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FLAVORING DEVICE

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10 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A self-contained device for adding one or more different flavors to a liquid during intake by the drinker. The device operates on a drinking straw principle and incorporates at least one compartment interposed in the path of liquid through which the liquid to be drunk is circulated. Flavoring material is placed in the compartment to impart a particular taste to the liquid before exit from the device.

Background of the invention

This invention relates to flavoring mechanisms and in particular to a drinking straw having an attached compartment for flavoring materials.

As a convenience and novelty, efforts have been made to devise ways of flavoring liquids without physically adding flavoring material to the liquid prior to consumption. When flavoring is added to a liquid before drinking, there is a certain annoyance factor involved in the effort of adding and stirring the flavoring. In contrast, it has been found that the sensation of consuming liquids with such means as drinking straws and adding flavoring to the liquid as it is being drawn through the straw is a rather stimulating one.

The manner in which this has been accomplished in the past has been to take ordinary drinking straws, such as those fabricated from heavy paper, and impregnate a flavoring material into the material of the straw. Among other limitations of such an approach is the fact that the amount of flavoring available in such a manner is limited and after a small quantity of liquid has been drawn through the straw it must be discarded in favor of a new one. In addition, only one flavor can be imparted to the liquid being consumed, namely, the flavor with which the drinking straw is impregnated.

In contrast, the present invention provides a self-contained device for flavoring liquids in which the flavoring can be turned on and off at will. In its preferred embodiment the invention includes the capability of selecting from a plurality of flavors, any one or a combination of which can be added to the liquid to be consumed. In addition, the flavoring material can be renewed without the necessity of discarding the drinking implement and acquiring a new one.

Summary of the invention

The present invention is a flavoring device comprising a conduit having an inlet and an outlet. Attached to the conduit intermediate the inlet and the outlet is a chamber for receiving flavoring material. Means communicating between the flavoring chamber and conduit are provided whereby liquid drawn into the inlet and through the conduit is contacted with the flavoring material prior to exit from the conduit at the outlet.

In one form the present invention contemplates a drinking straw type of structure with a small auxiliary tube or straw attached to the main straw, the interior of the two straws being in liquid communication by means of

a small aperture in the wall of the main straw. Before use, flavoring material such as sugar, artificial citrus flavoring, vanilla extract, powdered chocolate and the like is placed in the auxiliary straw. When the main straw is inserted into a receptacle containing liquid to be flavored and the user draws on its outlet end, the aspirator effect of the liquid passing the small aperture interconnecting the two straws has the effect of drawing a metered amount of flavoring material into the liquid to flavor it.

In a preferred embodiment the device of the present invention incorporates the capability of selectively connecting one of several flavoring chambers to the main conduit. In this way the user can rapidly and easily change the flavoring of the liquid to be consumed to increase the novel taste sensation characteristic of the device.

In another embodiment, the invention contemplates a self-contained unit similar to a flask or canteen which includes a receptacle for liquid to be flavored. In use a liquid would be added to the receptacle and the entire device carried with the user until he desires to take a drink. By connecting the flavoring chamber to the liquid path and drawing on the outlet of the conduit the liquid is drawn into and through the flavoring chamber and thence to the user's mouth.

In still another preferred embodiment, a plurality of flavoring chambers are commonly connected to the main liquid conduit so that any one or combination of flavor chambers may be connected to the liquid conduit to provide a selection of flavors which are available to the user. This embodiment further contemplates the provision of valving means intermediate the liquid receptacle and the flavoring chambers to prevent liquid from being returned to the liquid receptacle subsequent to its withdrawal therefrom. In this manner discoloration of the unflavored liquid in the supply receptacle is prevented.

Brief description of the drawings

These and other advantages of the present invention will be better understood by reference to the following figures in which:

FIG. 1 is an elevational view of a drinking straw provided with a flavoring chamber attached thereto;

FIG. 2 is an elevational view of an alternate embodiment of the flavoring device of the present invention;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of a preferred embodiment of the flavoring device of the present invention;

FIG. 4 is a view taken along lines 4—4 of FIG. 3;

FIG. 5 is a sectional, partial elevational view taken along lines 5—5 of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a sectional, partial elevational view taken along lines 6—6 of FIG. 4;

FIG. 7 is a sectional, partial elevational view taken along lines 7—7 of FIG. 6.

A flavoring device 10 according to the present invention is illustrated in FIG. 1. As shown therein a drinking straw 12 serves as a main conduit communicating between a receptacle 14 for liquid 16 to be flavored and the outlet end 18 of the flavoring device. Attached to straw 12 is a chamber comprised of a short auxiliary length of straw or conduit 20 provided with a right angle bend which is adapted to receive flavoring material 22. An aperture 24 communicates between conduit 20 and main conduit 12. Provided below aperture 24 is a flutter valve 26 secured interiorly of conduit 20. When a user draws or sucks on the outlet end 18 of the straw, the flutter valve 26 is caused to flex to its ghosted position to allow liquid to pass from receptacle 14 to end 18. Due to the aspirator effect the flavoring material 22 is drawn through aperture 24 into the liquid stream to flavor it.