

Inside Trader Joe's Podcast Transcript — Trader Joe's Wine Club: Sublime Springtime Sipping

[Light upbeat music begins. Birds chirping in the background.]

Matt: Ah, spring.

Tara: I know, right? I mean, what can you say about spring?

Matt: Well, as Neltje Blanchan asked, "Can words describe the fragrance of the very breath of spring?"

Tara: Yeah, they really can't.

Matt: "Every spring is the only spring, a perpetual astonishment." — Ellis Peters

Tara: Well, there's that.

Matt: "The older I grow, the more do I love spring and spring flowers." — Emily Dickinson

Tara: Okay, we get it. We love spring.

Matt: "Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'" — Robin Williams

Tara: Okay, now we're talking. Let's pop open some wine.

Matt: And go *Inside Trader Joe's*.

[Theme music begins with two bells at a neighborhood Trader Joe's.]

Tara: We now call this meeting of the Trader Joe's Wine Club to order.

[Gavel banging.]

Matt: And let the minutes show that one of Trader Joe's foremost experts of wine is present: James.

James: Hi, Matt. Hi, Tara. Happy spring.

Tara: Happy spring. Actually, I have a feeling it's about to get even happier. Let's talk about some wine.

[Theme music ends. Upbeat music begins.]

Matt: I'm intrigued, because you have a couple things.

James: Yeah, both wines we'll discuss today are planned as limited releases arriving to stores by early May. Great picks for the spring and summer months ahead.

Matt: I'm looking at these bottles, and they are two different types of wines from different places, but they do have something in common: their bottle size.

James: Both wines today are one-liter bottles, essentially a third larger than the standard wine bottle.

Tara: So standard wine bottle, 750 milliliters, 750 ml. When you look at it, okay, it looks a little bigger. But it is. It's a third more wine than a standard bottle of wine.

James: Yeah. So usually, estimated at about five pours or five glasses of wine. So this is actually an extra eight and a half ounces in the bottle.

Tara: Oh, wow. You're going to get seven to eight glasses out of this?

James: Yeah, yeah. An extra one to two glasses.

Tara: That's fantastic. Okay. There is a red and there is a white.

James: I'll start with... The white wine is brand Le Beau Sud, or translated as, "The beautiful south."

Matt: Sounds pretty French.

James: It's what we're going for. (laughs) This is a white blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Vermentino, both 50%. And it is coming from Southern France. It's really refreshing, crisp white wine that I think is a great match for spring and summer, both in terms of the taste profile, but just the pairing possibilities as well.

Matt: Is Vermentino a grape that's typically grown in France? I think of it from another place often from Italy, but there's no boundary that says thou shalt not grow a grape someplace else. So, Vermentino in France, unusual or normal?

James: It's fairly normal, but only in a certain part of France. So mostly in the South hugging the Mediterranean, and just a little ways from where it's grown in Italy as well.

Matt: Makes sense, yeah. And a Mediterranean hug sounds great for this time of year.

Tara: Any time of year, really.

Matt: I really like the label. The label to me looks like the cover of one of *The Adventures of Tintin*, and it looks like this very clear line style of illustration that the creator of Tintin, Hergé, did. And it looks like the French Riviera travel board put together a beautiful south poster and then it wound up on this bottle. So that's pretty neat. I think that looks great.

Tara: It's an original work? It's not an artwork that we've repurposed?

Matt: That's a great question.

James: It was a design really presented just for this wine for us.

Tara: It makes me want to buy this wine. I think there's a perception among some American wine drinkers that French wine is stuffy. It's like old world, old school. This doesn't

look stuffy. This looks like something that I would like to bring to a barbecue, or a picnic or graduation parties, and weddings, and showers, and things like that.

Matt: It feels like a gathering wine, for sure. Not just because of the size of the bottle, it has that screw cap closure. It's easy to open, easy to transport.

Tara: You don't even need a cork puller for this bottle of wine.

Matt: Yeah.

James: We went with the screw cap really for convenience at outdoor barbecues, or picnics, and just making it that much easier.

Tara: I would love to give it a taste, shall we?

[Cap cracking open. Wine glugging into glasses.]

Matt: Don't be shy on that pour, James.

Tara: (laughs)

James: Yeah, I really like the tropical notes, but also just how refreshing it is. A really good acidity, which both of these grapes really offer that typically. So it's a nice blend between the two, I think.

Tara: Yeah. I don't know that I've ever had a Sauvignon Blanc/Vermentino blend before, but that's a really enjoyable, easy drinking. It's just crisp. I like it a lot.

Matt: Man.

Tara: What would you eat that with, Matt?

Matt: It's the time of year for fresh vegetables, lots of salad things, but grilled things, maybe not even hot, but room temperature. That mixed plate of grilled things, dipped things like hummus, just a ton of olive oil with some bread. This is really a flexible wine in that it's so bright. So this is like a quenching wine. If you're thirsty, paste yourself first and foremost, but this would be nice to have on a really hot day. And this flavor wise is bright enough to hold up to being really well chilled, which I think most of us probably keep our white wines too cold, but this won't be a problem for this particular wine.

James: So this white blend will be on our shelves for \$8.99, which is a great price for a standard bottle, but even more so for this one-liter size.

Tara: Yeah, that is the price that it will be available for in most Trader Joe's around the country. There may be exceptions based on factors that are outside of Trader Joe's control, like transportation, and taxes, and things like that that are region specific. But in most Trader Joe's stores, it'll be \$8.99. That's impressive.

Matt: I think if you had a pasta salad that was al dente with a really nice peppery olive oil, and some black pepper, and some fresh shelled English peas that are lightly blanched, still a little bit of crunch, and a can of smoked trout...

