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RAMADAN KAREEM!

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ART REPORT

By NAMAN ARORA
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BAHRAINI artist Khalid AlAbbas's award-winning installation *Telling Time* takes viewers on a journey through a lifetime, as seen by a mundane daily relic – the toilet wash basin.

Now on show at the National Museum as part of the Bahrain Annual Fine Arts Exhibition, Khalid's piece won the Al Riwaq Prize, marking both an arrival and a new beginning for the 25-year-old artist.

"As an artist, you start by seeking art for the sake of art," he told *Gulf Weekly*.

"But after a long time of dedication, receiving recognition from professionals in the field truly means a lot."

His winning installation unfolds across two parallel domestic scenes, each centred on a hand wash basin and medicine cabinet.

On the surface, the objects are familiar, but a closer look reveals an entire lifetime.

The first installation captures the energy of a young family – makeup, grooming products and baby items all gathered around a clean basin, forming a vibrant tableau of shared space and new beginnings.

The second scene tells a more solitary and rusted story where the basin is worn and visibly aged. The cabinet is crowded with medicine, accompanied by items such as dentures.

This is later life, stripped back to essentials, where care becomes inward and the domestic space belongs to one.

"I've always appreciated the items I own," Khalid explained.

"I've been privileged to see things my grandmother and grandfather used, like old cameras and photographs.

"Those objects carry time within them. They hold stories."

Life through daily rituals



TELLING TIME: Khalid with his installation



AGEING: A closer look at the details in the older man's washbasin

That sense of inheritance became more personal in 2025, when he got engaged. "What amazed me was how the items of two people

come together, get shared, and create something new with vibrant colours," he added.

"That directly inspired the first part of the installation.

"The objects show how a young family cares for themselves and their children."

The second installation, by contrast, leans heavily into metaphor.

Medicine and dentures stand in for ageing, while the absence of family items underscores isolation.

"The cabinet belongs to a single old man," he noted.

"It reflects a later stage of

life, when you are alone."

Though themes of time and decay have long fascinated artists, Khalid wanted to approach them from a fresh angle.

The decay of time has always been a muse for him and his attachment to objects revealed the idea naturally. Technically, *Telling Time* bridges painting and installation.

Two layers of glass are framed together with a narrow gap between them, each painted separately in acrylic to form a three-dimensional medicine cabinet.

I've been privileged to see things my grandmother and grandfather used, like old cameras and photographs. Those objects carry time within them. They hold stories.

The technique allows viewers to see both brushstrokes and depth, merging realism with painted texture.

"I am a painter before anything else, and this is my first installation," he explained.

"So I wanted the painter side to be present. The layered glass gives a 3D effect while still showing the hand of the artist."

The basins themselves are also treated as painted surfaces, with carefully arranged daily-use items rendered to feel as though they have stepped out of a canvas.

The first remains clean and new, the second deliberately aged, visually mapping the passage of time.

"When I look at items my grandparents used to own, I feel fulfilled, like I can tell a story that belongs to me, but not really," the artist, who works in the reinsurance industry, added.

"Not many people have that privilege. I want to preserve the same thing for my children, grandchildren, and their children too."

"Time, to me, is a story I want to freeze into a frame for those who come after us."

"I want people to pause."

"To look at what they have around them, and who they have around them. To appreciate the time they are in, and feel thankful for what they have."



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From Bahrain to bestseller



BOOK REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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FORMER Bahrain resident Maria Steene is transforming lives as an internationally-certified breakup and divorce coach, empowered by her personal journey of love and loss.

The English expatriate, who lived and worked in the kingdom for 15 years, went through a devastating divorce and, three years ago, decided to return to the UK.

While there, she came across *Heartbreak to Happiness* – a podcast by Sara Davidson, who is a world-renowned expert on breakups, divorce, and domestic abuse. Known globally as ‘The Divorce Coach’, Sara founded The International Divorce Coach Centre of Excellence in 2018. She is a four-time bestselling author of books like *Uncoupling* and *The Split*.

Initially, Maria signed up to become a coach while navigating her own healing journey. As she delved deeper into the material, she found that the subject matter resonated with her ongoing interest in researching the psychology behind specific life-partner behaviours.

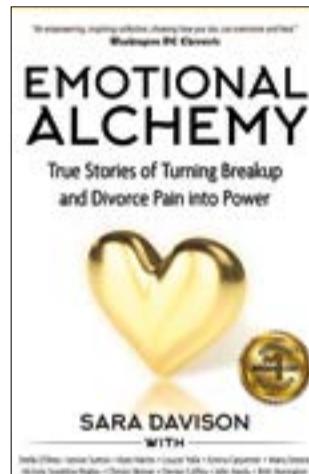
Divorce and breakup coaching is specialised, forward-focused support for individuals dealing with the emotional, practical, and legal complexities of a relationship ending. While the concept has been around since the 1990s, it has rapidly risen in popularity during the 2020s.

“I returned to the UK with more than suitcases and memories,” the Briton from Hastings, East Sussex, told *GulfWeekly*.

“I carried lived experience of one of my life’s most destabilising transitions: navigating relationship breakdown as an expat thousands of miles from home,” she added.

“When I trained with Sara, I realised that my lived experience, combined with structured coaching tools and strategies, meant I could support others in a deeply authentic way.”

After 25 years in the education sector, Maria



POWERFUL: The book cover

decided to pursue a career as a divorce and breakup coach full time and has been practicing for the last five years.

