

# Inside Trader Joe's Podcast Transcript — Episode 48: Spring Shopping List

*[Birds chirping.]*

Tara: Mmmmm. Do you smell that, Matt?

*[Spring music begins]*

Matt: Oh yes. Spring is in the air.

Tara: No, that's Trader Joe's Grapefruit Scented Candle.

Matt: Oh.

Tara: But it is that time of year. Time for our spring shopping list episode.

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

*[Spring music ends. 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: The grapefruit candle is just one of a long list of new and returning items for spring.

Matt: This smells to me more like a Ruby Red Grapefruit than say an Oro Blanco. It's wonderful.

Tara: It just smells clean and springy to me.

*[Theme music ends. Light music begins.]*

Matt: It's just about the middle of March and you know, March 18th, the full moon for March, it's known as the Worm Moon, which I've always thought as kind of like a less than great name, but that's really from old farmers Almanac kind of take when the soil thaws just enough for earthworms to move around. But some people call it the Crow Moon, the Crust Moon, the Sap Moon. What a sap! It's the full moon and that's gonna lead us right into that vernal equinox, of course, March 20th, the first day of spring.

Tara: Woo hoo!

Matt: I'm ready for spring thoughts and spring products. So let's get into it. Where to start? There's so much stuff.

Tara: Hey, let's give the wheel a spin.

*[Spinning wheel begins and continues under.]*

Tara: Let's goooo frozen!

Matt: Candy, candy!

Tara: Oh, wine would be good!

Matt: Candy, candy. Yes!

*[Wheel slows down almost to a stop.]*

Matt: Candy.

*[One last click.]*

Tara: Nope. Dog treat.

Matt: Well to a dog this is practically candy.

Tara: The new Trader Joe's Grain Free Cheeseburger Flavor Dog Treats. Really, like, what dog doesn't want a cheeseburger? But these are crunchy cheeseburgers, which I guess for a dog is great.

Matt: I mean, this is so cute. It's, like, shaped like a little cheeseburger.

Tara: Before I left my house this morning, I gave one of these to each of my dogs. They each went in a different direction to eat their treats so that I wouldn't take it back and they wouldn't try to steal from each other.

Matt: Grain free treats. Is that important?

Tara: There is definitely a trend in the dog food and dog treat world to not use grains because there are a lot of dogs who have grain allergies, you know, who have wheat allergies or corn allergies. And then there are just some folks who don't want to give grain to their dog for whatever reason that might be. I have not actually tasted these treats. Have you, Matt?

Matt: You know, I haven't tasted these treats, but I am a fan of the Cheeseburger Burrito.

Tara: Oh, so that's kind of the human equivalent of the Cheeseburger Flavor Dog Biscuit.

*[Wheel spins again.]*

Matt: Candy. Come on. Candy.

Tara: Wine. Let's go. Wine.

Matt: Candy.

*[Wheel stops.]*

Tara: Frozen. From the freezer case.

Matt: The frozen aisle is such a fun place to bump into new products. Four little cheese pastry rolls. These cheese pastries. Think of this as the greatest cheese Danish you might ever have.

Tara: Yeah, it's flaky, kind of like a croissant.

Matt: Flaky, yes. Like a croissant.

Tara: Should we try them?

Matt: We should.

Tara: Okay, the hardest thing about this is gonna just be eating a bit of this and not the whole thing right now. There is a little sweetness on the outside of the dough. The inside is really flaky, but it has that nice creamy cream cheesy filling.

Matt: And there's a brightness, there's a little tartness in the filling that kind of cuts through. This is a rich treat, right? So you have the cheese filling, you have that laminated dough that is very rich. It's textually light and it's full of delicious fats.

Tara: Okay, so this one...

Matt: (laughing)

Tara: ... it's actually...

Matt: Full of delicious fats! My new show.

Tara: (laughing) Fats with Matt!

Matt: But you need that little bit of tartness to cut through that, um, to keep it light on the pallet and man that's tasty. That would be fantastic with a cup of coffee.

Tara: This one's a little bit of a tease right now because it's coming into the stores sort of mid-April.

