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Hell's Kitchen 4

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## Gordon Gets Chatty About Hell's Kitchen 4

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Although the fourth season of Hell's Kitchen doesn't begin until Tuesday, April 1, Gordon Ramsay has already begun hyping the show. This season the stakes are high and the competition is the most stressful to date for both the competitors and Ramsay. Unlike previous seasons, the wannabes are not competing to cook at some restaurant in a Vegas casino resort. This time around the winner will become the chef at Gordon's own, much-hyped restaurant, London West Hollywood in LA. I recently sat in on a conference call with the bad-boy chef. To hear what he had to say, read more.

On London West Hollywood:

Gordon Ramsay: I have to say, opening up in New York taught me a lot. London's a tough market, Paris is a tough market, but New York, well, that's extraordinary. Everything I learned and didn't do in New York I would put into place here in the London West Hollywood. Here, in LA, trust me, there will be fireworks from the canapés right through to the desserts. It's not going to be sedated, heavy, rich French cuisine; it's going to be a light and American, California style with a bit of a Japanese influence.

The style, the feel and the décor of the dining room is vibrant. It's very LA, very cool fabrics, lots of silver, lots of nickel, brushed stainless steel, and lots of cream fabric. It's going to be fast, it's going to be furious, and more importantly, we have that level of intimacy, that level of fun without being long winded. That's really important.

On tasting the contestants crappy signature dishes:

GR: I get really frustrated because they know I'm coming. So when a chef is that incompetent or stupid or lazy in terms of health and hygiene. . . . When people say, "Oh, you're doing that for the cameras," no, I'm doing that because if you work in this industry and we're going to spend 25 or 30 years in the kitchen trying to master our craft, how stupid do we have to be to put together a venison tartare with capers, shallots, parsley, lemon juice, egg yolk, and combine that with a scallop tartare with, again, ketchup, lime juice, and white chocolate bound together with caviar? What type of nut is going to actually come out and eat and pay top dollar for that level of stupidity?

It does hurt. You'd think they'd perfect it in a way that says right, keep it simple, focus on the ingredients, and when we go out for lunch or dinner, let's be honest, it is the flavor that holds the memory. The presentation is one thing, but the execution of flavor is what draws you back to a restaurant.

On what celebrity he would absolutely love to cook for:

GR: I get excited cooking for anybody, to be honest. I'm cooking for Nelson Mandela's birthday party in Hyde Park this summer. I suppose if I wanted something really fun and sexy, it'd have to be Cameron Diaz. She's tall, she's beautiful, and she loves pink meat.

On why he decided to give this season's winner a job at one of his restaurants:

GR: I cringe sometimes when everyone talks about a reality show with no integrity. So I thought about this idea of me looking for a chef. Is it promotional? No, of course it's not! I've never been any form of marketing tool in order to promote my restaurant.

Sometimes I get a lot of criticism from the industry because it's not the real deal. Well, it is in the premiere league. If you want to go to the top, then of course you have to weather the storm. It's not all plain sailing, and it's not all about creating little pitchers out of watermelons. I get very frustrated when things go wrong, clearly.

Putting my neck on the line and looking for a chef for my own restaurant was almost an investment, from my point of view, a way to make sure that we continue searching for talent and propelling it. Yes, I want to put my money where my mouth is and prove to the industry that any winner of Hell's Kitchen is more than qualified and capable of standing alone in my kitchen, that's for sure.