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(54) **BOTTLE COVER**

(57) A bottle cover (10) for covering the lower part of a wine bottle, the bottle cover (10) comprising a body (12) and a base (14), the body (12) having a cylindrical portion (16) and a substantially conical portion (18) extending from one end of the cylindrical portion (16), the other end of the cylindrical portion (16) being open, the substantially conical portion (18) terminating in an aperture (20) through which a bottle neck can extend, the base (14) being substantially circular and having a peripheral upstanding flange (32, Fig 2), both the body (12) and base (14) being made from metal or metal alloy, in use, the base (14) being rigidly fastened to the body (10) for retaining a bottle within the cover (10).

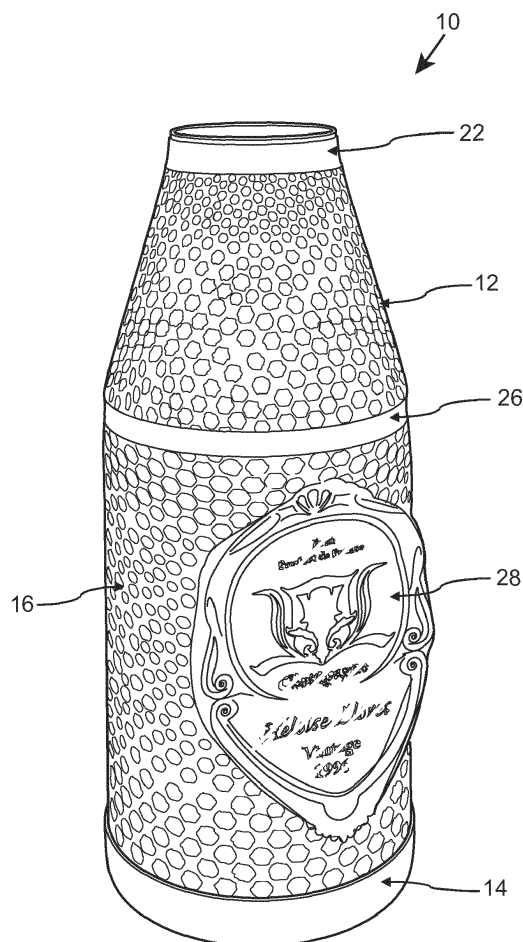


Fig. 1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a bottle cover and particularly but not exclusively to a bottle cover for a bottle of sparkling wine.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

[0002] The more expensive sparkling wines and champagnes are often sold in individual bottles, for example, on wine shop or supermarket shelves. In order to protect the sparkling wine or champagne from light, the bottles are boxed. Wines exposed to light tend to deteriorate over time. Manufacturers do their best to make the boxes look attractive and appealing to customers, but the appearance of the bottled wine is lost. Generally the marketing appeal of a box is not as appealing as that of a bottle. The use of, typically green bottles and foils around the corks is not sufficient protection against light, although it does reduce the impact of exposure by slowing the rate of deterioration of the wine.

[0003] It is also understood that fluctuating temperature, and, in particular, warm temperatures tend to cause deterioration of wine. Hence, it is advantageous if fluctuations in temperature, even short term fluctuations, can be avoided.

[0004] It is an object of the present invention to reduce or substantially obviate the aforementioned problems.

STATEMENT OF INVENTION

[0005] According to the present invention there is provided a bottle cover for covering the lower part of a wine bottle, the bottle cover comprising a body and a base, the body having a cylindrical portion and a substantially conical portion extending from one end of the cylindrical portion, the other end of the cylindrical portion being open, the substantially conical portion terminating in an aperture through which a bottle neck can extend, the base being substantially circular and having a peripheral upstanding flange, both the body and base being made from metal or metal alloy, in use, the base being rigidly fastened to the body for retaining a bottle within the cover.

[0006] Advantageously, by providing a bottle cover made from metal or metal alloy, the bottle can be shielded from light and hence the risk of light deterioration is substantially mitigated. Furthermore, by covering the majority of the bottle, i.e. the lower part, but not the foiled upper end, the bottle can be opened and the wine consumed, whilst the cover is in place. It has not been found necessary to cover the foiled upper end of a bottle, because the foil is sufficient protection from light. It should be understood that the 'lower' part of the wine bottle includes sections of the base, the body and the neck of the bottle, up to the foiled upper end.

