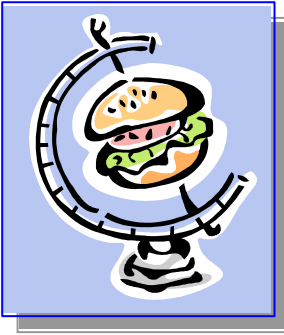


For Dr. Culture's® Muslim Friends:

If It's Not Made Of Ham, Why Do They Call It "Hamburger?"



If you doubt the importance of the Hamburger on American Culture then consider this: Americans on average eat 3 hamburger's a week. And McDonald's alone has sold 12 hamburgers for every person in the world. Nearly 7% on the United State's workforce had their first job at McDonald's. Hamburgers account for nearly 60% on all the sandwiches eaten. So next time you pick up a hamburger, remember it's not just a sandwich, it's an economy. And, Fries? French fries consume 7.5% of the United States Potato harvest each year.

The origin of the hamburger is clouded in controversy. In Medieval times, the Tartars, a band of warriors from Central Asia plains, would place pieces of beef under their saddles while they rode. This would (presumably!) tenderize the meat that would then be eaten raw. This is the legend of the origin of the modern, gourmet dish called "Steak Tartar."

In the nineteenth century, German immigrants brought a dish called ***Hamburg Style Beef*** to the United States, which had traveled to the seaport city of Hamburg, Germany from Russia. This dish was a raw, chopped piece of beef and is believed to be the primitive ancestor of the modern hamburger.

Now several people who claim to be the descendents of the hamburger's inventor dispute what happened next. The popular story is that the first hamburger was served up at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. This sandwich was made with a cooked patty of ground beef on a hard roll. Of course there are earlier references but this might very well be the first time a cooked patty hit the bun.

Mass distribution of the fast food hamburger started with America's White Castle Hamburger chain in 1921. White Castle was such an immediate success that dozens of imitators jumped up and quickly failed. This tiny hamburger originally sold for 5 cents. Later the tell tale holes were added to the patty to speed up cooking times and eliminate the need for flipping.



In 1934 the Wimpy Burger appeared. Named for Popeye's hamburger eating character, this burger went for the upscale market at 10 cents a burger. In keeping with the founder's wishes, all 1,500 restaurants were closed down when he died in 1978. The 1930's also saw the advent of the drive-in. Drive-in's changed the landscape of burgers forever by allowing diners to remain in their cars and therefore creating the concept of drive up service that remains the mainstay of the fast food industry.

By the late 1930's, Bob Wain of Bob's Big Boy, introduced the first double patty burger. Variety in Hamburgers was beginning and like White Castle the Big Boy found a lot of imitators. But it wasn't until 1948 when the first McDonald's opened that the modern fast



food Hamburger was set to revolutionize the way we eat. This first McDonald's didn't sell Hamburger's though; it was a Hot Dog stand. Ray Kroc, who would create the McDonald's empire, joined the team in 1954. By then the Hot Dog had been replaced by Hamburgers. The Big Mac was introduced in 1968 and the rest is hamburger history..!

So, while visiting the United States, I invite my Muslim friends to enjoy “Ham” burgers without concern for their Islamic faith.

Best regards,

Dr. Culture