A protective cover for providing a novel and effective means of protecting cookware from damage and that eliminates or reduces the likelihood that cookware will be damaged during storage. The cover comprises two opposite faces permanently joined together to form an inner cavity with an opening extending along part of the common edge to allow insertion and extraction of the cookware. The cavity having at least two compartments therein for allowing separate parts of the cookware to be stored.
COOKWARE HAVING A PROTECTIVE COVER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to a cookware and, more particularly, to cookware having a protective cover for use in storing the cookware when not in use.

[0002] Conventional cookware is generally composed of a container having vertical sidewalls extending upwardly from a bottom surface, an elongated handle, and a lid. High-quality cookware in which heat is transferred uniformly throughout the conductive heat cooking surface, for example iron skillets, aluminum and copper cookware are also well known for cooking. Such cookware often include a non-slip coating on the top surface of the metal cooking surface to prevent the food being cooked or food residue from adhering to the surface. Most non-stick coatings used for cookware work by providing an extremely smooth surface, without surface pockets or indentations, effectively reducing the coefficient of friction of the cooking surface. An example of such a non-stick surface coating is marketed under the trademark TEFLON, which is formed from tetraturoethylene (TFE) fluorocarbon polymers or fluorinated ethylene propylene (FEP) resins. One of the short comings of such coatings however is their lack of durability. Many non-stick coatings are relatively soft and can be easily scratched, scraped or otherwise marred.

[0003] Conventional cookware is also known to be difficult to stack and store without causing damage to the cooking surfaces. Further, it is often desirable to store cookware on the top of a stove or by hooks attached to racks and many times are used for ornamental purposes. Cookware however after repeated use often loses some of its attractiveness and displaying such cookware is not always desirable. Further, storing various pieces of cookware, many having several pieces, such as a pot and matching lid in a cabinet, shelf or the like, often results in the pieces becoming separated. Such separation can make it difficult to match related pieces, such as a pan with its corresponding lid.

[0004] Accordingly, it would be desirable to have a cover that would effectively protect cookware from scratches and other damage, that would allow cookware to be easily stacked for storage, keeps related cookware pieces together, and provides an attractive appearance.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention is directed to cookware and a protective cover for the cookware that is effective for protecting the cookware from scratches and other damage, that allows the cookware to be easily stacked, keeps related cookware pieces together, and provides an attractive appearance. The protective cookware cover comprises two opposite faces permanently joined along most of their common edge to form an inner cavity with an opening extending along part of the common edge to allow insertion and extraction of the cookware. The cavity having at least two compartments wherein which are effective for separating and protecting the individual pieces comprising the cookware.

[0006] In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the protective cover further comprises closure means for closing said opening.

[0007] In another preferred embodiment of the invention the protective cover includes a closure means comprising a draw string.

[0008] In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the protective cover includes a closure means comprising a snap connector.

[0009] In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the protective cover includes a closure means comprising hook-and-loop fastener tape.

[0010] In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the faces forming the cover comprises a generally oval portion sized to enclose the base portion of the cookware and a more elongated narrow portion to enclose part or the entire handle of the cookware within the cover.

[0011] In another preferred embodiment of the invention the protective cover the compartments are formed from at least one inner panel, wherein said inner panel is flexible to permit the lid to rest within the base portion of the cookware.

[0012] In another preferred embodiment of the invention at least one face of the protective cover is padded.

[0013] In another preferred embodiment of the invention the protective cover includes a side panel adapted for expanding to accommodate various sizes of cookware.

[0014] Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description, the accompanying drawings, and the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] To provide a more complete understanding of the present invention and further features and advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0016] FIG. 1 is a cut-away perspective view of the protective cookware cover of the subject application showing conventional cookware having a base portion and a lid positioned within the protective cookware cover;

[0017] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the protective cookware cover of FIG. 1 showing conventional cookware having a container and a lid positioned therein with the opening closed using a draw string;

[0018] FIG. 3 is a partial perspective view showing one example of a closure means whereby spaced apart snap closure means are used for providing closure to the protective cookware cover of the present invention;

[0019] FIG. 4 is a partial perspective view showing another example of a closure means whereby strips of hook-and-loop tape are used for providing closure to the protective cookware cover of the present invention;

[0020] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of another preferred embodiment of the protective cookware cover of the subject application;

[0021] FIG. 6 is a side elevation view of the protective cookware cover of the present invention showing a pair of covers, one cover as shown in FIG. 1 and one cover as shown in FIG. 5, without cookware therein stacked for storage;

[0022] FIG. 7 is a side elevation view if a pair of protective cookware covers of the present invention showing an inner
flap effective for permitting the lid of the cookware to be stored within the base portion of the cookware; and

[0023] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of another preferred embodiment of the protective cookware cover of the subject application showing a padded surface for providing additional protection to the stored cookware.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0024] The present invention relates to cookware covers and more particularly, to a protective cookware cover for protecting cookware from scratches, marring and other damage during storage. The application however, is not intended to be limited by the specific terms so selected, and it is to be understood that each specific term includes all technical equivalents that operate in a similar manner to accomplish a similar purpose.

