

# San Gabriel or Labrador Black?

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Hi Maurizio, After researching black granite on your site, I've decided against Absolute Black and am looking for an alternative. I like the look of San Gabriel Black and Labrador Black....is there anything I should look out for or worry about with these stones? Thank you!

Dear Karen:

The true absolute black (a denomination that legally belongs exclusively to the black stone quarried in South Africa) is an extremely good choice. The problem is that different distributors call absolute black any black "granite" they decide to carry. So you really never know what kind of stone you're getting when you hear saying "black absolute."

Welcome to the stone industry, where everything goes and everybody's happy, and the where the law of the land means nothing at all!

Probably the two stones you mentioned are not candidate to doctoring; but probably doesn't mean for sure.

I hope you will understand the true spirit of what I'm about to say. It appears to me that like most other inquirers at this stage you seem mostly interested in the type of stone and/or its physical characteristics. It's human nature at work, I reckon! J

How about if I tell you that a certain stone is a good choice and then you get a low-grade slab or a doctored one? Trust me: the human factor is far more important than the stone itself and should be the only true deciding factor!

In an industry that's virtually unregulated, how good and reputable the fabricator who's is going to process the stone you'll end up choosing is far more important than the stone itself. None of the horror stories that get posted in this very site stem from the stone: they all stem from the fabricator. That is why I seldom make final statements about any one particular stone. There may be differences within the same stone (and I'm not talking about looks, here!) from one bundle of slabs and the next. The slabs may have also been either "doctored" (which is bad), or "resined" (which overall is good) by the factory, which would make a big difference. Even more important, what's a good stone in the hands of some "Michelangelo"?! And again: a reputable fabricator will only carry high-grade slabs, not some "special!"

We have available a very comprehensive article on "How to Shop for a Granite Kitchen Countertop" that will give you all the intelligence you need to venture yourself with confidence in the stone industry jungle, and it includes the world renowned "Lemon juice (and oil) test", which will enable you to determine on your own the suitability of any stone you will consider! It does carry a small price tag, and you can order it by logging on the Educational Literature section at: <http://www.mbstone.com/literature/literature.htm>. It's available in pay-per-download format and I consider it a cheap "insurance premium" to pay when there are thousands of \$ involved! Not to mention the little and much needed support you'd be giving to the cause, **your** cause, since every single penny of the cost of the article will be used to support it.

Also, will you please read and e-sign our Statement of Purpose at: <http://www.marblecleaning.org/purpose.htm>? By spreading the word about this valuable site among your friends & family and the stone trades' people you've been dealing with you will be rendering everybody a valuable service!

Also, do take advantage of the plethora of FREE Helpful Hints available at:

[http://www.mbstone.com/HH\\_promo/helpful\\_hints.htm](http://www.mbstone.com/HH_promo/helpful_hints.htm). They're on the house!

Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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