

Inside Trader Joe's Podcast Transcript — Episode 63: Knack for Hacks

Tara: This is another Trader Joe's Product Hacks episode. What's first on the list?

Matt: Placing a scented candle under each arm as deodorant.

Tara: Any particular scent?

Matt: What else? Um, air fried head of cabbage.

Tara: Why?

Matt: Because you air fry everything. Um, you could garnish a burger with Trader Joe's Ketchup Flavored Sprinkle Seasoning and a little bit of Popcorn in a Pickle.

Tara: Wait. Are these even real hacks? I mean, we found some others that are really good, and that I can't wait to try, so can we just talk about those?

Matt: All right. Let's go inside Trader Joe's. Wah-wah.

Tara: (laughs)

Matt: Dip.

[Theme music begins and 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 marketing product guy.

Tara: Let's talk about some products you may know, some you may not be familiar with, and hopefully discover some new and maybe unexpected ways to use them. Matt, can I ask you to please read this disclaimer?

Matt: "Some of these ideas have been found on Trader Joe's groups on social media. None of these groups are affiliated with or sanctioned by Trader Joe's, although the people who participate in these groups do appear to love Trader Joe's and have good intentions. We have not tried all of these product hack ideas personally, although we intend to, because they seem great. We do not accept any liability if you don't like any or one of them. Your mileage may vary." I'm Matt Sloan and I approve this message. Whew.

Tara: Let's get on with it, shall we?

Matt: So do you wanna just jump into our stuff?

Tara: Let's-

Matt: Or do-

Tara: ... just jump into our stuff. One of the most popular items in our stores consistently is Everything But The Bagel Seasoning.

Matt: It still is. It holds true. Such a customer favorite.

Tara: And I think one of the reasons they love it is it's just so versatile. People write entire articles of lists of things that you can do with Everything But The Bagel Seasoning. It's like, what do they call it? A listicle? It's a listicle, right?

Matt: A listicle-

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: ... on EBTB.

Tara: Right.

Matt: Is that what we-

Tara: Exactly.

Matt: ... call it? Everything But The Bagel, yes.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: EBTB.

Tara: We've already added Everything But The Bagel Seasoning to a whole bunch of products that exist as full products in the store, like there's an Everything But The Bagel dip in the store, and there are Everything But The Bagel crackers in the store, and there are almost Everything But The Bagel sandwich crackers that are about to be available in stores. But we're reading about people using Everything But The Bagel to e- to season rice. I've seen people talking about Everything But The Bagel Seasoning as an ingredient in bread, s- putting it into the dough of your bread, or sprinkling it over the top of bread before you bake it, so it kind of bakes in to the t- as a nice seasoning and a little crunch in the bread.

Matt: Yeah. An easier idea, crescent rolls.

Tara: Mm.

Matt: And so you can take our crescent rolls and you've got the flat triangle piece of dough, and just sprinkle Everything But The Bagel on that, roll it up, an Everything But The Bagel crescent roll. I think our biscuits are really good, that ready-to-go in the refrigerator case biscuit dough, rolled in, topped on ... with the Everything But The Bagel, that would be great. I think it's good, actually, if you have some dipping olive oil, and a baguette, a ciabatta, or a French-style baguette. If you just give a good, healthy shake of the Everything But The Bagel into that olive oil, and make a seasoned dipping olive oil, it works really well.

Tara: I think that's a really cool idea. I'm thinking breakfast, right? S- How about mixing it into scrambled eggs?

Matt: Sure. Oh, yes.

Tara: Which is a pretty cool-

Matt: Oh, yeah.

Tara: ... idea. Or if you're an avocado toast kinda person, sprinkling it on top of the avocado on your toast.

Matt: And I'm thinking, if you were to season breadcrumbs or flour to make a dredge for a piece of fish, or chicken, or anything else that you wanted to have a crunchy coating on, you could even air fry this thing.

Tara: Uh.

Matt: I think-

Tara: What?

Matt: ... Everything But ... I know, it's crazy talk, here.

Tara: (laughs)

Matt: But Everything But The Bagel's a great all-purpose seasoning for a breading to put on just about anything.

Tara: I think there's kind of an endless supply of ways to use Everything But The Bagel Seasoning. And at a certain point, is it a hack or is it just sprinkling seasoning on something?

