2027 Maker’s Exchange FAQ

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What is the Maker's Exchange?
The Maker's Exchange is a way to showcase and celebrate each others' creativity.It is a small gift exchange between participants. All you need to do is sign-up using the highlighted link below. During sign-ups, you'll include information about how many gifts you feel comfortable making (between five and ten) as well as some personal information about things you like.

After sign-ups have closed, you will be assigned gift recipients, and asked to make items for these people. Note that the people you give *to* might not be the ones you receive *from* -- giving you the opportunity to meet more makers and see more amazing creations! This exchange will happen at a specified meetup on the cruise, so that you have the opportunity to meet each of your fellow makers and hand-deliver the fancy goods you've created!

2027 Maker's Exchange Signups form: https://forms.gle/LzEkm4uqSsu3CpX39

You can also join our Facebook Group here

When can I sign up?
At this stage, signups for Maker's Exchange will open approx 3 months out. If you register your interest earlier, I will email you when Maker's Exchange signups open.

Relevant Dates

Activity	**Timings**	**Dates for 2026 Sailing**
Signups Open	Approx 3 months before sailing	1 November 2026
Signups Close	Approx 8 weeks before sailing	20 December 2026
Signup Details confirmed	Approx 7 weeks before sailing	31 December 2026
Gift Allocations	Approx 7 weeks before sailing	10 January 2027 2026
Maker's Exchange Meetup	Sometime on boat as advised by THO	TBC

When do I need to signup by?
Initial sign-up closes approx eight weeks prior to sailing. Information will be collated and you will receive notification (via facebook and/or email) asking you to confirm all your details are correct, that you still want to participate etc.

I can't remember if I signed up!
After filling in the Maker's Exchange sign-up form, you should receive an email confirmation detailing all of the information you provided. This message should come from forms-receipts-noreply@google.com and should include a link so that you can update any

details (such as cabin number etc) right up until the initial sign-up closes (approx ten weeks prior to sailing).

If you don't receive this within 24 hours, please check your junk mail. If you can't find any such email message, feel free to contact us and we can help you get sorted out (sometimes google forms don't submit properly so if you don't receive the email, it can be a sign that your details aren't in the info we have, which can lead to missing out on being included etc).

Please also make sure that my email address - thirstymeg@gmail.com has been white-listed so that you receive all relevant emails

When will I know who I am gifting to?
Initial team allocations will be handed out approximately 7 weeks before cruise departure to allow some time for any personalization you'd like to do of your items.

What's this about personalization?
During signups, we'll ask some questions about things you like -- fandoms, favourite colours, your name or what you like to be called, favourite animal. When you're sent your giftee names, you'll also receive this information about things they like, and if you so choose, you can customise your gifts. However, you are absolutely not required to do this! We just like to have it as an option for those people interested.

What if I missed the sign-up date?
If you miss the final date, you may still be able submit your name to exchange with other latecomers. Depending on timings, we may not be able to get you the number of exchanges you would like though. Please contact the organiser if you missed the signup date and still want to participate.

Who can participate?
Anyone going on JoCoCruise this year can participate. The only requirement is that you need to have contributed somehow in the production of the items that you are giving. This can be by sewing, 3d printing, taking photos, designing graphics to make into enamel pins, knitting, crocheting and much much more. It is about sharing what you make and do!

What if it turns out that I can't make it to the meet-up?
Participation in Maker's Exchange means you are committing to come to the scheduled meetup on board. If for some reason you are unable to attend the event, please arrange for someone to act as your proxy to both give out your gifts and receive your gifts for you.

You'll miss out on getting to talk to all the other makers, but your friend can take the things you've made and pick up items in your stead! Please contact the organisers ASAP if you know you won't be able to make it.

Please do not leave it up to your giftees/gifters (or the organisers) to chase you down for the promised exchanges.

Can I request not to be paired with travel companions/friends/family?
On sign-up there is a question where you can indicate anyone that you don't want to be matched with, such as close friends, roommates, partners etc.

Do I need to put my name on my gift?
This is **highly recommended**, as most people appreciate being able to identify who gave what gift in the Maker's Exchangeplus it is a great way to get your 'name' out there. Who knows where this might lead! The meetup can be a crazy chaotic gathering where everyone is madly trying to find their giftees and can border on information overload, so having your name on your gifts makes it much easier for people to identify what came from who afterwards.

You might also consider bringing a business card to include with your gifts, so people can find you later. This is also very useful if, for some reason, you can't make the event and someone else needs to share/collect gifts on your behalf.

Is there a minimum/maximum number of gifts I can give out?
The minimum number of gifts to give out will be five (5), and the maximum ten (10). Please consider carefully when deciding how many gifts to sign up for and only sign up for as many as you are confident that you can follow through on. Makers Exchange is supposed to be a low stress enhancement to the cruise and we want to make sure that participants both enjoy making the gifts they committed to and that everyone receives the expected number of gifts.

Can I bring extra items to give?
If you'd like to give to more than ten people, you can always bring more items on the boat with you to gift or trade with other makers in person at the meet-up! However, please note that we do not want *bartering* at the meet-up. These exchanges should be friendly and open, without an expectation of "same value". Each trade should be a one-for-one.

