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(54) **Support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general**

(57) A support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general and, in particular, for bottles (12), comprising a pair of lateral flanks (10), delimiting a bottom (11) on which the bottle (12) is housed; in particular, the lateral flanks (10) have a curved profile and include a series of shaped portions (17, 18, 19), which are the support points of the support structure on a plane, such as, for example, the top of a table, depending on whether the bottle (12) is exposed on the table in upright or horizontal position. In practice, it is possible to expose on a table and transport the bottle (12), indifferently, both in upright position and in horizontal position, keeping the drink temperature at a level suitable to maintain unchanged the organoleptic characteristics thereof.

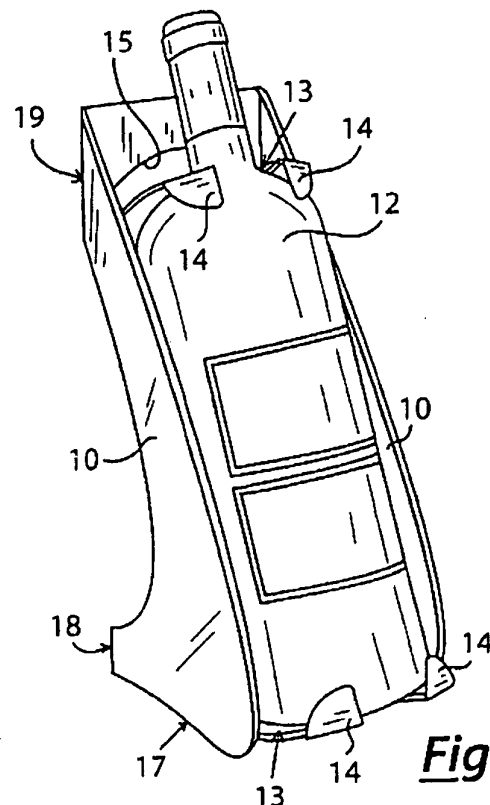


Fig. 2

Description

[0001] The present invention generally relates to a support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general.

[0002] More specifically, the invention concerns a support structure for containers having the functions of exhibitor and transport element for bottles, also suitable to keep the organoleptic characteristics of the drinks or foodstuffs in general contained into the aforesaid bottles.

[0003] They are currently known ice buckets, thermal containers and/or bottle-coolers (the so-called "glacette"), suitable to contain one or more bottles and keep the drinks contained in the bottles at a certain temperature, so that to preserve their organoleptic characteristics and better taste them.

[0004] The importance of tasting temperature is, indeed, a fundamental issue for appreciating the aromas which contribute to fix the taste of a drink and, in particular, a wine.

[0005] The aforesaid buckets or containers are usually made of plastic or metallic material and are usually equipped with side handles and a possible cover for the transport and are filled with ice when it is necessary to keep at low temperatures the drink contained in the bottle.

[0006] In any case, such objects, besides inevitably hiding the bottle and the relative label, are considerably bulky, heavy and not very practical to carry.

[0007] Moreover, when the bottle is collect from the bucket it needs to be dried, since the moisture on its surface may ruin the label and the support table and may cause difficulties in the grip of the bottle when pouring the drink.

[0008] Finally, the opening and closing of the bucket, as well as the mere exposure of the same at room temperature, contribute to change the temperature of the bottle and, consequently, the organoleptic characteristics of the drink or foodstuff normally contained therein.

[0009] As part of the requirements above mentioned, therefore, purpose of the present invention is to carry out a support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general which allows to expose the container (in particular a bottle) on a table, both vertically and horizontally, keeping, at the same time, the optimum temperature of the drink, in substitution of glacette and ice buckets.

[0010] Another purpose of the present invention is to provide a support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general, which allows to transport the container and, in particular, a bottle, both in upright position and in horizontal position, in a very simply and effective manner.

[0011] Further purpose of the present invention is to provide a support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general, which is extremely simple to manufacture and which allows to greatly minimize production costs, compared to the prior art, by virtue of the benefits achieved.

[0012] These and other purposes are achieved by a

support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general, as described, in its generic and preferred embodiment, according to the appended claim 1.

[0013] The dependent claims contain other features of detail of the invention.

