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(54) **SLOPED PLATE WITH RESERVOIR**

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(57)

ABSTRACT

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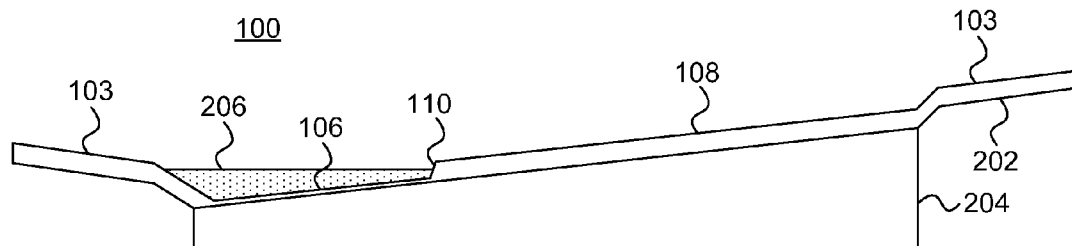
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Plates are shown that include a sloped support that supports an eating surface; a raised border around the eating surface; and a reservoir foamed as a depression in the eating surface at the bottom of the slope, such that the depression and an angle of the sloped support allow fluids to collect in the reservoir.



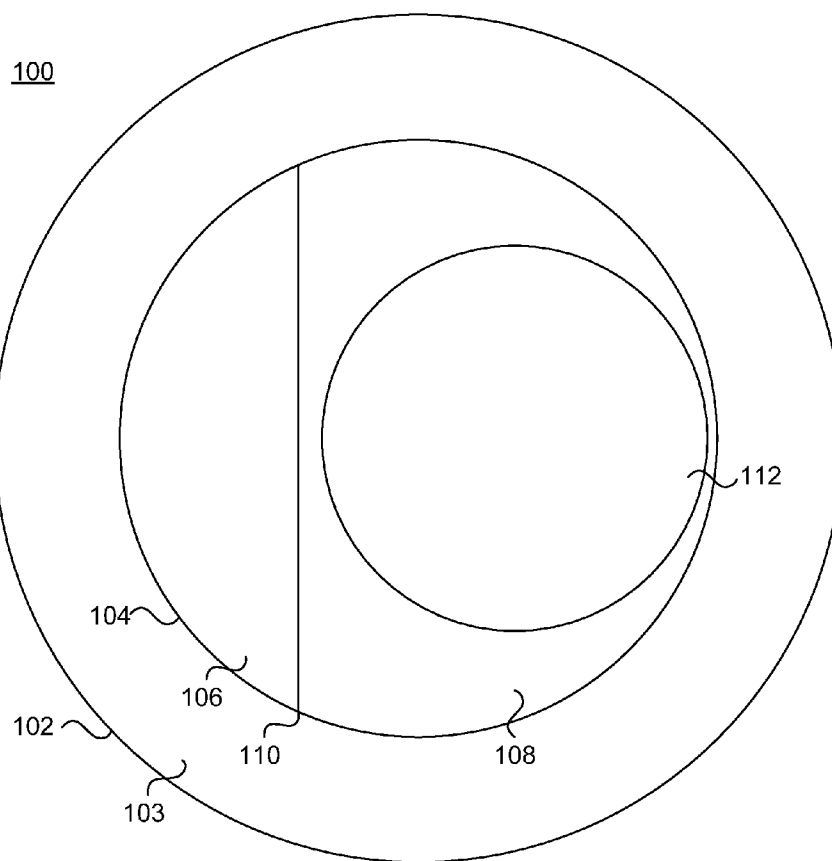


FIG. 1

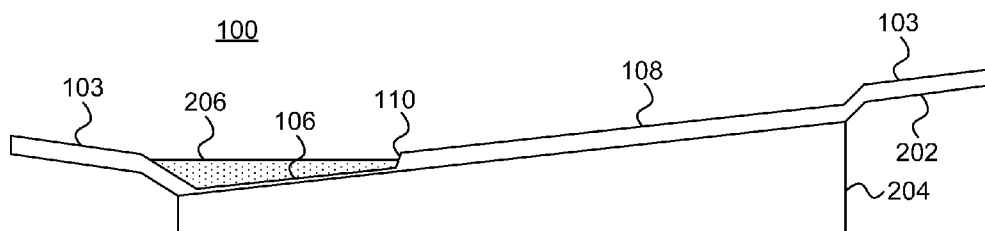


FIG. 2

SLOPED PLATE WITH RESERVOIR

BACKGROUND

[0001] 1. Technical Field

[0002] The present invention relates to kitchenware and, more particularly to a serving and eating plate that includes a reservoir to collect fluids for dipping.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] Pancakes, the consummate American breakfast food, are limited by the dishware used to eat them. Existing plates have a flat eating surface that is not conducive to optimal application of syrups and sauces. In particular, existing plates pool syrups in the same area as is used to hold the pancakes themselves, frequently resulting in oversaturation of the pancake material.

