually just a handful of ingredients and the process is fairly straightforward, but the balance each person can achieve or enjoy varies dramatically.

As Roberto explained during

the demo: "It's always the same ingredients. What really shapes the final pesto is, first of all, the freshness of the ingredients, especially the basil. The fresher the basil, the more flavourful the pesto. Secondly, each chef likes a certain flavour profile. Some put in more garlic, while others like more cheese or salt. In a competition, we look for a well-rounded balance, but everyone may have their own personal preference. And finally, it's crucial to have a grandmother from

Italy around. Because that's what pesto means to Italians. It reminds them of their childhood kitchens and their mum's cooking."

And the most crucial thing that Roberto emphasised was that pesto is never cooked. A tablespoon (or 10, if you are like me) atop cooked farfalle brings the green magic to life. And each variation does so differently. The culinary assistants at the demo overlooked this detail and the flavour difference between the cooked and uncooked pesto was quite evident.

The next day, to test this theory, a mortar pesto competition was held at Darseen Café, bringing 10 pesto makers and more than 200 attendees together.

Each pesto maker had their own spin and the judges including Roberto, Emiliano, the Italian Ambassador to Bahrain Domenico Bellato and the Ambassador of Genoa to the world Alessandro Piloni, had to taste each pesto twice to decide on a winner.

Alessandro, who lives right here in Bahrain while promoting Genoa to the world, said: "The pesto competition went extremely well and I am honoured to see the 10 pesto makers challenging

themselves. The contestants, despite having grown up with a different culinary background were very well prepared. In fact, we had to do a second round of pesto tasting before declaring the winner. I am confident this would be the first of many collaborations between Genoa and Bahrain on both cultural and economic perspectives."

The winner was Suresh Chauhan, who is a faculty member at the Bahrain Institute of Hospitality and Retail. Suresh is now entitled to participate at the 2020 World Championship of Pesto in Genoa.

As for me, I had just spent the weekend, tasting pesto from 12 different chefs and that in itself, at least for me, is the perfect pesto pastime.

● Scan the QR code below to check out some of the pesto festivities.



Subscribe to GulfWeekly's YouTube Channel.



Roberto, Suresh, Domenico, Emiliano and Alessandro



The crowd at the pesto demo at Lulu Hypermarket



A magical



EXCLUSIVE

By NAMAN ARORA
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A snowy winter is coming to Bahrain this season at Jumeirah Royal Saray Bahrain (JRSB) with a Winter Wonderland planned for the month of December, opening this evening at 6pm.

The *GulfWeekly* team stopped by the JRSB this week to check out the progress on the Wonderland, which is unlike any other planned for the season, including an ice rink, a snow play area and tubing slide at the hotel's Seef location.

Amit Alva, director of Food & Beverages explained: "Winter Wonderland is all about fun and festivities for the whole family. There will be a 100 square meters' ice rink, a snow play area fit for the best snow balls fights or snow men building contest, children will also be able to hurtle down the tubing slide wedged in a giant inflatable doughnut.

"Of course, no festive village would be the same without tasty snacks, that's why we have partnered with a selection of popular food trucks in Bahrain to be on site selling must-have delicacies from burgers to ice-cream and waffles. Jumeirah Royal Saray has also set-up an outdoor lounge where guests can relax with a beverage while glancing at the sea. Guests can also enjoy a small festive market and walk their way to Santa's Grotto for the greatest pleasure of the little ones."

While other malls have done portions of this concept, JRSB decided to bring it all together, creating a wondrous land of delights for children and adults alike. The entry is BD5, with activities and food priced separately.

So far, Florencia Ice Creams, Cine Cafe, Flaming Salmon and Black Tap are confirmed food vendors for the festivities. The ice rink, snow ball zone and tubing will be priced between BD1 and BD3. The artificial snow used in the Snow play area is sourced from recycled



Spencer



Amit

wanting to host festivities in their homes. Our succulent turkeys can be ordered, either Mustard honey glazed or Apple and honey glazed for BD 80net. They come with all the trimmings from roasted brussels sprouts, carrots

materials, is biodegradable and compostable, and is certified safe for children from a supplier that only uses environmentally sustainable artificial snow and ice.

Amit noted: "Our afternoon tea remains focused around chocolate, but this December we have decided to add a touch of festive magic to it with mini gingerbread houses, reindeer chocolate macarons and mini bouchées shaped like sledges. Of course, the signature chocolate fondue and warm scones with clotted cream and house made chocolate spread are still part of the offer.

"We also have a nice selection of take-away specialties for guests

and potatoes to cranberry sauce, gravy and traditional stuffing. There is also a full set menu option for BHD 130 net, good for 8 to 10 people, which include the traditional turkey or whole Roasted ribeye, lobster bisque, seasonal prawns & mango salad, butternut squash salad and to finish a tasty pumpkin pie and German Christmas stollen."

The festive season at JRSB, which kicks off this evening with a tree-lighting ceremony at 6pm, will also feature special performers every weekend.

The hotel also has a slew of feasts planned for the entire family for the end of December, for Christmas and New Year's Eve.

Amit commented: "Our

paradise



special Christmas Day Feast will include fresh seafood, including oysters and lobster, a wide selection of sushi, an extensive Charcuterie & Terrine Station of curated cured meats such as beef bresaola (air-dried) and duck & pistachio pate, various live stations from seared foie gras to beef Wellington, and the classic Christmas. The desserts won't disappoint with the wide variety of Christmas sweets and treats and timeless holiday favourites such as homemade pecan pie, chocolate cake yule log, Christmas pudding or gingerbread cookies in addition to many others. Santa Claus will also do an appearance and distribute small gifts to the little ones on the 25th of December.

For our New Year's Eve Gala, the venue will be

turned into a white magical paradise and the buffet will not be short of luxurious options to satisfy any craving. We are also very excited to have the popular recording artist Banah with us on that evening. She will perform a variety of English and Arabic songs with her

Arabic singer, Banah plans to fuse her passions for guests on these evenings. She noted: "I would like to have a song for everyone there, including the singles I have released this year. My tree-lighting set list includes festive favourites, with our own twist on them. For New

Years, we are planning a fusion of Arab and western music to keep everyone dancing and entertained." Spencer Wadama, General Manager of JRSB and himself a fan of

We created the concept of Winter Wonderland as our way of giving back and bringing together people in Bahrain. As Bahrain continues to grow as a global destination, the entire hotel came together to give the seasonal festivities a European touch.

