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HOT PRODUCT

By Gillian Duffy

(February 18, 2002) Home breadmakers have for years been counseled to use clay tiles to halfheartedly reproduce a bakery's brick oven. But tiles do nothing compared with the ceramic HearthKit, the brainchild of bread guru Charles Van Over, which in our tests produced breads and pizzas (and roasts) with crunchy crusts that compare with any professional's. The HearthKit has, in fact, impressed no less an authority than the hero of home bakers: Rose Levy Beranbaum, the author of *The Cake Bible* and its sequels devoted to pie and pastry. Levy, who's currently working on a bread book, calls it the most important piece of new kitchen equipment since the Cuisinart. (Available at Broadway Panhandler, 477 Broome Street, 212-966-3434; and Zabar's, 2245 Broadway, at 80th Street, 212-787-2000.)

