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## Britain goes halal... but no-one tells the public: How famous institutions serve ritually slaughtered meat with no warning

By [SIMON MCGEE](#) and [MARTIN DELGADO](#)  
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A Mail on Sunday investigation - which will alarm anyone concerned about animal cruelty - has revealed that schools, hospitals, pubs and famous sporting venues such as Ascot and Twickenham are controversially serving up meat slaughtered in accordance with strict Islamic law to unwitting members of the public.

All the beef, chicken and lamb sold to fans at Wembley has secretly been prepared in accordance with sharia law, while Cheltenham College, which boasts of its 'strong Christian ethos', is one of several top public schools which also serves halal chicken to pupils without informing them.

Even Britain's biggest hotel and restaurant group Whitbread, which owns the Beefeater and Brewers Fayre chains, among many others, has admitted that more than three-quarters of its poultry is halal.



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A Manchester United fan tucks into a burger at Wembley Stadium, which serves only halal meat

Animal welfare campaigners have long called for a ban on the traditional Islamic way of preparing meat - which involves killing animals by drawing a knife across their throats, without stunning them first - saying it is cruel and causes unnecessary pain.

Sharia law expressly forbids knocking the animal out with a bolt gun, as is usual in British slaughter blood allowed to drip from the carcass while a religious phrase in praise of Allah is recited.

The extent of halal meat consumption, even in areas of Britain with a very small Muslim population, was revealed as the Pope, on his first visit to Britain, expressed fears that the country was not doing enough to preserve traditional Christian values and customs.

In a strongly worded speech to Parliament, he said: 'There are those who argue that the public celebration of festivals such as Christmas should be discouraged, in the questionable belief that it might somehow offend those of other religions or none.'

But it is animal rights groups which have been most vociferous in their opposition to halal slaughter. Campaign organisation Viva!, whose supporters include Heather Mills and Joanna Lumley, said in a statement: 'Other practices which may be undertaken for religious reasons, such as polygamy or the stoning of adulterers, are not permitted in the UK.'

'Religious freedom does not override other moral considerations and the suffering caused by this form of slaughter is so severe that it cannot be allowed to prevent action to be taken. Consumers can do their bit by boycotting places that persist in selling meat from unstunned animals.'

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**Race-goers indulge in some fast food at Ascot where meat is slaughtered in accordance with strict Islamic law**

An RSPCA spokesman added: 'The public have a right to know how their meat is produced. Many people are extremely concerned about animal welfare. What The Mail on Sunday has discovered shows that people are not being kept informed. The key to a more humane death for these animals is that they are stunned before slaughter.'

A spokesman for Twickenham, which sells only halal chicken despite not advertising the fact, insisted that the lack of transparency 'had never been an issue' and said: 'Our consideration is more for those who want halal, to ensure they get it.'

Other institutions secretly serving up meat that is halal – or 'permissible' – include Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and one of London's and St Thomas'.

A spokesman for the London hospitals admitted: 'The only way canteen would know they were staff directly.'

The spokesman for the London hospitals added: 'The chicken we use is stunned before it is killed.'

Whitbread, which also owns Table Table restaurants, Costa Coffee shops and Premier Inn hotels, admitted last night that 80 per cent of the chicken it served comes from halal poultry suppliers, including some in Muslim-dominated Turkey.

A Whitbread spokesman said: 'We don't specify halal as a requirement in our procurement. We base our decision on quality and price.'

'It just turns out that we source that amount of chicken from suppliers that happen to be halal.'

'It is not mentioned on any of our menus because we don't think there is customer demand for that information. But if people started asking, then we would definitely provide it.'



**Marlborough College in Wiltshire has admitted that while halal chicken is usually only served to Muslims, it had 'occasionally' served it to all pupils**

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Rival operator Mitchells & Butlers, which owns the Harvester, Browns and Toby Carvery restaurant chains as well as pub chains All Bar One and O'Neill's, was even more opaque about the source of its meats.

A spokesman said it had a 'broad range of suppliers' but declined to say how many were halal-certified.

Ascot racecourse said it was easier to store and cook only one type of meat. 'All our chicken is halal. This is not advertised as the menus are kept as simple as possible,' said a spokesman.

A Football Association spokesman confirmed: 'All the beef, chicken and lamb sold at Wembley Stadium is halal which means a large proportion of the meat on offer to our customers falls into this category.' Pork, which is at the stadium.

Cheltenham College boarding school in Gloucestershire admitted: 'We have not sent a letter, nor is there any note on menus that informs parents and pupils that the chicken served in the canteen is mostly halal.'

Marlborough College, in Wiltshire, admitted that while halal chicken is usually served only to Muslims, it had 'occasionally' served it to all pupils. The school refused to say whether parents and pupils had been informed.

Britain's Muslim community is exempt from regulations that require animals to be stunned before death, as is kosher meat prepared for the Jewish market.

Conservative MP Andrew Rosindell, secretary of the Associate Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare, said: 'I don't object to people of different religious groups being catered for but it's not something that should be imposed on everybody else.'

'The vast majority of people in this country would not want meat of this origin. The outlets have a duty to let their customers know because some will object very strongly, not least because of the animal welfare implications of halal.'

Keith Porteous Wood, executive director of the National Secular Society, said: 'We suspected that meat killed by the halal and kosher methods was being used for general consumption but we never imagined it was so widespread. It is disgraceful that aren't being told if the food they are being served is from meat that has not been stunned prior to slaughter.'

In 2003, Government advisory body the Farm Animal Welfare Council published a report declaring that the halal method of killing 'would inevit sensory information to the brain in a sensible (conscious) animal'.

Experts who contributed to the report concluded that 'such a massive injury would result in very significant pain and distress in the period before insensibility supervenes'.

