

A general uniform dulling of the stone is typical of steam shower stalls

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Dear Maurizio:

I have installed crema marfil (sp?) marble in my shower stall. We do not seem to have a problem with soap scum probably because we rinse and towel dry the shower after each use. We do however have hard water which seems to be slightly dulling the surface. I understand that your MB-3 Soap Film Remover is designed to remove mineral deposits. Will it negatively affect the shine at all in the process of removing the deposits? How often should it be used?

Lastly, should I also be using MB-5 Marble, Granite & More Spray for routine maintenance?

Thanks,

Pam

Dear Pam:

If I were a salesman I would enthusiastically answer, YES to both your questions.

Unfortunately I'm a mechanic, and, because of that, I know that all too many times when it comes to stone the perceived problem may not correspond to the actual problem. And that is why I created our corporate motto, "Education before any sale!"

Now, ask to yourself: "Why should I have hard water mineral deposits if I rinse and towel-dry the marble tiles every day after everybody finished taking a shower?" (BTW, that's an excellent practice!)

The answer is that you shouldn't.

Now, let's see the possibilities:

- 1) Did you ever use a generic cleaning product on your marble tiles?*
 - 2) How is the condition of your grout and caulking lines? Were those tiles set butt-joint (next to one another with no grout gap)? Do you have any grout or caulk missing or damaged?*
 - 3) Do you have this slight "dullness" all over, or only on specific areas?*
- Answer the questions above for me, and then we'll take it from there.*

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

Maurizio:

Thanks so much for your email. How impressive that you would respond so quickly and thoroughly.

I did ask myself why I would have mineral deposits if we dry the shower and the only thing I could figure out was that maybe (1) that the minerals attach themselves during the shower (or steam session since it is a steam shower) and aren't removed by the towel or (2) despite wiping the shower down, there is still some small

amount of water evaporation. In any event, the answer to your questions are:

- (1) We have only rinsed the shower with water after each use and not used any cleaning products with the exception of one occasion last week when I used diluted Ivory soap (at the suggestion of the installer and before I read your website--at least it was very thoroughly rinsed off). Having educated myself by reading your website, I will not use Ivory again but the dulling had occurred before the one-time use of the soap (and was, in fact, why I tried it) and the marble looked the same after using it.
- (2) The grout looks to be in very good shape. I wouldn't say there is no gap at all between the tiles but they are very close to each other with only a very thin grout line. They are much closer than typical ceramic tile joints.
- (3) The flecks on the marble (that appear to be minerals) and slight dulling is uniform all over the shower.

The shower looks pretty good but the tiles simply don't have the high polished reflective character of the tiles on the bathroom wall that are outside the shower. Therefore, it seemed I might be doing something wrong and I wanted to address this before it becomes a true problem. After doing a lot of research online, you were the only source that I developed confidence in.

Thanks for your help.

Pam

Dear Pam:

Now I know exactly what the problem is.

No mineral deposit there!

A general uniform dulling of the stone is typical of steam shower stalls.

There is not a sure technical explanation as to why steam does that to polished marble, but it does...

It turns the stone from polished to dull over time, yet in a very uniform way.

There's nothing that you can do about it, other than occasionally hiring a stone restoration contactor every few years to re-polish your stone.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

Dear Maurizio:

Thanks so much for helping me to solve this mystery. Before going to the marble restoration crowd, I think I will try your polish on the marble and maybe also your mineral cleaner (unless you feel that would be a complete waste). In the right light, you can see reflective flecks located uniformly on the marble which may be etchings from the chemicals/minerals in the water or actual deposits of some sort caused by the steam. If I experience any break-throughs, I'll let you know so you can alert other steam shower owners to this use of your products.

Again, thanks for taking an interest in this problem and approaching it in

such a professional manner. It is always such a true pleasure to find and converse with an expert in a field.

Pam