

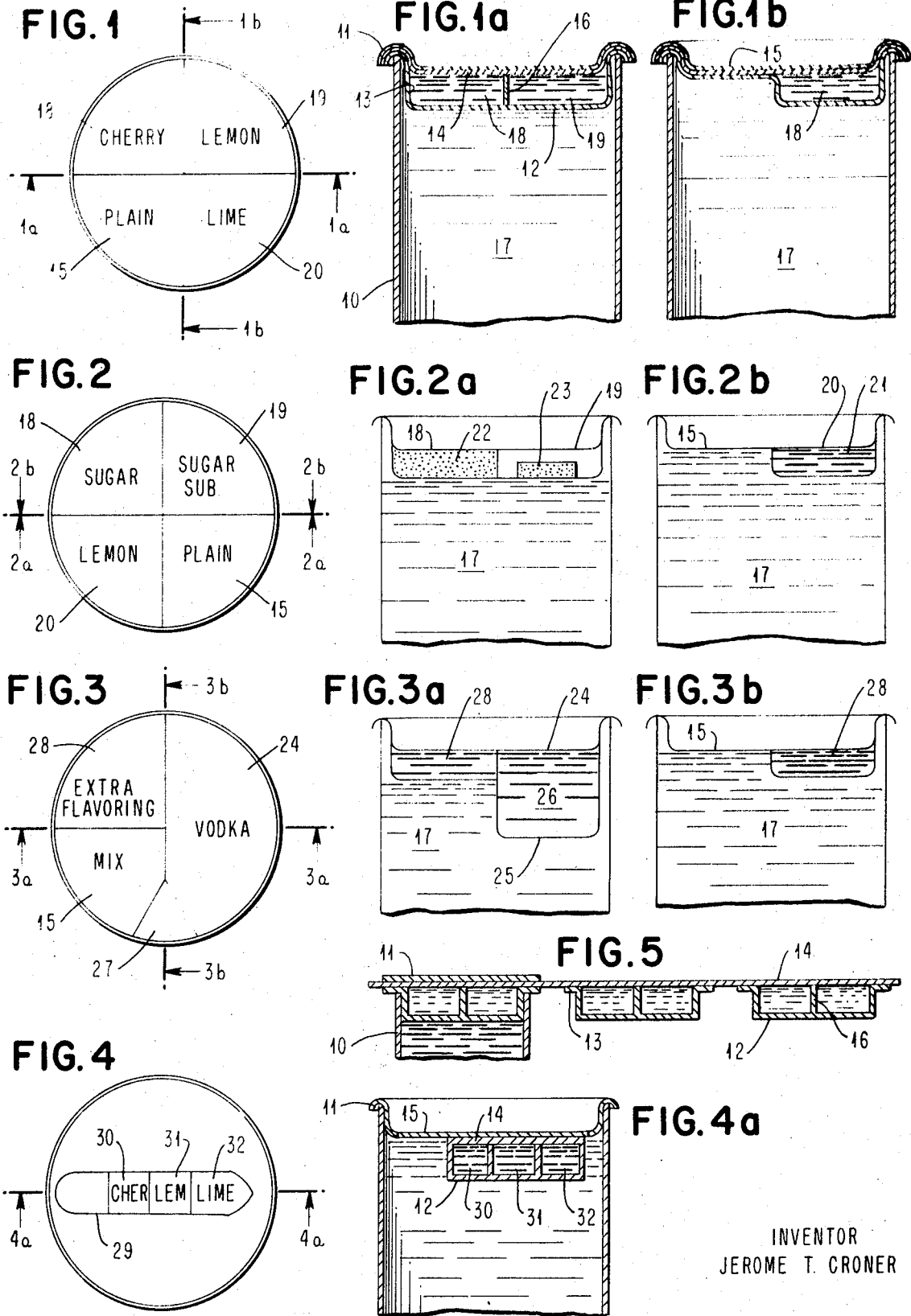
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COMPARTMENTED BEVERAGE CONTAINER

