

Banana Island: A Place to Remember

Raed Ali Ayesh Marabeh, Teaching Assistant of Math, Foundation Program

On March 30th, the Foundation Program Social Committee arranged a trip to Banana Island. Around 40 faculty, staff, and their families participated. For most of the participants, it was their first experience



Banana Island: Photograph courtesy of Raed Marabeh

visiting this crescent of golden beach. Everyone on the trip was excited to discover this island.

Banana Island is about 25 minutes away from Doha by boat. It contains a five-star luxury resort with extensive facilities, including: rooms with a sea view, a surf pool, a dive center, a VIP cinema, and a bowling alley.

Faculty and their families reached Banana Island around 9:30 am. The morning sun glistening over the beach was really amazing! We had the chance to try out many activities and facilities. However, the most enjoyable part was relaxing on the beach.



Banana Island: Photograph courtesy of Mondher Chaabane

This trip was really a good opportunity to meet and interact with colleagues outside the workspace and to see the social and fun side of friends. If you are a staff or a faculty member in the Foundation Program, then why not come along on the next trip that the Foundation Program's Social Committee organizes?

FPDE Off-road Excursion to Ras Abrouq

Elisabeth Szewczyk-Méziane, Lecturer of English, Foundation Program

On Friday, 19th April, a group of about twenty FPDE staff, family, and friends set off in a convoy of five 4x4 vehicles led by Marcin Wawrzyniak to explore the Ras Abrouq Peninsula. The first destination was Bir Zekreet Beach for a photo-op. Unfortunately, the tide was out but that

did not discourage the avid photographers. A brief dash through tiny Zekreet village was followed by a stop at a local camel farm for another photo-op. Here, some intrepid souls petted and nuzzled the remarkably docile and patient camels.

Onward to the Abrouq Nature Reserve, famed for its bizarre limestone formations and salt flats, to snap photos of oryx and Thomson's gazelles. Our adventurers gazed in awe at acclaimed artist Richard Serra's remarkable quartet of four massive fourteen-metre high steel-plate sculptures magnificently rising in solitary splendor in the desolate desert landscape.

Film City, a film set of a 19th century Qatari village built for a QTV production (Eyaal Al Theeb) was a few kilometers away. The stage village was eagerly explored by our keen adventurers who clamored up and down the steep steps to rooftop views of the rocky landscape beyond.



Richard Serra sculpture: Photograph courtesy of Phillip Wren



Richard Serra sculpture: Photograph courtesy of David Andrew Coupland

The next stop was the so-called Mystery Valley, a naturally enclosed formation of wind-sculpted limestone ridges and cliffs. The valley was peppered with fake semi-circular structures used to house the villagers' enemies in the same TV series. The trekkers explored the wonderfully weird natural formations as the sun slowly set.

Finally, everyone headed to a McDonald's in nearby Dhukhan. Afterwards, our weary travelers wended their way home to Doha. The trip was declared an overwhelming success.