

Inside Trader Joe's Podcast Transcript – Episode 66: Fall 2023 Shopping List

[Upbeat music in the background.]

Tara: It's fall shopping list time at Trader Joe's, and you know what that means.

Matt: So many products. Lots of cool products. New products, returning products. Even new and returning pumpkin products.

Tara: Ooh, pumpkin.

Matt: Okay, so how many pumpkin products are we going to talk about in this episode?

Tara: Two.

Matt: Really?

Tara: Yeah. I mean, we love us some pumpkin, but there are also so many other great products to talk about. We can't fit them all in. So, two pumpkin, lots of other great stuff. Are you ready?

[Music ends.]

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

[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 culture and innovation guy.

Tara: Hey, that's new.

Matt: It is actually, and maybe we'll get into that later, or, you know, maybe we won't.

Tara: Speaking of things we're going to get to later, the pumpkin stuff.

Matt: Yes, let's keep everyone in suspense.

Tara: Okay, let's start with...

Matt: Mini Maple Flavored Marshmallows. Small bag with a dirigible, like an inflatable contraption kind of vehicle on the front.

Tara: Wait, how'd you say that word?

Matt: DIR-i-gi-ble

Tara: Oh, okay.

Matt: How *do* you say it?

Tara: I've always said dir-l-gi-ble.

Matt: Dir-l-gi-ble, okay. Em-PHA-sis with Matt and Tara.

Tara: On the wrong syl-LA-ble. More important than what's on the outside of the bag, what's inside the bag?

[Music transition. Opening bag.]

Matt: So, little, tiny, I guess I'd call these 'mini' marshmallows.

Tara: Like what that says on the bag?

Matt: Exactly, as we have written on this bag. Small marshmallows, perfect for floating in cocoa. I actually might even try these floated in a cup of tea, like our Autumn Harvest Tea. They are, in fact, flavored with maple. Now to make a marshmallow do its puffy thing, you have to have very specific ingredients. So, the maple component is not the primary sweetener, it's regular sugar in this case. And yet the maple does in part a classic, wonderful maple like flavor. So, kind of like what you'd have on pancakes in marshmallow form, this is it.

Tara: Like the other marshmallows that we sell at Trader Joe's, but unlike most of the marshmallows you find in grocery stores, these are vegan.

Matt: Correct. Made without gelatin, no animal byproducts. These are vegan.

Tara: They are by the way, really good in crispy rice treats.

Matt: Hmmm.

Tara: So, if you want to do a little spin on a crispy rice treat, you can have a maple version

Matt: That would be fun.

Tara: These are in stores now. They arrived early September, only available for a limited period of time.

[Music ends.]

Tara: I want to go forward and talk about a little more maple stuff right now.

[Light upbeat music begins.]

Matt: Great. It's the time of the year for it.

Tara: Yeah, this is a returning fall season product that first arrived on our shelves last fall. The Organic Maple Vinaigrette Dressing. This is a classic vinaigrette flavor profile with maple syrup. It's delicious.

Matt: This is pretty versatile. This makes actually a great marinade. If you wanted to marinate chicken, vegetables, other things, and either grill or roast them, this works really, really well.

Tara: I'm thinking brussels sprouts.

Matt: Sure. Even if you were doing a pan sauté or something approximating a stir fry, a little bit of this vinaigrette would work really well there too.

Tara: That, that sounds really good. Matt, I have maple on the brain now, Organic Vermont Maple Syrup, Bourbon Barrel Aged. Talk about what that means.

Matt: If you think about the wonderful, nuanced flavors that can come from bourbon, and a lot of those flavors come from the barrels that the bourbon itself is aged in, these are taking and repurposing barrels used to age bourbon and filling them with great, in this case, organic maple syrup and having those flavors come from the barrel, from the wood, into and throughout the maple syrup. It might sound crazy. It is absolutely tasty. It's an interesting thing for some to have this flavor to start the day. If you're having breakfast with bourbon infused something. There's no alcohol here. And it's so interesting and great on the usual suspects, French toast, pancakes, et cetera. This is an amazing price and amazing product.

