

Care & Maintenance Guide

For Residential Natural Stone Countertops

Congratulations, you've got one of Mother Nature's best material in your home! It took a few hundred thousand years to make the stone that you now proudly own. Each and every piece of stone you own has no match in the entire world. Along with its unmatched beauty, you also have to accept its physical limitations and understand the proper care and maintenance.

Maintenance Cleaning

All natural stone products are subject to damage if not cared for properly. For normal housekeeping, clean using clear warm water or a pH neutral stone cleaner on a regular basis to remove residue from everyday spills such as food, hairspray, or cosmetics. No other soaps, detergents, or cleaners should be used on natural stone. Be careful with common foods and drinks that contain acids that may etch or dull the stone's surface. Some common toiletries (i.e. perfume, toothpaste, mouthwash) may contain acids and other ingredients that may damage the stone surface or degrade the sealer if not cleaned timely.

Sealing

Your countertops are purchased sealed. The purpose of a sealer is to repel dirt and liquid while increasing stain resistance. It penetrates into the stone, thereby reducing absorption, keeping dirt and staining agents on the stone surface. Be aware that sealing will not eliminate staining. Any spills should be wiped off immediately to prevent stains from settling into the stone. Sealers should be reapplied periodically; we recommend at least once a year. Apply sealers that are made only for natural stone.

Natural Stone Care Dos and Don'ts

- DO use drink coasters under glasses, especially if they contain alcohol or citrus juices.
- DO use trivets or mats under hot dishes or cookware.
- DO dust countertops, islands, vanities and floors frequently.
- DO blot up spills immediately to minimize permanent damage to the stone.
- DO clean surfaces regularly with cleaners designed for stone.
- DON'T use vinegar, bleach, ammonia, general purpose bathroom cleaners or tub and tile cleaners.
- DON'T use abrasive cleaners such as dry cleansers.
- DON'T use alkaline cleaners not specifically formulated for stone.

Etch Marks

Highly acidic substances such as orange juice, coffee, vinegar, wine, mustard and many soft drinks can "etch" Maestro Marble. Sealing allows you time to wipe up a spill, but it cannot stop the chemical reaction called "etching" that may leave a dull mark. General cleaners not specifically designed for natural stone are not recommended. These may etch away the polish, discolor the surface, scratch the stone or degrade the sealer. Once the stone is "etched" etch marks cannot be removed.

Food Spills

Scoop up the food with a plastic spoon. Remove residue with dry, clean cloth. Spray the area with a natural stone cleaner and wipe off excess with a clean cloth.

Liquid Spills

Blot away the mess with a clean, dry cloth while turning the cloth frequently. Spray the area with a natural stone cleaner and wipe off excess with a clean cloth.

Oily Stains

Of particular hazard to natural stone are oil, fats, grease and products containing these types of items. Extra care should be taken to avoid products with grease residue being exposed to your natural stone for prolonged periods of time. If you identify the stain as having an oil base (from foods like salad dressing, cooking oils, butter or some cosmetics), you may be able to remove the stain using a Poultice Mix. It will help wick up the stain from deep within the stone.

If by chance a stain does settle into the stone, do not attempt to remove it with cleaners, abrasives or any other method. Most stains can be removed by using a Poultice Mix.

Poultice Application Guide

1. Apply 1/8" to 1/4" of poultice stain remover in a uniform coat over stained area to encompass an area slightly larger than actual stain.
2. Cover the poultice with foil or plastic wrap and tape down borders.
3. Allow poultice to remain covered for 12-24 hours.
4. After this period, remove covering and poultice (a slightly improved result may be obtained by removing the covering only and allowing the poultice to dry out for another 24 hours prior to removal).
5. Inspect for any remaining stain and repeat procedure if necessary.
6. Clean thoroughly with water or a stone cleaner.

After cleaning and removal of poultice, the stone may appear darker due to excess moisture content. When the stone dries, possibly over several days, the darkening will disappear.

Cleaning Products

Allied Stone has a complete line of stone care products for sealing, cleaning, and stain removal. Call a sales representative today for more information!

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