Inside Trader Joe’s Podcast Transcript — Episode 116: All Broken Up About The Chocolate Goodies at Trader Joe’s

[English countryside. Birds chirping. Light upbeat music begins.]

Darren: Hi. I'm Darren. I'm the founder and chief chocoholic here, and it's really great to have you guys visit and show you around.

Tara: That's a great title.

Darren: (laughs)

Tara: I like that. Okay. We're going to go with that. Let's go inside.

[Conversation transitions back to mothership in Monrovia.]

Matt: It was great to get to meet Darren out in the English countryside at his small chocolate factory.

Tara: Small, but getting bigger.

Matt: We love all of our suppliers, big and small, and it's always so inspiring to get to meet someone with that entrepreneurial spirit who has turned a passion, maybe even developed as a child into a successful business.

Tara: You know, I had a passion for chocolate when I was a child too.

Matt: I'm excited to share Darren's story on the podcast and to learn about this break apart chocolate thing that could even be a trend.

Tara: All right then, let's go *Inside Trader Joe's*.

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

Tara: I'm Tara Miller, director of words and phrases and clauses.

Matt: And I'm Matt Sloan, the culture and innovation guy at Trader Joe's.

Tara: Our last episode was recorded in Ireland, and for this one, we crossed the Irish Sea.

Matt: Well, sure, but we weren't actually on the water. We flew.

Tara: Well, sure, but not without help. We were on a plane.

[Rimshot. Theme music ends.]

Matt: All right, you just ruined my ‘and boy are my arms tired’ joke.

Tara: You used that one the last time.

Matt: Oh, right.

[Loud jet plane in air.]

Matt: We flew to the southeast of England.

[Light upbeat string music begins.]

Tara: Darren's factory makes the Hot Chocolate Stirring Spoons that are available now at Trader Joe's through the holidays and our Break Apart Reindeer. Or is it reindeers?

Matt: Well, let me think. When what to my wondering eyes did appear but a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer. Mmm…yeah, it's definitely reindeer. I mean, whether they're flying or chocolate.

Tara: Yeah, I knew that. Just testing you, Matt. Hey, let's listen to our conversation with Darren.

Matt: Whom our listeners may notice has an accent that is not English.

[Conversation transitions to Darren at the England chocolate factory.]

Darren: I'm originally from Australia. I grew up there and I grew up with my late grandfather making me hot chocolate from real chocolate, not from powder. And then I came over to the UK. I'm a chartered accountant, so I used to work in accounting firms and banks.

Tara: It's not as exciting as chocolate.

Darren: Definitely not as exciting. That's for sure.

Matt: I'm sure it has its moments.

Tara: (laughs)

Darren: (laughs) Uh…mmm.

Tara: (laughs)

Darren: And then coming over here, I wanted to recreate that experience. I set up a small kiosk in a shopping center, very small, to test the concept. So we made hot chocolates and iced chocolates. We had some retail products. And then a year later we opened up our flagship chocolate café. So we serve chocolate desserts, we serve hot chocolate, ice chocolate. The focus is chocolate, but we also do amazing teas and coffees and savory because in case it's too early in the day for people to want chocolate. I don't understand that. I'll eat chocolate all the times in the day. Or somebody doesn't want chocolate, they'll come as well. And then shortly after opening, we started making chocolate behind the counter and then cooling it in wine fridges below the counter and sending to customers on pallets behind the shopping center and then realized we need a production unit. So we opened up a very small production unit. Shortly after, we really outgrew that very quickly and we opened up a larger one and then two or three years later we opened up a much larger one, which is where we are now.

Tara: Wow. There's all kinds of beeps and bobs going on behind us. There's work being done. We got a lot of stuff in here.

Darren: We have a lot of stuff in here. Yes, exactly. We've been growing very quickly.

Tara: Chocolate is one of those things that makes people happy. I imagine that would be a growth enterprise.

Darren: Yes.

Tara: How long have you been working with Trader Joe's?

Darren: I think over three years.

Tara: Okay. And right now there are two products that you're making for Trader Joe's for the holiday season…

Darren: Yes.

Tara: …this year.

Darren: We're doing a hollow chocolate reindeer filled with sweets, so little red sweets, which are like the reindeer noses, and we're doing hot chocolate stirrers.

Tara: What we call them, Matt? Are they spoons?

Matt: I think spoon. I mean, they are a spoon.

Tara: They are a spoon.

Darren: Yeah, correct.

Tara: Hot Chocolate Spoons.

