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2 A drop-level unit will provide a comfortable spot to dine and allow guests to join in the cooking without getting in the way. Second Nature's Cornell Oak range costs from £14,000

3 The addition of a small prep sink in an island takes the pressure off the main sink. The Ingleton Kitchen starts from £8,000, Culshaw Bell

4 Opening your kitchen out to the living room with the sink facing into the room creates a

more sociable cooking experience. Bespoke kitchens from Bath Kitchen Company start from £25,000

5 A large Aga with extra electric module is backed up by Gaggenau hobs on the island. The Mandarin kitchen by Smallbone of Devides starts from £35,000

6 By rounding off the peninsula in a circle, Vela Cici has created an area for two cooks to work opposite each other. This bespoke kitchen starts from £30,000



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STUART MCKAY, SENIOR DESIGNER AT VELA CICI, ADVISES ON PLANNING A MULTIFUNCTIONAL KITCHEN

- The primary aim should be to avoid congestion in any one area, so it's important to split the kitchen into definite zones. Consider space and facilities for relaxing and entertaining, and locate the office area in a quieter part of the room.
- Bear in mind all appliances need to be quiet, efficient and odour-free wherever possible.
- The design of a kitchen in a multi-purpose environment needs to consider the user as an entertainer and not relegated to a corner. Therefore island units need careful consideration in order not to isolate any particular function.
- When designing an office area within a kitchen an independent area is required away from water and cooking zones. The advent of wireless computer technology means it is not necessary to have servers and printers in the kitchen.
- The utility room should ideally accommodate tumble dryers, ironing boards and cleaning equipment as well as the washing machine. The creation of a lobby area linking the outside door, kitchen door and utility can help alleviate congestion.'