Matt: Depends if you're making a listicle or not.

Tara: N- There you go. That's exactly right. Okay, what's next, Matt?

Matt: Well, you know, I'm so glad that tinned fish is having a moment. It's springtime, or thereabouts, and we should get outside, because being outside makes everything taste better. And a tinned fish picnic is a great idea. And on that similar note, I'm thinking of other phenomenal foods of a mezze variety-

Tara: It-

Matt: ... that come in little tins.

Tara: Wait. Sorry to interrupt you. But explain mezze, please.

Matt: I wish I really could. I mean, I think of it as like appetizers, but sometimes I just wanna make a whole meal out of little tastes of a bunch of different things. So it has a Mediterranean, some Middle Eastern type of association and connotations with it. Not an elaborate, but an abundant spread of different things that really are f- great together and taste wonderful on their own. A classic offering in this area, dolmas.

Tara: Hm.

Matt: We have a great product, a little can of dolmas, classic Greek dolmas, vine leaves, grapevine leaves stuffed with seasoned rice in olive oil. Simple, delicious, and there's this secret slight, little tartness from

some lemon, and a little bit of mint in that recipe, too, that adds a little brightness. We also have quinoa stuffed dolmas. That might be a whole different show.

Tara: We're a limited sku company, right? But we two versions of dolmas in cans. I was very hesitant to try these, because I thought, "How can they be good?" This is a product that really needs to be fresh. And yet, when I crave dolmas, these are the ones that I always go for, 'cause they are absolutely delicious. I'm thinking of making like an entire meal of mezze, right? Making a whole plate of a bunch of different things that are similar in culinary origin. I'm thinking from, g- of going from the dolmas to the Grecian-style eggplant with tomatoes and onions that we have in the can, that is just such a great product. The eggplant is so tender and just absolutely delicious.

Matt: It kind of tastes like right outta the can, an amazing eggplant Parmesan without cheese. This could be just about anything, a pasta sauce, it's phenomenal. Toss it in pasta, fantastic. As a pizza topping, it's amazing. And if you're thinking, "Wait a minute. Tara, Matt, are you saying that I'm gonna have an amazing picnic by popping open some cans and just digging in?" Yes.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: That's the idea, here. We've got these giant baked beans in a tomato sauce, and another bean, similarly Grecian in origin, are these chickpeas with parsley and cumin out of the can. These are amazing as a topper to hummus. It's like, "Wait a minute. Hummus needs more chickpeas?" Why not? Texturally interesting and different, but the same bean, what a great combo. A nice, big mound of hummus, dump these on top, wonderful. You can also heat those chickpeas up in a pan, and then pour them over just about anything. Eat them as they are. They also make a great burrito type of filling.

Tara: Okay.

Matt: Uh-

Tara: I gotta ... I gotta stop you for a second because you said you can heat them up. I'm gonna take you one step further. You can air fry them. They get really crispy. They're such a great snack when you pop them in the air fryer.

Matt: Okay. So we, we have a Grecian in a can, it's like having Prince Albert in a can, let him out. A Grecian in a can picnic, dolmas, chickpeas, Grecian-style eggplant, those giant baked beans. What a fun time.

Tara: I guess I'm hungry right now. That-

Matt: Really, really tasty.

Tara: ... sounds delish.

Matt: And you know, with a lot of these things that we're talking about, things that you can use in maybe unexpected ways, they pack a lot of flavor. They have a seasoning punch to them, so you don't need to do a lot beyond that.

Tara: All right. I wanna go to something that's a little different and is not necessarily edible.

Matt: Hm.

Tara: So it's a weird hack for us. But I'm seeing it all over social media. Using jars that Trader Joe's products come in as vessels for other food uses when you're done. So if you have a glass jar, say, from strawberry jam, right? You could take that jar when you're done and recycle it. Or, you can repurpose it as a mug for an icy, cold beverage.

Matt: And that, and that strawberry jam jar, the fresh pack strawberry jar-

Tara: Mm-hmm.

Matt: ... is the one I'm thinking of.

Tara: Mm-hmm.

Matt: It kind of has a faceted, almost paneled aspect to it. It's not a-

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: ... straight, round cylinder. So-

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: That's kind of a neat look, in and of itself.

