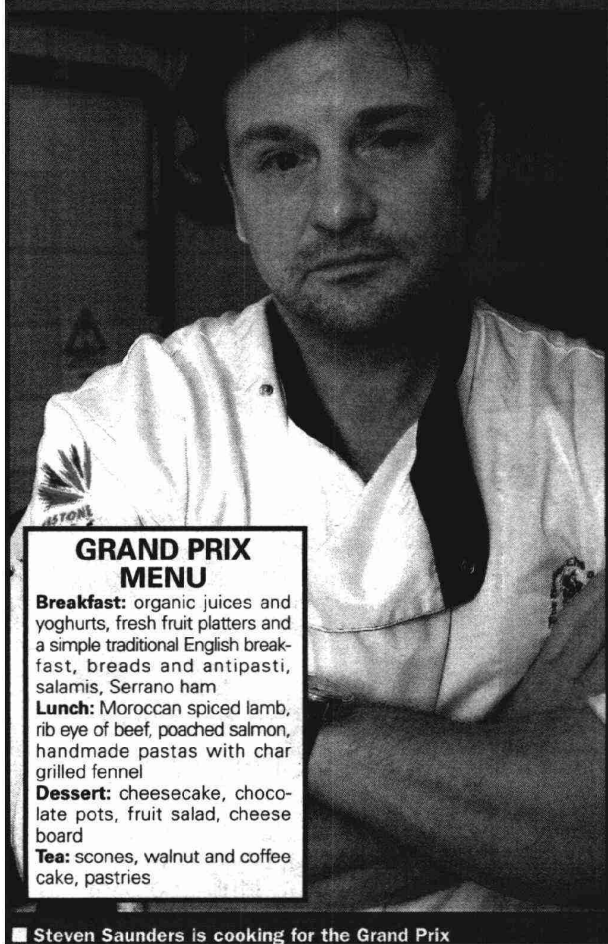


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# Formula One: very fast food

## Behind the scenes in the kitchens for the big race



### GRAND PRIX MENU

**Breakfast:** organic juices and yoghurts, fresh fruit platters and a simple traditional English breakfast, breads and antipasti, salamis, Serrano ham

**Lunch:** Moroccan spiced lamb, rib eye of beef, poached salmon, handmade pastas with char grilled fennel

**Dessert:** cheesecake, chocolate pots, fruit salad, cheese board

**Tea:** scones, walnut and coffee cake, pastries

PREPARING a meal for the family can sometimes feel a bit daunting, but imagine if you had to cook for 20,000 guests... This is the mammoth task that is facing the catering team at Silverstone at the British Grand Prix today.

While hopeful Lewis Hamilton is pulling on his gloves and helmet, some 3,000 chefs and waiting staff will be scurrying about behind the scenes chopping and seasoning for Britain.

On top of that, there'll also be 130 mobile catering units around the 3.2 mile course, serving everything from traditional fish and chips to organic burgers and even Thai food, to some of the 100,000 punters on race day.

The former TV chef Steven Saunders is the creative director of Silverstone's catering group Aspire.

One of the original Ready Steady Cook team, Steven's forte lies more in gourmet restaurants than mass catering, but when the opportunity came up to cook for Silverstone, he jumped at the chance.

"It's the most diverse and logistically challenging event in the social calendar, because of the layout of the course," says Steven.

Silverstone itself takes up an area of 800 acres, with hospitality suites packed into all the best corners and straights of the track.

The most prestigious venue is the British Racing Drivers' Club (BRDC) stand, which hosts the likes of former champion Damon Hill. Other celebrity race-goers have included Chris Martin, Roman Abramovitch and the Beckhams.

While some of the suites have their own kitchens - and even roof terrace barbecues - Steven creates another 6,000 lunches for individual boxes of up to 60 people from a massive central kitchen at the heart of the race course.

"Some chefs write menus around logistics," says Steven. "Whereas we write the logistics around the menu. You've got to keep the ingredients at the top of the ladder and keep it simple.

"It's about producing rosette-style service and you can't do that by having a buffet laid out on a table, you've got to inject some originality."

The personal touch is equally important for Steven and his team - from scanning the guest list and menu-testing before the event to popping their heads into each suite on the day.

"We do get some very famous people," adds Steven. "It's a sexy sport - and it's a diverse selection, from those who just want to walk around and eat from mobiles, to a higher level of hospitality. But the standard whoever the people are has got to be the same."

■ Steven Saunders is cooking for the Grand Prix