



MinamiCon 31

13th – 15th March 2026

Novotel Hotel, Southampton

Charge your thrusters and prepare for launch – MinamiCon 31 is here, and this year we're going full Mecha! Whether you grew up watching Gundam, Evangelion, Macross, or Code Geass, this year's theme is a love letter to the towering titans of Anime. From the earliest super robots stomping through 1970s television to the sleek, psychologically complex mech pilots of modern Anime, Mecha has always been at the heart of the genre – and now it's at the heart of MinamiCon.

We're back at our beloved home, the Novotel Hotel in Southampton, for another weekend packed with panels, workshops, quizzes, karaoke, cosplay, and community. As always, this convention exists because of you – our incredible, passionate, creative community – and we cannot wait to see what you bring to the Con floor this year.

Our Charity This Year

This year, MinamiCon is proud to be raising funds for Cancer Research UK, in memory of long-time con-goer and event organiser, Choco, who has been a big part of our Con. She will always be remembered fondly as our resident karaoke queen. Last year, our community raised a remarkable £2,500 for the British Heart Foundation. Let's see if we can match – or beat – that. There will be fundraising activities throughout the weekend, including the charity auction immediately following the Masquerade on Saturday evening.

A Guide to the Weekend

Throughout the Weekend

Several key features run across multiple days and are worth knowing about upfront.

Dealers' Room

The Dealers' Room (Le Havre, ground floor) is open Saturday 10am–5pm and Sunday 10am–4pm. It's packed with Anime, manga, model kits, Japanese snacks, merchandise, and original artwork – and with Gundam Mad among this year's dealers, there's never been a better time to add to your Mecha collection.

Bring & Buy

The Bring & Buy is on the 5th floor. You can drop off items for sale on Friday (1pm–5pm) or early Saturday morning (8:30am–9:45am). The room is open for shoppers on Saturday (10am–5pm) and Sunday (10am–1pm). Collect your takings and any unsold items on Sunday from 1pm–4pm.

A few things to note on item submission:

- Items must be related to Far East Asian culture – no Harry Potter, Doctor Who, Star Wars, Marvel, and so on. Split your items into Media (DVD/Blu-ray, video games, CDs, manga, art books, doujinshi) and Other (figures, plushies, merchandise, cosplay items).
- The maximum total number of items per person is 30, with a maximum of 10 manga items (a bundled set counts as one item). All prices must be in whole pounds sterling.
- Mark each item clearly with your Bring & Buy ID number, item number, and price – preferably on an easily removable sticky label. Your ID number is your registration number; email registration@minamicon.org.uk if you've forgotten it.
- The Con takes 10% commission on all sales.

Download the submission form from the website and use your membership number as printed on your badge.

Games Room

The Games Room at the Ibis Hotel is run by the fantastic Tokonatsu crew, bringing everything from retro machines to the latest releases. It's open Friday 2pm–7pm, Saturday 10am–5:30pm and 8:30pm–10pm, and Sunday 10am–4pm.

Karaoke

KaraKara Funtimes (5th Floor) private karaoke slots are available throughout the weekend for you and your friends – book your slot at Ops. The main Karaoke stage then runs on Saturday night from 9pm until 12:45am, with Retro-oke rounding things off on Sunday evening from 8:30pm.

Photoshoot Room (5th Floor)

The Photoshoot Room setup by props master Dando, will be on the 5th floor with props available for cosplay photos – bring your own photographer! It's open Saturday 10am–5pm and 8pm–9pm, and Sunday 10am–5pm. If the room is closed outside these times, collect the key from Ops. We will also be using this room for a few suitable events as we trial merging the themed room setup on a Friday.

Friday 13th March

Doors open and the Con kicks into gear from Friday afternoon. Registration will be open by 11am in the Novotel foyer and will be there until 4:45pm. If you miss the registration window, head to Ops on the 5th floor. The first events start at 12pm and prior registration is mandatory. So make sure to pick up your Con badge and pack beforehand.

Matsuri

The highlight of Friday evening is the Minami Matsuri featuring Artists' Alley, running from 5pm–8pm. This is our take on a Japanese festival – browse the artist stalls, play some games and enjoy some light festival treats.

Please note: this year there will be no food boxes available at the Con. The Matsuri will focus all its energy within the Matsuri room area itself, so you'll still find shaved ice, buns, cotton candy, waffles, and other light snacks – but plan ahead if you'll need a proper meal before or after.

Other Friday highlights include:

- Tengu Tunes Silent Disco (9pm–11pm)
- Plus late-night 18+ panels running into the small hours

Saturday 14th March

Saturday is the big one, building towards the main event: the Masquerade and Charity Auction from 5:30pm.