Matt: Simple, easy, and they're delicious.

*[Light music changes.]*

Tara: What else? Another really cool pastry type frozen treat that we call Portuguese Custard Tarts. But in Portugal they are called... Matt?

Matt: Well, if you're talking about one, it's a Pastel de Nata. If you're talking about several, pastéis would be the plural of that or some approximation of that pronunciation. Apologies, actual Portuguese speakers out there. We had these for the briefest of moments last year and they just came, went, I couldn't even find them at my store.

Tara: No, me either.

Matt: If you've just come back from Portugal, you're probably thinking about, or have actually experienced this custard tart. It is classic. It is so typical of Portuguese bakeries. It's just really incredible, talk about armchair traveling, and you can get the actual thing, really made in Portugal at Trader Joe's. They're small. They're in cute little tiny...they look like little tiny pie pans.

Tara: I wanna try it out.

Matt: Hmm. That's really good.

Tara: A simple custard inside a simple flaky crust but you put those simple things together and something extraordinary happens.

Matt: Oh, and if you have a small head, you could use a little pie pan as a hat to protect yourself from all the wavelengths.

Tara: (laughs) It's a tinfoil hat for your cat.

Matt: Totally. It'd be cute.

Tara: This one is a spring-only special item in our freezers.

Matt: Okay.

Tara: It should start arriving in stores between the middle of March and early April, depending on where you are in the country, because you know, it's coming from Portugal, it's gotta get around the world. So it might take a little while to get to where you are, but rest assured it will at some point this spring. I really like those.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: We have one more frozen product to share.

*[Light upbeat music begins.]*

Tara: It's a lemon ice cream that we're calling When Life Gives You Lemons, Make Ice Cream.

Matt: This was multiple, multiple iterations and some frustration and heartache along the way for the person working on this. But we wound up with something really, really special. It started out as a, dare I say, very basic lemon ice cream. And conceptually, while that's a thing, gelato al limone in Italy, for example, that's a thing around the world, many of the tasting panel panelists felt like it just didn't connect. So we went back and we were thinking about, does it need a crunchy thing? Does it need a little bit of salt? Does it need like a lemon curd swirl? Could we have pieces of lemon zest in it? And we wound up with just about all of that in there.

Tara: So it's sweet and it's tart and it's creamy and it's got texture and it's delicious. I think people are really gonna really gonna like this one.

Matt: I hope so. And when you pick it up, which I hope you do, you might notice that it's heavy. For those of you keeping score at home, ice cream is sold by volume, not by weight. So a lot of ice cream in the general marketplace makes great use of what is known as overrun, where they whip air into the ice cream to actually have less of the dense, real stuff and more air to fill up the space. So not all ice creams are created equal. If you go to another crazy big box type store with lots of different types of ice cream, I won't mind cuz it's not our store, open that freezer case and just do a little check among all the different brands of ice cream. They weigh different amounts and the ice cream tubs, those little pint tubs in our store are quite heavy, on purpose.

Tara: When Life Gives You Lemons Ice Cream should be out around the very beginning of spring. Late March this one will arrive in stores and it is a limited edition ice cream. We rotate flavors through our frozen case so that we can so that we can have a variety.

Matt: Do you want to continue with lemony stuff?

Tara: Sure. Lemon.

Matt: Lemon.

*[Music ends.]*

Matt: I think it's in stores right at this moment.

*[Light upbeat music begins.]*

Matt: It's a ravioli. A filled ravioli filled with ricotta and lemon zest. It's actually made in Italy. The lemons are grown on Sicily, so it's kind of fun. Sicily is a fantastic producer of citrus and lemons in particular and really wonderful pasta. I like this dressed up very, very simply just with olive oil, maybe a little bit of shaved cheese, but in addition to that, or maybe even instead of that, I like a great big handful of some fresh bitter greens. Maybe some arugula, maybe a little bit of one of the members of the chicory family, you know, you're kind of thinking radicchio. That bitterness pairs so nicely with this lemon ricotta filling.