Darren: It's amazing chocolate. It's got vegan mini marshmallows on there, and then it's got obviously the spoons, so you can obviously use that to stir your drink and to help you scoop out the marshmallows as well.

Matt: Is there anything different about a chocolate that you would use for that purpose as compared to a chocolate bar?

Darren: We worked with Trader Joe's in order to find the formulation of the chocolate that they would like, so we mixed some different chocolates. Because it's hot chocolate, it's going into a mug or a cup of milk, so that will dilute the chocolate. So for example, a chocolate bar, you'd probably be more comfortable using just a regular milk chocolate because you're eating that directly as that product. Whereas once you put the hot chocolate stirrer into milk, it will dilute that. So it'll still taste lovely, but you'd want to ideally have a higher cocoa percentage for that. So for the Trader Joe's product, we worked with Trader Joe's and different samples and different formulations to make sure that we had the right cocoa percentage, which wasn't obviously too much cocoa where it's too bitter, but it wasn't too little cocoa where it's just too sweet and you don't taste the cocoa.

Matt: It's interesting to note that you're making this product for Trader Joe's, but it's very similar to what got you interested in the first place in chocolate is hot chocolate made with actual chocolates, which is not the same thing as a powdered instant thing at all. What is it about hot chocolate from actual chocolate that you think makes it more special and worth the effort?

Darren: I think it's worth it just for the reaction on people's faces. We see it in the café. People come in, it might be their first time into the café and probably their first time having hot chocolate from real chocolate. And when you see their face after they have that sip, it just lights up and it's this shock of wow.

Matt: And you see their reaction. Their whole body reacts.

Darren: It's a really different taste and really different experience. There's nothing wrong with powdered hot chocolate. People enjoy that and they like that. But for a luxury hot chocolate, when you taste that, it's the cocoa content, it's the mouthfeel, it's the richness, the smoothness. It's also very personal preference. Some people like a milkier option, some people like a darker option. I believe that Trader Joe's has selected a really great formula where it's got enough of that cocoa that people can taste, but it's not obviously too dark where people might be put off and it's not too milky and sweet that people won't like it. So it's a really good product hopefully everybody would love.

Tara: Matt and I are both fortunate enough to be part of the tasting panel. I remember tasting it the first time, just thinking what a cool concept. What a great idea to put something already on a spoon because you need a spoon anyway.

Darren: Yes.

Tara: Right? It's one of our more interesting products during that time of the year. We probably have customers who've shopped with us forever who never even noticed it.

Matt: Yeah, maybe.

Tara: Because it's small. Even though we sell through every year when we bring it in, it's one of the reasons we wanted to talk to you here. It's a really interesting product. It's so simple and yet super innovative and really you do get a much different cup of hot cocoa than from a powdered mix, which again, there is a place for that and I always in the wintertime have a box of those in my pantry.

Darren: Yeah.

Tara: But these are really cool. I love giving them as gifts. I always put one in my kids' stockings at Christmastime.

Darren: I mean they're fantastic stocking fillers.

Tara: They're great and they're really well priced and I could go on and on and on about that, but we had the bunny last year. We have the reindeer this year.

Matt: I think the break apart chocolates is an invitation to play with your food. I mean, it's something to do that is also something to eat. There's a little surprise element. I'm always

curious about what else we could put inside there. And every so often we'll have some idea like let's put a secret gift card in one out of every so many, which is a level of complexity that is really hard to achieve.

Tara: Sounds like a food safety nightmare.

Matt: It can be done, yeah.

Darren: We did look at, and we've done some development, and it is illegal in the US to have a capsule or anything that's non-food inside. We're finalizing some work at the moment, which we're going to want to speak to yourselves about, I probably won't mention it now, of some other options of some amazing, delicious things to go inside.

Tara: I like the idea of trying to put other things inside. The gummies are fun. You're kind of teasing a little bit and that's okay. We don't need to know, but we'll hopefully know it sometime soon.

Darren: Well, we'd like to present that soon and then you guys might think that's a great idea or you might look at it and go, "Not for us." So you never know.

[Music transition.]

Tara: From a product development perspective, are you coming to Trader Joe's with ideas? Is Trader Joe's coming to you with ideas?

Darren: I think it's a little bit of both. So we'll get ideas from, let's say Allison, we'll brainstorm on a couple of different options. As one of our customers and one of our most important customers, we'd also want to be presenting to Trader Joe's saying, "Oh, hang on, we think this could work," and present some ideas. Obviously Trader Joe's knows their customers incredibly well. Even though we might think it's fantastic, they might say, "Well, actually we're not sure about this, but actually this one we think could work and why don't we change this or we need to achieve a different price point."