[0014] In advantageous way, the technical solution object of the present invention uses an internal cooling system, combined with a particularly support envelope, which allows to keep the organoleptic characteristics of the drink (especially wine and water), without hiding the bottle and the relative label.

[0015] The support system for containers in general and, in particular, for bottles, according to the present invention, can also be used to heat drinks, providing one or more pockets or thermal pads.

[0016] The result gained is a functional and aesthetically pleasing product, also suitable to constitute a heat stabilizer element, in order to better taste the drinks contained in the bottle placed therein, better appreciating the organoleptic characteristics of these drinks, such as, in particular, water and wine.

[0017] The support according to the invention, because meant to let viewable the bottle and the relative label during the entire period of stay on the table of the aforesaid bottle, is also a design object and a real furniture for the table.

[0018] The shape and structure of the support allow then to keep the temperature of the drink at predefined values, but avoiding to ruin the label of the bottle and drip on the table during pouring.

[0019] Finally, the support object of the present invention allows to expose the bottle on the table both in vertical and horizontal position, keep it always in an ergonomic position for the grip and the deposit and to transport it easily both in the vertical version and in the horizontal version, through a proper handle or grip in general.

[0020] Further purposes and advantages of the present invention will be clear from the description that follows, referring to a preferred, but not limited, embodiment and from the appended drawings, provided only for illustrative and not limited way, in which:

- figure 1 is a front perspective view of a support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general and, in particular, for bottles, according to the present invention, carried out in order to expose the bottle vertically;
- figure 2 is a front perspective view of the support structure for containers and particularly for bottles of figure 1, according to the present invention, complete with bottle, housed within the provided seat and in upright position;
- figure 3 is a side perspective view of a support structure for containers and in particular bottles, according to the present invention, carried out in order to expose the bottle horizontally;
- figure 4 is a side perspective view of the support structure for containers and in particular for bottles

of figure 3, according to the present invention, complete with bottle, housed within the provided seat and in horizontal position;

- figure 5 is a side perspective view, taken from the opposite with respect to the view of figure 4.

[0021] First of all, it is noted that, although the following description and the appended figures refer to a support structure suitable to house bottles, the structure subject of the present invention can be similarly used for the support, exposure and transport of generic containers and, in particular, containers for drinks and/or foodstuffs in general.

[0022] Referring to the figures cited, the support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general and, in particular, for bottles, according to the present invention, presents two lateral flanks 10, substantially curved-shaped, delimiting a bottom 11 suitable to house the bottle 12.

[0023] In particular, the bottle 12 is kept in position by two bottoms 13, shaped and provided with suitable retention tabs 14, which are fixed to the bottom 11, at the terminal portions of the lateral flanks 10.

[0024] On the top of one of the bottoms 13 and at the bottom 11 a first handle 15 or grip generally is made, while, on the opposite side with respect to the aforesaid handle 15, on the terminal portion of the curved profile of the flanks 10, a second handle 16 is made.

[0025] From the appended figure it is possible to fully understand the use of the support system, which is the object of the present invention.

[0026] In particular, figures 1 and 2 show a first use of the support system object of the invention, according to which such support is positioned so that to expose vertically the bottle 12 on a plane, such as, for example, a table.

[0027] In this case, as clearly visible from the perspective figures 1 and 2, the lower shaped bottom 13 acts as a support base of the support, together with the curved terminal portion 17 of the flanks 10.

[0028] On the other hand, figures 3-5 show a further use of the support system object of the invention, according to which the aforesaid support is positioned so that to expose horizontally the bottle 12 on a plane, such as, for example, a table.

[0029] In the latter case, the shaped portion 19 of the bottom 11 corresponding to the handle 15 and the handle or grip 16 are, respectively, the support points of the support structure on a plane, such as a table.

[0030] In practice, as clearly visible from the comparison between the figures 1-2 and figures 3-5, it is possible to expose the bottle 12 on a plane indifferently upright (fig. 1-2) and horizontally (fig. 3-5).

