

Moving to Qatar: Your Relocation Guide



By Appointment To
Her Majesty The Queen
Removals and Storage Contractor Abels

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THE ART OF MOVING

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| TELEPHONE: | Country Code (974) |
| STANDARD TIME: | GMT +3 hours |
| WEIGHTS & MEASURES: | Metric |
| ELECTRICITY: | 240 / 415 Volts AC; 50Hz |
| INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS: | Polio, Typhoid, Yellow Fever, Cholera and Rabies |
| PUBLIC HOLIDAYS: | 8 Aug, 26 Oct, 18 Dec |
| OFFICE HOURS: | 0800 – 1300 and 1530 – 1830 |
| BANK HOURS: | 0730 – 1200 Saturday – Wednesday 0730 – 1130 Thursday |
| EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS: | All services are 999 |
| BRITISH EMBASSY: | PO Box 3 Doha State of Qatar Tel: (974) 496 2000 Fax: (974) 496 2086 Email: embassy.qatar@fco.gov.uk Web: http://ukinqatar.fco.gov.uk/en/ |
| TOURIST & TRAVEL INFORMATION: | Qatar Tourism Authority PO Box 24624 Doha State of Qatar Tel: (974) 441 1555 Fax: (974) 437 2993 |
| QATAR EMBASSY IN LONDON: | 1 South Audley Street London W1K 1NB Tel: 0207 493 2200 Fax: 0207 493 2661 Web: http://qatar.embassyhomepage.com/ |

Customs

To the best of our knowledge, the following documentation is required to import household goods and personal effects into Qatar. However, it is important to check with the authorities that documentation is in order and you must have all signatures notarised and copies legalised in Qatar prior to despatch.

Household Goods

Documents required:

- Original Bill of Lading / Airway Bill or copy of telex / express release
- Detailed inventory
- Passport copy with Qatar work / residence permits
- No-Objection letter to import Household Goods into the country (typed in Arabic) on the original letter head of employer / sponsor in Qatar

There will be no custom duty for USED PERSONAL EFFECTS AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS.

Duty: 5% on Cost Insurance and Freight (CIF) value plus legalisation charges IMPORTED AFTER SIX MONTHS.

Pallets have to be used in all goods shipments as from 30 June 2017. It will not be permitted to clear goods shipped unless they are on pallets, in line with guidelines SPM-15 on wood packaging for pallets and lift vans. Penalties will be imposed if case of infringement to the rule and the goods might be returned back to origin destination.

Shipments to be declared as used household goods and personal effects.

All shipments are subject to 100% physical inspection.

Computer equipment requires a separate clearance procedure through Qatar customs. If a computer is included in the shipment, specifications should be sent prior to arrival in order to obtain Qatar Telecommunication approval.

CDs and DVDs are subject to censorship department approval. This process will take up to 14 days.

LCL shipments arriving POE Doha are taking up to two weeks in port to be de-consolidated. Therefore, customs clearance and delivery after vessel arrival, can take up to three weeks.

Groupage shipments are causing considerable problems as the complete content of the container is off-loaded before customs clearance can begin.

No one is allowed to have access to the goods until customs officials have completed clearance, leading to problems during re-packing.

All shipments are subject to 100% physical inspection.

If the shipment arrives after six months of the pax first entry in Qatar there will be duty applicable.

Customs has the right to charge duty on any shipments found UNDER VALUED / IMPORTED after six months (later during Audit).

Diplomatic Removals

Documents required:

- Original Bill of Lading / Airway Bill
- Detailed inventory
- Letter of protocol from the relevant Embassy must be processed with the Qatar Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Once protocol letter received, shipment is normally exempted inspection and duty free clearance into Qatar but this remains at the discretion of the customs director.

Import of alcohol is allowed for diplomats but limited to annual quota agreed by the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the respective embassies in the country and it should be declared in the packing list and MOFA letter.

New Furniture

Documents required:

- Legalised CIF (Cost Insurance & Freight) invoice
- Certificate of Origin
- Inventory
- Bill of Lading / Airway Bill

5% duty on Cost Insurance and Freight value plus legalisation charges.

Invoice and Certificate of Origin have to be endorsed by Qatar Embassy at origin and received by destination agent prior to shipment's arrival.

Motor Vehicles

Documents required:

- Original Registration Certificate
- Insurance Policy
- Invoice (if available)

5% duty plus legalisation charges on Cost Insurance and Freight value may be charged at the discretion of customs.

