



NEWSLETTER

October 2024
SOAPSTONE



Bonjour Stone Aficionados!

Fall is finally upon us! 🍁 The change of colors, the cooler weather! It's also marking the beginning of the holiday season for us. We're in full gear mode working on the Atlanta Home and Lifestyle Holiday Showhouse, and believe me when I say this... It's going to be a showstopper! Can't wait to see you there. Don't miss it! I'll share some sneak peeks here and there on my social media platforms. November 21st to December 15th is when it's happening! 😊

The launch of the stone-integrated phone charger has been **TREMENDOUS!** I love all your feedback on how simple and easy it is to use. If you haven't seen it yet, check out our website and social media. The future is here, people! I'm not tech-savvy in any way... I love technology when it works, but when it doesn't, I panic because I have no idea how to fix it! (Thank you, Alissa, for all your tech guru-ness!) And I have to say this charger is so simple to use that I can even show you how to do it! That should say a lot! 😂

Our Midtown showroom is also doing great. We're booking our appointments fast and furious to get ready for your projects for your family's visits this holiday season. Just a reminder at both locations: we're **open by appointment only**. So don't hesitate to call or text me to schedule your next visit... Time is running out to get your holiday projects wrapped up on time! 📦

"Autumn is a mood that stirs the soul to wander outdoors and feel Earth's love."
- Angie Weiland-Crosby

Marglene

UPCOMING EVENTS

BURTON SHOWHOUSE: OCTOBER 11-OCTOBER 20

SERENBE SHOWHOUSE: SEPTEMBER 27-OCTOBER 20

  @touchofstoneinc



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WHAT IS SOAPSTONE?

Soapstone (also known as satiate or soaprock) is a naturally occurring metamorphic rock. It is a very dense and magnesium-rich variation of talc. Soapstone typically manifests in a gray or grayish-green color with varying degrees of white veins of pure talc. The surface of soapstone is most commonly sold with a smooth, honed finish.

The high talc content provides softer and more manageable carving products. Soapstone was first discovered in America by Native Americans. Domestic soapstone derives geologically from a line of talc and accompanying miner deposits that run along the Appalachian Mountains from New England to Georgia.

Soapstone has resurfaced as an increasingly popular material of choice in American homes. Due to soapstone's remarkable acid-resistant properties, it has become instrumental in countertops and bar tops where products like vinegar, wine, or lemon are stored. Furthermore, how soapstone naturally absorbs and evenly distributes heat lends itself perfectly for use in fireplace surrounds, wood-burning stoves, and even cookware.



Soapstone bar fabrication with integrated sink



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HOW DO I MAINTAIN MY SOAPSTONE?

Our soapstone requires very little maintenance due to the fact that it will not absorb liquids and does not need any special handling around heat or acids. In the beginning, some recommend the application of mineral oil to assist in the oxidation process and to develop a homogeneous color.

Over time, this color will 'set' and oiling will no longer be necessary. In some circumstances, new scratches in soapstone will appear as thin white lines. This is simply residual talc dust and further application of mineral oil will remove this dust and restore its lustrous dark color. Deeper scratches can be first removed by hand using a #150 or higher sandpaper. Gently rub over the scratches then follow up by reapplying a touch of mineral oil. As for cleaning daily, any household cleaner will do fine with the soapstone. Usually, soap and water are sufficient.



Soapstone sink fabrication

Note: the oiling process is a tedious and diligent procedure as when you start oiling your counters. You cannot stop until it is saturated and you will need to be consistent and reapply your coating regularly. If so, you will have a splotchy appearance as some will be lighter and darker. More and more people choose not to treat the stone and let the surface patina as it will.



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Designer Spotlight: Keri Serda

Question 1: How do you choose between stone and quartz?

Generally, I lean towards stone for clients who want a natural material and the unique qualities and one of a kind beauty that comes with natural stone, but these clients also need to be prepared and ok with some degree of maintenance. For clients that want a similar but less unique look with little to no maintenance, then I direct them towards quartz. However, so many new quartz options have come out lately where it would take a trained eye to tell the difference between the two, giving designers and clients the possibility to have it all ... the look AND the low to no maintenance product. Win Win!!

