

# PATHFINDER®



LOST OMENS

TRAVEL GUIDE

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**LOST OMENS**

**TRAVEL GUIDE**

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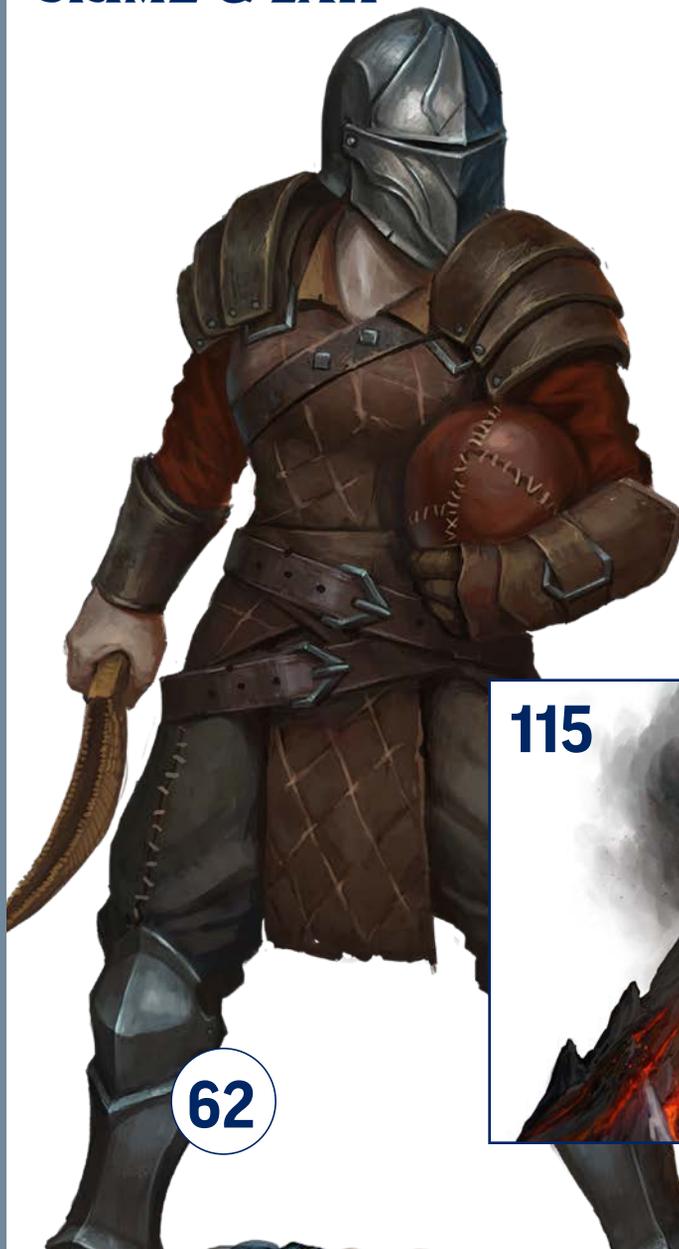
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This book refers to several other Pathfinder products, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available for free at [paizo.com/prd](http://paizo.com/prd).

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our latest guidebook, *Golarion's Finest Guide to the Inner Sea*!

Are you a world-spanning traveler from Arcadia or Tian Xia, planning the trek of a lifetime across the numerous and varied lands of the Inner Sea? Are you a lifelong dweller in one region of the Inner Sea who now craves a different view? Or are you simply an avid armchair tourist, looking to discover more about this diverse and exciting region from the comfort of your own home? If any of these apply to you, then this is the guide you're looking for!

The Inner Sea region is truly enticing and sensational, full of culture, stories, and traditions across its stunning range of nations and peoples, not to mention its rugged landscapes and enduring mysteries. In this comprehensive guide, you will be delighted to learn all about this fabulous region! We explore aspects from history to religion to cuisine to fashion—and that's just the beginning! In addition to a broad overview with all kinds of fascinating and unexpected details, we've also included wondrous illustrations, maps, and diagrams throughout!

Within these thrilling pages, you'll find everything you need to know to enrich your travels, no matter

their scope or purpose. We present you with the most up-to-date information to help you orchestrate your wanderings or delight your dinner guests with your newfound knowledge. We help you determine precisely where to go and what to see. Even the seasoned traveler who's spent considerable time already in any of the nations of the Inner Sea will be amazed at the depth and breadth of our guide. Which Varisian or Taldan festivals should be on your schedule? Which games should you try in Oppara or Nantambu? What should you wear to the opera in Westcrown or the theater in Almas? Is there ever a good reason to head into the Eye of Dread? We answer these questions—and thousands more!

