

Absolute Black Granite

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

Saved From: <https://marblecleaning.org/knowledgebase/article.php?id=523>

I had absolute black granite installed in my kitchen in June. It was sealed by the fabricators. For a couple of months now I have been noticing "huge white out spots (the black speckled dots have all disappeared)." I have not done anything to the countertops (no spills, nothing has been placed on them to damage them, etc.) What is going on? I contacted the seller and she assured me that the problem can be fixed. Is this true? She said I was her third customer to be experiencing this problem. One customer's countertops are completely white. She said she will never sell absolute black granite again because it is too much of a liability. She assured me that in two weeks she would contact me. It has been almost a month and I have not heard from her. I called again yesterday and she was "busy" with sales. What recourse do I have? How should I handle this problem? Will my granite need to be replaced or is the problem correctable? Is the seller responsible for correcting the problem? Thank you for your time and attention to answering my questions.

Dear Charmane Beverly:

“What recourse do I have?” • Call you fabricator one more time and if they will keep ignoring them, have your attorney write them a “nice” letter. That should get their attention.

Now, what went on?

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 for 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 "doctored," 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. Points 2 and 3 are full-fledged consumer fraud, a criminal activity that's been going on for years and counting and that's unopposed by the stone industry establishment. Going by your description I lean toward possibility 3. No matter what, the fabricator is fully responsible for what happened to your stone and the only remedy is a complete replacement with also the assumption of the risks attached to the removal of the current countertop, which could damage the top of the cabinets. Marblecleaning.org is available to help you at no charge should the matter reach the courtroom.

All things considered, black granite "which should be considered among the most enjoyable materials as a kitchen countertop (and a decent fabricator should be able to recognize and find the right ones that are available)" has made it out my own list of recommended stones.

Until the industry will not clean its act up by becoming serious about the classification of all the different "granites" on the marketplace and dictate strict rules and guidelines about their characteristics and implied guarantees to the consumers, my position is going to be that from now on.

You can help! Actually, as a consumer of stone you're the best qualified to make things happen! Will you now please read and sign our Statement of Purpose by logging on 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 you will be rendering everybody a valuable service!

Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

www.marblecleaning.org "The **Only** Consumers' Portal to the Stone Industry Establishment!"