

When I was a little kid, the cookie jar was one of the centers of my world. My parents had an heirloom cookie jar that was always put up on top of the refrigerator. My parents liked to give us treats every now and then from it, but they were pretty health-conscious people. They wanted to stop us from having cookies on our own, fearing that as kids we would not know when to stop.

Looking back on it, they certainly were right. Cookie jars are such an irresistible source of temptation for kids, especially when they are well decorated like this one was. It was a pretty cookie Christmas jar, decorated with pine trees, red ribbons, and even an image of Santa Claus and his sleigh riding around the rim of the jar. I think that was part of the temptation. There is something that is always more tempting about cookies in a jar.

Don't get me wrong - cookies are best fresh off the baking sheet. They taste so good, after all, and they are so soft and chewy when they are completely new. Still, the cookie jar itself has such a beautiful and forbidden look to it - like a chest of hidden pirate treasure. It is always just out of your reach as a kid. When I think about it, cookie jars might be a pretty bad approach to things. Rather than making the cookies less tempting, they make them look like a forbidden goal, a haunting paradise just out of reach. This is why so many kids spend so much time struggling to stick their hand in the cookie jar!

Still, having grown up with a cookie jar, I kind of missed it when I moved out on my own. I looked at a lot of ceramic mason jars, but none of them worked. None of them were quite right. Then one day, I was in an antique shop when I saw it - the perfect cookies jar. It had a much different look than the one that I grew up with, but nonetheless, I knew it was right. It had an almost Moroccan design, ornamental with miniature ceramic tiles in a mosaic pattern around the circumference. It was beautiful to look at, and one glance left little doubt that the contents would be absolutely delicious. I bought it, and immediately went home. I was going to do some baking tonight!