[0031] In particular, the transition from the vertical to the horizontal position can be carried out simply by inverting the bottle 12 of 180° and rotating the support system in accordance with the arrow F of figure 1, so as to support both the portions 19 of the flanks 10 next to the

handle 15 and the terminal portions 18 of the flanks 10, where the handle 16 is made, on the plane (such as, for example, the top of a table).

[0032] Similarly, the transition from the horizontal position of exposure to the vertical one is obtained simply by inverting the bottle 12 of 180° and rotating the support system in accordance with the arrow G of figure 3, in order to support the shaped portions 17 of lateral flanks 10 on the plane (such as, for example, the top of a table).

[0033] Furthermore, between the lateral flanks 10 and on the bottom 11 of the structure, it is possible to place a cooling cushion, which is then arranged under the bottle 12 in order to keep at a desired optimal value the temperature of the drink contained in the bottle 12, without needing the use of glacette and/or ice buckets and, consequently, without hiding the bottle 12 and its label.

[0034] Such a cushion can also be used to heat the drink and/or foodstuffs normally contained in the bottle 12.

[0035] Once the cooling and/or heating effect of the cushion is run down, it is sufficient to remove the cushion and heat and/or cool it again, in order to be able to use it again.

[0036] Finally, the support structure, according to the invention, can be transported, easily and effectively, whether in the vertical exposure version or in the horizontal exposure version, since in both cases the use of a handle or grip suitable to the purpose is provided.

[0037] In particular, for the vertical transport of the bottle 12 the handle 15 is used (as seen in fig. 1-2), while for the horizontal transport of the bottle 12 the handle 16 is used (as seen in fig. 3-5).

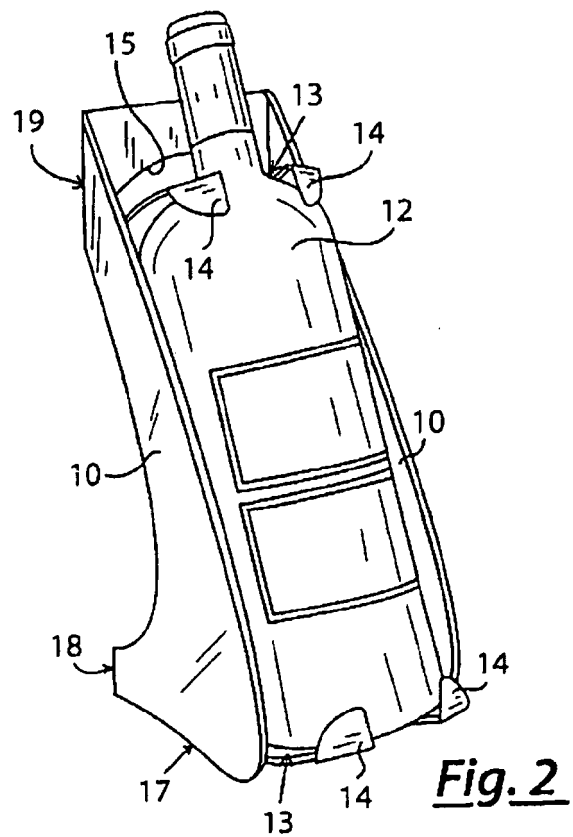
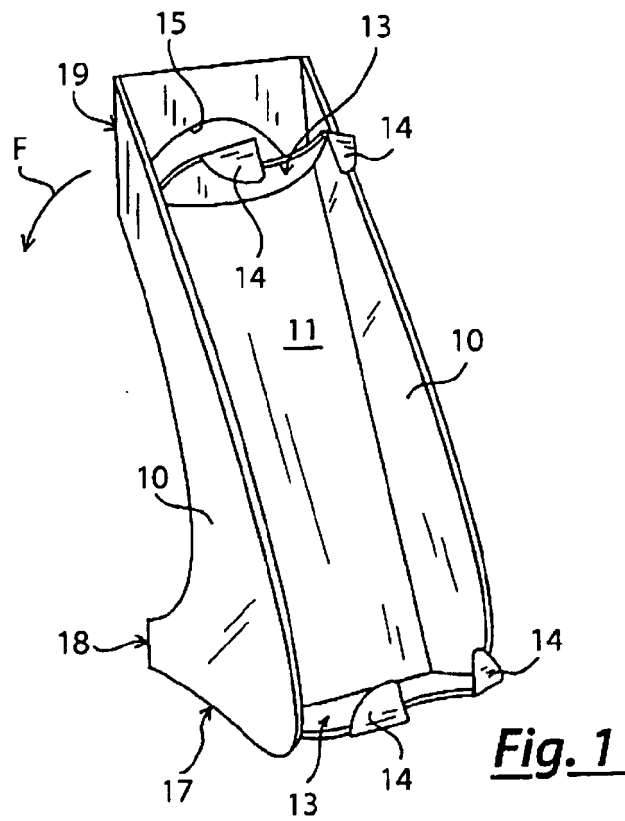
[0038] It is clear, then, as the support structure for containers in general and for bottles in particular, as conceived and described according to the present invention, is very practical to be used and producible at low costs, compared to the prior art, having at the same time various functionalities, such as the exposure of the bottle on the table both in horizontal position and in upright position, the maintenance of the temperature of the drink contained in the bottle and the transport of the bottle, both horizontally and vertically, by means of a handle or a grip in general.