7-piece band."

Banah, the first female artist in the GCC to be signed by worldwide label Universal whose latest single *Shou Bina* reached the official top 10 chart in Lebanon, will be performing at the tree-lighting this evening and at the New Year's Eve gala.

Being an English and

snowy winters having been an avid skier, concluded: "We created the concept of Winter Wonderland as our way of giving back and bringing together people in Bahrain. As Bahrain continues to grow as a global destination, the entire hotel came together to give the seasonal festivities a European touch."



Below, work in progress on the Winter Wonderland





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Property Weekly

A guide to the best properties home and abroad - by Mai Al Khatib-Camille

FLAT WITH WORLD-CLASS SERVICES UP FOR SALE

A spacious fully furnished one bedroom apartment is available for sale and for rent in Seef district's The Tweet tower.

This apartment features a built-up area of 70sqm and includes a cosy bedroom with an ensuite bathroom, a guest closet and a large living room space with an open plan kitchen and breakfast bar.

The apartment building was developed by Bin Faqeeh Real Estate Investment Company.

It is located opposite City Centre Bahrain near Business Bay and The Grand. It consists of 21 floors of fully furnished one-bedroom apartments with a total of 135 apartments. It boasts facilities such as a gym and swimming pool with a children's section and offers world-class services and amenities.

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Location: The Tweet in Seef district

Reference number: AP985

Sale price: BD62,000

Rental price: BD475

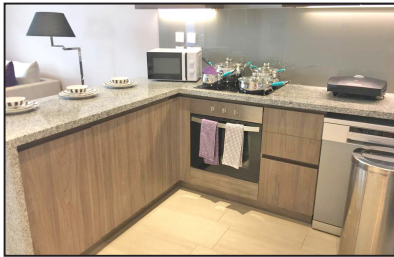
Living rooms: 1

Bedrooms: 1

Bathrooms: 1

Additional information: There is a gym, a swimming pool and a children's section.

For further information on this and other homes call Star Real Estate 17298210.



FREEHOLD | SALE | RENT RESIDENCES



DILMUNIA, EASTERN NEIGHBORHOOD FOR SALE! FREEHOLD RESIDENTIAL LANDS

Price Per Square Feet: from **BHD 22.5 - 24.5**

Plot Area: from **529 - 743 Sqm**

Total Price: from **BHD 131,000 - 188,000**

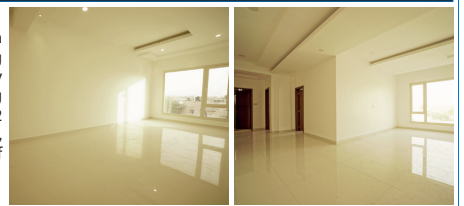
Classification: **RA**

FOR SALE! BRAND NEW APARTMENT NEXT TO ISA TOWN GATE

Spacious Property Features:

En suite master bedroom, 2 bedrooms share a bathroom, spacious living/dining area welcoming guests, closed kitchen and a maid's room, fully finished, with flooring throughout, air conditioning units and a fully fitted kitchen with appliances, 2 allocated parking spaces are provided for each flat, elevator, garbage chute, high-quality soundproof windows.

Starting Price: BHD 65,000 – Ref: AP733

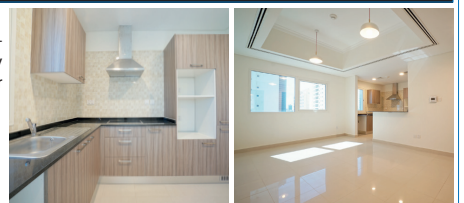


FOR SALE! FREEHOLD BRAND NEW APARTMENT MINUTES FROM SEEF

Spacious Property Features:

Open plan kitchen, living and dining area, 1 en-suite bedroom, 1 guest toilet, balcony with a city view, one car parking, 24 hour security, outdoor rooftop swimming pool, ladies and gent's gym.

Starting Price: BHD 47,000 – Ref: AP869



FOR RENT FULLY FURNISHED INCLUSIVE FLAT IN ZINJ

Fully Furnished Flat Features:

Fully fitted open plan kitchen, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, rent is inclusive of electricity and water bill (BD 30 cap), 1 car parking.

Rent Price: BHD 390 – Ref: AP887



InteriorsWeekly

Your guide to the best in furnishing and design

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Beautiful brown

HAVING the right hue in your home can make all the difference. It can make your home more enjoyable as well as quicker and easier to decorate or revamp a space. It's just like colour psychology which tends to reflect who we are through our colour choices.

Colour psychology is the study of hues as a determinant of human behaviour. Colour influences perceptions such as the taste of food or enhances a feeling. For example, red is the colour of energy, passion, action, ambition and determination. Whereas yellow is the colour of the mind and the intellect.

Every colour has a meaning and a vibe behind it and it's up to the dweller



to figure out what works and doesn't for them.

Once the colour palette has been created, every decorative decision should flow a lot easier.

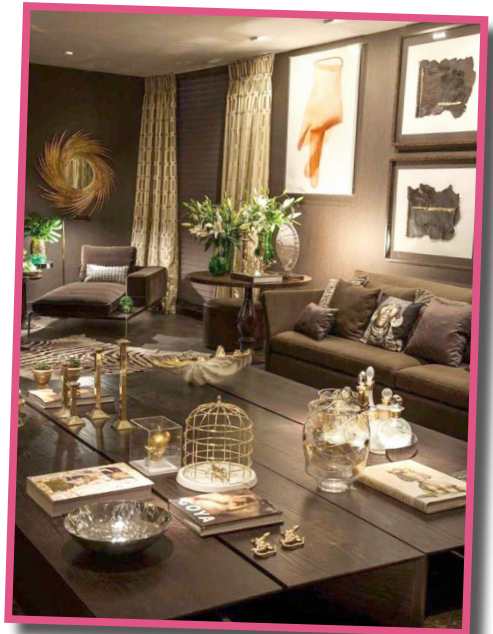
According to Emirati retailer 2XL Furniture &

Home Décor Company, which features a very classic and French-inspired range of products, people should consider changing up their colour palettes for winter and incorporating darker and richer tones.

Brown infuses a space with warmth and is a great equaliser, exuding timeless

elegance in interiors.