Tara: This tastes really good drizzled over Trader Joe's Vanilla Ice Cream.

Matt: If you have a, you know, a sweet glaze on a ham as a thing, this time of year, this would be fantastic as a counterpoint to ham's, salty taste. I'm curious. I'd love to see what people do with this.

Tara: Yeah. If you have a specific way that you like to use this particular product, you can send us an email. Podcastquestions@traderjoes.com.

Matt: It was a nice plug.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: It was so natural.

[Music ends.]

Tara: What's next on our list?

Matt: I think salsa.

[Latin music begins.]

Matt: The Fall Harvest Salsa. Not a new product. This is a returning favorite. This is a salsa that I think is so good, I just like to eat it as it is with nothing else.

Tara: Really?

Matt: Yes. I think just right out of the jar with the spoon, this is delicious.

Tara: Wow. Okay. It's filled with pumpkin and butternut squash and there's apples in it, there's tomatillos in it, there's lime, there's even a little bit of jalapeno for some heat.

Matt: Certainly fantastic with chips, but poured on a piece of fish, poured over cottage cheese.

Tara: A pork tenderloin, probably in the oven with this poured on top and then roasted.

Matt: Absolutely. And I could see going like an autumnal enchilada where in lieu of a classic enchilada sauce, you poured this over a pan of enchiladas and baked them.

Tara: All of this and it's still really good with chips.

Matt: Dang it, it really is good with chips.

Tara: It's really good with chips. We got to get through this grocery aisle of the store.

Matt: We're still on the grocery aisle.

Tara: We're in the grocery aisle, but we're kind of moving into the baking section.

[Music transition.]

Tara: A seasonally available limited-edition item on our shelves is Organic Clove Powder. And clove is really a flavor that people use a lot in holiday baking and in holiday cooking.

Matt: And what's interesting about our spices, is how quickly we sell them. The rate at which customers buy them, it forces us to constantly get fresh batches and fresh spices are so interesting as compared to old stale, not so fresh spices.

Tara: If you are in a different grocery store, check to see if there's dust on top of the spices, and I know that sounds silly, but the reality is in most stores, they have all the spices in the world, and some of them sit for months and months and months without really rotating through.

Matt: And I think what's most impressive about this is its aroma. When you open this little jar, you are like on the spice islands.

[Music transition.]

Tara: Well, let's move on to our Double Fold Bourbon Vanilla Extract with Vanilla Bean Seeds. So, it's a long title on a 3.55 fluid ounce bottle. The vanilla extract inside is incredibly intense.

Matt: And when you're talking about the level of intensity of a vanilla extractive, those levels are measured as folds. So, you have a single fold, double fold. You can even have a triple fold and what it gets down to, at the risk of oversimplifying it, it's the amount of extractives as compared to the amount of liquid. So, a double fold vanilla basically is the same amount, the same volume of liquid, as a single fold with twice the amount of extractives. Now to make things even that much more intense, this particular one has vanilla bean seeds in it, those classic little flecks of dark color throughout your pastry cream or the baked goods you're working on. So, this adds visual punch, aroma and flavor punch, you know, vanilla can be really expensive, and it stands to reason because it comes from a type of orchid. These are orchid flowers that turn into seed pods, and so vanilla is expensive. This is a great deal on what is often sort of a culinary level of vanilla or a professional. I'm excited for this. I'm excited to make whipped cream.

Tara: It's available now. We don't think that this will last all the way through to the end of the year. We bought as much as we could get this year.

[Music ends. Transition to Alison.]

Tara: Okay, ready?

Alison: Hello, hello, testing.

Tara: Next on our Fall Shopping List, I want candy.

[Light upbeat music begins.]

Matt: Yes, Bow Wow Wow recorded a very popular version in 1982. Interestingly, it only reached number 62 on the Billboard Hot 100.

Tara: Which is so weird because everyone knows that song. I think we should introduce Alison.

Matt: Alison is what we at Trader Joe's call the category manager for candy, which means according to her job description, she can take a sunrise, sprinkle it with dew, cover it with chocolate, and a miracle or two.

Tara: The candy category manager can.

