

# granite kitchen top

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15 weeks ago i had 30mm black lustre granite worksurfaces installed in our new kitchen. within a few days i noticed the first of several marks that vary in size from 15-150mm, they are dull in colour and appear to be just under the surface. One looks not unlike a handprint but most are unrecognisable in shape. I have had the installer fabricator/importer back on several occasions resulting in various unsuccessful remedies, such as stripping and polishing. have you any thoughts or products that would assist and finally is there a governing body that i can approach to complain to in these circumstances as all i get is a list of excuses and empty promises.

Dear Paul:

Let's start by saying that the only black mercantile granite that has the legal right to be called "Black Absolute" is the one coming from South Africa. However, in real life, when one mentions "Black Absolute Granite" one's talking about a huge variety of stones coming a little bit from all over the planet, each and every one of them not a geological granite by a long shot, and each and every one of them with different characteristics. If that wasn't confusing enough, each and every one of them are processed with even if so slightly methods "which again can make a difference.

There used to be three possibilities to explain the problems that you are experiencing, which are here listed in order of probability (the first being the most probable):

1. The fabricator applied an impregnator/sealer to it believing that it's granite. No impregnator/sealer will ever be absorbed by black granite; therefore it won't do the first thing about doing what's designed to do, which is prevent stains. (What you have are NOT stains, and no impregnator/sealer on the planet can prevent those.) Many a sealer turn out to be sensitive to acids; hence the "mysterious etching." Not on the stone, rather on the sealer that had no business being there.
2. The slab had been "doctored" by the factory by applying some sort of black shoe shine in order to make it "blacker" and, therefore more "sellable." After a while the "shoe shine" will begin etching as it gets eaten away by acidic spills. The true color of the stone is dark gray.
2. It is one of those as-rare-as-a-white-fly "mutt" stones with some traces of acid-sensitive minerals in it. In this case it is actually the stone that gets etched.

In the last couple of years there's been a change in the scenario above. Another possibility has entered the scene:

4. Certain manufacturers apply some sort of protective wax to the slabs. It is not actual "doctoring," since there's no alteration to the color of the stone, but the result is the same as if the slab had been "doctored" with the "shoe-shine."

Finally, case 3 above is not as rare as it used to be anymore. At least a couple of "Black Absolute Granites" allegedly from India and China entered the scene recently and are terrible "mutt" stones. Since they are cheap (to the importers) they push them like crazy at full black absolute granite prices.

Having said all that, the remedy to the points 1, 2 and 4 is to remove whatever it is that's sitting on the stone surface,

by either stripping it chemically by soaking it with Methylene Chloride, or mechanically, by rubbing on the stone surface a polishing compound for marble (NOT for granite!) with a little bit of water.

Case 3 is terminal.

From a legal point of view, cases 2 and 3 are full-fledged consumer fraud and could be prosecuted by the law.

All things considered, black granite â€œ which should be considered among the most enjoyable materials as a kitchen countertop â€œ has made it out my own list of recommended stones.

That said, there's no governing body that you could address your complaint to, but you don't need any. If your case is - as I suspect - either doctored stone or acid sensitive stone, the law of the land and its courtrooms is all you need. However, there's marblecleaning.org here to assist you, because, no matter what, you will need an expert to go with you in court to prove your case (the case itself is so black and white that you won't need an attorney). At marblecleaning.org we offer free expert testimony anywhere in the USA (you will have to pay only for all traveling expenses and possible lab tests).

I would suggest that as a first course of action you print this out and have your fabricator/stone yard read this.

If they won't replace your countertop with a more suitable stone, then your next step will be filing with the BBB (and marblecleaning.org will help with its assistance). And if that won't be enough... it's court time.

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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