

Icing on the cake!
Despite all the baking they tasted during filming, Dean and Sue can't resist our delectable spread.

A S SUE



Spoonful of sugar!

SUE & DEAN'S SWEET GIG

High tea with the *Bake Off* judges

As *The Great Kiwi Bake Off* judges Sue Fleischl and Dean Brettschneider chuckle and playfully pose for our vintage photo shoot, you can tell these two know how to have a good time. It's no surprise when the pair confess they had a ball filming the first local series of the popular British reality show.

"I had no idea how great it would be – it's a fabulous programme and to be asked to be a part of it is quite an honour," Sue, 55, tells *Woman's Day*. Nodding, Dean, 49, adds, "The underlying word for the show was 'fun' and you can really see that. The contestants were a fun bunch."

And co-hosts Madeleine Sami and Hayley Sproull also kept the cast and crew in fits of laughter the whole time they filmed. "They're gorgeous – we love them!" says Sue, adding that she hosted the two comedienne for a viewing party when the first episode aired on TVNZ 2.

Unfortunately, Dean couldn't make it to the "really lovely" soiree after undergoing back surgery in Singapore, but the catering queen had another man by her side to support her – her fiancé, a surgeon named Michael, who was "very, very proud" of his bride-to-be.

Sue admits that her *Bake Off* co-stars won't be there to see her tie the knot for a second time in December, but she says, "We want it to be special without it being too formal. It'll be a celebration that we have decided to spend the rest of our lives together. He's

a lovely, caring, romantic kind of guy."

When our talk returns to the show, as cheerful as she is, Sue confesses filming wasn't all sunshine and smiles. "There were so many twists and turns, which were quite emotionally exhausting because of all the surprises that happened," she admits. "There were unexpected variations in performance and abilities, which made it so exciting."

Having previously judged *New Zealand's Hottest Home Baker* and starred in his own *Kiwi Baker* series, Dean is glad *Bake Off* focuses more on making food than whipping up drama.

"There's just so much more warmth in baking," he explains. "Generally, it's sweet and it's got a whole lot of love in it – and I don't mean that as a cliché. Baking is all about giving, sharing and passing on knowledge."

In fear of spoilers, neither judge will name their favourite sweet treat from their time on *Bake Off*, but they both admit to a weakness for classics such as banana bread and ginger crunch. Sue says, "There were things that were so delicious that I was like, 'Gosh, where did they get this recipe from?'"

The judges insist their show gives *The Great British Bake Off* a run for its money, with Dean saying Aotearoa's "multicultural melting pot of influences"

gives the Kiwi contestants an edge.

"While it's the same format, we are a little bit more adventurous in our products," he adds.

As for their top baking advice to

readers, the judges agree

we should always read the

recipe before we fire up

the oven. Sue laughs,

"There's nothing worse

than getting halfway

through and realising

you're missing a key

ingredient!"

#