

**Title: Havdalah set**

**Artist:** Jacob Greenvurcel

Israel (born Poland 1952)

<http://greenvurcel.co.il/>

**Date:** 1982

**Medium:** Decorative Arts and Utilitarian Objects, Judaica

**Size:** 4 1/8 x 6 5/8 x 6 5/8 in. (10.48 x 16.83 x 16.83 cm)  
(overall)

**Institution:** Minneapolis Institute of Arts

**Accession #:** 2006.67.1a-g

set has a Kiddush cup with cover, spice container and a candle holder all set into a wood base topped with silver outlined tray for specific pieces; highly polished without any decoration; spice container with oval-like base with one rounded side and two straight sides, leading to angled and rounded top with holes in V shape; candleholder has an oval-like base with two straight sides leading to concave top with candle insert; Kiddush cup has same oval-like base with two straight sides leading to a rounded support for a half-round, half straight, cup with unique cover, having a hole for lifting; all flat sides fit together in silver tray



**Questions**

How would you describe the design?

How would you compare it to the other Havdalah sets and spice boxes in the case?

How would you describe the aroma?

**Key Points**

The Havdalah ceremony marks the end of the Sabbath at sundown on Saturday evening. Havdalah means separation. It separates the Sabbath from the rest of the week.

Although many of the writings describe it as a sad event because the Sabbath is over, I've found that it has an atmosphere of celebration.

A double candle of entwined blue and white is lit, wine is poured, blessed and passed for a sip, and a spice box is presented for all to smell. A blessing is said over each one. A small amount of wine is left in the cup in which the candle is extinguished...and in my experience a party begins. ...a few goodies, a little music...

<http://judaism.about.com/od/prayersworship/a/havdalah.htm>

**Spices** A special box filled with fragrant spices is another important part of *havdalah*. There are many different designs available, but the image on the left is an example of one popular design. It doesn't matter which spices are used so long as they give off a sweet smell. Cloves and allspice are common choices.

According to Jewish legend, we each receive an extra soul that makes us especially attuned to the spiritual world during Shabbat. This soul leaves when Shabbat is over and the smell of spices is meant to revive us as it departs. In a way the spices are our spiritual smelling salts!

Lift the box, then say this blessing and smell the spices: *Baruch atah Adonai*

Object of the Month submission June 14, 2011

Lynn Brofman

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*Elohaynu melech ha'olam, boray minay vesamim.* Blessed are You Adonai our Lord,  
Ruler of the universe, Creator of the different spice

**Prop:**

I ground up allspice, cloves, a very small amount of cinnamon in my spice grinder and added orange zest; put it in the toe of a nylon knee high stocking and then in a container--- I used a small Japanese tea caddy because that's what I had and it has a secure lid. I passed it around for visitors to have the sensory experience of smelling a spice box.

**Bibliography**

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=950DE5DD153BF932A25757C0A9669D8B63>

<http://judaism.about.com/od/prayersworship/a/havdalah.htm>

