



# Festival of speed

The Goodwood Festival of Speed is the largest motoring garden party in the world – an incredible four days that brings together a heady mix of cars, stars and motorsport ‘royalty’ to create the largest car culture event in the world on the second weekend in July

**P**icture the scene. A glorious summer's day, with a picnic hamper, a group of friends and a glass of something bubbly. You're sitting on the lawn of an English stately home. All is bliss. Suddenly, the tranquility is broken by the piercing sound of a V6 Formula 1 car thundering past you at 160mph. Rrrrrwaaaammph!

In a flash, it's gone. Soon to be followed by an altogether different sight. Here comes the slow chugging of a vintage car from the 1900s, that looks distinctly like it's been driven off the set of *Chitty Bang Bang*. As it trundles past, you cannot help but raise your glass to toast the unique annual event that is the Goodwood Festival of Speed.

A two hour drive south-west of London is Goodwood House. Nestled in the picturesque South Downs, it is the family home of the Dukes of Richmond and Gordon. On the estate is the world-famous

**Above:** A McLaren MP4-12C GT3 race car drives up the famous hill at the Goodwood Festival of Speed in 2011

horse racing track and a former airfield that was converted into a motor racing circuit following the end of the war.

The circuit's second race meeting in 1949 was described as “glorious” and the epithet has stuck to Goodwood, which has always managed to retain a garden-party atmosphere. Motor racing ceased at the circuit in the 1960s but when the current Duke of Richmond (formerly Lord March) took over the estate in the early 1990s he was keen to revive motor sport at the venue.

With restrictions still in place on the circuit (but now relaxed) he had the ingenious idea to have cars driven – at high speed – up his Tarmac drive.

Timed hillclimb runs began in 1993 and large numbers of spectators flocked to his West Sussex home to watch the latest racing machinery, classic cars and motorcycles from all ages take to the hallowed 1.16 miles of asphalt that starts next to the Duke's cricket pitch, snakes around the front door of his stately home and through his estate.

With static displays such as the Concours d'Elegance, classic car auctions, moving motor shows, supercar runs, forest rally stages and airshows the annual Goodwood Festival of Speed has retained much of its original charm but has now expanded to be one of the most popular motor sport events of the year. Today numbers are capped on the



four-day event to 150,000 – and tickets sell fast.

By not clashing with the Le Mans 24 Hours or the Formula 1 calendar, Goodwood caters to all motor racing fans and anyone who has a passion for cars and

**Top:** Former F1 World Champion Nico Rosberg and Hollywood star Keanu Reeves  
**Above:** Two vintage classics at The Goodwood Festival of Speed  
**Right:** A family celebrates Goodwood's 70th anniversary in 2019

motoring. It's not unusual to see Lewis Hamilton at the wheel of his Mercedes F1 car charging up the hill, or performing dramatic burnouts, then the next minute '92 world champion Nigel Mansell (complete with flat cap and goggles) at the wheel of a pre-war veteran machine.

After a period of timing F1 cars up the hill, the decision was made to limit their appearance to ‘demonstration’ runs. That meant Nick Heidfeld's 41.60 second timed run in a McLaren F1 car held the course record for over

in transportation, an incredible central display in front of the main house which is an iconic celebration of the festival, the rally forest stage, action sports – such as BMX mountain bikers and trail riders – and the Cartier Style et Luxe, which has some of the most extraordinary automotive designs. On top of all that, there's corporate hospitality and fine dining to enjoy too. For the motor racing enthusiast, it is a truly unmissable event.

Four-day pass from \$225 (€200). Shootout Sunday from \$85 (€95). At the time of publication, this event was set to go ahead.

[www.goodwood.com/motorsport/festival-of-speed](http://www.goodwood.com/motorsport/festival-of-speed)

**70 YEARS AT GOODWOOD**

