**Stone Restoration Can Save You Money… But It Can’t be Cheap**

One of the great advantages of natural stone is that if it has become damaged, it can be restored, and restoration is virtually always less costly and time-consuming than replacement.

If done properly, restoration can result in an installation that looks just as good or better than the original one ⎯ the operative phrase being, “if done properly.”

**So What, Exactly, Is Stone Restoration?**

Stone restoration is the process of restoring worn or damaged stone to the state in which it was installed. It may also entail the altering of the surface of the stone to match a desired finish, for example, taking a polished finish to a honed / satin one or vice versa.

Stone restoration is a process that can only be done by a professional stone restoration company. Most maintenance or cleaning companies, although they may be very good at what they do, will not have the proper tools or experience to restore natural stone. Why? The investment of knowledge, equipment and experience needed to properly understand and work with stone requires qualified technicians, and your average janitorial company can’t afford to keep qualified technicians on staff.

**The Cost of Cheap**

One of the most costly decisions you can make is choosing a contractor based on price only. A contractor who has not had the proper training or who has little or no experience with your specific type of natural stone may offer the cheapest price, but the cost in the long run may end up being far greater. You may end up with dimpled or wavy surfaces ⎯ or worse.

**TIPS FOR SELECTION YOUR STONE RESTORATION CONTRACTOR**

Thoroughly checking out your contractor in advance is an excellent way to sidestep costly errors. Ask for references… and check them.

Most professional stone restoration contractors will have a before and after images, a portfolio or case studies on their websites. Review them.

Be wary of anyone who comes in and promises a miracle-in-a-bottle approach. There’s no such thing in professional stone restoration. Natural stone reflects light and does not need a topical coating or wax to achieve this desired finish. It only needs a series of diamond grits used in the proper order by a master technician who is experienced in their use. This followed by a careful polishing technique that can only be learned from experience.

A restoration professional will carefully protect the surfaces surrounding work areas from damage. For example, the water used in diamond grinding could damage wood and carpet.

A qualified professional will be able to educate you about the damage and explain what must be done to properly rectify it.

Make sure the contractor you select has experience with your specific type of stone. Many very experienced marble restoration contractors will have no experience at all restoring granite. Granite is more difficult to restore than marble and requires unique skills and expertise.

An inexperienced contractor may not understand the long-term outcome of stone restoration processes. For example, applying a coating might make the initial job may look great, but if the solution was not the appropriate solution for that particular installation, the stone would end up looking terrible again a few months down the road when the coating begins to yellow and peel.

**The Bottom Line**

If you want a fairly priced solution, not a costly mess, choose your stone restoration contractor carefully. Mistakes in stone restoration, depending on the severity, might end up costing more time and money than a new installation.

Be prepared to pay professional level prices for professional level work. If someone gives you a price that is too good to be true or substantially lower than other bids, be suspicious.