What sets her apart is that she draws from both lived experience and practical expertise for her consultations, which can be booked in-person or online. Unlike traditional couples counselling, Maria works individually and privately with clients, focusing on emotional resilience, clarity, empowerment and forward planning.

While she helps with navigating separation and divorce, infidelity in relationships and toxic or abusive relationships, she also consults those who want to explore the possibility of saving their relationship. Additionally, she is a trained toxic relationship and domestic abuse recovery specialist, and facilitates



COACH: Maria

exclusive small-group retreats.

If needed, she refers clients to legal or financial professionals as well.

Marking the culmination of her career as a coach, Maria published her chapter entitled ‘From Expat Heartbreak to Global Impact’, as part of an anthology last month.

Emotional Alchemy features the transformational journeys of 17 authors, who are all break up and divorce coaches

trained by Sara.

The 175-page book is now a number-one *Amazon* international bestseller and offers practical guidance, with each story revealing how personal transformation can spark strength, clarity and hope.

Maria’s story touches upon her experience being far away from family during a separation. She believes this can be doubly challenging. Expats going through a breakup or divorce risk stability in terms of their job, residency status and financial stability, among other things. According to her, many expat couples remain in broken relationships ‘for the sake of the children’ – and for the lifestyle.

The digital e-book format is now available on *Amazon*, with the digital flip book, hardback and paperback editions set to be launched soon.

“Now that I’ve established myself fully in the UK, I am in a strong position to extend my busy UK online coaching services to welcome in clients from Bahrain and across the wider Middle East,” she said, talking of near future goals.

Visit mariasteene.com for more details.

Tips for expats facing separation

- **Build a trusted support team immediately:** Isolation intensifies emotional distress. Seek safe, trusted allies early.
- **Secure important documents:** Gather passports, financial statements, property ownership papers, insurance policies, and birth and marriage certificates.
- **Protect your physical energy:** Eat nutritious food, hydrate regularly, prioritise sleep, and pace yourself.
- **Understand the grief cycle:** Relationship loss mirrors bereavement. Anger, sadness, denial, depression – all are normal emotions, particularly exacerbated when abroad, and feelings of being overwhelmed can additionally become heightened.
- **Take daily mindset time-outs:** Breathwork, walking outdoors, meditation, and gentle movement can stabilise ‘emotional overwhelm’.

GET together with your family and friends to enjoy some of the English language films being shown at CINECO Seef this weekend.

CRIME 101 (PG-15)

Set against the sun-bleached grit of Los Angeles, *Crime 101* weaves the tale of an elusive jewel thief whose string of heists have mystified police.

Actors: Chris Hemsworth, Mark Ruffalo, Barry Keoghan

Timings: 11.30am, 2.30pm, 5.30pm, 8.30pm, 11.30pm

WUTHERING HEIGHTS (18+)

A bold and original imaging of one of the greatest love stories of all time, *Wuthering Heights* stars Margot Robbie as Cathy and Jacob Elordi as Heathcliff, whose forbidden passion for one another turns from romantic to intoxicating in an epic tale of lust and madness.

Actors: Margot Robbie, Jacob Elordi

Timings: 12.30pm, 3.15pm, 6pm, 8.45pm, 11.30pm



Margot Robbie



THE HOUSEMAID (18+)

A struggling young woman is relieved by the chance for a fresh start as a maid for a wealthy couple. Soon, she discovers that the family’s secrets are far more dangerous than her own.

Actors: Sydney Sweeney, Amanda Seyfried, Brandon Sklenar

Timings: 12.30pm,

Check out GDNOnline’s list of the best movies to watch this weekend on Instagram.)

BRAIN-BUSTERS

Quizmaster and Radio Bahrain host Shannon Crockett, who has been entertaining people across the island with his brain-teasing quiz night sessions, has offered to put *GulfWeekly* readers’ general knowledge to the test. Join in the fun every Thursday with Shannon’s seven brain-busters.



1) Which TV series features a famous purple apartment door?

2) What term for the poisonous secretion of a snake originates from the Latin word for poison?

3) Which country adopted the euro on January 1, 2026?

4) What was the band Queen’s first hit single in 1974?

5) What is the star space in the middle of a Scrabble board called?

6) As well as being called ‘the morning’, what other name is

given to the period of time before midday?

7) What kind of liquid has sometimes been used in emergencies as a substitute for blood plasma?

7. Coconut water

6. Greenoan Square

5. Double Rye

4. Seven Seas or Rye

3. Bulgaria

2. Venom

1. Friends

ANSWERS



GOURMET REPORT
By MELISSA NAZARETH
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HILTON Bahrain's iconic Ramadan tent – The Dome – is back for a second year. Only this time, it is better. I was thrilled to visit the breathtaking seaside venue, near Al Najma Club in Manama, and found it to be accessible, with ample parking space.

It was night time when I arrived but I can only imagine what The Dome would look like framed by the tranquil waters and Bahrain's mesmerising sunset skies casting a golden glow behind it – truly enchanting! The nice people at Hilton Bahrain warmly welcomed my companions and me through the magical, illuminated archway leading onto the tent. On entering, the dim-lit interior was a vibe in itself but adding to it were the soulful, stringsy Arabian tunes played live by a musician.

As we sipped on warm, aromatic gahwa, I admired the décor – minimalist yet classy. Ramadanesque embellishments like lanterns, crescent moons and stars adorned the high 'roof'.

