

ELLE DECOR

WINTER

THE ESCAPES
ISSUE

JOYFUL, OUT-THERE DESIGN
TO DREAM ABOUT

A Secret Love Nest
Turned Weekend
Idyll in Italy

Minimalist Beauty
at the Edge
of the World

35 Host-Gift
Ideas to Beat the
Winter Mood

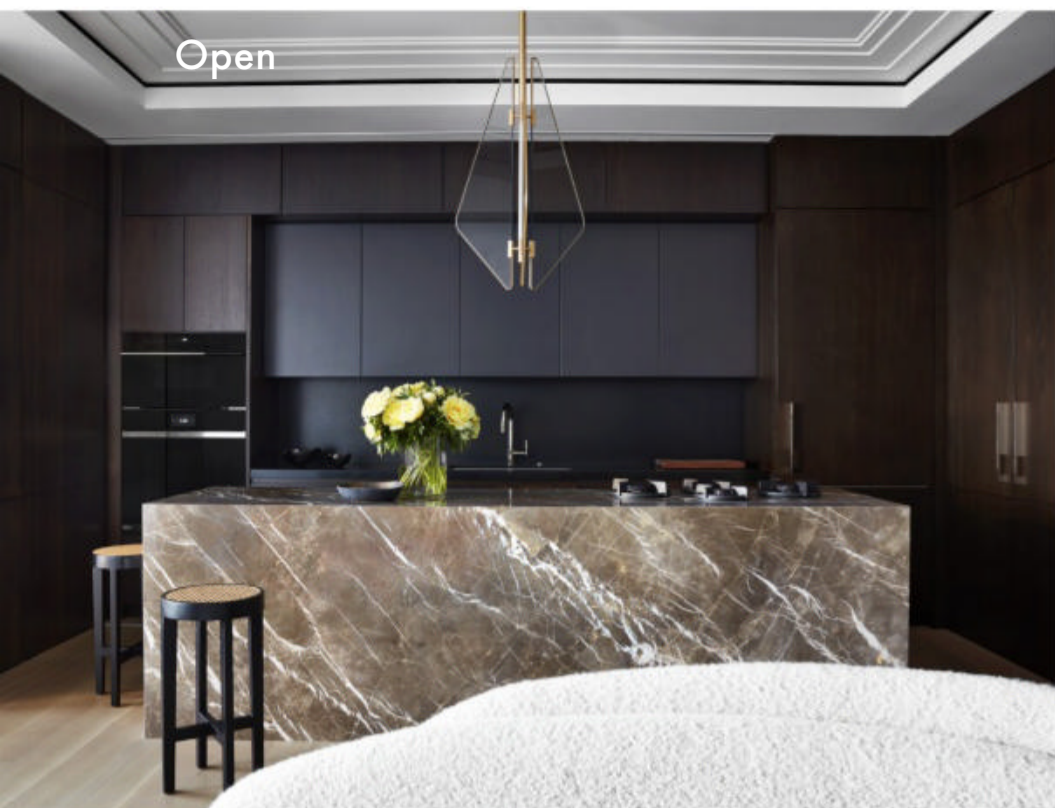


THERE'S A TV HIDDEN HERE

Designers are pulling off sneakily innovative solutions for obscuring screens, wires, and appliances at home. Here's how. *By Tim McKeough*

Can you guess where Ashe Leandro hid the TV in this Park Avenue living room? Answer: Behind a custom mirror with a hinged panel that rotates open.

STEPHEN KENT JOHNSON



We love the entertainment provided by screens and stereos and the convenience of cutting-edge appliances and devices—but let’s be honest, we hate seeing all those ugly boxes and cords out in the open. That’s why architects, designers, and homeowners alike have been working to conceal home technology for nearly as long as we’ve had electricity.

“It is a battle because we want to keep the architecture pure,” says Crina Arghirescu Rogard, a New York City- and Paris-based architect whose artfully minimalist interiors are packed with covered-up tech, from imperceptible magnetic access panels to barely-there roller shades. “There are many ways to camouflage things from a distance.”

At the top of the list of offenders is the television, which only seems to grow in scale every year. “It’s always an eyesore, especially when it’s in a living room,” says Jarvis Wong, a New York City-based interior designer. But there are numerous methods for making it disappear. Wong has cached enormous TVs within custom built-in cabinetry and once replaced a unit with a projector that descends from a ceiling soffit on a motorized lift. Rogard has used mechanized hoists that stow under a bed when the television isn’t being watched, as well as mounts that slide a screen sideways out of a wall.

But not every gadget-stashing solution needs to be so high-tech; ELLE DECOR A-List Titan Juan Montoya frequently deals with screens in a more playful manner. At his country house in Garrison, New York, he devised what he calls a guillotine—a wooden panel raised by rope and pulley that conceals a TV right beside the fireplace. Other times, he has simply used a curtain on a rod. “It gives you the sense of a window,” he says.

