

DELICATE TOUCH

Pastel blue wall cabinets contrast with warm oak furniture to give a soft finish to Samantha and Tim Sillitoe's new kitchen

A curved peninsula topped with chunky oak and glossy Labrador Antico granite separates the working part of the Sillitoe's spacious kitchen from the dining zone. Neatly integrated, a Rangemaster wine cooler is positioned close to the eating area, so Tim can refill guests' glasses without interrupting Samantha as she cooks



Cream Corten Beige Tau Ceramica floor tiles, from Colchester Tile Supplies, blend perfectly with the simple oak and chic glass cabinets. The walls have been painted in subtle Jewelled Creek 6 by Dulux



▲ Samantha teamed the Corinthian Triflow mixer tap by Franke with a French farmhouse double-bowl sink, as it's just the right size for soaking her large Aga pans. The tap's porcelain levers match the sink and feature wall. For similar splashback tiles, try B&Q

▲ At first, Samantha chose black granite but when she saw a Labrador Antico worktop in Baker & Baker's showroom, she decided she liked its subtle blend of colour and pattern more. The sapphire blue flecks add sparkle to the simple wooden design

Every possible use of space is included in the design of the Sillitoe's kitchen, including this shelved drum cupboard at the curved end of the peninsula. The segment-shaped shelves are just the right size for storing plates and bowls. For similar terracotta china, try Saborear. On top, designer Graham fitted a round oak chopping block, which saves Samantha time finding a board for preparing vegetables. So as not to detract from the Shaker-style door fronts, the couple chose plain chrome knobs from Häfele



Samantha Sillitoe and her husband Tim will always remember the day they moved into their Essex home. 'The kitchen was still being fitted, as the project had been delayed,' recalls Samantha. 'There were 15 workmen, the removal men, Tim and myself, our two children, Jamie, 15, and Hanna, 12, plus the dogs, Basil and Dobie – it was bedlam,' she says.

'We'd chosen Baker & Baker to design it after seeing a scheme in a magazine. We knew the furniture would fit in with the rest of our home,' explains Samantha. 'However, the kitchen company couldn't get in to fit the units any earlier, as the floor screed took a long time to dry.'

The kitchen and breakfast area had originally been two rooms but Samantha and Tim decided to open up the space. Its increased length gave them a large eating area, which could then be

divided from the kitchen by a curved peninsula. This provided Samantha with an abundance of cabinets and work surface that she could work at while facing the family sitting at the table.

'I knew I wanted oak furniture and, at first, I was against anything painted because in my previous kitchen the finish had started to chip. After some discussion, though, designer Graham Baker persuaded me to have the wall units painted, as he said an all-wood design would look boring and he was right,' reveals Samantha. The oak furniture is complemented by cabinets painted in a soft blue, while the walls are painted in a lighter shade of the same colour. 'So often blue can be a cold colour but this isn't.'

As there is no gas available in the rural area where the family live, Samantha chose a four-oven electric night storage Aga, which is inex-

pensive to run as it charges up at night when electricity costs less. The range's traditional style also complements the Sillitoe's rustic home.

In their previous home, the family had an American-style fridge freezer, but this time, as space was not a problem, Samantha knew she had to have a bigger fridge from The Corner Fridge Company. 'I'd seen one in a showroom some time ago and made a mental note of it,' she says. 'Having a large corner fridge also means you don't have to have a larder cupboard as well, so it is quite economical in its use of space.'

The kitchen is finished with a combination microwave as a backup to the Aga and a smart wine cooler, which is invaluable when the couple are entertaining. 'After the shambles of the day we moved in, we can now really appreciate our new kitchen,' smiles Samantha. **BK**

“After I bought the four-oven Aga, I discovered non-stick lining paper. It's great for making toast, cooking eggs and heating wraps on the hot plates without leaving any difficult sticky residue to clean up”

SAMANTHA SILLITOE



ONE THING I WISH I'D KNOWN: 'To check the depth of the worksurfaces around the sink run. I had a bit more room in my last kitchen and, although there's only a few centimetres difference, I think I would have preferred to have a bit more space'





As space was plentiful Samantha could have her coveted corner fridge, plus a larder freezer sited in the entrance alcove. The fridge not only makes use of otherwise wasted space, it also allows the couple to unpack their groceries and put them away all in one place. Designer Graham suggested the floor-to-ceiling cabinetry curving around the corner to match the rest of the room's units

Chunky oak handleless drawers are great for storing a multitude of odds and ends, from birthday cake candles to a ball of string. Samantha initially wanted shelving but designer Graham suggested pull-out boxes as an alternative



DESIGN & CABINETRY

- Graham Baker at **Baker & Baker**, Bench Barn Farm, Stoke Road, Clare, Suffolk CO10 8HQ (01787 277379) www.bakerandbaker.co.uk
- Bespoke solid oak furniture with hand-painted oak cabinetry and glass units, all from the Classic English range

WORKTOPS

- 30mm Labrador Antico granite, Ivett & Reed. Price per sq m **£555**
- Solid oak. Price per linear m **£273**

SINK & TAP

- Normandy 3364 double-bowl farmhouse ceramic sink, Brass and Traditional Sinks **£524**
- Corinthian Triflow monobloc mixer filter tap in Silk Steel with porcelain levers, Franke **£575**

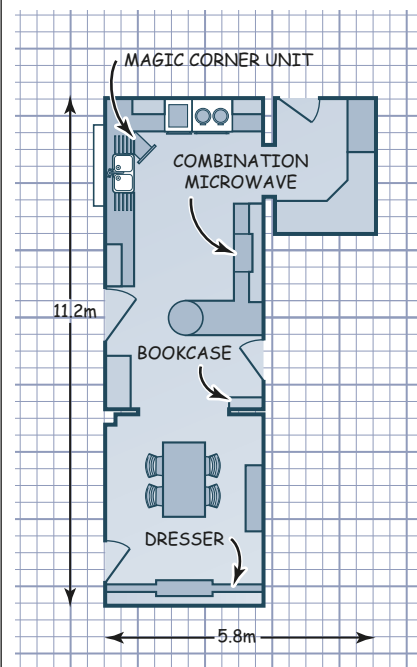
APPLIANCES (shown)

- Four-oven electric night storage Aga in pewter **£11,350**
- DHL545SGB canopy extractor hood, Bosch **£131**
- AG918504i integrated larder freezer, AEG-Electrolux **£570**
- Deluxe integrated wine cooler, Rangemaster **£855**

APPLIANCES (not shown)

- Built-in combination microwave, Bosch **£676**
- Fully integrated corner fridge, The Corner Fridge Company **£3,200**
- Fully integrated dishwasher, Bosch **£450**

☎ For stockists, see page 136



GUIDE PRICE

- Starting price for a Baker & Baker kitchen **£20,000**