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COMPARTMENTED BEVERAGE CONTAINER

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5 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Beverage containers are shown to have, on the underside of a portion of a can top, one or more rupturable compartments. The compartments each contain a different ingredient for modifying a basic beverage in the container. The top of the can is marked to indicate the location and contents of each compartment and where rupturing of the top provides access only to the basic beverage. The bottom wall of a compartment may be positioned such that rupturing of the top of the beverage can over the compartment with an ordinary can opener will also rupture the bottom of the underlying compartment to allow entry of the modifying ingredient into the beverage in the can. The bottom of a compartment may be positioned so as not to be ruptured by a can opener providing access to the modifying ingredient through the top of the can.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the invention.—This invention relates to beverage containers, and more particularly to containers having the interior divided into a basic compartment and one or more other compartments containing a beverage modifier.

Prior art.—The prior art shows containers for beverages wherein the interior of the container is divided into a compartment having a basic ingredient and a compartment which can be ruptured so as to mix, within the container the basic ingredient and some form of modifier or flavoring. The basic reason for this prior art container is to provide the mixing action at the time of consumption since prior mixing would have adverse effects. The basic ingredient is not usually suitable for consumption and requires mixing with the modifier prior to consumption.

One such prior art container is represented by U.S. Pat. 3,305,368 which divides the interior of a can into a compartment for a basic ingredient and a compartment, coextensive with and underlying the top of the can, for a flavoring syrup. Rupturing of the top of the can with an ordinary can opener also ruptures the bottom of the underlying compartment to cause mixing of the contents of the two compartments. This action is invariably required prior to consumption, and always effected. The construction of this container is such that removal of the ingredients of the container is restricted and the entire contents difficult to remove. Further, mixing must invariably take place in the container.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a compartmentalized beverage container wherein:

Selective access to a basic beverage and modifying ingredient is provided;

Mixing within the container of a basic beverage and selectable one or more modifying ingredients is provided;

Mixing of a basic consumable beverage and selectable modifying ingredients can take place either within the container or outside the container;

Direct access by rupturing to a basic beverage, without access to modifying ingredients, is provided.

These and other objects, features, and advantages are realized in a preferred embodiment of the present inven-

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tion wherein there is provided with a beverage container having bottom, side, and top walls, a rupturable compartment for a modifying ingredient which underlies only a portion of the container top so that the top can be selectively ruptured to provide access to only the basic beverage, the underlying compartment, or both. By providing side walls to the underlying compartment, several compartment sections can be provided, each with a different modifying ingredient. The top of the container is provided with suitable markings to indicate the location and contents of the sections.

By suitable construction of the underlying compartment, the bottom wall portion of the compartment, or certain ones of the sections, can be spaced differently from the top wall of the container. The rupturing of the top of the container and underlying compartment or section by an implement such as a can opener, may or may not rupture the bottom of the container or section. Thus, mixing of the basic beverage and modifying ingredients of the compartment or section can take place within the container or in another receptacle.

The modifying ingredients that can be contained within the underlying compartment are shown to include liquids, powders, or tablets.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 shows one embodiment of the invention wherein a beverage container includes a plurality of compartment sections underlying a portion of the top of the container;

FIG. 1a is a sectional view taken along section 1a—1a of FIG. 1;

FIG. 1b is a sectional view taken along section 1b—1b of FIG. 1;

FIG. 2 shows the same construction as FIG. 1 wherein the compartment sections contain different forms of modifying ingredients;

FIG. 2a is a sectional view taken along section 2a—2a of FIG. 2;

FIG. 2b is a sectional view taken along section 2b—2b of FIG. 2;

FIG. 3 shows one embodiment of the invention wherein rupturing of the container top provides access to a modifying ingredient through the top;

FIG. 3a is a sectional view taken along section 3a—3a of FIG. 3;

FIG. 3b is a sectional view taken along section 3b—3b of FIG. 3;

FIG. 4 shows another embodiment of the present invention where the container top is opened with a pull tab;

