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The community newspaper at the heart of Bahrain

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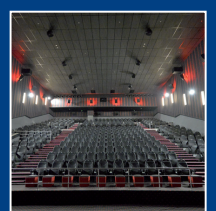
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GRAND OPENING
New cinema in town:
SEE PAGE 5



EATING OUT
Chinese New Year:
SEE PAGE 11

MR ENDURANCE

EXCLUSIVE
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

EXPAT long-distance runner Ernst Jan van Manen has completed one of the world's most gruelling endurance events ... and vows to push himself even further next time.

The Dutch superhuman, known to friends and family as EJ, participated in the Vibram Hong Kong 100 Ultra Trail Race last month and finished the 103km course in a staggering 24 hours, 21 minutes and 12 seconds.

The 52-year-old lives in Jasra with wife Ellen and son Pim, a student at the British School of Bahrain. Their eldest son, Floris, who also attended BSB, is currently at Glasgow School of Art studying architecture.

His decision to take up ultra-long distance running came from his dissatisfaction of 'just' finishing marathons and he said: "I've been running for a number of years, since I was back in the Netherlands. I started out doing 10km but continued to beef up the distances



MEDAL MOMENT: EJ recovering at home in Bahrain

and completed a number of marathons, with my best time being three hours, 19 minutes in Rome.

"However, to be brutally honest and with the greatest respect, I find running normal marathons boring.

They're usually a straight, flat road with familiar sights all around. I wanted to push my boundaries and explore something more exciting.

"I decided to do a 50km trail run in Hajar in Oman and loved it. I immediately

started looking at other opportunities, and one of my friends sent me a video of the Hong Kong trail run last year and I was enchanted. I entered into the lottery, since there is a limit of 2,000 entrants for logistical

reasons, and luckily I was selected."

The Hong Kong 100 is an ultra-endurance race, starting in Pak Tam Chung on the Sai Kung Peninsula and covers some of the most beautiful scenery in Hong Kong, including remote and unspoilt beaches, ancient forests, nature trails, reservoirs and steep hills.

The course is based around Hong Kong's famous Maclehoose Trail, but with some diversions to ensure that runners spend more time in its most scenic sections, as well as finishing with the descent from Hong Kong's highest peak, Tai Mo Shan.

The course involves a cumulative elevation gain of more than 5,300 metres and the cut-off time is 30 hours.

Of the 2,000 people who signed up, 1,842 from 57 different countries actually made it to the start line, and of those only 1,292 (70.1 per cent) finished the course within the cut-off.

33 males finished within 13.5 hours to be classified as 'Elite', whilst 27 women finished within 16 hours to achieve the same classification.

Turn to Page 2

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From Page 1

In total, 142 finished under 16 hours to be awarded Gold, 240 crossed the line sub-20 hours to achieve Silver, whilst 404 powered through within 24 hours to claim Bronze. The remaining 504 finishers who beat the 30-hour cut-off time were awarded a medal.

The overall race winner was Shen Jiasheng of China, who crossed the line in a staggering 10:22:02.

EJ, who works in Saudi Arabia as a project developer, started his intense training throughout the tough summer and into the kingdom's more pleasant winter months.

However, his plans were nearly scuppered five weeks before his Hong Kong adventure, as over-training led to painful shin splints. He explained: "Unfortunately, they are very nasty. In those five weeks, I did some running but I needed to take it easy to help in the recovery process, so I was mostly limping around."

"I was a bit 'undercooked' and a week before I wasn't sure if I would be able to start. Thankfully, throughout the race, my shins were OK, but due to taking it easier I wasn't in top-notch condition."

As a veteran of long-distance running, EJ set off smoothly at 8am and he hit the first couple of checkpoints, of which there were nine in total, easily.

A team of 1,000 volunteers manned the stations, where runners could take on-board fluids and food.

He suffered his first major mishap at the 30km mark,

Shin splints couldn't stop EJ



MAPPING IT OUT: A satellite view of the trail and, below, EJ in his hotel room ready for the challenge

tripping up on some loose stones and taking a heavy fall. His hands and arms bear deep cuts and scratches which are still prominent weeks later.

However, he powered on, conserving his energy on the fluctuating terrain. It was at the seventh checkpoint and the 78km mark that the thoughts of quitting seriously entered his head.

Tired and shivering next to a fire, he was so miserable that he almost pulled the plug. "I was freezing and spent," he admitted. "I was trying to catch an hour's sleep to

restore some energy, but it was impossible. Others were somehow able to just put their head down and immediately fall asleep... one runner even managed to sleep by the side of the trail as people were running past him!"

"I was going to throw in the towel, but I realised that it was still a considerable distance to the road to get to a taxi, so it wasn't worth the hassle. I thought I may as well just carry on the trail and see how I go. I thought about it and focused on the 25km left and realised it wasn't that big

of a number, having already completed 78 of them.

"I somehow picked myself up and started moving. It was a surreal experience; I suddenly lost all sense of time and I got a second wind with the adrenaline and determination kicking in. The old adage is true, the first three-quarters of an endurance run is physical, but the last quarter is all about mental strength."

EJ was alone for many stretches of the journey, running and scrambling through the dark with just a headlamp. The beautiful views of Hong Kong along the way, particularly the sunrise with clouds rolling over the mountains, was one of his motivators to finish the course and offered him comfort.

After 24 hours, 21 minutes and 12 seconds of running, power hiking and scrambling over a variety of terrains, he stumbled over the finish line, too tired to be jubilant. He had lost more than four kilos and was drenched in sweat and dirt.

He changed into fresh clothes and joined the after-race party for a little while to collect his commemorative shirt and medal. He also celebrated with a bubbly beverage, something which he dubbed 'a terrible idea in hindsight.'

He then took a taxi back to the hotel where Ellen, who had followed his progress on an online tracker, was waiting for him. He walked into the shower and promptly fell asleep mid-wash. Understandably, he had never been so tired in his life.

He explained: "I was curious about how my body would respond to something like this and I didn't know what to expect. I found that I was more skilled than I thought at managing my energy."

"In fact, I believe I could

definitely have got a time of under 24 hours if I had more experience. For example, I conserved energy earlier on because the elevation map temporarily tattooed on my arm showed that the end of the course was the steepest section. However, it turned out to be a smooth, paved road which is so much easier than a technical hill, that while smaller in height, is so much more difficult having to scramble up on loose stones.

"So I do feel that I had a little bit of excess energy left. Not only that, but with my shin splint injury, I couldn't prepare exactly as I wanted to in the weeks leading up to the race. In peak condition and with first-hand experience of finishing the course, I believe

I could shave off those 21 minutes."

After returning to Bahrain, EJ was feverish for a few days due to the fatigue and extremities his body had been through, and it took almost a week to regain his appetite.

He has resumed slow running and has mainly stuck to cycling in the gym to get the muscles working again.

His usual schedule is running 80-100km a week, including one or two longer runs lasting three-to-five hours. He makes sure to complete a marathon distance every weekend, although, after his negative experience of over-training, will not push it further.

"Getting out on the roads" is one of his main pieces of advice to any potential long-distance runners. Whilst he believes treadmills are useful for hill training, particularly in a country such as Bahrain with very few natural hills and valleys, he describes them as "incredibly boring" and will soon extinguish any desire to maintain the hobby.

Instead, he advocates taking part in regional trail runs in the UAE and Oman, which are frequent and start at 30km, going up to as much as 60km.

As for EJ himself, surely achieving the 100km goal would be the peak of his ambitions?

Not a chance, it would appear.

"I'm going to run another 100km trail run in Switzerland this summer," he proclaimed. "Then, the dream is to take part in the Ultra-Trail du Mont-Blanc, which is the most prestigious ultra-marathon event in the world. That's a monster at 160km, and the goal is to run that in 2020. Inshallah!"

The Story Begins...



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Let laughter offer a cure

NO joke, expat Keyem Thomez is spreading merry cheer and positivity across the kingdom by staging a series of laughter-style sessions and festivals to help boost morale, decrease stress and to strengthen people's immune systems, writes **Mai Al Khatib-Camille**.

After all, the saying goes that 'laughter is the best medicine' and more people are turning to Laughter Yoga to find inner peace and fulfillment. They recently gathered at the Bahrain Festive Laughter event in Juffair.

"Laughter yoga is a revolutionary idea," said Keyem, 57, a personal officer at St Christopher's School. "It is an exercise routine made up of a combination of deep breathing exercise from yoga and laughter exercises."

"The concept of Laughter Yoga is based on the scientific fact that our body cannot differentiate between fake and real laughter. We get the same physiological and psychological benefits including relieving stress, depression and anxiety."

"It also strengthens the immune system, relieves pain naturally and improves breathing and increases oxygen to the body and the brain. Our mission is to bring good health, joy and world peace through laughter."

The practice originated in India when Dr Madan Kataria from Mumbai believed that more laughter was needed to improve health and cope with the stress of modern living. He started a quest to find ways that laughter could be prescribed to patients by field-testing the impact of a good chuckle. In March 1995, he launched the first Laughter Club starting with five people.

These founding members laughed together in a park to the amusement of bystanders and eventually, the small group grew to 50 strong. When the jokes dried up, further findings revealed that even a forced hearty guffaw produced 'happy chemistry' and Laughter Yoga was born.

Now, the practice is a worldwide movement with more than 20,000 laughter clubs in 102 countries.

Keyem, who lives in Zinj, co-founded the Kerala Catholic Association's (KCA) Laughter Club in Bahrain along with friend P U Devassy.

Keyem was trained by Dr Madan and is now a laughter ambassador in the Middle East, the founder of four clubs in Bahrain and The Laughing Toastmasters. He has also attended as a guest speaker and presenter at laughter conferences in Italy, Malaysia, Germany and France, and conducted sessions in Vietnam, the UAE, Oman, Turkey, Singapore, Sri

Lanka, Nepal, Cambodia and Thailand.

The January festive session proved to be a resounding success. "Laughter yoga is the tool to bring more happiness and joy into life," Keyem added. "Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring mind and body back into balance than a good laugh."

Attendees agreed. Among those holding hands in a circle and giving it his best giggle, was Ed Bhaskaran, 59, an investor and company director who lives in Budaiya, said: "It was a fun event. I advise others to take it up as it's so good for both mental and physical well-being."

Manager Biju Prabhakaran, who lives in Mahooz, and describes himself as '17 at heart', said: "Laughter Yoga keeps me energetic and lively and that's what many miss from their daily work schedules. I like to keep myself active, laughing and enjoying life."

Saira Ranj, 45, who recently moved to Seef with her 14-year-old daughter, Kirtina, said: "I was told to come in comfortable clothes and be ready to dance and laugh... and we did!"

● *The Laughter Club meets at the KCA, in Segaiya monthly. The next laughter yoga session will be staged on Saturday at Khadija Plaza 2 from 4.30pm to 5.30pm. For more information, email keyem21@gmail.com or call 39867041.*



ALL SMILES: Keyem and, below, participants join hands at the recent Laughter Yoga Festival

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Thousands flock to festival

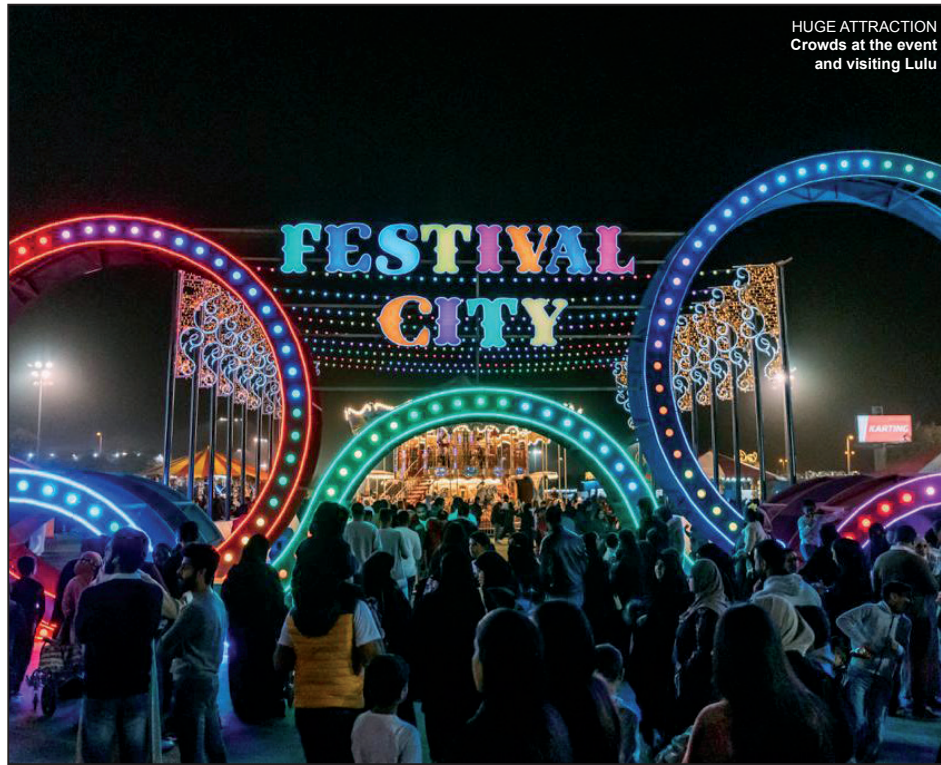
COMMUNITY REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

THE kingdom's fabulous Festival City came to a close last weekend with thousands of families and friends flocking to the carnival-like attraction as part of the hugely successful month-long Shop Bahrain bonanza.

