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courses, and I just got really into it—there's something quite exciting about those three disciplines. I just needed another challenge—and Kona was the Oscars.”

As he splits his time between London and Los Angeles, Ramsay started training with no-nonsense swim coach Gerry Rodrigues in Santa Monica, who appears to have turned the tables on him. “Even if I haven’t finished the session, he still kicks you out,” Ramsay says. “I love that kind of old-school authority. Anybody talks over him when he’s commanding orders, he will lay into them. I love it.” When Ramsay showed up 10 minutes late one time, Rodrigues made Ramsay show him the actual speeding ticket that made him late.

And now Ramsay, a Ferrari collector and admitted speed freak, has a bike that he can’t get enough of: a custom tri machine from Guru procured over the summer that Ramsay affectionately calls “the f*****g stealth bomber.” When Ramsay’s wife recently flew from London to L.A. with his bike in tow, she jokingly says when she landed that he asked her more questions about the bike’s well-being than about her and their children’s flight. “That’s how obsessed I am with this thing,” he says.

But being as in demand and as turbocharged as Ramsay is presents some obvious challenges when training for an Ironman. His frequent-flier lifestyle means he’s training all over the place—often in some enviable training locations: Central Park, the Aquatic Center at Chelsea Piers, London’s Richmond Park, the Santa Monica Mountains. He also takes his bike on location with him, and will describe epic rides through places like rural Vermont taken during filming breaks for an episode of “Hotel Hell.”

GETTING KONA FIT

HOW RAMSAY IS PREPPING FOR RACE DAY

Ramsay trains almost as intensely as he runs a kitchen. He works out three to four days a week, with coach Will Usher in the U.K., and Nicky Holender in L.A. Ramsay often does intensity training at 4:30 a.m. before work, and eight- to nine-hour training days on his days off—sometimes incorporating a six-hour bike ride followed by a three-hour run.

His first goal was to lose weight and excess muscle mass. “His starting weight was 226 pounds, and his ‘before’ picture showed a man that needed to know how to control calories,” Holender says. “Gordon has always been an extremely strong individual, but with his elevated weight, he would routinely pull muscles and injure himself.”

Ramsay’s workouts with Holender feature high-intensity, low-impact movements, sprints, tabata runs and lots of variety, “so that his body would not stop shredding calories quickly,” the coach says.

One innovative feature of Holender’s work with Ramsay is his use of weighted vests. For every pound that Ramsay lost, Holender would add it into the weighted jacket, which accelerated Ramsay’s calorie expenditure. “Within four weeks of that, all of a sudden I’d dropped 20 pounds,” Ramsay says.

Many of the workouts U.K. coach Usher tailored for Ramsay are 60- to 90-minute, high-intensity brick sessions that can be done on the road, with time-efficiency in mind: To compensate for the shorter sessions, he likes to incorporate core strength-building exercises.

Just as Ramsay was ramping up his training last year, he suffered a bad tackle in a soccer charity match (look it up on YouTube) in front of 77,000 people at Wembley Stadium against an all-star team of retired English professionals in October, leaving him with a torn meniscus. After surgery and a month of rest, he resumed training in January, and says his knee feels 100 percent again. “He forgot it was a f*****g charity match!” Ramsay says of former soccer great Teddy Sheringham, the perpetrator. “He took me out like a juggernaut. My back was numb, I had oxygen on—it was insane.”

But in typical Ramsay fashion, neither a repaired knee nor a training regimen undertaken in parks or hotel gyms in all corners of the globe will likely stop him. His biggest concern? Reminding himself to slow down, of course.



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