Amit Yadav, head of marketing, said: "Mixing different textures and colours can instantly transform an area. Brown furniture and accessories give any space a sense of richness and personality. When used in contrast with lighter or brighter shades such as beige, cream, grey, powder blue, orange, yellow, gold or purple it provides a lot of depth and style. Moreover,



it is timeless and durable as well as easy to live with."

Brown signifies the colour of earth, wood, stone, wholesomeness, reliability, elegance, security, healing

and home. It also symbolises stability, warmth and honesty. It is a natural, neutral colour that is typically associated with the seasons of fall and winter.



SocialScene

True champions



The Inta Ba6al event, which means You are a Champion in English, was a major success in raising awareness about the Paralympic Movement in the kingdom as well as building on achieving a more inclusive and diverse society. The three day event, staged at City Centre Bahrain by the Bahraini Paralympic Committee, was held to raise awareness of the Paralympic movement and the sport of determination. Vice chairman of the Committee, Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa and a number of members of the Board of Directors and Secretary General Ali Al Majid, were present during the event. Other people present included Asian Paralympic Committee chairman Majid Rashid Al Osaimi as well as social media influencers. Thousands of people who visited the sporting stage set up at the mall participated in several competitions such as basketball, volleyball, football and fencing. The Committee also co-ordinated with the Ministry of Education to attract several school students. Many fans enjoyed the different stations such as "You are a hero" and took commemorative photos with Paralympic athletes.

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PUBLICATION
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New in post

Bahrain FinTech Bay (BFB) has announced the appointment of Khalid Humaidan as the new chairman of the board, succeeding Khalid Al Rumaihi. BFB would like to convey its appreciation and gratitude to Khalid Al Rumaihi for his leadership and support. Khalid Humaidan, who was recently appointed as the chief executive of the Bahrain Economic Development Board, brings a wealth of experience in the financial services industry, having previously served as Head of Global Markets MEA for BNP Paribas.



In focus

The Chairman of Bahrain Future Society for Youth, Subah Al Zayani, stated that The World Children's Day is an important occasion to highlight the importance of building a brighter future for children worldwide, promoting international interdependence, raising awareness among children around the world, and improving the well-being of children.



The Indian School Bahrain Riffa campus held a 'Happy Feet Initiative' in which little ones donated shoes to charity. The charity initiative was held in collaboration with Al Rashid Group's Corporate Social Responsibility project titled Shoemart 'Happy Feet Initiative'. The objective of the drive was to inculcate the spirit of generosity in them to help the underprivileged. Students were encouraged to donate used shoes to charity which were then delivered to the Al Sanabel Orphans Care Society.



The Information Communications & Technology (ICT) Special Interest group of the British Bahrain Business Forum in collaboration with Sysprove Consulting and David Lynas Consulting hosted a meeting for ICT professionals yesterday at the Capital Club.

SocialScene

Why wait a month! Join Social Scene every week

Training programme



Gulf Hotels Group, Bahrain recently completed the 2019 intake of its Bahraini management training programme in the presence of the chief executive Garfield Jones and the director of HR Mahmoud Abd El Monem. The Group has a quota of 10 management trainees and added six new trainees to replace those who have recently graduated. The two-year programme sees the trainees gain exposure in all aspect of hotel operations, with their work experience spread across all the Group's hotels, including the newly opened Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay in Dubai. The trainees also attend Hotel School in Lausanne, Switzerland, where they obtain a Higher Diploma in Hotel Management.

Taste of Italy



Italian Ambassador to Bahrain Domenico Bellato, inaugurated the Italian Food Festival last Wednesday at Lulu Hypermarket, Atrium Mall, in the presence of Juzer Rupawala, LuLu's Director for Bahrain as well as other key Lulu and Italian embassy officials. The week-long festivities kicked off with a tour around the store, showcasing popular Italian products in-store, which were on sale throughout the week.

Mercedes certification



Al Haddad Motors recently held a ceremony congratulating their employees on achieving the Certified Status under Mercedes-Benz. Certified Service Advisors, Jaffar Taher and Ayman Almedaifa, and the Certified Parts Advisor, Mohamed Bizal, underwent several training courses and extensive exams to achieve the Mercedes-Benz Certified designation. The certifications were presented by Al Haddad Motors management.

Entrepreneurship week



Tamkeen concluded its fourth edition of the Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW 2019), a week that was filled with more than 45 activities and events that attracted over 5,000 participants. The GEW events were organised by Tamkeen and the Global Entrepreneurship Network - Bahrain (GEN Bahrain) and it included a variety of workshops, seminars, exhibitions, conferences, and interactive panels, held in partnership with more than 40 local and regional entities.

Film Weekly



Movie-loving Naman Arora checks out the big screen releases on show in a cinema near you



Bromantic banter

AN iconic racing movie, especially one based on real events and characters, is one that requires just as much, if not more precision than the sport of motor racing itself. Not only is the movie competing against larger-than-life adrenaline-fuelled events that are often emblazoned in fans' memories, a delicate balance between car and character needs to be maintained to capture audience hearts and to push one right to the edge of his or her seat, without toppling into road rage.

Le Mans '66, released as *Ford v Ferrari* in the US, manages to achieve this and then some with a star-studded cast, an iconic director and a legendary tale still regaled by American car-lovers.

The movie starts off with Carroll Shelby (Matt Damon) competing in his final race before retiring due to heart complications. To the thumping soundtrack of a heart beat against the backdrop of a racing car, Carroll ruminates, "There's a point at 7,000 RPMs where everything fades. The machine becomes weightless. It disappears. All that's left is a body moving through space and time. At 7,000 RPM, that's where you meet it. That's where it waits for you."

We then meet Ken Miles (Christian Bale), an egotistical but extremely talented driver and mechanic, who is married to Mollie (Caitriona Balfe) and has a son, Peter (Noah Jupe).

What follows is a tale of the 'bromance' between Ken and Carroll.

LE MANS '66 (FORD V FERRARI)

CAST: Matt Damon, Christian Bale, Jon Bernthal, Caitriona Balfe

DIRECTOR: James Mangold

GENRE: Action, Biography, Drama

RATING: PG-13

RUNTIME: 152 minutes

They become the leading charge of the battle brewing between automakers Ford and Ferrari in the 60s after financially unstable but racing-ly unbeatable Ferrari refused a takeover bid by Ford, which was seeking to expand its racing footprint.