The fun-filled site close to the Bahrain International Circuit in Sakhr recorded a whopping 103,615 visitors from across the Gulf and beyond, exceeding all expectations of the organisers, Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA).

"This year, we hosted a festival which included exciting activities suitable for the entire family," said Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa, BTEA's chief executive officer. "Shop Bahrain is proof of the major efforts exerted by the organising team to solidify its position as the biggest family entertainment event on a regional level."

The organisers also hailed strategic partners Tamkeen, VIVA, Gulf Air and A.A. Bin Hindi Group, in addition



HUGE ATTRACTION
Crowds at the event and visiting Lulu

to platinum partners, Bin Hindi Informatics (Samsung) and the Lulu Group for their efforts during the annual

shopping spectacular.

Shaikh Khaled was particularly delighted by the partnership between the public and private sectors to ensure the event's success.

One shining example was retail giant Lulu which recently opened its

156th hypermarket and the seventh in the kingdom in Saar. Yusuff Ali M. A., chairman and managing director of Lulu Group International, which owns the Lulu Hypermarket chain worldwide, attended the inauguration ceremony at The

Atrium Mall & Towers last December.

"We extend our thanks to Lulu Hypermarket for the continued partnership with Shop Bahrain since its inception," said Shaikh Khaled. "This demonstrates the group's commitment

towards embracing national initiatives and we are looking forward to renewing this collaboration in the upcoming editions."

Lulu Hypermarket hosted a variety of family-oriented events and activities in different branches around the kingdom such as cooking demonstrations featuring a number of local chefs in Saar as well as a baking demonstration in Juffair. A number of promotional videos for Shop Bahrain were also filmed at the stores in Hidd and Galleria Mall. Additionally, Lulu planned major promotions during the festival as well as musical performances and a FIFA tournament.

"We were delighted to be among the platinum partners of Shop Bahrain for the fifth consecutive year," said Juzer Rupawala, Lulu Group regional director. "The festival continues to highlight what the kingdom has to offer to visitors and shoppers during the holidays and festive seasons."

With the curtains now drawn on this year's activities, no one is resting on their laurels. Plans are already afoot to stage the sixth event, Shop Bahrain 2020. "We look forward to offering even more surprises and prizes in the next edition which we hope will be even bigger and better on all levels," added Shaikh Khaled.

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ONE of the leading cinematic companies in the world had opened its latest operation in the kingdom's newest mall, promising a whole new movie experience for all ages.

Cinépolis, the world's fourth largest cinema operator, opened last week at the top of Atrium Mall in Saar with a red carpet event for VIPs, ambassadors, special guests and members of the media.

Announced as the company's 'official entry' into the GCC's movie theatre sector, the biggest cinema chain in Latin America also operates in the US, Spain and across India.

Ashish Shukla, CEO of Cinépolis Gulf, believes that with easy access for visitors from neighbouring Saudi Arabia, as well as Bahraini and expatriate film-goers, the location will be a smash hit too. "We are offering cinema like never before to the Bahrain community," he said. "We know how much the community in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia loves movies, and we are relishing the opportunity to present a premium, yet wonderfully accessible, cinema experience that can be enjoyed by all."

"Our location just off the causeway will prove incredibly convenient for Bahrainis and Saudis alike, and we hope we can become a central part of the community for all."

The complex has also been boosted by the opening of Lulu Hypermarket in particular last December which has helped generate a massive footfall to the mall.

The new 13-screen cinema using the latest big screen technology includes a Junior Theatre with a covered slide from the top row of seats into a Jungle Gym below. There's bean bag seating and a 15-minute intermission during screenings to allow youngsters to take a break.

And the state-of-the-art 4D E-motion experience has already had movie-lovers buzzing on social media about the 'theme park-like treat experience'. This immersive theatre format allows an audience to 'live' the movie with motion seats and special effects such as wind, water, smell and air shots, all perfectly synchronised with the action on the screen.

Founded in Mexico in 1971, Cinépolis is considered a 'cinematic powerhouse' that now boasts more than 338 million guests and 5,707 screens worldwide. Bahrain expands the company's footprint to 16 countries. Cinépolis Global and Al

It's showtime at mall

COMMUNITY REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



Tayer Group, have created a joint venture under the name, Gulf Entertainment, headquartered in Dubai. Cinépolis Gulf plans to continue its expansion path by opening soon in Oman, UAE and Saudi Arabia too.

The Bahrain complex will run 70 movies per day, starting every 15 minutes. There are large format screens, MacroXE with Dolby Atmos object-based sound systems and a range of seating options, including fully-reclining leather seats.

As well as serving traditional cinema snacks such as popcorn and nachos, its in-house 'Coffee Tree' venue offers treats including Panini, crêpes and specialty refreshments.

In keeping with the move towards web-based bookings, downloadable apps and new technologies designed to prioritise ease of use for customers, there's an online booking system and an abundance of e-kiosks on site.

Shaikh Khaled bin Humood Al Khalifa, Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority's chief executive, was delighted to cut the ribbon at last Wednesday evening's opening ceremony. He said: "This adds a valuable element to the tourism and trading attractions in the Kingdom of Bahrain."

● See Editor Stan's interview with Ashish and



NEW SCREENS: Inside the new Cinépolis, below, ribbon-cutting and the crowd of VIPs attending the grand opening

the grand opening ceremony by placing your smartphone over the QR Code.

● FilmWeekly: Page 17



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Putting Bahrain's supermarkets under the spotlight and searching for the best deals

Here's the faces of romance!

AL Hawaj Group has launched a Valentine's Day campaign to help those looking for the perfect present for their loved one.

The luxury retail group is giving its customers the gift of time by offering a 'Buy 1, Get 1 Free' promotion on all watch brands, except for Smartwatches and Swarovski time pieces.

Some of the leading brands included in the sale are Guess, Gc, Charles Jourdan and Fossil and Omorfia. Terms and conditions on the promotion also apply.

The offer, which will run until February 17, is available for shoppers at all of its 10 branches in Bahrain, as well as at Watch Time Bahrain, a watch and accessories shop which is



part of the Al Hawaj Group.

Al Hawaj is one of the leaders in the field of perfumery, cosmetics and fashion and also represents electronic giant Samsung. For details, contact 16160000.

● *More timely tips in FashionWeekly: Page 10*

Lulu Hypermarket

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US almond/ kg – BD3.790
Supreme smoked turkey thigh/kg –
BD4.950
Bridel mozzarella cheese/ kg – BD2.790
New Zealand natural cheddar cheese/
kg – BD3.790

Carrefour Hypermarket

Qzeen jasmine rice 5kg– BD1
Abu Zahra sunflower oil 1.8ltr – BD1
Pepsi 2.25ltr+7Up orange/ Mountain Dew
1.25ltr – BD1
Sunfresh water 42x175ml – BD1
Al Osra sugar 2kgx2pcs– BD1

Jawad Supermarket

Americana garden peas 900gm (1+1) –
940fils
Ola white oats 2x600gm – BD1.450
Libby's p/apl slice 3x235gm – 975fils
Emborg sweet corn 450gm (1+1) –
925fils
Filliz vermicelli 4x400gm – BD1
Libby's baked beans 220gm (5+1) –
BD1.200

Al Jazira Supermarket

Sweetzone rainbow gummy 960gm –
BD2.940
Biona milk chocolate almond organic
70gm – BD1.840
Organic coconut delight vegan 40gm –
630fils
Cemol milk chocolate 100gm– 790fils
Tunnock's dark caramel wafer– BD1.210

Techtronic Specials



Your guide to the best in-store deals of the week

	Item	Description	Location	Price
1	Washing Machine	Westpoint washing machine, 15kg, 2 inlets (WLX-1517.P)	YKA Almoayyed & Sons	Now BD126 Was BD221 Savings BD95
2	Blender	Homeway ironing board mesh 48cmx14cm.	Carrefour Hyper Market	BD9.990
3	Food processor	Philips food processor HR7627.	Carrefour Hyper Market	BD16.990
4	Air Conditioning	Blue Star split air conditioning 1.5ltr (indoor), R410A gas, BTU 17998, 6-star, EER-11.846, automatic 4D swing, iFeel five-in-advance filter, cold plasma filter, hidden display, smart mode, dimmer function, large air throw, turbo cooling, hydrophilic Blue fin evaporator and Blue fin copper condenser. There is also a Blue Star split AC 1.5ltr outdoor.	Gajria Electronics	BD239.990
5	Air Fryer	It's a 7-in-1 multi-use programmable pressure cooker, slow cooker, rice cooker, steamer, sauté, yogurt maker and warmer.	Kewalram & Sons	BD28.500

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GADGETS OF THE WEEK

What is it called? Oh Snap Infinity Gauntlet

What does it do? The Marvel Thanos Gauntlet Mood Lamp is loaded up with infinity stone replicas that light up and the best part is that no one will disappear when you turn it on. The stones can be powered by battery or USB.

Cost: BD15

Visit <https://www.thinkgeek.com>



What is it called? Zippo Hand Warmer

What does it do? This is the perfect accessory to combat the chill and keep your hands warm. It fits easily into pockets, gloves and pants without the bulk of other warmers and lasts for up to 12 hours.

Cost: BD7.5

Visit www.amazon.com



What is it called? LED Reflective Cycling & Running Vest

What does it do? This vest will keep runners and cyclists safe at night while looking stylish. There are two LED strips on the front and one on the back to ensure that the person is visible from all angles from the dangers of traffic.

Cost: BD10

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FinTechFocus

Editor Stan Szczewka takes a look at the world of financial technology and beyond ...



UK training for top techies

JUST months after launching operations in Bahrain, UK-based Adsertor has teamed up with several ministries and universities in the kingdom to set up an educational training programme that will see 20 talented Bahraini students undergo training in Great Britain.

The technology firm plans to invest BD1million in human capital to nurture local Bahraini talent as the next generation of data scientists and experts in analytics.

The training programme will allow the students to attend a UK vocational course where they will learn the latest techniques in data application with a specific focus on smart algorithms.

The students will also be provided with employment opportunities with Adsertor and work with the company's technologies.

Currently set up in Bahrain FinTech Bay, the largest financial technology hub in the Middle East and North Africa, Adsertor provides their clients with a data analytics platform that consolidates and simplifies a company's data into one system.

Adsertor's core operations are focused on delivering digital services to both the FinTech and wider business community and works with government entities on their digital transformation projects.

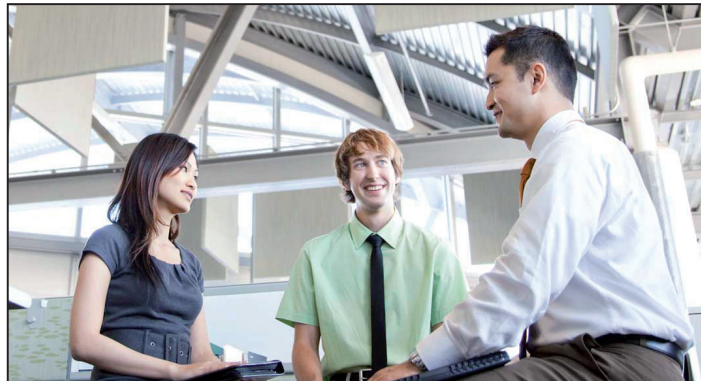
The Bahrain Economic Development Board was instrumental in attracting Adsertor to establish its regional base in Bahrain as part of the government's diversification plans to create a digital economy – a competitive information communications and



technology hub that is already home to a growing number of tech-based start-ups.

Mazen Alhilli, director of Investor Relations & Government Affairs at Bahrain Economic Development Board, said: "Adsertor's investment is yet another vote of confidence in the country's education and technology strategies that will equip the next generation with the skills needed to succeed in the modern, digital workplace."

"Bahrain is developing an ecosystem which will enable the best possible operating environment for disruptive companies like Adsertor. Training and upskilling our workforce lies at the heart of this and we are making



LEARNING ADVENTURE: Youthful data debate, above, from left, Timothy and Mazen

great strides in developing the kingdom's human capital." Bahrain has successfully built a vibrant regional start-up ecosystem that is attracting the attention of global investors, accelerators and incubators. It currently ranks on top of global ICT readiness indices, including first in the GCC by the World Economic Forum, largely due to Bahrain's strong

track record of public service and regulatory reform. Adsertor's experience in developing technology around artificial intelligence and building business intelligence solutions for companies and government entities is core to Bahrain's plans to enhance its digital offering.

The close of 2018 saw Adsertor forming partnerships

and implementing its technology within a number of ministries and businesses within the Kingdom, with 2019 being a year of significant potential across Bahrain's governmental and commercial sectors.

Speaking about the next stage in its strategy, Timothy Roberts, the chairman and founder of Adsertor, said: "The

training of young Bahrainis is key to our success, as it will ensure we can rapidly deploy our technology to a broad range of clients.

"The ability to build a sustainable business is what attracted us to Bahrain in the first place and we look forward to working even more closely with local and regional partners to bring new technologies to market in the near future."

Last year, Adsertor embarked on the setup of its regional presence with the launch of Adsertor 2.0 at the Bahrain International eGovernment Forum & IT Expo, where Timothy addressed delegates on general data protection and regulations and its implications on businesses. Adsertor is the only platform of its kind in Bahrain that is GDPR compliant and supports businesses in increasing customer acquisition and retention, building customer engagement and maximising return on investment.

AS SAUDI BAHRAIN forges ahead with its transformation into a digital economy, another leading UK-based technology company Innervate has chosen the kingdom to open for FinTech business.