More than that, our guide will supply you with the knowledge you need to connect with anyone and everyone that you encounter throughout the Inner Sea. Our guide provides such an unparalleled and in-depth look at life among the many varied and colorful peoples here that we'll help you make friends, fit in, and impress locals wherever you go. This region features such a range of interesting ancestries, from the dwarves of Highhelm and the tengu of Riddleport to the towering orcs of Belkzen and the pint-sized goblins of Isgar's Chitterwood. And every one of these peoples

boasts a plethora of traditions and customs that we bring to life within these very pages! With our engaging descriptions and painstakingly detailed drawings, we show you the pageantry and variety of our entire region. We've made it all entirely accessible, putting the whole region in the palm of your hand! You'll learn what to eat in Katapesh and what to avoid eating in Ustalav. You'll be able to discuss the architecture of Magnimar and the art of Sothis. You'll learn the differences between the fashions of the Saga Lands and those of the Sodden Lands. You'll know how to strike up a conversation with a resident of Kibwe and what to avoid saying to your innkeeper in Vidrian. It's all here for you!

Once you start reading this book, you won't be able to put it down. It contains all the most fascinating details about the myriad locales and cultures in the Inner Sea. We've organized it not by region but by topic. That way, you'll easily be able to compare and contrast the many types of houses from across the region. You'll have insights into the differences between city and country. You'll be able to read up on different religions and myths, making it easy for you to remember the finer details as you compare them. Wondering which celebrations and festivals happen in the spring? Need an overview of history or trade routes? We've got you covered! Even after you've read this guide cover to cover, you'll still reach for it time after time.

*Golarion's Finest Guide to the Inner Sea* is the latest in our line of Golarion's Finest—brand travel guides. If you're familiar with our previous guides, you know that we like to offer the detailed information and recommendations that will benefit you most in your travels. Our recent, best-selling guides to the Saga Lands, the River Kingdoms, the Mwangi Expanse, and Varisia include everything from where to stay and what to eat to advice on how to navigate crowded markets and outwit unscrupulous caravan-masters. But it was you, our loyal readers, who got us thinking about a more comprehensive guide. You asked us for a guide you could share with your contacts in Casmaron who want to visit but don't understand our calendar or food. You wanted a way to explain our myths and share our history with your hosts in Vudra. You shared your own questions about the areas of our region that you hadn't visited. And we listened. We looked over our previous guides, saw where we needed to expand, and got to work!

## WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK

Our aim is to immerse you in every particular of life in our region. We get right down to the basics so that you don't have to ask any awkward questions—or run afoul of local laws—as you journey. Thanks to this guide, you'll already know about our calendars and festivals. You'll understand the differences between our urban-dwellers and our rural kin. You won't have to ask if a structure is a home, a barn, or a shrine. You'll already know the major

events of our history and the key moments in our many vibrant cultures. Because you'll understand the way our money works and how our trade routes function, you should have an idea where to shop—and you won't overpay! You'll know when to bring up religion or ask about magic and, just as importantly, when to avoid these topics. You'll be familiar with our stories, our pastimes, and even our weather. We aim to take away every bit of that awkwardness that comes when arriving in an unknown land. You'll be able to blend in or stand out as you choose!

But perhaps the most enticing element of this, our newest guide, is the stunning illustration! You'll readily imagine the festivals, fashions, and architecture that we describe, for our words are paired with images that brings the entries to life. Created by our crack team of cartographers, illustrators, portraitists, and artists here at Golarion's Finest, each of these memorable illustrations, diagrams, and maps is itself a work of art. Immerse yourself in these images and be transported!

As always, we welcome comments and insights from you, our loyal readers. We take our commitment to you seriously! We sincerely and thoroughly peruse every letter you send us, and we do our best to respond, whether individually or in print, to every suggestion and proffered nugget of knowledge. Feel free to stop by our offices when next you find yourself in Absalom; we always have some tea and cakes on hand and would love to hear about your travels. We invite you to attend one of our lectures, speaking engagements, or book signings. Better yet, contact us about hosting a lecture or book signing! When you purchase our Golarion's Finest guides, you gain more than the insights that will guide you in your perambulations across our fascinating planet—you gain the friendships of a lifetime. From each one of our talented and dedicated staff, we thank you and look forward to sharing our travel knowledge with you for years to come!

Happy travels!

