Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford on a culinary journey in the Porsche 911 GTS

07/09/2026 When he's not running the pass at his Cambridge restaurant, you're likely to find two-Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford behind the wheel of a 911. We join him on a culinary pilgrimage to visit his friend – and fellow two-Michelin-starred chef – Sat Bains.

Albert Einstein once said, 'Once you stop learning, you start dying.' A little blunt, perhaps, but an effective way of saying what we all know – learning new things keeps us young and awake.

You might think a Michelin-starred chef knows everything there is to know about food: they've perfected their Parmesan foam and mastered their veal jus – what else could they possibly learn?

But masters don't stop being students; they just choose their classrooms more carefully. In the case of two-Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford, that means an annual pilgrimage to France, the cradle of haute cuisine, to worship at the altar of sauce and soufflé.

But these journeys aren't just about the food. Daniel and four of his celebrity chef friends – Clare Smyth, Sat Bains, Tom Kerridge and Claude Bosi – turn their trip into an adventure that's as much about camaraderie and cars as cooking.

For their last trip, Daniel took a Porsche 911 GTS – and today he's taking another drive, only this time, a little more local. Instead of France, he's driving from his own two-star restaurant, Midsummer House in Cambridge, to see his friend at Restaurant Sat Bains in Nottingham. Sinking into this car's optional sports seats and setting off to the soundtrack of the flat-six T-Hybrid, Daniel tells me about their annual pilgrimages – and the importance of keeping an open mind.

'France has 22 three-star restaurants!' Daniel tells me. 'As a young chef, you read about them in books and the Michelin Guide – these are places you're fascinated by, but you never thought you'd get to eat in them.' So despite having a clutch of Michelin stars and cuisine awards between them, this group of friends still get starry-eyed when they visit these time-honoured French restaurants.

'On these road trips, we go to places that have been iconic for 40 years,' Daniel says. 'The five of us are like children again! There's a chef in the south of France, Michel Bras, who was one of the first three-star chefs in the area. His son Sébastien has taken over, and we went for dinner. We were all giddy – like we were all 25 again. Dinner was off the charts, and then Sébastien said to us, "My dad's at the farm tomorrow, would you like to go?" And we're like, "Oh my God! We're going to meet Michel Bras!" So we went to the farm and Michel Bras is showing us around his gardens! I feel the happiest I've ever been when I'm on that road trip."

And, of course, the driving is very much a part of the joy: 'French roads are so well suited to sports cars. When you drive off the motorway and suddenly you're driving through the Alps or you're driving through Provence – you just feel like you can really get the most out of the car.' Daniel's introduction to the 911 GTS was almost as transcendent as eating in those restaurants: 'I'd never driven it before, so the night before the trip I thought, "I need to go take this out to get used to it." And I was like, "Oh my God – this car!" I came back and Alice, my wife, said, "Have you seen your face?" I said, "No," and she said, "You should look in the mirror – you're glowing like you're the happiest person I've ever seen!" I'd never driven a car like it before – where you feel like you've become part of it.'

Today's journey may be shorter than those French road trips, but the purpose is the same. Daniel talks about the importance of learning from other chefs: 'You never go to copy; you go to be inspired,' he says. 'Someone's use of one ingredient can change your whole trip – just the way an artichoke is used, for example, can kick something off, trigger an emotion. Right now, I'm excited about going to Sat's! The anticipation builds in me, because I know exactly what we're going to do.'

We reach Sat's restaurant on the outskirts of Nottingham, and the two friends tour the kitchen garden and reminisce about their last trip.

Sat's thoughts chime with Daniel's: 'There's a depth of knowledge in France – it's like going back to the motherland,' he says. 'But the best thing is when you look around the table and see the smiles and joy

on everyone's faces. We're all like kids, laughing our heads off.'