[0039] From the description made the characteristics of the support structure for containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general, which is the object of the present invention, as well as the resulting benefits, are clear.

[0040] It is, finally, clear that many other variations can be made to the support structure in question, without for this reason going out of the novelty principles inherent to the inventive idea, as it is clear that in the practical implementation of the invention, materials, shapes and dimensions of the illustrated details could be any according to the needs and the same could be replaced with others technically equivalent.

Claims

1. Support structure for containers of drinks and food-stuffs in general, **characterized in that** it presents a pair of lateral flanks (10), defining at least one bottom surface (11) on which the container is housed, said lateral flanks being produced according to a curved profile which comprises a series of perimetrical shaped portions (17, 18, 19), suitable to be the support points of said support structure on a plane, depending on whether the container is exposed in upright position or in horizontal position. 5
2. Support structure as claim 1, **characterized in that** said containers of drinks and foodstuffs in general include at least one bottle (12). 10
3. Support structure as claim 1, **characterized in that** at least one shaped bottom (13), provided with proper tangs (14), suitable to keep in position the container resting on the bottom surface (11), is connected with said bottom surface (11). 15
4. Support structure as claim 1, **characterized in that** said bottoms (13) are provided at the upper and lower terminal portions of the lateral flanks (10). 20
5. Support structure as claim 1, **characterized in that** at least one seat, which acts as first handle (15) or grip in general, is made at a terminal portion of said bottom surface (11) and on said bottom surface (11). 25
6. Support structure as claim 1, **characterized in that** a second handle (16) or grip in general is made in correspondence of at least one (18) of said perimetrical shaped portions (17, 18, 19) of the lateral flanks (10). 30
7. Support structure as claims 5 and 6, **characterized in that** said second handle (16) is opposite to said first handle (15). 35
8. Support structure as claim 3, **characterized in that**, in case said container is exposed on a plane in upright position, at least one of said shaped bottoms (13), along with at least one (17) of said perimetrical shaped portions (17, 18, 19) of the lateral flanks (10), forms a support base of said support structure. 40
9. Support structure as claims 5 and 6, **characterized in that**, in case said container is exposed on a plane in horizontal position, at least one (19) of said perimetrical shaped portions (17, 18, 19) and at least one (16) of said first (15) and second handle (16) form the support points on the plane of said support structure. 45
10. Support structure as claim 1, **characterized in that** said horizontal and vertical positions of exposure of said container are obtained by inverting the container of 180° and rotating the support system in accordance with a given direction (F, G), so that to support on a plane, respectively, at least one (17) or at least two (18, 19) of said perimetrical shaped portions (17, 18, 19) of the lateral flanks (10). 50
11. Support structure as claim 1, **characterized in that** at least one thermal or cooling cushion is positioned under the container, close to said bottom surface (11), in order to keep at a desired optimal value the temperature of the drinks or foodstuffs in general contained in the container. 55
12. Support structure as claims 5 and 6, **characterized in that** said container is transportable both in vertical position, by means of said first handle (15), and in horizontal position, by means of said second handle (16).