[0007] The bottle cover is intended to be permanent, that is, once the base is attached to the body, it is not intended to be removed. This is to prevent the bottle from falling out of the cover, when the bottle is lifted from the body of the cover.

[0008] The base may be bonded to the body with cement or adhesive.

[0009] The base may have a domed central region, which may locate in a deep punt on the underside of a sparkling wine bottle. Sparkling wine bottles require a deep recess formed in their base to effectively reinforce the base of the bottle to retain the pressure of the wine within. The dome substantially follows the shape of the underside of the bottle and a wine waiter or sommelier may utilise the domed recess to assist in holding the bottle.

[0010] The domed central region may extend in the same direction as the peripheral upstanding flange.

[0011] The metal alloy is preferably pewter. The pewter may be hand crafted.

[0012] Preferably the bottle cover is dipped in gold, preferably 24 carat gold. The gold is highly decorative and desirable, but also provides a reflective surface which assists in keeping the cover and bottle within cool, when exposed to the sun, for example.

[0013] At least part of the surface of the bottle cover may be textured with hammered dents.

[0014] A three-dimensional plaque may sit proud of the body portion for displaying indicia formed in the plaque. The plaque may be in the form of a crest, with a raised and decorated periphery.

[0015] A further three-dimensional plaque may sit proud of the body portion for displaying indicia on the opposing side of the bottle cover. The further three-dimensional plaque may be smaller and may display product details pertaining to the contents of a bottle to be received within the bottle cover.

[0016] The bottle cover is shaped to match the shape of a champagne bottle and so the effect is that it looks like a very impressive bottle in use. Furthermore, a bottle of expensive champagne can be displayed by using the cover, without the need for a box, and so the product and brand is significantly enhanced in the retail environment. The raised plaques, the gold coating, and the hammered effect may all combine to provide an elegant visual display.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] For a better understanding of the present invention, and to show more clearly how it may be carried into effect, reference will now be made by way of example only to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows a perspective view of bottle cover of the invention;

Figure 2 shows a perspective view of the bottle cover

of Figure 1, with the base detached; and

Figure 3 shows a perspective view of the bottle cover of Figure 1 & 2, in use, covering a bottle of champagne.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0018] Referring firstly to Figures 1 and 2, an embodiment of bottle cover is indicated generally at 10. The bottle cover 10 comprises a body 12 and a base 14, which are fastened together in use and substantially replicate the shape of the base, body and part of the neck area of a typical bottle used for sparkling wine, e.g. champagne. The bottle cover 10 is intended to be a close fit with minimal clearance over a bottle of champagne.

[0019] The body 12 has a substantially cylindrical portion 16 with circular cross section extending into a tapered or substantially conical portion 18, at the upper end of the cylindrical portion 16, as viewed in Figures 1 and 3, and as used. The cylindrical portion 16 is open at its lower end, presenting a circular aperture 20 for receiving a bottle.

[0020] The body in the embodiment shown is made from pewter, which is hand crafted with a hammer to create a dented or rippled surface effect. Smooth circumferential bands 22, 24 are provided in the surface at its upper and lower ends; and also partway along the body, referenced 26, at the position of the transition from the cylindrical portion and the conical portion. The upper and mid bands 22, 26 are provided for aesthetic reasons, but the lower band has a functional purpose in providing a smooth circular surface onto which the base 14 can be engaged, as described further below.

[0021] The pewter is soft enough a material to allow the creation of a raised crest 28 for branding purposes on one side of the body 12, and a smaller raised area 30 on the opposing side of the cover, which can carry, for example, product information. The text and images may be pressed, stamped or otherwise and crafted and polished.

[0022] The base 12 of the bottle cover is integrally made from spun pewter, and is a substantially circular member with a peripheral upstanding flange 32. A circular dome 34 is provided at the centre of the circular member, extending away from a substantially flat surrounding circular outer 36. The peripheral upstanding flange 32 extends away from the outer circumference of the substantially flat surrounding circular outer 36, at a curved transition.