Tara: So like I make chia pudding for, for breakfast. I use our chia seeds, and almond milk, and a little sweetener, and some vanilla extract. Use those strawberry jam jars or any jam jar as the vessel for your chia pudding, and store it in your fridge. It comes with its own lid. Right? I saw someone on social media using the jar from those peach halves that-

Matt: So tall-

Tara: ... we sell.

Matt: Uh, that's a taller jar.

Tara: Yeah. I s- Yeah. So it's a taller, maybe thinner jar. It is smooth on the sides. I, I saw someone using that jar as, um, a mug for iced coffee. It comes with a lid. You can bring your iced coffee with you, and then-

Matt: You'd probably even shake it up, that-

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: ... type of thing.

Tara: That's exactly right.

Matt: All right.

Tara: These are just jars. And you would probably just put them in your recycle bin. But what if you could reuse them? If you're thinking about what are you gonna do this summer for outdoor gatherings? You know, you have a whole bunch of potential glassware already in your pantry.

Matt: So that is fun.

Tara: Okay. See? So that's a hack, but it's not a food hack. What's next? We going to pizza dough?

Matt: We have some new pizza dough stuff?

Tara: It's not just for pizza anymore. Or was it ever? I think the great thing about that pizza dough is that it is all done. And all you really need to do is wait for it to come to room temperature, to be a little more malleable for you. Think what might get lost sometimes is how versatile that pizza dough is. You could make it into little garlic knots, right? Cut it up into little pieces, stretch it out into a knot, brush it with garlic butter, and bake it. There you go. How about you take little pieces of it, roll it into a ball, and roll it in cinnamon sugar, and bake those? Or, you could also make little pretzel bites out of it. Put it in a pot of boiling water that has some baking soda in it, and then take it out of that, and put it in the oven with whatever seasonings you want on top of the for a pretzel. It's like you could do salt. Or you could do Everything But The Bagel Seasoning.

Matt: Oh my gosh. Full circle.

Tara: We're coming full circle.

Matt: Have you ever tried making like a loaf, like a boule, like a rounded loaf with that? I wonder how that would work.

Tara: I haven't tried that. But I have made breadsticks with it. And that works very nicely. So my guess is that it would work pretty well.

Matt: I feel like that we've presented ourselves with a bit of a marketing conundrum, because naming things ascribes a use, and only that use. Of course it's pizza dough. I don't know what else we would call it, delicious dough.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: But it's like it-

Tara: We could just call it dough, D'O-H-

Matt: Yes.

Tara: ... with an exclamation. Call it (laughs) D'oh! Are you giving me level?

Matt: Hello? Can you see-

Tara: Yes.

Matt: ... our reading?

Tara: Yep. And for me as well. Okay. Matt, we made a promise.

Matt: What now?

Tara: In the Spring Shopping List episode, crew member Kathleen amazed us with a great hack. And we said, "She should come back on the next Hacks episode."

Matt: And there she is, knocking on the door, using our vast sound effects library.

Kathleen: Hi.

Tara: You ready for some hacks? Ha- [inaudible 00:11:33]

Matt: Hack away, Kathleen. Hack. What is it? Describe a hack without using hack as the operative word.

Kathleen: I'm gonna use this thing for something other than its in- intended use. And it's gonna be awesome. I'm very into that right now, really finding value in the things that you used to throw away.

Tara: Love that. Think that's a really good way to define hack.

Matt: Other than when it's an adjective applied to us and our performance, "What a hack."

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: Yeah.

Tara: Well, yeah. That's a noun at that point. If we wanna get-

Matt: I guess-

Tara: ... technical about it-

Matt: ... it is.

Tara: ... the grammar.

Matt: You're right.

Tara: That would be-

Matt: It is.

Tara: ... a noun and not-

Matt: Grammatically.

Tara: ... and adjective.

Matt: Thank you.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: All right.

Tara: Just ... you just randomly walked through the building the other day with an incredibly delicious, quick recipe that, in my brain, it's a hack, because it's using a product in a way that people might not expect that product to be used. Can you tell us about that?

Kathleen: So, it was rainy, it was kinda cold, and-

Matt: Sound effect.