We head into Sat's kitchen, and Daniel sits at the chef's table, in the middle of the action. Sat has kindly cooked for us as well as Daniel – four plates from his lunch menu that completely blow my mind. The ingredients are complex, the explanations bewildering: 'Wild bass, dried for four days,' says Sat, '… cooked on the plancha [a flat metal grill plate]. Then we sit it in beef dripping to get that roast flavour. It's a take on bourguignon, but instead of mushrooms we've got salsify, onion bacon, some beautiful thyme, parsley and some spring onions for freshness. There's also a reduced red wine sauce with fish stock, and a little kimchi, made with salsify and pickled onions.' Breaking into the beautiful, delicately balanced structure on the plate seems criminal – but after the first mouthful, I demolish it in seconds. The flavour is out of this world. Daniel is smiling too, shaking his head with surprise and delight. Despite being a two-star chef for over 20 years, you can see he's never lost his love of great food. 'This is why our trips are so important,' he tells me. 'How can you improve yourself if you're not looking at what else is out there?'

I can't reply because my mouth is full and my brain is doing somersaults. You don't need to be Einstein to know that food like this definitely keeps you alive for longer.

Further Information

Porsche and Michelin have been collaborating for over 50 years, and more recently Porsche partnered with the Michelin Guide to create the Recharge Guide – curated road-trip itineraries for electric and hybrid Porsche owners, blending inspiring food and travel with practical EV charging information. You can access the Recharge Guide through the ViaMichelin app. Our thanks to Daniel Clifford at midsummerhouse.co.uk and Sat Bains at restaurantsatbains.com.

Info

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Consumption data

911 Carrera GTS (WLTP)*: Fuel consumption combined: 10.6 – 10.1 l/100 km; CO_2 emissions combined: 242 – 230 g/km; CO_2 class: G

*Further information on the official fuel consumption and the official specific CO_2 emissions of new passenger cars can be found in the "Leitfaden über den Kraftstoffverbrauch, die CO_2-Emissionen und den Stromverbrauch neuer Personenkraftwagen" (Fuel Consumption, CO_2Emissions and Electricity Consumption Guide for New Passenger Cars), which is available free of charge at all sales outlets and from DAT (Deutsche Automobil Treuhand GmbH, Helmuth-Hirth-Str. 1, 73760 Ostfildern-Scharnhausen, www.dat.de).

Image Sublines

Path: Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford on a culinary journey in the Porsche 911 GTS/Images/img_1.jpg
Title: Daniel Clifford, two-Michelin-starred chef, 2026, Image: Fred MacGregor
Subline: In the driving seat: World-renowned chef Daniel Clifford climbs into the Porsche 911 GTS T-Hybrid outside Midsummer House in Cambridge, where he has been Chef Patron for the past 25 years.

Path: Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford on a culinary journey in the Porsche 911 GTS/Images/img_2.jpg
Title: Porsche 911 Carrera GTS, 2026, Foto: Fred MacGregor
Subline: [ci:911-Carrera-GTS-992-II]

Path: Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford on a culinary journey in the Porsche 911 GTS/Images/img_4.jpg
Title: Restaurant Sat Bains, 2026, Image: Fred MacGregor
Subline: Hot plates: The Michelin Guide says Restaurant Sat Bains has 'an unerring commitment to well-sourced produce. Whatever the dish, it will be as punchy as it is good-looking'.

Path: Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford on a culinary journey in the Porsche 911 GTS/Images/img_5.jpg
Title: Sat Bains, 2026, Image: Fred MacGregor
Subline: Serving suggestion: Sat Bains in his eponymous Nottingham restaurant. Like Midsummer House, Restaurant Sat Bains has two Michelin stars – a distinction that places a restaurant in the premier league of fine dining.

Path: Michelin-starred chef Daniel Clifford on a culinary journey in the Porsche 911 GTS/Images/img_6.jpg
Title: Daniel Clifford, Sat Bains (l-r), 2026, Image: Fred MacGregor
Subline: Mind your peas and cucumbers: The two chefs share a joke in Restaurant Sat Bains' kitchen garden, where Sat and his team select many of the vegetables and herbs used in their dishes.

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