The devious secret of this movie is that it's not just the 1966 Le Mans race, the characters of Carroll and Ken, or what happened behind the gilded blue-collar doors of Ford. It is about dichotomies and the struggle between opposites to synthesise into something special and beyond the imagination of either party.

There is constant 'bromantic' banter between Carroll and Ken, with Matt portraying the careful but thrill-seeking nature of the American automotive designer with ease and Christian blending in a bit too smoothly into the role of an ego-maniacal and narcissistic English racing engineer.

There is a high-level war between Ford and Ferrari. Ford is financially stable and producing cars by the millions but struggles to have a legacy beyond the family sedan. Ferrari is iconic, sexy and keeps winning races due to the nature of its perfectionist founder Enzo but is on

the brink of bankruptcy because of the same tendencies.

At the subtlest and deepest level, there is a struggle between the creative and the practical. We see this in the struggle within Ford between Ford's infamous corporate executive machine and the start-up nature of Shelby Automotive. We see it in Ken Miles' personal life and his trade-off between racing and raising a family and

While it's romantic to simply take the side of the creative, the point the movie makes is that it's the energy feeding off the struggle itself that fuels the engine. And this is something director James Mangold understands. Having directed both the legendary *Logan* and its preceding travesty, *The Wolverine*, he understands the balance of innovation and reality.

In fact, as Christian said in a *RadioTimes* interview: "Jim has this director of photography called Phedon Papamichael – the two of them have worked together for years. And they're just like Shelby and Miles. They've got this absolute love and respect for each other; they've got a common dream that they're going for and they bicker like crazy. It's bloody hilarious to watch the two of them. And it was a great inspiration for us."

But what makes it past the finish line because of this bickering battle is a multi-gear story, spellbinding cinematography, well-developed main characters and a powerful conclusion, easily earning its four stars.

NAMAN'S VERDICT

1 popcorn – stay home
5 popcorns – start queuing

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Bite-sized trailers

Knives Out

DIRECTOR: Rian Johnson

CAST: Daniel Craig, Chris Evans, Ana de Armas

Plot: When a crime novelist dies after his 85th birthday, an inquisitive detective arrives at his estate to investigate. He soon sifts through a web of red herrings and self-serving lies to uncover the truth behind the writer's untimely demise.

SHOWING IN: Oasis Juffair, City Centre, Seef I, Seef II and Wadi Al Sail.



The Addams Family

DIRECTOR: Greg Tiernan, Conrad Vernon

CAST: Oscar Isaac, Charlize Theron, Chloë Grace Moretz

Plot: Gomez and Morticia Addams are chased away with the rest of the Addams clan during their wedding ceremony by an angry mob. They decide to move to New Jersey with Thing. They meet Lurch, an escaped mental patient whom they hit when Thing was distracted driving the car, and recruit him as their butler. After 13 years, the Addams family continue to live their gloomy lives in isolation.

SHOWING IN: City Centre and Seef II.



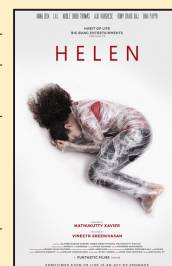
Helen

DIRECTOR: Mathukutty Xavier

CAST: Anna Ben, Lal, Aju Varghese

PLOT: An ordinary suburban girl suddenly disappears, leaving her loved ones in a desperate search as she must face the ultimate battle - the one for her life.

SHOWING IN: Oasis Juffair, Seef I, Wadi Al Sail and Al Hamra.



imdb movie charts

Current Position	Title	Weekend Takings	Gross to date
1	Frozen II	\$85M	\$288
2	Knives Out	\$27M	\$42M
3	Ford v Ferrari	\$13M	\$81M
4	A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood	\$12M	\$34M
5	Queen & Slim	\$12M	\$16M
6	21 Bridges	\$6M	\$19M
7	Playing with Fire	\$4M	\$39M
8	Midway	\$4M	\$50M
9	Joker	\$2M	\$331M
10	Last Christmas	\$2M	\$32M



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كل النساء مرحب بهن

THOUGH Bahraini Women's Day is just an annual celebration, it is now becoming an annual activity that looks at new ways and means to raise the status of women in all fields.

We are really pleased about the increased participation and celebration as well as the preparations being made by all sectors,

Government and Private, to celebrate the success of Bahraini women. This, no doubt, is an important date that everyone awaits with a lot of

anticipation and passion.

On this occasion, we thank and praise Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, wife of His Majesty the King and Chairperson of the Supreme Council for Women, who launched this event and revealed through her vision the importance of giving Bahraini women

a day in which the nation celebrates their contributions. The support and empowerment of women is no longer an option but a duty for leaders and decision-makers.

Her Royal Highness has continued to support and empower women and has adopted methodologies to

integrate their development with equal opportunities. This has been reflected positively since we see their increasing contribution in the process of development and national prosperity.

We are confident that the pace of progress of Bahraini women will continue at an increased pace. Bahraini Women's Day will remain an opportunity to evaluate and study their progress and participation in Bahrain's process of nation building, development and prosperity.

Email sent from GPIC



Write to the editor

Follow Mai on Instagram @voice_of_mai and GulfWeekly @gulfweekly
Your views make all the difference – email: mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com



Her Royal Highness

LOST

That woman standing there
As you see her crystal clear
In broad daylight
pretty and happy,
is lost.
You may never know
But she is lost
In an invisible maze of life
With impenetrable walls around her—
You cannot see but she is trapped—
She knows not how to break through them
And cries invisible tears
Disguised as smiles on her face.
You may not know
But if you ask me
I'd tell you how lost she is—
To walls that close in on her every day
Bit by bit, in stealth—
How every day is a defeat
Of dreams she had
Of love she knew
Of the truth she treasured—
Oh how utterly lost!
When sunrises failed sunsets and poetry
died a thousand deaths—
Oh how irretrievably gone is she—
Find her this way and she's twice lost!
This time to you who thought you had
found her!

By Vijayjantee Bhattacharya

NETFLIX, HULU AND PRIME, OH MY!

BEGINNING with, agreeably, a conservative and mathematics-dictated outlook, TV shows have significantly long running times. This past year saw the conclusion of *Game of Thrones*, which amounted to almost 80 hours of running time. Other classics like *Friends* and *How I Met Your Mother* go well beyond a 100 hours. *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* struck back and *Modern Family* got renewed for its 11th season!