Seating was intimate, nodding to the community spirit of Ramadan while still offering privacy. The Dome is a great venue for medium-to-large private gatherings or even corporate events. There is a small outdoor section for those who want to enjoy the cool sea breeze.

Now, there cannot be a Ramadan gathering without a sumptuous feast. The Dome has an exquisite, diverse spread cooked using the finest ingredients. A lot of it is sourced from Dar Aqua – Bahrain's first aquaponic farm.

I toured the buffet, which featured an eclectic mix of traditional favourites, like prawn machboos and lamb ouzi, and modern spins on rustic creations, like a whole-fried hammour with crispy potato wedges and roast carrots. There were international dishes as well, including Indian biryani, Chinese Kung Pao chicken and Italian pasta, catering to a wide



FLAVOURFUL: Ouzi

STAR-LIT FEAST

TREAT: A part of the dessert station



FULL HOUSE: Guests enjoying the ambience



audience.

I was happy to catch up on all of my favourite Arabic foods. In the appetisers, I devoured a couple of meat kibbehs. Biting into the crunchy shell and tasting the juicy minced lamb was heavenly. The meat samboosa was equally delicious.

Balancing the fried foods were a variety of salads and cold mezze. I dolloped the usual suspects like hummus and baba ghanoush onto my plate, as well as a chicken-and-pineapple creation, with sweet and savoury flavours.

Grilled meats included shish tawouk and lamb kofta, which were being

freshly barbecued outside. I recommend getting some right off the grill. They were beautifully cooked, buttery and oh so succulent!

Speaking of live counters, there are shawarma and pasta stations too. However, I had to ration my appetite for the mains and then desserts so I decided I would revisit for



ON A ROLL: Sushi station at The Dome

Hilton Bahrain has launched Sawani, a ready-to-cook package. It comes with any protein of your choice combined with all the ingredients and spices so, you can just toss it into the oven and experience Ramadan dining in the comfort of your home.

more.

Around this time, an Egyptian tanoura performance commenced and guests were wowed by the skill on display.

Admiring the class act, I headed to the lamb ouzi, which I have no words to describe. Call me dramatic but how many times have you attended events where the ouzi – typically the star of the table at most Arab gatherings – has fallen short? Not at The Dome! The expert chefs at Hilton Bahrain flourished their spatulas to conjure one of the lushest ouzis I have ever eaten.

The rice was cooked just right and slicked with all the flavours from the fatty protein rendered to perfection. The aromatics were on point, not overpowering the meatiness but playing the supporting act to the hero – the lamb – which was falling off the bone. Even the server had to balance it on the spoon lest it slid off – and it did – more than once.

The ouzi was the finale to my experience but there was so much more ground to cover so I trudged on. I could not miss the hammour, flaky and embodying the goodness of the sea. Other traditional dishes I tried were the harees, a cracked wheat and meat porridge, and kousa mahshi, baby marrow stuffed with minced meat. Both were delicious.

Even though there is a lot of food on offer, Hilton's Green Ramadan initiative, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme West Asia, Winnow and Goumbook, ensures there is minimal food waste.

The hotel also supports needy families along with Bahrain Food Bank. Hilton Bahrain, take a bow!

The dessert counter at The Dome is equally extensive but I stuck to the humble luqaimat – golden fried dough balls steeped in sugar syrup.

My companions ate a decadent chocolate pudding, which I was told is a Hilton Bahrain signature creation. Well, I suppose I will have to wait for my next experience at The Dome to tuck into that gooey goodness.

For iftar and ghabga bookings and more information on group rates, call 33692013 or 77010100.



SOULFUL: Live music and entertainment at the event



A JOURNEY THROUGH TRADITION AT THE RITZ-CARLTON

CELEBRATE the magic of Ramadan with an extraordinary lineup of unforgettable events at The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain.

The hotel presents Layali Al Noor, its newly unveiled grand Ramadan tent, where the kingdom's rich cultural heritage meets contemporary luxury in a breathtaking setting.

Inspired by the island's land, sea and natural beauty, the space features layered greenery, natural textures and intricate architectural details, creating an atmosphere of warmth, serenity and understated elegance.

In partnership with the Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait and CrediMax, Layali Al Noor accommodates more than 55 food stations across five distinct venues, offering the perfect setting for both intimate family iftars and grand

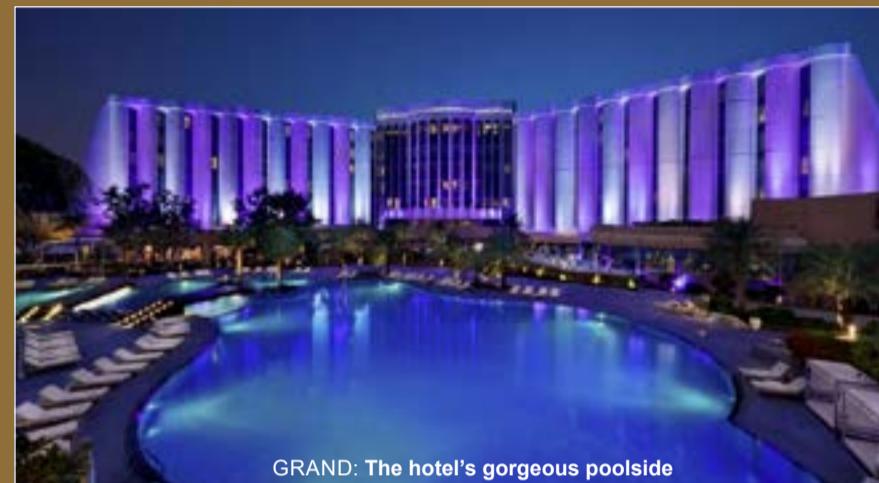
corporate ghabga gatherings.