FIG. 4a is a sectional view taken along section 4a—4a;

FIG. 5 shows diagrammatically, the ease with which the present invention can be constructed.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF INVENTION

FIGS. 1 and 2 show the basic construction of the present invention. Only FIG. 1 is shown in detail, with the others being shown only with line drawings. A standard metal beverage container is shown to include, along with a bottom, side walls 10 and a top wall 11. A compartment with beverage modifying ingredients to be positioned within the container includes a bottom wall portion 12, a side wall portion 13, and top wall portion 14. During assembly and sealing of the compartment and container, the side wall portion 13, top wall portion 14 and container top wall 11 are all crimped over the side wall 10 of the basic beverage container.

The compartment for the modifying ingredients can be constructed using any suitable plastic or metallic material which is moisture-impermeable and which can be

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ruptured with any suitable can opening implement. FIG. 1 shows a top view of the beverage container and points out a desirable feature of the present invention. Suitable markings on the top 11 delineate the location of the underlying compartment which underlies only a portion of the top 11. A second portion 15 has no underlying compartment and therefore provides direct access to the basic beverage within the container. If the basic beverage within the can is to be consumed without modification, access can be had to the beverage by rupturing the top only at the portion 15.

As shown in the section of FIG. 1a, the underlying compartment is provided with an additional side wall 16. In the absence of the wall, the interior of the beverage container would be divided into a compartment for a basic beverage 17 and a single compartment underlying a portion of the top 11 for modifying ingredients. With the additional side wall portion 16, the upper portion of the compartment for modifying ingredients is divided into a plurality of sections 18, 19 and 20.

In the construction shown in FIG. 1, the bottom wall portion 12 of the underlying compartment is sufficiently close to the top wall 11 as to be ruptured when an ordinary can opener is used to puncture the top wall 11. Thus, by selective rupturing of the top 11, access can be had to the basic beverage 17 at top portion 15, and one or more modifying ingredients contained in the sections 18, 19, or 20 can be mixed within the container.

Desirable marketing and consumer features are readily available using the present invention. Cola drinks comprising the basic beverage 17 can be purchased containing popular flavorings normally only obtained at soda fountains. As shown in FIG. 1, the delineations on the top wall 11 show the ability to open the container at portion 15 to obtain access to the coal drink, or to provide selective rupturing of the underlying sections 18, 19, or 20 to provide the cola drink with cherry, lemon, or lime flavoring, or any combination thereof.

FIG. 2 shows the same construction as FIG. 1, but shows that several forms of modifying ingredients can be provided in the underlying compartment sections. Thus, another desirable consumer selection is provided. A basic beverage 17, such as tea, can be obtained from the container at portion 15. The popular modification of ice tea are provided in the underlying compartment sections 18, 19, and 20. These include a liquid lemon flavoring 21, sugar 22, or sugar substitute which can be a tablet 23.

A still further beverage packaging concept is provided by the construction of FIG. 1. Each of the underlying sections can contain the same modifying ingredient. Therefore, providing a container with a basic beverage such as gin, and underlying sections containing vermouth, a perfect martini is selectable by consumer.

Another popular drink is a bloody mary. FIG. 3 shows another embodiment of the present invention for packaging this drink to provide consumer selection in making this drink. As shown in FIG. 3a, at least one section 24 of the underlying compartment is provided with a bottom wall portion 25 spaced sufficiently away from the top wall 11 of the container such that rupturing of the top wall 11 will not rupture the bottom wall 25. Therefore, access to the modifying ingredients of the section 24 can be had independently from access to the basic beverage 17 through the portion 15 of the top wall 11. Mixing of a selectable quantity of the basic beverage 17 and a selectable quantity of the modifying ingredient 26 in the section 24 is possible. Shown in FIG. 3 is a further portion 27 of the top wall 11. The delineation of portion 27 is such that if the top 11 is ruptured at portion 27, the side wall of section 24 will be ruptured along with the top 11 of the container and underlying section 24. Mixing of the basic beverage and modifier can be made to take place within the container.

