

BRUSHED ABSOLUTE GRANITE

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I purchased and had installed brushed absolute granite counter tops. After they were installed they were sprayed with a sealer. We noticed what looked like finger print marks all over the stone. The fabricator returned the next day and used acetone and removed the sealer. It lightened the marks but upon resealing they were still there. They informed me that my stone was not brushed but high heat was used to remove the polish. They want to put a chemical on them to see if it will remove the stain or they will replace with the real brushed stone. I love the gray matt color/finish but want to enjoy my counter tops without fear of staining etc. What are my options? I am now afraid I have made a terrible mistake. Please help!!

Dear Nancy:

So, for starters we don't really know whether the finish you have is brushed or flamed. Second, why is your fabricator such an incompetent that he doesn't know that the last thing you want to do is apply an impregnating sealer to a flamed, or brushed, or hone-finished black "granite"?

That said, you have to insist that you want a real brushed finish. Once you have that, unfortunately, if you don't want to live a maintenance nightmare, you're going to have to give up the gray.

Let me explain:

The problem with black "granite" with a finish below polished (whatever that might be: honed, brushed or flamed) is that it is not, well "black" any more! Most black stones are but an optical illusion: they become black only when highly polished, or when wet. (See the back of your slab to see the *real* color of your stone!) As you take gloss off the stone surface (and honing, brushing and flaming do just that) you lose depth of color and the stone turns gray; but when you wet it ... here it is black again! As you spill oily liquids, or you simply touch the stone surface with your fingers (perspiration), you're going to have all sorts of dark surface stains that are a terrible eyesore. Please notice that I said, **surface** stains, not **imbedded** stains. In fact, you can clean those stains off (though with lots of labor), while if they were imbedded you would have to poultice them out. If you apply an impregnator/sealer to the stone you will not solve your problem one bit: in fact the sealer will only prevent liquids from being absorbed by the stone (which in the case of black "granite" is an unlikely event to begin with due to its natural density. Please notice that I always used quotation marks when saying black "granite". No black "granite" is even remotely related to true geological granite; they are all totally different stones), not the staining of its surface.

Any solution?

Well, yes: you have to give up the gray!

If you apply a good-quality stone color enhancer to your countertop **instead of** an impregnating sealer (a good-quality stone color-enhancer like MB-6 is also an impregnator/sealer) it will turn it permanently black, while preserving the dull. In that way, the surface-staining problem would be minimized.

Let's just hope that your fabricator, in their "infinite wisdom," will not apply an impregnator/sealer to your stone again without informing you first (so that you can stop them): this would have to be stripped (not an easy feat! And acetone doesn't do the trick most of the time.), or else the color/enhancer wouldn't stand a chance to work properly.

And don't you forget that in order to upkeep your stone *and* the color enhancer, your best bet is to use good-quality specialty products for stone.

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Thank you.

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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