



Polished vs. Honed vs. Leathered Surfaces

So you want to know what finish to go with... There isn't a right or wrong answer. The choice depends on your lifestyle, and your preference of look both today and in the future, and how much maintenance you are willing to do. It also depends on the availability of the material in each finish. The differences listed below should help you in making your decision.

Polished surfaces are smooth and shiny. This glossy finish brings out the full color and character of stone. It also reflects light more than other surfaces. The polished finish also adds a layer of security to protect from stains. The process in which a stone is polished helps to close natural pores and creates a protective barrier. Overtime minerals from your water can dull darker stones but this can generally be taken care of by stripping and resealing your countertops every few years depending on your maintenance and your type of water. In between resealing, a polish made for stone countertops can be used to give life and depth of color back to them.

Honed surfaces give a different look that is desired by some, but it doesn't come without its issues that need to be considered. Honing can make the stone appear lighter or "greyed out" especially on dark surfaces. Dark honed material will show oil marks from your hands or anything oily for that matter. It is suggested that an Enhancer Sealer is used as it will darken the stone. This helps by camouflaging the oil stains without adding shine. Lighter stones don't tend to have the same issue with oily fingerprints but as a rule of thumb are still susceptible to other stains that come with general use in the kitchen and bath. Because the pores are more open than in a polished stone, they are at greater risk of accepting stains even when properly sealed. If you are looking for a pristine look this is likely not the finish for you. You should expect over time to see some changes like an old leather jacket. Some "weathering" of sorts will likely happen.

Leathered surfaces have become more popular in recent years but are limited as are honed in their availability. This process is obtained by use of brushes grinding out the softer parts of the stone. This leaves a textured, matte appearance. Leathered stone also as a rule of thumb hides fingerprints that can plague honed surfaces. Since we have different tooling to polish our edges than was used to leather the face of the slabs, the edges might be a little different than the top. We use brushes to mimic the appearance, but subtle differences may be apparent.

For specifics on the type of stone you are considering, please don't hesitate to talk to us about your concerns.