[0023] The inner diameter across the peripheral upstanding flange 32 of the base is marginally larger than the outer diameter across the lower band 24 of the body 12. The clearance is small and is intended to be sufficient to allow the base to be pushed onto the lower end of the body 12 with a push fit.

[0024] The bottle cover 10 is a luxury item and the pewter is dipped in gold, for example, 24 carat gold. An in-

expensive cover may be spray painted in gold paint, but this would take away from the intended luxuriousness and exclusiveness of the product.

[0025] Any suitable malleable and reflective/lustrous metal or alloy could be used to manufacture the cover. For example, the metal or metal alloy could be or include: silver, gold, platinum, or another of the noble metals. More specifically, the metal alloy could include: brass, electrum, Dutch metal, duralumin, speculum metal, bronze, or white gold, for example. These could be hand crafted, either with or without a further coating. Polishing could be performed for lustre or a mirrored effect.

[0026] In use, as shown in Figure 3, a bottle of champagne 38, for example, is placed into the aperture 20 of the body 12 and inserted through the body until the tapered or conical portion 18 engages against the bottle. The upper end of the bottle 38 including the wired cork and neck of the bottle extends above the cover. This part of the bottle is foiled, and it is envisaged that the foil will be black foil with a gold band disposed just below the neck of the bottle, to match the visible bands 22, 26 of the cover 10.

[0027] The base 14 is pushed onto the bottom of the body 12 and is bonded on with adhesive. Threading or engaging detents could be provided in alternative embodiments to retain the base to the body, but any fixing should be bonded to make it permanent before sale. The dome 34 in the base 14 is accommodated in the domed recess or punt in the bottom of the bottle 38. In this way, when the bottle is picked up by the cover, the bottle does not drop out of the bottom aperture 20, but is retained in the cover by the base 14.

[0028] By using gold plated pewter, the cover 10 has enough structural integrity to support the weight of a bottle of champagne 38 or other sparkling wine. Furthermore, the cover is impervious to light, and so in combination with the foiled upper end of the bottle, the content of the bottle is fully protected from light. An advantage of the gold plating is that the cover 10 is highly reflective and consequently does not warm up quickly when exposed to sunlight. The metal cover effectively increases the heat capacity of the bottle, and so in ambient weather conditions, retains its' temperature for longer after having been removed from, for example, a cooler or cellar.

[0029] The embodiments described above are provided by way of example only, and various changes and modifications will be apparent to persons skilled in the art without departing from the scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.

Claims

1. A bottle cover (10) for covering the lower part of a wine bottle, the bottle cover (10) comprising a body (12) and a base (14), the body (12) having a cylindrical portion (16) and a substantially conical portion (18) extending from one end of the cylindrical portion

(16), the other end of the cylindrical portion (16) being open,
 the substantially conical portion (18) terminating in an aperture (20) through which a bottle neck can extend, 5
 the base (14) being substantially circular and having a peripheral upstanding flange (32),
 both the body (12) and base (14) being made from metal or metal alloy,
 in use, the base (14) being rigidly fastened to the body (12) for retaining a bottle within the cover (10). 10

2. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in claim 1, in which the base (14) is bonded to the body (12) with adhesive. 15
3. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, in which the bottle cover (10) is made from pewter.
4. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the bottle cover (10) is dipped in gold. 20
5. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in claim 4, in which the bottle cover (10) is dipped in 24 carat gold. 25
6. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in any preceding claim, in which at least part of the surface of the bottle cover (10) is textured.
7. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in claim 6, in which the texture is provided by hammered dents. 30
8. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in any preceding claim, in which the base has a domed central region (34). 35
9. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in any preceding claim, in which a three-dimensional plaque (28) sits proud of the body portion (12) for displaying indicia formed in the plaque (28). 40
10. A bottle cover (10) as claimed in claim 9, in which a further three-dimensional plaque (30) sits proud of the body portion (12) for displaying indicia on the opposing side of the bottle cover (10) to the first three-dimensional plaque (28). 45

