

Absolute Black Brushed Granite

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We are in the process of choosing a stone for a rather large kitchen project that will get a lot of use and potential abuse (wet bottle, glasses, pans, etc). A representative from the countertop company recommended (and we liked the look of) Absolute Black Brushed Granite. However, I was alarmed when I researched black granite on your website. It appears that many consumers are not getting what they expect. Can you please explain how to ensure that the stone we purchase is of the quality and performance expected? Any recommendations you may have are greatly appreciated. Thanks in advance for your assistance.

Dear Josh:

Your concern is not justified.

It appears that many consumers are not getting what they expect.

This makes strict reference to polished black granite. All too many times, since the black granite is actually grey, they paint-over some sort of black shine to make it look black and more sellable. Of course, when the shine begins to give, all hell breaks loose!

With a finish different than highly polished the issue can not and, in fact, does not exist.

However, there's another important issue that has nothing to do with the quality of the stone. If tackled at the right time, it's no problem; if not, it's a maintenance nightmare. Read the following. Even it talks specifically about hone-finished granite, it applies to brush-finished, leather-finished and flame-finished black granites, too.

There are indeed different opinions on black honed granite surfaces, 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 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.

Let's just hope that your fabricator, in their "infinite wisdom," 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.

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Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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