



CLIP

36 ■ AVENUE

at home ...
in a Park Avenue
kitchen

Elizabeth Franklin, banker turned decorator, married technology and tradition to create an opulent haven

BY ALEXANDRA RIBIS

WE FEEL LIKE WE'RE THE JETSONS, LAUGHS ELIZABETH FRANKLIN AS SHE points to her prized computer, hung on the wall above her kitchen table. "When Jeff is away, he e-mails the kids pictures of where he is while they eat breakfast." Franklin—the stylish dervish behind *The Franklin Report*, considered the Zagat of interior decor—carefully strategized every detail of her kitchen. Since her investment banker husband travels frequently, she devised a way for him to be part of daily family life despite distance.

"We have a family website that details the girls' schedules for the week," she says. "If Jeff arrives home before I speak to him, he can log on and see Campbell has a school event and be there. It also tells us the weather, so he'll make sure she has a raincoat." Plus, the nanny can order the groceries online, and Grandma can greet the girls before school with special e-mails. "The computer has become integral to our family," says Franklin. "The only time my husband and I fight is if I forget to post one of the kids' activities. It helps us all feel connected."

This high-tech marvel aside, the rest of the kitchen is quite traditional. Since Jeff is from North Carolina, Franklin used wood planking from a Southern barn for the floor, to connect him to his roots. The purple and green floral fabrics were shipped to Italy so expert painters could match column tiles to the upholstery, that cushions the chairs and frames the window overlooking Park Avenue. Verde green marble counter-tops are both attractive and sturdy, able to withstand chopping and children's homework projects.

Franklin's kitchen boasts another unusual feature: two ovens. "Although the Viking is great for entertaining, it takes a long time to heat," she says. "So I got a smaller Miele oven that doesn't emit as much heat but can quickly warm pizza and English muffins when the kids have play dates." She points out, however, that she loves the Viking stove. "Year after year in *Consumer Reports*, it is touted as one of the best; it's usable and aesthetic." For cleaning up, she prefers a Bosch and Asco dishwasher, she says, since it's one of the quietest.

Franklin admits that one of the pleasures of her kitchen is the variety of plates and settings used to celebrate holidays. "I recently bought Easter bowls at Williams-Sonoma and Valentine's Day plates from Lillian Vernon," she says. Keesel and Matthews on Madison Avenue is also a favorite store.

Despite a hectic schedule, the Franklin family values the warmth that emanates from their kitchen. But unlike the Jetsons', their computer doesn't do the cooking.



Elizabeth Franklin and her two daughters, Hunter and Campbell, make cookies in their recently renovated Upper East Side kitchen. The family's prized computer hangs on the wall.

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