Keturah Venchayyak,  
*Editor-In-Chief*

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*Golarion's Finest makes no guarantee that following the advice within this book will yield similar results. The people of Golarion react differently to ancestry, attitude, clothing style, hair style, religious belief, traveling companions, and a multitude of other factors. Consider these factors when speaking with a stranger and react accordingly. Thank you for your purchase of this Golarion's Finest product, and we wish you good travels!*

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# TIME & THE CALENDAR

*“Time to Kill” by Alvinia Lodge, retired Lady of Shadow*

Golarion has as many sayings about time as it has ways of measuring it, but my favorite has always been “time to kill.” After all, until my recent retirement from the Ladies of Shadow tea and assassination guild, I’ve always meant it quite literally. Luckily, my work gave me more than a gift for conversation and some pesky bounties on my head—I also have a special appreciation for the importance of time. How can you not love something so precious that running out of it is the end, but so meaningless that we can’t help wasting it? Time is always shifting, impossible to hold onto. One instant can be an eternity, the next a flash; one day stands still while the next rushes by. While no two of us experience it quite the same way, I think we can all agree: time is something worth keeping track of.

## MARKING TIME

Let’s begin with the basics. Generally, wherever you are on Golarion, a day runs for 24 hours with seven days in a week. Fifty-two weeks, or 12 months, make up a year. And just to keep things interesting, every four years there’s an extra day added in to keep things running smoothly. It seems trivial, but the leap day (or the Fey Day, as they call it in parts of the River Kingdoms) is surprisingly important. Once, for some unknown reason, half the world was convinced a leap day should happen every four years while the other half insisted on eight. Getting everything straightened out took three days and ended in six deaths, two marriages, and at least one blood feud. But that’s a story for another day. Instead, a look at the days of the week.

We begin with **Moonday**, which is straightforward enough. While it may be a day for work, it’s also the night when worshippers of Desna, Ketephys, and night-loving religions hold ceremonies, often with only the moon as a silent witness. Always helpful if you’re looking to dispatch a target in the dark.

**Toilday** and **Wealday** are two sides of the same coin. Both are days of labor, but many think of Toilday as a day to work for yourself and Wealday as one to work alongside others. It’s no accident that many apprenticeships—and revolutions—use Wealday as their start.

**Oathday**, as it sounds, is considered the perfect day to make a promise, written or otherwise. While there’s no proof that contracts are more likely to be successful when signed on an Oathday, I always used it for my more complicated assignments—and never failed to execute.

**Fireday** is market day in most places, and a great time to put eyes on a target who’s trying to lay low. Apparently, it’s impossible to resist the smell of honeycakes and the cries of cloth hawkers peddling their wares, no matter who you’re on the run from. Any other unfinished business for the week usually happens on **Starday**, the final day of work. Then, after six days of toil comes **Sunday**, a day of rest and, for many, religious observance.

Unlike the days of the week, the months of the year take their names from deities. This can cause difficulty for those who either dislike a particular god or prefer to put some mental distance between worship and the keeping of schedules. To help you in making idle conversation with anyone who falls into those categories, I’ll note the alternate common name for each month and a few relevant facts. After all, you never know when you’ll be stuck in the Dusk Market trying to stall a rogue historian long enough for your contracted sharpshooter to get into position. A few tidbits of information can go a long way.

The year begins with **Abadius**, a 31-day month named for Abadar, the god of cities and wealth. While his believers would tell you that the first month bears his name to honor his help in building great civilizations, I tend to consider it a sign of the influence of wealthy merchants attempting to curry favor with their god as early in the year as possible. Alternatively, this month is called **Prima**, a nod to its position at the start of the year.

Next is **Calistril**, the 28-day month in which winter begins to die. How fitting that it’s named for Calistria, goddess of revenge. Much like revenge itself, in the Inner Sea this month can be cold and lonely, but those who are patient with it are sure to reap future rewards. For those who prefer something a bit less vindictive, this month is also called **Snappe**, a word as short and harsh as it can be.

In most of the Inner Sea, spring begins with the third month, **Pharast**, also known as **Anu**. This 31-day month is named after the goddess of birth and death, Pharasma, as she brings the new season into being.

Some believe that the name of the 30-day month **Gozran**, an homage to Gozreh, god of the wind, was first chosen by the people of distant Sarusan. While their seasons are the reverse of ours, Gozran is said to bring as much wind and rain to their shores as it does to those of the Inner Sea. Personally, I’m inclined to believe this tale, especially as this month is also known as **Rusanne**.

In the Inner Sea, the turbulence of Gozran fades into the mild and warm weather of **Desnus**, named for the goddess Desna. Many associate Desna with journeys, and it’s believed that this 31-day month is named after her for the way its fair weather smiles on travelers. Their journeys are also reflected in its common name, **Farlong**.

The Inner Sea’s summer continues with **Sarenith**, also known as **Sola**, a 30-day month often filled with sun. It is named, unsurprisingly, for sun goddess Sarenrae.

