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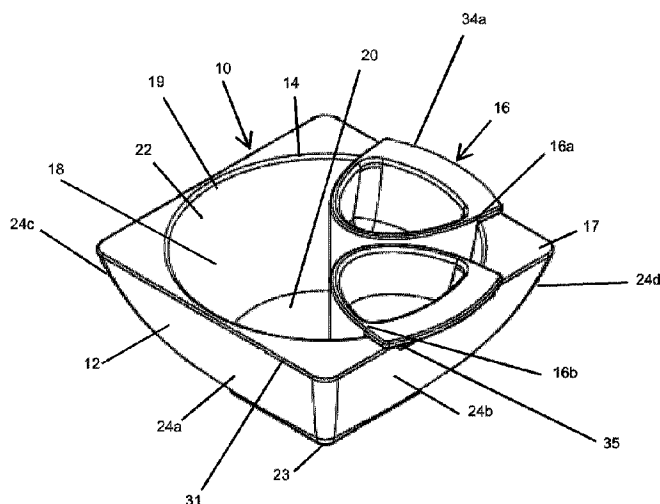
(71) Demandeur/Applicant:
BENJAMIN, ROBERT A., US

(72) Inventeur/Inventor:
BENJAMIN, ROBERT A., US

(74) Agent: ADE & COMPANY INC.

(54) Titre : SERVICE DE TABLE AVEC POCHES DETACHABLES

(54) Title: FOOD SERVER WITH DETACHABLE POCKETS



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

Tableware to contain main ingredients and condiments of a meal separately, comprises a primary receptacle having a top wall, a plurality of exterior walls intersecting the top wall at an upper end of the exterior walls and a bottom exterior surface intersecting a lower end of the exterior walls. The primary receptacle has an interior sidewall extending from a bottom interior surface located at the lower end of the interior sidewall to the top wall located at the upper end of the interior sidewall to form a storage space within the interior sidewall. A first rim is disposed about the upper end of the interior sidewall and the intersection with top wall. One or more removable pockets are detachably suspended from the first rim of the primary server into the storage space within the interior sidewall.

ABSTRACT

Tableware to contain main ingredients and condiments of a meal separately. comprises a primary receptacle having a top wall, a plurality of exterior walls intersecting the top wall at an upper end of the exterior walls and a bottom exterior surface intersecting a lower end of the exterior walls. The primary receptacle has an interior sidewall extending from a bottom interior surface located at the lower end of the interior sidewall to the top wall located at the upper end of the interior sidewall to form a storage space within the interior sidewall. A first rim is disposed about the upper end of the interior sidewall and the intersection with top wall. One or more removable pockets are detachably suspended from the first rim of the primary server into the storage space within the interior sidewall.

FOOD SERVER WITH DETACHABLE POCKETS

FIELD OF INVENTION

- [01] The present invention relates generally to an improved food server, and, more specifically, the present invention relates to a food server having removable condiment pockets attached thereto.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

- [02] Food plates, beverage cups, and utensils are commonly used when consuming food and beverages. Over time, food plates and beverage servers have evolved to encompass a variety of different shapes and sizes. For example, food plates have been developed with dividers/compartments designed to keep food items separate.
- [03] Bowls and plates, such as the type used to serve and consume food items and the like, are well known in the art. Recently, there has been considerable competition in the home tabletop and restaurant industry to develop new and innovative serving pieces that satisfy the ever-evolving desires of consumers. Today's consumers demand, for example, tableware that is economical, easy to handle, stackable, aesthetically pleasing, dishwasher-safe and/or capable of withstanding extreme temperatures, such as those associated with freezing and microwaving. Another desirable feature, which, prior to the present invention, was largely unaddressed in the tabletop art, is the capability of separately heating or chilling (or leaving at room temperature) different food items

within one bowl. As the solution to the challenge discussed in item #1 above, the consumer dips their forkful of salad into a pocket filled with dressing, or their spoonful of frozen treat into a separately heated pocket of hot fudge, caramel sauce, etc. The control of mixed ingredients by the consumer is the same at the beginning as it is at the end of the course.

[04] Previous to this invention, the home or restaurant chef had two choices when serving something as basic as salad:

1. Pre-dress the salad, in a way that might not be enough or maybe too much, and in any case would be either dry or sodden at the bottom of the bowl; or
2. Serve the salad separately with the dressing, either in a bottle (usual home style) or in a ramekin, shaker, or boat (restaurant). This, of course, is less convenient than having everything in a single bowl.

