

Travertine is a porous, calcareous limestone formed by mineral-rich hot spring deposits. Its characteristic voids and open structure make it highly absorbent and sensitive to acids. Whether honed, polished, or filled, travertine requires consistent care to preserve its beauty. These guidelines cover both interior and exterior applications.

DAILY CARE

- **Wipe spills immediately** — travertine is highly porous and calcareous. Acids in citrus, wine, vinegar, coffee, and soda will etch and stain within minutes. Blot; do not wipe.
- **Clean with a pH-neutral stone cleaner** and warm water. Rinse thoroughly and dry. Avoid regular dish soap — surfactant residue dulls the finish.
- **Use mats at entries** to minimize abrasive grit, which scratches the soft surface.
- **Use trivets and coasters** under all hot items and acidic beverages.
- **Outdoors:** Rinse after rain, poolside splash, or lawn chemical exposure. Do not allow standing water.

WHAT TO AVOID

- × Vinegar, lemon juice, or any acid-based cleaner — will permanently etch and pit the surface.
- × Bathroom, grout, and tub-and-tile cleaners — virtually all are acidic.
- × Bleach used regularly — occasional dilute use for organics is OK, but rinse well and re-seal after.
- × Abrasive pads, steel wool, or powdered cleansers — travertine scratches easily.
- × Ammonia-based cleaners (including glass cleaners) — degrade sealer and dull the finish.
- × Pressure washing at close range — forces water into voids and joints, causing subsurface damage.
- × De-icers and road salt on exterior travertine — highly damaging; use sand for traction instead.

STAIN REMOVAL

Stain	Treatment
Grease / oil	pH-neutral stone degreaser. Stubborn stains: poultice with mineral spirits + diatomaceous earth.
Organic (wine, coffee, food)	12% hydrogen peroxide + drop of ammonia. Blot and rinse. For outdoor stone, sunlight aids natural bleaching.
Rust	Non-acid rust remover formulated for stone only. Acid-based rust removers will destroy travertine.
Biological (algae, mold, moss)	Dilute bleach (1/2 cup per gallon water). Rinse thoroughly and re-seal. Never mix bleach and ammonia.
Etch marks (dull rough areas)	Light: polish with marble polishing powder (e.g. Tenax TeEtch) and damp cloth. Deep etching: professional re-honing required.
Void/hole staining	Clean void thoroughly, allow to dry fully, then re-fill with color-matched travertine filler or epoxy grout.

Poultice method: Mix absorbent powder (diatomaceous earth or kaolin) with cleaning agent to a paste. Apply 1/4-1/2" thick, cover with plastic wrap, tape edges, dry 24-48 hrs, remove and rinse with distilled water. Repeat if needed.

SEALING

Travertine is among the most porous natural stones — sealing is **critical**, not optional. Always use a **penetrating impregnating sealer**; never a topical coating, which traps moisture in the voids and will peel or yellow over time.

STAIN-PROOF (Dry Treat) · Premium Impregnating Sealer

World-leading penetrating sealer with permanent molecular bonding — ideal for travertine's high porosity. ISO Class 5 stain resistance. Breathable, prevents efflorescence and subsurface moisture damage. Pair with **40SK Consolidator** in coastal or salt-spray environments.

Re-seal: Every 3-5 years (exterior); every 5 years (interior)

Tenax · Proseal-P Premium Natural Effect Sealer

Ultra-premium penetrating impregnator for highly porous stones. Fills travertine's open void structure deeply without leaving a surface film. UV stable, food-safe certified. Does not alter stone color.

Re-seal: Every 3-5 years

Food-Grade Mineral Oil · Traditional Natural Option

Non-toxic option for honed travertine. Apply liberally, absorb 20-30 min, buff off excess. Enriches natural tone. **Does not provide the stain or water resistance of a chemical impregnator.** Avoid cooking oils (olive, vegetable) — they turn rancid in the stone's voids.

Re-seal: Every 2-3 months

Color-enhancing option: Tenax Ager or STAIN-PROOF Color Enhancing Sealer seal and deepen travertine's warm creams and golds simultaneously. Test on an inconspicuous area first.

HOW TO SEAL

1. Clean thoroughly with a pH-neutral stone cleaner. Allow to dry completely — 48-72 hrs for travertine, which holds moisture in its voids.
2. Apply sealer with a soft cloth or low-pressure sprayer, generously and evenly until stone no longer absorbs.
3. Dwell 5-15 min per product directions. Buff off all excess with a dry cloth before it dries.
4. Apply a second coat after 10-15 min. Travertine's high porosity typically benefits from 2-3 coats.
5. Allow 24 hrs before light use; 72 hrs before full use. Full bond develops over 3-4 weeks.
6. Annual test: water should bead. If it absorbs within 5 minutes on a clean surface, re-seal.

FILLED VS. UNFILLED TRAVERTINE

Filled travertine has voids pre-filled with grout or epoxy. Inspect periodically — fill can crack or stain differently than the stone; re-fill with color-matched material as needed. **Unfilled (open) travertine** requires extra care to keep voids clear of debris and moisture. Seal both types thoroughly, paying extra attention to void edges.

SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

- **Monthly:** Clean with pH-neutral cleaner. Inspect for stains, etch marks, or deteriorating void fill.
- **Quarterly (exterior):** Check grout joints and fill for cracking. Repoint as needed to prevent water infiltration.
- **Annually:** Water bead test. Re-seal if water absorbs within 5 min on a clean, dry surface.
- **Spring (exterior):** Inspect for freeze-thaw damage to unfilled voids. Address promptly to prevent spalling.