Tara: (laughs)

Kathleen: ... and cozy. Think warming, comforting, think chicken and dumplings soup.

Tara: I'm in.

Kathleen: We use our organic, free-range chicken broth as the base.

Tara: Okay.

Kathleen: All the flavor's already there, no need to simmer for hours to get the flavor. Bring in our organic biscuits. Those are the dumplings.

Tara: Okay. Which biscuits are we talking about?

Kathleen: Our deli organic biscuits in the little cart- uh, t- in the tube.

Tara: In the tube. Because in the first variation that you let me taste, you kinda cut the biscuits into quarters, right? So they were kind of like puppy triangles, and delicious. But you weren't satisfied with that. Why?

Kathleen: I wanted them to look more like dumplings. So after I cut the biscuits, I rolled them in the palm of my hands, and that's what I boiled into the broth. And they looked amazing.

Tara: Fantastic. So-

Matt: How long do you have to boil them?

Kathleen: About 15 minutes, so they, they cook through.

Tara: Adding the dumplings just adds a different layer of, "Oh, this is comfort food."

Matt: Now, I was able to actually taste this soup, and it was wonderful. And I remember being so completely impressed by the velvety texture of the broth. This broth is more like pasta water than just regular broth or stock, because of the carbohydrates in that water. It's why it was so darn good. This all makes sense now.

Kathleen: Pasta water is magical, by the way. I keep it in my fridge.

Tara: Do you really?

Kathleen: Absolutely.

Tara: Oh, so you save it.

Kathleen: Save it.

Matt: Hold on. We're onto-

Tara: Oh, wait.

Matt: ... another hack.

Tara: Okay. Wait. Uh, so I love-

Matt: So-

Tara: ... that the unexpected hacks ... this is kinda great.

Matt: So what do, what do you do with it, the pasta water, that is?

Kathleen: Anything you need to thicken up ever so slightly. Al- Add a little luscious to-

Tara: "Add a little luscious." This is my new ... This is my new catchphrase. I'm stealing it from you. So all those recipes that kinda say, you know, "Take a, a cup of the pasta water and pour it into your sauce to thicken it up." You're saying, "No, no, no, no, no, the heck with that. I'm saving that water. Maybe I'll drain the pasta, but that water's not going down into the sink."

Kathleen: Correct. I have a deli container in my fridge, at any time, with that cloudy, beautiful liquid that I'm just gonna add to everything. Liquid gold, is what they call it. And you should stash your liquid gold in your fridge.

Tara: Oh, pasta water. Man, that's, that's an ... a different and interesting way to use, to use a product. It's very cool.

Matt: Any other shopping hacks, life hacks?

Kathleen: Well, I don't wanna go back to the soup again, but I will.

Tara: You can.

Kathleen: So the chicken part of the soup is our barbecue teriyaki chicken that's in our frozen section. It's a bag, the chicken is already seasoned, it's already cooked, and it comes with a sauce packet of teriyaki. To cut some extra corners, to get the soup on the table in 30 minutes, we're taking that chicken and just not using the sauce.

Matt: And the packet of teriyaki sauce could go in the fridge next to your pasta water.

Kathleen: Yes. And I already have ideas what I'm gonna do with the teriyaki sauce.

Matt: Don't use-

Tara: Do you?

Matt: Wow. There's no-

Tara: Okay, well, we'll save those for next time.

Matt: ... spoilers.

Speaker 4: Yeah.

Tara: That makes me think, so now I'm on the hack patrol, here. You could use those biscuits as the topping for a chicken pot pie.

Kathleen: Yes.

Tara: Just lay them all out on top of your-

Matt: Oh, you can just be like-

Tara: ... chicken pot pie.

Matt: ... a cobbler, like feel like a chicken cobbler.

Kathleen: Yes.

Matt: Why doesn't anyone make chicken cobbler? Why don't people make savory cobblers?

Tara: Maybe we do.

Matt: All right. Looking forward to the next hack. I'm just gonna say ...

Kathleen: Thank you.

Tara: We know they're coming. Adios.

Kathleen: Ciao.

Tara: I got an email from the other Trader Joe's mothership that said, "Please come to Boston for the springtime."

