

HEAD KNOW

has been a huge fan, and they are all unbelievably polite.' For Nadia, 20, from Leeds, the biggest challenge about being on the show was leaving my kids.' She adds, 'It was the first time for me since I had them and it was the toughest thing I've done.' In the case of Ian, 41, a travel photographer, he's had to get used to reading on Twitter about being 'jean' and says he looks back fondly on his crown-shaped Charlotte russe - made during the Victorian-themed week. 'When I finished, my fellow bakers and crew all gave me a round of applause!' Like everyone in this year's show, Tami - who's 29 and lives in Manchester - admits, 'I'm a huge fan of Bake Off, so applying seemed like the natural thing to do, even though I never thought I'd get on. I wanted to test myself and learn new skills.' But now the contest is nearly at an end, he admits the biggest surprise has been 'how long it is! The filming days are long and time away from the tent is just as hectic with all the agonising over recipes. I really need a holiday!' **Graham Kibble-White**

...has been the biggest Bake Off ever, with this year's run attracting viewing figures around 10 million mark - dwarfing a line of supposed ratings for The X Factor. But what's really like to be on the show? Flora, 18, from Scotland, admits she's been surprised by the programme's success. 'I never did it cross my mind that 7 million people would watch me make a bread cornet!' she laughs. But she plays down her newfound fame. 'Fame' is a long word. Everyone who's crunched me in the street

tot

...also notable guest stars, including Maureen Lipman as former Broadband boss Maggie. Meanwhile, Sarah reveals she's had real experience of job centre... 'When I first walked out, coming into a job centre was intimidating,' she says. 'It made me feel like I was...' **Nick Price**



Warriors on horses, swords, shields and spears - no, this isn't *Game Of Thrones*, but a new series on the Celts!

NEW

Tribal warfare

The Celts: Blood, Iron & Sacrifice
BBC2 • Monday **FACTUAL**

Dramatic reconstructions of the brutal battles between the Celts and their archenemies the Romans brings the story of our prehistoric ancestors to life in this fascinating new BBC2 documentary.

Presenter Neil Oliver says the image of the Celts as 'shaggy haired, rag-wearing barbarians who come howling out of the trees' is perpetuated by films like Mel Gibson's *Braveheart*.

But in fact the Celts, who spread all across Europe, were quite sophisticated people.

'They had beautiful artwork, jewellery and weaponry, and were clearly people with self-respect, prowess and skill,' says Neil. 'The first people to write about the Celts were the Romans, and as enemies they were never going to paint them in a very noble light!'

Neil and co-presenter Alice Roberts travel extensively across Europe in the three-part series unearthing the story of the Celts, and in an Austrian salt mine, Neil comes face to face with some 3,000-year-old preserved prehistoric poo!

'I never expected to catch such an intimate glimpse of



Neil (top) and Alice delve into history

a Celtic salt miner!' he grins.

Today, the Celtic language endures on the fringes of Europe - in Cornwall, Ireland, Wales and parts of Scotland.

'It only survived where the Romans couldn't be bothered to wipe it out,' he says.

Neil can also see the parallels with *Game Of Thrones*. 'I have watched it - my wife's a huge fan. Similarly, with the Celts, you're getting a glimpse into a world devoid of anything we would recognise as law and order. The warlord was king.'

Apart from investigating the Celts, Neil hopes to do another series of *Coast Australia* and his first novel - *Master Of Shadows* - was published last month.

'When I was young I thought about being like Roald Dahl and having a writer's shed. But I have to pay bills, so I don't have the luxury of shutting myself away. I've got to crack on!'

Natalie Dye