

good living

Slice, dice, cut and run

Four elite chefs will tackle the Sun-Herald City2Surf in the name of charity, writes **Garry Maddox**.

Working long hours in fevered kitchens, many leading Sydney chefs are more likely to exercise their tempers than their bodies. When they talk about warming up, they mean an oven rather than a light jog. And their chips are generally crisply fried rather than tied to running shoes to register race times.

But the Sun-Herald City2Surf run on Sunday has drawn some high-profile chefs and cooks out of their kitchens to raise funds for their favourite charities.

For Neil Perry, it's the first time he has run the 14-kilometre event since his rugby playing days in the mid-1970s.

"That's called ancient history," he says. "I came straight out of football training basically and ran

in the race. I was a little bit younger, more nimble and I'd suggest quite a bit fitter."

The Rockpool chef and restaurateur has entered to raise funds for the Starlight Children's Foundation, which grants wishes for seriously ill children.

Perry's Sydney restaurants are represented by a team of 30-odd runners, including managers, administration staff and waiters. Team Rockpool will be joined in the run by Daniel Hughes from Manta Restaurant (raising funds for the Black Dog Institute), Giovanni Pilu from Pilu at Freshwater (Barnardos Australia) and Peter Kuruvita from Flying Fish (A Start in Life).

Working long hours and travelling between restaurants in three states has made it tough for Perry to train.



Raising dough ... (from left) chefs Daniel Hughes, Giovanni Pilu, Neil Perry and Peter Kuruvita. Photo: Marco Del Grande

"It's been difficult and I have another issue – I have a back injury," he says. "So I'm doing a lot of very long walks and also stair runs and pilates so that I can kind of nurse myself to race day and just jog out the race. A lot of chefs get it. I'm 54 but I've worked two lifetimes."

Perry has two aims – completing the City2Surf in 90 minutes and raising \$150,000 with his team.

"Getting to the end of the race is going to be fun and rewarding but the most rewarding thing is knowing that if I get to \$150,000, there's 25 kids around Australia

who'll get a chance to experience that bit of joy during some pretty rough times," he says.

For Kuruvita, completing the course will be difficult. He is determined to take part despite a shoulder reconstruction after a motorcycle accident.

"I won't be able to run because it'll obviously jerk it too much and the surgery is very new so I'm going to walk," he says. "It's going to be a bloody horrible day for me but I really want to do it because of the charity."

Hughes will pick up the pace

somewhat – he has competed in marathons and half-marathons and jokingly calls himself the fastest chef on the Woolloomooloo wharf. He trains most days between the restaurant's lunch and dinner shifts.

"It's not really the done thing in the chef's world but I've always been involved in sports and tried to keep fit," he says. "I just find if you're fitter, day to day life is a bit easier."

To support the running chefs, go to fundraise.city2surf.com.au and search for their names.