Matt: Ah, Dave Loggins, Epic Records 1974, two weeks at number one.

Tara: Okay. I have no idea what you're talking about, but I did ask some of the crew members in our Boston office if they have any favorite Trader Joe's product hacks they could share with us. Stephanie, can you tell us what it is you do here at Trader Joe's?

Stephanie: I work on the food labels.

Tara: I think people underestimate the amount of work that goes into that kind of a thing. Like, it's a lot.

Stephanie: It is. Hm,

Tara: And I wanna talk to you about, um, about sweets and treats, and, and how to sort of hack your sweet tooth a little bit.

Stephanie: I have to avoid sugar because, or processed sugar, because my body can't digest it correctly.

Tara: Okay.

Stephanie: Hopefully your science teacher taught you in high school that regular sugar breaks down into glucose and fructose. So my body has trouble digesting the fructose.

Tara: Okay.

Speaker 6: Part of it.

Stephanie: So I have to be careful about how much sugar I eat, or I will get sick.

Tara: But you still like sweets?

Stephanie: I do. I love chocolate, I love fruit. So my biggest hack is to just watch how much I'm eating and when. So I can figure out kind of what my, what my quota is. Instead of eating a whole chocolate bar, I eat a quarter of a chocolate bar, and I still get that sweet taste. And I eat it slower. I savor it a bit more. I have things like dates, or figs, or something that is naturally h- um, high in sugar but doesn't affect my body the same way.

Tara: Is the sugar in fruit not fructose?

Stephanie: So it is. It depends on the fruit. So all fruit and vegetables are different. They all have different ratios of glucose to fructose.

Tara: Ah.

Stephanie: Yes. So things that are ... taste sweeter, uh, berries, bananas, dates, they are a bit higher in fructose. Things that are a bit not as sweet, think, like citrus, or things like that, those are gonna be on the glucose side, because your tongue tastes fructose at a higher sweetness level. Fructose tastes sweeter, um, than glucose. So, um, that's how you can kinda tell with fruit, specifically, what is gonna be higher in fructose than glucose. So I tend to have more of the fruits that are higher on the glucose side, fructose side.

Tara: Okay. Oh. This is very ...

Stephanie: Yeah. (laughs)

Tara: This is really interesting. Maybe I'll talk to you again soon.

Stephanie: Thank you.

Tara: I have finally gotten to spend some time with crew member Rashinda. Can you tell us what you do here at Trader Joe's?

Rashinda: I'm the category manager for coffee, tea, and beverages, sourcing green coffee beans and making sure we get rice- pricing, same thing for beverages, water, juice, soda.

Tara: All things drinkable except for alcohol.

Rashinda: That's correct.

Tara: I kinda wanna ask you a hack for buying the best coffee at Trader Joe's, the best quality coffee at the best possible price.

Rashinda: Small lots is a place to start. Um, we have our great, Everyday Value items, but small lots are very unique. They're sourced from small farms, and they're either unique beans or the process of creating those beans, and making them special is, is unique. So I would start there.

Tara: Those are the rotating offerings that sort of ... They come and go really quickly.

Rashinda: Yes. So typically we have about eight of them per year, the beans are brought in when they're ready and harvested, they're roasted, they're at our warehouse in a week or so. So they're really fresh. The next one is coming up, is our Chiapas, from Mexico. It's actually a repeat. We had it back in 2020. By far, since I have been in this role, it's been the most sought out, after, uh, a lotta customers coming in to say, "Hey, can we get this one back?" So, the answer is yes.

Tara: There are supply issues around a lot of products, but coffee is, coffee's a crop.

Rashinda: Mm-hmm.

Tara: And you can't just go out and buy more the next day.

Rashinda: Agreed. So, uh, these are truly limited. We're d- We bring in about 75 to 100,000 pounds and, uh, dependent on how much availability there is. So if there's issue with crop, we can't bring it back again.

Tara: Right. We have millions of customers who shop at our 542 stores every week. So 100,000 pounds of coffee isn't really that much coffee.

Rashinda: No, it isn't. No.

Tara: I think there's also a story here about just sort of our coffee section in and of itself, as a hack for getting fresh coffee. We go through inventory really fast.

Rashinda: Mm-hmm.

