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Copa di Vino founder James Martin offers single-serving wine

By **Laura Petrecca, USA TODAY** Updated d|

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p class="firstParagraph">A ride on a European bullet train has turned James Martin's life into a bit of a roller coaster.

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Janice E. Pierce Video & Photo
James Martin, with his selection of wines.

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James Martin, with his selection of wines.

He seeks high-quality distributors. He also needs to find affordable material for the plastic cups he produces. Employees and his family help, but his to-do list still overflows.

"We have all kinds of challenges," he says. One of the most pressing is raising capital. Martin isn't quite sure how to go about that in the best manner.

He recently appeared on the ABC reality show *Shark Tank*, in which entrepreneurs pitch ideas to potential investors. He was offered an investment in the single-serve technology. He didn't want to separate that from the wine side of the business, so he declined.

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While in France to celebrate his 20th wedding anniversary, Martin and his wife, Molli, hopped a high-speed train. There, **The Dalles, Ore.**, winery owner discovered something that intrigued him: wine sold in individually packaged glasses.

The concept was brilliant, he thought. By packaging single servings, it was just a one-step process to drink — remove the cover and sip. There is no separate glass needed as there is for those who open a small bottle of wine, he says. And those who only want to drink a few ounces don't have to worry about the rest of a bottle going to waste
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Since then, Martin's days have been packed with non-stop activity. He returned to Europe to learn more about how he could replicate that packaging in the U.S.

He experimented with producing cost-effective plastic glasses, and worked to create a strong seal that would keep the wine from spilling or spoiling.

Things have calmed down a bit since his official launch of Copa Di Vino in 2010, "but I still run 14 hours a day," says Martin, 47. "You wake up, and it's a marathon each day."

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