

Garage Sale Gal
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

May I take your order please?



Lynda Hammond

Antique coffee grinder stirs up story
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Something old, something used and something with a rich history. It's what I like most about garage sales--- discovering a treasure you could never buy in a store anymore.

But I often fall in love with things I spot on display in public places--in a restaurant or a hotel lobby. Now, I know it's not for sale--but hey, at least I can find out more about it thanks to the internet and--sometimes--even the owner. It's a fun way to learn about the value of an item you might, one day, see at a garage sale.

I found out a lot about old coffee bean grinders on my recent annual trip to Hawaii. Each time I go to Oahu I absolutely must have a cappuccino at my favorite coffee shop. The Honolulu Coffee Company is on the main strip, Kalakaua Avenue, along the beach on Waikiki, just off the veranda of the Westin Resort. Although I'm a huge Starbucks fan nothing beats a coffee from this historical, quaint shop where you can sit at the huge open windows, enjoy the ocean breezes and watch the tourists walk by. And it turns out there's a bit of history just *inside* the coffee shop, too, sitting on a countertop.

Tucked away in a corner of the coffee shop sits a beautiful, antique coffee grinder. I moved in for a closer look and was quite impressed. I just had to know more about it but thought my chances of discovering it's history would be a bit limited. But I was in for a pleasant surprise.

"My brother bought it at an antique store in Montana 20 years ago," Sam Suiter-- who, by the way, had just whipped up my frothy cappuccino-- told me. I couldn't believe my good fortune--not only was I talking to the owner of the magnificent piece but of the shop as well. He and his family have owned the coffee chain for 16 years.

As we were talking about the grinder he was beginning to realize just how much I loved it and a look of concern came over him. "You know it's not for sale," he told me. No problem. But it would look good in my kitchen which has a lot of red decor.

Turns out the coffee mill is priceless to Sam and his family. "We actually used this grinder on camping trips when I was younger. We'd wake up in the morning, put the beans in the top and the coffee came out in this little drawer."

The grinder was made by the Philadelphia Enterprise Manufacturing Co. In 1873. Sam's No. 3 model is made of heavy cast iron, shaped like an hour glass, sports a wheel on either side and has a wooden drawer at the bottom with the number of the model painted on it. Typically red, this particular model also includes the company logo on one wheel. There are companies that restore these old beauties but I prefer them in "as is" condition which shows character. Apparently others do, too. One exactly like Sam's recently sold for \$1300.

Now, if only I could find one of these at a garage sale for a couple bucks!

MY FAVORITE FIND: (Photo by Lynda Hammond)



Sam Suiter shows off a favorite find—an antique coffee grinder from 1873. It's on display in his coffee shop in Honolulu. Sam says they have several coffee-related antiques in their shops including a very old espresso machine at another coffee cafe on Waikiki Beach!

Do you have a garage sale find you love? Something that makes you smile when you look at it? Share it with us. Send us your picture. Include your name, email address and phone number and email it to: Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Watch for the story of your treasure in this column!
