

Small Eats, Big Chill on the Go

Portable cooler offers advantages, features beyond other similar products **BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN**

fitFridge comes with a Transportation Security Administration-approved ice gel pack, a leak-proof container for dressings, sauces or nuts and seeds.

A portable chiller just for snacks? I'm in! If, for example, you're taking a stroll or running errands, you may not want to take along a bulky cooler or one of those square, insulated lunchboxes. If you like to travel light but, like me, don't prefer to pay premium prices at the convenience store, fitFridge is an attractive, compact, lightweight, easily portable cooler that fits—for example—a few string cheeses, a bunch of cut veggies, or even some chocolate candies.

Inventor Cyndi Nadeau of Bethany, Connecticut, shares her story.

Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): Please tell us about your background and whether you've invented anything before.

Cyndi Nadeau (CN): I am married. I have one daughter and one grown stepdaughter. I invented one previous product.

EGT: What materials are used to make fitFridge?

CN: EVA (ethylene vinyl acetate) with aluminum insulation.

EGT: What are the special features? Why and how is it different from all other similar, smaller cooler bags?

CN: fitFridge was originally designed for small, healthy snacks. It is small and compact but also sleek and modern-looking. It can also be used to keep medications chilled on the go (insulin, GLP-1s and peptides).

fitFridge comes with a Transportation Security Administration-approved ice gel pack, a leak-proof container for dressings, sauces or nuts and seeds. You can also find a nutrition tracker to track to your macros.

It also has two pockets and dual straps to hold snacks and the ice gel pack. It is thoughtfully designed and attractive.

EGT: How was the prototyping process? How long did it take until you reached production quality?

CN: I attempted several variations of the interior of the container, as well as different sizes and shapes of containers, and designed until I felt I found the best design to hold the greatest number of snacks. I also tested many ice gel



“I attempted several variations of the interior of the container, as well as different sizes and shapes of containers, and designed until I felt I found the best design to hold the greatest number of snacks.” —CYNDI NADEAU



packs to be able to choose one that fit appropriately in the case and lasted a long time. The process took about 17 months.

EGT: What type of market research have you done for this category of product?

CN: My last product was also an original design but only held one snack, so fitFridge is really an extension of that original product. I knew there was a market based on the first product's market performance.

EGT: Are you manufacturing in the United States, or overseas? Please share your experiences.

CN: I am manufacturing overseas. I tried to find a U.S. manufacturer, but most are not interested in startup productions for entrepreneurs and also have very high minimum-order quantities.

EGT: Because this is a food-grade invention, is Food and Drug Administration certification or government testing required?

CN: Neither was required.

EGT: You've been featured on Grommet. How was that experience?

CN: I launched my previous product, as well as fitFridge, on Grommet. Grommet is very supportive of product launches because they are built for inventors trying to break into the market. I had a very strong launch!

EGT: How are you handling PR?

CN: By establishing brand trust through consistency in social media posts, tone, and marketing materials. fitFridge has good reviews on the website. I am currently searching for influencers. I just launched on March 12, 2026, so it is a work in progress.

EGT: Have you had any product development or production problems?

CN: I sourced this product myself by finding manufacturers through Alibaba. I ordered a lot of samples to test and test again during the prototype phase.

When it came time for the initial order, I had to coordinate between three manufacturers. And, of course, there were minor issues such as not having a preferred color available. There were a lot of early mornings and late nights!

EGT: Any words of support for novice inventors?

CN: Please find as much support from other inventors as you can! I tried to go it alone with the last product, and that was a mistake. This can be a lonely space, so you need like-minded people to speak with but also to offer advice, and with whom to bounce off ideas.

Also, most of us are good at a couple of things, so we need help with the things that are not our “specialty” (i.e., marketing, accounting, pitching your product, contract negotiations, etc.). There are many inventor groups to get involved in, either via social media or virtual meetings, as well as local, in-person groups. 🍷

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Edith G. Tolchin has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000 (edietolchin.com/portfolio). She is the author of several books, including “Secrets of Successful Women Inventors” (<https://a.co/d/fAGlvZJ>) and “Secrets of Successful Inventing” (<https://a.co/d/8dafJd6>).

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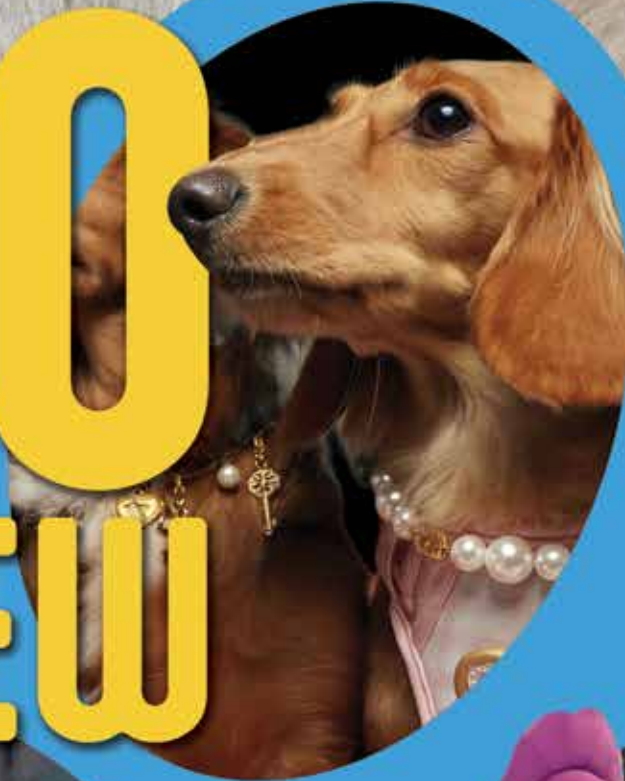
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