Matt: And after seeing what you and your team do every day here, there's a huge amount of customization on how you produce things.

Darren: Yes.

Matt: And so a lot of times massive production facilities, factories are quite rigid. They have to be because that's where their efficiency is, but then they are so efficient that they can't consider anything that's out of the ordinary for them.

Darren: And I think that's always been our approach and as we've grown, that's grown as well. For us as a business, that's probably been how we've grown. By being an early adapter of a particular product or category that we might think of or see and want to adapt, we can basically have an idea in the morning, and we can have samples by lunchtime and tweak them, which is fantastic. And quite often it might be the staff who have an idea and we can see if that works because we have a café in close proximity. We don't have to use a independent market research company where they're being paid a certain amount to give their opinion and half the time won't really care. We've got people in the business who care and who are passionate about it. So we'll do a lot of hot chocolate tastings, chocolate tastings, sweet tastings. We'll get

everybody's opinion. It won't always be that everyone has the same opinion. So if we're comparing two chocolates, for example, quite often it might be split between that. But actually then the important thing is that everybody loves both. It's just they may have a preference over it where sometimes we'll taste the chocolate and people be, that's just not good.

Matt: So I love the idea of ideas coming from all places, especially from the people who work in that place. That's something that we think about quite often and we try to remain open to that.

Darren: And some people really enjoy the fact that they're part of a team and they're genuinely contributing to the growth of the company and collaborating as a team. They're able to do lots of different things. So that's why for those sorts of people, it's a great fit for us.

Tara: You've grown a lot since you started.

Darren: Yes.

Tara: Still relatively small compared to those giant corporations.

Darren: Yes.

Tara: How do you keep that sense of ‘we can do whatever we need to do to make it work’ as you get bigger and not become that giant corporation that has the list of tasks that you do and then go home?

Darren: That is a challenge. We've had to bring in people in operations, a full technical team, a warehouse team, a planner, all those things which we never had before, and we couldn't promote from within because we didn't have the knowledge in-house. So we had to bring in the right people that had the right experience. But rather than us hiring somebody from a big corporate and changing us to be a big corporate, we're saying no, we're happy being flexible, but we need someone who's experienced to lead that area and help us grow. It's about having those team members all working together with the shared goal of where we want to go.

Matt: It could be really daunting if you were to come over though for dinner and someone was to give you dessert. That could be ... I mean, I probably wouldn't serve anything chocolate. Maybe just a simple fruit platter or something.

Tara: Just berries.

Matt: Yeah, exactly.

Darren: But we do get friends who come over or bring a box of chocolates and then they realize it and they're almost apologetic. And I'm like, "No, I love chocolate." I encourage people to eat lots of different brands of chocolate. I eat lots of different ... Obviously a lot of our chocolate, but I definitely believe that people should be eating a lot of other people's chocolate sweets. It's great. There's lots of great products out there.

Tara: Darren, thank you so much. This has been great.

Darren: And thank you all for coming today. We really appreciate the effort to come by.

Tara: Getting to learn more about chocolate is always fun.

[Loud jet plane in air. Conversation transitions back to California. Light upbeat music begins.]

Tara: We're back in California now with Allison, our category manager for candy and chocolates.

Matt: Man, that was a quick flight.

Allison: Hello.

Tara: Hi.

Matt: Hello.

Tara: Thank you for coming to talk to us. Allison, Darren's team is making Trader Joe's Break Apart Reindeer. We have other break apart chocolates available in the store right now for the holiday season, even though we might not call them break apart chocolates.

Matt: Is there a definition for something to be considered break apart? It's like perforated?

Allison: I mean, you were just saying that anything can be break apart. (laughs)

Tara: Well, it's true. If you're having a bad day, any chocolate bar could be a break apart, right? Just smash it against the countertop and suddenly you have lots of pieces. But how about intentional break apart things?

Matt: Like in a chiropractic way. You don't have to just smash it. You can just lovingly, gently adjust it into a bite-sized morsel.

Tara: Maybe. So the other one that we're thinking of that we have during this holiday season right now…

Allison: Oh, the orange?

Tara: …is not technically…

Allison: The Dark Chocolate Orange is…

Tara: Can I register a complaint?

Allison: Please. (laughs) That's what I'm here for.

Tara: Can we please bring the milk chocolate one back?

