

The muted colours in the couple's new kitchen work together perfectly, from the Grey limestone worksurfaces to the sweeping hand-painted island. For a similar shade, try Chalk Violet by Fired Earth. Influenced by Jaki's Aubergine Aga, Hydrangea wallpaper by Kandola, which is scattered with pink Swarovski crystals, adds glamour to a feature wall

# FULL CIRCLE

A stunning round island is the centrepiece of Jaki and Paul's former farmhouse home

AS SEEN IN  
BEAUTIFUL  
KITCHENS  
MAGAZINE

**RIGHT** A tap dispenses both hot and filtered drinking water. 'If I had opted for a stovetop kettle it would have meant keeping the Aga lid up constantly, which wasn't what I wanted,' explains Jaki. 'The tap gives us near-boiling water without the need or clutter of a normal kettle.' Below, the prep sink is actually a mixing bowl that Jaki found. The fitter drilled a drain hole and added a waste pipe



*I wish... I'd known that we'd need additional cupboard space. Now the kitchen is finished, I wish we had gone for the extra cabinets at the time. Fortunately, it's something we can add at a later date!*

JAKI STATHAM

The Aga is central to the design of the kitchen and provides warmth, as well as a traditional element, which Jaki was keen to have in the room. Made from solid maple and hand-painted tulipwood, the island is completed by simple, pewter D-handles



**ABOVE LEFT** Curve-fronted drawers within the island both maximise space and prevent the lines of the unit from being broken up. Easily accessible, they house Jaki's cutlery and her dinnerware from Habitat

**ABOVE** Built to be practical as well as striking, the rounded design of the unit accommodates the dishwasher with ease as one side is flat to attach to the appliance. Hand carved from one solid piece of timber, the curved door is a beautiful example of the craftsmanship that has gone into the kitchen

**ABOVE RIGHT** The large three-door, American fridge freezer is flanked by pull-out larders so that all of the couple's food items, from tins and packets to fresh and frozen goods, are kept together conveniently. Above, a neat, high cupboard stores less frequently used items. Matching maple corning on the top of the furniture adds to the classic look that suits the former farmhouse property so well

What better than a dramatic circular scheme to create a focal point in an open-plan space? Having bought their former farmhouse in Warwickshire, Jaki Statham and Paul Williams knew their first challenge for the 80-year-old building was to create a kitchen that would stand out from the crowd. 'We fell in love with the house immediately and, although it needed work, it had such a lovely feel about it,' recalls Jaki. 'It did require more balance, so we ended up moving the kitchen, even though it was perfectly adequate.'

Having retired, the couple were able to spend plenty of time on the project. With the help of a local architect, five of the ground-floor rooms were transformed into a single open-plan space with a central kitchen. 'We wanted this to be our main chill-out area and, although it's not a particularly wide house, remodelling really made the best use of the space,' continues Jaki.

The couple were excited by a picture of a striking circular island design by Fraser James Bespoke Handmade Furniture that they'd seen in a magazine. 'We have a mix of modern and antique furniture, so we needed something that would sit comfortably with both but without dominating,' says Jaki. 'This was the perfect solution, so we contacted the company to see if it could create something similar for us.'

Armed with their picture of the curvy kitchen, the couple spoke to designer Paul Matthews and discussed what to include and how a circular layout would work, especially in terms of storage

and appliances. However, while the newly open-plan proportions of the room were perfect for the concept, it was those same dimensions that dictated the size of the arc of the island, while finances controlled the amount of surrounding cabinetry. 'The central island works brilliantly because it's so compact, with everything close to hand, but it also creates a wonderful entertaining space,' explains Jaki. 'Another cupboard would have been lovely but our budget limited how much we could achieve in one go. It's something we may well add in the future, though.'

Despite the restrictions of the curves, the kitchen fulfilled everything on the couple's wish list, from a richly coloured Aga to the range of integrated appliances. 'Everyone kept telling me that I should have a black range cooker, but I fell in love with the Aubergine shade; it set just the right tone that I wanted to filter throughout the house,' recalls Jaki. 'I was adamant we wouldn't have a second oven and that I'd get used to using the Aga instead. I'm getting there slowly but I absolutely adore it!'

The maple finish of the cabinetry was an easy decision, chosen to blend with the newly fitted floor. Selecting the paint shade for the outside of the curve was slightly more challenging, though. 'In the end, we considered a selection of colours and chose a subtle violet shade,' recalls Jaki. 'The whole kitchen has come together beautifully – it's a perfect mixture of modern design and traditional elements, which is exactly what we wanted.'



**LEFT** Without available walls to place a bank of sockets, a pop-up power supply from Evoline was necessary to allow Jaki to plug in small appliances at the island. After use, the unit slides down to sit flush with the polished limestone worksurface, leaving only a chrome circle as a clue to its location

Situated close to a dining table and chairs, the curved island is perfect for entertaining and allows Jaki to chat to guests while she cooks. Behind, a slim unit includes a tall wine cooler and a built-in coffee machine. Listone Giordano Plank 190 French oak flooring from Wood Floor & Carpet Shop adds warmth to the room



## DESIGN & CABINETRY

- Paul Matthews at **Fraser James Bespoke Handmade Furniture**, Greenacres, Catesby Road, Staverton, Northamptonshire NN11 6JP (01327 315037) [www.fraserjamesltd.co.uk](http://www.fraserjamesltd.co.uk)
- Bespoke solid maple furniture with hand-painted tulipwood cabinetry

## WORKTOPS

- Grey limestone, Fraser James Bespoke Handmade Furniture. Price per sq m **£250**

## SINKS & TAPS

- BlancoTwen 6-U undermounted one-and-a-quarter-bowl sink in stainless steel, Blanco **£241**
- Custom-made round single-bowl sink in stainless steel **POA**
- Olympus Trispray monobloc mixer tap in chrome with pull-out rinse, Franke **£740**
- Little Butler 2000 hot and chilled filtered water tap in chrome, Franke **£649**

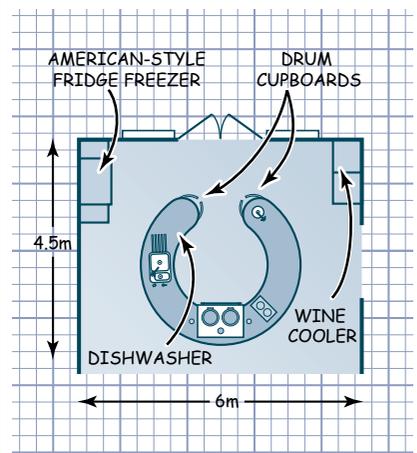
## APPLIANCES (shown)

- Three-oven, gas-fired Aga in Aubergine **£7,760**
- CVA5060 built-in coffee machine, Miele **£1,750**
- Built-in warming drawer; for similar try ESW5080-14, Miele **£539**
- Definition 3D integrated American fridge freezer, Amana **£2,675**
- W208CG Precision integrated wine cooler; Amana **£2,789**
- G1182SCVi fully integrated dishwasher; Miele **£870**

## APPLIANCES (not shown)

- Integrated microwave, Panasonic **£96**

 **For stockists, see page 152**



## GUIDE PRICE

- Starting price for a Fraser James Bespoke Handmade Furniture kitchen **£12,000**

*My favourite...* design element is the circular layout. It's functional, practical, great for entertaining and gives the room a real "wow" factor!