[05] There thus exists a long felt need for an improved salad bowl that eliminates the need to serve and clean, in separate vessels, large ingredients such as salad roughage apart from smaller or liquid ingredients, such as salad dressing, until mixing them together is desired.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[06] According to an embodiment of the present invention, there is disclosed an improved tableware to contain main ingredients and condiments of a meal separately. The tableware comprises a primary receptacle having a top wall, a plurality of exterior walls intersecting the top wall at an upper end of the exterior walls and a bottom exterior surface intersecting a lower end of the exterior walls. The primary receptacle has an interior sidewall extending from a bottom interior surface located at the lower end of the interior sidewall to the top wall located at the upper end of the interior sidewall to form a storage space within the interior sidewall. A first rim is disposed about the upper end of the interior sidewall and the intersection with top wall. One or more removable pockets are detachably suspended from the first rim of the primary server into the storage space within the interior sidewall.

[07] According to a further embodiment of the present invention, there is disclosed an improved tableware to contain main ingredients and condiments of a meal separately. A primary receptacle having a top wall, a plurality of convex shaped exterior walls intersecting the top wall at an upper end of the exterior walls and a bottom exterior surface intersecting a lower end of the exterior walls. The primary receptacle having a plurality of convex shaped interior sidewalls extending from a bottom interior surface located at the lower end of the convex shaped interior sidewalls to the top wall located at the upper end of the convex shaped interior sidewalls to form a storage space within the plurality of convex shaped interior sidewalls. A first rim about the upper end of the convex

shaped interior sidewalls and their intersection with top wall. One or more removable pockets are detachably suspended from the first rim of the primary server into the storage space within the convex shaped interior sidewalls.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- [009] The structure, operation, and advantages of the present invention will become further apparent upon consideration of the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying figures (Figures). The figures are intended to be illustrative, not limiting.
- [010] Certain elements in some of the figures may be omitted, or illustrated not-to-scale, for illustrative clarity. The cross-sectional views may be in the form of slices, or near-sighted cross-sectional views, omitting certain background lines which would otherwise be visible in a true cross-sectional view, for illustrative clarity.
- [011] Often, similar elements may be referred to by similar numbers in various figures (Figures) of the drawing, in which case typically the last two significant digits may be the same, the most significant digit being the number of the drawing figure (Figure).
- [012] FIGURE 1 is a top, three-dimensional view of the improved server with clip on pockets, according to the present invention.
- [013] FIGURE 2 is a top, three-dimensional exploded view of the elements of the improved server with removable pockets, according to the present invention.
- [014] FIGURE 3 is a top view of the improved server with removable pockets, according to the present invention.

- [015] FIGURE 4 is a side, cross-sectional view of the improved server with removable pockets, according to the present invention.
- [016] FIGURE 5 is a front, three-dimensional view of a second embodiment of the improved server with removable pockets, according to the present invention.
- [017] FIGURE 6 is a top, three-dimensional exploded view of the elements of the second embodiment of the improved server with removable pockets, according to the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

- [018] In the description that follows, numerous details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that variations of these specific details are possible while still achieving the results of the present invention. Well-known processing steps are generally not described in detail in order to avoid unnecessarily obfuscating the description of the present invention.
- [019] In the description that follows, exemplary dimensions may be presented for an illustrative embodiment of the invention. The dimensions should not be interpreted as limiting. They are included to provide a sense of proportion. Generally speaking, it is the relationship between various elements, where they are located, their contrasting compositions, and sometimes their relative sizes that is of significance.
- [020] In the drawings accompanying the description that follows, often both reference numerals and legends (labels, text descriptions) will be used to identify elements. If legends are provided, they are intended merely as an aid to the reader, and should not in any way be interpreted as limiting.
- [021] Many types of foods are provided with condiments and/or toppings that are selected and added to a main dish as desired by the consumer. For example, a salad may be provided with salad dressing. The type of condiment or topping to be used on a particular main dish is often selected from a number of different options, depending upon the

consumer's taste. Continuing with the salad example, a consumer may select from a number of different salad dressings for the salad. The selection may depend upon the consumer's particular tastes and/or available options for salad dressings.

[022] The present invention is directed to improved tableware 10 including a primary server, such as a plate or bowl 12, having a rim 14 about an interior sidewall 18 and a top wall 17 for supporting one or more removable pockets 16, known as POCKETBOWLS suspended from the rim of the bowl and into the storage space 22 between the rim and the bottom interior surface 20. The improved tableware 10 is novel in that it allows the main ingredients of a meal to be contained in the primary bowl 12. Simultaneously, the condiments meant to adorn the main ingredients are independently contained within the removable pockets 16, thereby separating the latter from the contents of the bowl until desired. In this manner, the integrity of the main ingredients within the bowl is maintained until they are ready to be consumed.

