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## **FOOD NETWORK STAR: COMEBACK KITCHEN** (2018) Finalist Bios

**Trace Barnett** (Brilliant, AL) - A finalist on season 13, Trace is known for his Southern twist on deliciously quick and easy recipes. Trace is the founder and driving creative force behind The Bitter Socialite, a culinary and lifestyle blog that features unique content about living a beautiful, well-balanced life, while juggling a tight budget and hectic schedule. Trace continues to be featured in numerous national and regional publications for entertaining tips, culinary recipes, and DIY projects.

**Adam Gertler** (Los Angeles, CA) – Adam has turned his passion for encased meats into a career as the official Würstmacher (sausage maker) for Dog Haus restaurants. A previous finalist on season 4, Adam is the former chef of The Smoked Joint – a BBQ joint he ran with his brother that brought ‘the barbeque experience’ to Philadelphia. Adam is also currently the host of FX Movie Download.

**Debbie Lee** (Ladera Ranch, CA) – A former finalist from season 5, Debbie scored notoriety as the queen of modern Korean gastro-pub fare with her clever fast-casual model of a Korean drinking house. Debbie currently operates a sustainable meal delivery service called Mind Body Fork, that specializes in gluten and sugar-free cooking, while drawing upon her Korean heritage and Southern upbringing by combining unique Asian and American cuisines.

**Yaku Moton-Spruill** (San Francisco, CA) – Standing at 6’9”, it was pretty much guaranteed that Yaku would have the basketball world’s attention from an early age. But even while playing professionally in Europe, he couldn’t shake the fact that nothing made him as happy as cooking. Drawing influence from his Southern and Caribbean heritage, Yaku currently owns and operates his own catering and personal chef service called D.O.P.E. Chef Society, while teaching youth culinary programs in the Bay area. Yaku previously competed on season 12 of *Food Network Star*.

**Sarah Penrod** (Dallas, TX) – Sarah is a born-and-bred Texan who comes from a family of entertainers. From musical theater to beauty pageants to country singing, Sarah has been performing her whole life. After competing on season 10, Sarah founded the Texas food and entertainment blog Urban Cowgirl and is a full-time cookbook author. This sassy, feisty and fun chef has worked with celebrities and athletes, and always keeps things entertaining in the kitchen.

**Amy Pottinger** (Honolulu, HI) - As a mom to two young children and two dogs, Amy is used to life being hectic. Being self-trained, Amy has worked in restaurants since she was a teenager, having previously worked at a catering company and specializes in elevating every day foods. Previously a competitor on season 13, Amy also loves to cook gourmet meals, along with running the culinary blog Caviar and Crayons.

**Monterey Salka** (San Diego, CA) – As a competitor on season 12, Monterey has the skills and confidence to go against any chef in the industry. Inspired by her unrelenting culinary wanderlust and her jet-setting past as a model, Monterey has returned to her Southern California roots, where she worked as a chef for nine years. Monterey currently consults with local restaurants to create culinary fare, while highlighting quality produce and proteins that perfectly balance the innate and iconic Latin and Asian influences.

**Jernard Wells** (Atlanta, GA) – With a wife of 19 years and nine children, Jernard is affectionately known as “The Chef of Love.” Previously the runner-up on season 12, Jernard loves to infuse Southern flavors and a Cajun twist. A cookbook author, Jernard believes in faith, family, food and fun, and wants everyone to know how easy and enjoyable cooking can be, when you are doing it with the ones you love.

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