At an official launch event held at the British Embassy in Manama, Zayed R. Alzayani, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, and senior management from the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB) joined ambassador Simon Martin, Innervate CEO Andy Startin, representatives from the Department of UK Trade & Industry, Bahrain Fintech Bay and Microsoft, together with members of the local business community, to welcome the opening of Innervate Technology's first regional office servicing the financial sector.

Innervate specialises in developing customer relationship management technology across different sectors, where finance is its core area of expertise. Innervate's main clients in the region include the Saudi British Bank, Mitsubishi Bank, Aspen Insurance and Carnival Cruise.

With an initial investment of almost \$1m, (around BD376,000) Innervate plans to recruit employees

New base open



PIONEERING MOVES: John, Arun and Andy

across various skill-sets ranging from system integrators, data scientists, business analysts and system architects. As a result, Innervate has become the first Microsoft Dynamics 365 Gold partner in Bahrain that mainly focuses on the financial services sector.

John Kilmartin, the EDB's executive director – business development, said: "We're delighted that Innervate has chosen Bahrain to establish a permanent office in Bahrain that will service clients across the region."

"This is indicative of their confidence in Bahrain's rapidly-moving strategy to develop

as a regional ICT hub and highlights Bahrain's attractive environment where companies can experience some of the lowest costs of doing business in the Gulf."

Innervate's decision followed its attendance of the Gateway Gulf Investor Forum held in Bahrain last year, where companies from around the world were invited to learn more about Bahrain's business incentives, economic policy and to drive reform and diversification.

Its CEO Andy Startin said: "The EDB, Fintech Bay, Microsoft and the Department of UK Trade & Industry have truly been inspirational partners to help get our venture off the ground in Bahrain."

Innervate's business development director Arun Murria also felt inspired by members of Team Bahrain over recent months which he believes gave the company confidence to choose the kingdom.

"They have warmly welcomed and actively supported us in our plans across the region, and I have no doubt we will see success in bringing Innervate's British and international financial services expertise to customers and prospective clients across the Middle East market," he added.



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Today (February 6)

Every Wednesday is 'Wings and Wisdom' night at Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House inside Best Western Plus - The Olive Hotel. It's a quiz night with an added bonus of BD10 for 'all-you-can-eat' chicken wings. Call 17360063 for details.

The Swiss-Belhotel Seef Bahrain is hosting a Mediterranean Lunch every day except Friday and Saturday, from 12.30pm-3pm at Swiss-Café. Priced BD6net per person, BD3net for children aged six to 12, and free for those under six. For details, call 66310000.

Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain hosts a stylish yet rustic BBQ Experience on the terrace of Baharat Restaurant from 7pm-11pm, showcasing succulent ribs and Wagyu prime rib steak. There is also live music from Deux Sons. The BBQ buffet is BD18net including soft drinks and water, or BD24net including selected beverages. Call 17171000 for details.

The Sheraton Hotel Bahrain hosts an evening of live music at An Nada Lounge by Filipino band Strings & Harmony every day except Saturday. This takes place from 8.30pm-12.30am during weekdays and from 8.30pm-1.30am during weekends. Call 17533533 for details.

Enjoy a selection of delicious cakes crafted by skilled culinary hands all day at Furn Bakery, located in the Westin City Centre Bahrain. Call 17171441 for details.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's famous steak night starts from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant priced BD18net, with the 1kg steak-eating challenge too. For details, contact 17531122.

Spend time with friends and family in an Afternoon Tea experience at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Lobby Lounge and Ritz Gourmet Lounge. Indulge in new items on the menu and enjoy the piano entertainment on Fridays and Saturdays. Afternoon Tea is served from 3pm to 5pm priced BD21+++ per set. For details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Treat your special someone to a romantic dinner by the sea at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain. This is staged daily at the sea breeze area and private island from sunset to 10pm. Priced BD350 per couple at the sea breeze area and BD500 per couple at the private island.

For details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's spa provides a refreshing wellness package, complete with a full-body massage followed by Vitamin-C scrub to help protect your skin. Priced BD90 for 90 minutes. This package is available until Sunday. For details, contact 17586808 or e-mail rc.bahrz.spa@ritzcarlton.com

Celebrate your birthday at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Gourmet Lounge where celebratory Afternoon Tea, lunch, dinner menus and an inclusive birthday cake are provided. The special menu is available for a minimum-of-two and maximum of 10 guests. This offer is ongoing until Sunday. For details and reservations, contact 17586499.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's poolside Italian restaurant, Vento, is offering a wide selection of pizzas from wood-fired ovens and artisan pastas. Available on weekdays from 11.30am to 11pm, and weekends from 11.30am to 12pm. For reservations, contact 17115500.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is offering family spa-bonding sessions. Its 'Relaxed Us' offer aids muscle tension, releases stress and promotes wellbeing, 45 minutes for BD80. The 'Beautiful Us' offer is designed to cleanse, gently exfoliate and hydrate skin with a 100 per cent chemical-free product range from Australia and the UK, 45 minutes for BD85. The 'Glowing Us' offer is a special indulgent full-body treatment, 45 minutes for BD85. For reservations, contact 17115500.

Reef Resort's lobby café Chocolaterie is offering an array of signature teas, coffees, pastries, and delectable hand-made chocolates. The ideal venue for morning coffee or afternoon tea. Every day from 4pm-6pm. Net price of BD4. For details, call 13110110.

Reef Resort's Tokyo Reef restaurant features a specially-created set menu that is offered on weekdays (Saturday-Wednesday, closed on Mondays) and guests can watch as the chef prepares sushi and sashimi before their eyes. The promotion is BD15+++ per person. For details, call 13110110.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's band the Eye Candles will

entertain every evening, except Saturday, at Harvesters. The outlet is also dishing up a new Camel Burger and staging a Beast Burger Challenge which, if finished in the stipulated time, offers the meal for free, a T-shirt and wall of fame celebrity status. It runs daily from 11am to 9pm and is priced BD8.410. For details, contact 17531122.

Tomorrow (February 7)

Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House hosts Thursday Night Lights from 7pm-9pm. This event showcases local and international musicians in Bahrain. Don't miss American country legend Rusty Golden performing live every Thursday through to Sunday. Call 17360063 for details.

There will be a Seafood Night at Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands, every Thursday from 7pm-11pm. BD12+++ for adults, BD6+++ for children aged six to 12, children below six dine for free. For details, contact 16000099 or email dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com

Elite Resort & Spa hosts a sea & grill buffet dinner every Thursday and Friday from 7pm to 11pm at Al Naseem & La Brasserie priced BD12+++ per person. For details, contact 17131333.

Friday (February 8)

Check out The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's new Pearl of Arabia-themed night from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too. A Friday date has been added to the regular Saturday session by public demand. For details, contact 17531122.

Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House presents its 'Small Town Throw Down' brunch – the only five-hour brunch in the kingdom – from 11am-4pm. It features a buffet and specific table orders. There's also karaoke. Call 17360063 for details.



Bahrain's Sweetest Brunch takes place every Friday from 12.30pm-3.30pm at Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain's Baharat restaurant. Enjoy the award-winning sweet and savoury

experience for BD26net including soft drinks and water, or BD38net including selected beverages. Live music from duo Deux Sons accompanies the fare. Book for 10 people or more and receive 20 per cent discount. For details, call 17171144.

Enjoy a lavish dining experience at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's restaurants by indulging in a culinary extravaganza at La Med, Italian classics at Primavera, exotic Indian fares at Nirvana and prime steaks and seafood at Plums. This will be held today from 12.30pm to 3.30pm, priced BD35 per person with soft drinks and BD39 per person with selected beverages. For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

At the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa's China Garden Restaurant, Chef Ding and his culinary brigade will be offering pan-seared Chinese delicacies. For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfhotehbahrain.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's La Mosaïque Restaurant is hosting an International Theme Night Buffet every Friday, from 7pm onwards, priced BD13net. For details, contact 17531122.

A buffet is served every Friday from 12.30pm-4pm at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's La Med Restaurant, combined with drinks of your choice. Soft drinks priced BD30+++ , special beverages priced BD35+++ . For details, contact 17586499.

Eat and party at the Reef Resort's Pool Delight with an unlimited seafood BBQ buffet accompanied by the chill out music from the Beat's Zone band. Every Friday from 7pm. For details, call 13110110.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is hosting Friday Brunch at CUT by Wolfgang Puck Steakhouse from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. Priced BD26+++ per person including soft beverages, BD26+++ per person including extensive beverage package for ladies, and BD36+++ per person including extensive beverage package.



Also at the hotel's CUT by Wolfgang Puck Steakhouse, a Bistro-inspired lunch is being hosted every day from 12pm to 3pm. For details and reservations, contact 17115044.

Elite Crystal Hotel has a Friday Pool Party brunch at Waikiki from 1pm-8pm with entertainment from DJ Santi, DJ Smiley and DJ Goose. It's free entrance for women with one welcome drink, BD10net for men with one complementary beverage and BD25net inclusive of unlimited selected beverages and grills. For details, contact 66666360 or 17360360.

Saturday (February 9)

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Pearl of Arabia-themed night takes place from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too. For details, contact 17531122.

Spice up your weekly brunch with a culinary journey around Mexico at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Cantina Kahlo Restaurant. This will be held today from noon to 4pm. Priced BD35 per person with selected beverages and BD20 per person with soft beverages. For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

A Kid's Special Movie Time takes place at Ramee Grand Hotel & Spa, Seef's second floor Banquet Hall every Saturday between 3pm to 5pm. Entry costs BD2, snacks included. For more details, contact 36693693 or 36479898.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Waves Seafood Restaurant is hosting a three-course business lunch, from Saturday-Thursday, 12pm

to 4pm. The lunch is priced BD8net. For details, contact 17531122.

Experience spa treatments at the Crowne Plaza Bahrain's bFit Health Club. It is providing facials, body scrubs and combined packages to help guests relax and rejuvenate, while massage therapy focuses on alleviating stress and encouraging well-being. For more details and bookings, contact 17525812.

The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa is offering 'Art of Cooking' classes for those with busy lifestyles who have a passion for food. Classes feature demonstrations, from the building blocks of culinary practice to mouth-watering menus, led by professional chefs. Priced BD18net, including lunch. Seats are limited, book now. For details, contact 17171000 or email info@gulfhotehbahrain.com

Families can enjoy a buffet meal at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's La Med Restaurant every Saturday from noon to 3.30pm. Soft drinks are priced BD15+++ . For details, contact 17586499.

Enjoy an authentic Italian buffet at Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands every Saturday, from 7pm-11pm. BD10net for adults, BD5net for children aged six to 12, children below six dine for free. For details, contact 16000099 or email at dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com

Soak up the stunning views from the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's 50th floor and feast on Asian delights like Korean Fried Chicken Bao Buns, Wok Fried Shrimp Dumplings and Brisket Wontons at the Re Asian

Leisure Guide



Listings, lifestyle, travel, entertainment and sporting events by Kristian Harrison

Cuisine by Wolfgang Puck's Saturday Brunch. The price is BD19+++ and BD37+++ with selected beverages.
For reservations, contact 17115046.

The Bahrain Bay Kitchen at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is staging a Saturday Brunch from 12.30pm-3.30pm offering a wide selection of Arabic favourites such as Lamb Ouzi and cold mezzeh, priced BD16+++ including soft beverages.
For details, contact 17115000.

Sunday (February 10)

Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands is hosting a Ladies Breakfast for the price of BD4net, every Sunday until Thursday from 7am-11am.
For details, contact 16000099 or email dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain holds an Italian Night at La

Mosaique Restaurant from 7pm featuring pasta, pizza and more priced BD13net for the food only and there is a separate beverage package.
For details, contact 17531122.

Monday (February 11)

Check out The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's new One Night in Bangkok-themed night from 7pm at La Mosaique Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too.
For details, contact 17531122.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Harvesters Back to School-themed party starts at 9pm. Entry is free.
For details, contact 17531122.

Tuesday (February 12)

Every Tuesday, Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House inside Best Western Plus - The Olive Hotel hosts an

authentic Tex-Mex cuisine with Latin entertainment from 5pm-midnight. Each week there are various food and beverage specials to keep things fresh.
Call 17360063 for more details.

Ladies Night at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa every Tuesday, where women receive a 50 per cent discount for the hotel's lounges, spas and restaurants, excluding Raosy by Vineet.



For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfhoteibahrain.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain has a Catch of The Day Seafood Night starting at 7pm and priced BD18net (food only with beverage package available) at La Mosaique restaurant.
For details, contact 17531122.

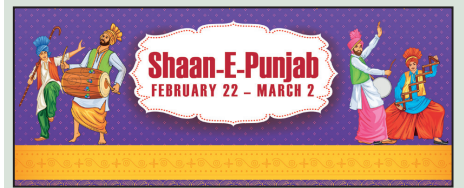
The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's bFit Health Club is offering swimming classes every Monday and Wednesday. Classes for children aged eight to 11 are from 4pm-4.45pm, classes for children aged five to seven are from 5pm-5.45pm, and adult classes are from 6pm-6.45pm. The classes are priced BD40 per month for bFit Crowne Plaza Bahrain members, and BD50 per month (eight sessions) for non-members.
For bookings, contact 17531122.

A BRAZILIAN Carnival will be staged at the Via Brasil restaurant in Wyndham Garden Manama in Juffair with live entertainment from resident band First Class, from February 15-20.