Allison: Ooh. So I am working on a individual size milk chocolate version that has a mold of slices. It looks like slices of orange.

Matt: So what's individual? So you get one orange segment?

Allison: No, no, no. It's like a bar. It's like a chocolate bar. It's more of like a stocking stuffer size versus the dark chocolate, which is the larger that you smash with your hand.

Tara: It does go in the stocking at my house every year.

Matt: It depends upon the stocking you're stuffing.

Tara: It always goes in the stockings. It's an expectation at my house that if there isn't one of those on Christmas morning, my children who are now adults, are not very happy.

Allison: Okay.

Tara: Yeah.

Allison: This one is more like if you don't want to commit to the full ball. (laughs)

Tara: Okay. But that one…

Allison: You get a smaller version in milk chocolate. (laughs)

Tara: I think that maybe there are people out there in the world who haven't tried that Dark Chocolate Orange yet and don't understand that it's a break apart. You are literally supposed to kind of smash it or at least hit it hard on a hard surface.

Allison: There is an illustration of a hand banging on the packaging to instruct you.

Tara: And it separates perfectly every single time, which is kind of miraculous.

Allison: And they look like orange sections and it's fun. You can share it; you can not share it.

Matt: That would be a really great how it's made video because I'm guessing that they have separate molds for what look like the orange segments and then they have to somehow connect them.

Allison: I believe so, yeah.

Matt: That's so cool.

Tara: I'm writing that down because that's something to consider.

Matt: Let's go to the Chocolate Orange Factory.

Tara: Okay. That's one that's actually a break apart.

Allison: Correct.

Tara: But the other one we were talking about isn't called a break apart, but technically it could be a break apart if you wanted it to be.

Allison: The hedgehog.

Tara: Yeah.

Allison: Yes.

Tara: Talk about the hedgehog.

Allison: The hedgehog is a new item this year. It's kind of choose your own adventure how you want to consume it. You can melt it in milk or non-dairy beverage, and marshmallows will appear and it will become a hot chocolate…

Matt: Magic.

Allison: …situation.

Tara: It is like a little magic, right?

Allison: Yes.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: Nothing up my sleeve.

Allison: It's a little brutal for the hedgehog because he's going to melt in there.

Matt: In the service of a great cup of hot chocolate.

Tara: We have a really cute video…

Allison: Oh yes.

Tara: On traderjoe's.com and on our YouTube channel, youtube.com/traderjoes, of the Hot Cocoa Hedgehog. It's very cute.

Allison: Oh yes. I love that one.

Tara: Very cute. The hedgehogs don't seem to mind at all.

Allison: They love it.

Tara: That's what I'm saying.

Allison: It's like they're fulfilling their purpose. (laughs)

Tara: Exactly, exactly.

Matt: Talk about destiny.

Tara: Yes, exactly.

Allison: But you could break it apart as the chocolate is delicious to eat on its own and you can just eat the marshmallows. I guess those are the two options. (laughs) I mean, you could probably think of a third way. You could just bite into it, bite its head off. You drink the marshmallows and…

Tara: Oh, yeah. Bit its head off.

Matt: Bite its head off and drink its guts.

Allison: I'm the candy witch now. (laughs)

Matt: Yes.

Tara: Well, you're giving me an idea. You could take or bite its head off and then you have the marshmallows and you could fill it with cold milk instead of hot milk, and then you could use it as a cup with the marshmallows.

Allison: I think it would be structurally sound enough…

Matt: Messiest afternoon ever.

Allison: …to do that.

Tara: It might be structurally sound enough to do that.

Allison: You could try it. Try it over a sink.

[Music transition.]

Tara: What is the deal with break apart things? Where does this whole idea come from?

Allison: The break apart concept actually came about because the first time I visited Darren and his team, we had the spoon with the marshmallows. I was there to see what other capabilities they have, which you all saw when you were there. They had a bunch of cocoa bombs, different shapes and sizes. And at Trader Joe's, we're always looking for the next big thing. At that point, there had been cocoa bombs everywhere. It was really popular.

Tara: What's a cocoa bomb?

Allison: A cocoa bomb is a hollow chocolate shape that is filled with various things, usually for something you're going to melt in milk.

Matt: It's like a bath bomb for sipping.

Allison: Yes. Yes, exactly. Yeah. Yeah.

Tara: So that's kind of what the hedgehog is?