Alison: Hi!

Matt: Alright, Alison, first question, let's get right to it. Do you mix it with love and make the world taste good?

Alison: Yes, I do.

Tara: You certainly do. I want to get right into one of the things coming back this year after a brief hiatus from our Halloween season shelves, Trader Joe's Halloween Gummies. Why were they gone? Why are they back?

Alison: Well, the reasons they were gone, well.

Matt: Let's go full candor. Candy candor...

Tara: Candy candor.

Matt: ...with Alison. Let's do it.

Alison: Really?

Tara: Yeah. Let's do it. Will we use it? I don't know, but let's do it.

Alison: Well, it went away because our supplier for this item had some production issues, and we want to make sure that all our items are as excellent as they possibly can be. So, we took it away for a little bit while we perfected it again, and it is now back perfect as it should be.

Matt: Now, how long were they gone? How many years or Halloween seasons?

Alison: The last season we had them was 2019.

Tara: I just, they're so soft. They're so juicy. They have so much flavor and there's 20 bags in this bag.

Alison: Mm-hmm.

Tara: Like they're great for giving out for Halloween treats, obviously, but such a great little snack. I mean, for those parents who put candy in their kid's lunchbox, you know, maybe you don't do it every day, but maybe it's like a sweet treat every now and then. There's like 70 calories in a little pack, and they're chewy, and they're yummy.

Matt: Twenty bags in a bag makes me understand this is, like, for passing out for Halloween. That's the intended use.

Tara: It's Halloween time.

Matt: Great, and could we get a little scary sound effect, please?

[Scary organ music, ghoulish laughter.]

Alison: Ooh, that's a little too scary.

[Music transition to upbeat Halloween music.]

Tara: Those are in stores. Like, those are in stores the beginning of September.

Alison: Yes.

Matt: So, probably stock up if you see them if you want them.

Tara: So, another thing that is kind of meant for passing out that is not a forever thing, but that is *new* this year, maybe one of my favorite product names ever, Trader Joe's Wicked Good Mini Chocolate Bars.

Alison: Yes, please.

Tara: Oaky.

Alison: When people have been asking me lately what I am most excited about in our holiday season in terms of candy, this is what I tell them.

Tara: Okay, why?

Alison: We have had many requests over the years for Halloween candy, chocolate Halloween candy. And the reason we didn't have it for so many years is we wanted to get it really right.

Tara: Mm-hmm.

Alison: And we think with this product, we did.

Matt: I think calling this Halloween candy is kind of selling it short. These are little chocolate bars, classic chocolate bars. How many flavors or how many different versions?

Tara: So, there are four.

Alison: Mm-hmm.

Tara: There's a nougat and caramel chocolate bar. There's a peanut and caramel chocolate bar, a caramel and wafer chocolate bar, and a nougat chocolate bar. So, they're really classic flavor combinations.

Matt: These are also, as you mentioned, intended to be handed out to trick-or-treaters, you could snack on them.

Tara: Yeah, I think it's great. I mean, there, how many bars are in here? Do we know how?

Alison: Twenty-four.

Tara: Oh, there it is, right on the bag, 24 pieces per bag.

Alison: Six of each flavor.

Tara: Okay.

Alison: And each flavor is a different color,...

Tara: Yup.

Alison: ...so that's easier to identify as well.

Tara: All the ingredients are on each of them, so you know, like, if you don't want to have peanuts, then you just, you know, might stay away from the one that has peanuts in it.

Matt: Or I will, just find it that much easier to eat all the peanut and caramel bars first.

Tara: Yeah.

Alison: Yes.

Tara: Yeah, me too. So, these are also in stores already beginning of September. Stock up while you see them because they are wicked good, and they will be wicked gone, right? At least until next year. Okay, Matt, what is next on our candy list?

[Music transition.]

Matt: This is not a new idea, but it's a fun revisitation on maple.

Tara: Mmm.

Matt: Maple flavored fudge, which is just a classic butter fudge with lots of maple flavor going on in there from actual maple syrup. And it's just a really interesting thing, but it's also a very specific version of fudge. This is like British butter fudge.

