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“ Saya percaya bahawa ilmu akan lebih bermakna apabila ia mampu menyentuh kehidupan dan membawa harapan kepada mereka yang memerlukan. ”

- Siti Asmah Mohamed -

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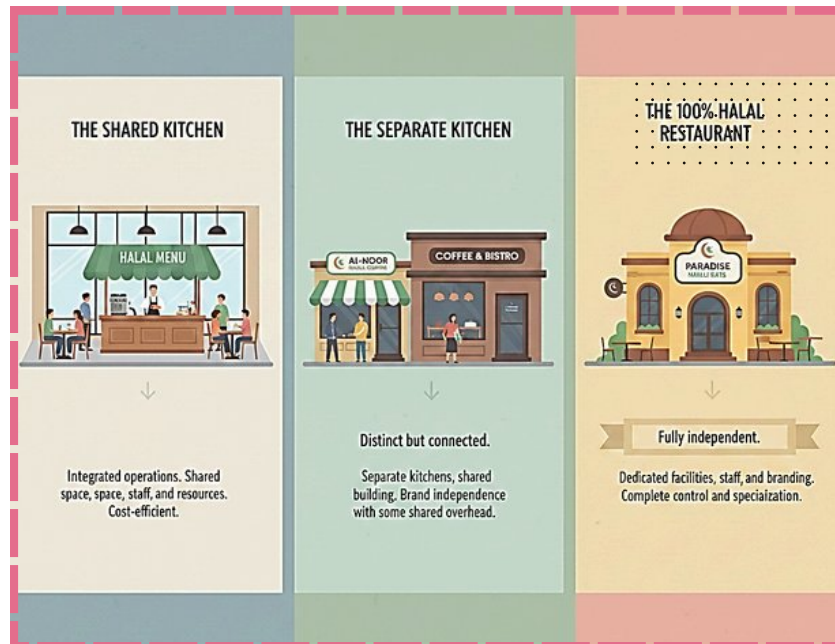
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ISLAMIC BANKING: A "Foodie's Guide" TO HOW IT WORKS.

BY: NOR HANIM ABD RAHMAN & RAFIZAH KECHIL

IF YOU'VE EVER WALKED INTO A BANK IN MALAYSIA, YOU MIGHT HAVE NOTICED DIFFERENT NAMES LIKE "ISLAMIC WINDOW" OR "ISLAMIC SUBSIDIARY."

If that sounds like "Finance-Speak" to you, don't worry. To make sense of it, let's forget about money for a second and imagine we are talking about restaurants. In Malaysia, Islamic banking has grown through three main stages:



1 The "Islamic Window" (The Shared Kitchen)

Think of this like your favourite neighbourhood cafe that decides to add a few Halal items to its regular menu.

How it works: This is a standard bank (like Maybank was back in the 90s) that opens a specific department or "window" for Islamic products.

The Setup: It uses the same building, the same staff, and the same computers as the regular bank.

The Layman's View: It's super convenient because you don't have to go anywhere new to get an Islamic loan.

The Worry: Some people feel a bit uneasy about the "Common Kitchen." They wonder if the money for the Halal dishes is being kept strictly away from the interest-based (non-Halal) money. Even though the accounting is separate, it doesn't feel 100% "pure" to everyone.

2

The "Islamic Subsidiary" (The Separate Shop Next Door)

Now, imagine that same cafe decides to open a dedicated Halal shop right next door.

How it works: This is a separate company (like CIMB Islamic or RHB Islamic) owned by the "parent" bank.

The Setup: It has its own name, its own manager, and its own dedicated kitchen. It is legally its own boss.

The Layman's View: This feels much "cleaner" and more professional. You know the money is clearly separated from the parent bank's interest-based activities.

The Perk: You get the best of both worlds. It's a separate shop, but you can still use the parent bank's huge network of ATMs and branches.

3

The "Full-Fledged" Bank (The 100% Halal Restaurant)

This is a restaurant that was "born" Halal. It has no connection to any interest-based parent company at all.

How it works: From the very first day, every single cent is managed under Shariah rules. Examples you might know are Bank Islam or Bank Muamalat.

The Layman's View: This is the "Gold Standard". There is zero risk of money mixing with a conventional parent because there is no conventional parent.

The Challenge: Because they don't have a "big brother" bank to lean on, they had to build all their own branches and ATMs from scratch.

SUMMARY USING COMPARISON TABLE:

	 ISLAMIC WINDOW	 ISLAMIC SUBSIDIARY	 FULL-FLEDGED BANK
The Analogy	 One Halal dish on a regular menu.	 A separate Halal shop owned by a regular restaurant.	 A 100% Halal restaurant from day one.
Money Separation	 Separate accounting, same "house".	 Legally separate company.	 Completely independent from the ground up.
Staff & System	 Shared with a conventional bank.	 Mostly dedicated, shares some HQ tech.	 100% dedicated to Islamic banking.
Trust Level	 Good (some may have doubts).	 Very High	 Highest ("True Blue")

Comparison is for visual reference only. Structure specifics may vary by institution.

Here, the process illustrates the evolution of Islamic Banking in Malaysia using a simple restaurant analogy. Whether you're a finance pro or just a curious consumer, understanding these three "stages" helps you choose the right fit for your values: (a) *The Islamic Window (The Shared Kitchen)*: A regular bank serving a few Halal "dishes". It's convenient but uses shared staff and systems, which leads some to worry about "purity". (b) *The Islamic Subsidiary (The Separate Kitchen)*: A legally independent Halal shop owned by a "parent" bank. It feels "cleaner" because the money is strictly separated, yet you still get to use the parents' huge ATM network. (c) *The Full-Fledged Bank (100% Halal Restaurant)*: The "Gold Standard". These banks were born Halal from day one with no conventional parent, ensuring zero risk of mixing funds. Thus, which model do you prefer for your banking needs?



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