Many crops begin to bear fruit during **Erastus**, the 31-day month named for the hunting and farming god, Erastil. It’s unclear to me whether the timing of the Archerfeast celebration, held 3 Erastus, came before or after the month was named, but it may also be the origin of the common name for this month, **Fletch**.

Decades after the death of the god of human culture and innovation, Aroden, the month of **Arodus** still bears his name, with only a few using its older, common name

of **Hazen**. Perhaps this is a tribute to the persistence of human culture even after his passing, or simply a reflection of the lazy feel of late summer. I'm still not sure.

**Rova** has always intrigued me. This 30-day month is known for harvest and celebration, but it's named after Rovagug, the god of disaster and destruction. I like to think of it as a warning: even in the midst of joy, steel your heart for the harsh cold to come. Still, it doesn't surprise me that dwarves prefer to call this **Torawsh** after their creator god Torag, or that many use the month's common name, **Nuvar**.

As shadows grow long over the 31 days of **Lamashan**, many begin to see monsters in their midst, which is why this month is named for Lamashtu, goddess of monsters. Its common name, **Shaldo**, also evokes the dark.

**Neth**, also known as **Joya**, is named for the two-faced Nethys, god of magic. A fitting tribute to the dual nature of this 30-day month, the name evokes the world outside growing starker, even as relationships between friends and family grow stronger with the shared harvest.

Finally, we end with **Kuthona**, named for Zon-Kuthon, god of darkness. This makes perfect sense; while this month is 31 days long, it includes the darkest and shortest day of the year, the winter solstice. Fittingly, its common name is also the shortest—**Kai**.

## AS THE DAYS GO BY

Calendars may be an inevitability of mortality, a way for us to track the things that matter in our too-short lives, but we don't all value the same things. Osirionologists believe that the Pharaohs used the life-giving River Sphinx's water level to measure their years. Ancient Thassilonian ruins suggest that they divided their days into sevens to match a set of key virtues. So how did we come to the calendar that most of the Inner Sea region uses today? Blood and negotiation.

Merchants once spent as many hours exchanging time as they did coin—shifting and translating dates from one calendar to the next. Some also used the opportunity to cheat—adding an extra day of work here, changing a contract term there. After several ruined shipments and the short-lived but bloody Five Wealdays War, negotiations began to develop a new calendar that all could agree on. This meeting, and the calendar that came from it, was called the Absalom Reckoning.

Today, most of the Inner Sea Region uses Absalom Reckoning, but some other calendars have been maintained. These include the supposedly more accurate Bronze Calendar kept by followers of Brigh and the Galtan Bladesday calendar, which the region's Gray Gardeners use to thwart political leaders who would create their own. A more recent invention is Irrisen's new Stasian calendar, which sets itself 2,700 years behind Absalom Reckoning for reasons that, though still unknown, may be tied to Queen Anastasia's mysterious origins.

## TIMES FOR CELEBRATION

For those of us who do use the Absalom Reckoning calendar, there are a few common dates celebrated across Inner Sea regions and religions.

**Night of the Pale/New Year's Day:** On the final night of the year, many wait to see if the ghosts of those who died that year will visit, seeking vengeance (probably just superstition, as none have yet darkened my door). When the next day comes, the still-living celebrate having made it to the new year with rituals for luck and good fortune.

**Longnight:** Revelers stay up all night on this first full moon of Abadius to defy the long winter's cold.

**Vernal Equinox:** This first day of spring, celebrated widely as Firstbloom, is often the first full day of planting, followed by a night of food, dance, and courtship rituals.

**Midsummer:** While celebrations of the Estival Solstice vary throughout the Inner Sea, most regions take advantage of the abundant light to come together for food, song, and games.



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# Timepieces



## Soulsand Timers

These gnome-crafted hourglasses go beyond marking the passing of time: they note what you intend to do with it. The color of the sand reflects your intention as you flip the clock—the stronger your purpose, the brighter the glow.



## Infinite Clocks

Whether created from wood, stone, or metal, the gears that power an infinite clock are made from one continuous piece of material, with makers of each variety often competing to see who can make the most beautiful and intricate piece.



## Cindrel's Climb

The fast-growing Cindrel vines on this living wall head skyward over the course of 24 hours, passing hour markers as they grow, then shed their petals and retreat to the ground to begin the climb again at the stroke of midnight.

**Autumnal Equinox:** Fall begins on this day in late Rova and is often marked by harvest festivals.

**Seven Veils:** This celebration of the diversity of the Inner Sea region on the 23rd of Neth is marked by Seven Veil masquerades, where people hide their true appearance for a single night. Excellent for both surveillance and executions.