Guests can enjoy iftar from sunset until 8pm, priced at BD38 per person, followed by ghabga from 9pm to 2am at BD42 per person, from Saturday through Wednesday.

On Thursday and Friday, iftar is available from sunset to 8pm at BD42 per person, with ghabga from 9pm to 2am at BD44 per person.

Children aged six to 12 enjoy the event at BD16net, while those under six dine for free.

Bring the spirit of the holy month home with the hotel's Ramadan Takeaway, featuring a generous selection of seasonal favourites. Orders must be placed at least 24 hours in advance. Various packages are available, with one option serving four people for BD80 and another serving two for BD45.



GRAND: The hotel's gorgeous poolside

Break your fast with Shan E Iftar, an Indian family-style menu at Plums. It features slow-cooked specialities, fragrant rice dishes and more, available from Tuesday to Sunday, sunset to 8pm, priced at BD19 per person, including a lassi.

Enhance your Ramadan experience with a staycation at the hotel. Begin the evening with a luxurious

room, then gather with family and friends at Layali Al Noor to enjoy an unforgettable iftar or ghabga. Available from February 21, rates start from BD175net per room, per night, subject to availability at the time of booking.

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



MAGICAL NIGHTS

EXPERIENCE the enchantment of Ramadan at The Dome at Hilton Bahrain.

Nestled against serene waters and the shimmering city skyline, with sunsets casting a warm golden glow, The Dome provides a magical setting for families, friends, and colleagues to come together and celebrate the spirit of the holy month.

Guests can look forward to iftar and ghabga offerings that feature authentic Bahraini Ramadan favourites alongside delicious international dishes. Priced at BD28net, with special group rates available, The Dome welcomes corporate gatherings, family groups, or friends celebrating together, making it an ideal destination for shared experiences. It costs BD14net for children aged six to 12 while those under six dine for free.

Live entertainment will also be held, enhancing each evening and creating a magical and immersive Ramadan experience for all.

The Dome is also hosting a Ladies' Ghabga Night, offering 50 per cent off every Sunday and Tuesday, from 9.30pm to 1am.

Meanwhile, Lamar, the



DECADENT: Dessert counter

hotel's gorgeous café and bakery, will operate on special Ramadan hours, welcoming guests from sunset until midnight.

Lamar, the hotel's gorgeous café and bakery, will also remain open for Ramadan timings, from sunset to midnight.

For more information, contact 33692013.

DIVERSE FLAVOURS TO SAVOUR

THE Amriya Group, operator of a distinguished portfolio of restaurants, has curated a series of Ramadan offerings designed to celebrate the spirit of the holy month.

This season, The Orangery presents a thoughtfully curated selection of favourites and artisanal hampers, created to bring families and loved ones together around meaningful shared moments.

Guests can gather for iftar in an atmosphere of calm reflection, with a set menu available from sunset to 8pm at BD19 per person. Complimentary gahwa is served from 6pm to 8pm, while post-iftar dining continues a la carte from 8pm onwards. Reservations can be made by calling 17369696.

For late-night gatherings, The Secret Lounge introduces a range of seasonal Ramadan mocktails, available



GOODIES: Ramadan hamper

from 8pm to 2am. A gentle Ramadan playlist enhances the ambience, complemented by live harp performances daily from 9pm to midnight. Reservations can be made by calling 17369696.

Corporate bookings, private events, and catering are also available at The Secret Garden, which offers a lush and intimate setting for corporate iftar and ghabga occasions. Each event is tailored to individual preferences, featuring customisable menus, seamless service, and meticulous attention to detail.

Bookings can be arranged by contacting 38855117.

GHABGA: An experience for the entire family



WORLD'S BEST ON YOUR PLATTER

INTERCONTINENTAL Bahrain invites guests to its Regency Tent where a series of specially curated experiences will make the holy month truly memorable.

Guests can break their fast with an exquisite culinary journey at the iftar event, enjoying a lavish buffet, live cooking stations, traditional favourites and international selections, all set in an elegant ambience enhanced by the soft melodies of live Arabic strings.

It costs BD28net per guest, with children aged six to 12 receiving a 50 per cent off and those under six dining

for free.

For those seeking a relaxed late-night gathering, the hotel offers a rich ghabga buffet, featuring a wide array of traditional and international dishes prepared by expert chefs to satisfy every taste.

Available from 9.30pm to 1am, this experience costs BD22net per guest, with children aged six to 12 receiving 50pc off. Children under six dine for free.

Guests visiting during the first week of Ramadan can also enjoy a special 50pc early-bird discount on both iftar and ghabga.

The Regency Tent will host an exclusive offer for



SCRUMPTIOUS:
Takeaway to
enjoy at home



ladies every Monday.
Visitors can enjoy the
cherished Ramadan tradition
of gergaoun at the hotel. It will
feature a festive buffet, sweets,
lively music, and a specially
curated children's programme
with henna art, a best-dressed
gergaoun competition, and
entertaining characters.