Now, multiply all this by the hundreds and thousands of shows that exist in various languages and genres released through various time periods and you have a spot to put that in Aladdin's cave. Once you enter, it's hard to come back. Ironically, being a victim of this myself, in addition to identifying this, I can also catch on its positives and its importance in our lifestyle.

Lately, many TV shows have been very lucid in bringing forward relevant and integral issues that invoke necessary dialogue and awareness. *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* handled the topics of workplace sexual harassment, stereotypes and racism very well in the past few seasons. Series like *Thirteen Reasons Why* started debate about mental health and *Modern*

Family introduced atypical families to us. The list is endless. Accepting that TV shows play a very significant role in determining what is normal, what is right and what is favourable, they are, perhaps, one of the most important tools we have to influence society for the better. They push us to be more accepting and inclusive, and hey, that's brilliant! Moreover, a balance of the right shows can bolster the development of a person. With the right integration of drama, biographies, documentaries, fantasy, thrillers etc, one can absorb and learn new things as well as express themselves better. TV shows, today, are a social node that one can lean on and build interactions on, much like, common sports, courses, choices and other interests. On the same note, this balance in life can make one more productive even when it comes to doing academic or professional work. In conclusion, I feel that although TV shows do draw significant attention from the viewers, both in terms of the time spent watching and in terms of commitment to the storyline, if undertaken in moderation, it can really contribute to the social building blocks that are a part of all our lives! And yes, do suggest some good ones to me!!

He says,
She says



THE best part of my week is when I wake up on a Friday morning and get to watch a new episode of my current favourite show. Ah sigh. For the other days of the week, I manage my thirst for entertainment by going through a lineup of strategically staggered shows. My taste in television has changed over the years, I must say. From solely watching animated shows on Cartoon Network and vowing to never lay my eyes on any other form of television, to binging medical dramas like *The Good Doctor* and comedic sitcoms like *The Office*. I have definitely grown. Perhaps there will even be a day where I will willingly sit down to watch talent

shows like *The X-Factor*. Sadly, that will also be the day you know I'm not all too well up there. Don't get me wrong, it's amazing to see the talent that people in the world possess but I cannot for the life of me sit through an entire hour of people being judged. The cringe is too real. I think it is only fair, after dedicating an entire paragraph to one of the worst forms of television, to talk about one of the greatest creations of all time – *MasterChef Australia*. Please do not get this legendary show confused with its corresponding cheap equivalents like the ones in the US and India. They are no match for my boys Matt, Gary and George. To be honest, you don't even need to be interested in cooking to appreciate an episode of *MasterChef*. It is agreeable that television is transformative and can be life changing. I for one have watched Gary from *MasterChef Australia* be the angel that he is for eight seasons straight and now plan to move to Australia. See, life changing.



Zaidan Zia Siddiqui, 15, studies at St. Christopher's School. Although he is fascinated about science, he is more inclined towards physics. He would like to explore the depths of space and is especially captivated by the mysterious 'dark matter'. In his free time, he likes to fight zombies, ancient pharaohs and Greek gods on the PlayStation. He also enjoys travelling, reading, swimming, chess and writing.



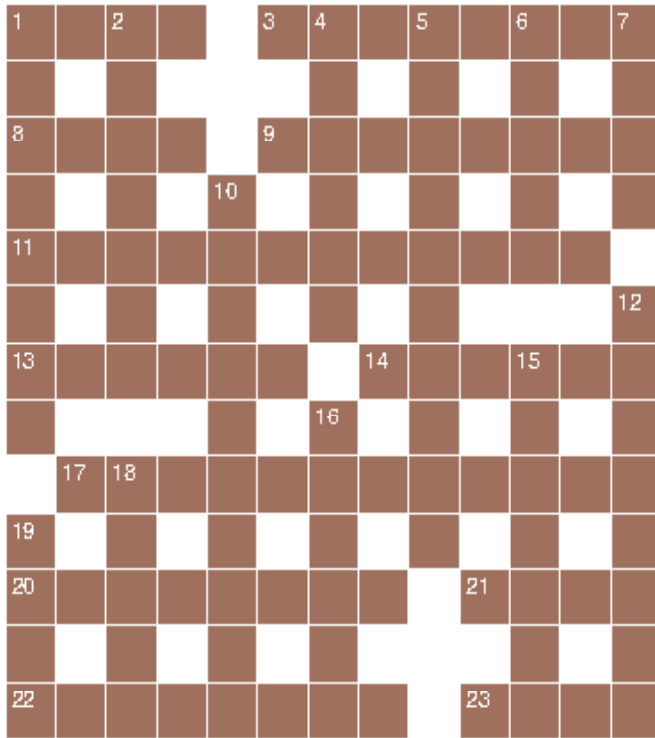
Athena Puri, 17, studies at St Christopher's School. She is interested in studying marketing, finance and management and has begun applying to different universities. She loves to read and her favourite authors are Khaled Hosseini and Liane Moriarty. She is also extremely passionate about art and enjoys painting and drawing in her free time.

cerebrally crust & crema



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Inform (4)
3. Reckon (8)
8. Notch (4)
9. Valuable (8)
11. Loving (12)
13. Pantry (6)
14. Suffocate (6)
17. Endless (12)
20. Fragrant (8)
21. Member (4)
22. Led (8)
23. Gala (4)

DOWN

1. Feeler (8)
2. A match (7)
4. Stress (6)
5. Fickle (10)
6. Around (5)
7. Simple (4)
10. Speed up (10)
12. Be like (8)
15. Feverish (7)
16. Absorb (6)
18. Loop (5)
19. Insect (4)

who, what, where, when

WHO...was Cobi at the 1992 summer Olympic Games in Barcelona?

WHAT...is the name of the chief wolf in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book* who is succeeded by Phao?

WHERE...in 1872 was the first English F.A. Cup final played?

WHEN...did the US humorist Ogden Nash die?

WHO...played the title role in the 1977 television mini-series *Jesus of Nazareth*?

WHAT...is the name of the promontory at the west end of the Gower peninsula?

WHERE...in the US is Lake Iliamna the largest in the state?