Tara: When I have prepared these at home, I have done that very simple preparation with really good olive oil, just a little bit of that over the top and a whole bunch of cracked black pepper on the ravioli, which is kind of a similar eating experience. That's a really good idea. I'm gonna try that.

Matt: Yeah, yeah. Either way.

Tara: I wanna also just clarify, make clear, this is not frozen. This is in the refrigerator. So you know where we have all those fresh pasta options. This is where you'll find the Lemon Ricotta Ravioli. Okay then, what's next?

*[Wheel is spun. But just a few seconds in, it stops abruptly, as if someone reached out and stopped it.]*

Tara: Oh, look it landed on snacks.

Matt: I think this is fixed.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: Well, I'm gonna give you a fix of some really good snacks right now.

*[Upbeat music begins.]*

Tara: Trader Joe's Sour Cream & Onion Flavored Lentil & Rice Snacks Rings. They're like little onion rings, but they're crispy and they're snacks and they come in a bag and they are...

Matt: Can you say the name again?

Tara: Yeah, but the name is weird. Trader Joe's Sour Cream & Onion Flavored Rings Lentil & Rice Snacks.

Matt: Sounds like recess on the space station.

Tara: So I'm gonna open the bag. (bag rustling) Oh my God. They smell, okay, they smell like buttered popcorn.

Matt: Whoa.

Tara: Don't they?

Matt: Yeah. That's like, you're like waiting, waiting, waiting to get in to see *Empire Strikes Back*.

Tara: Right? I'm gonna try. (crunching) Those are really good.

Matt: What starts off smelling like a dairy butter component becomes more sour cream like when you actually taste them. Very oniony, in a wonderful way.

Tara: And they're gluten free.

Matt: You know, a lot of things like this in the wider world are made out of corn or potato, very light starchy things. These rings, our rings, made with lentils and rice, they have a different, slightly more toothsome texture. They've got a little seriousness to them. I like that.

Tara: Serious. They are serious snacks.

Matt: You seriously get busy on this bag.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: But if you were going to a polo match or something and you needed to bring a snack, these would be perfect.

Tara: Total polo match appropriate. What else is in our snack section, Matt?

Matt: You know something else that you need to keep your eyes peeled for, when we name products we're trying to do a lot of work to really convey, like what is it that someone might expect? So we have Fancy Cheese Crunchies. Well, what on earth does that mean? These are Classic Cheese Crunchies Enhanced with Truffle. One of our product developers was out scouring the world, as she often does, looking for great things. She came across this producer's truffle cheese crunchy, brought them back. We all flipped out and we're pretty excited to have these coming to you, to your Trader Joe's.

*[Music changes.]*

Tara: Hey Matt, I'm looking at a new salad dressing that we are about to have on shelves. It's an Organic Poppy Seed Dressing. It's coming at the very beginning of April and I'm super excited about this dressing, cuz it's a real sort of standard salad dressing that you find in a lot of grocery stores and we've never sold it because we've never been able to find one that used the types of ingredients that we allow to be used in our products and still tasted the way you expect it to taste.

Matt: People will probably put this on just about everything. I think, fruit. We're heading into the time of year where you're gonna start to see more and more berries and hopefully some stone fruit pretty soon. And this would be great on peaches and nectarines, in a salad.

Tara: Yeah. I have a summertime salad recipe that has fresh strawberries and it has, um, like slivered almonds and it calls for a homemade poppy seed dressing so I've always just made my own. But I think that I will probably take the shortcut from here on out. My understanding is it will be around like sort of spring and summerish.

Matt: Okay, so if you're interested, if you see it, grab it.

Tara: Yeah.

*[Music switches to more upbeat music.]*

Tara: Should we spin the wheel again?

Matt: Let's don't and say we did.

Tara: Matt, I wanna go to a product that is not edible. This is the newest addition into the very limited, but really high quality line of skin care products that we have in our stores. And this is a Retinol Night Serum. How would you use this, Matt?

Matt: Well, probably at night when no one would notice me using it.

Tara: (chuckles)

Matt: And then the next morning they'd be like, "God, he looks so fresh."

