

Java Bean - Box 16

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Among legendary coffee purveyors stands Ken Hom of Zabar's. Ken carries on a decades-long tradition of coffee excellence which started with Saul Zabar, icon of New York's Upper West side, and continues today alongside Saul's daughter, Annie Zabar. Every Tuesday morning, a ritual takes place where Ken personally cups, taste-tests, and evaluates the fresh weekly coffee shipments—checking everything from the roast color and aroma to the flavor profile before any batch is approved for sale. It's this kind of meticulous attention to detail that makes Zabar's coffee so special.

Ken and I have been friends since the late 80's - and he has been at Zabar's for over 40 years. He is, undoubtedly, one of the hardest working people on planet earth. But he still has a great sense of humor, and Ken definitely knows how to have fun. We worked 60 hour work weeks during the frequently busy times and holiday seasons at Zabar's. Consequently, much of our 'fun' had to take place in the workplace. I can't begin to expound on the myriad adventures we authored within the walls of Zabar's - but let's just say there were 'battles' in the basement - among hundreds of cardboard boxes full of inventory - oranges were projectiles, territory was not ceded without the spilling of...juice.

We had similar engagements in the garage across the street - 3 floors of multi-leveled hide and seek. And then there were the Zabar's office pranks, where on Sunday afternoons, when the office was empty (and usually dark) - one of us would hide under a desk and wait patiently to strike with a jump scare when the other came through to collect inventory forms off of the printer. Calling each other on the Zabar's intercom system, impersonating our boss, Saul was nearly a daily occurrence. We shared so many full belly laughs together. All I have to do is think about them - and I start laughing again, out of the blue.

Ken and his wife Nanci are my very beloved friends - New Yorkers through and through - true human treasures - I love them beyond measure.

This box was made especially for Ken and Nanci - I used coffee grounds as the wood stain. It seems so plain next to the rich history of our friendship.