[0025] Referring to FIGS. 1 and 2, the protective cookware cover of the present invention 100 is shown having two opposite faces 102 and 104 permanently joined along most of their common edge 106 to form an inner cavity 108 adapted to enclose cookware 110, such as a convention pot, pan, container, and other cooking vessels. Although any type of pan, pot or container may be used with the invention, the invention will be described with respect to the cookware as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. The cover 100 is further provided with an opening 112 extending along part of the common edge 106 to allow insertion and extraction of the cookware 110. As shown the faces 102 and 104 forming the cover 100 include a generally oval portion 114 which is sized to enclose the base portion 116 of the cookware 110. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the faces 102 and 104 forming the cover 100 also includes a more elongated narrow portion 118 which encloses part (as shown) or the entire handle 120 of the cookware 110 within the cover 100.

[0026] It should be understood that the opening 112 has a diameter sufficient to allow the cookware 110 to be easily inserted into the inner cavity 108. For example, the opening 112 may be a split that extends long the common edge 106 between faces 102 and 104. Once the cookware 110 is inserted into the cavity 108 the opening 112 can be closed, such as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, by the use of a conventional draw string 122, as shown, along the periphery of the opening in the front faces 102 and 104 allowing the opening to close. It should be understood that the use of a draw string 112 allows the cover 100 to easily accommodate various sizes of cookware 110. Other closure means such as intercooperating means, for example spaced apart snaps 124 (FIG. 3) may also be used. As shown, the snaps 124 comprise two separate sections that are used to close the opening 112 such that the inserted cookware will remain within the inner cavity 108. The first section 126 of the snap 124 is inserted though the first face 102 and the second section 128 of the snap 124 is inserted through the second face 104 such that it sections 126 and 128 can slidably engage to form a snap connection and sufficiently close the opening 112. It should be understood that the outside surface 130 of the first and second sections 126 and 128 can be imprinted with a predetermined logo or design or an elongated strip of material (not shown) can be sewn along the periphery of the opening 112 to cover the outside surface of each section 126 and 128 of the snap 124. Another example of intercooperating means is shown in FIG. 4 whereby strips of hook-and-loop tape 132 are attached respectively to the inner surfaces of the faces 102 and 104 along the opening 112 in mutually facing relationship. Such hook-and-loop fastener tape is commonly known and sold under the trademark VELCRO.

[0027] In another preferred embodiment of the invention, as shown in FIG. 5, the cover 200 comprises two opposite faces 202 and 204 and a side panel or gusset 205 permanently joined such as by stitching, to the common edges 206 of the faces 202 and 204 to form an inner cavity 208 adapted to enclose cookware 110 (Such as shown in FIG. 1). As shown the faces 202 and 204 forming the cover 200 include a generally oval portion 214 which is sized to enclose the base portion 116 (see FIG. 1) of the cookware 110. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the faces 202 and 204 forming the cover 200 also includes a more elongated narrow portion 218 which encloses part (as shown) or the entire handle 120 of the cookware 110 within the cover 200. The cover 200 is provided with an opening 212 extending along part of the side panel 205 to allow insertion and extraction of the cookware 110. As shown in FIG. 5, forming the cover 200 using side panels or gusset 205 permits the cover 200 to easily expand to accommodate larger cookware 110 while allowing the cover 200 to lie flat (as shown in FIG. 6) when not in use. This permits one or more covers 200 to be easily stored when not in use. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, a zipper 225 is provided for opening and closing the opening 212 to allow for the cookware 110 to be inserted or removed from the inner cavity 208.

[0028] The cover 100, 200 can be made from any suitable material, for example fabric, vinyl, etc. The weight and thickness of the panels may vary depending upon the quality of the product specifically desired, but it should be understood that the thickness should be sufficient to provide structural integrity and wear ability. It should also be understood that the cover can be sized and made in various colors and materials and can be imprinted with predetermined logos and designs and formed in different configurations to accommodate various cookware.

