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Copa di Vino

If you take your pouch to the beach, you'll need to pack some kind of wine glasses, er, cups. A new, winery-based enterprise in The Dalles, Ore., aims to answer that need. Copa di Vino was launched last year by James Martin, owner of Quenett Winery and Silver Salmon Cellars.

Copa di Vino was inspired by wine packaging that's been in use aboard France's

bullet train for the past six years. Martin worked with the company that developed these single-serving glass packages to come up with a resealable, unbreakable PET plastic goblet: Copa di Vino holds 187ml.

After designing and building a bottling line in France, Martin has installed it in his winery in Oregon: a refurbished 9-story flourmill beside the Columbia River at the "gateway" to The Dalles. After bottling the



equivalent of 2,000 cases in France, he's now filling the Copas with his own, high-end varietal wines retailing for \$3.99: about the same price per serving as a \$16, 750ml bottle. So far, they are available only in the Pacific Northwest, at Whole Foods and New Seasons markets and several specialty stores and golf courses.

Although they are available in two-, six- and 12-packs, Martin insists that single-serve, ready-to-drink (RTD) glasses of wine are the wave of the future. "Consumers are afraid of a \$20 bottle," he says. Buying it by the glass, he hopes, will encourage shoppers to try his wines. "In the marketplace, we're selling singles."

He's improved the original package by developing a new screening process that leaves the goblets permanently marked with the brand. Since they are reusable, this will likely keep the winery brand on consumer tables for more than a single use. "A lot of my friends are using them for sippy cups," Martin says. "We're proud if people are reusing our package." He claims that the shelf life of Copa-packaged wines is up to one year.

Martin has no intention of keeping the Copas to himself. His bottling line is mobile, and he's more than willing to take it to other Northwest or California wineries. Something of an evangelist for wines in RTD, "We want to make premium wine more accessible. We're looking to bottle for the industry," he says.

J.F.

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