Saturday highlights include:

- Cooking with Tab: Tteokbokki Three Ways (10am–11:45am) – learn to make Korean chewy rice cakes in three different styles: spicy, savoury, and sweet. Places are limited so get there early!
- Cel Painting Workshop (10am–11:45am) – hand-paint Minami-chan on animation cel, everything provided.
- Sake Tasting 18+ (3pm–4:15pm) - there will be 6 kinds of sake available, from light to complex.
- Masquerade & Charity Auction (5:30pm–8pm) - the centrepiece of the weekend: cosplay competition, judged performances, followed by an auction in aid of Cancer Research UK. All welcome to watch; entry to compete via the website. *For masquerade participants, there is a **MANDATORY** briefing at 3:30pm on Saturday before the Masquerade.*

Sunday 15th March

Sunday winds things down with a gentler pace. The Cosplay Café runs from 12pm until last orders at 2pm – drop in for cake, tea, or coffee served by our charming cosplay staff, with proceeds going to the Con charity. In the evening, the You Can (Not) Advance Lounge opens from approximately 8:30pm alongside Retro-oke – expect questionable 1980s singalongs, board games, and the warm comfort of the Con's final hours.

Sunday highlights include:

- Gundam Speed Building, max 50 (10am–10:45am) – race the clock and each other, this is a first come first served event and may start a little before 10am if capacity is reached early.
- Cosplay Café (12pm–2:30pm, last entry 2pm)– cake, tea, and coffee served by cosplay staff.
- Closing Ceremony (6:30pm–8pm)
- Retro-oke (8:30pm–10:30pm)
- You Can (Not) Advance Lounge (8:30pm–11:45pm)

Ones to Watch

With a packed schedule across all three days, here are some highlights to whet your appetite. Check the full calendar for descriptions and timings of everything on offer.

Mecha Theme Highlights

Fittingly for a Mecha-themed Con, there's a strong thread of giant robot content woven through the weekend. A Brief History of Mechs on Friday evening is a great primer – part history lesson, part excuse for terrible puns. Also on Friday, METAL GEAR? Mechs, Lore, and So Much More dives deep into the lore of the iconic game series from 10:30 pm.

Saturday brings A Very British Guide to Giant Robots, exploring the surprisingly strong influence of British myths and legends on Mecha Anime and games. For the hands-on crowd, the new Gundam Trading Card Game gets a dedicated learn-to-play workshop on Sunday morning, and Gundam Speed Building gives you a race against the clock (and 49 other people) to assemble a kit.

Fighting Game Roulette: Mech Battle on Friday afternoon pits you against fellow attendees in a rotating tournament – no skill required, sweeties very much on the line. And rounding off Friday night in appropriately unhinged fashion, History of Tokusatsu Gaiden: Which Super Sentai Mecha is Sexiest? 18+ does exactly what it says on the tin, with audience-driven tier-list voting starting at 11:30pm.

Quizzes

MinamiCon has always been a great place to flex your Anime knowledge, and MC31 is no exception. Here's a run-down of what's on offer:

- Name That Tune (Friday afternoon) – the Anime and game music guessing game returns. Several rounds have a Mecha flavour, so brush up accordingly.
- Super Knowledge Mecha Quizarion (Friday evening) – a Mecha-specific quiz run by a group who have been known to fansub obscure Mecha Anime. Challenging, with some multiple-choice rounds to keep it from being too brutal.
- Anything but Anime Quiz (Friday night) – exactly what it says. No obscure Anime knowledge required, just general quiz chops. Great for teams of mixed backgrounds.
- Panel of Games (Friday night) – a light-hearted multi-round quiz designed to test your grey matter after a drink or two, with added audience participation this year.
- Pointless Anime (Saturday morning) – the ninth instalment of the Anime take on the BBC teatime favourite. Remember: the most obscure answers score lowest, and the lowest-scoring team wins.
- Minami Family Feud (Saturday afternoon) – a convention-themed Family Fortunes, where the winning family plays Fast Money for the Con charity.
- DisQuizzing Around the World (Saturday afternoon) – the eighth outing for the beloved DisQuiz, this year taking a global theme.
- The Animazing MinamiCon Pub Quiz (Sunday morning) – the Sunday institution. Rounds covering Anime, games, music, Tokusatsu and more, pitched to suit all levels of knowledge.

Workshops & Creative Events

From the perennial Cel Painting Workshop on Saturday morning – where you can traditionally hand-paint Minami-chan on animation cel – to the new Crochet-a-long Haro (make your own amigurumi Haro from Gundam, spaces capped at 15), the creative programme is well worth a look. Iron Cosplay and Iron Artist both return on Saturday. Sunday also has Life Drawing with fully clothed cosplay models, Rock Painting for a more meditative Sunday afternoon, and Dando's Foamical Mania – a crash course in propmaking materials, glues, and finishes for cosplayers and Mecha builders of all levels.