The event includes an 'all you can eat' buffet and soft drinks at BD19.900net and a selected beverages package at BD26net available from 7pm until midnight.
For more details, call 66393054 or email banquetsales@wyndhamgardenmanama.com

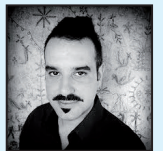


ENJOY the festive delicacies of Punjab at the Wyndham Garden Manama in Juffair's Jashan Asian restaurant from February 22 to March 2. An authentic set menu costs BD8+++ with unlimited soft drinks and BD4+++ for children aged six to 12. Lunch will be served from noon to 3pm and dinner from 7pm-11.45pm.



RENOWNED cosmic reflexologist, Paolo Lai, will be visiting Bahrain today to offer his product, Moon Mist, at Gloss Salon & Spa in Seef. This invention has been specially created by Paolo to encourage relaxation and improve your mood.

This Mist is made every month during the full moon, with the crystals left in pure water overnight, absorbing the moon rays. Then they are mixed with essential oils and a pinch of Himalayan Rock Salt to protect and purify.
For more information, call 17826030.



RE/ ASIAN Cuisine at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay will be transformed to celebrate Chinese New Year. Live cooking stations will feature traditional Asian cuisine with Wolfgang Puck and his team's innovative twist. The price for Friday's brunch (12.30pm-3.30pm) will be BD32net, and it is BD47net for the live cooking stations' dinner (7pm-11pm).

Guests can also ring in Chinese New Year with a Friday Brunch at Bahrain Bay Kitchen. There will be an international buffet

featuring interactive live cooking stations such as dim sum and Peking duck stations. Other seasonal dishes available will include prosperity tossed salad and the ever-popular Singapore chilli crab, together with a tempting assortment of desserts. This will take place from 1pm-4pm and the price is BD30.300 net inclusive of soft drinks, and BD42.400 net inclusive of selected beverages. For reservations, call 1711 5500.

MASTER Chef Lu Yao is visiting Bahrain until Friday



to bring his special Chinese New Year creations to the Gulf Hotel Bahrain's China Garden restaurant.

He is the Chinese Executive Chef of the renowned Yihe Brand and has worked for several five star hotels.

In addition, the China Garden Restaurant will be filled with the Chinese New Year spirit, such as chandeliers that will light the path to the entrance, a fortune cookie raffle, and three chances to win a dinner-for-two.

A spokesperson for the hotel said: "The Chinese New Year has evolved not only in China but also across the globe, including here in Bahrain. Since the opening of China Garden in 1996, we have

revolutionised Chinese cuisine along with culture among the people of Bahrain. This has created a legendary trend not only with the Chinese community but also with the locals and expatriates alike."

● See Eating Out: Page 11

THE Wok Station is welcoming Chinese New Year with its 12 Noodle Fest. The 12 new types of noodles signify the 12-cycle of animals, which appear in the Chinese zodiac related to their yearly calendar. Each of the 12 noodles is paired with fresh exotic vegetables/seafood/meat and comes with an exotic mix of spices and flavours. Each noodle dish is priced separately and starts from BD2.900.

The Noodle Fest will be available from until March 5 at the Galleria Mall in Jinj. Restaurant timings are noon-11pm.

For reservations, call 77570570.

VALENTINE'S LISTINGS

ENJOY a romantic St Valentine's evening at the beach at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay. What could be more romantic than roses, chocolates, fizz and a stunning beachside location with the waves lapping the shore and a gentle breeze? A private butler will serve a four-course Mediterranean dinner with influences from Italy at The Beach. It also includes a complimentary day pass at the Four Seasons Beach & Spa for two, as well as a 20 per cent discount for any treatment.

The cost is BD194net per couple including selected beverages and BD145net per couple inclusive of non-alcoholic beverages.

For reservations, call 17115500.

Enjoy St Valentine's Afternoon Tea at Bay View Lounge, featuring layers of delicious savoury and sweet



snacks. The price is BD17 net per person, or BD31.500 per couple.

This runs from Monday until February 16, from Noon-9pm.

CELEBRATE St Valentine's Day in style at The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain with a variety of special offers and promotions.

You can dine under the stars as La Plage welcomes guests to a unique St Valentine's

experience under the breathtaking views of the night sky and the glittering Arabian Gulf.

A cabana package is priced at BD200 per couple which includes a five-course menu by Chef Nikos and a bottle of select beverage.

A number of the hotel's outlets are hosting special menus for February 14: • Cantina Kahlo has a four-course set menu dinner for BD28 per person or BD39 per couple.

- Primavera has a four-course set menu dinner for BD32 per person.
- Nirvana has a five-course set menu dinner for BD25 per person.
- Plums has a four-course set menu dinner for BD36 per person.
- The Lobby Lounge is hosting St Valentine-themed Afternoon Tea for BD21 per set.
- The Ritz Gourmet Lounge is presenting a selection of bite-sized cookies, colourful candies, decadent chocolates and individually-wrapped heart cakes that are sure to delight adults and kids alike. A special 'Love Me Tender' red heart-shaped cake created by Executive Pastry Chef Jonathon Challenor and inspired by Elvis Presley will be the highlight this year. The specialty cake is priced at B20.

REEF Resort & Spa's pastry

chef Ahmed has created a series of delectable cakes and treats to celebrate the month of love. They are available at the Chocolaterie.

There is also a number of dining options for February 14, including a romantic dinner for two by the pool and special offers on rooms starting at BD100.

ELITE Resort & Spa is hosting a St Valentine's night at Al Naseem & La Brasserie. From 8.30pm onwards, there will be a violin performance, fortune teller, raffle draw and a visit by Cupid.

The cost is BD25++ per couple inclusive of a five-course set menu and two selected beverages.

Meanwhile, at the hotel's Shift 7 outlet, enjoy a candlelit dinner from 8.30pm. The cost is BD35++ per couple.

AT THE Elite Crystal hotel,

the Waikiki outlet is hosting a St Valentine's night stand-up comedy night with a live band from 7pm-11pm. There will be a lavish buffet for BD10+++ , with special offers on selected beverages.

AT THE Wyndham Garden Manama in Juffair enjoy a special candlelit dinner date at Jashan restaurant. For BD30++ per couple, receive a five-course meal by the poolside, a bottle of sparkling beverage and enjoy live entertainment. It takes place from 7pm-11.45pm.

For reservations, call 66316666.

THE Crowne Plaza Bahrain is hosting a 'Celebration of Love' St Valentine's Day dinner from 7pm-11pm. It features a four-course meal, entertainment and sparkling beverages. The price is BD28net.



IN THE heart of Bab Al-Bahrain, in its front outdoor market space, a weekly activity takes place at 5pm every Thursday. Organised by the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, it includes various elements such as music, handicrafts, heritage, arts and food. The event is open to the public for free, and different aspects of culture will be focused on each week so that it is never the same.

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Fashion Weekly

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

Jalal's timely tips on the latest trends



ROGER Dubuis is convinced that women are every bit as keen as men to wear daring and technical calibres and the watchmaker has reached for the stars with its latest offerings.

For a quarter of a century Roger Dubuis has been speaking to women through highly distinctive, self-confident and sophisticated codes ... combined with an elegant touch of eccentricity.

This has resulted in a combination of shapes, curves and fashionable designs, while remaining at the very high end of luxury watchmaking.

According to the designers, the kind of people attracted to its latest offerings are 'oblivious to the rules', which is why



they have been chosen to symbolise a unique vision of femininity.

Enter the Excalibur 36 Shooting Star timepiece, enriched with alternative techniques and featuring a choice of blue, white and pink interpretations, all issued in eight-piece limited editions. The result of two years of research and development in Roger

Dubuis' legendary Geneva workshops were devoted to miniaturising the existing X42 single tourbillon while retaining all of its lightness and airy dimensions.

The new RD510SQ Poinçon de Genève-certified calibre is a diminutive yet bold work-of-art ideally suited to smaller wrists.

It is equipped with one of the smallest flying tourbillon skeleton calibre to fit in a dainty 36mm case.

Shining in a feminine starry sky set against a white mother-of-pearl, blue PVD-treated or pink translucent varnished background, the 18K gold shooting star timepiece loops around the maker's astral signature, trailing its diamond-studded tail and complemented by colour-coordinated enamel stars.



Heartbeats and happiness

LOVE is in the air and it seems to have rubbed off on Weill's creative director Mathilde Castello Branco as the Parisian fashion houses a romantic and flirty new line celebrates the month of amour.

Weill's spring summer 2019 tells the story of a woman's summer of love being footloose and fancy-free as she roams France travelling from Paris to Deauville in heart-covered tops, scarves and dresses.

Mathilde has illustrated little red hearts by hand on T-shirts and vest tops as well as little tweed jackets that are as soft as knitwear.



FASHION
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

The beating hearts are also embroidered onto cotton and silk Prince of Wales checked suits, as patches on jeans and are in harmony with stripes.

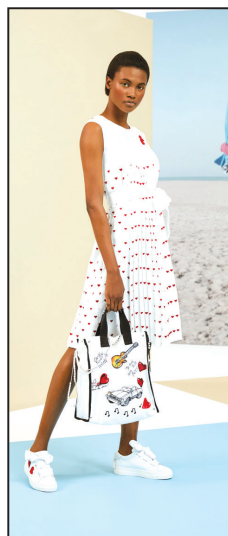
Inspired by long walks on the beach, summer by the sea and sun-kissed holidays; Mathilde also created a fruity frock featuring lemons, strawberries, pineapples and cherries. She combined it as well with deckchair stripes, parasol patterns and more sporty designs which she believes is the perfect combo of fun and chic.

For the more monochromatic female, there are a few stylishly chic black and white

looks to mix and match.

Other designs are enhanced with a sprinkling of polka dots and stripes, mini hearts and star-studded touches. This is a wardrobe of dresses, pleated skirts, suits, knits and tweed.

Accessories bring a new vibe to classic designs, creating a whole new wardrobe filled with style and imagination. Of course, it's also all in the details and a waistband tied with a grosgrain ribbon, a button with a sapphire, an emerald or pearl jewel, a hand-embroidered brooch, a fruit or a film clapperboard, a rock star chain, dashes of diamanté, a bow can make all the difference in an outfit.



Eating Out

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

GOURMET REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



CELEBRATIONS across the globe are taking place to mark the start of Chinese New Year and where better to start the annual culinary and cultural occasion than at one of the most sparkling Asian restaurants in the kingdom, China Garden.

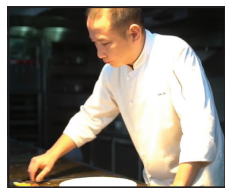
What I love about this annual event is that it's not over in just one night, the Chinese really know how to party. The Chinese New Year, or Spring Festival, has more than 4,000 years of history and is the longest holiday of the year. Although it officially began yesterday the occasion doesn't finish this year until February 19.

The award-winning venue, nestled on the edge of a green oasis inside The Gulf Hotel Bahrain, Convention & Spa, has welcomed visiting Master Chef Lu Yao, *right*, who has cooked for Chinese President Xi Jinping, to present his special culinary creations until Saturday.

It seemed appropriate to capture the essence of the cause early so I called in to get a taste of the action last Saturday evening.

The ambience is perfect and, in a strange sort of way, every time I step into The China Garden I get a nostalgic feeling and remember my late mother, Edith. I know what it is, it's the knickknacks, she was a great collector of bits and pieces and I couldn't help notice the little ornaments on display from the smiling fat Buddha to the sparkling tree and even a waving pussy cat at the entrance. I want that cat.

That homely feeling is encapsulated by the exquisitely friendly and



prompt service provided by outlet manager Joann Q Tugonon and her team. And, the food, before during and after Chinese New Year, will be just as memorable.

The weekend's visit also gave me the opportunity to meet up once more with one of my favourite chefs on the island, the mighty Chef de Cuisine Ding. There was a special dish – Golden fried soft shell crab with oatmeal – (BD9+++), on last weekend's menu which was a taste sensation, a clever combination of crunchy bites and juicy joy.

Duck also played a starring role in proceedings with a marvellous minced meat filling for the lettuce wrap starter (BD4+++), and the restaurant's signature crispy duck is a cracker, slowly marinated, steamed and then roasted before Chef Ding arrives on the table to shred it on to the plate. Absolute perfection at BD8.700+++ and with the pancake wraps were easily enough to feed our party of four.

Our friends, traditionalists when it comes to Chinese cuisine, went for old favourites: crispy beef and sweet & sour chicken, but the good lady wife, Kathryn, was feeling adventurous, and so plucked for the Scallops & Asparagus



DINING DYNASTY: Asian cuisine at its finest served up at China Garden restaurant in the Gulf Hotel, Bahrain, Convention & Spa

in Black Bean Sauce (BD8+++), and described the dish as sublime. The accompanying fried rice, place rice and noodles soaked up the sauces with savoury style.

There really shouldn't have been room for desserts but as we're marking the Year of the Pig, the 12th in the 12-year cycle of Chinese zodiac signs and the same symbol I was born under (strengths:

warm-hearted, generally good-tempered, loyal, honest and gentle – weaknesses: naive, gullible, sluggish and occasionally short-tempered) it seemed apt to indulge a little more.

And who can resist toffee banana, deep fried ice-cream and the simple deep-fried banana (BD2.400-2.600++) to finish off a fabulous evening.

China Garden is rumoured to have been one of the late legendary singer Michael Jackson's favourite restaurants when he lived in Bahrain. Now that calls for a signature scream!

To book a table call email fbm@gulftelbahrain.com, info@gulftelbahrain.com or call 17746423/4 and check out Editor Stan's YouTube interview with Joann and Chef

Ding by scanning the QR code below.