Tara: You had me until smoked trout.

Matt: ...that would be picnic heaven. And if you're outside and there's music going on, a really fresh, vibrant wine.

Tara: Absolutely delivers that. We need to deliver another wine here.

[Music transition.]

James: So next up is the Table Red Blend. This is coming from...

Matt: Boy, now that is really poetry in motion, James.

James: (laughs)

Matt: Is that what it says on the label?

James: It is what it says on the label, but there's...

Matt: Okay, that's helpful.

James: ... a lot more to the label than just the name itself, trying to represent that old idea of standard table red, but really aiming to overdeliver on the quality, and exceed expectations with what's in the bottle itself. So on that note, it's a really Rhône-style red blend from Santa Barbara County, mostly Syrah, a little over 50%, and then a blend of Carignan, Grenache, and Mourvèdre.

Matt: Interesting. So not from France, but French in style, maybe?

James: Yeah. Rhône-style modeled off of the Rhône Valley in Southern France.

Tara: I kind of love the name, because in my albeit limited travels in certain parts of the world where wine is made, quite often when you go to a restaurant and you just order the table wine, and it's fantastic. And you have no idea what you're drinking. And it might be the romance of the place, it might be the food, it might be the company, it might be all kinds of things, but the table wine is great. When I see Table, that's what I feel.

Matt: So it is called like the name, the brand, if you will, is Table. And I really like that. And so this is also a one-liter bottle. Also, a screw cap.

James: These were designed with the idea of being in stores at the same time, having a red counterpart to the white blend we were just talking about.

Tara: And they look very different, but they also look like they belong together. And I imagine parties all over the country this spring and summer with these two wines on the table. They make sense together.

[Cap cracking open. Wine glugging into glasses.]

Matt: There I go. All over the table with the Table.

Tara: Ha-ha.

Matt: It's like a crime scene cleanup.

Tara: Okay. So this one, I want to have a burger with this one. This makes perfect sense to me with a burger off the grill, all summer long.

James: That is definitely what I was thinking too before coming in. I was noting excellent with burgers, or even pizza night, just really solid wine that I think will really surprise people. There might be a perception that it's coming in a one-liter bottle, it's lower quality, but I think this is the opposite of that.

Tara: Yeah. I mean, a burger, even a hot dog or a grilled sausage, or anything right off the grill, because it's not a heavy wine. It's a really bright red wine, but that feels like a good summertime barbecue cookout kind of wine to me.

Matt: If you want the really well seasoned piece of fish that's pretty mild, like a Branzino kind of fish, but you had some of those giant beans from Greece with it.

Tara: Oh yeah.

James: Mm-hmm.

Matt: I think Greek food, I think this would work really nicely with some of those strong aromatic herbs, like a Greek oregano, even some of the cheese like a feta, classic Greek salad. I think this would be tasty.

Tara: We could do like a mezze plate with all your Greek and Mediterranean faves with this wine.

Matt: Mm-hmm. I'm interested in that this red, it also has a nice bit of acidity. So, it doesn't feel heavy and weighty. It doesn't feel like, oh, my gosh, this is like a sweater weather kind of wine. You can be wearing shorts and enjoy this.

Tara: I will say, I love a good Sangria. By that, I mean, I love a good Sangria. I don't like cheap Sangria. That would be a great Sangria wine, because it's not too big on its own. And I think it would go well with the fruity flavors that you add to the Sangria as well.

James: As a wine it has a lot of really good dark fruit character to it.

Tara: Yeah. Probably not the first way that I would use it, but I'm thinking because, when I make a big Sangria batch for a party, I want a good wine to serve as the base of it. I don't want a cheap yucky wine to start off with.

James: Yeah. And I think this blend is really balanced. And coming from Santa Barbara County, I think a lot of the fruit itself was from Santa Inez Valley. And well-produced, offers a lot of balance.

Tara: So the price on this one is slightly different than on the white.

James: Just \$1 higher. The Table Red Blend will be \$9.99 on our shelves. So again, really great value.

Tara: Nine ninety-nine, again, for a one-liter bottle. That's a lot of wine. That's seven or eight glasses of wine.

Matt: When can we find these in our Trader Joe's?

James: Yeah, both of these wines will be in our Trader Joe's stores by early May.

Tara: Yeah, so this podcast will be out into the world the last week of April. So sometime right around there, if you shop at a Trader Joe's that sells wine, you'll be able to find these wines at your neighborhood Trader Joe's.

Matt: I really appreciate a great find, a killer lead in the wine section, makes you feel like you kind of got a little inside angle. And I know, because I get to interact with you and the team, how much work goes into this. So I really appreciate the wrangling, because while they look like a nice pair, one comes from a different part of the world, and you have to coordinate boats on bottles and all kinds of things to get this stuff here so that in May, we get to enjoy it. So thanks for that. That's a lot of work.

James: Happy to work on it. Happy to be here, and certainly excited for customers to find these wines.

[Transition to closing music.]

Tara: I'm Tara Miller.

Matt: And I'm Matt Sloan. The Trader Joe's Wine Club Spring 2026 recommendations are...

James: Le Beau Sud, a Vermentino/Sauvignon Blanc blend from France.

[Ding on a crystal glass.]

James: And Table, a California red wine from Santa Barbara County.

[Ding on a crystal glass.]

Tara: We'll have another Trader Joe's Wine Club episode for you soon.

Matt: And more *Inside Trader Joe's* episodes to share the stories behind lots of Trader Joe's products for spring, and summer, and beyond.

Tara: Until then, thanks for listening.

Matt: And thanks for listening.