

Travertine floor tiles

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I am building a home and love the look of large travertine tiles, but sales people tell me that it is a nightmare to maintain and keep clean and I would be better off with a porcelain tile that looks like travertine. I have a two year old and a baby and I am building on a acreage, so I need something durable. Would you recomend travertine, or something else and if so, what kind of finish on the travertine? Thanks.

Dear Cara:

It's much easier to stay (specifically) ignorant and say that a certain material is a maintenance nightmare, rather than getting the right intelligence, isn't it?...:-)

Of course, under your circumstances, it wouldn't be advisable to have polished travertine installed, but good-quality honed and filled travertine tiles will give you a very enjoyable floor, if installed properly. (Which brings up the vital issue of the installation: don't shop price when shopping for a tile setter; shop reputation!)

However, the real debate about the maintenance of natural stone tiles is not really a matter of stone; it is rather a matter of collective culture of a certain community.

Let me explain myself better:

People buy blue-jeans for their practicality and, not only won't they mind when their pants will "age", but most people actually look forward to that!

Within the North American culture, the same principle does not appear to be accepted and embraced when it comes to natural stone. In here, most people would like to have their stone "no matter what the original finish is" to stay brand-new all the time, and any sign of "aging" is considered a "damage" that must be rectified.

That is the difference between the collective culture of, say, the Mediterranean basin and other communities, such as North America .

Over there they just use and abuse (enjoy, that is) their stones and they only care for them with a floor stone cleaner. And the "older" they get the better they look!

Over here, we're "slave" of our stones!!

In conclusion, as you can see, I can't answer your question objectively.

You are the only one with the answer!

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[? :-\)](#)

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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