Splashes of inspiration



ONE of the stars of the culinary world who boasts a massive and growing social media following has stepped up to the plum position at one of the kingdom's premier beach resorts, writes Stan Szczotka.

Chef Yann Lejard first proved his leadership with a promotion to Executive Sous Chef in 2016, and in his new role as Executive Chef of the five-star Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain he will oversee a culinary team of 130 chefs.

He will also be responsible for the menu creation and kitchen operations of the resort's 11 restaurants, in-room dining and banquet catering divisions.

Normally, corporate press releases received at this publication are full of overblown literary boasts but the hotel's public relations officer was spot on suggesting 'daring, unique and playful', just a few words that come to mind when experiencing one of Chef Yann's signature dishes.

Like a 'modern-day disruptor' turning the simplicities of food into plated works of art, his talents have taken him across Europe, into major Michelin Star restaurants, before arriving to the region, first in Saudi Arabia and then to Bahrain in 2014 where he assumed the role of Chef de Cuisine for the award-winning Plums restaurant.

Shortly after he arrived, *GulfWeekly* met the culinary creator. As World Cup fever gripped the hotel's big screen arena, there was just as much excitement in the kitchen as Plums' latest recruit dazzled his teammates with a sizzling display of culinary prowess.

As soccer superstar Neymar was notching a brace for Brazil during the host country's thrilling opening 3-1 win over Croatia, his cooking equivalent from France, Chef Yann, was performing miracles amid the pots and pans.

A fellow chef whispered in the editor's ear 'he's an artist'. As for the taste of all nine courses sampled, the experience could best be described as poetry on a plate.

The new boy in town, who was snatched in an end-of-season transfer swoop from a top family across the causeway, only arrived three weeks earlier and offered to display his talents as a tease of things to come for distinguished diners in Bahrain.

He was a team player from the very start, insisting the photographer took a kitchen team shot. It's that focus on attention and caring about his colleagues that has seen



him rise up the ranks like a well-cultured cake in the oven.

It's something he's taking with him in his new executive position. "It's not about an individual, it's about the team and we've got incredibly talented chefs working in the kitchens at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain.

"I've seen them develop their talents, I want to give something back and believe I can encourage and inspire them. These are exciting times."

Born in Paris in 1975 and holding a degree in cooking from the tender age of 16, Chef Yann has worked in many Michelin star restaurants and leading hotels around the globe.

He admits that in his youth, he wasn't the best student in the world, didn't enjoy the classroom and became a rebel from the age of 14 painting the back alleys of his

home city and expressing himself through street art, taking inspiration from the likes of modern art legend Jackson Pollock, an American painter and a major figure in the abstract expressionist movement. He was well known for his unique style of drip painting.

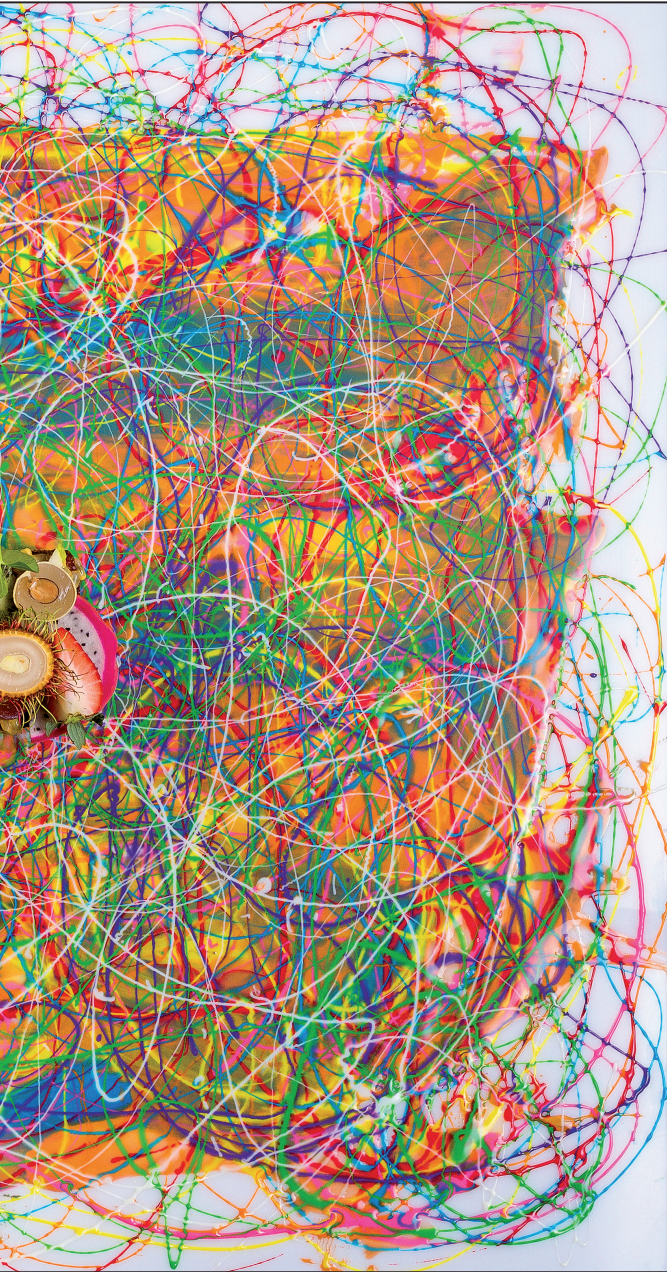
His mother knew he had an 'explosive' talent from the very moment he was born and his father guided him towards a professional career, noting his love of cooking from a very tender age.

The rebel had a cause.

He became a chef by the age of 16, and it was then where he found food to be a catalyst for artistic expression and where his signature, abstract style of 'splattering' sauce on a plate was born.

Fast forward to the era of social media, his accounts @YBLinc have since amassed

tion win promotion



TALENT AND
TEAMWORK:
Chef Yann

methodology and tutoring involved in fine dining instruction.

For a time he turned his back on the hospitality industry, gained a bachelor's degree in management and took up a career as a cost controller. But life behind a desk in a corporate office was not for him and, once fully recovered physically and back in the right frame of mind, he decided to return to the kitchen.

"It's all about the passion," said Chef Yann, 38. "I enjoy creating contemporary modern cuisine using all the knowledge I have picked up from my travels around the world and the people I have met and worked with."

"My philosophy is to make the best out of each and every ingredient no matter whether it is the simplest or the most expensive."

"Inspiration comes from deep inside my heart with feelings that emulate every detail of my life."

Although undertaking a heavy load of managerial responsibilities he insists of making time for a couple of hours each day in the kitchens working alongside the chefs, helping to develop the menus as well as his art.

He is also busy working on a 'top secret' new small select restaurant opening at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain offering an exclusive contemporary dining experience to culinary connoisseurs, details of which will be announced shortly.

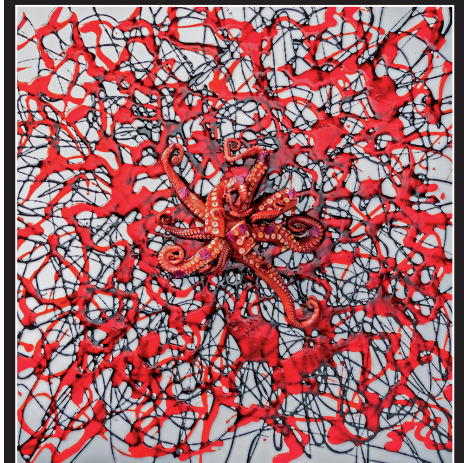
The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain GM Bernard de Villèle, couldn't be happier, saying: "He is a master of art and a disruptor in the food scene with a following of admirers on social media to back it up. He, as well, has the creativity and mastery to take our large dining portfolio to pure excellence. His hands on leadership and mentorship of the entire Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain kitchen brigade has been superb, so it was a natural choice to promote him."

In an interview with the glossy magazine he said there were three things he would take to a desert island – his wife, Caroline, their son, Adrien Leonard, nine, and their dog.

Fortunately, the desert island is Bahrain.

Photographs courtesy of:

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a foodie cultist following of more than 120,000 fans who can't wait to see what he does next.

He worked in more than 10 countries believing that he could only become truly experienced if he challenged himself by starting all over again in different places.

Through his travels he learned all about local products and the varied techniques necessary to bring out the best flavours and taste combinations.

Before joining The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, he held culinary positions in major restaurants, including working as a Chef Saucier for notable names like Heinz Winkler in Germany and Peter Knogl in Switzerland.

After stints across Europe, his career eventually lead him to Jeddah where he served as the Executive Chef for Glow

restaurant and where he became the first chef ever in Saudi Arabia to become ranked by the award-winning luxury lifestyle and food magazine, *FOUR UK*.

In addition to being frequently tapped as a guest chef for Master Classes and pop-up restaurants throughout North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, he has also been a finalist at Le Taittinger Prix Culinaire in Switzerland, along with a ranking in the notable Gault & Millau restaurant guide, amongst many more.

However, it's not all been plain sailing. As reported earlier in *GulfWeekly*, disaster struck when a crippling knee condition meant he had to give up life in the kitchen and go under the surgeon's knife.

He also needed to reignite that artistic and creative flair he had in his youth that can so often be reined in amidst the strict



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Property Weekly

A guide to the best properties home and abroad – edited by Mai Al Khatib Camille email: mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

A semi-furnished villa is available for sale in Riffa Views boasting a large plot of land and a spacious interior.

The four bedroom home, situated in the lush and landscaped Lagoon Estate, has a total built-up area of 349sqm and a plot area of 644sqm.

The ground floor has a sizable foyer, a guest bedroom with ensuite bathroom and a guest closet with vanity set. There is also a fully-kitted out kitchen with serving area and a laundry room.

There is a dining room and a reception area as well as a majlis (lounge). Residents can access the backyard garden from the reception area. There is also a useful storage area behind a door under the staircase.

The first floor has a second foyer leading to a large terrace and three bedrooms.

The master bedroom has a dressing area, as well as an ensuite bathroom with a tub. The other two bedrooms have built-in wardrobes and there is also a family bathroom with a shower.

There is a double carport, a maid's room and a handy outdoor kitchen for heavy-duty cooking.

As for local amenities, residents can enjoy Riffa Views' 18-hole PGA championship Colin Montgomerie-designed course and a 9-hole executive golf course. There is also a country club, a tennis facility, an international school and the Riffa Palms shopping centre close by with cafes and a supermarket.

Majestic villa for sale



FACTS AT A GLANCE

Location: Lagoons Estates at the Riffa Views

Reference number: V1810

Sales Price: BD295,000

Living room: 2

Bedrooms: 4

Bathrooms: 4

Additional information: A nice rear garden, car port for two cars. There is a golf course, country club and shopping strip.

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InteriorsWeekly

Your guide to the best in-store deals of the week

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WHAT trends will continue to dominate home decorating in 2019?

When we asked interior designers about the colours, fabrics and styles likely to be popular this year, one message came through loud and clear: people are seeking comfort at home.

They are seeing a trend toward a sophisticated, elegant comfort achieved through things like warm wall colours, antique wooden items with a patina of age.

Along with the physical cosiness these items bring, many folks seem to be seeking a degree of emotional comfort in their home decor.

Furniture and wall-covering designer Brett Beldock said: "They want this cocoon feeling. Our surroundings have to be really warm and comforting now ... everything is crazy and we're all up in the air."

He believes furniture shapes are changing too: "We're

Comforting decisions



seeing a return to rounded edges and pieces of furniture with big, soft, rounded arms," he added.

Two other leading interior



designers – Marika Meyer and Dan Mazzarini – are predicting changes in home design in the coming months too. Marika said: "We're coming back into

more warm neutrals. Green is the new blue. It's likely to be used in everything from upholstery patterns to kitchen furnishings."

She also believes that as part of a 'return to traditionalism' in home design, many people are opting for 'heavy layering of very traditional patterns'.

With a movement growing on recycling across the globe, second-hand items are also having a moment.

"There have always been the antique lovers that we've worked with," said Dan. But now, a growing number of people 'are responding more positively to things that have an actual sense of history'.

Even for homeowners who prefer a more modern style, warm wood tones are increasingly popular too.

"Everyone's using warm woods and walnuts," said Marika. Some clients continue asking for lighter wood tones, but even when paired with white items for a very clean look, the wood grain brings a degree of warmth to a room.

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- Compiles and create reports to clearly outline department's progress

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- Knowledge of card processing, payment fraud prevention/detection techniques, On-line Fraud Management is an advantage.
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In focus



CITY Centre Bahrain invited children to attend an exclusive birthday party at Playsy to celebrate its first anniversary following a social media campaign.

Thirty children were treated to a complimentary experience, where they got to participate in an unsolved mystery story within Playsy's town, located on Level 2 of the mall.

Playsy offers a 'dual reality experience', where the children complete a multitude of challenges, through the unique challenge served in various occupational modules. For every challenge that is completed, children are then rewarded with Playsy's cyber currency that can be redeemed for purchases within the facility.



THE Rotary Club of Salmaniya recently organised a meeting at Eagle Hills Marrassi at Diyar Al Muharraq. The club members were given a tour of a new apartment building overlooking the sea. The aim of vocational outdoor meetings is to increase awareness of new projects and experiences happening in Bahrain.



THE Entrepreneur's Organisation (EO) Bahrain has recently staged a three-day retreat which included a business innovation workshop conducted by Faeq Alaliwaf.

