

Transcript — Episode 33: Trader Joe's 12th Annual Customer Choice Awards Winners

[Street noise, paparazzi, crowd murmur.]

Tara: I'm Tara Miller, director of words and phrases and clauses here on the red carpet with...

Matt: Matt Sloan, the marketing product guy.

Tara: We're outside the Trader Joe's mothership in Monrovia, California and of course it's a lovely day.

Matt: And the Trader Joe's products competing in nine categories are now arriving.

[Echo announcer voice. Award music begins.]

Matt: The 12th Annual Customer Choice Awards.

[Applause.]

Tara: Okay, Don Pardo. Let me just say, I cannot believe what Unexpected Cheddar is wearing. It is unexpected.

Matt: And how does Almond Kringle keep his figure? I mean, have you checked his ingredients?

Tara: So what do you think? Will Everything But The Bagel Seasoning repeat as Favorite Overall? Or will frequent Overall Winner Mandarin Orange Chicken make its triumphant return?

Matt: The suspense is killing me.

Tara: Let's head in because I'm beginning to notice these nominees are only stopping to talk to Seacrest anyway.

Matt: All right then.

[Music ends.]

Matt: Let's go Inside Trader Joe's. After you.

[Theme music begins and two bells at a neighborhood Trader Joe's. Then it's interrupted by...]

Tara: Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, hold up.

Matt: Yeah, that's our normal podcast theme music. The Customer Choice Awards, they deserve something special. Don't you think?

Tara: Oh yes. I do think. So for an original Customer Choice Awards theme. We welcome back crew member David.

[Cheerful music begins. Large auditorium applause.]

David: Thank you. Do you think I could get some glamorous backup dancers?

Matt: Yes. And since this is a podcast, not TV, we'll pretend that we're doing it.

David: Oh, perfect.

[Timpani roll. David singing in echo.]

David: Grab your head phones for Trader Joe's Annual Customer Choice Awards. Which snack or meal will seal the deal all while this podcast records? Who'll win the name of best in the game, plus all the acclaim that that affords? No more delays time for TJ's Annual Customer Choice Awards.

[Thunderous applause, timpani roll ends.]

Tara: Whoohoo!

Matt: Fantastic!

Tara: Thank you, David. Please stand by. Enjoy the craft service backstage, sample the nominees. And we do understand that you'll have more musical entertainment for us later?

David: Absolutely.

[Orchestra music begins.]

Matt: Our first category in The 12th Annual Customer Choice Awards - Beverages.

[Timpani roll.]

Tara: The envelope please.

[Tearing envelope.]

Tara: And the winner for Favorite Beverage, Sparkling Black Tea with Peach Juice.

[Applause.]

Matt: What a great year this product has had. It's its first year out.

Tara: Yep.

Matt: So well received and an almost instant customer favorite. That's exciting to see. Congratulations.

[Applause and music ends. Phone ringing during outgoing call, answered.]

Hannah: Hi, this is Hannah in Store 691 in Lincoln Park, Chicago. How can I help you today?

Tara: Hey Hannah, it's Tara and Matt calling from the office.

Matt: Hello Hannah!

Tara: How's Chicago?

Hannah: Chicago today is actually warm. It's like 40 degrees here. You can actually go outside and not lose a digit, which is awesome.

Matt: That's not warm, but ok.

Tara: Warm is relative apparently, Hannah.

Hannah: I'm originally from Southern California, so I get it.

Tara: We are announcing our Customer Choice Awards and what we would love to hear from you is an announcement of the customer favorite for the home, bath and beauty product. So in your best, super awesome announcer voice.

Hannah: Absolutely. Give me a minute to get in character here.

[Drum roll. Hannah speaking in an echoing announcer voice.]

Hannah: And the Customer Choice Award for Favorite Home, Bath and Beauty Product goes to Trader Joe's Scented Candle.

[Applause.]

Tara: Wow, Hannah, thank you. Now, Hannah, do you have a favorite scented candle?

Hannah: It's a tie for me between the Grapefruit and the Cedar Balsam.

[Light upbeat music begins.]

Matt: Okay, what if you're not allowed to have them both? You have to choose one. Which one will it be?

Hannah: I can't do it.

Matt: You have to.

Tara: The Cedar Balsam was the top vote-getting individual candle.

Hannah: (gasps)

Tara: The second highest vote-getter that went to the Honeycrisp Apple, which was really, really close to the Cedar Balsam.

Hannah: That one's my husband's favorite.

Tara: Oh, okay. So your household is filled with candles?

Hannah: Yes, exactly. We have a candle warmer, so we don't even have to burn them and lose them. We just keep them warm all year round.

Tara: Wow! Didn't even know such a thing existed.

Hannah: It's very exciting. You can have it where you can't have live flames.

Tara: Oh, so like when you have children.

Matt: Or you're working in a coal mine or something. You don't want the open fire.

Tara: (chuckles)

Matt: That's great. But you still want the Cedar Balsam scent.

Tara: Well, Hannah, I think we're good. And I'm so grateful to you for making time out of your busy day to talk to us.

[Light music ends.]

Hannah: Absolutely. Thank you very much, Tara.

[Applause and awards orchestra music up.]

Tara: And our next category in The 12th Annual Customer Choice Awards - Cheese.

[Music ends. Timpani roll.]

Matt: Okay, here we go.

[Tearing envelope.]

Matt: Wow! Unexpected Cheddar!

[Applause. Awards orchestra music up.]

Tara: How many years in a row is that?