[023] The removable pockets 16 can be constructed of substantial versatile, glassware (types may include Borosilicate, Tempered, Fire-Resistant, or Crystal glass), clear of color so as to blend universally with existing home and restaurant tableware. Additional embodiments can be made with other materials, (for example, glass with speckles or other enhancements, or in translucent colors; china, ceramic, porcelain, etc.). The endless possibilities are within the scope of the present invention.

[024] The initial design of the POCKETBOWLS 16 has been rendered in one size (6.25-6.50” in width and 3.25” in height) and two styles: CLASSIC, which was inspired by the “tulip bowl” styles up to the 20th Century, and MODERNE which is more 21st Century. The removable pockets 16 can be manufactured in any number of other styles as long as the removable pockets 16 maintain their ability to be removably suspended from the top wall 17, the interior sidewall 18, and the rim 14 of the bowl 12.

[025] According to the present invention, the sizes of the subsequent bowl designs 16 can be at 8-10” in width and 4-5” in height, for serving more than one person. Also, for each bowl 12, there can be from one to four removable pockets 16 detachable suspended therefrom. Hence, it’s within the scope of the invention to serve sushi or sashimi in a bowl with removable pockets 16 containing soy sauce, ginger, and wasabi detachable suspended therefrom. Larger sizes could be used for party or catering needs, with as many detachably pockets mounted to the bowl 12 as would not interfere with the central items in the bowl 12 being served. Similarly, smaller bowls, i.e. less than six inch wide bowls, without clip on pockets (but matching the style of the set in which they are offered) could be added to complement the bowl 12 with the detachably pockets for coordinated side dishes, dips, crackers, seeds, sauces, etc.

[026] The improved tableware 10 is directed to a primary server, such as a plate or bowl 12, having a rim 14, for supporting one or more condiment detachably pockets 16. The improved tableware 10 is novel in that it allows the main ingredients of a meal to be contained in the primary server 12. Simultaneously, the condiments meant to adorn the main

ingredients are independently contained within the suspended pockets 16, thereby separating them until desired. In this manner, the integrity of the main ingredients in the bowl 12 is maintained until they are ready to be consumed.

[027] For example, the present invention overcomes the problem of salad that has been covered in dressing prior to being eaten becoming soggy and unappetizing. Utilizing the improved tableware 10, the salad within the primary bowl 12 is only covered with the desired dressing within a removable pocket 16 when the salad is to be consumed.

[028] As illustrated in Figure 1, the primary server 12 is a salad bowl 12, having one or a plurality of removable pockets 16a and 16b suspended therefrom, each designed to contain salad dressing. The primary server 12 may be any desired plate or bowl that has a rim 14 around the periphery of the opening into the bowl. As such, the dimensions of the primary server 12 may vary dependent on the plate or bowl selected. The dimensions of the removable pockets 16 must be formed to mount to the exterior upper surfaces 24a through 24d extending about the rim 14 disposed about the upper end of the storage space 22 of the primary bowl 12. In addition, the convex shaped rear wall 26 of the removable pockets 16 must conform to the shape of the interior sidewall 18 of the storage space 22.

[029] By way of example, the salad bowl 12 may have a height between the exterior upper surfaces 24a-24d and the bottom exterior surface 23 with a exemplary range between 3 inch and 10 inches. The bottom interior

surface 20 has a diameter with a range between 2 inches and 10 inches. The opening into the storage space 22 forms a circle between exterior upper surfaces 24a-24d and has a rim 14 thereabout. The rim 14 has a diameter with a range between 3 inches and 10 inches. Each of the one or more condiment removable pockets 16 may have a height with a range between 1 inches and 6 inches, and a width with a range between 1 inches and 8 inches. It must be noted that it is within the terms of the embodiment that each of the one or more removable pockets 16a and 16b may have different appropriate dimensions.

[030] In the preferred embodiment, the primary receptacle 12 and the removable pockets 16 of the improved tableware 10 are constructed of a material such as glass that is strong and rigid enough to hold salad or other food products.

[031] As seen in Figures 3 and 4, the primary server 12 has a top wall 17, an interior sidewall 18, a first rim 14, a bottom exterior surface 23, and a bottom interior surface 20 that cooperate to define a storage space 22. As illustrated, the top wall 17 of the primary server 12 includes four exterior walls 24a, 24b, 24c, and 24d, which are disposed about the upper opening 19 into the interior sidewall 18 disposed therein. It must be noted that although the illustrated primary server 12 includes a top wall 17 formed of four exterior walls 24a-24d, it is within the terms of the embodiment that there only be a sidewall having an interior portion and an exterior portion, as shown in Figure 4.

