

The Complete Guide to Eid-ul-Azha

Aside from the quintessential cuisine prepared on the day, we have so much more to look forward to on Eid-ul-Azha.

As much as we relish the beef curry, biriyani, and korma preparations, we also crave for arrangements that don't necessarily end here. We end up with so much meat immediately after the slaughter, basic knowledge on meat preservation has become *de rigueur*.

Having said all that, Eid is at least for three days. After day one begins the preparation for marination, venturing into unique recipes like Mediterranean, Continental and Pan Asian.

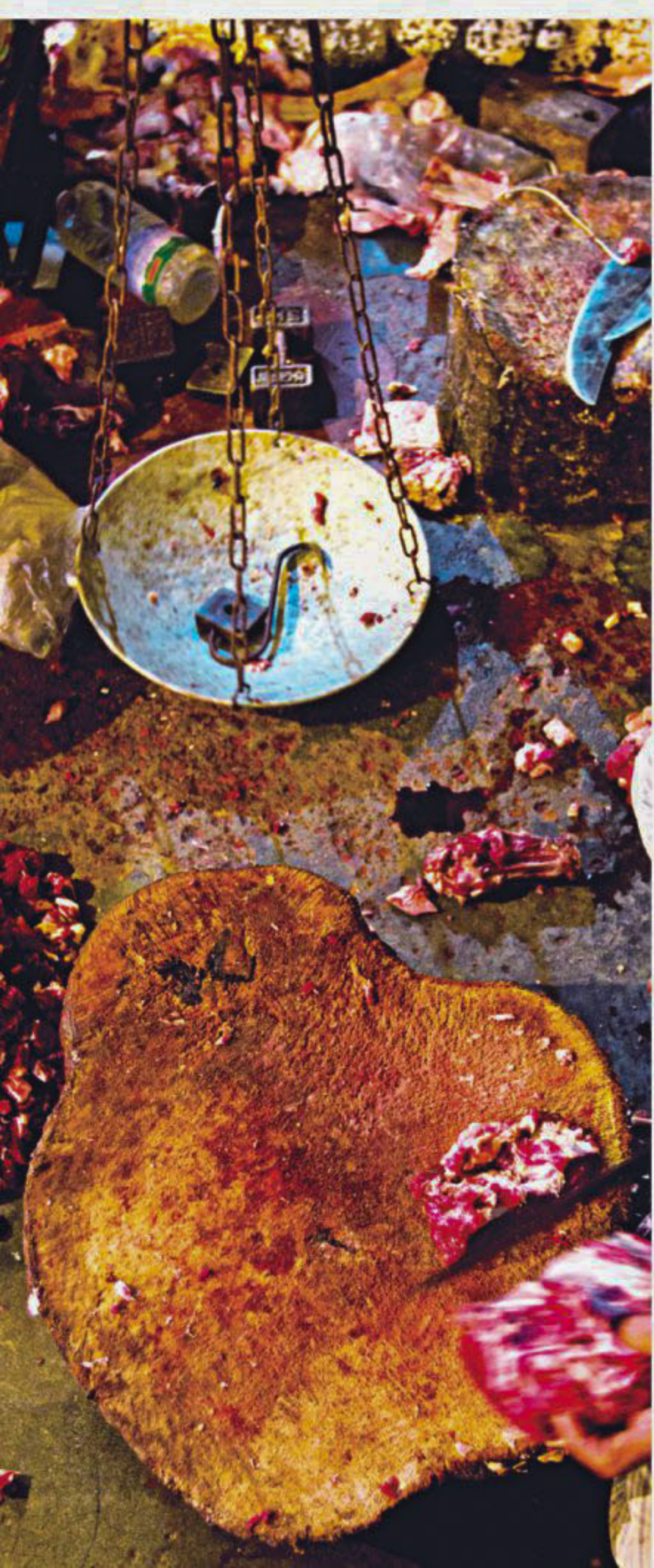
Is this where it stops? Spices should also be counted as an important factor that's extremely crucial for all the recipes to give that perfect taste. And then there's so much to say about the Do's and Don'ts of Qurbani.