[0029] As demonstrated in FIG. 1, the invention is shown whereby the cover 100, 200 has at least one inner panel 134 or flap separating the inner cavity 108 into at least two separate compartments. It should be understood that while the following description refers to the cover of FIG. 1, the description may equally apply to the other embodiments shown and described herein. As shown, an inner panel 134 operates to divide the inner cavity 108 into at least two compartments. As shown in this the inner panel 134 operates to separate the inner cavity 108 into a first compartment 136 and a second compartment 138. As shown, the first compartment 136 is sized to accommodate the base portion 116 of the cookware 110 and the second compartment 138 is sized to accommodate a lid 140 of the cookware 110. As shown, the inner flap 134 operates to separate and protect the base portion 116 and the lid 140 by preventing their metal surfaces from rubbing against each other and provides a protective cushion between the parts. Preferably, the inner flap 134 is formed from a flexible material, such as fabric, or is sized to permit the lid 140 to be inverted and rest within the base portion 116 of the cookware 110, as shown. It should be understood that by allowing the lid 140 to be inverted and rest within the base portion 116 allows the protective cover 100, 200 with the cookware 110 therein to
be stably stacked on other protective covers having cookware therein (as demonstrated in FIG. 7). It should also be understood that the cover may also be provided with additional flaps to separate the inner cavity into additional compartments.

[0030] Referring to FIG. 8, another preferred embodiment of the invention is shown whereby faces 302 and 304 of cover 300 are formed from panels 307 each having inner and outer layers of material 309 and 311, respectively, which are stitched together at the peripheries by stitching to enclose padding 313. Such padding 313 will provide the cookware 310 contained within the inner cavity 308 with greater protection from the risk of damage.

[0031] As shown in FIG. 8, the cover 300 can be provided with means for hanging the cover 142 such as by a hook, to store the cover with the enclosed cookware in various storage devices, such as a conventional pot rack.

[0032] Accordingly, it should be clear to those skilled in the art that the cookware having the protective cookware cover is less prone to scratches and other damage, allows the cookware to be easily stacked, keeps related cookware parts together, and provides an attractive appearance.

[0033] Although the foregoing invention has been described in some detail for purposes of clarity of understandings, it will be apparent that certain changes and modifications may be practiced within the scope of the appended claims. Accordingly, it should be understood that the present disclosure is to be considered as exemplary of the principals of the invention and is not intended to limit the invention to the embodiments illustrated and the invention is not to be limited to the details given herein, but may be modified within the scope and equivalents of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A protective cover comprising:
   - two opposite faces permanently joined along most of their common edge to form an inner cavity with an opening extending along part of said common edge to allow insertion and extraction of the cookware
   wherein said cavity includes at least two separate compartments therein.

2. The protective cover of claim 1 further comprising closure means for closing said opening.

3. The protective cover of claim 2 wherein said closure means comprises a draw string.

4. The protective cover of claim 2 wherein said closure means comprises a snap connector.

5. The protective cover of claim 2 wherein said closure means comprises hook-and-loop fastener tape.

6. The protective cover of claim 1 wherein the cookware includes a base portion and a handle and wherein said faces forming the cover include a generally oval portion sized to enclose the base portion of the cookware and a more elongated narrow portion to enclose part or the entire handle of the cookware within the cover.

7. The protective cover of claim 1 wherein said separate compartments are formed from an inner panel, wherein said inner panel is flexible to permit the lid to rest within the base portion of the cookware.

8. The protective cover of claim 1 wherein at least one of said faces is padded.

9. A protective cover for cookware comprising:
   - two opposite faces and a side panel permanently joined together to the peripheries of the faces to form an inner cavity;
   wherein said inner cavity encloses cookware therein; and
   wherein said side panel is adapted for expanding to accommodate various sizes of said cookware; and
   wherein said cavity having at least two compartments, a first compartment for storing the base portion of said cookware and a second compartment for storing the lid of said cookware.

10. The protective cover of claim 9 further comprising closure means for closing said opening.

11. The protective cover of claim 10 wherein said closure means comprises a draw string.

12. The protective cover of claim 10 wherein said closure means comprises a snap connector.

13. The protective cover of claim 10 wherein said closure means comprises hook-and-loop fastener tape.

14. The protective cover of claim 9 wherein said cookware includes a base portion and a handle and wherein said faces forming the cover include a generally oval portion sized to enclose the base portion of said cookware and a more elongated narrow portion to enclose part or the entire handle of said cookware within the cover.

15. A protective cover comprising:
   - two opposite faces permanently joined along most of their common edge to form an inner cavity with an opening extending along part of said common edge; and
   cookware positioned within said inner cavity.

16. The protective cover of claim 15 wherein said cavity having a first compartment and a second compartment therein.

17. The protective cover of claim 15 further comprising closure means for closing said opening.

18. The protective cover of claim 15 wherein said cookware includes a base portion and a handle and wherein said faces forming the cover include a generally oval portion sized to enclose the base portion of said cookware and a more elongated narrow portion to enclose part or the entire handle of said cookware within the cover.

19. The protective cover of claim 15 wherein said first compartment and said second compartment is formed from an inner panel, wherein said inner panel is flexible to permit the lid to rest within the base portion of said cookware.

20. The protective cover of claim 15 wherein at least one of said faces is padded.

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