What’s in your sea chest?

There’s only so much room! Think about what would make you feel comfortable or help you pass time on a long sea voyage. Many sailors would bring sketchbooks, family photos, or a favorite story.

Draw your items into the empty chest below.
What do they say about you?
What story do they tell?

Visit the Sailor’s Treasure exhibit at Maine Maritime Museum to experience sea chests for yourself!

A SAILOR’S TREASURE
Sea Chests & Curiosities

Activity Booklet
Grades k - 3
Souvenirs from Around the World

Sea chests were a place for sailors to stow their clothes and gear, but they were also a locker for mementos brought from home and souvenirs acquired while at sea.

It was a ritual to show the contents of sea chests to other sailors, sharing stories from home and adventures from distant voyages with each item unpacked.

Try to match each item pictured with its description. Then, see if you can locate the souvenir’s origin on a map.

Rice-paper painting booklet from China

Incense holder from India

Buddha votive plaque from Myanmar (Burma)

Coconut purse from the Pitcairn Islands

Ivory dice cup from China

Bottled shell collection from far and wide

Scrimshaw whale tooth, from a whale near New Zealand

Pressed wings from a flying fish in the ocean

Coin sword from China

All these artifacts are from Maine Maritime Museum’s collection and are on display in the Sailor’s Treasure exhibit. Come check them out!