Award-winning international speaker, conscious entrepreneur and treatment specialist Bradley Callow also conducted a workshop which included interactive role play games. The EO Bahrain chapter has 46 members.

INSURANCE company

Solidarity Bahrain has signed an agreement with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), an IT services, consulting and business solutions' company, to deploy TCS BaNCs core insurance



system as its core platform for digital transformation. A signing ceremony took place at the Solidarity offices and was attended by senior executives from both businesses.

SocialScene

Why wait a month! Join Social Scene every week

Revamped brunch



CAFÉ Mosaic on the 28th floor of the Wyndham Garden Manama, Juffair launched its newly-revamped brunch last Friday with members of the media in attendance.

Restaurant opens

THE M Restaurant staged its inaugural celebration last Saturday evening and becomes another welcome addition to the growing Adliya dining out scene.

The M Restaurant is the brainchild of Mushtak Abdul Gafoor, a well-known businessman on the island. The taste and presentation of the dishes will showcase the kitchen's expertise in Indian, Arabic and creative international cuisines.



Smile programme



SMILE Initiative, an initiative of Bahrain Future Society for Youth which provides support to children with cancer and their parents, has launched its Tawasol programme.

The aim is to provide a communication platform for parents to allow members to gain a better understanding of what they are going through.

A meeting with chairman of the Future Society for Youth's Subah Al-Zayani was recently staged at Arjan Village and parents offered suggestions on developing the initiative's programme in order to enhance its benefit to their children.

It was agreed that the Smile initiative would host speakers and experts to enrich discussions in coming sessions.

Groundbreaking ceremony



EAGLE Hills Diyar, the company behind the iconic Marassi Al Bahrain development, held a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the commencement of the above ground construction works on Marassi Galleria.

It took place in the presence of Shaikh Salman bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, head of the Survey and Land Registration Bureau, Mohamed Alabbat, chairman of Eagle Hills Diyar, Abdulhakeem Al Khayyat, vice chairman of Eagle Hills Diyar and Dr Maher Al Shaer, MD of Eagle Hills Diyar.

Marassi Galleria will host five interconnected lifestyle urban districts – the High Street, Family Plaza, Waterfront Dining Promenade, an Animated Rooftop and the Luxury Courtyard.

Professional examinations



RCSI Bahrain recently hosted a series of postgraduate professional exams organised by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. In total 120 dentists from Bahrain and around the Middle East took the Membership of the Faculty of Dentistry (MFD) examinations, following on from the two-day MFD International Intensive Revision Course, which also took place at the RCSI Bahrain campus.

Film Weekly



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



No serenity here

OFTEN, the task of being a film reviewer is a pleasant one. I mean, there are many worse occupations in the world. Once a week, I get to watch the latest releases with a tub of popcorn in a comfy seat.

The majority of the time, I have a blast and come out of the screen with a smile on my face or an emotional tear rolling down my cheek.

And sometimes, I walk out in disgust thinking about what a waste of time the past two hours were. *Serenity* is such a film, the rare breed that makes me wish I was working down a coal mine instead.

It's been a while since I've seen something so truly awful, and the only saving grace of the whole experience is that I have a platform here to vent and get my teeth stuck in. Scathing reviews are so much more fun to write than positive ones.

The New Year is not even a month old, but *Serenity* already qualifies as the worst film of 2019. I am absolutely, unequivocally certain of that. Both moronically written and directed with shocking, amateurish ineptitude by Stephen Knight, it's a pointless bomb about the biggest tuna in the Caribbean and the foolish fishing boat captain who devotes his life to catching it.

The result is a king-sized waste of time. The early months of every year are always devoted to the rubbish Hollywood couldn't dump in the plethora of Oscar contenders the year before. One expects junk in January. It's a rule. But it is rare to pull any junk movie from the gutter as spectacularly stupid as *Serenity*.

Matthew McConaughey, who seems to have slipped back into bad habits again after his career renaissance a few years back, plays a boat captain with the silly

SERENITY

STARRING: Matthew McConaughey, Anne Hathaway, Diane Lane

DIRECTOR: Steven Knight

GENRE: Thriller

RATING: PG-15

RUNTIME: 106 Mins

name Baker Dill who ekes out a living taking tourists fishing on a boat called Serenity and lives in a cardboard lean-to on an island called Plymouth.

It is clear from first sight that he has serious issues. So flat broke that he can't even afford petrol, he tells off his customers, pulls a knife on his loyal first mate Duke (Djimon Hounsou), chain-smokes anything he can light with a match, brawls his way through the island bars and drinks himself unconscious every night.

Miraculously, he also has a girlfriend, played by a terminally-wasted Diane Lane, who serves no purpose except to provide him with repeated opportunities to show off his chiselled torso. There isn't a shred of passion between them.

He also has no plumbing, so to take a bath he sometimes goes full monty and jumps off the top of a cliff into the sea to show even more of his gym-pumped abs. Unfortunately, it doesn't match his ravaged face. He looks embalmed.

Just when you think you can't bear another minute of monotony, Baker's ex-wife Karen (an abysmal Anne Hathaway) shows up out of the blue and offers him \$10 million if he'll take her abusive, one-armed billionaire husband Frank out into the middle of the ocean on the Serenity and feed him to the sharks.

Years ago, Karen dumped Baker and

traded him for money. Now she realises it was a mistake. Frank, the sadistic, alcoholic brute she married, beats her up regularly, and now she wants freedom for herself and Baker's 13-year-old son Patrick, whom he has never seen.

The point where the movie starts to seriously fall apart (if it was ever wholesome in the first place) is the intrusion of another weirdo who interrupts what weakly passes for a plot by pretending to sell Baker a magical 'fish finder' that can help him locate the giant tuna he sacrifices everything to catch.

This skinny little creep (Jeremy Strong) wears dark business suits and no shoes, wading through the surf in his bare feet predicting ominous things to come.

As the movie turns into a long, exasperating episode from *The Twilight Zone*, the dialogue induces giggles and then loud guffaws. As for the plot twists, they're so ridiculous they appear to have been doodled on a notepad in a 'sci-fi for beginners' brainstorm class, and have more holes than a Swiss cheese.

Honestly, this film isn't in the 'it's so bad, it's actually good' category, where it might be worth a watch for the silliness of it all. It's just a rotten carcass.

In fact, earlier I said this will definitely be the worst film of 2019. I'd like to change my stance... I can hand-on-heart claim that this is categorically the worst film I've had the displeasure of reviewing in my five years at *GulfWeekly*.

Now where's that pickaxe?

● **Now showing in:** Cineco, Saar

KRISTIAN'S VERDICT
1 popcorn - stay home
5 popcorns - start queuing

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Bite-sized trailer

Replicas

DIRECTOR: Jeffrey Nachmanoff

CAST: Keanu Reeves, Alice Eve, Emily Alyn Lind

PLOT: A daring synthetic biologist, after a car accident kills his family, will stop at nothing to bring them back, even if it means pitting himself against a government-controlled laboratory, a police task force and the physical laws of science.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, Saar, Seef II, Wadi Al Sail, Oasis Mall Juffair



Destroyer

DIRECTOR: Karyn Kusama

CAST: Rebecca Ferguson, Tom Taylor, Patrick Stewart

PLOT: *Destroyer* follows the moral and existential odyssey of LAPD detective Erin Bell who, as a young cop, was placed undercover with a gang in the California desert with tragic results. When the leader of that gang re-emerges many years later, she must work her way back through the remaining members and into her own history with them to finally reckon with the demons that destroyed her past.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, Seef I, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Oasis Mall Juffair



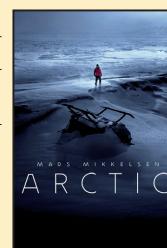
Arctic

DIRECTOR: Joe Penna

CAST: Mads Mikkelsen, Maria Thelma Smáradóttir

PLOT: A man stranded in the Arctic after an airplane crash must decide whether to remain in the relative safety of his makeshift camp or to embark on a deadly trek through the unknown in hopes of making it out alive.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, Seef II



imdb movie charts

Current Position	Title	Weekend Takings	Gross to date
1	Glass	\$10M	\$89M
2	The Upside	\$9M	\$76M
3	Miss Bala	\$7M	\$7M
4	Aquaman	\$5M	\$324M
5	Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse	\$4M	\$175M
6	Green Book	\$4M	\$56M
7	The Kid Who Would Be King	\$4M	\$13M
8	A Dog's Way Home	\$4M	\$13M
9	Escape Room	\$3M	\$52M
10	They Shall Not Grow Old	\$2M	\$11M

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LAST Saturday, the British Embassy Bahrain together with the UK's Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) led a beach clean-up in Abu Subh Beach near Diraz, in partnership with the Supreme Council for the Environment (SCE) and Clean Up Bahrain.

This initiative formed part of the UK-Bahrain Environment Week series of events taking place until Saturday. Participants recorded the different types of litter which will be analysed by Cefas and help with future litter and waste monitoring mechanisms.

Nermeen Mahran, by email.

TO help celebrate the National Environment Day,



Financial Centre Development Company is launching a new recycling project for Harbour Towers and Harbour Gate this week.

Together with EFS Facilities Services Bahrain we will provide tenants who take part in the project with recycling bins and recycling bags, as well as a dedicated collection area for recycling materials.

This project aims to conserve energy and natural resources and reduce the amount of

waste dumped in landfills. It is our national duty to protect this beautiful country. Launching this project will enable us to help protect Bahrain's environment and, therefore, help to protect the planet.

The company aims to measure the recycled amount of plastic, cans and paper throughout the year. This will also encourage tenants to become more involved in recycling and more proactive. It is also in response to requests we have received from some tenants who are going to be very willing participants in the scheme.

Angus Campbell, CEO of Financial Centre Development Company.

online challenging themselves to spend a year without clothes shopping.

While the majority of them do so for minimalist, financial or even self-development reasons, I reckon that such a move – where you avoid purchasing new items and instead buy second-hand or swap clothes with friends – is crucial to slowing down

fast fashion practices that are quite detrimental to the environment.

Here in Bahrain, businesswoman Lana Furman decided to go a year without shopping when she learned that certain retail practices and associated global warming could lead to the disappearance of penguins!

Because I was never one to try to keep up with trends, and as Lana said in a recent interview, most of us have enough clothing to last us years anyway, I am led to believe that I would fare quite well if I ever decide to take up this challenge myself.

And, if you decide to contest your shopping habits as well, rest assured that that doesn't

mean you have to put up with the same boring items of clothing! Project 333, a capsule wardrobe as well as tips on mix-and-matching, have all been proposed as ways to make better use of your wardrobe by using the clothes you already have to the fullest and steer away from surplus spending. Nature will thank you.

GulfWeeklyBookClub – in association with The Bookcase



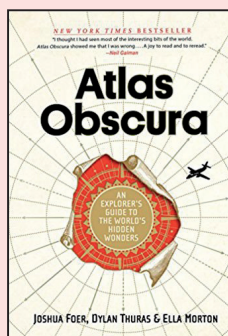
BOOK OF THE WEEK by Linda Jennings – ATLAS OBSCURA, JOSHUA FOER, 9780761169086 (WORKMAN) BD13.100 for Gulf Weekly Book Club members

IT'S TIME to get off the beaten path. Inspiring equal parts wonder and wanderlust, *Atlas Obscura* celebrates more than 700 of the strangest and most curious places in the world.

Talk about a bucket list: here are natural wonders such as the dazzling glow-worm caves in New Zealand, or a baobab tree in South Africa that's so large it has a lounge inside where 15 people can drink comfortably, plus architectural marvels including the M.C. Escher-like step wells in India.

Mind-boggling events, like the Baby Jumping Festival in Spain, where men dressed as devils literally vault over rows of squirming infants ... not to mention the Great Stalacpipe Organ in Virginia, Turkmenistan's 40-year hole of fire called the Gates of Hell, a graveyard for decommissioned ships on the coast of Bangladesh, eccentric bone museums in Italy, or a weather-forecasting invention that was powered by leeches still on display in Devon, England.

Created by Joshua Foer, Dylan Thurais and Ella Morton, it revels in the weird, the unexpected, the overlooked, the hidden and the mysterious. Every page expands our sense of how strange and marvellous the



world really is. And, it comes with compelling descriptions, hundreds of photographs, surprising charts and maps for every region of the world.

It is a book to enter anywhere, and will be as appealing as much to the armchair traveller as the die-hard adventurer.

COOKERY BOOK OF THE WEEK
THE HOW NOT TO DIE COOKBOOK,
 MICHAEL GREGER, MD
 9781509844333 (PAN MACMILLAN)

BD8.300 for Gulf Weekly Book Club members

DR MICHAEL Greger, founder of the wildly popular website Nutrition Facts, takes his comprehensive, lifesaving science into the kitchen. Why suffer from disease and ill health when the right food is proven to keep you healthy, and without the side effects of drugs?

We can help avoid heart disease, cancer and our other biggest killers if we use food as medicine, and the *How Not To Die Cookbook* offers a sustainable and delicious guide to preparing and eating the foods that will help prevent and maybe even reverse fatal diseases.

Featuring around 100 easy-to-follow, beautifully photographed, plant-based

recipes, with plenty suitable for vegetarians and vegans, the *How Not To Die Cookbook* merges cutting-edge science with everyday ingredients from the supermarket to help you and your family eat your way to better health and a longer life.