Tara: It is. It's actually made in England.

Matt: Literally from England.

Tara: Yeah. It's not like British butter fudge.

Matt: It is.

Tara: It is. Yeah, it's British Butter Fudge with Maple. You want to try some?

Matt: Yeah, I mean I've had this so this texturally speaking is very different from classic American chocolatey fudge. This is a little icy as you might say in the candy biz

jargon world of not so creamy, like a wonderfully sugary texture, lots of butter flavor, a little bit of saltiness. The maple comes through.

Tara: I want to like, (opening package) I want to open it, I want to try it. You can see it gets a little crumbly.

Alison: I mean they're made in traditional copper pans,...

Tara: Oh.

Alison: ...which is how they achieve that kind of special mouthfeel. And it's cooled for two days before it's cut because a lot of manufacturers have moved away from the copper kettles, but this is a traditional fudge maker that still uses them.

Tara: That's really delicious. It's very sweet so it's not something you're not going to eat a lot of in one sitting, but I imagine like a cup of tea and a good book. Oh, I'm, I'm like, I'm feeling fall, right.

Matt: It's cozy.

Tara: Yeah, that's really cozy.

Alison: It's also, it, because it's so sweet, I like to pair something like this with something salty. So, like crumbling it in some popcorn or with some pretzels or in some kind of mix like that.

Tara: Oh.

Matt: Just for a balanced meal. I like it.

Alison: Yeah (laughs). And the maple really comes through, too.

Tara: And sometimes maple is challenging as a flavor to really get it to pop. That really pops out. It's delicious. The day that this episode launches, this product becomes available, I think, in stores so, people should be able to get this right away and hopefully throughout the fall. But again, it's a limited availability item. Okay, we have one more thing we want to talk to you about, and that is the Cinnamon Sugar Toffee Trio.

[Music transition.]

Tara: And every time I say that, I, my brain wants to say coffee instead of toffee, even though I know it's toffee.

Alison: Our customers love toffee, let me say, we sell a lot of it especially in the fourth quarter, and one of our longstanding items is the English Toffee, the large canister. And we also have an individual bite version of that as well. And it has almonds on it. This is from the same supplier. They know their toffee, let me tell you. Actually, this is one of my favorite items. It's that buttery crunchy toffee, each piece is covered in either milk, dark, or white chocolate, and then it's then covered in cinnamon and sugar.

Matt: This is decidedly a snickerdoodle take on a toffee candy.

Alison: Yeah. That's a good way to put it.

Matt: The cinnamon feels like fall, but I think the cinnamon is great any time of year. Things like the Horchata Ice Cream and other cinnamon-y inflected treats have really clicked for customers so I'm hoping this does likewise.

Tara: I would like to try one of the white chocolate ones. I'm one of those weird people in the world who enjoys a good white chocolate.

Alison: I'm not especially a white chocolate person, and this is actually my favorite one in this trio. I think the cinnamon and sugar with the white chocolate pair really well. They're all delish, all three versions are very delicious in this even if you don't like white chocolate, don't be deterred from buying this because it's really good.

Tara: Yeah, this is an exciting fall in the candy division here. I mean,...

Matt: And there's so many other things too. We have a lot of treats.

Tara: There's a lot of candy stuff happening in early fall this year, so I think that's kind of exciting, it's a whole new candy season for us.

Matt: Yeah. All treats, no tricks. Alison, it's your new show.

Tara: (laughs)

Matt: Gonna run with it.

Alison: Treats are my life.

Tara: Use that line with your kids, actually.

Alison: Well, my daughter told me the other day that tasting candy is not a hard job, so.

Tara: Well, okay, well you know she...

Matt: Already it starts.

Alison: Yes.

[Music fades up during laughs. Music ends. Transition.]

Tara: Matt, let's move into the plants and flowers section.

[Light upbeat music begins.]

Matt: That section as you come up to your store, your Trader Joe's, and you see the plants and flowers, it often sets a temporal theme. So, it's the fall we're heading closer towards, Día de los Muertos, and you'll see sugar skulls.

Tara: Really vibrantly decorated, beautifully designed ceramic vessels, beautiful greens and foliage.