Tara: Calling it a night serum is very intentional because you don't really want to use retinol products if you're gonna be outside in the sun.

Matt: Oh, okay.

Tara: Retinol is, um, it's a form of Vitamin A.

Matt: This is made with baobab tree seed oil.

Tara: I am gonna, um, just sort of open up the jar a little bit. It's kind of like a milky liquid, uh, a little thicker, but it's a white, it really smells pleasant.

Matt: It smells like you care.

Tara: It smells like you care? What does that mean?

Matt: It smells like you're worth it. It smells like you're gonna take some 'me time' and get...

Tara: ...and go to sleep. I think the folks who hear this, who hear that we have a retinol serum will be like, "Oh my gosh, I can't believe that." Because they'll know that the price is awesome, because that's what we do.

Matt: Having a nighttime routine is important to getting good deep sleep so I'm on board with that.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: Hey Matt, guess what it's time for now?

Matt: Candy? Really?

Tara: Yes!

*[Light music begins.]*

Tara: We have a couple of returning candy products that are spring season only and one of them looks quite different this year. And that is the Springle Jangle. Last year Springle Jangle made its first appearance in the store and it was in a little yellow canister and we just didn't feel like there was enough space there to really let this product shine through and show everyone what it had to offer. So this year it's in a bigger yellow bag with a resealable top.

Matt: If you've ever been to Monet's house in Giverny outside of Paris, his dining room walls are almost this yellow.

Tara: It's sort of a spring take on Jingle Jangle which remains one of our most popular holiday season products. There's little pretzels drizzled with yogurt and there are little nonpareils with brightly colored sprinkles. There's Dark Chocolate Joe Joe's Cookie Bark, Butter Toffee Peanuts, Milk Chocolate Peanut Butter Cups.

Matt: I love those Butter Toffee Peanuts.

Tara: And the Butter Toffee Peanuts are the ones...we carry these in the fall, in their own bag, right?

Matt: Why I hope so. Now I'm drawing a complete peanut blank on that.

Tara: Yeah, we do. We carry these in the fall. I thought we did.

Matt: I need to use a lifeline.

*[Calling...phone ringing.]*

Tara: Butter Toffee Peanuts. (crunching)

*[Phone call is answered.]*

Phone Voice: Hello, Katherine speaking.

Matt: Katherine, it's Matt. Do you have just a quick second?

Phone Voice: Yeah, sure.

Matt: Okay, thanks. Well actually, you are being recorded and because we're in California, I do need to make you aware of that from a legal perspective, but I'm on the podcast and I need some help. Are we gonna have Butter Toffee Peanuts?

Phone Voice: Butter Toffee Peanuts? That sounds amazing. So they were discontinued in 2020.

Matt: Oh.

Phone Voice: They came in a canister.

Matt: Okay, any other good news for me?

Phone Voice: (laughs) I wish I did have more good news for you.

Matt: All right. We've got a show to do Katherine, so I'm gonna have to end this call.

Phone Voice: I know, I know. Get to it.

Matt: All right, talk to you later.

Phone Voice: All right, bye.

Tara: Okay, I'm sorry I sent you on a wild peanut chase.

Matt: They were discontinued.

Tara: They were dis... they were so good.

Matt: And that friends is Springle Jangle, so that's coming soon.

Tara: It does have Butter Toffee Peanuts and they are delicious. The other candy item we have coming back is this Pinks and Whites Dark Chocolate Bar. It is a beautiful chocolate bar. So it comes in a box. It's a bar that is in a box. I'm just gonna open it really quickly because it's so pretty to look at.

Matt: So everyone can show, oh, see everybody?

Tara: Oh, see that? It looks beautiful. Um, it really is. It really is so pretty.

Matt: It's like three life preserver rings floating on a chocolate ocean.

Tara: That's exactly what it looks like.

Matt: If you're having a spring gathering, and instead of like a normal dessert setup, maybe make like a little chocolate board.

