

Idea File

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Chef Jose Garces' Bucks County, Pa. kitchen pairs high-powered equipment with designer details. The range hood, for example, gets a style boost from brass-studded black steel edging.

Farm Fresh

An Iron Chef's country kitchen feeds a crowd in style thanks to a bold new look and powerful professional appliances

► **WHEN CHEF JOSE GARCES** bought his 40-acre farm in Bucks County, Pa., the farmhouse kitchen was a far cry from the professional spaces that he was used to. "It was pretty bare," he says. "It had a few cedar cabinets, an electric cooktop and oven, and an open flue to vent to the outside." Because the busy restaurateur and Food Network Iron Chef intended to use the kitchen for hosting events, it clearly needed a total overhaul.

"We wanted to be able to have chefs up from Philadelphia to cook here, so we needed a high-powered and efficient space," he says. With the help of designer Gretchen Kubiak and a major



CHEF AT HOME
Garces and family named the farm after their beloved bulldog, Luna.

PHOTOS, THIS SPREAD AND NEXT: JASON VARNEY

redo, that’s just what he got: The new kitchen blends a homey look with restaurant-style chops. It’s the perfect mix for the working farm, which not only hosts events but also provides much of the produce, eggs, and honey for Garces’ East Coast restaurants and plays a key role in the Garces Foundation’s mission of teaching underserved children about sustainable agriculture.

Professional Appointments

Not surprisingly, Garces’ main design concern was that the kitchen be able to turn out plenty of delicious food—and that meant upgrading the appliances. “I’m not a big fan of electric cooktops,” he says, so they brought in a propane tank to fuel a new eight-burner, two-oven range from BlueStar. “My favorite thing about this range is the griddle,” Garces says. “I cook everything on a griddle—or ‘a la plancha’—so it was a must-have feature.”

Another non-negotiable: the stack of French-door convection ovens. “They have convection and infrared broiling technology, and they allow us to have six to eight half-sheet pans going at once,” the chef says. A commercial Kelvinator refrigerator with a glass door keeps ingredients fresh and visible. “I like being able to see everything on the shelves, the way you can in a restaurant kitchen,” Garces says.

Rural Refinement

With the equipment arranged to his satisfaction, the chef turned the layout and look over to the designer. Kubiak began by swapping the worn cedar cabinets with new units painted glossy black, adding much-needed storage and setting the luxe-but-laid-back tone for the space. A freestanding island—formerly a tall-top at one of Garces’ restaurants that Kubiak had cut down to counter height—offers an additional open prep zone. Carrara marble counters and a backsplash of brass sheeting lend a note of sophistication that’s balanced by the rustic slate floors and



MIXED METALS Brass, steel, and copper work together to lend refinement to the kitchen’s modern farmhouse vibe.

“It’s not a big space, but the way it’s laid out, we can easily cook for 20 or 30 guests,” Garces says.

simple schoolhouse light fixtures.

Adjacent to the kitchen are a new outdoor kitchen (not shown) and a comfortable dining room, which also got a makeover during the rehab.

Like many homeowners, Garces is as relieved the renovation is over as he is happy with the results. “I love the way the kitchen turned out,” Garces says. “For a small space, it has tons of capability and it’s easy to work in. I really wouldn’t do anything differently. But I’m glad I don’t have to do it again anytime soon.”



FINE DINING Rustic finishes in the dining room play into the kitchen’s style, without matching too perfectly.

Get the Look

Give your own kitchen chef Garces’ modern farmhouse style



1 Retro reproduction light fixture

NEWBURY 4” \$129

Schoolhouse-style ceiling fixtures add overall lighting and a warm, vintage look. Add strips of undercabinet lighting to illuminate countertop work zones. [schoolhouseelectric.com](#)

2 Classic café chairs with a twist

WANDERLOOT CAFE CHAIR IN COPPER \$123

The traditional French café chairs get an unexpected update from a rich copper finish. Soften the seats with cushions (sold separately) to encourage lingering over dessert. [overstock.com](#)

3 Glass-door commercial fridge

KELVINATOR COMMERCIAL REACH-IN \$1,626

A glass-door refrigerator lends instant industrial-style chic and lets you see the contents at a glance. But pricey professional units don’t have many of

the perks of models designed for home use—and you’ll have to spring for a separate freezer, too. [kitchenrestock.com](#)

4 Freestanding metal and wood island

ORLEANS KITCHEN ISLAND \$469

A freestanding island can beef up counter and storage space if you choose one with integrated cabinets or open shelving. In a small kitchen, an open design like this one takes up less visual space. [bellacor.com](#)

5 French-door convection oven

30” ELECTRIC WALL OVEN \$4,875 AND UP

This oven comes in more than 750 finishes, including white. We haven’t tried this model, but other BlueStar appliances haven’t done well in our tests. Consider instead the GE Café CT9070SHSS French-door wall oven, \$3,600, which we recommend. [bluestarcooking.com](#)