Matt: Coming out almost like a hairdo on top of the sugar skull, but this year a new round of designs on that sugar skull container. And this year you'll also see two related planters, so small containers or pots if you will, in the shape of either a dog or a cat for that Day of the Dead celebration with succulents, and these are really cute.

Tara: I have a couple of neighbors who've purchased multiple succulents from Trader Joe's in these decorative containers over the years and have replanted them in the fronts of their homes, and they are ginormous now.

Matt: Even if you don't feel like you have a green thumb, these are pretty easy to have great success.

Tara: Okay, I want to move on to something else that's I think is really fun, and that is the return, yet again, of Butternut Squash Mac and Cheese.

[Music transition.]

Matt: Wow, I mean, talk about something that is eagerly anticipated, awaited, and expected, it is this mac and cheese.

Tara: When we first brought this into the stores in fall of 2017, I don't think anybody expected it would be quite the hit that it became.

Matt: We can't get enough of this product. Now, this year we are working to have so much more than we've ever had. I have to be candid. I'm not sure it's enough still, but we'll see.

Tara: Buy a bunch, you know, if you need four or five at once, you can buy four or five at once. We have one other product that's in the freezer case that I want to call attention to because this one is new.

Matt: Oh yes, this is new.

Tara: This is new. It's 12 Mini Pumpkin Ginger Scones. Kind of self-explanatory, they do not need to be thawed or proofed or anything before you bake them. If you want two, you want to bake two, you can bake two. If you want to bake all 12, if you're having a bunch of people over, you can bake all 12, and I have a feeling that some people are going to be baking them in an air fryer, but they...

Matt: Oh, wait a minute. I mean, I know I'm like, you know, the, sort of, it's a cliché at this point, I'm the naysayer, but you, can you bake pastry in an air fryer?

Tara: Like you've said over and over again, an air fryer is just a convection oven by a different name.

Matt: Can I get a witness? I mean, yes!

Tara: So yes, people bake in the air fryer all the time. Rule of thumb, you cook them a little bit lower temperature and for a slightly shorter period of time, and you just kind of have to play with it. You know, we don't have air fryer instructions on this package, but they are really tasty crumbly classic scones with pumpkin and candy ginger.

Matt: And I'm so glad that you said classic. That's my favorite part of these scones. These are not iced, and they are not overly sweet. They would work really well with crème fraîche, clotted cream, a spoonful of pumpkin butter or fig butter for that matter. Man, if you had quick over the weekend neighbors pop over for, you know, just, you know, casual conversation, you could have fresh scones before something, I don't even know what, before they get antsy to leave. I mean, these are so easy.

Tara: Yeah, I mean really you can bake these scones in just a little bit longer than it will take you to brew a fresh pot of coffee.

Matt: Oh, so you could do them both.

Tara: Right? You know what's gonna taste good...

Matt: What?

Tara: ...with those scones? Chocolate Hazelnut Coffee.

Matt: I think it would work well because, you know, it's more about the aromas of chocolate and hazelnut. It is not a sweetened thing.

Tara: No.

Matt: I think that it would be a fun mash up of flavors, so I want to try this.

Tara: Yeah, to be clear, we are talking about Trader Joe's Chocolate Hazelnut Ground Coffee that should be arriving in stores right about now for a limited time. We do all kinds of limited availability coffees, and this is one of the latest ones. It's already ground.

Matt: And there's a reason why we brought this in. We hear from customers that they would like to see this. We certainly didn't invent this flavor combo, but this is a particularly fantastic expression of the idea. I can just smell it now.

Tara: We've done candy, grocery, plants, and flowers.

Matt: I think it's always time for a salad.

[Music transition.]

Matt: So, let's take a stroll over to the produce area, the refrigerated produce area, to see Trader Joe's Avocado Ranch Salad Kit. Now this is a complete salad kit. It even says so right on the bag. So, you get all the chopped veg components. You get some crunchy bits, corn chips, a little bit of cheddar cheese and a delicious creamy avocado ranch dressing. All together, separated out, ready to go when you feel like tossing that salad.