The event will be held on the
15th night of Ramadan, with
children aged six to 12 receiving
a 50pc discount and those
under six dining for free.

Noor Lounge complements
these celebrations with a
selection of Ramadan goodies,
hampers and cakes, offering a
50pc discount daily from 6pm
to 11pm.

For more information and
reservations, call 36967701.

TAJ RAMADAN TENT BY SHERATON BAHRAIN HOTEL

STEP into a spectacular Ramadan journey inspired by the richness of Arabic heritage and the warmth of true hospitality at the Sheraton Bahrain Hotel's Al Taj Ramadan Tent.

Indulge in exceptional iftar and ghabga buffets featuring an abundant spread of authentic Arabic cuisine, where every evening becomes a celebration of culture and flavour.

From fragrant rice dishes and slow-cooked lamb specialties to traditional Gulf favourites, handcrafted mezze, freshly baked Arabic breads, live cooking stations, and charcoal-grilled classics, there is something to delight every palate.

Prepared live by Chef Hassani, Persian specialty chef at Golestan Persian Grill, his mastery of traditional flavours and refined technique adds depth, authenticity, and culinary distinction to the Ramadan experience at Al Taj.

Highlights include aromatic Arabic soups, vibrant salads, and an indulgent selection of traditional Middle Eastern desserts infused with pistachio, saffron, and rose.

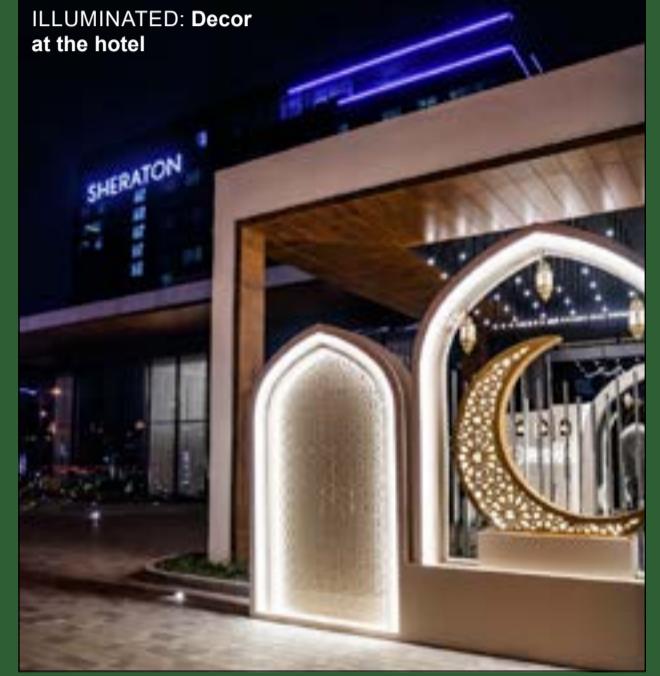
With live cooking stations, traditional entertainment, and a warm, immersive Ramadan ambience, the experience is further enhanced by elegant indoor seating, a refined outdoor terrace, and luxurious sofa lounge settings that invite relaxation.

Traditional games and captivating live performances elevate the atmosphere into a truly engaging social experience, creating a setting families will return to throughout the holy month.

Iftar is pried at BD23 plus taxes from sunset to 8pm while ghabga is available at BD25 plus taxes from 9.30pm to 2am.

For bookings, contact 17533533 or 38885413 or email dining.bahsi@sheraton.com.

ILLUMINATED: Decor at the hotel



HERITAGE TAKES CENTRE STAGE

STUNNING: View at Hawar Resort by Mantis

EMBRACE the spirit of the holy month with a serene retreat at Hawar Resort by Mantis, where peace, reflection and relaxation define the Ramadan experience.

Room rates start from BD80, while villa stays begin from BD90, offering a tranquil escape surrounded by nature. Guests can enjoy iftar and suhoor at Bahri Restaurant, where togetherness and cherished traditions take centre stage.

Bahri is open from Saturday to Wednesday for iftar from sunset to 8pm at BD22 per person, followed by ghabga from 9pm to 11pm at BD18 per person.

On Thursdays and Fridays, C-Salt

Restaurant hosts iftar from sunset to 8pm at BD22 per person, with a special rate of BD15 for ladies. Ghabga is also available from 9pm to midnight at BD18 per person.

For a truly memorable experience, guests can step into Jalsat Ramadan under the stars, an exclusive evening featuring exquisite flavours in a serene beachfront setting. The Bedouin tent can be arranged upon request for a minimum of 20 guests for iftar and ghabga, while a beach lounge front option is available for larger gatherings of at least 50 people.

Book your stay by calling 32183610 or emailing reservations@hawarresort.com.

A FEAST BEYOND COMPARE!

THE Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay invites guests to celebrate a spectacular Ramadan experience at its iconic Ramadan Tent this month.

This year's setting features an enhanced design with expansive spaces in emerald green and soft gold tones, adorned with intricate Arabic-Islamic patterns, creating a truly captivating ambience.

Guests can indulge in an abundant buffet and live stations offering Bahraini favourites such as lamb ouzi and machboos, alongside a variety of other Arabic and international dishes.

Highlights include a lamb mansaf station, fresh mezze, shawarma and saj specialities. Sweet cravings are catered to with a selection of desserts, including a

Transylvanian chimney cake station, teppanyaki ice cream, cheese kunafa, Bahraini halwa and more.