Allison: Yes. And we've had several iterations. We had a polar bear, we had a snowman, so now it's a hedgehog. This is the cutest version in my opinion. So I said, "Well, you can put anything in it." Because usually it's little chocolate pieces or marshmallows. And they said, "Yeah. I mean anything." They had a cute bunny shape. I said, "It'd be fun if we just put some candy in there and then it'd be a little surprise and then you don't melt it. You just break it open and you eat the chocolate and the candy."

Matt: Like a chocolate pinata.

Allison: Exactly. And they said, "Yeah, we can do that." So then they sent me a bunch of different possibilities for what could be inside of it, and we landed on the carrots, the gummy carrots, and then it was sour or not sour. And this is just the process of elimination we go through when we're developing an item. And then when we were thinking of a name, it was kind of like, we want to make it clear this is what our intention is, that you break it apart. And I can't remember who said, it was probably Matt said, “You just call it break it apart, break it apart.”

Matt: Smash and grab wasn't really good.

Allison: Yeah. What else do we think of?

Matt: A kinder, gentler.

Allison: Yeah. Yeah.

Tara: Good on you for not running in that direction.

Matt: Well, a lot of candy items that are sort of under this heading of novelty or fun things where the idea is the most important thing, well, frankly, they're not very good. And that's what's so different about this producer, this vendor, and your projects with them. They use outstanding chocolate. Like, this is great eating chocolate, whatever shape it takes. And the candy inside is also really good. And I think that is a huge difference because there's all kinds of goofy cocoa melts and things out there that you can whack and unwrap and do all this stuff. They're not as good, and this thing's good eating.

Allison: Yes. I mean, that does differentiate us from other retailers because I do see chocolate out there, especially in a variety of shapes. Well, I guess it's gummies now too, like gummy ramen or tacos or what have you. And they're always more fun to look at than they are enjoyable to eat.

[Music transition.]

Tara: After walking through their production facility, I hesitate to even call it a factory because it just didn't feel factory-like. It felt more like a place where you make stuff. And I know that's a factory, but that feels bigger.

Matt: It felt like a workshop. It felt like a hands-on people tinkering with things and people making in the moment decisions more than a push the button and let the machine whir.

Allison: More often than not, the facilities that we partner with are smaller and it makes sense. We need them to be more flexible. We want to change things. I want things to break apart and have candy in them. If I were at a different facility, they probably would've said, “Yeah, we don't do that. We do marshmallows and that's all we do.” I find that a lot of the kind of unsolicited presentations I get from candy people are like, “Here's the thing that's super popular right now. Don't you want that?” I'm like, I don't need that. I need the thing that's going to be popular that we will make popular. And that comes from ideas from the team here and vendors like that. They want to work with us and understand that we want to be ahead of it. Darren and his team are a great example of that.

[Music transition.]

Matt: What I think you, Allison, are so good at in particular is understanding what that vendor, what they are capable of doing. Hey, you're doing all these things that are so popular as to almost be passe. Let's take what you can do and make something new out of it. So that is so cool and thank you for it because that's what gets us to have for the second year running Break Apart Reindeer.

Allison: Thank you for that.

Matt: And so if that rabbit was full of carrots and our new break apart guy is a reindeer.

Allison: Yes.

Matt: He's full of...

Allison: Red noses.

Matt: See?

Allison: Gummy red noses.

Matt: Gummy red noses?

Tara: I think that's really adorable.

Allison: Thank you.

Tara: Yeah. Is this his first time this year?

Allison: No, last year.

Tara: This second year. We had this guy last year.

Matt: He's back.

Allison: He's back.

Tara: I'm just assuming it's a guy. I don't know why I said his, because it's a piece of chocolate.

Allison: Maybe because it's Rudolph. That's why you're thinking, boy.

Matt: If we're going to smash a reindeer, let's make it a guy.

Allison: Yeah. Oh yeah, please.

Tara: I didn't say it. Let's just be clear. The woman here.

Matt: Dear Matt, as the Guys of America Association, we're writing in to say that we're displeased with you.

Tara: Guys of America.

Matt: Yep.

Tara: I'm all about the acronym say GOAA. (laughs)

Matt: GOAA. And that's where they hold their convention. GOAA, we're going to GOAA.

Tara: (laughs) That's in India?

Matt: Yep.

Tara: Okay.

Matt: Still. It's where the Guys of America like to hang.

Allison: (laughs)

[Music transition.]

Tara: Wow. Any exciting things in development that you can share that we want people to be excited about for 2027?

Allison: Yeah. I don't know if you can break these apart, but...

Tara: It doesn't matter.

Allison: It's kind of like a tube of raspberry flavored licoricey gumminess, and then it's filled with a soft tart candy.

