

THE HUFFINGTON POST

Out and About With Eli Zabar, the Man Who Feeds the Upper East Side

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How the grocery giant spends his Sunday in his NYC neighborhood. Photo by Quentin Bacon.

By **Eli Zabar** for *Fathom* | I emigrated from the Upper West Side to the Upper East Side about 40 years ago. I love the West Side, but the tranquility and gentility of the UES is irresistible. I'm in Central Park everyday, running and walking my dogs. I follow the seasons, watching the trees bud out, bloom, shower us with cherry blossoms and then suddenly the view to the West Side disappears because all the trees are leafed out. I know that view will be back in the autumn as the leaves turn and fall down. It's all in a season. And here's what's in a typical perfect Sunday.

Morning

Coffee, usually lightly roasted Colombian and the *New York Times* are for breakfast at home. If we go out, it's usually closer to lunchtime and we go to one of my two restaurants — **E.A.T.** for lox and eggs or **Eli's Table** for huevos rancheros. At both places my wife, Devon, orders oatmeal.

We like to stop in to **E.A.T. Gifts** next door to EAT and see what's new. It's an endless source of whimsy and amusement, brimming with amazing toys, games, tchotchkes and housewares.

Sometimes we'll go to a museum — we love the view from the roof terrace at the **Metropolitan**. Or we'll stop by the newly renovated **Cooper Hewitt** and **Neue Galerie**. Both have fabulous gift shops.

On Saturdays there are always a lot of runners at **Urban Athletics**, where I buy my sneakers by the dozen. I like to stick my head in and say hi to Jerry. My wife loves **Blue Tree**, a gift and jewelry boutique very well curated by Phoebe Cates. **Peter Elliot** is a must. It's where we bought our son's white bar mitzvah suits.



Photo courtesy of Cooper Hewitt.

Afternoon

Our favorite walk is up Fifth Avenue to 96th Street, into **Central Park**, across the transverse, and then around the playing fields. I love to watch the softball games in summer and the kids' soccer teams in the fall.

When we have errands to run, we stop into **Feldman Housewares** for household essentials or items that a houseguest may have left at home (most recently, a travel converter for a European friend).

Kitchen Arts and Letters is an incredible food-and-drink bookstore where we can spend hours reading about things we will probably never cook. My wife loves **Tender Buttons**, a tiny,

magical shop devoted to buttons. Just buttons — the kind you need and the kind that are works of art.

While she shops — she's better at it than I am — I may head back to Eli's Table to review that night's menu and new dishes with the chef. He walks the market daily to pick the freshest ingredients for our dishes. And, of course, *someone* needs to taste them.



Oysters and wine at Eli's Table. Photo by Quentin Bacon.

Evening

If Devon and I are in the mood for a dinner out, we'll usually stop by **Eli's Table** for a glass of wine and an appetizer and then maybe have dinner at **Table d'Hote**, a classic UES hole-in-the-wall that's run by a former chef from Gramercy Tavern. If we're in the mood for Japanese, we'll go to **Kappo Masa** because Masa is so nice. It's another island of tranquility in this crazy world.

Read more on Fathom: Where to Find the Best Vintage Shopping in NYC, 5 New York City Oyster Joins for Every Occasion, See Fathom's Full NYC Guide

Eli Zabar is a grocer, restaurateur and wine collector. You can follow him at @elizabar on Twitter and @elizabarnyc on Facebook and Instagram. He travels for the pleasure of discovering great wine and new flavors.