During ghabga, live performances by members of the Cairo Opera House will create a vibrant and immersive atmosphere, while younger guests enjoy a dedicated children's programme led by the hotel's club team.

Iftar is served from sunset to 8pm at BD38 per person, inclusive of water, juices, Arabic coffee and tea. Children aged six to 12 dine for BD22, and those under six dine for free.

Ghabga takes place from 9pm to 2am, Saturday to Wednesday, in the Ramadan Tent and Ballroom at BD42 per person. On Thursday and Friday,



ELEVATED: Premium experience for guests

the tent section is available at BD46 per person, including juices. Children aged six to 12 are charged BD22, while those under six dine for free.

For elevated dining, the hotel offers the Premium Experience, featuring exclusive service with a full table of the finest mezze and mains, plus the option to select additional dishes from the buffet. This special experience also includes full table service, elegant tableware, and thoughtfully designed set menus, available daily from 9pm to 2am.

Pricing is BD55 per person for groups of four or more, with a minimum charge of BD220 for groups of three or fewer.

For more information and bookings, call 17115000.

RAMADAN PASS AWAITS

THE British Club Bahrain has launched a special Ramadan Pass for residents aged 18 and above, offering access throughout the holy month.

The pass is priced at BD60 and is for individual use only, as holders are not permitted to sign in as guests.

For more information, contact 17728245.

Pulse of Pop



AROUND THE WORLD IN MUSIC, TV, BOOKS AND MORE - BY RIMA ALHADDAD



BESTIES: The series' poster

BACK TO SCHOOL

IRISH television series *How to Get to Heaven from Belfast* is out now on Netflix.

Starring Roisin Gallagher as Saoirse, Sinéad Keenan as Robyn, and Caoilfhionn Dunne as Dara, the comedy thriller follows the three long-time friends, who are in their late 30s.

Together, they investigate the mysterious death of a former school mate and estranged fourth member of their childhood gang.

The show's creator, Lisa McGee, who also produced

teen sitcom *Derry Girls* (2018 to 2022), describes her new project as an Irish odyssey full of twists and turns.

"This is the show I've always wanted to make – a mash-up of my two favourite genres – mystery and comedy," Lisa said in an interview.

"We want to keep you guessing and keep you laughing. I can't wait for you to meet Saoirse, Robyn and Dara, and go on this wild, weird adventure with them," she added.

The Irish playwright and screenwriter shared that the eight-part series takes inspiration from a creepy experience she had, and that the character Saoirse is based on her, while Robyn and Dara are based on her real-life friends.

"My old school moved buildings and the old one which had been a convent was left empty. I'd heard this was now a place where ghost hunters go and asked my husband to drive me. It looked like a zombie apocalypse. I was walking

down a path all overgrown and I just had this feeling I was going to bump into myself as a teenager. I remember thinking, 'Well, that's quite a cool, creepy idea'."

This is not the first time Lisa has incorporated parts of her life into her work; *Derry Girls* was also based on her teenage years.

It ran for three seasons, earned critical acclaim, and a number of awards including an Emmy in 2023 for best comedy series.

NAVIGATING GRIEF

HISTORICAL fiction novel *Where the Wildflowers Grow* by Terah Harris has hit the shelves.

The story tackles Leigh, the sole survivor of a prison transport bus crash, who finds refuge at a rural Alabama floral farm.

There she meets the farm's owner, Jackson.

The two form a bond and he offers her small moments of tenderness, encouraging her to face her own tragedies. However, Leigh learns that she cannot easily bury the past and in order to heal she must face her



MELANCHOLIC: Terah

hidden secrets.

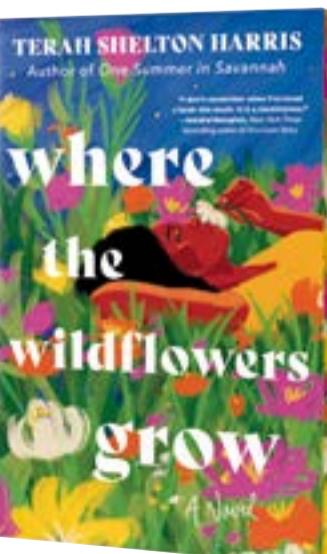
"Grief was the seed that grew *Where the Wildflowers Grow*," Terah said.

"In both of my previous

books, grief has been quietly present. I realised I'd been circling the topic without fully confronting it because I wasn't ready to sit with its messiest truths. So I decided to tackle it head-on," the author added.

The former librarian previously wrote *One Summer in Savannah* (2023) and *Long After We Are Gone* (2024).

"I wanted to go deeper and peel back the layers of grief, the discomfort, the confusion, the sorrow that doesn't fit neatly into a box.



I wanted to give a voice to the parts that are often left unspoken. Grief isn't just about loss; it's about the messiness of emotions that don't have clear boundaries," she noted.

INTROSPECTIVE TUNES



STAR: Hykeem winning best rap performance for *Family Ties* in 2022

AMERICAN rapper Hykeem Carter Jr, professionally called Baby Keem, drops his second album *Ca\$ino* tomorrow.

Following up his 2021 project *The Melodic Blue*, the ensemble's surprise announcement came on February 10. It was followed by a YouTube release titled *Booman, Casino Documentary*,

which featured clips of him in the studio.

It also showcased home videos and interviews with his family, including his frequent collaborator and cousin, Kendrick Lamar. The duo can be heard together on songs, including the Grammy-winning tracks *Family Ties*, *Range Brothers* and standalone single *The Hillbillies*.