Matt: I can't even count that high.

Tara: You ran out of fingers. (chuckles)

Matt: The next category in our Annual Customer Choice Awards - Entrees.

[Timpani roll.]

Tara: And the winner is...

[Tearing envelope.]

Tara: Mandarin Orange Chicken.

[Applause. Awards orchestra music up.]

Tara: Well, let me tell you, Matt, this product received 10 times as many votes as the second highest vote-getter in this category. Okay, our next category in The Customer Choice Awards - Produce.

[Music ends. Timpani roll.]

Matt: Here we go. Lots of votes. Big numbers for Teeny Tiny Avocados.

[Applause. Awards orchestra music up.]

Matt: So conveniently sized.

Tara: Literally handy.

[Music and applause ends. Speaking to Alyssa on the phone.]

Alyssa: Hi, this is Alyssa from Store 252 in North Hollywood, California. Do you want me to just go ahead and go for it?

Tara: Yep. Go for it.

[Timpani roll. Alyssa speaking in an echoing announcer voice.]

Alyssa: The Customer Choice Award for Favorite Desserts and Sweet Product goes to Trader Joe's Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter Cups.

[Applause. Awards orchestra music up.]

Matt: Of course it does.

Tara: What is your favorite candy or desserts or sweets item at Trader Joe's?

[Applause and music ends.]

Alyssa: Can I list two?

[Light upbeat music begins.]

Alyssa: My mom is Mexican and my dad's Filipino. And so we're all about the charcuterie boards and make it look plentiful. So I love doing our Chocolate Coconut Almonds and our Chocolate Covered Peanut Butter Pretzels.

Tara: You just said charcuterie board and then candy. So you like making just like big candy boards for your family?

Alyssa: Well, just a little of charcuterie meat, cheese, and then we'll do grapes, fruits, and then we will put candy on a charcuterie board.

Tara: I like the way your family works.

Alyssa: (laughs) There's no rules to a charcuterie board.

Tara: So those are your two favorites and now you have to choose. You have to leave one behind and take one to the deserted Island with you. Which one is it?

Alyssa: I would definitely say the Chocolate Covered Peanut Butter Pretzels.

Tara: OK good choice. I'm with you on that one.

Alyssa: (laughs)

Matt: Get it? Deserted island?

Alyssa: (laughs)

Tara: Alyssa, thank you so much for taking a few minutes to talk to us today. We really appreciate it.

Alyssa: Thank you guys so much.

[Music ends.]

Matt: The next category...

[Timpani roll.]

Matt: ...in The 12th Annual Customer Choice Awards - Snacks.

Tara: The winner here...

[Timpani roll ends.]

Tara: ...not so surprisingly, Peanut Butter Pretzels.

[Applause. Award orchestra music up.]

Tara: I know that in my household, they're a constant favorite. Our next category is Vegan and Vegetarian Items.

[Timpani roll.]

Matt: And the winner is Soy Chorizo.

[Applause. Awards orchestra music up.]

Tara: Nice to meet you.

[Brief silence.]

Tara: Cause you said, "I am Chorizo." (chuckles) Come on. You got it.

[Music ends.]

Matt: I have a hard enough time with one language.

Tara: That's one of my favorite bad dad jokes.

[Award orchestra music up.]

Matt: So versatile, is this Soy Chorizo. Like if you do roasted potatoes, bell peppers, onions, actually carrots, and then you put Soy Chorizo in there and make a burrito, good stuff.

[Music ends.]

Tara: Okay Matt, it's time. The moment we've all been waiting for.

Matt: Both of us.

[Dramatic awards music begins.]

Tara: And everybody who's listening to this podcast. Come on, Matt.

Matt: Yeah, right.

Tara: You know, for years, Mandarin Orange Chicken was the winner of this award. Every year, year after year, it was just everybody's favorite. And last year, a new contender, Everything But The Bagel Seasoning came in and just took the award. It just swept last year. I would like to bring in somebody who can sing us to the winner.

Matt: Sing us to the winner! This is the sound of my two hands making a little heart. That's how much I love sing us to the winner. Let's do this.

Tara: I'd like David to come back and join us.

Matt: So would I.

David: Okay, are you guys ready?

Tara: Is the world ready?

[Timpani roll. David singing in echo.]

David: □□ Congrats, congrats to Mandarin Orange Chicken on your return atop the voting charts. When dinner comes and we need a meal to dig in, you're number one in our stomachs and our hearts. Good luck next year, Everything But The Bagel. For now content to be in second place. As once again Orange Chicken runs the table. The sweet and savory sovereign of the freezer case. □□

[Large auditorium applause, ending awards show music begins behind.]

Matt: Wow, I thought I was at a wake for a moment.

Tara: (laughs) David that was great.

David: Thank you very much.

Matt: Really good.

Tara: That might be my favorite part of The Customer Choice Awards.

[Small transition.]

Matt: Okay, to my kids listening to the awards at home tonight. I love you, but it's bedtime.

Tara: (laughs) That's actually a good one, Matt.

Matt: I think that's THE last award show cliché. We've done them all.

Tara: Congratulations again to Mandarin Orange Chicken, winner of Favorite Overall at The 12th Annual Customer Choice Awards.

Matt: And you know, thinking about that winner, I think our next episode should be about some of your other favorites in the frozen food category.

Tara: To make sure you get that one, click that free subscribe button.

Matt: It is free and worth every penny.

Tara: Until then, thanks for listening.

Matt: And thanks for listening.