For all vehicle(s) older than one year, a pre-alert, with all details included is required seven to ten days in advance of vehicle(s) arrival.

For Registration:

- Proof of ownership at origin and original import manifest are required
- Owner must be resident in Qatar prior to registration in his / her name. Possibility for a single shipper to import more than one vehicle
- Import of vehicles older than five years is forbidden.

Right hand drive cars are prohibited.

Cats and Dogs

Documents required

- Health Certificate dated no more than two weeks prior to date of arrival
- Import licence issued in Qatar

The following dogs require at least two weeks notice and may be rejected:

Boxers, Bulldogs, Rottweilers, Pugs, Great Danes, Dobermans, Shar Pei's and Japanese Akitas.

A Health Certificate has to be issued by government approved veterinary clinics and faxed at least three days prior to arrival.

Prohibited

- Alcoholic beverages
- Pork
- Wireless transmitters / receivers
- Fire arms / explosives / Swords / Daggers
- Narcotics
- Pornographic material
- Items made out of ivory
- Any product that has not been manufactured in Qatar in accordance with the law or legally imported into Qatar
- Political and religious literature / articles deemed offensive to the Qatar government and the Islamic faith

All prohibited articles detained by customs may be destroyed without consignee's consent.

Audio / Video Tapes, Books and CDs

Subject to screening by the Ministry of Information and returned within 14 working days.

General Information on the State of Qatar

Background

Ruled by the Al Thani family since the mid-1800s, Qatar transformed itself from a poor British protectorate noted mainly for pearling into an independent state with significant oil and natural gas revenues. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Qatari economy was crippled by a continuous siphoning off of petroleum revenues by the amir, who had ruled the country since 1972. His son, HAMAD bin Khalifa Al Thani, overthrew the father in a bloodless coup in 1995. In short order, HAMAD oversaw the creation of the pan-Arab satellite news network Al-Jazeera and Qatar's pursuit of a leadership role in mediating regional conflicts. In the 2000s, Qatar resolved its longstanding border disputes with both Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. As of 2007, oil and natural gas revenues had enabled Qatar to attain the highest

per capita income in the world. Qatar has not experienced domestic unrest or violence like that seen in other Near Eastern and North African countries in 2010-11, due in part to its immense wealth. Since the outbreak of regional unrest, however, Doha has prided itself on its support for many of these popular revolutions, particularly in Libya and Syria. In mid-2013, HAMAD transferred power to his 33 year-old son, the current Amir TAMIM bin Hamad - a peaceful abdication rare in the history of Arab Gulf states. TAMIM has prioritized improving the domestic welfare of Qataris, including establishing advanced healthcare and education systems and expanding the country's infrastructure in anticipation of Doha's hosting of the 2022 World Cup.

Geography

Qatar occupies 11,437km² on a peninsula that extends approximately 160km north into the Persian Gulf from the Arabian Peninsula. Varying in width between 55 and 90km, the land is mainly flat (the highest point is 103m) and rocky. Notable features include coastal salt pans, elevated limestone formations (the Dukhan anticline) along the west coast under which lies the Dukhan oil field and massive sand surrounding Khawr al Udayd, an inlet of the gulf in the southeast known to local speakers as the Inland Sea. Of the islands belonging to Qatar, Halul is the most important. Lying about 90km east of Doha, it serves as a storage area and loading terminal for oil from the surrounding offshore fields.

The capital, Doha is located on the central east coast on a sweeping (if shallow) harbour, other ports include Umm Said, Al Kwawr, and Al Wakrah. Only Doha and Umm Said are capable of handling commercial shipping, although a large port and a terminal for loading natural gas are planned at Ras Laffan, north of Al Khawr. Coral Reefs and shallow coastal waters make navigation difficult in areas where channels have not been dredged.

Doha is the capital of the country and the major administrative, commercial, and population center. In 1993 it was linked to other towns and development sites by a system of about 1,000km of paved roads. Doha's international airport has an approximately 4,500m main runway, capable of receiving all kinds of aircraft.

Climate

The long summer (June through September) is characterized by intense heat and alternating dryness and humidity with temperatures exceeding 55°C. Temperatures are moderate from November through May, although winter temperatures may fall to 17°C, which is relatively cool for the latitude. Rainfall is negligible, averaging 100mm per year, confined to the winter months and falling in brief, sometimes heavy storms that often flood the small peninsula and the usually dry wadis. Sudden, violent dust storms occasionally descend on the peninsula, blotting out the sun, causing wind damage and momentarily disrupting transport and other services.

