

EVENTS/CAUSES

PETA accuses Prada, Herms of mistreating ostriches used for leather

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Prada handbag in ostrich leather

By STAFF REPORTS

The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has singled out Italy's Prada and France's Herms for the unethical treatment of ostriches.

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Ostrich leather, an exotic skin known for its polka dot pattern where the bird's feathers once grew, is commonly used by leather goods brands. PETA's latest investigative report, posted to YouTube, shows the mistreatment of ostriches for the benefit of luxury brands.

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PETA's "[Ostriches killed for Herms, Prada Bags](#)" calls out these two brands despite other well-known leather goods brands also using the material.

Nevertheless, the nearly six-minute video shows scenes of ostriches being plucked, electrocuted and exsanguinated while conscious. Scenes of the brutal treatment of these birds is juxtaposed with footage of ostriches in the wild.

Per PETA's investigation, the activist group says that 75 percent of all ostrich leather comes from slaughterhouses and tanneries in South Africa's Western Cape, with the two largest suppliers being Moostrich and Klein Karoo.

PETA recently targeted Herms and its alleged use of unethical leathers from alligators and crocodiles ([see story](#)), but this is the first time the activist group has narrowed its lens on Prada. Although PETA calls out Herms and Prada for the use of ostrich leather, a factory insider shown in the film states that LVMH also uses the skins from these suppliers.



Hermès Birkin bag in ostrich leather

"We know that other companies use ostrich skin," Kathy Guillermo, SVP at PETA, told the [New York Times](#). "But as we talked to more people who work at these factories and at trade shows, Prada was the name they offered up, the name they said was connected with these two companies in particular."

Prada declined to comment on the allegations, but consumer activists have already taken to its social media pages to voice their aversions to the use of ostrich leather. Many resorted to using Facebook's newly instated emojis to express their displeasure with Prada's alleged practices in addition to sharing the link to PETA's report.

While no stranger to PETA's accusations and often mum on its use of leathers, Hermès released a statement regarding its use of exotic skins. The statement shared is as follows:

"Hermès is fully committed to adherence to the highest international standards regarding the sustainable farming of non-endangered animals. Hermès is in the process of auditing supplier farms to ensure best practices are met in all instances. Any breach of rules will be rectified and sanctioned.

"For more than 10 years, Hermès has organized monthly visits to suppliers. The company demands conformity with slaughter standards established by veterinary experts and by the Fish and Wildlife Foundation (a federal American organization for the protection of nature) and with the rules established under the aegis of the U.N.O. by the Washington Convention of 1973 which defines the protection of endangered species."

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