Tara: It is a complete salad kit. It's in the name. But you can still add stuff to it.

Matt: Oh gosh, yeah.

Tara: So, if you want to add protein to your salad, go for it. Add your favorite protein. I personally love adding chicken to these kinds of salads, but every now and then in this kind of a salad, thinly sliced steak cooked exactly the way you like it is a phenomenal addition.

Matt: I would actually go with that grass fed sliced sirloin, that precooked ready to go steak that we have. It is a perfect salad cut. You could take one of those blocks of baked tofu, chop that guy up and put 'em in there. That would be good too.

Tara: Yeah, really yummy. The next product we want to talk about is Honeycrisp Apple Granola. It is delicious.

Matt: Just right out of the bag as is. It's a really nice breakfast. It is sweet. It's a granola. Honey crisp apples as far as apple varieties go, those are sweet apples too. But it

has a lot of nice apple flavor, which sounds almost silly to say, but is important to mention here. This actually tastes like apple.

Tara: You want it with milk, like a breakfast cereal? You can do that. You want to mix it in with yogurt so, you, you know, you get a slightly different texture flavor combination. You can do that.

Matt: And just around for the fall. If it finds favor with you, then maybe it'll return. But for right now, it's a fall only product.

[Transition. Music transition.]

Tara: We have this great new skincare item that we've called the Honey Hydration Day and Night Cream Duo. So, we've gone from Honey Crisp Apples to Honey Hydration Day and Night Cream Duo.

Matt: There's the through line.

Tara: The package for this product is adorable. It's yellow and white and it's got bees all over it and it's sort of, what's the shape? 1 2 3 4 5 6.

Matt: It's a hexagon.

Tara: It's a hexagonal shaped box and inside are two hexagonal shaped glass jars with wooden tops.

Matt: That hexagonal shape is a reference to the chambers or cells within honeycomb, the things that bees make to store honey. So, really shout out to Trader Joe's Designer Kalen, great job on this.

Tara: Yesterday when I noticed this on my desk, this sample, I was so excited, and I opened up the box and I was so sad because the jars were empty.

Matt: It's just a mockup.

Tara: I got empty jars. It's a mockup of what the product is going to look like when it shows up on our shelves right about now.

Matt: And it's a day and night cream. So, I guess you use one in the morning, one in the evening, both creams, day and night, are made with Manuka honey. There's the honey.

Tara: In addition to the Manuka honey, it has hyaluronic acid and ceramides in it. And then the night cream has shea butter, Manuka honey, and sea buckthorn cause winter can be really harsh on your skin.

Matt: Got it. So, heading into winter.

Tara: They smell good, they feel good, they feel really light on your skin.

Matt: And I think this would just make such a nice gift.

Tara: And like all of our skincare products, they're really well priced and if you compare to anything similar you might find elsewhere, you'd kind of be shocked that we're offering such a great.

Matt: Ain't that the true.

[Transition. Music ends.]

Tara: We're nearing the home stretch here, Matt. Let's go to the refrigerated case.

[Light upbeat music begins.]

Tara: You want to do dinner before dessert, or you want to do dessert first? Let's do dessert first.

Matt: All right, the meal in reverse. This is an All-Butter Sugar Cookie Dough, basic classic, don't let that fool you. This is made with wonderful butter. It's very tasty.

Tara: But I want to read the ingredient listing on this product. Flour, sugar, butter, water, eggs, vanilla extract, vanilla bean, leavening, and sea salt. That's it. And the reason I wanted to read that is because this is the reason why this is our first foray into a slice and bake cookie dough. Most of them are filled with ingredients that we don't allow in our products. So, finding a vendor who could make what we would refer to as a clean product, with the kinds of ingredients that we allow in our products that tasted as good as this does, it took a long time.

Matt: It did. It did.

Tara: And that one should be in stores basically about now, so,...

Matt: Oh good.

Tara: ...you know, and we'll have it in stores as long as we can keep it around, right? I mean, that's the idea. It's a limited item, but we ordered a lot of this.

Matt: I think it's going to be great.

[Music transition.]