Panels & Talks

There's a strong line-up of talks this year. Highlights include Heroic Failures of Anime Was a Mistake (Saturday night), the long-running awards show for Anime industry disasters, artistic catastrophes, and justified anger – now in its eighth year. The Yaoi Gameshow: DanmeiRonpa brings back Tab Kimpton and Nathan Blades for their Boy's Love history quiz with a Danganronpa-inspired revamp. Weebing Before the Internet is a love letter to becoming an Anime fan before streaming existed, aimed at the under-30s. And for something genuinely unusual, Echoes of a British Poet's Songs in Modern Anime makes the case that William Blake's philosophy echoes through Trigun, Paranoia Agent, and more.

Things You Need to Know

Registration

Show your proof of identity at the Registration Desk in the Novotel foyer to collect your membership badge and Con pack – which will contain your conbook and the 'What and Where' guide with the schedule and a map of the Con.

The Registration Desk will be open by 11am on Friday. If you arrive after the desk has moved from the foyer, head down the left hallway past the bar towards the Matsuri, where it will have relocated. If you arrive after the desk has closed entirely, head to Ops on the 5th floor instead.

T-shirts are also available to purchase at the Registration Desk, or from Ops once registration has closed.

The following forms of ID are accepted; note that names should match what you have signed up with, or you can provide a deed poll/marriage certificate that connects you to the registered name. Please contact us ahead of the Con if there are any concerns or questions around your identity, and we will treat everything confidentially:

- A valid Passport
- A current Driving Licence (full or provisional)
- Credit or Debit card
- Citizen Card
- ProveIT Age Card
- MOD 90 (Defence Identity Card)
- Recent bank statement showing your Con registration address

Con Ops

Ops (convention headquarters) is your go-to for lost property, accessibility queries, general queries, karaoke and photoshoot room bookings, and any issues that need committee attention. Located on the 5th floor of the Novotel.

Ops opening hours:

- Friday: 1pm–5pm and 8pm–9:30pm
- Saturday: 10am–5:30pm and 8pm–9:30pm
- Sunday: 10am–5pm

Masquerade

Transform yourself and take to the catwalk! Sign up and submit your entry on the website.

Key deadlines and requirements:

- Online entry must be submitted by midnight on Friday 13th March
- All entrants must attend the Masquerade Briefing at 3:30pm on Saturday – no exceptions
- The show starts at 5:30pm on Saturday, followed immediately by the Charity Auction

Gophering / Volunteering

MinamiCon runs on volunteer power. If you'd like to help keep the Con moving, sign up at Ops starting Friday morning.

Limited Capacity Events & Queues

Some events and workshops have limited spaces – these are noted in the schedule where applicable (for example, the Crochet-a-long Haro is capped at 15 participants through an advance sign-up, but places may be available on the day due to drop-outs and Gundam Speed Building at 50). We'd encourage you to arrive a little early for anything you're particularly keen on.

Where queues develop for popular events, our gophers will do their best to monitor numbers and keep things orderly. If you see a queue forming, please join it rather than waiting by the door, and our team will keep you informed if a session is reaching capacity. We appreciate your patience – it helps everyone have a better experience.

Accessibility at MinamiCon

MinamiCon is committed to being a safe, welcoming, and inclusive convention for all attendees and volunteers. Accessibility is something we actively work to improve each year, and we want you to know that your comfort and experience matter to us.

New this year, we are introducing dedicated access slots for the Bring & Buy to ensure the room is manageable and accessible for all attendees. More details will be available at the Con.

If you have any accessibility questions or requirements before the event, please get in touch with us through our Contact Form on the website, and we'll do our best to help. At the Con, flag down any gopher or committee member, or visit Ops on the 5th floor – there will always be someone available to assist.

We'd also love to hear what we're getting right and what we could improve. Your feedback helps us make MinamiCon better for everyone. Send your thoughts and suggestions to us.

Where Everything Is

MinamiCon uses the following spaces across the weekend:

- Ground Floor of the Novotel Hotel – Dealers' Room (Le Havre), Event Rooms 1–4 (Caen, Cherbourg, Bayeux, Dieppe), Bar and Seating Areas
- 5th Floor of the Novotel Hotel – Bring & Buy (Fécamp), Operations (Honfleur), Event Rooms 5 & 6 (Deauville, Rouen)
- Hampshire Room at the Ibis Hotel – Games Room (diagonally opposite the Novotel entrance)

Note that the ground-floor event space transforms over the weekend as rooms are reconfigured for larger events such as the Matsuri and Masquerade.

Full Schedule

A full description of all events is available in our published [Google Calendar](#), or download the [iCal version](#) to add directly to your calendar app. Even if you've been before – please don't assume timings are the same as previous years. We optimise the schedule annually and often make adjustments.

See you on the battlefield!

MinamiCon Committee