



Participants of the 2nd Pin Fiesta at Hard Rock Cafe Penang hoping to fish out special pins from the raffle draw. (Left pic) Raffique showing off his pin-studded jacket to sons Ayden (in red), seven, and Isaac, four.
— Photos: GOH GAIK LEE/The Star

Small in size, big in appeal

Pin enthusiasts proudly display their collections at charity fest

By JEREMY TAN
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HARD Rock Cafe Penang's 2nd Pin Fiesta had avid collectors from all over Malaysia showing off their caches and engaging in trades, all for a good cause.

There were hundreds of different pin designs from the brand's many properties worldwide on display, each highlighting elements unique to their respective locations.

Some marvelled at fellow enthusiasts' collections while others took the opportunity to swap for missing pieces to complete their own line-ups.

The event raised RM4,500 for the Crystal Family Home to help cover costs of daily essentials needed by its 14 underprivileged young residents, aged five to 20.

The sum came from event ticket fees of RM185 per person, and a raffle draw where participants could pick out random pins for RM10 each.

Also contributing to the figure were silent auctions of a Hard Rock Hotel Penang Lagoon Deluxe room stay and 15 goodie bags containing various merchandise.

The bags included T-shirts, pins, shot glasses, accessories and magnets, donated by Hard Rock Cafes in Tokyo, Seoul, Sentosa, Bangkok, Yokohama, Busan, Las Vegas, Osaka and Amsterdam.

Hotel general manager John Primmer said there was a large fan-base for the brand's collectibles and one of the most popular items being the pins.

And the recent fiesta, the only one of its kind in Penang, was organised to give collectors a platform to meet up and indulge in their hobby.

"This time, in addition to the fun, we also wanted to give back to the community in line with our motto, Take Time To Be Kind," he added.

Among those present was Kuala Lumpur "pin master" Patrick Cheah, an IT and human resource manager, who has amassed a personal collection of over 3,000 pieces over the past several years.

"Every Hard Rock location has its own pins, which highlight the ele-



(From left) Hard Rock Cafe corporate regional sales and marketing manager Cristina Lopes with fellow collectors Aszlihan Ali Shamsudin and Rizal Fauzi Ahmad chatting about their passion.

ments, landmarks or even special events unique to the area.

"The responsibility of each pin master is to catalogue new launches and upload it on a database that all collectors can refer to.

"There is a huge market for pin collecting. Asian pieces tend to be higher in value, and some can engage in trades worth up to several thousands of ringgit a month," the 42-year-old explained.

Audio engineer Raffique Hashim, 32, from Kuala Lumpur, turned heads by wearing a jacket adorned with dozens

of pins weighing around 5kg.

"I got my first pins in the early 90s when I followed my parents to Hard Rock Cafes, but only started seriously collecting around 2001.

"I came to know a Singaporean trader, and he introduced me to this world. I like how each pin commemorates something different, and it sparked my interest," said Raffique, who has so many pieces he has lost count.

Quantity surveyor Fazlul Azlee, 36, and tour guide Aszlihan Ali Shamsudin, 31, both from Kuala Lumpur, and Ipoh-

based businessman Rizal Fauzi Ahmad Ismail, 48, were seen chatting over their collections.

"I've been collecting for over 10 years, and have some 7,500 pieces. I've put some in guitar-shaped display cases as they give with the Hard Rock brand."

Rizal, who has around 700, added, "I visited a store, saw the pins, and just fell in love with them."

The Pin Fiesta also featured live performances by Somebody Who and resident band Nu Color, as well as mob dance by the organising committee.

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