WHEN...was the Curtis Cup, a team competition for amateur women golfers, first held?

just so

MI SIRS

down

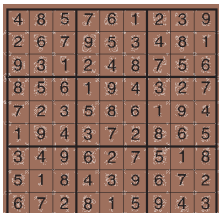


GLOVE

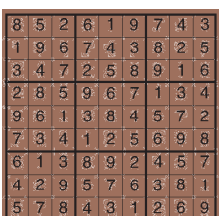
darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

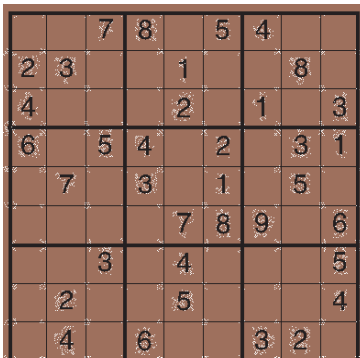
Last week's sudoku



darn tough sudoku



Sudoku



Sudoku



Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

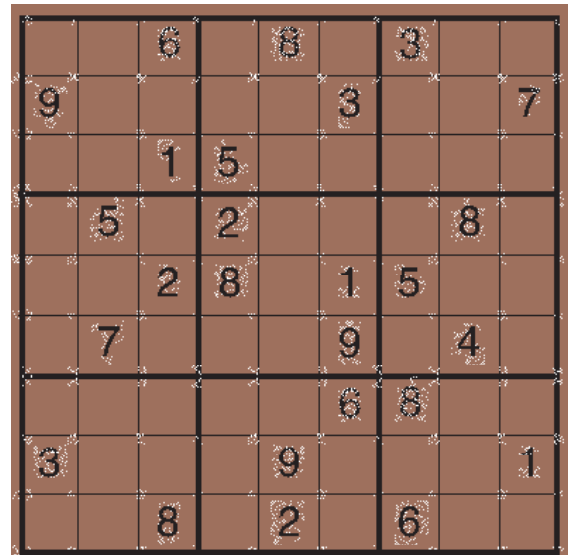
Across: 1 Flabbergast;
9 Wastrel; 10 Dense;
11 Whorl; 12 Shyness;
13 Resort; 15 Reveal;
18 Necktie; 20 Plain;
22 Spite; 23 Prowess;
24 Antecedents.

Down: 2 Lasso; 3 Burglar;
4 Enlist; 5 Godly; 6
Sincere; 7 Awkwardness;
8 Beastliness; 14 Section;
16 Explode; 17 People; 19
Theme; 21 Alert.

JUST SO: Top dog,
Tough love, A man of the
cloth, A turn of the screw.

**WHO, WHAT, WHERE,
WHEN:** Vince Vaughn;
Mahogany; Isle of Man;
1898; Ulster; Black
Sabbath; Australia; 1810.

Darn Tough Sudoku



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Majestic Mazda3



MOTERING REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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THE Mazda3 was recently named the Supreme Winner of the 2019 Women's World Car of the Year as well as the Women's World Family Car of the Year and after driving it around the kingdom... it's easy to see why.

The aesthetically appealing vehicle had won over the hearts of a panel of females judges from over 30 different countries who were asked to vote according to what they look for when purchasing a car.

It is believed that the Japanese automaker's Mazda3 was loved for its "matured Kodo design language which combines simple lines with a bold appearance and a more prominent overall body structure".

The car, which comes as a hatchback and sedan, boasts different design personalities too. The hatchback features an emotive design while the sedan is elegant in look and sporty in drive.

Wanting to know what all the hubbub was about, I drove up to the Mazda showroom in Tubli to pick up the four-door in order to put it through its paces in what was at the time, a slightly gloomy and rainy day. Why do women love this car so much? Was it just about looks or did it have a "je ne sais quoi" of some sort?

I was informed that I'd be getting the sedan for the day and as I waited, I walked over to the hatchback, which was sitting beautifully in the showroom, to give it a once-over. I stared back at me looking contemporarily chic and bold.

I was then escorted to my new ride and at first glance, it was sleek and stylish. Designers wanted the exterior to feature contours that capture movement, even at



a standstill and it did. It boasts "simplified essential characteristics that embrace the Japanese philosophy of less is more".

This is the expressive evolution of their Kodo: "Soul of Motion" design aesthetic. Apparently, reflections of light across its surface create more complex and intriguing shapes. It is poised, dignified and beckons to be driven... and I was more than thrilled to do so.

I hopped into the classy but cool car and began to admire its interior. It was meticulously crafted by Mazda Takumi, which describes master artisans and craftsmen, using sophisticated materials and select finishes to make it feel as though it was tailored for the driver.

It featured a lovely leather interior with stylish stitch work as well as a nifty infotainment system, centre

console and dashboard. Before pressing the push start button to get the car purring, I was in awe of the digital odometer that featured a visual which looked like sound vibrations fading in and out. Once I hit start, the vibrations changed and the Mazda3 moniker appeared followed by the odometer. The geek in me was awoken. It may have been a small touch to some but I felt it was a 'swish' move to make.

As I rolled out of the showroom, I thought I'd feel a difference in power and speed as I'm used to driving a 3.6 litre V6 and this was a 1.5 litre V4. However, I didn't even notice it. I found the sedan swift and nimble, handling corners and Bahrain's roundabouts with ease. It exhibited great grip and although it felt as though it was glued to the ground, its speedy movement showed otherwise.

Perhaps that is due to its Skyactiv technology. The powertrain line-up comprises the latest Skyactiv-X, Skyactiv-G and Skyactiv-D engines, each of which provides responsive speed control in any driving situation.

I had driven a 1.5 litre before and found it to be a drag. I mentally decided to not get into a V4 again as I figured they were all a similar drive. However, this Mazda3 picked up quite well, so much so, that I actually double checked the car engine specs with the showroom as I couldn't believe how well it picked up. I'm not talking about monster power but I felt confident enough to make those cuts and turns whenever I wanted or needed to. No wonder the ladies love it. It made zipping around the island for meets and finding parking in the compact car

a breeze and a pleasure. It is easy to manoeuvre around in and the centre console and I found the infotainment system quite simple to use.

The main hub of the 2019 Mazda3 infotainment is the Mazda Connect which helps drivers seamlessly connect with their music and entertainment, friends and family, and other key information. It helps you monitor the efficiency of the car and get notified if anything is wrong. The multifunction Commander control makes navigating the system extremely easy as well.

Audio and music was crisp and fun to listen to. Then again it is equipped with Bose's Premium Audio System. Many a time I hit that cruise control on my steering wheel, turned up the volume from the toggle switch that was there too, and just glided through traffic without a care in the world... even when it began to drizzle. I picked up Honey, *GulfWeekly's* photographer, and took the little beauty for a photo-shoot. Her grill glistened as though she was smiling back at him and the light reflected off her form just as the designers intended it to.