Montoya also loves filling rooms with music but doesn’t like seeing speakers everywhere. As a solution, he has recessed them behind ceiling treatments, including

a dining room where he covered the expanse in straw. Rogard often uses speakers from Stealth Acoustics and Sonance that get plastered directly into walls so they’re completely invisible.

In kitchens, hidden appliances have been trending for years, as food-prep spaces blend into living spaces, which has encouraged manufacturers to invent products that are stealthier than ever. “The biggest change has been in hoods,” which are no longer necessary, says Piotr Paradowski, who runs Poland-based Paradowski Studio with his wife, Zuza Paradowska.



In a New York City bedroom, designer Crina Arghirescu Rogard crafted a custom window treatment featuring a discreet slot for roller shades.

Subtle kitchen ventilation started with pop-up down-draft hoods but has moved on to extractors that remain flush with the countertop, Piotr says. The Paradowskis have also tucked wall ovens behind access panels that slide into the wall to reveal the appliances only when needed. “We didn’t want it to look like a kitchen,” Zuza says, “so during the day, you’re not bothered by any of the mess.”

There is also, of course, the continual struggle with cord and charger clutter. That’s where more intelligent solutions are required. When Wong designed a handsome custom desk for a home office, for instance, he didn’t want it ruined by bundles of computer cable. “We added a removable panel under the desk,” says Wong, where connections can be made to concealed wires, after running cables

through a slot in the desktop. “If you want to be really meticulous, you tape the wires behind the monitor stand,” he says. To minimize visibility of living room lamp cords, he routinely uses floor outlets paired with custom rugs that have slots for passing cords through, resulting in light fixtures that appear totally untethered.

But all the time spent on conjuring such illusions leaves Rogard asking a larger question: “Why doesn’t technology respond to the demands of architecture and design?” It seems obvious that since the entire point of camouflaging is to create something aesthetically pleasing, why not just keep that in mind before a piece of tech is even created? “If we design products better,” she says, “they might actually be a pleasure to look at.” ■



Tolix TV Cabinet by Chantal Adriot
Sliding doors and cord portals ensure that cables stay behind the scenes.
\$1,995. dwr.com



Travertine Switch Plates
Outlets will fade into the background with these stylish covers.
\$25 each. tileshop.com



French Door Refrigerator
Customizable panels will help your fridge blend in with the cabinetry.
Price upon request. subzero-wolf.com

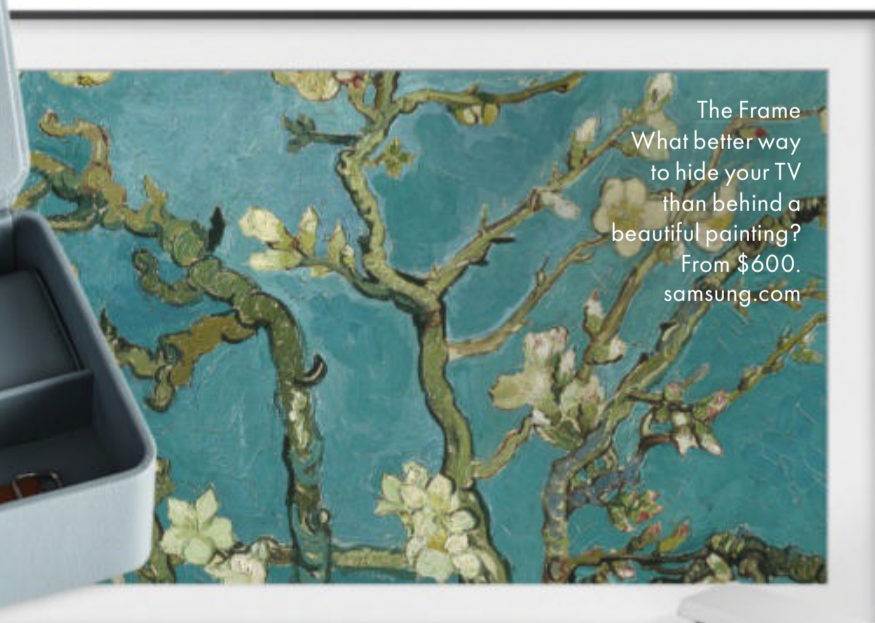
VANISHING ACTS

Accessories to make tech go poof.

By Helena Madden



Presidio Apple Watch Storage Box
Keep smart watches fully juiced with a discreet, vegan-leather-wrapped charging station.
\$199. californiaclosets.com



The Frame
What better way to hide your TV than behind a beautiful painting?
From \$600. samsung.com



NeatUp Cable Management
Humanscale’s system keeps cords both organized and nearly invisible.
From \$267. humanscale.com