Question 2: How do you incorporate stone or quartz in your designs?

Some of my favorite places to use a unique stone without breaking the bank are powder rooms, butler's pantries and bars. All of these spaces lend more freedom to get fun(ky) and use a more dynamic stone that one would often choose for larger areas. If a higher budget is an option, the kitchen and master bath can also be great places to feature special stone applications and designs such as waterfall edges, incorporated trough sinks, larger format patterns.

Question 3: What Influences or inspires your design choices?

I like to mix natural materials, so a space makes me happiest and feels most complete with a solid, balanced mix of stone, wood, glass, and metal with textured fabrics and textiles. Two designers that inspire me the most are Becki Owens & Victoria Hagan. Both of these designers mix materials very well and always maintain unity and balance of materials in their designs.

Question 4: Do you have a favorite stone and what is the name?

I am very much a fan of calacatta gold marble. Though not an uncommonly used stone, it is easy to see why it is so loved. With both warm and cool tones, grays, creams, brown and gold, it blends seamlessly with such a wide variety of materials, the possibilities are endless when it comes to overall design style and aesthetic. It can easily work with traditional to modern design and everywhere in between.

Question 5: When choosing a stone or a quartz, do you choose first the color pallet or the movement of the stone? Which is predominant in your choice?

Every project is different!! If there is a color direction my clients are hoping to achieve prior to selecting stone, then in those cases we definitely start with the colors first and then narrow down the options with movement that is most desireable. However, if there is no color direction to begin with, then some of the best designs have come from falling in love with a slab first and building a design around it. There is no right or wrong answer as every project is it's own unique process. 😊



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Question 6: What is your opinion on manmade products?

Historically, man-made products have looked just that ... man-made and therefore, fake. However, technology has and continues to improve to the point that it is becoming harder to tell the difference between manmade and natural materials. Both have their pros and cons, but with the line between the two becoming narrower, it is giving more options to have the best of both.

Question 7: Have you ever designed a room around a slab just because you loved it even if it was not your original concept? How did you handle that?

Yes! I love when a client is so inspired by a specific stone that it shapes the entire design; these are often my favorite projects. When this happens, I generally start pulling colors to see how they react to the stone. This is always fun because you may not realize a slab that looked gray at first may now look more green, or blue, or a number of other colors. From this, I like to get a general color direction ... what colors of the stone do we want to bring out or tone down, are there any colors from the stone that we want to highlight or focus on, etc. Then I like to start giving placement to those colors ... will they be used on cabinets, tile, light fixtures? The possibilities are truly endless and I find that part of the process so fun and exciting!

Question 8: When you first look at a project do you know immediately what stone you will use, or does it take time?

It definitely takes time. Products and materials are constantly changing (which is great!), so because of that, I always like to take a look to see what new products are available now instead of falling back on old favorites. Some spaces require more dynamic veining patterns while others need a more subtle appearance. So it's not uncommon for this to be a multi-visit process for slab selections as well as revisiting the slabs to finalize cabinet colors and finishes.



*Keri Serda integrated
sink design featuring
A Touch of Stone
Fabrication in
Soapstone*



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Designer Spotlight: Keri Serda

Question 9: What stone has surprised you most when it was installed?

On a powder room I was helping a client with, we ended up selecting Juliette quartzite. It wasn't on our radar, but we saw a piece that would fit the powder room perfectly. It had greys, creams, golds, chocolate brown and subtle hints of blush pink with sections that looked like crystals. We ended up doing an incorporated sink, so the wall-to-wall vanity looked like one solid piece of stone. I knew it would be beautiful, but I did not expect this level of stunning.

Question 10: Do you have any predictions on future stone design trends?

I think in years past the majority wanted more subtle veining and patterns, but I think people are becoming more open to stone as the showstopper and focal point of a room. Be it on countertops, a fireplace or feature wall, I keep seeing more and more examples of stone as art than as merely a utilitarian surface material.



Keri Serda design featuring A Touch of Stone Fabrication