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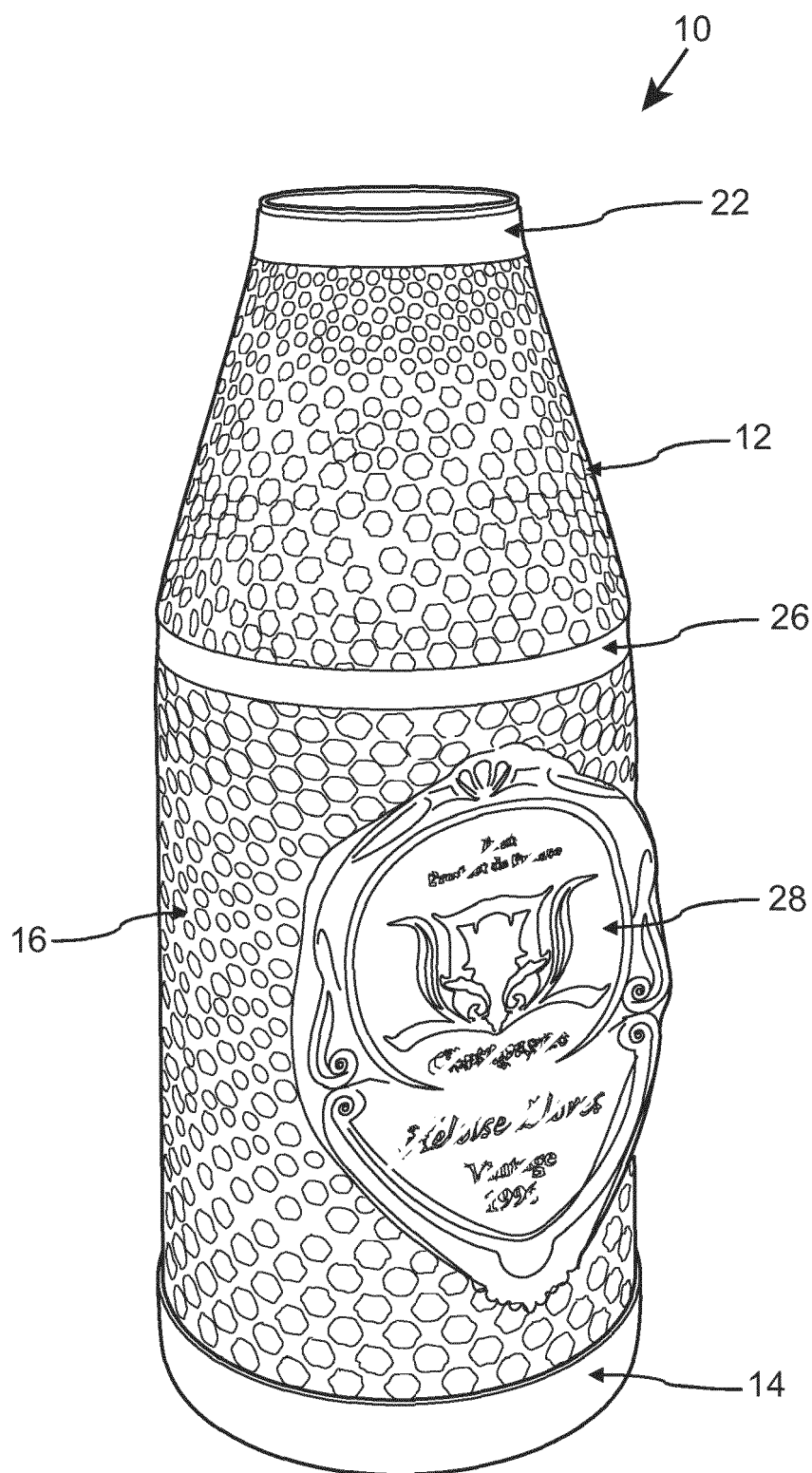


