

Outdoor limestone patio floor

Authored by: **Maurizio Bertoli** [mailto:mbstone.com]

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My mom had a beautiful patio built and installed a limestone floor. After several years she has concluded it was a mistake due to the challenge of keeping it clean and looking nice. She doesn't want to replace it and I wondered if she could use concrete stain to simply darken the stone. I read about sealers but also read many questions about staining problems even with a sealer. You said you would never use limestone. Does that include exteriors? Most of the homes in my area (Hill Country, TX) have limestone exteriors. Thanks for sharing your insight!

Dear Lisa:

The reason why I recommend people who inquire with me not to use limestone is because by saying limestone you're saying very little "if anything at all. There are many different (and I do mean **different**) kinds of limestone that span from dense and (almost) acceptable rocks, to limestone that will actually fall apart under running water, and everything in between. Unfortunately, it is everybody's experience that the vast majority of stone dealers know about stone just as much as their customers! Consequently, since nobody is there to tell the final end-user if the particular limestone they have in mind is suitable for the project, I can't certainly be the one, from here, to tell.

That being said, certain limestones (very few indeed) could be acceptable for outdoors installation. I.e. Indiana Limestone (but who likes that one, all gray and boring ?... :-)). However, the real problem is the fact that American consumers just don't seem to be able to drive themselves to enjoy their stones !... They're literally slave of them, in the sense that they would like them to look like brand-new all the time; and every little thing and natural change that happen to them is regarded like a damage that must be rectified.

Well, when you install stone outdoors, it ain't gonna happen, no matter what stone it is, and how much you seal it "which is not a good idea anyway for outdoors installations! :-)

Now, in your mom's particular case, maybe her limestone is beyond what could be considered as acceptable even by most open-minded consumers; but if that's the case, there's no "miracle-in-a-bottle" that could ever solve the problem of the wrong stone for the application.

And BTW, historically stains on stone never performed well. Before proceeding with the staining, test it on a few spare tiles.

May I ask you now to please read and e-sign our Statement of Purpose at:
[http://www.marblecleaning.org/purpose.htm? :-\)](http://www.marblecleaning.org/purpose.htm? :-))

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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