If anything, I'd say she is like a hummingbird that flutters around with adequate speed, is highly responsive and a 'looker'. Then again, great things do come in small packages and though she may seem small, her sportiness and aesthetic attitude is pleasing. It's understandable why Mazda3 won over women and was also the family car of the year.

The Mazda3 sedan 1.5 litres is priced starting at BD7,500 and the Mazda3 hatchback 2 litre higher model costs BD9,700. All prices are inclusive of VAT.

For details, visit the Mazda showroom in Sitra or call 17706010, and for Tubli, call 17875777 or visit www.mazda.kekanoo.com

Challenge accepted!

DAKAR Rally Saudi Arabia 2020, which is one of the world's most challenging rally races, has confirmed its routes and is all set to jump-start the year on a high note.

Rally Dakar, which will come to Asia for the first time from January 5 to 17, was addressed by HRH Prince Khalid Bin Sultan Abdullah Al Faisal, chairman of the Saudi Arabian Federation of Motor and Motorcycle Sports, and rally director David Castera, at a specially hosted press conference at the Arab World Institute in Paris. The 12 Dakar Saudi Arabia 2020 stages were announced to more than 200 media outlets and broadcasters in the presence of a number of



MOTORING
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
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Dakar pilots.

"Saudi Arabia and Rally Dakar come together to write a new chapter of achievements in the world of motorsports, a chapter headlined by the challenge of discovering a new land and written by the warm hospitality the Kingdom and its people have to offer," said Prince Khalid. "Through this inaugural rally, the world will see our breath-taking desert, our vast land, and will also meet its generous people.

"We want the world to see our fascinating desert waiting for the adventurous stories to be told. We want the world to see, first-hand, the warm and generous hospitality the people of Saudi Arabia

have to offer. We are eager to welcome the world to our country, and to witness our vision, capability and professionalism in hosting the biggest sporting events at the highest levels."

Pilots from more than 62 different nationalities and six continents have registered to experience the uncharted terrain of Dakar Saudi Arabia 2020, where they will drive specially modified vehicles, trucks, quad, SxS, and motorbikes, designed to handle 12 stages of various challenging terrains. Two-time Formula 1 world champion Fernando Alonso, for example, recently competed in Al Ula-Neom Cross-Country Rally in preparation for the Rally Dakar.

HRH Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki AlFaisal, chairman

of Saudi Arabia's General Sport

Authority, added: "We have the privilege of launching chapter 3 of the Dakar story, introducing the race to Asia for the first time, where no country better describes the diversity of desert terrains this continent has to offer than Saudi Arabia."

The rally, which extends over 7,500 of the kingdom's vast and unexplored desert, gets underway in Jeddah before drivers and crews navigate their way through the fast and winding dunes and stones for 752km.

The challenge continues up north along the coast for nearly 900km through the Red Sea Project till it reaches the futuristic megacity of Neom, where the journey reaches its



highest point at an altitude of 1,400m amid a series of canyons and mountains.

A combination of sandy stretches and gravel await Dakar's thrill-seeking competitors as they cruise next through 676km of the formidable trip from Neom to Al Ula in Dakar's fourth stage before the sandy hills of Ha'il put the navigation skills of competitors to the test while descending south onto Riyadh.

A rest day in the capital will be followed by Dakar Saudi Arabia's longest stage of 741km as the route takes a turn to the west in the centre of the kingdom's enormous desert before looping back

towards Haradh in the eastern governorate of Al Ahsa, marking the entrance to the Empty Quarter and building up to the grand finale in Qiddiya, a future entertainment, sports and cultural destination, where the winner will be crowned on the final podium.

"Crossing the Dakar finish line is nothing short of living the dream. You can do it on your first go, and sometimes your hopes may be dashed, but ultimately perseverance and clever strategy are most often rewarded. The happiness of these drivers and co-drivers also translates to the satisfaction of the organisers," explained Castera.

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MotorSport

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Smashing records...

LEWIS Hamilton has done it again. He not only enjoyed his 11th win of the 2019 season, ahead of Red Bull's Max Verstappen and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, but he is also thrilled to be crowned Formula 1 World champion for the sixth time. It's also the Briton's fifth with Mercedes.

For his 50th pole-to-win of his career, this was perhaps Hamilton's most straightforward victory this season. He also managed to maintain Mercedes' 100 per cent win record at Abu Dhabi's Grand Prix staged at Yas Marina since 2014. This victory means a lot to Hamilton as well as he tied his hero Ayrton Senna's record for the 19th lights-to-flag victory of his career.

Hamilton said: "Honestly I'm proud, definitely, but just super grateful for this incredible team, to all at Mercedes who have continued to push this year. Who would have thought at the end of the year we'd have this strength in the race. Even though we had the championship won, I just really wanted to keep my head down and try to see if we could learn and if we could extend and extract more from this beautiful car, it's a piece of art. Thank you for watching, thank you for supporting. I feel so happy."

Meanwhile, Verstappen had to settle for second place, ahead of Ferrari's Leclerc. However, Leclerc is set to be investigated after the



Hamilton with the cup

race for a fuel discrepancy reported ahead of the start of the Grand Prix.

The thing is, even before the race started, there was an inquiry on his fuel discrepancy and a stewards' directive issued

an announcement that an investigation would be held 45 minutes before the lights went out. However, that was clearly far from Leclerc's mind whilst racing as he made an incisive getaway from third on the grid before

out dragging Verstappen for second into Turn 8.

Behind the podium trio, Valtteri Bottas recovered from a back-of-the-grid start to end up fourth, less than a second behind Leclerc. A penultimate lap pass by

Sebastian Vettel on Alex Albon gave the Ferrari driver fifth, while a last-lap scrap between Lando Norris and Sergio Perez saw Perez come out on top to claim 'best of the rest' in P7, ahead of Norris.

Daniil Kvyat was ninth for Toro Rosso, while Carlos Sainz also made a last lap pass, on Renault's Daniel Ricciardo, to take a point for P10 - enough to see him claim sixth in the drivers' standings for 2019.