A further section 28 can be provided with the section 24 forming the underlying compartment. The bottom wall

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portion of this section is spaced so as to be ruptured when the overlying top 11 is ruptured.

Packaging a bloody mary in accordance with FIG. 3 provides many selections to the consumer. Rupturing at section 28 can provide additional tobasco and worcester sauce. Mixing of the entire contents of section 24 which is vodka and the basic bloody mary mix 17 can take place within the container if the top is ruptured at 27. More than one drink, or a drink with less vodka, can be mixed in separate receptacles if rupturing takes place at 15 and 24.

In FIG. 4, the need for a can opener is eliminated. The top 11 of the container is designed to have a pull tab opener which produces an opening 29 in the top which extends over essentially the entire diameter. Underlying a portion of the top 11 will be the rupturable compartment with the top wall portion 14 exposed when the pull tab is removed. The portion 15 of the top where there is no underlying compartment provides access to the basic beverage 17. In this embodiment, the compartment may also be provided with additional side walls 16 to provide a plurality of sections 30, 31, and 32 for containing different beverage modifiers. The top wall portion 14 of the modifier compartment will be provided with markings to delineate the location and contents of the sections. Any suitable fairly sharp implement can be used to rupture the top wall portion 14 and bottom wall portion 12 to allow the modifying ingredients to be emptied into and mix with the basic beverage. The pull tab itself will provide a readily available implement.

FIG. 5 shows how the container of the present invention can be constructed. The compartment containing various flavoring sections defined by the bottom portion 12, side wall portion 13 and, if desired, additional side wall 16 can be separately formed and filled. The top wall portion 14 of the compartment can be formed as a continuous belt and be provided as a seal to the filled sections. The series of compartments can be transported to a sealing station over the container, previously filled with the basic beverage. The top wall 11, side wall portion 13, and top wall portion 14 are then crimped over the side wall 10 of the container. The excess parts of the belt 14 are then removed.

While a preferred embodiment and modifications thereof have been shown, many other modifications are possible within the scope of the present invention as defined by the accompanying claims.

I claim:

1. A sealed beverage container comprising a side wall, a bottom wall, a top wall;
 - a rupturable, moisture-impermeable compartment containing beverage modifying ingredients underlying and adjacent to a first portion of the inner surface of said top wall, said compartment having bottom and side walls and dividing the remainder of said container into a basic beverage compartment, said rupturable compartment occupying less than all of the space underlying said top wall so as to form a second portion under said top wall capable of being separately opened;
- indicia means for delineating the location and contents of said rupturable compartment and said second portion to thereby permit the selective opening of said top wall at said second portion thereof or opening of said top wall and rupturing of said underlying compartment at the first portion to permit access to the modifier and basic beverage.
2. A beverage container in accordance with claim 1 wherein:
 - said rupturable compartment includes, at least one additional side wall extending from said bottom wall of said rupturable compartment upwardly to said top wall to thereby divide said modifier compartment into at least two sections, each con-

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taining a different modifier; and
said indicia means identifies the location and contents of
each of said sections.

3. A beverage container in accordance with claim 2
wherein:
said bottom wall of said rupturable compartment being
spaced from said top wall of said container sufficient-
ly close so as to be rupturable together with said top
wall by an opening implement. 5
4. A beverage container in accordance with claim 2 10
wherein:
said bottom wall of at least one of said sections is suffi-
ciently spaced from said top wall of said container
so as not to be ruptured by the implement used to
rupture said top wall of said container overlying said
one section; and 15
said bottom wall portion of at least one other of said
sections is spaced from said top wall of said con-
tainer so as to be rupturable by the implement used
to rupture said top wall of said container overlying
said one other of said sections. 20
5. A beverage container in accordance with claim 4
wherein:
said delineating means also defining a third portion of
said top wall overlapping said first and said second 25

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portion to thereby permit rupturing of said side wall
of said at least one section and said top wall at said
first and second portions.

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