



Denmark

A SENSE OF HISTORY AS WE JOURNEY TO THE LAND OF THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS WHO DISCOVERED DILMUN

About Denmark

Denmark (pop. 5.3 million) is the smallest of the Scandinavian countries, consisting of the Jutland peninsula, north of Germany, and over 400 islands of various sizes. It is also the least expensive country to visit in Scandinavia.



When To Visit

Most tourist destinations come alive from late April until late October. Weather-wise, May to August are best.

Visa Requirements

Citizens of many countries, including the US, EU, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore, and most South Americans do not need a visa. Other nationals need to obtain a visa in advance.

Getting There

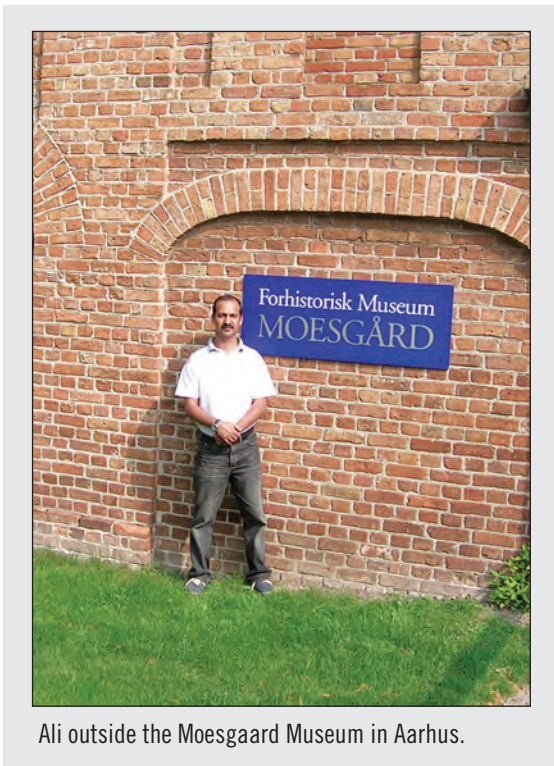
Most flights land at Copenhagen. There are bus and rail links to Germany as well as ferry links to several countries including the UK.



Bahrain Connection

It was Danish archaeologists who uncovered Bahrain's ancient Dilmun civilisation. Denmark and Bahrain are both small kingdoms, and both countries share the same colours of the flag – red and white.

By Martin Jorgenson



Ali outside the Moesgaard Museum in Aarhus.

DENMARK, THE COUNTRY CO-ADVENTURER Christine and I come from, was initially supposed to be the last destination on our tour. In fact, before the tour itinerary was expanded, it had been labelled From Dilmun to Denmark, to mark the fact that Bahrain's ancient Dilmun civilisation had been discovered by Danish archaeologists.

No matter. From a historical perspective, this is still our most important stop. It is exactly 50 years since that important discovery at Bahrain Fort and Barbar when excavations uncovered Dilmun's long-lost capital, palaces and temples from the sand.

The Moesgaard Museum in Aarhus, which conducted the excavations, held an exhibition to tell the Dilmun story, of how it was discovered, who the Danes were that chose to come to Bahrain, why they came, and what the consequences of their discoveries were.

Our own plan had been to stage a Bahrain Day at



PAGE OPPOSITE:
The Friendship Tour vehicle in front of the Frederiksborg Castle in the town of Hilleroed.



Ali talks about Bahrain to some local people. They were going to collect mushrooms in the forests around Moesgaard Museum.