[032] The interior sidewall 18 encompasses and extends downward from the

top wall 17. The first rim 14 extends around the opening 19 into the interior sidewall 18. The interior sidewall 18 extends upward and laterally outward from the bottom interior surface 20 so that the interior sidewall intersects the top wall to provide a first rim 14 that forms a peripheral flange. The base 23 includes a bottom interior surface 20 disposed such that the interior sidewall 18 intersects with the bottom interior surface.

[033] Figure 2 illustrates the one or more condiment pockets 16a and 16b disposed over the storage space or chamber 22 of the primary server 12. Each of the condiment pockets 16a and 16b includes a convex shaped rear wall 26, a forward projecting wall 28, a bottom wall 30, and a top wall 34. A storage chamber 31 is formed in the space between the convex shaped rear wall 26, the forward projecting wall 28, the bottom wall 30, and the top wall 34. A second rim 32 extends about an inner surface of the top wall 34 forming a perimeter about the storage chamber 31. The connector element or top wall 34 projects outward from the second rim 32 and enables the condiment pockets 16a and 16b to be suspended within the storage chamber 22 of the primary server 12.

[034] The connector element 34 extends outward from the rim 32 and enables the condiment pockets 16a and 16b to be suspended within the storage chamber 22 of the primary server 12. The connector element 34 includes a lip or projection 35 extending downward from an outer edge 34a forming the outer end of the connector element 34 away from the second rim 32. The lip or projection 35 extend downward from the outer edge 34a of the connector element 34 in the direction of the bottom wall 30

and are designed to engage the exterior walls 24a, 24b, 24c, and 24d of the primary server 12 to temporarily secure the condiment cup thereto. To enhance the securing of the condiment pockets 16a and 16b to the exterior walls 24a, 24b, 24c, and 24d of the primary server 12, the lip 35 be shaped to follow the contour of the outer edge 34a forming the outer end of the connector element 34. The condiment pockets 16a and 16b can be mounted to the storage chamber 22 of the primary server 12 so that the convex shaped rear wall 26 engages the interior sidewall 18 and the lip 35 engages the exterior walls 24a, 24b, 24c, and 24d.

[035] The convex shaped rear curved wall 26 is adjoined to the forward projecting wall 28 of the one or more condiment pockets 16a and 16b, and together taper down from the rim 32 to the bottom wall 30. The convex shaped rear curved wall 26 is designed to be disposed flush against the generally concave sidewall 18 of the primary server. Thus, when the condiment pockets are suspended from the exterior walls 24a, 24b, 24c, and 24d of the primary server 12, the projections 35 engage the exterior walls 24a, 24b, 24c, and 24d and secure the convex shaped rear curved wall 26 flush against the generally concave sidewall 18 of the primary server.

[036] Referring to Figures 5 and 6, there is illustrated a second embodiment of the present invention where the primary server 102 has a plurality of convex shaped interior walls 104 with a rim 106 and a bottom interior surface 108 that cooperate to define a storage space 110. As illustrated, the primary server 102 includes a plurality of convex shaped exterior walls 112 which contain the plurality of convex shaped interior walls 104

therein.

- [037] Figures 5 and 6 illustrates the one or more condiment pockets 116a and 116b. Each of the condiment pockets 116a and 116b includes a convex rear wall 118, a forward projecting walls 120 and 122, a bottom wall 124, a rim 126 disposed about the storage chamber and a connector 128 forming a rear wall to suspend the condiment pockets from the exterior walls 112 of the primary server 102.
- [038] A slot 130 is formed in the space between the convex shaped rear exterior wall 118 the underside of the connector 128. The condiment pockets 116a and 116b are designed to be suspended within the storage space 110 of the primary server 102 by hanging the slot 130 of the pockets 116a and 116b on the rim 106 primary server. The connector 128 extends outward from the rim 128 and includes a lip or projection 130 extending downward in the direction of the bottom wall 124 and designed to engage the exterior walls 112 of the primary server 102 to temporarily secure the condiment cup thereto.
- [039] The convex shaped rear curved wall 118 is adjoined to the forward projecting walls 120 and 122 of the one or more condiment pockets 116a and 116b, and together taper down to the bottom wall 124. The convex shaped rear curved wall 118 is designed to be disposed flush against the generally concave sidewall 112 of the primary server 102. Thus, when the condiment pockets are suspended from the exterior walls 112 of the primary server 102, the projections 130 engage the exterior walls 112 and secure the convex shaped rear curved wall 118 flush against the generally

concave sidewall 112 of the primary server.

