

Travertine streaking/marks in shower

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I recently had 12x12 travertine tiles installed in shower. Sealed it with 2 coats. Didn't know that I should not use a regular bathroom cleaner, and used Lysol Bathroom Cleaner. Now the travertine has water streaking - not obvious when wet, but looks horrible when dry. Marks are right where the water usually runs naturally. I tired using natural stone cleaner, with no help. Then, resealed just 1 square to see if it just needed to be resealed (thought perhaps the cleaner had stripped the sealant). That did not help; tried 2nd coat which also did nothing. Any suggestions?

Dear Tracy:

I can't stop getting amazed by messages like this one.

1. Polished travertine can't be technically sealed. It is too dense to let any impregnator (what you call sealer) in.
2. Impregnators (sealers for stone) are strictly below-the-surface (of the stone) products that have one function and one function only: help prevent staining (coffee, cooking oil, Ocean Spray, etc.). Moreover, the most important phase of their application is to make sure that every residue of the product (100% of it, in the case of travertine) is thoroughly removed from the surface of the stone before it has a chance to dry. Therefore the word "coats" does not apply, and no protection whatsoever to the surface of the stone can be expected.
3. Stone installed in a wet environment should never be sealed "even if it could be" unless you have unfiltered well water.

But the real amazing part is that people are so very concerned about the suitability of a particular stone for this or that project, but A) don't seem to care much about the quality of the installation "which is even more important than the stone itself" and also B) they don't seem to care about the routine maintenance. They go with the idiotic advice of the merchants that sell the stones to them to religiously seal everything in sight that doesn't move and don't know what to use to actually take care of their stone. The merchants themselves don't know that, either.

Now you have marks of corruptions (which are actual surface damages) all over your travertine tiles, and you tried to "clean" them with a neutral cleaner! And then, of course, you tried to "seal" them again, hoping that a below-surface product could "shine up" your stone! L

Did you ask your stone dealer what to do?... Let me take a wild guess: they don't have a clue!

Your only option is to hire a bona fide stone restoration contractor who will lightly grind (hone) and then re-polish your stone.

Now, you'd better watch out! I consider stone refinishing as the very pinnacle of all the activities related to stone from a professional point of view. Unfortunately, there are a lot of quacks on the loose out there! You get one of those, and you may even have to kiss your stone bye-bye!

How could you tell a champ from a chomp? Could you trust the recommendation of your local stone distributor, or contractor, or your interior decorator? Hardly!

We have available a very comprehensive article on how to select a *bona fide* stone restoration contractor, which will give you all the intelligence you need to make a competent choice. It does carry a small price tag, and you can order it by logging on the Educational Literature section Of our website 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 sign our **Statement of Purpose** at: <http://www.marblecleaning.org/purpose.htm>? By spreading the word about this valuable site among your friend & family and the stone trades' people you've been dealing with you will be rendering everybody a valuable service!

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