Fig. 1

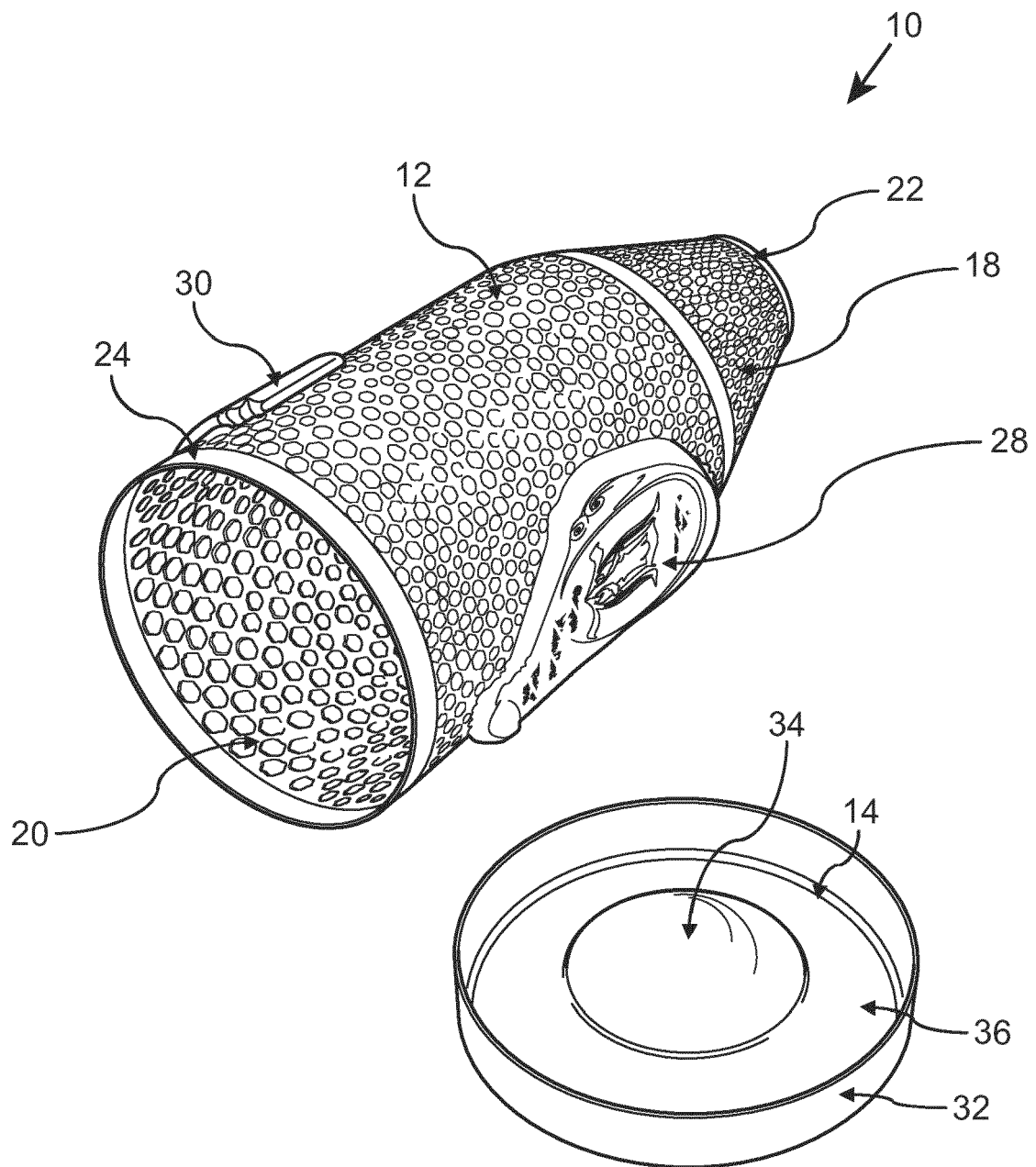


Fig. 2

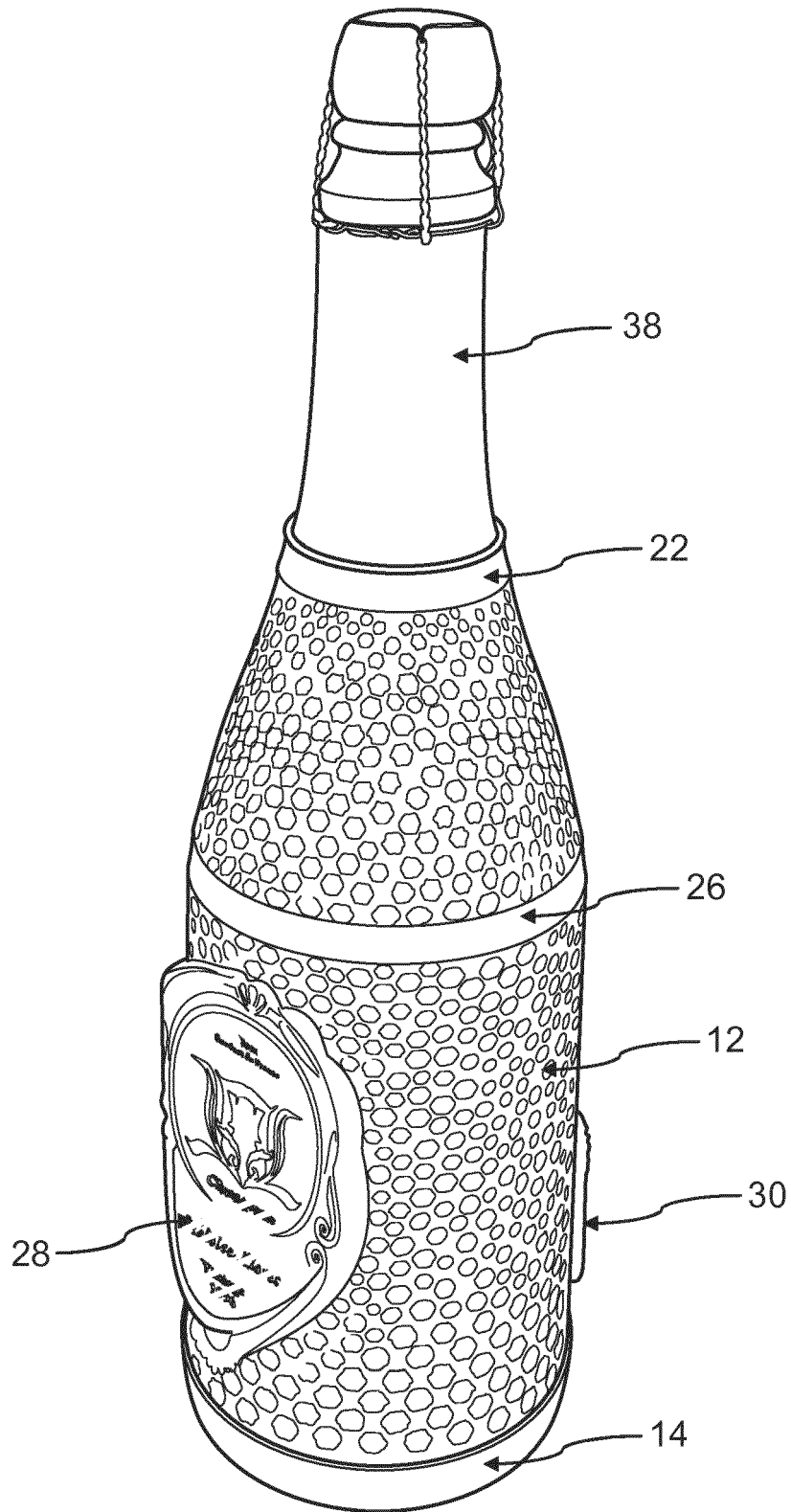


Fig. 3



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 16 15 5552

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
X	DE 296 01 594 U1 (LANDER REINGARD [DE]) 4 April 1996 (1996-04-04) * sentence 16, paragraph 4 - sentence 20, paragraph 5; claim 8; figures 1-3 *	1-10	INV. B65D23/08
A	FR 2 549 009 A1 (TAITTINGER CCVC [FR]) 18 January 1985 (1985-01-18) * figure 3 *	8	
A	US 4 510 769 A (MCCLELLAN JR ROBERT D [US]) 16 April 1985 (1985-04-16) * figures *	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			B65D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 18 May 2016	Examiner Fournier, Jacques
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

EPO FORM 1503 03/02 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 16 15 5552

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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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18-05-2016

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FR 2549009	A1	18-01-1985	NONE
US 4510769	A	16-04-1985	NONE

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82