[040] Although the invention has been shown and described with respect to a certain preferred embodiment or embodiments, certain equivalent alterations and modifications will occur to others skilled in the art upon the reading and understanding of this specification and the annexed drawings. In particular regard to the various functions performed by the above described components (assemblies, devices, etc.) the terms (including a reference to a "means") used to describe such components are intended to correspond, unless otherwise indicated, to any component which performs the specified function of the described component (i.e., that is functionally equivalent), even though not structurally equivalent to the disclosed structure which performs the function in the herein illustrated exemplary embodiments of the invention. In addition, while a particular feature of the invention may have been disclosed with respect to only one of several embodiments, such feature may be combined with one or more features of the other embodiments as may be desired and advantageous for any given or particular application.

In the claims:

1. An improved tableware to contain main ingredients and condiments of a meal separately, comprising;

a primary receptacle having a top wall, a plurality of exterior walls intersecting the top wall at an upper end of the exterior walls and a bottom exterior surface intersecting a lower end of the exterior walls;

the primary receptacle having an interior sidewall extending from a bottom interior surface located at the lower end of the interior sidewall to the top wall located at the upper end of the interior sidewall to form a storage space within the interior sidewall;

a first rim about the upper end of the interior sidewall and the intersection with top wall; and

one or more removable pockets, detachably suspended from the first rim of the primary server into the storage space within the interior sidewall.

2. The tableware of claim 1 wherein the primary receptacle and the removable pockets are constructed of a strong and rigid material.

3. The tableware of claim 1 wherein the interior sidewall of the primary receptacle forms a convex surface between the lower end of the interior sidewall and the upper end of the interior sidewall.

4. The tableware of claim 3 wherein the removable pockets mount to the top wall extending from the first rim to the intersection of the top wall and the upper end of the exterior walls.

5. The tableware of claim 4 wherein the removable pockets have a convex shaped rear wall, a forward projecting wall extending from either end of the convex shaped rear wall, a bottom wall disposed at the lower end of the forward projecting wall and the convex shaped rear wall.

6. The tableware of claim 5 wherein the removable pockets have a convex shaped rear wall that conforms to the convex surface of the interior sidewall of the primary receptacle.

7. The tableware of claim 6 wherein the removable pockets have a storage chamber disposed within the convex shaped rear wall, the forward projecting wall, and the bottom wall.

8. The tableware of claim 8 wherein the removable pockets have a second rim disposed about an upper end of the storage chamber.

9. The tableware of claim 8 wherein the removable pockets include a connector element which projects outward from the second rim and enables the condiment pockets to be suspended within the storage chamber of the primary server.

10. The tableware of claim 9 wherein the connector element which extends outward from the second rim includes a projection extending downward from an outer edge forming the far end of the connector element away from the rim.

11. The tableware of claim 10 wherein projection extending downward from the outer edge of the connector element in the direction of the bottom wall engages

the exterior walls of the primary server to temporarily secure the condiment cup thereto.

12. The tableware of claim 11 wherein the exterior walls of the primary server have a lip extending outward from the upper end of the exterior walls to engage the lip extending downward from the outer edge of the connector element.

13. The tableware of claim 12 wherein the convex shaped rear curved wall is adjoined to the forward projecting wall of the one or more removable pockets, and together taper down to the bottom wall whereby the convex shaped rear curved wall can be disposed flush against the concave sidewall of the primary server.

14. An improved tableware to contain main ingredients and condiments of a meal separately, comprising;

a primary receptacle having a top wall, a plurality of convex shaped exterior walls intersecting the top wall at an upper end of the exterior walls and a bottom exterior surface intersecting a lower end of the exterior walls;

the primary receptacle having a plurality of convex shaped interior sidewalls extending from a bottom interior surface located at the lower end of the convex shaped interior sidewalls to the top wall located at the upper end of the convex shaped interior sidewalls to form a storage space within the plurality of convex shaped interior sidewalls;

a first rim about the upper end of the convex shaped interior sidewalls and their intersection with top wall; and

one or more removable pockets, detachably suspended from the first rim of the primary server into the storage space within the convex shaped interior sidewalls.

15. The tableware of claim 14 wherein each of the one or more condiment pockets have a convex shaped rear wall, a forward projecting wall extending from either end of the convex shaped rear wall, a bottom wall disposed at the lower end of the forward projecting wall and the convex shaped rear wall.

16. The tableware of claim 15 wherein each of the removable pockets mount to the top wall extending from the first rim to the intersection of the top wall and the upper end of the convex shaped exterior walls.

17. The tableware of claim 16 wherein the removable pockets have a convex shaped rear wall, a forward projecting wall extending from either end of the convex shaped rear wall, a bottom wall disposed at the lower end of the forward projecting wall and the convex shaped rear wall.