Do I need to make my gifts or can they be store-bought?
The one rule with the Maker's Exchange is that you MUST have contributed to the making of your gift.This can be anything from designing enamel pins and having them made; taking photos and producing them as cards; 3d printing badges; crocheting dice bags; etc. The point is that the Maker's Exchange should have a personal investment of time and/or creativity. Basically, you don't have to have made all of it, but there must be some of "you" involved in its production.

Do I need to give every one of my recipients the same thing?
It is completely up to you as to what you give out. It can be the same thing, the same item in different colours, or completely different items. Your only obligation is to give a gift to each of your recipients whilst taking into consideration any special considerations or allergies they may have listed.

Is there a minimum value required for each gift I give?
There is no minimum value requirement, please recognise and value both your own and your teammates time and skills in regards to gifts given and received.
The important thing is that it is something that YOU made.

What are some example creations?
Gifts can vary greatly. Past gifts have included enamel pins, magnets, crocheted items, chainmail dice bags, jewelry, 3d-printed items, bookmarks, origami, handmade cards, mounted photos, original artwork, hand-sewn bags and much, much more.

Are there any restrictions on what I can give?
Absolutely not. Please keep in mind any special considerations, allergies etc that your giftees have noted. Also keep in mind that whatever you give out, people have to take home with them, so large or breakable items might not be a great idea. Additionally food, nuts, seeds, candles, plant items or wooden items may not be allowed by the cruise line, or may prove a challenge for people travelling internationally.

Help, I'm worried my gift isn't good enough!
If you have ANY concerns or questions regarding what you want to give, you are always welcome to message the organisers privately to talk through your concerns. This is not a competition and we want everyone to feel comfortable about what they are giving and receiving.

Can I promote my business in my Maker's Exchange gift?
Many participants are creatives that make awesome stuff. The Maker's Exchange is an excellent opportunity to share this. The only rule is that your gift should NOT be just your marketing material. For example, give something that you have made and include a business card, rather than giving a magnet, business card, and/or pin that only advertises your business. There should be something that does not have your business logo/address as the focus. Signed artwork would be acceptable, whereas a bookmark that prominently features your business info would not. A designed bookmark with a small accreditation on the back would be fine.

When do we exchange my gifts?
Gifts will be exchanged at the Maker's Exchange Shadow Event (date and time TBC) so that you have the opportunity to meet each of your teammates in person. If for some reason you can't make the meetup, please nominate a proxy to stand in for you and let the organisers know so that we can help get your gifts distributed.

One of my GIFTEES didn't show up, what should I do with the gift I have for them?
In rare circumstances one of your assigned giftees may not make it to the meetup. Ideally they will have arranged a proxy to distribute/collect on their behalf and/or let the organisers know beforehand so we can give you an update. We should have a list of all participant's Cabin Numbers so that we can direct you to their cabin to deliver/drop off their gift.

Something unexpected has happened and I am not able to fulfil my obligation of gift giving! What should I do?
Hopefully this won't happen to you, but realistically, there is always a possibility that something will occur that throws well-laid plans out the window. If this is the case, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can try and help with the situation. For example, if it is pre-cruise, then we can let your teammates know; if it is on the cruise, then we can work with you to try to find a solution to help you somehow deliver your gifts (or at least we'll know the situation, if any of your teammates come to us with concerns, etc.). Remember, this is supposed to be a low stress, fun addition to your cruise, not something that causes anxiety.

What happens if one of my GIFTERS doesn't show up, and I receive fewer gifts than expected?
Ideally if someone is unable to show up to participate in the exchange, they will have arranged a proxy to let the organisers know beforehand so that we can help get gifts to their intended recipients. Sometimes things don't go to plan for any number of reasons (outside the control of the participants and certainly outside the control of the organisers!)

We do all we can to ensure that things do go to plan, but in the end it may be that some participants receive fewer than the planned number of gifts. In the unfortunate case that this happens to you, please try to see past the inevitable disappointment and focus on the happiness that your gifts will bring to their recipients.

How many people are in Maker's Exchange?
This varies year on year, past counts are:

- 2019 - 39 participants, 298 gifts*
- 2020 - 49 participants, 350 gifts*
- 2022 - 29 participants, 208 gifts*
- 2023 - 49 participants, 361 gifts*
- 2024 - 47 participants, 347 gifts*
- 2025 - 61 participants, 441 gifts*
- 2026 - 81 participants, 589 gifts*
- 2027 - TBC

** No of gifts shown is based on the no of gifts people signed up to give. These totals do not take into consideration ninja gifts or trades that people may choose to do at the event.*

My question isn't covered here, who should I ask?
If you have read through this entire document then thank you. If you want to give me an extra laugh (and maybe I will bring you a surprise extra something to you on boat), put the word Banana in the last field you can write in on the sign up form (but don't tell anyone else about it, i can't really bring an extra 100 somethings on boat :).

If you have any other questions (that aren't covered above) please feel free to ask them in the JCC Maker's Exchange Facebook group or in the relevant Discord Channel, or email me directly at thirstymeg@gmail.com mentioning Maker's Exchange in the Subject line.