



HOME MAINTENANCE TIPS

Caring for Stone Countertop Material

The natural stone that we install in your home is an investment that will give you many years of beautiful service. Stone is a natural product and simple care and maintenance will keep it looking beautiful. Here are some recommendations for routine care and cleaning:

Granite and polished or honed marble counters are treated during the installation process with permanent high solids, penetrating densifier and sealer to help prevent water absorption, which lasts for up to five years. Reapplication is simple. Daily

Guest Suites Becoming a Popular Option

In an increasing number of newly built homes and homes with renovations and additions, full bedroom suites are replacing converted dens and musty basements as the standard accommodations for out-of-town friends, bounce-back children, and visiting in-laws. In the interest of providing short- and long-term guests with a greater measure of privacy and comfort, our clients are requesting guest suites.

A guest suite can be akin to the master suite in size and features or can be more modest in size but it often includes a separate bathroom, privacy access to the outdoors, and a place on the floor plan that is separate from other bedrooms but also close to gathering spaces, such as the kitchen or great room. Sometimes to achieve privacy, these secondary suites feature a vestibule or short hallway to the door, intimate courtyards or balconies, and plenty of closet space.

Those fortunate enough to spend a night or two (or more) in one of today's guest suites may find finishes and features--and perhaps even square footage--that rival the master suite. A far cry from the typical unfinished bonus room with a sleeper sofa, these rooms offer luxurious window and floor finishes, the latest in luxury bathroom features, and perks including morning kitchens, closet storage systems, and separate audio-visual components.

To provide an even greater level of comfort, as well as help in controlling household energy use and costs, a modern guest suite might employ separate heating and cooling systems, or perhaps a separate zone of the main system, that is controlled by the suite's occupants during their visit without affecting the rest of the house. When the suite is unoccupied, the homeowners can essentially "shut down" the room to conserve energy.

In addition to providing private access to an outdoor space, today's expanded guest suites may even offer separate

maintenance should consist of little more than wiping with a damp cloth and drying with a towel to prevent water spots. To clean counters use a mild liquid dishwashing detergent and warm water or Windex, without lemon, vinegar, or other acids and dry with a soft cloth or paper towel.

Granite is resistant to staining, but is not completely impervious to grease and oil. It is best to wipe these up immediately. If left to sit on the counter for hours, they will soak in, and leave a darker area. Small spills will dissipate and disappear over time.

DO'S AND DON'TS

--Do clean surfaces with mild liquid dishwashing detergent or Windex.

--Do thoroughly rinse and dry the surface after washing.

--Don't use vinegar or lemon juice or any product containing these.

--Don't use cleaners that contain acid such as bathroom cleaners, grout cleaners or tub and tile cleaners.

If you follow these simple tips, you will enjoy the beauty of your stone countertops for many years.

entries. This allows guests (most likely an adult child, in-laws, or a live-in caretaker) to come and go as they please, or welcome their own guests, without disrupting the activity of the main home's living areas and occupants.

Integrating the feature of a guest suite into the plan of an existing house requires a well thought out design to properly incorporate this feature. For those clients considering building a new home a guest suite should be considered as part of the program. As society continues to expand the definition of household formations to include multiple generations, and as aging baby boomers welcome their friends from out of town to enjoy the fruits of their labor, the trend toward luxurious and spacious guest suites is sure to catch on and eventually enter the mainstream of residential design.

Warm regards,

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