18. The tableware of claim 17 wherein the removable pockets have a convex shaped rear wall that conforms to each of the convex shaped interior sidewalls of the primary receptacle.

19. The tableware of claim 18 wherein the removable pockets have a storage chamber disposed within the convex shaped rear wall, the forward projecting wall, and the bottom wall.

20. The tableware of claim 19 wherein the removable pockets include a connector element which projects outward from the second rim and enables the condiment pockets and to be suspended within the storage chamber of the primary server.

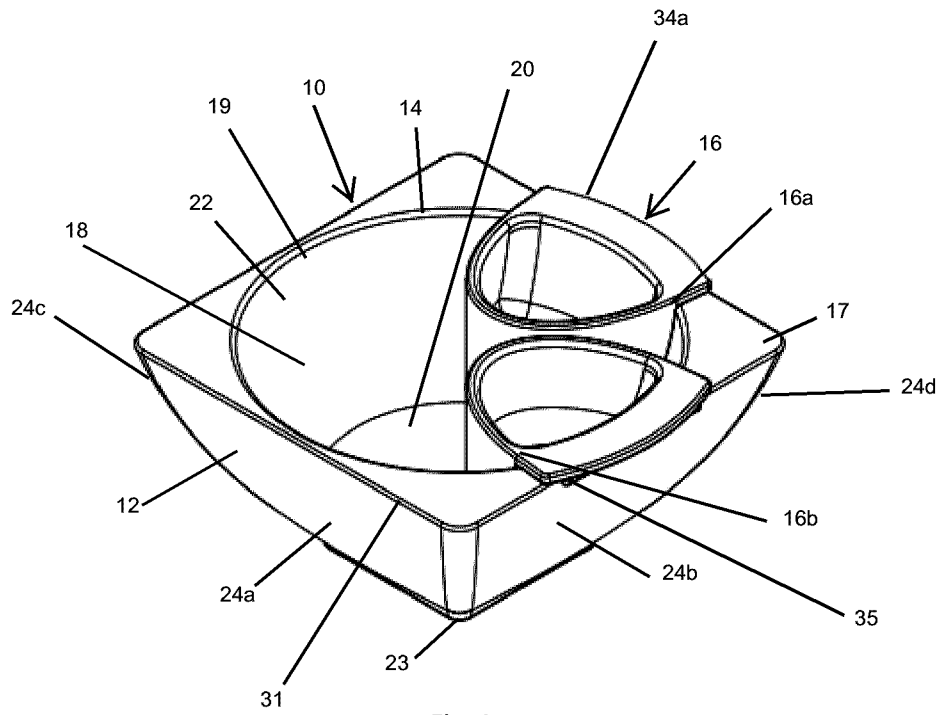


Fig. 1

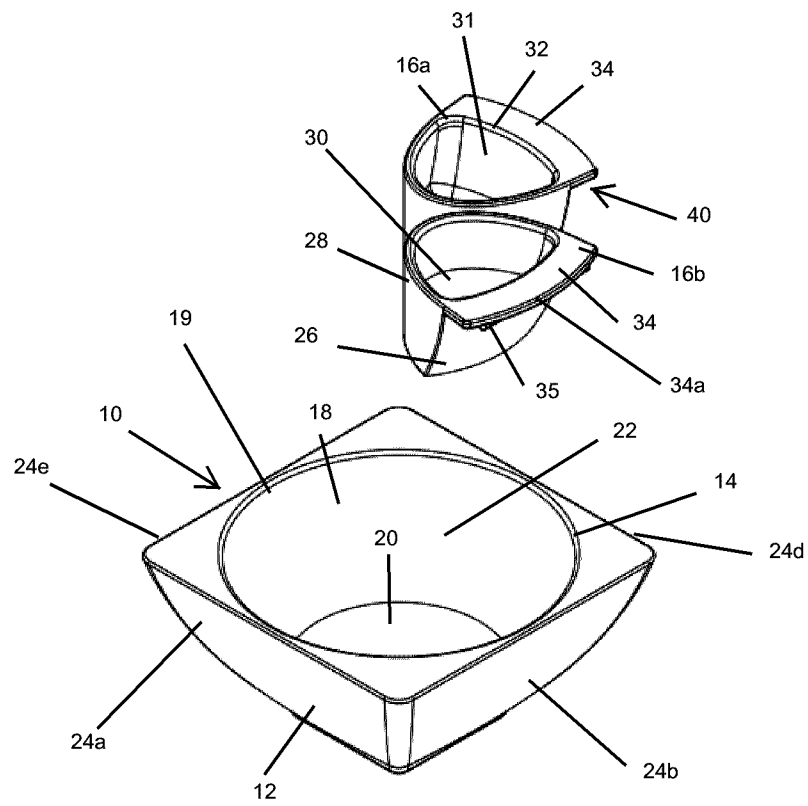


Fig. 2

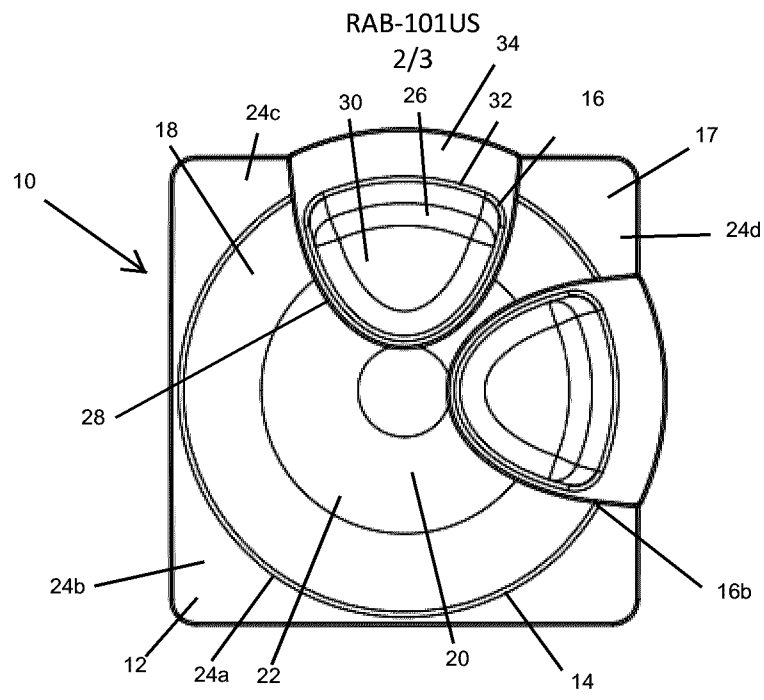


Fig. 3

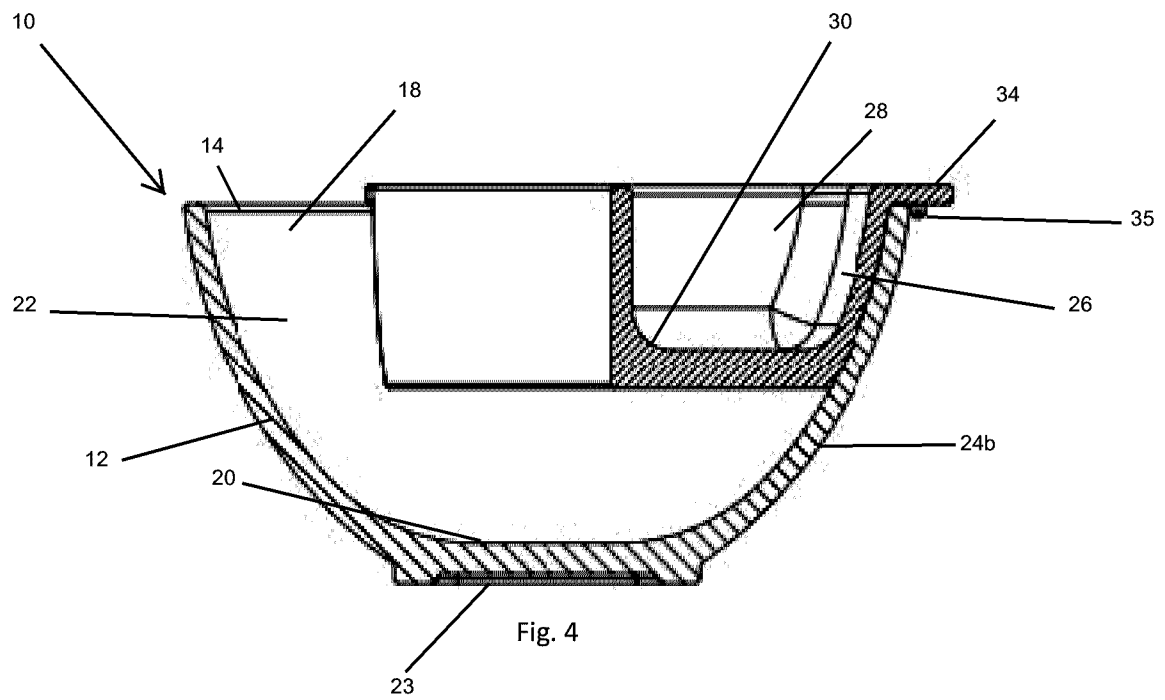


Fig. 4

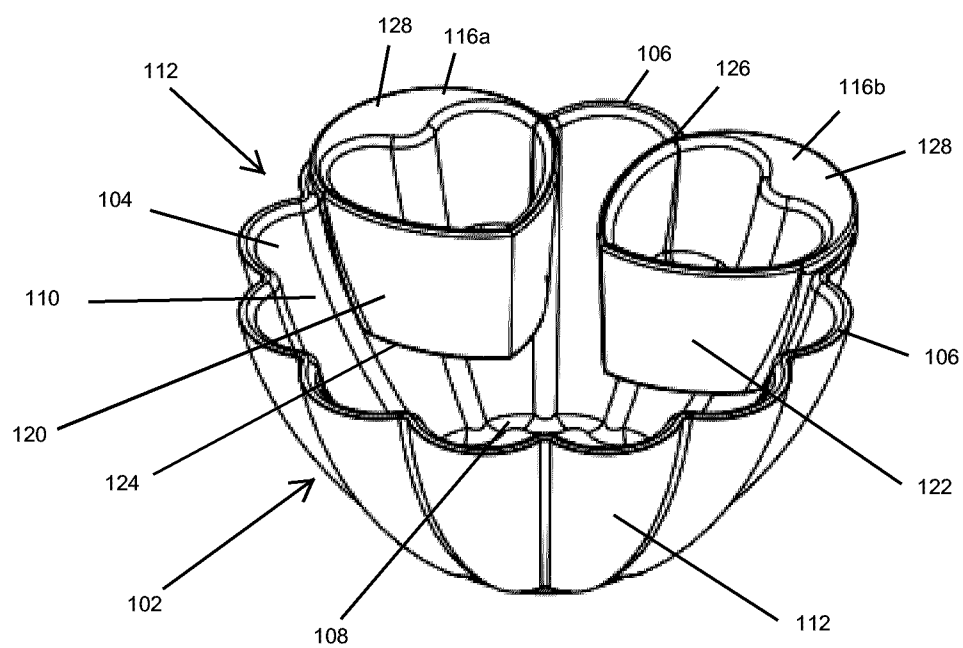


Fig 5

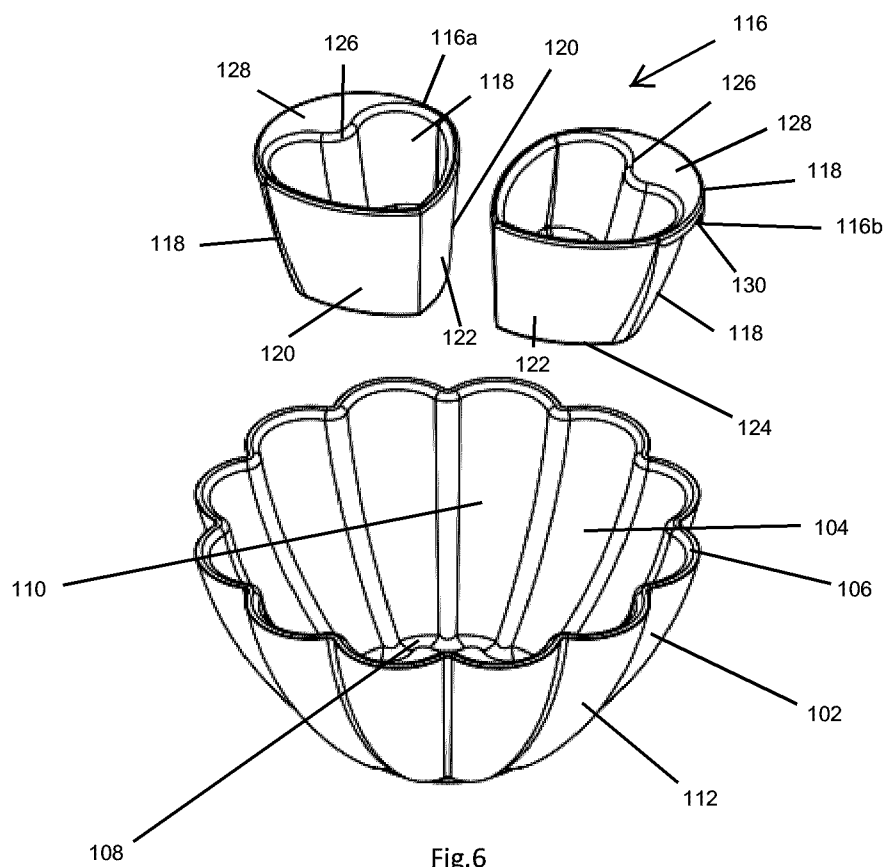


Fig.6

