What is claimed is:

1. A carrier plate for supporting a plurality of substrates, the carrier plate comprising:

a disk-shaped body having a first side and a substantially planar second side opposite the first side; and

a plurality of depressions formed in the first side of the disk-shaped body, each of the plurality of depressions comprising:

a sidewall tapering from a surface of the first side and a bottom surface of the depression; and

a support structure disposed above the bottom surface of the depression and geometrically centered in the depression.

2. The carrier plate of claim 1, wherein the support structure includes an upper surface that is parallel with a plane of the surface of the first side.

3. The carrier plate of claim 1, wherein the support structure comprises a substantially semicircular support surface.

4. The carrier plate of claim 3, wherein the support surface is offset from the plane of the surface of the first side.

5. The carrier plate of claim 3, wherein the support surface is offset a distance from the plane of the first side, the distance being substantially equal to a thickness of a single one of the plurality of substrates.

6. The carrier plate of claim 3, wherein the support structure comprises a first semicircular support surface and a second semicircular support surface.

7. The carrier plate of claim 6, wherein the first semicircular support surface and the second semicircular support surface are separated by a gap.

8. The carrier plate of claim 1, wherein the disk-shaped body comprises silicon.

9. The carrier plate of claim 1, wherein a peripheral edge of the disk-shaped body comprises one or more notches formed therein.

10. A carrier plate for supporting a plurality of substrates, the carrier plate comprising:

a disk-shaped body having a first side and a substantially planar second side opposite the first side; and

a plurality of pockets formed in the first side of the disk-shaped body, each of the pockets comprising:

a sidewall disposed between a surface of the first side and a bottom surface of the pocket; and

a support structure disposed above the bottom surface, the support structure comprising one or more substantially semicircular support surfaces.

11. The carrier plate of claim 10, wherein the support structure is geometrically centered in the pocket.

12. The carrier plate of claim 10, wherein the sidewall is tapered at an angle relative to the surface of the first side.

13. The carrier plate of claim 10, wherein the support structure comprises a first semicircular support surface and a second semicircular support surface.

14. The carrier plate of claim 13, wherein the first semicircular support surface and the second semicircular support surface are separated by a gap.

15. The carrier plate of claim 10, wherein the disk-shaped body comprises silicon.

16. The carrier plate of claim 10, wherein a peripheral edge of the disk-shaped body comprises one or more notches formed therein.

17. A carrier plate for supporting a plurality of substrates, the carrier plate comprising:

a disk-shaped body having a first side and a substantially planar second side opposite the first side; and

a plurality of pockets formed in the first side of the disk-shaped body, each of the pockets comprising:

a sidewall tapering from a surface of the first side and a bottom surface of the pocket; and

a support structure comprising one or more substantially semicircular support surfaces disposed above the bottom surface of, and geometrically centered in, the pocket.

18. The carrier plate of claim 17, wherein the support structure comprises a first semicircular support surface and a second semicircular support surface.

19. The carrier plate of claim 18, wherein the first semicircular support surface and the second semicircular support surface are separated by a gap.

20. The carrier plate of claim 17, wherein the disk-shaped body comprises silicon.

What is claimed is:

1. A carrier plate for supporting a plurality of substrates, the carrier plate comprising:

a disk-shaped body having a first side and a substantially planar second side opposite the first side; and

a plurality of pockets formed in the first side of the disk-shaped body, each of the pockets comprising:

a sidewall tapering from a surface of the first side and a bottom surface of the pocket; and

a support structure comprising one or more substantially semicircular support surfaces disposed above the bottom surface of, and geometrically centered in, the pocket, wherein the disk-shaped body comprises silicon.