Tara: Yeah. We have that great video on our YouTube channel, "How to Make A "Choc-uterie" Board," which is super fun and really cute. This would be a great addition to that kind of a presentation.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: We are reaching the home stretch of this spring shopping list episode, and there is one more sweet treat. It is the Spring Cupcake Mix.

*[Upbeat music begins.]*

Tara: It will be on store shelves at the beginning of April.

Matt: It looks like an egg hunt in cupcake form.

Tara: Yeah.

Matt: So if you are going out trying to find eggs on the lawn, this is sort of the cupcake version of that. Now this is a do it yourself project...

Tara: Totally.

Matt: ...that has almost everything that you need in that little box. But what you're gonna wind up with are wonderful cupcakes with a nice green frosting and little chocolate eggs, little chocolate caramel eggs, even better. And they're speckled eggs. They looked almost like little Robins eggs.

Tara: You know, if you're making, say you have to make, um, a sweet treat for your kids' classroom or you're having some friends over for a brunch...

Matt: If you wanted to make a great first impression, like you're gonna go on a blind date, you could make this and bring it to that person.

Tara: Wow. That's a lot of effort for a blind date.

Matt: You get no second chance on the first impression.

*[Music ends.]*

Matt: All right. I think it's time to wash this all down with a little Sparkling White Tea with Pomegranate Juice.

*[Slower softer music begins.]*

Tara: Now you might recall our Sparkling Black Tea with Peach. You might even be familiar with our Sparkling Green Tea with Pineapple. The next variation on that theme is the Sparkling White Tea, white tea, of course, is a younger, not fermented tea with a softer, subtle flavor. It does have some caffeine, not as much as other types of tea. This is ready to go, really cute little four pack of cans here.

Tara: (popping can open) This is absolutely delicious. I just took a sip of it. This little can, 8.45 ounce skinny can, is 10 calories. There's, I mean, come on now.

Matt: (popping can open) I like that a lot. This feels like it's refreshing, um, and incredibly easy to drink. I feel now that someone will say this would be great as a mixer or something. I'm sure you could make something.. that pomegranate flavor makes me think of a lower impact Cosmopolitan. I think this is just great as it is out of the can.

*[Music ends.]*

Tara: Matt, we have come to the end of our list and lucky us, the end of the list is all about wine.

Light music begins.]

Tara: Do you wanna do the Mur-lut?

Matt: Sure.

*[Bottle popping open. Pouring, glasses clinking behind dialogue.]*

Matt: Only special wines make it into this Reserve Label. It's from the Napa Valley in California, more specifically, it's the Oak Knoll district, which is an AVA, which is an American Viticultural Area. This is at the southern end of the Napa Valley and it's actually the floor of the Napa Valley. And the floor has different growing and climatological aspects to it as compared to the walls or sides of the valley so this is a Merlot. It's a Merlot and you'd say, "Wait a minute, I thought Merlot wasn't cool." Merlot is fantastic and everyone loves Merlot, but everyone recently has been drinking them as "red blends." We're so confident and excited about this wine, we're using that Merlot word. And so this is a 2020 Oak Knoll District Napa Valley Merlot under that Trader Joe's Reserve Label.

Tara: Okay, well I have one that I love too.

*[Bottle popping open. Pouring, glasses clinking behind dialogue.]*

Tara: And it is also a Trader Joe's Reserve. This one is a Pinot Noir from the Edna Valley AVA, again, AVA meaning American Viticultural Area so an area where grapes are grown and the Edna Valley is really small. It is along the central coast of California, south of the town of San Luis Obispo and north of the town of Arroyo Grande. It's a really great place to grow Pinot Noir grapes because of the breezes coming off the coast and they have warm days and cool nights. I think it's a nice sort of classic example of a California central coast Pinot Noir.

Matt: All right, let's give this wheel one more spin.

Tara: No, there's no more spinning.

*[Closing music begins.]*

Tara: That's the spring shopping list. I hope everybody was taking notes. Of course, you'll also find these items listed in the show notes on your podcast app. And speaking of that, please leave us a rating and a review.

Matt: Now does that require me typing with my thumbs?

Tara: And be sure to 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.