APPARATUS FOR SINGLE-HANDED TRANSPORT OF POTS AND PANS

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ABSTRACT

A single-handed porter for carrying pots, pans and the like. The porter generally comprises a length of fabric forming a flexible panel that creates a central pocket to hold a heat resistant plate for supporting a load such as a pot or pan. A pair of dowels inserted lengthwise into looped sleeves of the flexible panel form the handles for carrying. Cookware is seated atop the plate and the dimensions of the dowels and the fabric create the proper balance for carrying the cookware with minimum risk of spillage. The device provides excellent lateral support, stability and heat insulation when carrying full pots and pans with one hand, and can be cut and sewn from a simple fabric pattern design, thereby allowing easy and economical manufacturing.
APPARATUS FOR SINGLE-HANDED TRANSPORT OF POTS AND PANS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS


BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the invention

[0003] The present invention relates to kitchen accessories and, more particularly, to an economical cookware porter for single-handed support of hot or cold pots or pans.

[0004] 2. Description of the Background

[0005] One of the most accident-prone situations in the kitchen arises when one needs to move cookware containing food from one place to another. This is especially true in commercial catering situations where larger pots and pans are used. For example, when prepared food is finished it must often be transported to an affair. This typically requires two hot pads and two hands (one for each handle). The pot must be put down in order to navigate common obstacles such as, for instance, opening a car door. In these and many other situations, it is desirable to provide a one-hand support for pots and pans that eliminates the need for hot pads. There are many other known object carriers, many of which are simply not economically feasible, and none of which are suitable for transporting large hot kitchen pots and pans.

[0006] For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5169199 discloses an object carrier with a wrap-around strap member and a hook-and-fabric-type fastener. A ring is attached to one end of the strap member and the hook element of the hook-and-fabric-type fastener is attached to the other end. There is a handle on the external surface near the ring. The strap member is wrapped tightly about an object to be carried, with the handle accessible for one hand carrying.

[0007] Unfortunately, the above-described carrier fails to provide the lateral support and stability needed to carry full pots and pans. It would be greatly advantageous to provide a one-hand carry sling-type porter with integral heat insulation that can be cut and sewn from a simple fabric pattern design, which is especially stable to carry even while supporting a heavy and unstable load such as a 12"×20" aluminum pan of food.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] It is, therefore, an object of the present invention to provide a sling-type porter for kitchen cookware that assures the lateral support and stability needed to carry full pots and pans.

[0009] It is another object to provide a one-hand carry porter as described above with integral heat insulation that eliminates the need for hot pads and hot plates.

[0010] It is still another object to provide a one-hand porter as described above that can be cut and sewn from a simple fabric pattern design, and which lends itself to easy and economical manufacturing.

[0011] According to the present invention, the above-described and other objects are accomplished by providing a single-handed porter for carrying standard-sized and oversized cookware. The porter generally comprises a rectangular or circular fabric panel formed with a rectangular or circular central pocket. The fabric extends outward on each side of the pocket by approximately the width of the pocket, and terminates at looped sleeves at the opposing ends. A heat resistant rectangular or circular plate is inserted in the pocket of the panel for supporting a load such as a pot or pan. The pocket may be open to facilitate removal of the plate (to facilitate cleaning and/or for use as a standalone hot plate), or alternatively, the plate may be sewn permanently into the pocket. When carried, cookware seated in the porters atop the plate is suspended by handles each comprising a length of dowel inserted lengthwise into the looped sleeves of the flexible panel. The device provides excellent lateral support, stability and heat insulation when carrying full cookware with one hand.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments and certain modifications thereof when taken together with the accompanying drawings in which:

[0013] FIG. 1 is a front perspective photo of the single-handed cookware porter 2 according to one embodiment of the present invention specifically adapted for carrying square or rectangular cookware commonly referred to as pans.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a front exploded sketch of the single-handed cookware porter 2 as in FIG. 1.

[0015] FIG. 3 is a side view of the single-handed cookware porter 2 as in FIGS. 1-2.

[0016] FIG. 4 is a pattern view illustrating the panel sections and dimensions needed to form the single-handed cookware porter 2 as in FIGS. 1-3.