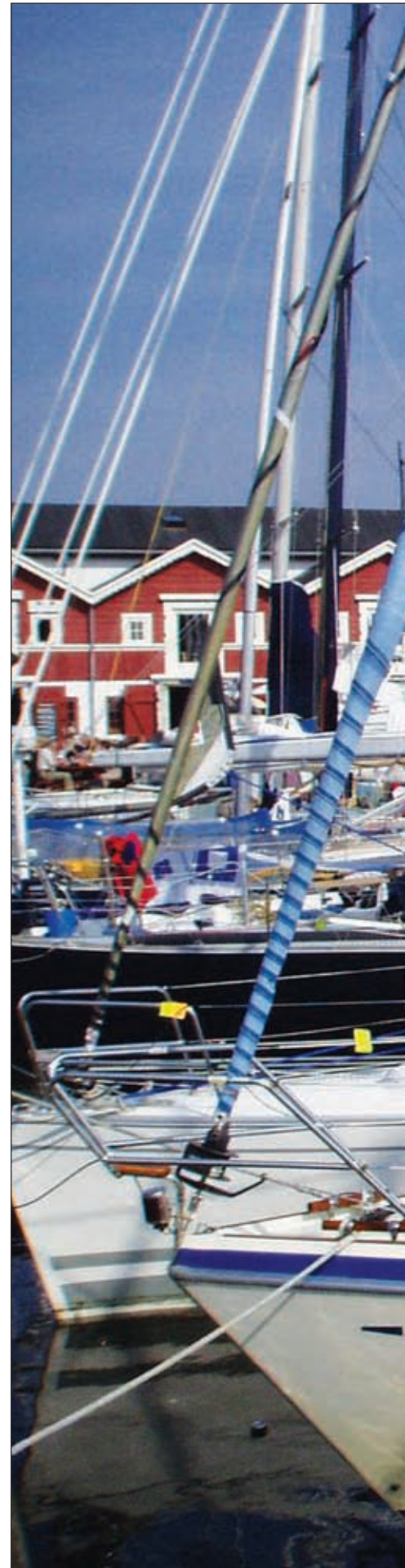
The team with Christine's father Helge Lundgaard, right, in front of an old traditional house in the countryside.

the museum during our visit, complete with everyone in the team wearing Bahraini costumes, but those plans had to be shelved because of the revision in tour dates following the death of Ali's father while the team was in London.

The Bahrain Day and exhibition will still be held at a later date, most likely at Mosgaard Museum.

We did visit the museum, and spoke about Bahrain to many interested people who wanted to know more about the country and about our tour. The museum has previously held a Dilmun exhibition, which included information about Geoffrey Bibby, something of a household name in Bahrain for his role in the Dilmun excavations.

Until the 1950s, historians believed that Bahrain was only a cemetery for surrounding lands. Bibby, who lived for a few years in Bah-





The town of Skagen, in northern Denmark, is well known for the beautiful old red storehouses on the harbour.

Fast Fact
In Denmark, smoking is restricted on public transport and in some public buildings.

Christine, Ali and Martin plant the Bahrain flag at Denmark's northern-most point, where two oceans meet. Note the waves coming from two different angles. Bahrain takes its name from the Arabic for 'two seas'.



Travel Tip
Even if you are just going sightseeing, take along a coat and tie. They're required in many restaurants after 6 pm.

rain with Danish wife Vibeke, went to her parents' home in Aarhus, Denmark, when the couple was expecting their first child.

It was there that Bibby met P.V. Glob, professor in prehistoric archaeology and director of Aarhus Museum, and he soon joined the museum himself.

One summer evening in 1951, when the museum staff was enjoying dinner with Glob and his family, Bibby and Vibeke talked about the 100,000 burial

mounds in Bahrain. Glob couldn't believe that such a fertile land was no more than a cemetery, and he hammered his fist on the table and exclaimed: "We're going down there!"

Two years later, in 1953, the first expedition landed in Bahrain, and the rest, no pun intended, is history.

Bibby wrote a book on his expeditions, *Looking For Dilmun*, which was published in 1969. It hit the



American Top 10 list the next year, and has since been updated and translated into many languages. It is still widely available throughout the Gulf and a must-read for anyone interested in ancient history of the region.

Many of the objects discovered in the many digs that have taken place since those early days have found their way into the Bahrain National Museum, which interestingly enough, was designed by another



Ali flanked by Martin's sister Lisbeth Kristensen and her husband Svend Erik at a dinner they held for the Friendship Tour team.

er Dane, architect Knud Holscher. Moesgaard's archaeologists and ethnographers have worked closely to build the exhibitions at the National Museum.

Moesgaard's own Bahrain exhibition had a number of other interesting elements, including the work of painter Karl Bovin, who took part in several Dilmun expeditions, composer Poul Rovsing Olsen, who collected musical instruments and made tape-recordings of the pearl fishermen's work songs and wedding music, and ethnographer Henny Harald Hansen, who refined Danes' attitudes to Islam and Muslim women through lectures and books about her experiences in Bahrain.

Denmark marked the topmost leg on the Friendship Tour map, and we decided to head for the country's most northern point, which fittingly enough was where two seas meet. For those that might miss the significance, the name Bahrain is derived from the translation for Two Seas.

We planted the Bahrain flag here, and while we might not be space pioneers Aldrin and Armstrong, we were certainly feeling over the moon!

