



Yas Marina Circuit Case Study

Motor racing fans across the world gasped at the magnificence of the Yas Marina Circuit when it hosted the first Formula 1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix - and Aspire was keeping the wheels turning in terms of catering and hospitality.

It was a major coup when the still-young company won the seven-year contract (covering year-round hospitality, as well as the grand prix) in May 2009. It was also the start of a major venture. During the three-day grand prix alone, Aspire was responsible for 48 restaurants across three grandstands, six 200-seat public restaurants, 11 quick-service restaurants, bars and 30 temporary mobile concessions. There were 27,000 hungry spectators in the 48 restaurants over the three days and 71,000 public spectators - but before they could be served, Aspire had to fly out and accommodate 360 personnel experienced in hospitality and motor sport, and blend them with 150 local personnel. As Sean Valentine says, that alone would be "a massive event" for most caterers, but Aspire went on to delight tens of thousands of people with fantastic food - all overseen by Steven Saunders, from gourmet sushi to chicken shawarma - and fantastic service from staff and chefs who really understand the Aspire ethos. Aspire also provided public catering for more than 100,000 people who attended the four concerts that included Aerosmith, Beyonce, Kings of Leon and Jamiroquai.

Sean said: "Having been involved in operating three British Grand Prix we were able to adapt the operation for Yas Marina. The challenge for us was one of cultural understanding and awareness. I have to say that the team did a fantastic job and delivered a very high level of food service in an extremely challenging environment".