

## SMART HOME GALLERY



# High-Tech Luxe in Tribeca

This smart home away from home is the ultimate automated escape.

BY KRISSY RUSHING  
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**WHEN YOUR VACATION HOME** is a three-story penthouse in New York's Tribeca district, it's clear that nothing less than the best will do. The family that occupies this luxurious abode travels from India to spend one month in the Big Apple every summer, and had the resources to make their high-tech home away from home the ultimate escape. To pull off the design and installation of a complex and high-end whole-house automation system, these globetrotters turned to the team at Rich AV Design, of Stamford, Conn.

This three-story gem actually started as two stories on levels eight and nine of the building. However, the third floor (floor seven) was added and integrated ad hoc, presenting one of the bigger challenges of the project. The original two-story penthouse was already wired and operated as a singular unit in terms of electrical plans. Adding another floor would potentially require completely rewiring the separate spaces so that electronic systems on the seventh floor would be able to communicate with systems in the penthouse. "There were no interconnecting electrical

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wires between the seventh floor and the eighth/ninth floors,” says Josh Rich, owner of Rich AV Design. “We used a wireless Lutron QS HomeWorks lighting system to join the entire apartment together without the added expense of redoing of all the electrical.” The Lutron system also allowed for all of the wall-mounted keypads that were installed to communicate with any light fixture, regardless of floor. A stroke of genius to be sure, but the innovation and functionality didn’t end here.

Frequent entertainers with lots of family in the city, the homeowners wanted to be able to entertain in style every time they visited. Of course, the home has the de riguer “Hello” and “Goodbye” scenes that greet the homeowners with perfect lighting levels and music, and help them close up the house when they leave by shutting down the electronic amenities, respectively. Additionally, the Savant automation system and its complementary Savant mobile app were programmed with an “Entertain” scene that allows the homeowners to tap a finger on a smartphone as soon as they land at JFK; when they arrive home, the lighting is festive, preselected party



music is wafting throughout the house and outside on the patio, the shades are drawn to reveal the beautiful view of the city, and the temperature is nice and cool on a sweltering New York summer night. Rich took great care to make the control system extremely easy to use due to the fact that guests frequently visit the penthouse when the owners are back in India. Thanks to this simplicity, they can navigate the robust audio and video system, directing music to invisible speakers and movies to flat-panel TVs throughout the house.

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Other than the Lutron wireless workaround, everything else in the home was hardwired using state-of-the-art fiber optic and Category 6 Ethernet cable for any location featuring a television or speakers. There are four main theater systems, the biggest featuring a 70-inch Sharp TV and a sound system that includes a custom-made Bay Audio soundbar, plus two Stealth Acoustics rear speakers and two subwoofers, which were installed behind the drywall to remain completely invisible. Keeping with this theme of minimal visible technology throughout the pad, Rich AV tucked the equipment neatly away in a full rack and a half located in a utility closet on the seventh floor. Also residing in the rack are the Savant audio and video distribution matrix switches, four cable boxes, four Apple TV boxes, Savant media server, CD player, and Blu-ray player. Content from all of these components can be



accessed from any room with just a tap of a button on a smartphone, Savant SSR-1000 remote controls found in every room, or iPads running the Savant app. These control devices also come in handy for monitoring what the kids are watching in their rooms or anywhere else, to turn the TVs off, or limit the amount of time the kids have access to a particular media source.

To preserve the apartment's gorgeous views of Manhattan, Rich chose see-through Lutron Sivoa QS motorized automated solar-reflectance shades that are automated to go up and down as needed to keep the heat and sun out of the apartment but allow the homeowners to enjoy the scenery. "Energy savings was a top priority as the apartment boasts 1,900 square feet and floor-to-ceiling windows," says Rich. "This solar-shade solution helps cut costs and save energy." When the owners want more privacy or darkness, black-out shades descend for a peaceful night's sleep.

Of course, because this is a part-time residence, the homeowners have a robust surveillance system with full remote access and Axis cameras on every floor. "Because the cameras spin around, pan, tilt, and zoom, we are able to give the homeowners a more granular level of surveillance," says Rich. "For example, they can zoom in and see if something that was supposed to be fixed was indeed fixed, all the way from India." **EH**

## THE PLAYERS

### Systems Design & Installation

Rich AV Design, Stamford, Conn., richavdesign.com

### Interior Designer

Anjali Pollack Design, New York, N.Y.,  
anjaliPollackdesign.com

### Builder

JAP Restoration, (917) 361-7458

## EQUIPMENT

**Home Automation:** Savant

**Lighting Control:** Lutron

**Multi-room Audio/Video System:** Savant

**Flat-Panel TVs:** Samsung, Sharp

**Loudspeakers:** Bay Audio, Stealth Acoustics

**A/V Amps, Pre-Pros & Receivers:** Audio Design  
Associates, Denon

**A/V Furniture:** Middle Atlantic

**Motorized Window Shades:** Lutron

**Surveillance Cameras:** Axis

## THE SCOREBOARD

**Customization** ★★☆☆☆

**Innovation** ★★★★★

**Aesthetics** ★★★★★

**Cool Factor** ★★★★★

**Affordability** ★★★★★