Tara: Here's another one. This is also new. For years we have sold a Pumpkin Ravioli during the fall season. This year, we have a Gluten Free Pumpkin Ravioli. And gluten free pasta, especially gluten free fresh pasta, if you can make it taste good, you've got a big winner on your hands with those gluten free customers.

Matt: I think you'd be hard pressed if you were just served this to understand or even realize that it's gluten free. It's really nice on the texture front.

Tara: It's a squash and cheese play here, right?

Matt: Mm-hmm.

Tara: So, it has ricotta cheese, it has kabocha squash and pumpkin and parmesan cheese. I mean, it's savory, it's really delicious. It'll appeal to folks who do buy gluten free products, but for those who don't normally, and they would like a more savory take on a pumpkin ravioli, this one really fits.

Matt: It does. It does. Okay, let's move on to those appetizers.

Tara: Do you want me to get those dips so we can try them?

Matt: We've got a couple of dips, and I'm not talking about the hosts.

Tara: I got to run to the kitchen and pull them out of the microwave.

Matt: Great.

Tara: Okay, I'll be right back.

Matt: Great. You have to have like a run sound effect. Like, phew (running feet to kitchen and returning) and like sound like she's going up like a flight of stairs, down a flight of stairs, into the basement.

Tara: (returning) Okay. They just so happen last time I was in the kitchen; they just so happen to have been setting up a Q&A tasting for some chips and crackers, so I just stole some. So, that worked out well. So, I'm back from the kitchen. I got the dips. Here we go. This is pretty awesome. We have not done this before. We have two refrigerated dips that are as opposed to other dips we have in our refrigerated case that are in meant to be eaten cold,...

Matt: Like hummus.

Tara: Yeah, or like spinach dip,...

Matt: Yeah.

Tara: ...salsas, hummus, those kinds of things, these are...

Matt: Hot dips.

Tara: ...hot dips. They're meant to be served hot.

Matt: So how was the prep?

Tara: Two minutes in the microwave.

Matt: They're really wonderfully aromatic.

Tara: They really are.

Matt: Just like, it just smells like a hot cheese situation.

Tara: So, the first one is Garlic and Asiago Cheese Dip, and that one's coming into the stores around the end of September. The other one is Roasted Hatch Chili and Jalapeño Cheese Dip. And that one is scheduled to arrive in stores probably sometime early mid-October.

Matt: And if you can make sense of that, drop us a line and clue us in.

Tara: (laughs) So, I have some pita chips here. First, I'm going to try the one that's not spicy. Ooh.

Matt: So, this is your Garlic and Asiago Cheese Dip.

Tara: This is garlic and asiago Cheese. It is delightfully cheesy. Here we go.

Matt: It's like all the goodness of garlic bread as a dip.

Tara: What's in that?

Matt: It's good.

Tara: That's really good.

Matt: It is like loaded with dairy stuff. So, lots of sour cream, lots of cheese.

Tara: Mm-hmm. The cheese is made with what are called microbial enzymes. So appropriate for vegetarians who still eat cheese.

Matt: Man, as like an entertaining thing, it doesn't get much easier than that.

Tara: Let's try the other one. Roasted Hatch Chili and Jalapeño Cheese Dip has sliced jalapeños on top.

Matt: And some diced jalapeños throughout. Um, you know, not as spicy as I was expecting, and yet, absolutely full of that pepper flavor, the jalapeño pepper flavor. And a cheddar-y taste. Classic annatto or sort of the orange cheddar. That's good.

Tara: Mmm. Yeah, that's really good. That one has sharp cheddar. What else is in there?

Matt: Sour cream, sharp cheddar cheese, cream cheese, you've got some hatch, green chili peppers, and jalapeño peppers, and then a bunch of seasonings like garlic.

Tara: So, not super spicy, but it does have a kick.

Matt: Yeah.

Tara: I'm glad we saved those for last, actually, cause that was a really good way to end.

Matt: Good way to end the show, great way to start an evening with some friends.

Tara: Wow.

Matt: I can't believe this podcast is over already.

[Transition to close. Closing music begins.]

Tara: I know. Well, there'll be another one soon. So, 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.