[0005] Attempts have been made to address a similar problem in the field of greasy foods, where it is often desirable to provide drainage for cooked meats, such that grease and oils are separated from the food. Particular attention may be given to U.S. Pat. No. 5,176,282 to Rapaz. The '282 patent illustrates a tilted eating surface having a set of parallel grooves that allow drainage to a compartment, with the compartment being separated from the eating surface by a dividing wall.

[0006] Similarly, U.S. Pat. No. 6,047,845 to Rapaz shows a tilted surface where a drainage compartment is accessible only through a grate or a hole in a dividing wall. The '845 patent goes to even greater lengths to separate out the drainage area from the primary eating surface.

[0007] Neither of these attempts provides an adequate solution for the consumption of pancakes. In both cases, attempts are made to separate a drainage area from the eating surface, because the entire goal of the Rapaz patents is to remove what is essentially a waste fluid. The Rapaz patents make no provision for users who might wish to keep the drained fluids easily accessible.

SUMMARY

[0008] A plate is shown that includes a sloped support that supports an eating surface; a raised border around the eating surface; and a reservoir formed as a depression in the eating surface at the bottom of the slope, such that the depression and an angle of the sloped support allow fluids to collect in the reservoir.

[0009] A further plate is shown that includes a sloped support that supports an eating surface; a raised border around the eating surface; and a reservoir, continuous with the eating surface, formed as a depression extending below a bottom plane of the eating surface at the bottom of the slope, such that the depression and an angle of the sloped support allow fluids to collect in the reservoir, wherein a border between the reservoir and a remainder of the eating surface is an unobstructed decline.

[0010] A further plate is shown that includes a sloped support that supports an eating surface, said sloped support comprising a hollow cylindrical shell that has a planar cut along the top surface to faun the angle of the sloped support; a raised border around the eating surface comprising a grippable extension of the eating surface; and a reservoir, continuous with the eating surface, formed as a depression extending below a bottom plane of the eating surface at the bottom of the slope, such that the depression and an angle of the sloped support allow fluids to collect in the reservoir, wherein a border between the reservoir and a remainder of the eating

surface is an unobstructed decline and wherein the raised border forms a sloped bottom surface of the reservoir.

[0011] These and other features and advantages will become apparent from the following detailed description of illustrative embodiments thereof, which is to be read in connection with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0012] The disclosure will provide details in the following description of preferred embodiments with reference to the following figures wherein:

[0013] FIG. 1 is a top-down view of a sloped plate having a reservoir according to the present principles.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a side, cross-sectional view of a sloped plate having a reservoir according to the present principles.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0015] Embodiments of the present principles address the syrup drainage problem by providing an angled surface with a recessed reservoir. No barriers are put in place to prevent easy sliding of pancake between the eating surface and the syrup reservoir, allowing users to have immediate and effortless access to whatever syrups and sauces they may desire.

[0016] Referring now to the drawings in which like numerals represent the same or similar elements and initially to FIG. 1, a top-down view of a sloped plate 100 with a reservoir 106 is shown. The plate 100 has an outer radius 102 and an inner radius 104, with the space between said outer radius 102 and inner radius 104 being an area 103 designed for gripping. The gripping area 103 may be flat or may be contoured to provide a superior grip. The gripping area 103 further provides a bordering area to prevent accidental spilling. It should be recognized that, although circular plates are described and shown herein, it is contemplated that any geometric shape may be used to form plate 100.

[0017] Within the inner radius 104, the plate 100 is divided into an eating surface 108 and a reservoir 106. It is specifically contemplated that the division 110 between the eating surface 108 and the reservoir 106 is merely a decline into a depressed area of the plate, without any barrier to the free flow of fluid and food between the two surfaces. As will be shown below, the eating surface 108 is oriented on a decline, with an angle such that viscous fluids such as syrups will descend into the reservoir 106. The eating surface 108 may be used to hold, e.g., pancakes 112, although any appropriate food or other substance may be used including, without limitation, French toast, sausage, bacon, biscuits, corn on the cob, French fries, lobster, and French bread. It is contemplated that the reservoir 106 may be used for any suitable dipping fluid including, without limitation, maple syrup, butter, gravy, ketchup, and mustard.

[0018] The material for plate 100 may be any appropriate dishware substance. In particular, it is contemplated that the plate may be composed of clay, ceramic, glass, plastics, metal, and wood. It is specifically contemplated that an earthenware plate 100 will be microwave and dishwasher safe, while providing sufficient mass that the plate 100 will not slide while the user manipulates food on the plate 100.

