



Variety magazine:

Hell's Kitchen

(Reality series -- Fox., Mon., June 4, 9 p.m.)

By [PHIL GALLO](#)

Chef [Gordon Ramsay](#) gets confrontational with contestant Vinnie during dinner service on Fox's 'Hell's Kitchen.'

Taped in Los Angeles by [Granada America](#) in association with A. Smith & Co. Executive producers, [Arthur Smith](#), [Kent Weed](#), [Curt Northrup](#); co-executive producer, [Kenny Rosen](#).

Starring: Gordon Ramsay

First episode of the first two seasons of Gordon Ramsay's hunt for a top chef saw a handful of competitors sparkle -- from day one, it was clear [Michael Wray](#) and [Heather West](#) had the goods to run a kitchen and that they would be among the finalists. In round three, which starts the way the first two did with the dozen cooks whipping up their signature dishes, it isn't as clear. While all the competitors work in the food industry, personality ticks appear to be driving the casting more than defined line-cooking skills. It looks like a season primed for confrontation.

And that's what Ramsay does best. This is a former athlete who knows how to "bring it" -- talk trash, make it comical -- "are you serving chicken and snot?" -- and cut to the bone as he dissects his charges for their cooking and character flaws. He has a bunch of weepers this year as the tears flow early and often in the first ep; to some degree it hints that the finalists might be competitors who overcome shaky emotional starts and then prove themselves. Or it may be those who show up steady and stay the course.

Ramsay, the bad boy of the British culinary world whose recent Gotham enterprise has been greeted with mixed reviews, starts in on his group of wannabes immediately as he tastes their 12 "specialties." Only two of the 12 are deemed acceptable -- a seafood tostada and a steak -- and self-esteem seems to be drained from the bodies of the other 10. Although the Hell's Kitchen restaurant has been expanded, production is following the same patterns of its first two seasons -- the aerial shots, the capsule review of the show that opens each segment, the bleeped bits, the tortured staff. Teams are again divided by gender and night one of the operation is, once again, a disaster. Ramsay again selects the best of the worst who then nominates two players for elimination. At the end of round one, the strategic gauntlet is throw down, yet another hint this might be a very testy summer in the Ramsay domain.

Review copy supplied by Fox does not divulge who is sent home.

Variety's team of cookshow enthusiasts will analyze each episode of "Hell's Kitchen" and Bravo's ["Top Chef"](#) this summer at [variety.com](#).

Executive Producer
(Person) [Arthur Smith](#)

Casting, [Sheila Conlin](#). The Conlin Company - Running time: 60 MIN.

Supervising producers, [Sandi Johnson](#), [Faye Stapleton](#), [Arthur Borman](#);

Producer, Emiline Davis;

Director, [Brad Kreisberg](#);

Production design, [John Janavs](#);