Like every Eid, we have tried again, to help our readers and patrons with all the necessary information to enjoy a flawless occasion.

Please flip through the issue, for all that you need to know about Eid-ul-Azha and more.

Eid Mubarak!

LS Desk



FYI

The etiquettes of Qurbani

Qurbani or Udhiya is one of the most literal forms of submission to God's will that Muslims can perform. To the layman, it is simply the ritualistic slaughter of a Halal (permissible for Muslims) animal sometime during the three days of Eid-ul-Azha. However, there are quite a few conditions to make this act of sacrifice acceptable to Allah, and quite a few things that can make it tainted or unacceptable in its totality.

The first thing to keep in mind is the welfare of the animal prior to slaughter, as well as your connection to it. As the Quran says in Surah Hajj (chap. 22), "It is not their meat, nor their blood, that reaches Allah: it is your piety that reaches Him." So what does reach, then? "It is your piety that does."

The act of sacrifice only becomes meaningful when you have feeling and care for the animal being sacrificed. The second thing to remember is that this Eid is not one for mindless feasting. Rather, a large share of the meat should be given away to those who cannot afford it throughout the year, and another part should be shared with friends and family to foster better relations. Ideally, only a third or less should be kept for oneself.

There are a host of other things that need to be kept in mind before the actual act of slaughter:

- Make sure all the payments related to the animal's purchase are duly paid.
- Care for the animal—proper and clean food and water should be made available at all times prior to the sacrifice. No kind of animal abuse is acceptable with any living being, let alone a sacrificial one.
- If possible, keep the animals together with others of their species, as a lonely animal becomes sad and more scared.
- Do not create the space for slaughter right near the place where the animals are kept. No animal shall be slaughtered in front of another.

- Make arrangements to have the area cleaned and washed of blood after each sacrifice.

- Arrange for sharp instruments. It is not permissible to use jagged, serrated or blunt knives for the sacrifice.

- While sacrificing, do not place the head of one live animal into the blood of another, and do not let one animal see the blood of another either.

- Fix the price of the skin before skinning; it is better to simply donate it to a good cause, as no proceeds from the skin of a sacrificial animal are halal for use by the person offering the sacrifice. No part of the sacrificed animal can be sold or be given to the butcher as a part of his wages. If somebody sells meat or skin of the animal, the proceeds must be spent as Sadaqa to a poor person eligible to receive Zakaat.

For the actual act of sacrifice, some aspects need to be ensured:

- Do not sharpen any instruments in front of the animal.
- Do not delay the sacrifice once the animal is already on the ground.
- Remember to take Allah's name while slaughtering, and attempt to face the Qiblah (Makkah).
- Make one single purposeful cut to sacrifice the animal. Do not prick or prod the body with the knife's pointed end at any point during the sacrifice.
- Make sure to cleanly cut through the four vessels; the wind pipe, the food pipe, and the two major blood vessels.

- Do not make repeated cuts on the animal's neck, and take care to not sever the head off completely. Do not break the animal's neck while sacrificing.

- Do not start skinning the animal as long as there is any sign of life in it.

Finally, it is advisable to do your sacrifice yourself, rather than relying on the butcher. Also, it is advised for all participants of the sacrifice to see the act, as it is meant to put the compassion and care into our hearts, and create realisation on the value of life, and difficulty accrued in subjecting to God's will.

However, often we find ourselves incapable of carrying out the act in person, for various situations, in which case, we should try to find ourselves agents who completely abide by these etiquettes and ensure a Halal qurbani.

Hazrat Ali (R) reports that the Prophet (S) said to Hazrat Fatimah (R):

"O Fatimah! Go and witness your Qurbani, because the first drop of blood that falls from it causes all your sins to be forgiven. On the Day of Qiyamah, this animal will be brought with its blood and flesh and will be placed on your scale, increasing it seventy times more."

May God remove all intentions of self-aggrandisement from all our hearts, especially in our acts of Qurbani, and may our sacrifices be accepted.

By Sania Aiman

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed
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