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*High-res images, show footage, and interviews available upon request.

CHOPPED ALL-STARS

Season Two Chef Bios

Episode 1 – “Iron Chefs Do Battle”

Cat Cora (Santa Barbara) made television history on *Iron Chef America* as the first and only female Iron Chef. In addition to being a world renowned chef, Cat has also authored three cookbooks, “Cat Cora’s Kitchen: Favorite Meals for Family and Friends” (Chronicle Books LLC, 2004), “Cooking From The Hip: Fast, Easy, Phenomenal Meals” (Houghton Mifflin, 2007), and most recently “Classics With a Twist: Fresh Takes on Favorite Dishes” (Houghton Mifflin, 2010).

Marc Forgione (New York) won season three of *The Next Iron Chef*. He is Chef and Owner of Marc Forgione in New York. Marc was recently awarded his second *Michelin* star, making him the youngest American-born chef and owner to receive the honor in consecutive years.

Jose Garces (Philadelphia) won season two of *The Next Iron Chef*. Since opening his first restaurant, Amada, Jose has opened eleven additional restaurants in Philadelphia, Chicago, Scottsdale, and Palm Springs; authored the cookbook “Latin Evolution” (Lake Isle Press, 2008); and won the James Beard Foundation’s prestigious Best Chef Mid-Atlantic award, 2009.

Michael Symon (Cleveland) was the first winner of *The Next Iron Chef*, securing a permanent place on *Iron Chef America*. Michael is the chef and owner of the critically acclaimed Lola and Lolita restaurants in Cleveland. He currently appears on *The Chew* (ABC) and *Symon’s Suppers* (Cooking Channel).

Episode 2 – “Prime Time vs. Day Time”

Keegan Gerhard (Denver) has appeared on *Food Network Challenge* and *Last Cake Standing*. Keegan was named one of the nation’s top pastry chefs by both *Chocolatier* and *Pastry Art & Design* magazines. He and his wife are the owners and chefs of D-Bar Desserts in Denver.

Jeffrey Saad (Los Angeles) was a runner-up in season five of *Food Network Star*. He went on to host *The Spice Smuggler* for [Food Network.com](http://FoodNetwork.com) and now hosts *United Tastes of America* on Cooking Channel. Jeffrey is currently the executive chef and partner of The Grove restaurants in San Francisco, and will release his first cookbook “Jeffrey Saad’s Global Kitchen: Recipes Without Borders” (Ballantine) on March 20th.

Aarti Sequeira (Los Angeles) was the winner of season six of *Food Network Star*, landing her very own Food Network show, *Aarti Party*. She is also a food correspondent for *Drop 5 Lbs with Good Housekeeping* on Cooking Channel.

Marcela Valladolid (Chula Vista, CA) is the host of *Mexican Made Easy* on Food Network. Marcela attended the Los Angeles Culinary Institute and the Ritz Escoffier Cooking School in Paris. She is the author of “Fresh Mexico: 100 Simple Recipes for True Mexican Flavor” (Clarkson Potter, 2009) and “Mexican Made Easy: Everyday Ingredients Extraordinary Flavor” (Clarkson Potter, 2009).

Episode 3 – “Food Network Star Contestants”

Justin Balmes (Atlanta) was a finalist in season seven of *Food Network Star*. A graduate of the Art Institute of Atlanta with a degree in Culinary Arts, he is currently a farmer’s market specialist at a large organic retailer.

Penny Davidi (Los Angeles) was a finalist in season seven of *Food Network Star*. Raised in California, Penny franchised Pizza Rustica and opened a popular branch in Beverly Hills.

Vic ‘Vegas’ Moea (Las Vegas) was a finalist in season seven of *Food Network Star*. He is a self-trained restaurant chef who learned to cook from his mother and grandmother. He worked his way up the culinary ladder from dishwasher to executive chef at a Las Vegas hotel restaurant.

Chris Nirschel (Hoboken, NJ) was a season seven contestant on *Food Network Star*. Chris attended the French Culinary Institute and now this culinary bad boy creates exciting flavor profiles with confidence to boot.

Episode 4 – “Judge Remix”

Alex Guarnaschelli (New York) is a regular *Chopped* judge and has been both challenger and judge on *Iron Chef America*. She also competed on *The Next Iron Chef: Super Chefs* and hosts her own show *Alex’s Day Off*. Alex is executive chef at Butter Restaurant and The Darby in New York.

Marc Murphy (New York) is a regular judge in the *Chopped* kitchen and has also appeared on *Iron Chef America*. Marc has logged more than 20 years in the restaurant business, and is currently executive chef and owner of Benchmarc Restaurants by Marc Murphy (Landmarc and Ditch Plains in New York) and Benchmarc Events by Marc Murphy.

Marcus Samuelsson (New York) is a recurring judge on *Chopped* and *24-Hour Restaurant Battle*. He most recently competed on *The Next Iron Chef: Super Chefs* and appeared on the Food Network special *Savoring Harlem*. Marcus is an award-winning chef, restaurateur, cookbook author, philanthropist and food activist. His most recent restaurant is New York’s acclaimed Red Rooster Harlem.

Chris Santos (New York) is a frequent judge on *Chopped*. He is chef and partner of popular New York City restaurants The Stanton Social and Beauty & Essex, and is currently working on two cookbooks and a line of hot sauce.

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