[0017] FIG. 5 is an exploded view of the single-handed cookware porter according to a second embodiment of the present invention specifically adapted for carrying round or elliptical cookware commonly referred to as pots.

[0018] FIG. 6 is a front view of the single-handed cookware porter as in FIG. 5.

[0019] FIG. 7 is a view of the base of the single-handed cookware porter as in FIG. 5.

[0020] FIG. 8 is a pattern view illustrating the panel sections and dimensions needed to form the single-handed cookware porter 3 as in FIGS. 5-7.

[0021] DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0022] FIG. 1 is a front perspective photo of the single-handed cookware porter 2 according to one embodiment of the present invention specifically adapted for carrying square or rectangular cookware commonly referred to as pans. Cookware porter 2 generally comprises a rectangular fabric panel 6 formed with a rectangular central pocket 24. A rectangular heat resistant plate 12 (obscured in FIG. 1) is inserted into the pocket 24 of the porter 2 for supporting a
load such as a pan. The fabric panel 6 extends outward from the pocket 24 to a pair of looped sleeves 30 at either end, and a pair of handles 42, 44 reinforce the respective sleeves 30. The fabric panel 6 is formed with two recessions 32 (as will be described) centrally and directly beneath the handles 42, 44 to provide a clearance for grasping the handles together with one hand. In using the porter 2 in the manner shown in FIG. 1, a pan, other kitchen item, or combination thereof may be placed on the plate-reinforced area of fabric panel 6. The user grasps the handles 42, 44 together as shown, thereby suspending the transported items in the porter 2 for single-handed transport. The device provides superior lateral support, stability and heat insulation.

The fabric panel 6 extends outward from the pocket 24 to a pair of looped sleeves 30 at either end, and a pair of handles 42, 44 reinforce the respective sleeves 30. The fabric panel 6 is formed with two recessions 32 (as will be described) centrally and directly beneath the handles 42, 44 to provide a clearance for grasping the handles together with one hand. In using the porter 2 in the manner shown in FIG. 1, a pan, other kitchen item, or combination thereof may be placed on the plate-reinforced area of fabric panel 6. The user grasps the handles 42, 44 together as shown, thereby suspending the transported items in the porter 2 for single-handed transport. The device provides superior lateral support, stability and heat insulation.

[0023] FIG. 2 is a front exploded sketch of the one-hand cookware sling 2 as in FIG. 1. The pair of handles 42, 44 may be formed from two wooden dowels of length corresponding to the width of the fabric panel 6. The handles 42, 44 are inserted lengthwise into the pair of looped sleeves 30 at either end of fabric panel 6, thereby leaving a central section of handles 42, 44 exposed within of sleeves 30. Preferably, the looped sleeves 30 are left open so that the handles 42, 44 may be easily removed for laundering of the fabric. Likewise, the heat resistant plate 12 is inserted into pocket 24 for support, and pocket 24 is left open for removal of plate 12 for laundering.

[0024] FIG. 3 is a side view of the porter 2 as in FIGS. 1-2. Recesses 32 occupy a central one-third of the upper margins of the fabric panel 6 and extend downwardly a short distance beneath the sleeves 30. This exposes the central section of handles 42, 44 and provides a clearance directly beneath to allow gripping of handles 42, 44. This also prompts the user to grip the handles 42, 44 at a fulcrum calculated with respect to the plate 12 in order to properly balance the expected load.

