

Black honed granite

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We just installed absolute black honed granite as our kitchen countertop. After the installation, the contractor told us not to leave anything (including bread box, canisters, books, etc.) on it for a long period of time because everything will leave permanent stains. How true is this? And how can I avoid this. I had hoped to put lots of things on my counter. Help me please!

Dear Jean:

Would you believe me if I told you that I had to laugh hard for several minutes after reading the recommendations of your installer, before I could type anything as a response?!... (I'm still laughing!!)

So basically, you bought a countertop of the allegedly most enjoyable material available, but you can't use it for nothing, or else!!!

Does that chap claim to know the first thing about stone?... Just curious!...

I only hope that in his infinite wisdom he did not apply an impregnating sealer to your countertop, because that could be a problem.

Let me explain:

There are indeed different opinions on the issue of sealing black hone granite, but there is a unanimous consensus about the fact that it presents maintenance issues.

The problem with honed black granite is that it is not, well â€¦ black any more! Most black stones are but an optical illusion: they become black only when highly polished, or when wet. (See the back of your slab to see the *real* color of your stone!) As you take gloss off the stone surface (and honing does just that) you lose depth of color and the stone turns gray; but when you wet it ... here it is black again! As you spill oily liquids, or you simply touch the stone surface with your fingers (perspiration), you're going to have all sorts of dark surface stains that are a terrible eyesore. Please notice that I said, **surface** stains, not **imbedded** stains. In fact, you can clean those stains off (though with lots of labor), while if they were imbedded you would have to poultice them out. If you apply an impregnator/sealer to the stone you will not solve your problem one bit: in fact the sealer will only prevent liquids from being absorbed by the stone (which in the case of black honed granite is an unlikely event to begin with), not the staining of its surface.

Any solution?

Well, yes: you have to give up the gray!

If you apply a good-quality stone color enhancer to your countertop **instead of** an impregnating sealer (a good-quality stone color-enhancer like MB-6 is also an impregnator/sealer) it will turn it permanently black, while preserving the hone finish. In that way, the surface-staining problem would be minimized.

Like I said before, let's just hope that your fabricator, in their â€œinfinite wisdom,â€• did not apply an impregnator/sealer to your stone: this would have to be stripped (not an easy feat!), or else the color/enhancer wouldn't stand a chance to work properly.

And don't you forget that in order to upkeep your stone *and* the color enhancer, your best bet is to use good-quality specialty products for stone. (<http://www.mbstonecare.com>)

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Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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