Keem can also be heard across Kendrick's latest *Mr Morale and The Big Steppers* (2022), which intimately tackles family struggles and generational trauma.

"I understood the hardship before he was born, just the history of

our family in general," Kendrick said in the trailer.

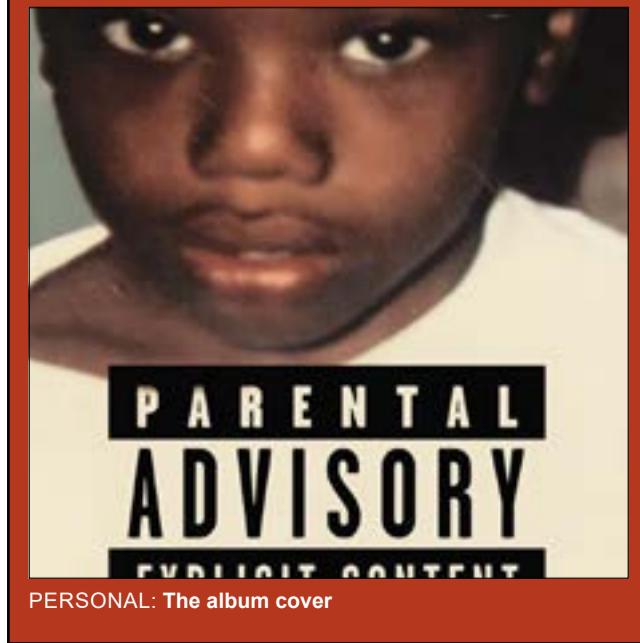
"We don't call ourselves 'the hillbillies' for nothing. This is a story of a warfare environment and a warfare, psychologically, to try and change our generational curses," he added.

The nearly ten-minute clip ends with a snippet of a new collaboration titled *Good Flirts*.

While little has been revealed about *Ca\$ino*, the documentary and album artwork that features a baby photo of the rapper imply a personal focus.

A listening party is set to stream live on Baby Keem's YouTube channel tomorrow at 7am Bahrain time.

The 25-year-old artist gained recognition in the late 2010s for his contributions to Marvel's *Black Panther* (2018) soundtrack, and later as a lead artist for his 2019 sleeper hit single *Orange Soda*, which received a quadruple platinum certification by the Recording Industry Association of America.



PERSONAL: The album cover

Motoring Weekly

The top motoring and motorsport news

Back on track!

Formula 1 fans from the kingdom and across the world will be rolling into the Bahrain International Circuit today and tomorrow for the second and final pre-season test before this year's championship gets underway, writes Naman Arora. Here are the key takeaways from last week's testing and all you need to know as teams make their way to the circuit armed with reams of data, as well as bruised egos in some garages, and quiet confidence in others.

RED BULL POWER

THE standout talking point was the performance of Red Bull Racing's new Ford-backed powertrain.

Rivals noticed its ability to deploy energy for longer on the straights, giving it a visible edge in top-end speed.

George Russell went so far as to describe Red Bull's advantage as 'scary', while GPS traces reportedly backed that up.

Reliability has also been impressive for a brand-new unit.

It is still testing, but early signs suggest Red Bull may already have a technical reference point for the rest of the grid.

SILVER ARROWS OFF-CENTRE

THE Mercedes-AMG Petronas team topped the outright times on the final day of last week's testing thanks to Kimi Antonelli, yet paradoxically logged the second-lowest lap count.

Suspension issues and an engine anomaly disrupted their first two days before a strong recovery on Day 3.

The raw pace is clearly there, but the car proved harder to keep in its 'happy window' in Bahrain's warmer conditions compared with Barcelona. The Silver Arrows enter Test 2 quick, but still searching for consistency.

RED BULL: Powering through



FERRARI: FASTING OR FAST?

The team in red kept performance talk to a minimum, instead stressing data collection.

Behind the scenes, however, they looked composed. Their mileage was among the best, reliability solid, and race starts particularly sharp thanks to minimal turbo lag.

Charles Leclerc remains cautious publicly, but McLaren boss Andrea Stella has already placed Ferrari at the top of his early pecking order alongside Mercedes.

MCLAREN HOLDING BACK?

Despite being double reigning world champions, the Bahrain-owned McLaren team adopted a

deliberately low-key approach.

They matched Williams Racing for the highest mileage of the test (422 laps), a huge tick for reliability on an entirely new car concept.

Oscar Piastri set their quickest time, while Lando Norris spoke positively about the learning curve. Yet Stella has openly pointed to

Ferrari and Mercedes as the early benchmarks.

The implication is that McLaren is focused on fundamentals first.

Test 2 should reveal whether they now pivot to performance runs, or whether they genuinely trail their rivals on pace.

MIDFIELD MAYHEM

THE toughest week belonged to Aston Martin.

Despite the arrival of design legend Adrian Newey, they recorded the fewest laps and admitted they are firmly on the back foot, compounded by a new Honda engine programme and in-house gearbox development. In contrast, Williams rebounded strongly after missing Barcelona, piling on mileage to stabilise their campaign.

Newcomers Cadillac also earned respect with more than 1,700 kilometres completed, efficient problem-solving, and early race simulations, an impressive foundation for a debut season.

With one test left before Australia, the gloves are finally expected to come off.

For fans heading trackside this weekend, the story is no longer about who can run, but who can run fast, consistently, and with confidence.



