

## Transcript — Episode 29: Trader Joe's Fall Products to (Pumpkin) Spice Up Your Shopping List

*[Pomp & Circumstance graduation march.]*

Tara: Our most recent episode of Inside Trader Joe's went into great depth about our tasting panel process, that big final hurdle before a new product is approved to, as we say, "come in" to your neighborhood Trader Joe's.

Matt: The tasting panel, it's like a final exam for each product. And you can think of this mini episode of our podcast as their graduation ceremony.

*[Applause in the background.]*

Tara: Please hold your applause until all the graduates receive their certificates.

Matt: As we go Inside Trader Joe's.

*[Theme music begins and two bells ring at a neighborhood Trader Joe's.]*

Tara: Welcome to another of our short shopping list episodes. I'm Tara Miller, Director of Words and Phrases and Clauses.

Matt: And I'm Matt Sloan, the Marketing Product guy. Now just about everyone in every type of business has had to make adjustments during this pandemic but we're proud that Trader Joe's has maintained a commitment to developing new products, to giving you that sense of discovery on every visit.

Tara: So let the discoveries begin.

*[Papers shuffling.]*

Tara: Alright, hold on. I'm just organizing. I don't even know where to start. There are so many new products.

*[Light music begins.]*

Matt: What's purple on the outside, creamy white on the inside and makes a great chip?

Tara: Donny Osmond's socks?

Matt: No, almost. Murasaki sweet potatoes. They're not the normal sweet potato. They're not the bright orange sweet potato. They're paler in color and flavor wise, I'm going to say that they're kind of like a roasted chestnut. Not in an obnoxious kind of way, but in a nice way. Like it's this nutty sweetness. These are great chips.

Tara: Wait, Matt, we sell Murasaki sweet potatoes in our produce section, don't we?

Matt: When we can get them.

Tara: Ok.

Matt: These are delicious sweet potatoes. People love them. They're great for you.

Tara: You meant the sweet potatoes themselves. You didn't mean in chip form that these should be considered some kind of health food.

Matt: Okay, these are potato chips. Full disclosure.

Tara: Right.

Matt: So they come with all the caveats that regular chips do. Sweet potatoes themselves? Really good for you. I will stand by that.

Tara: Those are probably in the store already. I think those are coming in at the beginning of September or something like that. And they are limited because there's a limited number of these potatoes that can be made into chips.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: People associate Trader Joe's with pumpkin stuff in the fall.

*[Upbeat music begins.]*

Matt: How about Pumpkin Spice Pretzel Slims? I mean, this is a candy. Yes, it's a pretzel, but it's a pretzel that is swimming in really nice white chocolate with crushed pumpkin spiced pumpkin seeds, and I think we're trying to figure out another way to put pumpkin on there one more time, but these are just great. So if you like the Peppermint Pretzel Slims, I think you'd be a fan of these too. These are really tasty.

Tara: Sweet with just a little salty so you just want to keep coming back for more.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: Another thing that is sweet, but I think not too sweet...

*[Light music begins.]*

Tara: ...are the Pumpkin Spice Batons that are coming in. And, those are kind of a very close relative to the Cocoa Batons that we have every day and the Vanilla Batons. We have the Vanilla Batons right now?

Matt: We do, yeah.

Tara: We do. And we've had Coffee Batons.

Matt: We had lemon for a while.

Tara: It's a wafer cookie with pumpkin spice filling inside. I mean, it's kind of simple and straightforward, but it's a, you know, kind of thing you could have with a cup of coffee or even some ice cream. Those should be in stores by the time this podcast lands and folks should be able to grab those right away. They're just delicious.

Matt: And when we're thinking about what else to include as a pumpkin version, we often look to really popular products...brioche. We sell an inordinate amount of that classic eggy, sweet French style bread. We have a Pumpkin Brioche coming. I'm excited for this. I think French toast will never be the same.

Tara: That one's also a super limited buy though, right? Like, it's in and we'll have it for a little while, but it's not something that's going to be around for, you know, months and months and months.

Matt: That's our hope.

Tara: Right.

Matt: If it works or it'll be a great St. Patrick's Day breakfast.

Tara: And by that time it'll be green.

Matt: Yeah. Oh, perfect!

*[Music switches to a little more upbeat.]*

Tara: One of the things that was a big sort of revelation to me this year, even though it's not something we invented, it's not something we were the first to think of is the Spicy Pumpkin Curry Simmer Sauce that's coming in. It's kind of inspired more by a Thai curry than an Indian curry, but it has all of those really classic curry flavors with the addition of actual pumpkin. And it's like thick and it's creamy and it's got a really good kick to it.

Matt: I'm going to say this is good right out of the jar actually.

Tara: With a spoon?