[0019] Referring now to FIG. 2, a side, cross-sectional view of the plate 100 is shown. It is contemplated that the plate 100 may be formed from one unitary piece, or may be formed from a surface part 202 and a support part 204. In the latter

case, the support part **204** may be formed as a wedge shape, allowing the flat surface part **202** to rest on the support part **204** at an angle. Reservoir **106** is shown as containing a fluid **206**, where reservoir **106** is created by the depression between border **110** and gripping area **103** as well as the slope of the support part **204**. The border **110** does not include any raised lip or wall, allowing fluids placed on eating surface **108** to flow unimpeded into reservoir **106**. This allows dipping of food into the fluid **206**, and even direct application of fluids to the food on the eating surface **108**, without oversaturating such foods.

[0020] The reservoir **106** is not limited to the depth of the surface part **202**. Instead, reservoir **106** may extend below the bottom plane of the surface part **202** and may occupy some of the volume of the support part **204**. Support part **204** may be a hollow cylinder, cut at a slope as shown, to make space for reservoir **106**.

[0021] In one specific embodiment, it is contemplated that the plate **100** may have an outer diameter of about 12 inches and an inner diameter of about 8.75 inches. In this embodiment, it is contemplated that the surface part **202** may have a thickness of about 0.25 to 0.3 inches, with a reservoir **106** that takes at most about 1.75 inches of the inner diameter and is about 0.2 inches depressed with respect to the eating surface **108**. The support part **204** may be a roughly cylindrical shell, having a thickness of about 0.5 inches, with a sloped cut of about 5 degrees. This angle is steep enough to cause viscous fluids such as syrups to flow into the reservoir **106**, while still maintaining enough friction to keep food on the eating surface **108**.

[0022] Having described preferred embodiments of a sloped plate with reservoir (which are intended to be illustrative and not limiting), it is noted that modifications and variations can be made by persons skilled in the art in light of the above teachings. It is therefore to be understood that changes may be made in the particular embodiments disclosed which are within the scope of the invention as outlined by the appended claims. Having thus described aspects of the invention, with the details and particularity required by the patent laws, what is claimed and desired protected by Letters Patent is set forth in the appended claims.

1. A plate, comprising:
 - a sloped support that supports a circular eating surface;
 - a raised border around the eating surface; and
 - a reservoir formed as a depression in the eating surface at the bottom of the slope, such that the depression and an angle of the sloped support allow fluids to collect in the reservoir, and wherein the reservoir occupies a geometrical segment of the circular eating surface.
2. The plate of claim 1, wherein the reservoir is formed continuous with the eating surface.
3. The plate of claim 1, wherein the depression extends below a bottom plane of the eating surface.
4. The plate of claim 1, wherein the sloped support comprises a hollow cylindrical shell that has a planar cut along the a top surface to form the angle of the sloped support.
5. The plate of claim 1, wherein the reservoir occupies less than half of the area of the eating surface.

6. The plate of claim 1, wherein a border between the reservoir and a remainder of the eating surface is an unobstructed decline.

7. The plate of claim 1, wherein the angle of the sloped support is about 5 degrees.

8. The plate of claim 1, wherein the raised border comprises a grippable extension of the eating surface.

9. The plate of claim 1, wherein the raised border forms a sloped bottom surface of the reservoir.

10. (canceled)

11. A plate, comprising:

- a sloped support that supports a circular eating surface;
- a raised border around the eating surface; and
- a reservoir, continuous with the eating surface, formed as a depression extending below a bottom plane of the eating surface at the bottom of the slope, such that the depression and an angle of the sloped support allow fluids to collect in the reservoir, wherein a border between the reservoir and a remainder of the eating surface is an unobstructed decline and wherein the reservoir occupies a geometrical segment of the circular eating surface.

12. The plate of claim 11, wherein the sloped support comprises a hollow cylindrical shell that has a planar cut along a top surface to form the angle of the sloped support.

13. The plate of claim 11, wherein the reservoir occupies less than half of the area of the eating surface.

14. The plate of claim 11, wherein the angle of the sloped support is about 5 degrees.

15. The plate of claim 11, wherein the raised border comprises a grippable extension of the eating surface.

16. The plate of claim 11, wherein the raised border forms a sloped bottom surface of the reservoir.

17. (canceled)

18. A plate, comprising:

- a sloped support that supports an eating surface, said sloped support comprising a hollow cylindrical shell that has a planar cut along the a top surface to form the angle of the sloped support;
- a raised border around the eating surface comprising a grippable extension of the eating surface; and
- a reservoir, continuous with the eating surface, formed as a depression extending below a bottom plane of the eating surface at the bottom of the slope, such that the depression and an angle of the sloped support allow fluids to collect in the reservoir, wherein a border between the reservoir and a remainder of the eating surface is an unobstructed decline and wherein the raised border forms a sloped bottom surface of the reservoir.

19. The plate of claim 18, wherein the angle of the sloped support is about 5 degrees.

20. The plate of claim 18, wherein the reservoir occupies less than half of the area of the eating surface.

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