[0025] FIG. 4 is a pattern view illustrating the panel sections and dimensions needed to form a balanced porter 2 as in FIGS. 1-3. To construct the porter 2, it is best to begin with a large rectangular fabric blank (approximately 46″ × 22″ is suitable), and canvas or denim are suggested materials. The fabric blank is cut with rectangular 6.5″ × 4″ apertures at opposing ends to form the recesses. The end margins of the blank are then folded over upon themselves, bisecting the apertures to leave 1.25″ sleeves 30 and 6.5″ by 2″ central recesses 32. A smaller 9″ by 21″ fabric panel is then sewn around three sides directly to the inner face of the larger fabric blank to form the open pocket 24. Reinforcement seams may be incorporated as desired. A 20″ by 9″ heat resistant plate 12 is then inserted into the open pocket 24, and plate 12 may be standard ¾″ plywood which has excellent heat resistant properties (although heat resistant plastic is also acceptable). Two 24″ lengths of ¾″ wooden dowels may be used as the handles 42, 44, and these are inserted into the sleeves 30 to yield the finished product. The sides of the porter 2 may be embroidered or otherwise adorned with a caterer’s promotional logo. The foregoing dimensions will result in a porter 2 that is 41″ long, 22″ wide, and fully capable of supporting and balancing four standard 8½″ by 12″ aluminum pans stacked 2 by 2, or two standard 24″ by 12″ pans, such pans being of common size gradations as will be appreciated to one skilled in the art.

[0026] It should be obvious that the dimensions may be altered so long as scale is maintained. In addition, the relative lengths of the components may be altered without sacrificing balance. For instance, shortening to a 41″ by 14″ porter is easily accomplished with a 9″ × 12″ plate 12, and two 10″ dowels as handles 42, 44. This will provide capacity for three 8½″ by 12″ aluminum pans in a stacked configuration.

[0027] FIG. 5 is an exploded view of a single-handed cookware porter 3 according to a second embodiment of the present invention specifically adapted for carrying round or elliptical cookware commonly referred to as pots. Cookware porter 3 comprises an elliptical fabric panel 52 formed with a circular central pocket 54. A circular heat resistant plate 13 is inserted into the central pocket 54 of porter 3 for supporting a load such as a pot. The fabric panel 52 extends outward from the pocket 54 to a pair of looped sleeves 56 at either end, and a pair of handles 82, 84 reinforce the respective sleeves 56. The fabric panel 52 is formed with two recessions 72 centrally and directly beneath the handles 82, 84 to provide a clearance for grasping the handles together with one hand.

[0028] FIG. 6 is a front view of the single-handed cookware porter 3 as in FIG. 5. Four fabric flaps 60, rectangular in shape and of the same material as the fabric panel 52, are attached at evenly spaced intervals along the border of the fabric panel 52 in the intermediate area between the central pocket 54 and the looped sleeves 56 by stitching one end of each flap 64 to the fabric panel 52. The end opposite the stitched end of the fabric flaps 60 attaches to the fabric panel 52 by means of a hook and pile mechanism 62 well known in the prior art. In the closed position, the fabric flaps 60 seal the gaps in the front and rear of the Porter created when the user grasps the handles 82, 84, and thereby securely closes the porter on all sides.

[0029] As seen in FIG. 7, the circular central pocket 54 of cookware porter 3 contains a slotted opening 92 running the length of the diameter of the central pocket 54 to receive the circular heat resistant plate 13 (obscured in FIG. 7). The circular heat resistant plate is likewise removable for laundering of the fabric.

[0030] FIG. 8 is a pattern view illustrating the panel sections and dimensions needed to form a balance porter 3 as in FIGS. 5-8. To construct the porter 3, it is best to begin with a large elliptical fabric blank (approximately 55″ × 12″ is suitable), and canvas or denim are suggested materials. The fabric blank is cut with rectangular apertures at opposing ends to form the recesses. The end margins of the blank are then folded over upon themselves, bisecting the apertures to leave 1.25″ sleeves 56 and 4″ by 2″ central recesses 72. A smaller 12″ by 12″ fabric panel with a slotted opening running the length of the diameter of the fabric is then sewn directly to the outer face of the larger fabric blank to form the open pocket 54. An 11″ by 11″ heat resistant plate 13 is then inserted into the open pocket 54. Two 12″ lengths of ¾″ wooden dowels may be used as the handles 82, 84 and these are inserted into the sleeves 56 to yield the finished product. The foregoing dimensions will result in a porter that is 12″ in diameter at the base by 16″ high, and fully capable of supporting and balancing up to four 9″ round pans or one 11″ round cooking pot.

[0031] The porters 2 and 3 as described above give superior lateral support, stability and heat insulation, and can be carried single-handed with minimum effort or risk of
spillage. Moreover, porters 2 and 3 are formed from a simple fabric pattern design, thereby allowing easy and economical manufacturing.