Tara: There-

Rashinda: I-

Tara: N- There isn't really an opportunity for it to be old coffee.

Rashinda: That's correct. Our turns are really quick.

Tara: It's pretty great. Okay, here's a question for you. Your favorite coffee at Trader Joe's?

Rashinda: Hm. Ethiopian Blend is my favorite flavor.

Tara: Do you just make a regular drip coffee? Or do you make espresso? What do you do?

Rashinda: Drip coffee, or I'll put it in the reusable pods, make a one cup.

Tara: You make your own- you hi- make your own pods, basically?

Rashinda: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Tara: Like the pre-made ones? I've never had a great cup of coffee-

Rashinda: Mm-hmm.

Tara: ... from a pod. But I, I think if I made my own, maybe it would be different.

Rashinda: Mm-hmm.

Tara: All right. N- Rashinda, we'll speak to you again soon.

Rashinda: Yeah, see you soon.

Tara: Thank you.

Rashinda: Thank you.

Tara: Matt, I think now is the point in the show where we just make some shameless plugs for products we love that we think people should love more than maybe they do. Sometimes we have products that, their names don't necessarily tell you what they are.

Matt: Maybe that's part of the issue, that people just aren't quite sure what to do with these things.

Tara: The first one that comes to mind is something that we call Figo.

Matt: (laughs)

Tara: What the heck is a Figo?

Matt: Figo, it's like an Italian exclamation. That means like, "Hey, that's cool."

Tara: (laughs)

Matt: "Like, neat." Uh, it's a literal situation for these, 'cause it's like an ice cream sandwich.

Tara: But it's more than an ice cream sandwich. What is it?

Matt: It's a novelty. So in industry terms, an ice cream novelty is ice cream in some form, often handheld, different from a pint, or a tub, or a quart container. So Figo combines two interesting ice cream novelty forms, the ice cream sandwich and the chocolate covered ice cream bar.

Tara: The ice cream sandwich part is at the bottom, and kind of acts as the, the handle.

Matt: Yeah.

Tara: And the chocolate covered ice cream bar is at the top, and you eat that first.

Matt: Probably.

Tara: And then you go, you maybe down to the ice cream sandwich.

Matt: Yeah. It's really fun. I mean, it's, it's classic.

Tara: Cool. All right. What else?

Matt: Oh, I'm thinking of, and actually, black garlic is never far from my thoughts, because I just think it's so great. It is more or less regular garlic that has been fermented to the point where it becomes black, it becomes sweet, it becomes tasty in ways very different from regular, raw garlic. And I can't think of a thing that doesn't benefit from adding a little bit of black garlic to it. Avocado toast, a salad, if you're making a vinaigrette, the vinaigrette is greatly enhanced by black garlic. As a seasoning, it adds this [French 00:23:05]. It's just fantastic.

Tara: On a pizza, mixed into pasta, the little garlic, uh, garlic knots you make with our pizza dough.

Matt: Anything, if you have a jar of pasta sauce, and you want a different angle on it, you have a bowl of soup, and you want it to just be a slightly different experience, try some black garlic.

Tara: Oh, mac and cheese.

Matt: Oh, yeah.

Tara: Okay. All right. Go black garlic. The guajillo salsa. It's spicy, and it's a little smoky, there's no other salsa in our store that hits this same flavor profile.

Matt: Exactly. And of course, this is great with chips. Chips and salsa, guajillo salsa, it's spicy, it's not like blow your head off spicy, but it has a really wonderful building warmth and heat to it. And I like to simmer eggs in this. So if you have a small, maybe like a seven inch diameter or even smaller, nonstick pan, and you're warming it up, and you pour a bunch of this guajillo salsa, and you crack a few eggs, and drop 'em in there, and gently poach them in that salsa, you can throw that on top of toast, a tortilla, have it with some beans and rice, just on its own.

Tara: Chicken thighs simmered in this, you get this really nice, smoky flavor that just melds into your chicken, and it ... That's great sort of shredded up for tacos or burritos.

Matt: You could add this to pasta. Why not? If you wanted a spicy pasta. You know, I've seen someone in my household take a little bit of salsa left in the jar and all the crumbly bits of chips left in a bag, and they

pour those into the salsa jar, and mix it up, and it's like speed chilaquiles, um, and they eat it was a spoon. And it's pretty good.

