

Plant overflowed onto travertine floors

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Hi Maurizio- I overwatered a plant that was sitting on a cork mat, on our travertine tile floors. When we discovered this mistake, we moved everything and were left with a stain that is lighter than the rest of that tile. It almost looks like the tile had faded from the plant sitting on it. That area does get a lot of sun, but given when I've been reading, this is more likely water damage. Can you please help me with some cleaning suggestions? The floors were already in the house when we moved in, so I'm not exactly sure what type they are. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated! Thanks!

Dear Brenna:

œ The floors were already in the house when we moved in, so I'm not exactly sure what type they are. œ•

Well, Brenna, you're gonna have to be more specific than that if you want me to help you. First you state in the subject box that's a travertine floor, and then you say that you don't know what it is!?

I will give you my answer assuming that's travertine.

Obviously the water-plant did not stain your stone, but it etched it. (A true stain is always darker than the stained material œ“ never lighter.) In other words you have a surface damage.

If the stone has a hone-finish (a satin finish œ“ not highly polished) then you could restore the color by repairing the damage with metal-grade sandpaper. You can use it by hand, but you'd be better off if you had a small hand-held buffer to use it with. Hit the etch-mark with a 120 grit to start with, and then follow up with 240 and 400 grit. (Or maybe the 240 will do.) This will usually get a result pretty close to factory finish. If it doesn't, don't worry too much: a few weeks of foot traffic will take care of producing a perfect blending. Don't be happy with a few strokes: work each grit intensively and make sure to widen the area you're working on of at least 1œ• all around each grit up. Pretty easy, wouldn't you say?...
J

If the stone had been sealed with an impregnator, it may need to be sealed again in the areas you worked on.

And if it is not a perfect match, a few weeks of foot traffic will take care of the blending.

If it is polished instead, technically you would need the services of a stone restoration contractor, but you could try (using the same hand-held buffer with a terry-cloth bonnet) to polish that spot with a consumer-friendly polishing compound for marble like MB-11 after using the 400 or, even better, the 600 grit sand-paper. And if it is not a perfect match! Well, learn how to live with it, or hire a pro. J

Now remember, it's never too early to think about the proper maintenance of your stone. ***The issue of what you'll be doing day in and day out to your stone is “as it should be intuitive” vastly more important than its sealing*** (if and when possible and/or advisable) and it's all too often neglected. As you can tell by reading many of this site's postings, you're not likely to get good information about routine care from your dealer or installer. Don't become another statistic! By logging into the Helpful Hints section of our website at: http://www.mbstone.com/HH_promo/helpful_hints.htm , you will be able to get the short version of our maintenance guidelines at no charge. The full version of it “a 7-page document considered by many as an industry benchmark” is available in pay-per-download format in our Educational Literature section at: <http://www.mbstone.com/literature/literature.htm> .

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Thank you

Ciao and good luck,

Mauri zio Bertoli

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