Matt: If you like sweet, fizzy, licoricey, ropey things, you might like this a lot.

Tara: Okay.

Allison: Yes.

Matt: And so the tube is the candy itself.

Tara: It's not a tube.

Matt: It's not a tube of candy.

Allison: No, sorry. Yes.

Tara: So it's like penne pasta tube kind of situation.

Matt: If you think of licorice penne pasta filled with slightly tart, sour, fizzy stuff.

Tara: I'm 100% in. And it's raspberry…

Matt: It's not just for dinner.

Tara: …licorice, not black licorice.

Matt: The filling is a little spritzy almost.

Allison: Yeah, I'd say spritzy. Sure. Yeah.

Matt: It's not like popping candy.

Allsion: Mm-mm.

Matt: It's not like foaming at the mouth rabid spritzy, but just a little touch.

Tara: But foamy gummy kind of spritzy or a little bit more than that?

Matt: A little more. Foamy gummy is like texture. This is active.

Tara: Yes.

Matt: Activated candy.

Tara: Like bubbly water spritzy almost?

Matt: Slightly. Less burpy, but kind of close to that.

Tara: Okay. I'm glad we are not bringing in burpy candy.

Matt: Actually, that would be great.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: Remember how Charlie got out of that jam in the chocolate factory? He had to burp his way down, folks.

Allison: That's true.

Tara: When are we expecting those in? Sometime after January?

Allison: I think end of February, early March.

Tara: And we're calling them Tart & Sweet Bites – Soft & Chewy Candy? We went descriptive.

Allison: Yes.

Tara: Okay. All right. That's good. So you want to know what you're getting.

Matt: Because spritzy tubes just didn't work. But I mean, it was in the running. It was a close fifth or sixth.

Allison: Licorice…not linguini.

Tara: Sweet and tart bites it is. Okay.

Matt: For the win. Looking forward to them.

Tara: Okay.

Matt: But seriously, if you like licorice, this is your thing.

Allison: Yeah.

Tara: It's very different than what we're talking about now, but still in the candy realm, which kind of shows the breadth of things that you're working on, you're doing everything from filled chocolates to filled tubes.

Allison: Yes.

Matt: Sounds like my most recent assessment.

[Music transition.]

Tara: We're not the only company in the United States of America that sells candy, but I don't believe that there are other retail companies in the United States of America that have as many people going out around the world looking for new ways to do things and new things to put on our shelves just proactively.

Allison: So when I do see something or an idea comes across or something occurs to me or someone on the team and it kind of clicks in and I get excited about it, I'm like, "That's it." It's like The Wizard of Oz coming into color and I get excited and I know our customers will be excited about it.

Matt: Yes, it does translate. It is conveyed. And while we are not the only place where you can buy candy, and admittedly I have a massive bias, I think our candy is worth the trip. And I think customers agree.

Tara: Yep.

Matt: What's your favorite candy product? I know you're going to say, "I don't eat candy in my real life." What's your favorite Trader Joe's?

Tara: She doesn’t though.

Allison: I…it's the Cocoa Truffles in the red box.

Tara: Really?

Allison: That's my favorite.

Tara: The classic.

Allison: It's my favorite candy item.

Matt: How come?

Allison: I like that it's really indulgent in one bite. I don't eat a lot of sugar in my real life, but it's not like I never want a sweet treat. I keep them in the refrigerator. And then if I need a little sweet treat after a salty dinner or something, pop one in my mouth and it lasts a long time if

you've had it in the refrigerator and it's just really indulgent, delicious. When people ask me, I always recommend that one.

Tara: Allison, we are so grateful for your time yet again.

Matt: Yeah. What she said.

Tara: (laughs)

Matt: Allison.

Tara: (continues laughing)

Allison: (laughs) I love talking to you guys. I could talk about candy and cookie for hours, so anytime you need me to ramble on about all that stuff, I am here for you.

Tara: We know where you live.

Allison: Yes.

Tara: Or at least in the office.

Allison: Yes. Whoa.

Matt: Creepy much?

Tara/Allison: (laughs)

[Transition to closing music.]

Tara: Coming soon on our next episode of *Inside Trader Joe's*.

Matt: A sequel?

Tara: No. Something entirely new, in fact. It's our very first Holiday Gift Guide Episode. And to make sure you hear it, better hit that free subscribe or follow button.

Matt: It *is* free and worth every penny.

Tara: Until next time, thanks for listening.

Matt: And thanks for listening.