Muslim leaders insist that animal welfare measures are observed during slaughter. Guidelines issued by the Islamic Cultural Centre in London state that 'no stress or discomfort' should be inflicted on the animal and that the knife must be sharp and clean.

## Brutal reality of the ritual that allows animals to be slaughtered without being stunned first

More than 40 million cattle, calves and sheep and more than 850 million poultry are slaughtered every year in Britain.

The vast majority are stunned before slaughter but UK law allows the Jewish and Muslim communities to kill animals by religious methods without any form of stunning.

A number of requirements have been put in place, however, in an attempt to reduce animal suffering.

The rules state that the throat must be cut with one rapid, uninterrupted movement of the knife. Both carotid arteries and both jugular veins must be severed.

In addition, the knife must be inspected before each animal is slaughtered to ensure that it is of sufficient size and sharpness.

But welfare campaigners say the rules are not enough.

The Government's independent advisory body, the Farm Animal Welfare Council, says sheep may lose consciousness within five to seven seconds of the cut.

But research has shown that some calves remain brain-responsive for up to two minutes. This is because the carotid arteries can contract after the cut has been made, effectively sealing the severed ends and maintaining blood pressure in the brain.

The RSPCA says all meat produced from animals that have not been stunned before slaughter should be clearly labelled so that it can be easily identified by consumers.

Sharia law states that the abattoir involved in the process must be under the 'close and

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constant supervision' of an Islamic religious organisation.

Under these rules, the cut must be made to the right side of the neck by cutting the two carotids, the two jugulars, the windpipe and the gullet, but without breaking the spinal cord.

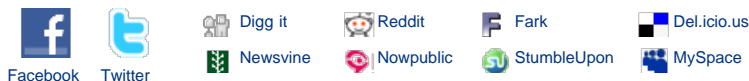
The carcass must empty of blood and a specific time should be allowed until the animal ceases to move before the next stage of the production process – de-skinning and removing the internal organs – may begin.

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Oh for heaven's sake. You've all been eating halal meat for years quite happily. Better boycott all New Zealand lamb as the entire industry there is slaughtered in accordance with Halal principles and has been for decades - hope that's not put you off your "traditional Sunday roast".

What do you think that you eat in your curries? What do you think that kebabs are made from? Even the ready meals that you buy are most likely manufactured from halal meat.

I doubt that this will be published as whenever I post the truth on this subject the moderators block me!!

- Sarah, Warwickshire, 19/9/2010 13:05

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Halal meat is one of many things the meat industry is hiding from us. It may be cruel but so are the current practices of the meat industry. Because of such a high demand for cheap meat by the British public, Animals are now battery farmed, kept in the dark 24/7, pumped full of chemicals to make them grow fast which causes them great agony, staff at slaughter houses are unvetted and get away with cruelty on a daily basis. The public need to stop acting like naive children; just eating whatever they're given with no questions asked, and start researching and acting on news like this.

- jo, london, 19/9/2010 13:04

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Everyone:

When travelling ask the plane to serve a special meal that is "Non Halal Beef or Chicken"

Enough people doing this will make the airlines realise it costs more to serve the majority than the minority.

- Warrior, London, 19/9/2010 12:46

'Warrior' (which I strongly doubt you are)- the majority of people have at least half a brain cell, and do not care whether the meat is Halal (or KOSHER, which you omit), because unlike the likes of Mail readers and BNP supporters like you, they know that an animal has been killed: there's no such thing as a pleasant or painfree killing.

That said, people like you would be surprised to know that a study at Hanover University found that Halal/Kosher slaughter caused significantly less suffering and pain than electrocuting an animal before killing it.

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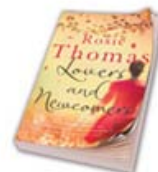
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- Andy, Leeds, 19/9/2010 13:04

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<Muslims do eat non Halal meat if they can not find Halal.  
We often eat non Halal.>

But today we do have STUN GUNS etc, so why not use them. We are in the future now, not years ago.

So what is all the fuss about Halal meat? Why bring Jewish religion into the debate. I'm not Jewish, but I know a lot of Jewish people and I have NEVER EVER heard them complaining about not getting Kosha meat .

- MINTY, MARGATE, 19/9/2010 13:04

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Why is there no fuss made of the kosher method practised by the Jewish community???

it is very similar to the halal method of slaughter. but of course how stupid of me, halal is associated with islam and muslims, it HAS to be menioned!!!!

- typical, cornwall, 19/9/2010 13:04

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Muslims do eat non Halal meat if they can not find Halal.  
We often eat non Halal.

What people forget is that Jewish people also eat meat that was prepared in the same way (animal is killed the same way), but as usual its MUSLIMS in the headline.

Remember years ago we all ate meat killed in the Halal way back in the day they did not have stun guns etc.

- BrightonMama, Brighton, 19/9/2010 11:47

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1313303/Britain-goes-halal---tells-public.html#ixzz0zyZxLibR>

TRUE I A SCARED OF THE AMOUNT OF RED ARROWS THIS PERSON IS GETTING JUST FOR SAYING THE TRUTH!!!

GET A GRIP AND THINK OF ALL THE PEOPLE WHO GOT KILLED IN THE MIDDLE EASE FOR THE OIL AND PETROL YOU LOT ARE LIVING ON RIGHT NOW!!

IF YOU HGAVE SO MUCH STRONG FEELINGS WHY DONT YOU MAKE THEM STOP THE WARS OR OS IT COZ YIU GETTING THINGS OUT OF IT IN RETURN

- I ONLY SAY THE TRUTH, EARTH,  
19/9/2010 13:03

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