Tara: I think that's a hack worth remembering, right there, actually.

Matt: Absolutely.

Tara: Right?

Matt: Like, waste not, want not.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: Because, just 'cause it's a little bit in the bottom of the jar doesn't mean it's not delicious. Of course it's delicious.

Tara: Yeah. What's next, Matt?

Matt: Let's go on a date, organic date syrup. I was a little skeptical of this thing at first, because I just didn't know what I would do with it. As a sweetener for beverages, it's fantastic. It has this somewhat caramel-like, with a little brightness. Iced tea, iced coffee, boba tea kinds of things, if you need to sweeten a coffee or tea beverage, totally try this date syrup. And this one, interestingly enough, it's coming from Belgium.

Tara: So we do travel the world to find the products, and if that involves going to Belgium to get something made with dates, then, darn it, that's what we're gonna do.

Matt: Yeah.

Tara: I love grapeseed oil. It is my oil of choice for stir frying and any kind of high heat cooking.

Matt: Sure.

Tara: Because it has a high smoke point, it's virtually flavorless, and it's clean. I don't see a lot of people talking about cooking with grapeseed oil, and I don't really understand why.

Matt: It is great. And I like the absence of flavor. It lets anything else really shine through.

Tara: Another product that I wanna talk about, here, chicken-less, riced cauliflower stir fry. Cauliflower-

Matt: Say that 12 times fast.

Tara: Cauliflower riced chicken-less stir fry, because it's not actually rice, it's riced cauliflower. And it's not actually chicken, it's a plant-based chicken alternative. And it's in a stir fry situation where there are some vegetables added. But it's, it's basically like the rice free, chicken free version of chicken fried rice, right?

Matt: It's just all veggies.

Tara: It's ... yeah.

Matt: Veggies in normal format, veggies in new, living in outer space format, and it's good. Cooking this at a very high temperature, with that grapeseed oil, is gonna give you a fried rice texture, because-

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: ... the riced cauliflower does tend to throw off a bit of moisture-

Tara: Mm-hmm.

Matt: ... when you cook it, 'cause cauliflower's mostly water. So you wanna mitigate that, high, high heat. And then I wanna make it into a burrito. I want a chicken-less riced cauliflower stir fry burrito. It's gonna basically be a vegetable burrito, but it's gonna taste like chicken fried rice, and it's gonna be great.

Tara: One of our coworkers suggested this morning, using the Taiwanese green onion pancakes in the freezer, as the wrapper for tacos or quesadillas. You could use them for the wrapper for that burrito that you just talked about.

Matt: This just in, you're almost ready for dinner, people want a little bit of a something, a little bit of a bite, a nosh before they tuck into the proper meal. What about tapas style grilled artichoke halves from Spain, these Iberico's Tapas Style Artichoke Hearts, they're grilled, they're cut in half, you open up this little tray, and just dig in. And they're great. They're just great on their own. But rather than deal with a whole messy, crazy artichoke, you have to cook, and peel, and mine the thorns yourself, if you want any kind of artichoke flavor or presence in anything, try these.

Tara: You just peel back the film, and you could serve them right from that tray. But you can also take them out and put them on a charcuterie-

Matt: Oh, yeah.

Tara: ... tray.

Matt: Yeah.

Tara: Right? With cheese and maybe some almonds.

Matt: And a nice Spanish wine.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: You can even actually like a Cava, a little sparkling wine, I mean, and then a nice sun setting on the verand- I mean, what else could you ask for?

Tara: You're expecting everyone to have a veranda. I'm not sure-

Matt: I mean, I don't. But it's an ... It's, it's kinda nice to dream. And that's what's fun about putting together a nice spread of food, is that actually is the dream.

Tara: Right.

Matt: To be able to share great things with those you love, and it turns any place into a magical spot.

Tara: Love the hacks, Matt. Another fun episode.

Matt: You know, I think Trader Joe's Hacks could be our spinoff series, like Frasier, or CSI: Monrovia.

Tara: I have a feeling we'll do this again soon. So please keep posting your ideas on social media with the hashtag Trader Joe's Product Hacks. And to make sure you get the next episode of Inside Trader Joe's, 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.