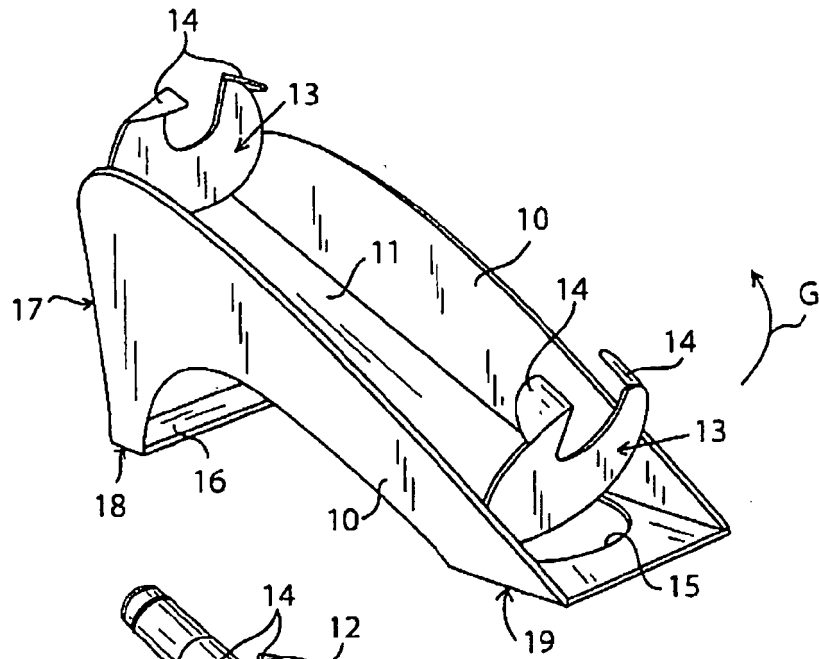


Fig. 3

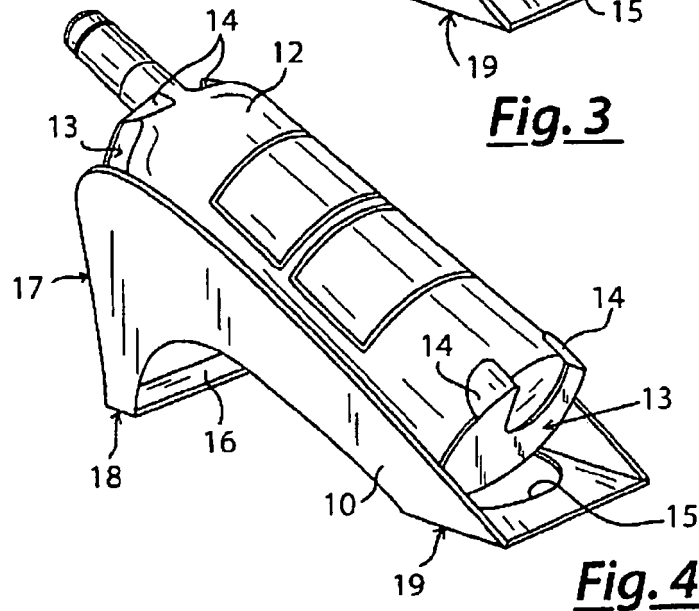


Fig. 4

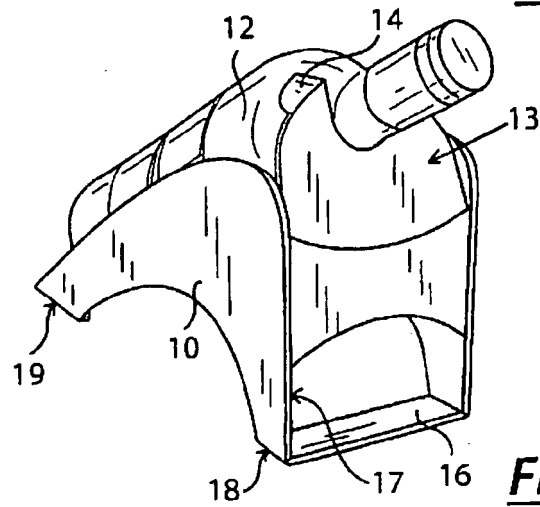


Fig. 5