[0032] Having now fully set forth the preferred embodiments and certain modifications of the concept underlying the present invention, various other embodiments as well as certain variations and modifications of the embodiments herein shown and described will obviously occur to those skilled in the art upon becoming familiar with said underlying concept. It is to be understood, therefore, that the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically set forth in the appended claims:

I claim:

1. A single-handed porter for carrying pots, pans and the like, comprising:
   a flexible panel formed from a length of rectangular fabric, said fabric having a central pocket and opposing sides extending outward therefrom to looped sleeves at opposing ends;
   a rectangular heat resistant plate inserted in the pocket of said panel for supporting a load; and
   a pair of handles each comprising a length of dowel inserted lengthwise into the looped sleeves of the flexible panel;
   whereby said panel provides lateral support, stability and heat insulation for carrying full pots and pans with one hand and without need of hot pads.

2. The single-handed porter of claim 1, wherein said rectangular fabric is denim.

3. The single-handed porter of claim 1, wherein said rectangular fabric is canvas.

4. The single-handed porter of claim 1, wherein said flexible panel is formed with two recesses centrally and directly beneath the handles to provide a clearance for grasping said handles.

5. The single-handed porter according to claim 1, wherein the looped sleeves are left open so that the handles may be easily removed for laundering of the fabric.

6. The single-handed porter of claim 1, wherein a smaller fabric panel is sewn around three sides to the inner face of said flexible panel to form the open pocket.

7. The single-handed porter of claim 1, wherein said rectangular heat resistant plate is comprised of standard \( \frac{1}{4} \)" plywood.

8. The single-handed porter according to claim 1, wherein said heat resistant plate is comprised of heat resistant plastic.

9. The single-handed porter according to claim 1, wherein said rectangular flexible panel is embroidered or otherwise adorned for advertising or aesthetic purposes.

10. A single-handed porter for carrying pots, pans and the like, comprising:
   a flexible panel formed from a length of elliptical fabric, said fabric having a central pocket and opposing sides extending outward therefrom to looped sleeves at opposing ends;
   a circular heat resistant plate inserted in the pocket of said panel for supporting a load; and
   a pair of handles each comprising a length of dowel inserted lengthwise into the looped sleeves of the flexible panel;
   whereby said panel provides lateral support, stability and heat insulation for carrying full pots and pans with one hand and without need of hot pads.

11. The single-handed porter of claim 10, wherein said elliptical fabric is denim.

12. The single-handed porter of claim 10, wherein said elliptical fabric is canvas.

13. The single-handed porter of claim 10, wherein said flexible panel is formed with two recesses centrally and directly beneath the handles to provide a clearance for grasping said handles.

14. The single-handed porter according to claim 10, wherein the looped sleeves are left open so that the handles may be easily removed for laundering of the fabric.

15. The single-handed porter of claim 10, wherein a plurality of closure flaps are attached to said opposing sides of said flexible panel for securing said opposing sides in a closed position.

16. The closure flaps of claim 15, wherein each flap is stitched to a margin of said opposing sides and carries a hook-type fastener means on an opposite side along each of the margins running perpendicularly to said handles, said flaps being stitched to said panel on one end and bearing a hook type fastener on an opposite end, and a pile type fastener affixed to the second of said opposing sides of said flexible panel such that said hook fastener is aligned to mate with said pile fastener thereby closing the gap between the two opposing sides and securing the pots and pans inside the porter.

17. The single-handed porter of claim 10, wherein said circular rectangular heat resistant plate is comprised of standard \( \frac{1}{4} \)" plywood.

18. The single-handed porter according to claim 10, wherein said circular heat resistant plate is comprised of heat resistant plastic.

19. The single-handed porter according to claim 10, wherein said elliptical flexible panel is embroidered or otherwise adorned for advertising or aesthetic purposes.

20. The single-handed porter according to claim 10, wherein a smaller circular fabric panel with a slotted opening running the diameter of the fabric is sewn to the outer face of said flexible panel to form the open pocket.

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