

Great British Menu  
Episode 1 - 5  
Starts Monday 30 March at 6.30PM  
BBC Two

Over the past three years **Great British Menu** has cooked for Her Majesty the Queen at her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday banquet, served a magnificent meal to the gastronomic elite of France and thrilled some of the world's finest chefs with some of the very best, cutting edge contemporary British food.

Now the fourth series begins on BBC Two with the chefs competing to cook a homecoming banquet to honour men and women recently returned from active service in Afghanistan, along with their families who have supported them. The competing chefs are all determined to win and cook a meal bursting with the tastes of home.

Alongside a few surprises, The **Great British Menu** sees two great culinary talents battle it out in the kitchen each week, competing to create a magnificent British meal - a taste of home - that the judges and public consider fitting for the country's returning heroes.

With a total of eight regions and 16 chefs, week one starts in the Midlands, and sees Glynn Purnell (*Purnell's, Birmingham*) up against Daniel Clifford (*Midsummer House, Cambridge*) in the Central heat.

Michelin starred Purnell invites his father into his restaurant to have a taste of his version of a British icon – brown sauce, which Glynn names GP sauce, made in Birmingham. Meanwhile Daniel visits a smokery in Bottisham to see their traditional kiln-fired smokery. He has an unusual ingredient he wants to smoke, one which they have never tried in 25 years of business.

Former Great British Menu Champion Sat Bains surprises the chefs and will be in the kitchen throughout the week to offer advice and support. Series four introduces the service visit – each chef is given the opportunity to work in their opponents kitchen, thus providing both chef's with a chance to get up close and personal under pressured conditions.

Each week the chefs get the chance to experience life in the Armed Forces when they go on a reconnaissance mission to a local military base in their region. Glynn and Daniel are given a rare insight into the RAF when they visit RAF Coningsbury, Lincolnshire, which is home to the UK's Quick Reaction Alert who protects UK airspace. The base is huge and the military chef's have an enormous job to feed so many RAF personnel – Glynn and Daniel are put to the test in a cook-off for the pilots to taste.

#### **Chefs taking part in Great British Menu 2009:**

**Central:** Glynn Purnell (*Purnell's, Birmingham*) vs Daniel Clifford (*Midsummer House, Cambridge*)

**London & South East:** Mark Sargeant (*Gordon Ramsay at Claridges*) vs Tristan Welch (*Launceston Place, London*)

**North East:** Ian Matfin (*Abode, Manchester*) vs Kenny Atkinson (*The White Room at Seaham Hall, County Durham*)

**North West:** Nigel Haworth (*Northcote Manor, Blackburn*) vs Aiden Byrne (*The Church Green, Lymm, Cheshire*)

**Northern Ireland:** Danny Millar (*Balloo House, Killinchy*) vs Clare Smyth (*Gordon Ramsay Royal Hospital Road*)

**Scotland:** Tom Kitchin (*The Kitchin, Edinburgh*) vs Alan Murchison (*L'Ortolan, Shinfield, Berkshire*)

**South West:** Nathan Outlaw (*Restaurant Nathan Outlaw, Fowey, Cornwall*) vs Shaun Rankin (*Bohemia, Jersey*)

**Wales:** Stephen Terry (*The Hardwick, Abergavenny*) vs James Sommerin (*The Crown at Whitebrook, Monmouth*)

40 x 30' regional heats

4 x 60' finals

1 x 30' results show

1 x 60' documentary showcasing the spectacular final banquet

## Judges Q and A

### Matt Fort

**\* What are your thoughts on this year's theme?**

Cooking for the Queen, for the cream of French gastronomic society and for the world's greatest chefs - you can't get more rarefied than that. It seems absolutely right, and in keeping with the times, that the Great British Menu should honour the men and women of the great British Armed Forces

**\* Are your expectations even higher now we're on series four?**

Yes. After three series, I think that the chefs taking part are familiar and trust the Great British Menu. They appreciate just how serious the challenge is, and they take it seriously. That's its great secret.

**\* What are you looking for this series?**

For inspired cooking that makes familiar ingredients and combinations fresh and new; for food that makes people feel as if they are eating the finest dinner of their lives; and for a dinner which sends us all away smiling with pleasure and happiness. It's a very serious test of a chef's creativity, the imagination and their skills.

**\* What do you think of this year's contestants? Do you have your eye on anyone specific?**

It's an interesting mix of some of last year's participants and some very hot new talent. I think the new chefs will push the older hands all the way - and in some cases elbow them out of contention. My mind, like my mouth, is open.

**\* What are you most looking forward to this series?**

To seeing how imaginative and empathetic the chefs are in interpreting the brief. They are used to cooking in very familiar surroundings for familiar customers. Now they have to play away from home, and cook for people whose expectations will be every bit as high as their regular patrons, but whose recent experience has been anything but that of a fine dining restaurant.

**\* Any specific ups and downs so far this series?**

Chefs appreciating that this is a serious opportunity to showcase their talents. The quality of ingredients shining out. Working with Prue and Oliver becomes more delightful and rewarding with each series. I'm trying to find a down, but I can't.

**\* What is your ideal/favourite dish?**

The next one

### Prue Leith

**\* What are your thoughts on this year's theme?**

I rather like it. Cooking for troops and their families is a serious challenge for these chefs. They have to crack "A Taste of Home". The food has to be celebratory, original but at the same time they can't deliver ordinary food.

**\* Are your expectations even higher now we're on series four?**

Yes. At the start top chefs did not take the programme quite as seriously as they do now. They respect it and badly want to shine. Besides, it fills their restaurants so they are dead keen to get on the show and then do well.

**\* What are you looking for this series?**

Quite Hard. "Taste of Home" means not too madly challenging. A bit comforting, a bit familiar, with local ingredients. "Celebratory" means something special so Sunday lunch won't do. "Food fit for Heroes" means something special and exciting, and that will make them feel appreciated.

**\* What do you think of this years contestants? Do you have your eye on anyone specific?**

There are some returners who have done well before, like Tom Kitchen or Stephen Terry, but the new guys sound really exciting and passionate so I think it's all up for grabs.

**\* What are your top tips?**

Lay off the foams, drizzles, splotches, etc, and keep in simple

**\* What are you most looking forward to this series?**

I enjoy bossing Oliver and Matthew around. We are all good friends and it is huge fun.

**\* Any specific ups and downs so far this series?**

We don't see what goes on in the kitchens but I understand there have been a few tears and tantrums. I HATE being the judge having to make the announcement.

**\* What is your ideal/favourite dish?**

Can't give too much away, but as usual, the chefs are better at savoury dishes than puds. We have had extremely few stand out blow-your-tastebuds puddings.

**Oliver Peyton**

**What are your thoughts on this year's theme?**

Two thoughts – one, anything that highlights the work of our armed forces makes good sense to me and secondly it is by far the most difficult challenge because we are asking chefs to make traditional dishes but to add something of themselves to it - it is very easy to misfire.

**Are your expectations even higher now we're on series four?**

Absolutely as all the people involved have three great series to look back on but everything is moving so fast in food in the UK that really we can be far less forgiving than we were in the beginning.

**What are you looking for this series?**

Greatness

**What do you think of this year's contestants?**

Honestly I have seen great chefs fail in previous competition that I feel anybody can succeed on the day.

**What are your top tips?**

The rise of the pudding chef

**What are you most looking forward to this series?**

Any new chefs

**Any specific ups and downs so far this series?**

The best dish of the day being on the wrong menu.

**What is your ideal/favourite dish?**

I love lamb. I am hoping to see some small defenseless as a whole dish i.e. piglet or baby lamb. It is a feast or a banquet after all.