

The Loft Life

What is it about the high windows and ceilings, exposed brick and open floor plans that make so many people want to live in loft style apartments? Maybe it's the carefree lifestyle that such an open style of living space represents. Maybe it's because such a home can be as detailed or sparsely decorated as the resident wishes it to be. Or maybe it's the mystique of "the city". After the workday is done those with less adventure in their souls head to their homes in the suburbs, leaving you to slowly absorb the sounds of the city, a place where a summer evening's rain mixes with the dust and the sounds of the streets to surround you with a feeling of belonging to a community that never completely shows it's face. Whatever the reason, loft living doesn't merely reflect a unique lifestyle, it also creates a truly distinctive and unique attitude.

The vast majority of lofts are apartments that have been built into a vacant industrial building-sometimes one that's been empty for some time. As the two-floored version of mono-spaced studio apartments, lofts typically have an open floor plan for a living room and kitchen area, plus an open-concept upstairs for the bedroom. The former warehouse-type building is chosen as the base of this trendy apartment style because of the high roof/ceilings that accompany industrial buildings, acting as a key component for "urban renewal" projects around the globe. The results of such projects are art galleries, art studios, and of course, the artsy lofts.

But exactly how did lofts become the status symbol of "the cool life"? It seems that back in the 1950's, in the midst of the American domination of the world economy, the hustle and bustle of a once-thriving industrial areas, such as New York's Soho district, had begun to vacate the large, high ceiling industrial-style buildings, as these buildings were no longer suitable for the changing times and modernizations required. The now-empty buildings forced landlords to look to the art community as a source for rent money, as the art and creative communities could certainly utilize the space.

These studios were "designed" for the use of artists as a place to work, not to live. So sometimes, historically, to hide their domestic usage of the property, a series of pulleys and false walls were added so that the living and sleeping arrangements of the "studio" could be hidden from the variety of inspectors that would come by at a moments notice. As zoning has eased this has become less of a problem.

Since the 1990's, loft living has been synonymous with a "Soho/New York"- type of busy, carefree lifestyle and attitude, as lofts offer an extra touch of excitement. It's considered to be genuine lifestyle that sets residents apart from the "dull and monotonous" life of suburbia.