

# Natural Stone Care

**Congratulations!** Your new natural stone purchase is an investment in lasting beauty that will give you many years of wear. This care guide gives you a few tips on how to properly care for your natural stone and help extend its life and beauty. Following some simple precautions, properly sealing, and using the correct cleaning methods and products, will insure you a lifetime of use from your natural stone.

## SEALING YOUR STONE

Natural stone has been formed over millions of years but improper care can ruin nature's beauty. Although we usually think of stone as "hard", it is a porous material that can absorb spills and stains if left untreated. Sealing your stone with a quality impregnating sealer will prevent most spills from damaging your investment.

There are a wide variety of sealers and cleaners available at most major hardware stores, so you need to select one for your specific needs and natural stone type. Impregnating sealers, with new, advanced fluorochemical technology, penetrate the stone and help protect it against water and oil-based stains. Industry professionals recognize that natural stone is best protected with a fluorochemical-based sealer.

Once sealed properly, your stone is protected against everyday dirt and spills. Proper cleaning will help the sealer last longer and keep your stone protected without damaging your stone's natural beauty.

## CLEANING PROCEDURES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Clean your natural stone on a regular basis with warm water and a clean non-abrasive cloth or sponge. In addition, using a neutral cleaner specially formulated for natural stone will help remove soils that normal dusting or damp mopping leave behind.

Do not use general purpose cleaners or you may damage your stone or the sealer applied. Do not use products that contain lemon, vinegar or other acids as these may etch the stone surface and damage the polish. Do not use scouring powders or creams; these products contain abrasives that may scratch the surface.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN A SPILL OCCURS

No matter how careful you are, spills are going to happen. A quick response and the right solutions can keep spills from damaging your stone or the sealer.

**Etch Marks** - Substances that are highly acidic, such as orange juice, coffee, vinegar, wine, tomato products, mustard and many soft drinks, will "etch" most marble, limestone and travertine - whether the stone is sealed or unsealed. Although sealing allows you time to wipe up a spill, it cannot stop the chemical reaction that may leave a dull area or etch mark in the stone. If excess with a clean cloth or clean the soiled area.

### DOS & DON'TS

**DO** use coasters under glasses, especially if they contain alcohol or citrus juices.

**DO** use trivets or mats under hot dishes or cookware.

**DO** use place mats under china, ceramics, silver or other objects that may scratch your stone's surface.

**DO** dust frequently.

**DO** blot up spills immediately to minimize permanent damage to the stone.

**DON'T** use vinegar, bleach, ammonia or other general-purpose cleaners.

**DON'T** use cleaners that contain acid such as bathroom cleaners, grout cleaners or tub and tile cleaners.

**DON'T** use wet or dry abrasive cleaners such as dry cleansers or soft cleansers.

**DON'T** use alkaline cleaners not specifically formulated for natural stone.

In addition, 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. That's why selecting the correct cleaning products is so important to the lifetime beauty of your natural stone.

Professional refinishing is the best way to permanently remove etch marks and restore your natural stone's even finish.

**Food Spills** - Scoop up the food with a plastic spoon. Blot with dry, white cloth. Spray the area with a cleaner and wipe off excess with a clean cloth or clean the soiled area.

**Liquid Spills** - Blot away the excess with a clean, dry, white cloth; turning the cloth frequently. Spray the area with a cleaner and wipe