The scarcity of rainfall and the limited underground water, most of which has such a high mineral content that it is unsuitable for drinking or irrigation restricted the population and the extent of agricultural and industrial development the country could support until the desalination projects began. Although water continues to be provided from underground sources, most is obtained by desalination of seawater.

Population

It is estimated that the population is 907,229 with 80% of this believed to be foreign families working on temporary contracts. Most foreign workers and their families live near the major centres of Doha, Alkhor, Messaeed and Dukhan.

Environmental Issues

Limited natural fresh water resources are increasing dependence on large-scale desalination facilities.

Language

The official language is Arabic and English is commonly used as a second language.

Religion

Islam is the official religion of Qatar and is practiced by the great majority (95%) of the people. The Qataris are mainly of the Wahhabi sect if the Hanbali school of Islam. There are also small populations of Christians, Jews, Hindus, Bahais, and other faiths; however, they are mainly foreigners. The constitution does not protect freedom of religion. Public worship of non-Muslim faiths is prohibited. Private worship is permitted for Christians and Jews (known in Islam as "People of the Book"). The Islamic Sharia is the principal source of legislation in the country.

Currency

Qatari Rial (QAR) = 100 Dirhams.

All credit cards and travellers cheques are widely accepted.

US\$ GB£ are the preferred currency.

Economy

Qatar has prospered in the last several years with continued high real GDP growth in 2011. Qatari authorities throughout the financial crisis sought to protect the local banking sector with direct investments into domestic banks. GDP rebounded in 2010 largely due to the increase in oil prices and 2011's growth was supported by Qatar's investment in expanding its gas sector. Economic policy is focused on developing Qatar's non associated natural gas reserves and increasing private and foreign investment in non-energy sectors, but oil and gas still account for more than 50% of GDP, roughly 85% of export earnings, and 70% of government revenues. Oil and gas likely have made Qatar the second highest per-capita income country – behind Liechtenstein – and the country with the

lowest unemployment. Proved oil reserves in excess of 25 billion barrels should enable continued output at current levels for 57 years. Qatar's proved reserves of natural gas exceed 25 trillion cubic meters, more than 13% of the world total and third largest in the world. Qatar's successful 2022 world cup bid will likely accelerate large-scale infrastructure projects such as Qatar's metro system and the Qatar-Bahrain causeway.

Health

There are several hospitals in Qatar, the most recent and modern being the Hamad General Hospital. The Poly Clinic has good dentists. Charges are high and health insurance is essential. As a precaution against the intense heat, visitors should maintain a high salt and fluid intake.

Typhoid Fever and Hepatitis A exist so precautions should be taken. Hepatitis B is endemic. Cutaneous Leishmaniasis occurs. Rabies is present. For those at high risk, vaccination before arrival should be considered.

If you are bitten, seek medical advice without delay. Certificates proving the visitor to be HIV-negative may be required if planning on staying more than one month in the country. Check with the Embassy.

Vaccination against Typhoid is advised.

Food and drink

All water should be regarded as being potentially contaminated. Water used for drinking, brushing teeth or making ice should have first been boiled or otherwise sterilised. Milk is unpasteurised and should be boiled. Powdered or tinned milk is available and is advised, but make sure that it is reconstituted with pure water. Avoid dairy products which are likely to have been made from unboiled milk. Only eat well-cooked meat and fish, preferably served hot. Salad and mayonnaise may carry increased risk. Vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled.

Education

Qatar follows a policy of compulsory education until the end of the elementary stage and education is free for all citizens. Basic education consists of the following stages:

Elementary Stage = Six years

Preparatory Stage = Three years

Secondary Stage = Three years

Qatar has 113 elementary schools, 60 for boys and 53 for girls, 56 preparatory schools, 28 for boys and 28 for girls, and 41 secondary schools, 19 for boys and 22 for girls. Government schools provide education for the children of non-Qatari residents who work for the public sector. Qatar also has private schools as well as schools for the different Arab communities like the Lebanese, Jordanian and Sudanese plus those for non-Arab communities like the Indian, American and others.

Private Education – The Ministry supports private education by providing private schools with textbooks, stationery, health services and free electricity and water and by providing a Qatari Headmistress and Teacher for every kindergarten. As a result of this support, private schools have become more popular.

Although every care is taken to ensure that all information in the Abels Relocation Guide is accurate and up to date Abels cannot accept liability for any inaccuracy.