

CHARLOTTE **URBAN**

# HOME

FALL 2007

Designs | Lifestyles | Investments | Improvements

Complimentary

## Sumptuous West Coast Style Hits Charlotte

## HOLIDAY

Decorating Tips

## DECORATING WITH LIGHT

Photo courtesy of Boyles and Kreiss Furniture

# MAINTAINING Granite with Ease

Nothing adds luxury to a kitchen like granite countertops. But in today's busy kitchens, these surfaces are often the center of activity. That's why many homeowners have questions on proper care for their granite countertops.

To learn the answers, Urban Home talked with stone care expert Filippo Emanuel, whose company TENAX USA manufactures the Lustro Italiano™ stone care products designed specifically for granite and marble.

**UH:** *Is sealing necessary for granite countertops?*

**Filippo:** Granite is a natural product that is porous and can absorb liquids. Sealing is necessary to prevent stains, which can ruin the beauty of your countertops.

**UH:** *Are all sealers the same?*

**Filippo:** An impregnator sealer is best, because it gets inside the stone and seals pores while still allowing the stone to breathe. This is important, so moisture won't get trapped in the stone.

**UH:** *How often should we seal our countertops?*

**Filippo:** In most cases, you should seal your countertops every year. But some granite is more porous than others and will need to be sealed more often. Some cleaning products strip the seal, so depending on the cleaner you're using, you may need to seal your countertops more often.

**UH:** *What kind of cleaner is best?*

**Filippo:** Most granite and marble fabricators recommend something engineered specifically for granite. Harsh cleaners, including those with ammonia or vinegar, will break down the sealer. Cleaners containing acid can etch the stone. And cleaners with bleach can leave streaks and ruin the surface. Look for a product that is slightly alkaline, containing no ammonia or bleach.

**UH:** *What is your company's cleaning solution?*

**Filippo:** We specialize in granite and marble. Our parent company TENAX out of Verona, Italy, has been supplying sealers to stone professionals for 50 years, so there are very few people who know stone the way we do. Our Lustro Italiano kit contains a daily cleaner designed for granite, and a stone polish that can be used every two to three weeks to bring out the luster of the stone. This polish has a side benefit: It seals the granite as well. So when you use the kit, you are getting a triple effect –



The Stonery



The Stonery

cleaning, sealing and polishing. The purpose of granite is to make a kitchen look beautiful. To ensure your granite stays as beautiful as the day it was installed, it's important to maintain it with the right products. ♦

Visit Lustro Italiano online at [lustroitaliano.com](http://lustroitaliano.com). Lustro Italiano products are available in Charlotte at BlackHawk Hardware, and from local granite and marble fabricators.