# Qatar draws growing numbers of British expats with tax-free salaries and lower living costs



The Middle Eastern nation of Qatar, which spent over 50 years under British rule, is now actively attracting British nationals to live and work in the country, particularly in its capital, Doha. With a population of approximately 2.6 million, of which only 313,000 are Qatari citizens, expatriates make up a significant portion of the labour force. This demographic shift is particularly appealing to younger individuals looking for new opportunities abroad.

Reports suggest that about 20,000 British nationals currently reside in Qatar, drawn to the country's favourable conditions including tax-free salaries and a reputation for low crime rates, which allows residents to leave their belongings unattended safely. Social media platforms, especially TikTok, have become a canvas for these new arrivals to share their experiences, often highlighting the benefits of life in Qatar compared to other destinations such as Dubai, with which many Britons are less enamoured.

The Daily Mail has highlighted the significant cost-of-living advantages that Qatar boasts over the UK. Analysis reveals that living expenses in Britain can be 34.2% higher than in Doha, with restaurant prices being 48% steeper and grocery costs at 41.5% higher in London. For instance, a mid-range three-course meal for two is reported to cost around £80 in London, while the same meal in Doha is approximately £37.16. Daily expenses such as utilities also offer stark contrasts; the average monthly bills in Doha are reported at £69.04, compared to £233.10 in London.

School teachers, healthcare professionals, fashion designers, and IT workers are among the groups making the move, with many citing job satisfaction, generous pay packages, and lower living costs as significant motivating factors. Health care services and public utilities in Qatar, coupled with their attractive work incentives—like companies covering accommodation and transport—add to the appeal. British expats have noted the allure of a lifestyle enveloped in sunny weather, with average summer temperatures around 45°C.

Among those relocating, social media influencers have gained traction by discussing both the advantages and challenges of expat life. A TikTok user named AngInQatar describes her journey, mentioning a sense of satisfaction and safe living conditions as driving factors for her move. Iqra Inspire, another expat, has shared her experiences online, stating that the cleanliness and safety of Qatar surprised her. She has also commented on the "extreme heat," cautioning newcomers to stay indoors during peak temperatures.

While many expats are embracing life in Qatar, the nation has faced scrutiny from human rights organisations regarding its treatment of migrant workers, particularly from developing nations. Reports have cited instances of harsh working conditions and restrictions on workers’ rights under the kafala system, which ties employees to their sponsors, limiting their freedom to change jobs. This has led to criticism from several high-profile individuals, including former footballers David Beckham and Gary Neville.

In recent discussions, Beckham defended his role as a World Cup ambassador, arguing that engagement with the region presented an opportunity for positive change. "I wanted to be involved in the World Cup because... it shines a huge spotlight on issues," he noted. Meanwhile, Neville expressed his discomfort with human rights violations in Qatar, yet acknowledged the longstanding relationships that exist between the UK and the Gulf state.

As Qatar continues to develop into a hub for expatriates, the complexities of its social and economic landscape remain a topic of considerable discussion. The juxtaposition of an attractive destination for Western professionals against allegations of worker exploitation paints a nuanced picture of life in this rapidly changing nation.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-qatar> - This UK government guidance confirms that Qatar imposes no income tax on salaries or wages, allowing expatriates to take home their full earnings without deductions.
* <https://www.iloveqatar.net/news/general/top-five-advantages-of-living-in-qatar> - This article highlights Qatar's low crime rate, noting it was named the third safest country in the world by Global Finance magazine in 2021.
* <https://livingcost.org/cost/qatar/united-kingdom> - This cost comparison shows that the average cost of living in Qatar is 19% less expensive than in the United Kingdom, with significant differences in restaurant and grocery prices.
* <https://livingcost.org/cost/doha/london> - This comparison indicates that a mid-range three-course meal for two costs approximately $52.4 in Doha, compared to $84 in London, supporting the claim of lower living expenses in Qatar.
* <https://www.businessstartupqatar.com/news/qatar-expat-high-standard-living> - This report states that the average monthly salary in Qatar is QAR 15,750 (USD 4,327), and that monthly utilities are very affordable at QAR 410 (USD 112), highlighting the financial benefits for expatriates.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crime_in_Qatar> - This Wikipedia article notes that crime in Qatar is very low compared to industrialized nations, with petty crimes like pickpocketing being extremely uncommon.
* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14682343/Move-Dubai-neighbouring-country-Brits-flocking-thanks-amazing-healthcare-tax-free-salaries-crime-rare-you-leave-car-unlocked.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data