MY FAVOURITE READ OF THE WEEK

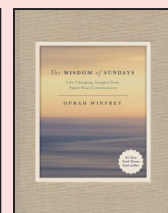
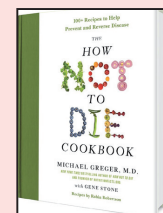
THE WISDOM OF SUNDAYS, OPRAH WINFREY, 9781509874118 (PAN MACMILLAN)
BD9.200 for Gulf Weekly Book Club members

The Wisdom of Sundays features insightful selections from the most meaningful conversations between Oprah Winfrey and some of today's most admired leaders.

Visionaries like Tony Robbins, Arianna Huffington and Shonda Rhimes share their lessons in finding purpose. World-renowned teachers like Eckhart Tolle, Marianne Williamson, and Wayne Dyer explain our complex relationship with the ego and the healing powers of love and connection. And, bestselling writers like Cheryl Strayed, Elizabeth Gilbert and Elizabeth Lesser explore forgiveness and letting go.

Organised into 10 chapters – each one representing a powerful step in Oprah's own spiritual journey, and introduced with a personal essay by Oprah herself – the moments of inspiration that have enlightened millions on the three-time Emmy Award-

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winning *Super Soul Sunday* are collected in *The Wisdom of Sundays*, a cherishable, deeply affecting book.

Paired with more than 100 beautiful photographs, including many from Oprah's private property in California, *The Wisdom of Sundays* promises to be a timeless keepsake that will help readers awaken to life's wondrous possibilities.

Oprah said: "If you want to be more fully present and live with a wide-open heart, this is where your journey begins."

Write to the editor

Follow Stan on Twitter @stanszeczowka
 Your views make all the difference – email Stan Szczerwka at editor@gulfweekly.com

THE WHISPERER

You don't know me; I know you, I know what's being said about you. I'm the 'whisperer'. I am socially mobile: Arab, Brit, Indian, Pakistani, American and the rest, they all invite me and share their world with me. Not much gets past me but if you think it may have done, email me on ...

[...editor@gulfweekly.com](mailto:editor@gulfweekly.com)



package contained, the trainer carried it to his car dreaming of great riches, perhaps a collection of sparkling carats encrusted on 18-karat gold jewellery?

He excitedly pulled the wrapping aside and found it contained plenty of carrots all right ... of the vegetable

variety ... a 'thank you' present for the winning horse. The Whisperer would like to share the difference between karats, carats and carrots.

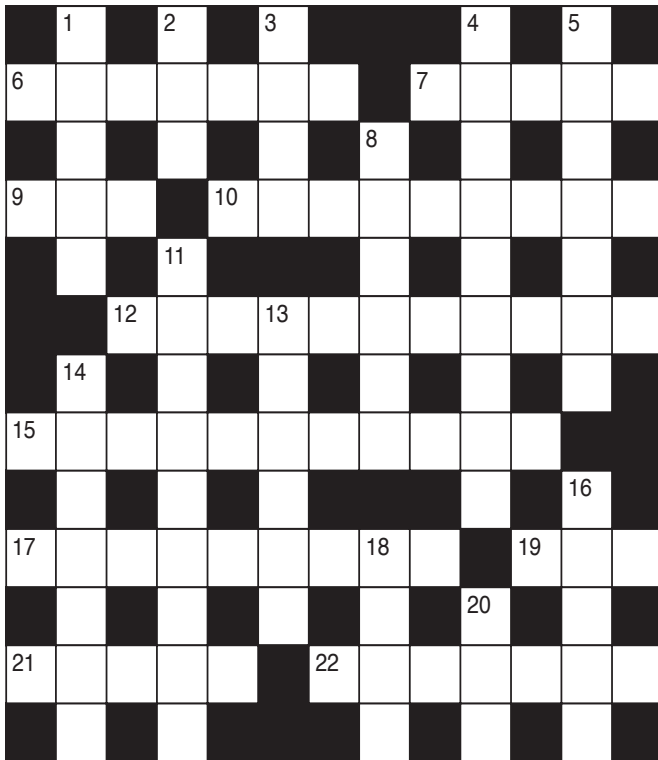


Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

- 6. Travel (7)
- 7. Weak (5)
- 9. Acquire (3)
- 10. Besiege (9)
- 12. Commodities (11)
- 15. Hypocrisy (11)
- 17. Repulsive (9)
- 19. Compete (3)
- 21. Consent (5)
- 22. Judgment (7)

DOWN

- 1. Staid (5)
- 2. Attempt (3)
- 3. Yield (4)
- 4. Coldness (9)
- 5. Malady (7)
- 8. Mend (6)
- 11. Circumference (9)
- 13. Mollusc (6)
- 14. Revile (7)
- 16. Because (5)
- 18. Require (4)
- 20. Strange (3)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... played Queen Elizabeth II in the film *The Naked Gun: From the Files of Police Squad!*?
WHAT ... Russian cyclist won the 2005 Vuelta a España after Roberto Heras was disqualified?
WHERE ... in the Americas did Tony Saca become president in 2004?
WHEN ... did the *Radio One* disc jockey Stuart Henry die?
WHO ... does Peter Capaldi play in the television series *The Thick of It*?
WHAT ... 1968 record album featured *The Saga of Rodney Toady*?
WHERE ... did James Henry Scullin become prime minister in 1929?
WHEN ... did Alfred the Great die?

just so

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PLASMA H₂O

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

6	5	1	7	4	2	3	8	9
7	8	4	9	1	3	5	6	2
9	2	3	5	8	6	7	4	1
3	6	7	2	9	1	4	5	8
8	9	5	4	6	7	1	2	3
1	4	2	8	3	5	9	7	6
5	3	9	6	7	8	2	1	4
2	1	8	3	5	4	6	9	7
4	7	6	1	2	9	8	3	5

3	6	1	9	4	8	5	2	7
7	8	2	6	3	5	4	9	1
9	4	5	2	7	1	3	6	8
1	9	3	7	5	2	6	8	4
4	2	7	8	9	6	1	3	5
6	5	8	4	1	3	2	7	9
5	1	6	3	8	7	9	4	2
8	3	4	1	2	9	7	5	6
2	7	9	5	6	4	8	1	3

darn tough sudoku

8	6	1	2	5	3	9	7	4
4	5	2	9	6	7	8	1	3
9	7	3	1	8	4	6	5	2
7	4	9	6	3	8	1	2	5
1	2	6	4	9	5	3	8	7
3	8	5	7	2	1	4	6	9
5	9	7	3	1	6	2	4	8
6	3	4	8	7	2	5	9	1
2	1	8	5	4	9	7	3	6

Sudoku

9			4			8		3
8				2		4		1
		5				6		2
4		9		6	1		3	
	8	2				7		
	5		2	7		1	8	
2		4				9		7
7		6		4				8
		8		9	7		2	

Sudoku

3		8		7				2
	4	1			2		6	
	2		4					8
		7			6			
4	6				8		3	9
			1	4	9	5		
5					7		4	
	9		5			2		7
2				1	9			

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 7 Determination; 8 Distance; 9 Able; 10 Patent; 12 Indeed; 14 Deform; 16 Relate; 18 Chic; 20 Tipsters; 22 Perpendicular.

Down: 1 Delicate; 2 Mettle; 3 Omen; 4 Inferior; 5 Strand; 6 Fool; 11 Tempting; 13 External; 15 Occupy; 17 Litmus; 19 Heed; 21 Prim.

JUST SO: Once bitten twice shy, A bit on the side, Heart of stone, The Birds and the bees.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Clifford Odets; Aegean Sea; Kyushu, Japan; Andy Warhol; 551-6 declared; Moscow; July, 1971.

Darn Tough Sudoku

9			7		5			3
		8	9		4	1		
	4	5				6	3	
7			2		3			1
	6	3				8	2	
		7	3		1	9		
8			5		7			2

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Motoring Weekly

Steering you to the best deals on wheels

AFTER more than 20 years of negotiations and planning, Mohammed Jalal and Sons has finally secured one of the jewels in its crown as Mahindra & Mahindra Limited finally rubber-stamped its presence in the kingdom with the launch of the new XUV500.

The Indian carmaker, established in 1945, is one of the largest vehicle manufacturers by production in India and the largest manufacturer of tractors in the world.

After focusing its business mainly within India, the marque is finally exporting its marvellous models, with Bahrain considered one of its most important global locations.

The new XUV500 is available in two variants, namely the W6 FWD and the W8 AWD, and is the only SUV in its class to offer a second generation, Japanese-produced, six-speed automatic transmission with AWD as an option.

According to Mahindra, the XUV500 'bridges the gap between style and adventure, luxury and ruggedness, and performance and economy.'

It was India's most decorated car, winning 22 awards in its first year after launch, and to-date has accumulated 29 gongs in total from auto experts.

Ahmed Jalal, director of Mohammed Jalal & Sons, said: "We've been working to obtain the Mahindra franchise for more than 20 years, but they were only a domestic company within India.

"In the last three years, they've shown more reticence to export their cars and we pushed them immediately to come to Bahrain, and thankfully they agreed.

"There's someone working here with the company who I sent to Mahindra to get them

Mighty marque finally comes to town



MOTORING
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

on board in the late 1980s ... so it was a long time coming but we're finally there and we're very proud of our association with them.

"Launching the XUV500 in the Bahraini market is in tune with our objective of offering the customer world-class vehicles and we are confident that it will soon become the preferred choice in the SUV segment in the Bahraini market."

The new XUV500 comes with leather seats, a touch screen, navigation, parking sensors and camera, USB, Bluetooth, front and rear air

conditioning, eight seats and ample room.

Alongside the XUV500, the company is offering a two-door pick-up, and another SUV is coming in 2020.

Mahindra & Mahindra was set up as a steel trading company in 1945 in Ludhiana as Mahindra & Mohammad by brothers Kailash Chandra Mahindra and J.C. Mahindra and Malik Ghulam Mohammed.

After India gained independence and Pakistan was formed, Mohammed left for Pakistan where he became the country's first finance minister. The company changed its name to Mahindra & Mahindra



NEW ARRIVAL: The XUV500 on display below, Ahmed sits inside for the cameras and the ribbon-cutting ceremony

in 1948. It eventually saw a business opportunity in expanding into manufacturing and selling larger MUVs, starting with the assembly under licence of

Willys Jeep in India.

Soon established as the Jeep manufacturers of India, the company later commenced manufacturing light commercial vehicles (LCVs)

and agricultural tractors.

● The Mahindra XUV500 starts at BD7,200. For more details call 17730802 or 17252606, or visit the showroom in Khamis.



Needing super credentials

ORGANISED by Supercars Club Arabia, members and guests got the chance to try out some of the most exclusive and iconic sports cars and share their love for the brilliant beasts, from marques such as McLaren, Porsche, Ferrari and more.

The track day also showcased some historic cars, including the Maserati MC12 and the Porsche 1 GTR - of which only two exist in the world. However, the star of the show was the Apollo Intensa Emozione, one of only 10 bespoke models in the world, which was recently purchased by a Saudi VIP.

The vehicle, often called the IE and is Italian for 'intense emotion', is a mid-engine sports car manufactured by Apollo Automobil GmbH, designed by Joe Wong.

All 10 have been snapped up, with a price tag of \$2,670,000 (BD1,006,456).

The exterior design is based on airflow and nature, insects and marine animals in particular. The interior is based entirely on the nature theme, with a cocoon-style carbon fibre tub cockpit, in the style of a leather-wrapped prototype race car.

The Intensa Emozione uses an Apollo 6.3-litre naturally-aspirated V12 engine developed by Autotecnica Motori and HWA AG. It produces approximately 780bhp with 760Nm of torque.

The machine is capable of 0-100kmph in 2.7 seconds, with a projected top speed of 335kmph. It is made almost entirely out of carbon fibre, but it does include high-strength steel, aluminium and titanium components.

Supercars Club Arabia was founded in 2014 by race ace Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa with the vision to create an exclusive supercars network to explore

Supercar enthusiasts (of good character) received a special treat at the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) and GulfWeekly's motoring correspondent Kristian Harrison joined them to sit in one of the sweet machines on display and meet the man behind a club whose members have class on and off the track.



and experience the world's best roads for the ultimate supercars driving experience.

In November 2014, 50 supercars took part in the first tour #DesertRun which started in the UAE and continued across the border into Oman. Since then, Supercars Club Arabia has been organising and managing international tours and other exclusive events.

According to board member Khalid Al Kinnah, prospective members not only have to own a supercar, but they have to be super people too.

"It's amazing how far we've come in a short number of years," he said. "We now have more than 200

members. It was originally Bahraini members only, but we expanded into Dubai, Oman, Europe and now North America.

"Events like these are designed to bring members together, and also show off these fantastic new models like the Apollo.

"We're very selective about our membership. Obviously you have to own a supercar, but we don't let any owner join. We run background checks, by asking people in their country whether they have a good reputation and making sure they haven't laundered money or obtained their status as owner by questionable means."



Taking the hassle out of annoying little prangs

MINOR prangs are particularly annoying and regardless of how careful a driver is, they can often happen.

Al Haddad Motors has introduced a SMART Repairs service to repair minor damage in a quick and efficient manner at the high standards, it says, owners come to expect from a Mercedes-Benz dealership.

State-of-the-art repair technology is used to fix several types of minor damage caused either by wear and tear,

adverse reactions to the temperature and atmosphere in the region, or small accidents.

"Through the Mercedes-Benz Repair Systems you are able to prolong your Mercedes-Benz durability as minor issues are repaired as soon as they occur minimising the probability of them developing into major issues," a spokesman for Al Haddad Motors said. "Repairing minor damage is now hassle-free and this will not only save a lot of

time, it is also very cost effective."