SECOND: Drivers and teams are headed back to the circuit this weekend for the final round of pre-season testing



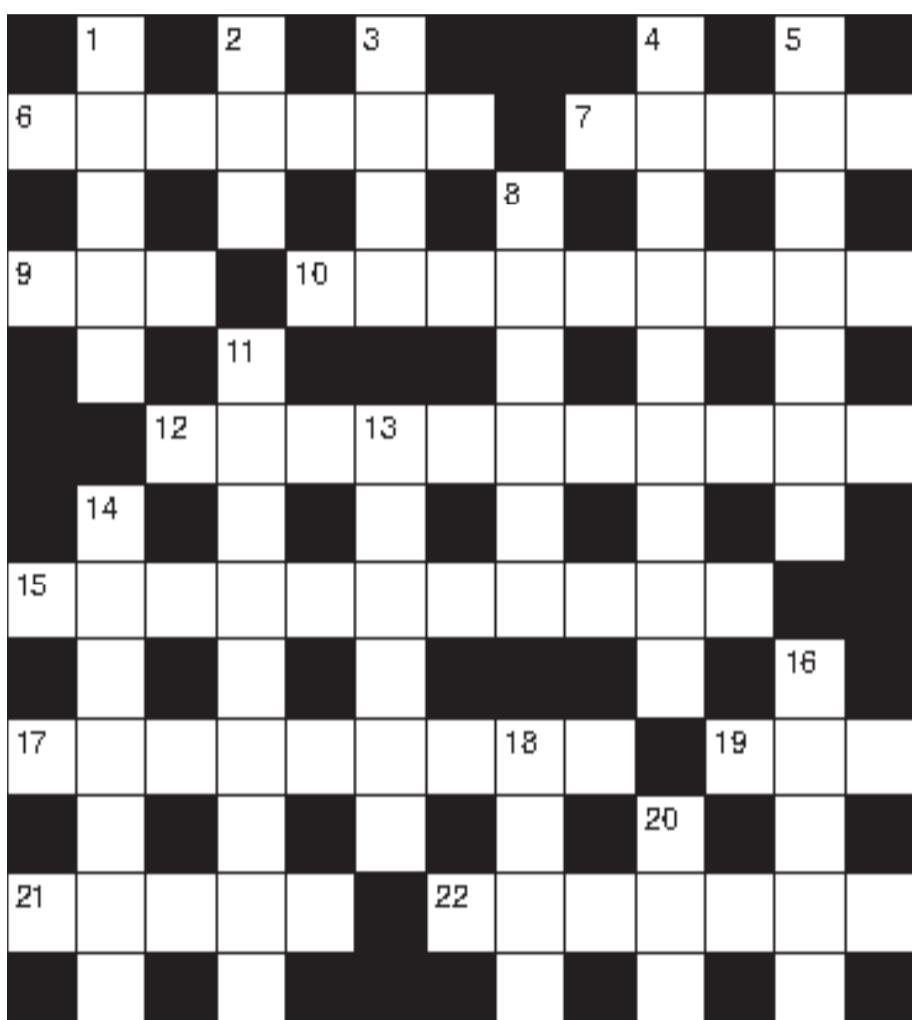
MCLAREN: Steady and sure



MERCEDES: Racing ahead

Time Out

crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

tough sudoku

Last week's sudoku

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

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

tough sudoku

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

ACROSS

- 6. Glass (7)
- 7. Daub (5)
- 9. Levy (3)
- 10. Ancient (9)
- 12. Rudeness (11)
- 15. Suggestion (11)
- 17. Dog (9)
- 19. Blend (3)
- 21. Indolence (5)
- 22. Make (7)

DOWN

- 1. Rustic (5)
- 2. Recede (3)
- 3. Prophet (4)
- 4. Likeness (9)
- 5. Reap (7)
- 8. Quantity (6)
- 11. Inequality (9)
- 13. Coffin (6)
- 14. Methodical (7)
- 16. Toss (5)
- 18. Merit (4)
- 20. Uneven (3)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... played Lucy Honeychurch in *A Room With A View*?
 WHAT ... was the name of the ancient British race of whom Boadicea was queen?
 WHERE ... was the Bounty heading for when the famous mutiny occurred?
 WHEN ... did the UK National Minimum Wage become law?
 WHO ... painted *The Guitar Player* in 1910?
 WHAT ... is an Ignis Fatuus, seen over marshy ground, more commonly known as?
 WHERE ... would you find the colleges of Selwyn, Trinity and Wolfson?
 WHEN ... did the 'Hundred Years' War' end?

just so

clight

EMOTI
DAYDAYDAY
DAYDAYDAY
DAYDAYDAY
DAYDAYDAY

writeswriteswriteswriteswrites

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 Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 7 Interrogation; 8 Reviewer; 9 Idea; 10 Superb; 12 Entomb; 14 Recess; 16 Estate; 18 Stop; 20 Basketry; 22 Unconditional.

Down: 1 Insecure;

2 Demise; 3 Brow;

4 Aggrieve; 5 Strict; 6 Core;

11 Busybody; 13 Material;

15 Employ; 17 Tremor;

19 Tune; 21 Site.

JUST SO:

Miss the point; Mixed up kid; Nothing doing; Open season.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE,

WHEN: Virginia Woolf; Carbon and nitrogen; Iceland; 1773; James Cameron; Goat; Italy; 1865.

Tough Sudoku

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