Matt: Yeah. I can't wait to hear about how people put this to use.

Tara: We are working on a recipe right now, internally, for a Vegetarian Spicy Pumpkin Curry Pot Pie.

Matt: Ooh.

Tara: That we're hoping to have on our website and in the Fearless Flyer in late September.

Matt: Also I think slated to be featured in an upcoming flyer, Mini Spicy Pumpkin Samosas. This will be in the frozen section. This is not a pumpkin pie situation at all. This is an appetizer. Wonderful, rich creamy spiced, pumpkin filling. This does sort of, flavor-wise go more toward the Indian style of curry. Classic samosa spices are used, these are delicious.

Tara: They're really good with a number of different kinds of sauces. You know, we've tried them with a chutney, but also with our Sweet Chili Sauce, which takes its inspiration from Thai cuisine and the Hot and Sweet Pepper Jelly. These taste really good dipped in any of those.

*[Music changes tempo.]*

Matt: I'm still focused and obsessed with pumpkin... Pumpkin Empanada. Now this *is* a pumpkin pie situation. So think of a small Mexican inspired hand pie with delicious spiced, kind of a classic spice, pumpkin pie spice filling. So good.

Tara: So not like spicy spice, but like sweet, savory spice.

Matt: Yea, the spice is more like our Spiced Apple Cider. Or a traditional pumpkin pie spice set up. This would be great for breakfast, I think.

Tara: (chuckles)

Matt: Cause I like to have pie for breakfast, you know, pie and a cup of coffee is a great way to start the day. And this is like a li'l pie. So it's like, I'm just having a li'l pie.

Tara: Li'l pie.

Matt: Li'l pie.

Tara: That's your new nickname.

*[Music change.]*

Matt: There's so much more pumpkin.

Tara: There's so much more pumpkin, but I do want to take, you know, we're going to run out of time because this is a mini episode.

Matt: That's what you thought. Well, I'm going to take a stroll to the grocery aisle and on a previous episode we spent some great time with Jasmine and others talking about spices and seasoning blends. We have a new thing hitting that part of the store...Everything But The Leftovers. This is like magic powder to make everything taste like Thanksgiving leftovers.

Tara: (laughs) Magic powder.

*[Pixie dust harp strum.]*

Matt: To me it tastes like the archetypal flavor of stuffing. Yeah, so the classic stuffing flavor, like if you wanted to make stuffing flavored popcorn, or if you wanted to make stuffing flavored mashed potatoes, or if you wanted your stuffing to taste that much more like stuffing.

Tara: (laughs)

Matt: Actually this might be helpful on the Thanksgiving table cause sometimes family or friends bring over a dish and it's like, you know, that needs a little help.

Tara: It's not something I've ever seen anywhere. Another thing I haven't seen, but then I'm looking forward to enjoying, are the Dry Roasted Maple Almonds. They're definitely sweet and they have a little crunch. They're just good. What's happening in coffee, Matt?

Matt: As we often do, we've got some great, small lot coffees coming. These are coffees that are from a single place, often a single farm or a small collective group of farms within that area. And we've got one coming out toward, um, it should be available toward the end of October and this is from Rwanda. It's known as Rwandan Simbi and it's from this Lake Kivu region. These beans are given sort of a lighter, medium roast to really emphasize the bright, almost fruit like flavors. This is a great cup of coffee, very limited. We got what we could get, but it's, you know, this is from a very small, small farm.

Tara: That's something I'm actually really proud of Trader Joe's for, like the way that we go out and we find these little producers who, we're buying their entire crop.

Matt: I love burritos. This is a Turkey Pumpkin Mole Burrito. Very basically you have turkey, you have a green pumpkin seed Mole sauce, cilantro rice, some black beans, little cheese, and roasted sweet potatoes, all wrapped up in a tortilla burrito style. This is tasty.

Tara: So that's just like you grab it. You microwave it. You have lunch in two minutes. Is it that kind of burrito?

Matt: Absolutely. I'm excited to have something with a pumpkin seed mole.

Tara: More mole all the time is a good thing.

Matt: Absolutely. And at the risk of jinxing it, I think this has legs. I think this can sell for an extended period of time.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: Turkey legs?

Matt: That too.

*[Transition to close. Closing theme music begins.]*

Matt: I just can't believe our new products. They're all grown up and ready to head off to the stores.

Tara: Seems like just yesterday they were cute little baby ideas from our product development and innovation teams.

Matt: Man, time flies.

Tara: And our time on this short shopping list edition of Inside Trader Joe's has flown too. To make sure you get the next episode, hit that free subscribe button.

Matt: It is free and it's worth every penny.

Tara: Until next time, thanks for listening.

Matt: And thanks for listening.