Repairs are carried out only by Mercedes-Benz certified technicians using the marque's recommended systems, tools and genuine parts. Procedures include dent removal, plastic, chip and scuff repairs and paintwork rejuvenation, as well as maintenance on parts such as wheels and headlamps.

● For more details call the Mercedes-Benz service centre on 17785999.

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Motor Sport

Bahrain International Circuit – the home of motorsport in the Middle East

BAHRAIN International Circuit (BIC) hosted a thrilling fifth round of National Race Day over the weekend, with four different race winners in the three championships that featured out on track.

It was a family affair in the BIC 2,000cc Challenge, as brothers Shaikh Salman bin Isa bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa and Shaikh Hamad bin Isa bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa shared the honours with a win apiece.

Meanwhile, Ahmed Al Muyini and Abdul Samee both dominated their respective series, with Al Muyini claiming a fantastic double in the Bahrain Motorcycle Racing (BMR) 600 and Samee winning both races in the Bahrain Supersport Championship (BSSP) 125.

All the action took place around BIC's 2.55-kilometre inner circuit.

In the 2,000cc Challenge, Shaikh Salman was the early aggressor. Driving his multi-coloured Honda Civic, he topped the timesheet in practice and then captured pole position for Race One with a best lap of 1min 16.947secs, just 0.551secs ahead of Shaikh Hamad, who was driving a white Civic.

With the pair featuring on the front row of the grid, a tight battle ensued but Shaikh Salman did enough to take the chequered flag in a total race time of 19mins 47.328secs over 12 laps.

Shaikh Hamad had to settle for the runner-up spot but was just 0.616secs behind, while Ahmed bin Khanen in a white Honda Civic EG4 came third 5.365secs back. All three were competing

Race Day full of thrills



in the Pro category of the Challenge.

Majed Himmo won the Novice category in his yellow Civic, followed by Giovanni Salerno in a blue Ford Focus and Abdulla Al Gaoud in a red Civic.

Shaikh Hamad registered the race's fastest lap of 1min

17.177secs. In the second sprint, he started from sixth with Shaikh Salman right behind and Salerno on top.

Shaikh Hamad was able to power to the front this time and win a shortened race with an 8.046secs gap ahead of bin Khanen. Tareq Al Tajer, in a red Focus,

came third overall 10.608s from the winner while also completing the Pro class podium. Shaikh Salman was forced to retire from the race five laps in.

Himmo, Salerno and Martyna Al Qassab in a blue Honda Integra DC5 were the top three in the

Novice category. Shaikh Hamad once again clocked the fastest lap with a time of 1min 17.223secs. Meanwhile, Al Muyini and Samee each enjoyed a perfect round, securing first place in each of their sessions from practice to race two while also posting their races' fastest laps.

In the BMR 600, Al Muyini won the first 11-lap sprint from pole in 13mins 01.570secs. Fahad Al Gharabally came second 13.627secs behind, while Ibrahim Alsharida finished third 17.345secs from Al Muyini. In race two,

Al Muyini once again led Al Gharabally to the finish, this time by just 2.127secs. Adel Najjar came third 5.474secs back.

Al Muyini set a fastest lap of 1min 09.835secs in race one and 1min 09.824secs in race two.

In the BSSP 125, Samee claimed his own pole-to-flag victory in race one over eight laps in 13mins 21.397secs. Yusuf Qaed followed 11.394secs back while Shaun Gillespie came third 11.557secs adrift.

Race two featured the same podium with Qaed as the runner-up 8.083secs off the pace. Gillespie finished third 13.214secs back.

Samee had the best lap of 1min 38.256secs in the opening sprint and then followed that up with a 1min 39.154secs time in race two.

After all the action, the winners were presented their trophies in a podium ceremony attended by officials from BIC, the Circuit Racing Club, the Bahrain Motorcycle Club and the Bahrain Motor Federation.

Following this meeting, the season heads into its final two events. Round six is scheduled for March 8 and then the championship finale will be held on April 26.

From Page 1

He purchased a bike knowing little about the sport, and decided to join in both the weekend and Tuesday night rides, which usually cover around 50km to 60km.

He said: "I just decided to take it up on a whim as I needed to pursue a new avenue of exercise. Now I love it, and I have a new circle of friends too."

"This is my first time doing the 300km ride. My previous longest distance was 160km so safe to say this is a mammoth challenge!

It's not for the unprepared or faint-hearted

However, Abdulmohsen has been hugely encouraging of myself and other cyclists, and has belief that we can do it if we try hard enough.

"I'm really looking forward to it ... if not how I'll feel after! With great support from the Tri-Life people and my family and friends around me, I have belief. Bahrain is blessed with high quality riders so it's fantastic to have an event to share our passion on a communal footing."

Treadgold's training has an extra edge to it, after his buddy Angus Campbell, the CEO of the Bahrain Financial Harbour Holding Company, completed the Ironman triathlon in December, as reported in *GulfWeekly*.

As Treadgold puts it ... 'the gauntlet has been well and truly thrown down.'

"Angus has had this over me for a couple of months now, so I have to finish the 300km to tie it up at 1-1. In March,

we're both racing in South Africa so it'll be all to race for there ... I'm competitive so I can't let him win!

"I've really stepped up my training in preparation. I've been pushing 120-130km on the weekends and putting miles in the legs. I have an indoor bike trainer I use at home, which keeps the muscles active."

"I believe that with my determination not to fail, the adrenaline and my training, I



can make it. I think my legs have the distance in them, I just need to make sure to keep my focus and ignore the discomforts of the saddle!"

Treadgold also expressed his thanks to all of the Tri-Life cyclists, particularly Eric Caes, who has been a great help in teaching him to ride within a peloton,

Michael 'MG' Gilliam for his tutoring and belief, and Bryce McGloughlin, a good friend with many years of experience to share.

He also praised the Sabeel Sunday Night Giants, an all-Bahraini group he joined, the Tuesday night ride team, the Friday San Pellingrigo Pedallers, and the Saturday Tri-Life ride team for helping him become a better cyclist.

● If anyone is interested in taking part in the event, call the Tri-Life shop on 77333737 or get in touch via Instagram @gotrilife

England show their mettle

VOICE OF SPORT
with Kristian Harrison

A resurgent England upset Six Nations champions Ireland on Saturday, handing Joe Schmidt a first ever home defeat in the championship with a resounding 32-20 victory that blew the tournament wide open at the first weekend.

England made a sensational start and rarely looked back, stunning the hosts with a fine Jonny May try after just 90 seconds before brushing off a reply from Cian Healy to force a raft of errors, one of them gifting Elliot Daly a second try.

Johnny Sexton cut the deficit back to four points in the second half but the mistakes kept coming for Ireland as their more ruthless opponents went for the jugular 14 minutes from time with Henry Slade touching down a perfectly weighted May kick.

Slade intercepted a Sexton pass for his second try to end Irish dreams of back-to-back grand slams at the first hurdle with a thud that a John Cooney consolation try did little to dampen.

We've been waiting a long time for the real England to show up under coach Eddie Jones.

Three years into his reign, this felt like the first good look at the side Jones has been dreaming about, the one he had always imagined he would pick when everybody was fit, the one he's been whipping and hounding his players in training for, the one that, he believes, can win the World Cup for him later this year.

They are an ugly bunch, nasty, brutish and sharp, a pack of burly bullies with a couple of whippet-quick sidekicks making mischief around the fringes. They have the strength to beat you one way, the speed to beat you the other, and they will be hell for everyone except their own fans.

Manu Tuilagi, in the starting XV for the first time since 2014 under Stuart Lancaster, felt like the missing piece of the jigsaw Jones had finally found underneath the sofa cushions. He is a talismanic player, a rock for all those fast-running backs to flow around. Jones has picked 17 men in the centre since he took on the England job but he is only now able to start Tuilagi, the one you suspect he has always wanted to have there.

The little-and-large centre pairing with Henry Slade is one Jones will stick with. "That's just the start for him," Jones said afterwards.

Of course, it wasn't all so slick and smooth. England played some rough stuff in the rest of the first half, when it felt as if there was a danger their indiscipline would undo them. It felt as if England were playing right on the edge, just as New Zealand did when they beat Ireland in Dublin in 2016. Joe Schmidt made that same comparison after the match.

"We got man-handled a little bit," said Schmidt. "It's not too dissimilar to the All Blacks here a couple of years ago when we got beaten up and we got beaten up again today."

At half-time, England were

17-10 up, a good omen. The last five times Ireland had lost, they had been behind at half-time. And the flipside of that particular statistic is that they had been behind at half-time only five times in that run, too, losing every one. Five duly became six. It always felt as though England were holding on to control.

Ireland simply did not have the strength in them to wrest back the match. England just kept pouring it on with more power, more power, more power.

In the end, the match finished up being the one thing no one had predicted: an English rout.

This was it, then, the signature performance England needed, a statement of intent at the start of the World Cup year.

It was their first match of 2019 and it will likely be the most important they play

till the last comes around, sometime, someplace, in Japan in the autumn. Because it was proof England have a game that can beat the best team in the northern hemisphere on their home turf, something even

New Zealand failed to do the last time they tried.

And if England can do that, then they, and everyone else, will know they can do plenty else, too. "We're a team that's still growing," Jones said. "We're nowhere near our best."

It's far too early to be talking about a Grand Slam yet, but this is England's 'good year' where they play three home games and just two away. France, Italy and Scotland at Twickenham should be winnable, with the mouth-watering clash in Wales likely to be the next true acid test.

On this form, no one will be betting against them.



TRY TIME: England score a try against Ireland and, below, a delighted Jones



BAHRAIN'S young stars enjoyed a golden moment despite thinking they would miss out on glory because extra time played meant they had to rush to the airport to avoid missing the flight back home.

A combined U9/U10 team enjoyed an unbeaten path to the final of the HSBC Dubai Junior Rugby Tournament and faced Dubai Tigers who they had already beaten during the pool matches.

The concluding game was a much tighter affair and at full time the score was 7-7.

Golden glory despite the rush back home

Extra time was played but neither side could score and even with a five-minute 'golden try' face-off no one could muster any more points on the scoreboard.

Unfortunately, Bahrain had to forfeit the game due to check-in time fast approaching. The travelling party made it to the airport by the skin of their teeth.

On paper, the trophy went to the Dubai Tigers. The players and supporting



parents alike were naturally disappointed but they left feeling like champions as the organisers ensured the players were awarded gold medals too!

The club's Under 11 and Under 12 groups also participated as a combined Under 12 team at the festival. They destroyed Abu Dhabi Quins 14-5, beat Dubai Tigers 5-12 and were also victorious against old rivals Muscat Pirates 17-7 before coming unstuck against GEMS Silicon Oasis School 10-7. They met them again in the group final narrowly going down 15-12 at the final whistle.



SPORTING JOURNEY: The Bahrain Rugby Football Club players

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Gulf Weekly SPORT



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TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL SPORT

February 6 - 12, 2019

PUSHING THE LIMITS

BAHRAIN'S cycling enthusiasts are gearing up to take part in the kingdom's most gruelling social event – a 300km ride around the island.

The Tri-Life Bahrain Club 300 will take place on February 23, kicking off bright and early at 5am with an estimated time of 10 hours to be spent on the saddle.

The event has been organised by Abdulmohsen Alghosaibi, the owner of Tri-Life, a bike and fitness shop which opened in Sakhir four years ago and was one of the catalysts in push-starting an interest in the sport which has since gripped the island.

Alghosaibi said: "We decided as a group two years ago to do a 300km challenge, since we felt there weren't many events or exciting challenges specifically geared towards cycling.

"It's now known as the Tri-Life Bahrain Club 300 and originally, members could join by showing their endurance accomplishments from phone app *Strava*. From their records, we could judge if they were ready for the challenge.

"A 300km ride is extremely challenging, but considering Bahrain's size it's a fantastic experience, being able to take up almost the entirety of this beautiful country with fantastic terrain.

"This is the third iteration of the ride, and we've decided to announce it a bit earlier this year to pique interest and shape the event. It is open to anybody who feels like they are fit enough; they don't



ENDURANCE REPORT
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

have to be existing members or even ride regularly with us."

The event is self-sufficient, however, so while there will be a support vehicle for medical emergencies, riders won't be allowed to use it for transport if they get exhausted.

There will be stops along the way to take on board food and fluids. The route has not yet been finalised, but last year's event started in Sakhir, before encompassing areas such as Zallaq, Durrat, Riffa Views, Hamala, Diyar Al Muharraq, Amwaj Islands, Juffair and back to the Tri-Life shop.

This year, the riders will also stop at the shop at around the 200km mark, should anyone who wants to take part not be able to carry on for the final push.

Currently, Alghosaibi anticipates approximately 30 riders will take part, keeping a pace of 30km an hour, although this will likely dip as

fatigue creeps in.

"I really want to stress that this is a supportive and communal ride," he said.

"There's no race element at all; the very ethos of the event was to increase cycling culture and endurance, not push the competitive element as there are plenty of other places for that.

"We have rides on a weekly basis, every Saturday morning, which are free of charge. We use these rides to build leg miles and endurance. I want to be clear that 300km is a huge distance, so you can't just expect to turn up as a casual cyclist and complete it!

"Ultimately, the goal of Tri-Life is to encourage people to enjoy living, take up sports and become healthier in mind and body."

One of those taking part for the first time will be businessman Fran Treadgold, who took up cycling three years ago after injury forced him to give up his favourite pastime, squash.

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Photograph: Honey Sharma

RIDING HIGH: Alghosaibi and, left, Treadgold during a cycling trip to South Africa

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