Hamilton waves to the crowd



Hamilton and Bottas celebrate



Verstappen congratulates Hamilton



Hamilton so proud



THE SQUAD: Liverpool set to start

VOICE OF SPORT

with Dan Grimes

In the 1989/1990 season, when Kenny Dalglish led Liverpool to the league title, you would've been hard pressed to find a Liverpool fan pessimistic enough to guess that it would be another 30 years before the title was back at Anfield.

At the end of this season, 30 years will have passed but it is becoming clearer and clearer that the Redmen will not have to wait 31 years for the next triumph. In reality, it is slightly weird for me to watch how this is unfolding. Liverpool do not seem to be playing at the same incredible level which they displayed for long periods of last season but with Pep Guardiola's men spluttering along with a vulnerability that has not been displayed in the past two years, maybe we should carve the name into the trophy right now.

To put the performance level into a better perspective, Liverpool have often been credited with having three of the best defenders in the world and one of the best goalkeepers and at times last year seemed impenetrable. However, this is the same team that has only kept two clean sheets in the Premier League so far, neither of which was at home, whilst the league's bottom side Watford has kept three.

Even last weekend, whilst cruising to a routine win

two-nil up against Brighton, they made hard work of the victory and at times and looked like they might throw away two points. They say it is a hallmark of champions to win games even when not playing at your best; Liverpool may become the first team in history to win a title through this method alone. The game away at Aston Villa is prominent in my memory, even though for long periods it seemed as though Liverpool would slip to defeat. When Andrew Robertson headed in at the back post there was an air of inevitability about what was to happen in the final few minutes.

I should probably clarify, that is not to say that Jürgen Klopp's men have not played well at times this season. They absolutely have. In comparison to their exploits

last year however, I would argue they are not at their best. They blew teams away with consummate ease for large parts of the campaign and would have been worthy champions in pretty much any league in history.

But this season's ability to win slightly uglier, has nicely

coincided with Manchester City's inability to get results unless they are playing well. It would be wrong to say that City have lost their aura. This is still a team who have won back to back titles and amassed 198 points in that time. They are quite capable of going on long

winning runs and clawing back point deficits but there is something a little more fragile about them so far this year. At the weekend, when David Silva back-heeled the ball into Raheem Sterling for him to finish, previously it would simply have been a case of how many goals

are city going to score. And even if they had been pegged back when Kevin de Bruyn fired home that would've been game over. Watching it, currently, you always felt as though Newcastle had a chance to grab something which in itself was a strange feeling.

I wrote in an article after the game against Norwich, mentioning that City could not use Aymeric Laporte's injury as an excuse for any bad results or loss of form especially when you consider how star-studded and expensive the rest of the team remains. Yet it seems as though they are desperate for him to return and sure them up. His return, scheduled for just after New Year, could be a massive psychological boost if nothing else.

Of course we have to remind ourselves that at one point last year, Liverpool had the opportunity to go nine points clear and cement themselves as favourites for the league before themselves faltering badly. That's why even the most arduous fan is being cautious with their predictions in a fan base that has become synonymous with the phrase "this is our year."

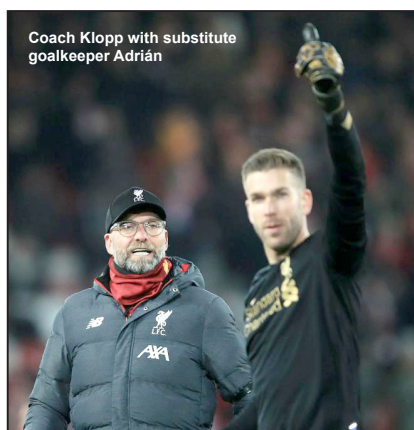
Liverpool has an extremely busy fixture schedule coming up that includes a number of different competitions and different games in a small space of time. They don't want to get ahead of themselves only to find that by January they're only three points ahead and Sadio Mané is out for the season.

In my opinion, there is great reason for tail wagging in Liverpool; if this really isn't their year then I'm not sure it ever will be.

FLYING HIGH: Excitement all around



The squad saluting the crowd



Coach Klopp with substitute goalkeeper Adrián

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TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL SPORT

December 4 - 10, 2019



THE Arab Women Sports Tournament (AWST), which will be staged in Sharjah in February, has grown from strength to strength over the years featuring fierce females from across the region vying for victory in several sporting categories.

Hosted by Sharjah Women's Sports (SWS) and held biennially under the patronage of Her Highness Shaikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, Chairperson of SWS, the AWST exemplifies its commitment to providing a platform for women athletes to thrive and realise their aspirations.

Featuring just five games in its 2012 debut, the enthusiasm and dedication of the Emirati and Arab players prompted SWS to increase the tournament's games to seven in the 2014 edition. One game was added in the 2016 edition and in 2018, with the addition of yet another, the number of competition disciplines rose to nine.

Last year, sportswomen from 16 Arab countries and 67 clubs competed professionally in basketball, volleyball, table tennis, archery, fencing, equestrian jumping, karate, shooting, and finally, athletics.

Nada Askar Al Naqbi, deputy head of AWST's Supreme Organising Committee,

Women forging ahead



head of AWST's Executive Committee and director general of SWS, told members of the press that the statistics quantify the great strides SWS has made in developing the



professional landscape of female sports in the UAE and the region.

"Preparations for all future AWST editions begin as soon as the current edition comes to a close," said Al Naqbi. "We are resolute on continuing on our journey to take Arab women's sports to the highest levels of professionalism and achievement, which follows from the vision of HH Shaikh Dr Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council member and Ruler of Sharjah, and the unwavering guidance and support offered by his wife, HH Shaikha Jawaher bint

Mohammed Al Qasimi, Chairperson of SWS. "We want AWST to be a regional benchmark for professional competition and skills development. We want Sharjah to reinforce its status as an incubator of human talent and capability, offering the region's sportswomen a vibrant springboard to launch into their international sporting careers."

A tournament manifesto has been released by the committee highlighting the roles of the follow-up and supervision, sportswomen eligibility, doping control, disciplinary and appellate committees, games' technical

committees, judges and referees' committees, as well as outlining the roles of the General Secretariat for the union of key committees of the tournament.

AWST 2020 has approved special prizes for participating clubs, including a 'Club Sports Excellence' trophy for the club that earns maximum medals, a 'Sports Excellence' trophy for the club competing in maximum AWST disciplines, and a 'Fair Play Committee Union' trophy, awarded to the club with the lowest number of violations on administrative or technical levels.

