

real dull (not me, the finish)

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As usual I am the minority. I do not want a polished marble floor. I love the dull, pitted, worn, marble surfaces I have seen in many ancient places where people have been walking for centuries. As you point out is stone after all. I asked the stone shop where I am buying the floor tiles (Bianco Carrara) to work the surface to be rougher than a standard honed finish (so I can feel the "tooth" of the stone when I run my finger over it). Am I badly mistaken to think I can have a dull, worn marble floor in my own kitchen by doing nothing to it except walk on it a lot and regular cleaning? (ps I gather from your responses you do not like marble in the kitchen so give it to me right between the eyes...)

Dear Peter:

Don't like marble in a kitchen?... Who, me?... As the "Duke" would say, "Not hardly!"

It's the (vast majority of) Northern Americans that don't like marble in a kitchen, not me!

And the reason why they don't like it is because they can't accept it in a hone-finished form to begin with, and they also can't accept any "change" that will occur to it over time.

It's not an issue regarding the type of stone: it's rather an issue of a community's collective culture in regard of how they expect the stone to perform.

If you like marble in a kitchen, go right ahead: here's is how I would do it (and how I did it 7 years ago as a wedding gift to my older son who now has marble throughout his kitchen and dining room):

Along with a reputable tile setter, you will hire a bona-fide stone restoration contractor. The tile setter will set the marble tiles (I really don't care how they're finished when they come out of the box) according to the specification of the restoration guy, which will include having 1/16" grout gap and leaving the grout in excess. After a couple of days of curing, the restoration bloke will come in and grind you floor flat, and finish the honing cuts at 120 grit. After that, a good pass with good-quality honing powder 150 grit will finish the job by delivering a brand-new 100-year old floor. All you will have to do is enjoy it!

As an alternative, if you can find them, you could opt for tumble-finished marble tiles. In such case, there wouldn't be the need of any stone restoration contractor. A good tile setter will install your tiles with a 3/16" to 1/4" grout gap and fill it with sanded grout. The maintenance requirements would be exactly the same. The only difference is that in the case I illustrated before you will have a classic Italian floor; while the second technique will deliver a much more rustic look.

In both cases, depending on the marble, you may want to consider the application of a good-quality stone color enhancer, like MB-6, to give more "life" to the color of the marble. Sure, they didn't have that 200 years ago; but they didn't have antibiotics, either! :-)

May I ask you now to please read and e-sign our Statement of Purpose at: <http://www.marblecleaning.org/purpose.htm> ? :-)

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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