

# televisionexpress

# Prime time slot caps it all

**I**T'S been daytime, it's been teatime, so it's high time it was primetime. I'm talking here (rather poetically, don't you think? Oh, suit yourself...) about **THE REPAIR SHOP**'s slot in the schedules. In the three years since it started, it's popped up all over the place.

And now it begins its fifth series in its most high-profile position so far, at 8pm on a Wednesday on BBC One. That's quite something. It's where *Watchdog*, for example, used to be, until the BBC gave that the chop, clearly satisfied that none of us is being swizzled any more.

I take it you know what *The*



**Mike Ward**  
previews  
tonight's TV

*Repair Shop* actually is? Maybe you don't, if daytime/teatime telly tends to pass you by.

Maybe you'd shrug with equal bafflement if I were to say *Homes Under The Hammer* or *Bargain Hunt* or *Escape To The Country* or various random things with Dominic Littlewood in them.

If so, you don't know what

you're missing. Hosted by the charismatic Jay Blades, a furniture restorer with a cap he likes too much to ever take off, *The Repair Shop* is a series where things get repaired. In a shop. Not that sort of shop but a workshop.

By "things", I mean precious family heirlooms, given a new lease of life by the show's restoration specialists.

If that sounds like rather dull TV to you, there's little I can say that's likely to change your mind.

Other than you're wrong and we'll never be friends.

But if that sounds rather absorbing, even mildly therapeutic, and suggests to you a format with

lots of scope for fascinating human interest stories, telling us the often remarkable tales behind the items being worked on, then you're right and I like you a lot.

Would you like to come for Christmas?

Items featured tonight include a pump organ, a very special crib and a really quite outstanding bunch of tools – not in a *Love Island* sense but as in tools that once were used on a ship.

Over on BBC Two, meanwhile, there's another show that isn't quite where we'd expect it to be.

**GREAT BRITISH MENU** is another series that's had its profile boosted, not just by being moved

to 8pm but by having comic Susan Calman brought in as its new host.

That, and by having its format given a bit of a tweak.

Finally, if neither of those 8pm offerings excites you, may I suggest another, in this case a brand new ITV sitcom?

Written by Andy Hamilton and Guy Jenkin (the pair behind *Outnumbered*), **KATE & KOJI** stars Brenda Blethyn, the actress who's made wearing hats trendy in *Vera*, as the owner of a seaside cafe, with Jimmy Akingbola as an African asylum-seeking doctor she strikes up an unlikely friendship with.