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**WHAT ARE THE COOLEST NEW YORK HOMES?  
From historical landmarks to a reality TV stars home, these choices might surprise you.**

By Ivy Pascual

New York City is home to many of the world's finest things, including some of the most innovative, over-the-top homes.

And so, real estate agents at Manhattan brokerage firm Douglas Elliman, who count Google amongst their clients, have seen just about everything. At the company's annual awards dinner on Wednesday night at Cipriani 42nd Street, *DuJour* just had one question on our mind: What are these homes actually like? With the ability to close \$550 million worth of contracts in a single day, Elliman's top-selling agents knew the answer. Keep reading to hear what Robert De Niro's son Raphael, *Million Dollar Listing* star Frederik Eklund and more had to say about New York City's most extreme residences.

**Raphael De Niro:**

"The Pierre Penthouse, the ballroom that belonged to Martin Zweig who passed away recently," says the father of three. What's so cool about it? "Everything. It's one of the largest and one of the most unique apartments anywhere in the world – and certainly in New York. It's literally a ballroom that was converted into an apartment many years ago. It broke the record in 1999, and it was considered the biggest and one of the most important sales of the 20th century," he says. Located atop the iconic Pierre Hotel on Fifth Avenue at 61st Street and dubbed the "chateau in the sky" by the *New York Times*, the opulent 16-room apartment is said to have hosted high-society galas and debutante balls during the Great Depression before the finance guru and author transformed it into his own private residence for \$21.5 million. It has not officially been on the market since it was last listed for a staggering \$70 million in 2008.



*Melanie Lazenby, left*

**Melanie Lazenby:**

"The coolest New York City apartment I've ever seen is the Penthouse at Superior Ink," she says of the West Village property, formerly owned by Houston Rockets-owner Leslie Alexander. What is the most amazing feature inside the 6,300 square-foot home? The skyline, of course. "The apartment has nothing in it but concrete floors. No walls. It is just views, views, views." Lazenby – the daughter of actor and one-time *James Bond* star George Lazenby – was in charge of the listing and sold it for \$31.5 million in 2010. With views of the Hudson River and the High Line, it is considered to be the most expensive condos ever sold downtown.



*Fredrik Eklund, right*

**Fredrik Eklund:**

"My apartment. I just renovated it," says the reality star, who understandably wouldn't divulge his address. "I have my dogs there and I just love it so much. I changed everything. I ripped everything out." With newly added marble counter tops and rustic wood features, his favorite remodeled room is the kitchen. "It's a country kitchen. I'm not a very country person, but I love it."

**Laura Cao:**

"I've seen amazing apartments with views of Central Park and everywhere else, but I'm really into green technology. Right now, there's a fantastic geothermal townhouse (currently on the market as a rental for \$45,000 a month) on 156 Reade Street," says Cao. The five-bedroom, five-bathroom property was once owned and commissioned by renowned architect John Petrarca. "A water well was dug deep down into a hole and the water is actually what warms the entire townhouse so the whole apartment space is temperature controlled. You don't have to pay for any heating or air conditioning. It's very minimalistic and revolutionary."