**Winter Week:** Held during the second week of Kuthona, this is a week-long celebration of friends and family, as well as an opportunity for those in search of a partner to court one for the cold days to come.

## TIME AROUND GOLARION

Each continent and region has its own calendars and customs. To avoid a repeat of the Five Wealdays War as trade reached these other lands, Absalom's guilds invited representatives from across Golarion to the Absalom Reconciliation in 1500 AR. There, the guilds exchanged favorable trade deals for agreements to synchronize the days and months of the following major calendars.

**The Casmaron Unified Calendar (CU):** The Casmaron calendar is a testament to the long rule of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh and uses the date of the empire's unification as its start.

**The Imperial Calendar (IC):** While not the only calendar in Tian Xia, the Imperial Calendar is the most commonly used and begins with the founding of Yixing, the first human empire on the continent.

**Jatembe's Light (JL):** Old-Mage Jatembe's restoration of wizardry to the world is honored in the most common Garundi calendar, which uses his supposed birth date as a focal point.

**The Long Night Calendars (LN):** The Age of Darkness shaped the formation of many Arcadian nations, and nearly all have created calendars that center on what is locally called the Long Night.

**Steps of Time (ST):** This calendar from the Crown of the World, which has been kept since the Age of Serpents, focuses on tracking the movement of game and the conditions of the High Ice.

Unfortunately, the continent of Sarusan was not represented at the Reconciliation, and its calendar system remains a mystery.

## OF AGES PAST

Tracking years is one thing; ages another. Much has happened since Golarion's creation, but if the ages we have come through teach us anything, it's that even the life of a civilization is only a moment in time.

**Age of Creation (Unknown):** Golarion is created, and many deities take an active role in shaping it. When Rovagug seeks to destroy the planet, several deities band together to protect it, locking their fellow god in the Dead Vault. As the age ends, mortal beings begin to appear on Golarion.

**Age of Serpents (Unknown):** Serpentfolk dominate Golarion, then mysteriously begin to lose their hold over the other mortal ancestries.



## Calendars

### The Pocket Scribe

It may look slim, but this foldable calendar can hold notes on a full year's events. Previous years' calendars can also be sold to the Scrivener's Guild to help their record keeping, making them a target for theft each new year.



### The Rings of Time

Ring devotees claim that the patterns found in these concentric rings—used to track natural phenomena like moon phases, rainfall, and animal migrations—can also be used to predict everything from tomorrow's weather to impending revolutions (for a fee, naturally).



### Guided Days

Several guilds offer lists of items important to their work, one for each day of the year. Guild members—or members of the general public—may spend years collecting the treasures and storing them in one of these collection boxes.

**Age of Legend (Unknown to –5293 AR):** The human Azlanti empire reaches still-unmatched heights of magic and technological prowess, and the Thassilonian empire, started by Azlanti exiles, becomes its own influential power. The age ends with Earthfall, which devastates the planet.

**Age of Darkness (–5293 to –4294 AR):** During the thousand-year period of darkness caused by Earthfall, the civilizations of the Age of Legend fall, elves flee Golarion, and the dwarves complete their Quest for Sky (–4987), pushing orcs above ground. The age ends with the return of sunlight to Golarion.

**Age of Anguish (–4294 to –3470 AR):** While these years are rife with conflict, they also include the founding of the Jistka Imperium (–4120), the first appearance of gnomes on Golarion (–4202), and Old-Mage Jatembe and the Ten Magic Warriors restoring wizardry to the world (–3502).

**Age of Destiny (–3470 to 1 AR):** This age of massive human civilizations includes the founding of Osirion (–3470), the Shory Confederacy (–2556), Taldor (–1281), and the Lands of the Linnorm Kings (~–624). It ends with the founding of Absalom by the newly deified god Aroden.

**Age of Enthronement (1 to 4606 AR):** This age, which begins with Aroden's deification and ends with his

death, sees Norgorber (1983), Cayden Cailean (2765), and Iomedae (3832) become deities. It also features the return of elves to Golarion (2632). Several nations also expand through conquest, leading to the First Five Kings War (1571), Taldor's Shining Crusade (3754 to 3827), and the colonization of Vidrian by the newly formed nation of Cheliox (4138).

**Age of Lost Omens (4606 AR to present):** Aroden's death at the time of his prophesized return to humanity begins our current age, and while much has happened in the century-plus since then, it is yet to be seen what of our current deeds and lives will be remembered over time.

## ANCESTRAL TIMESCALES

I may be human, but I recognize that humanity has driven much of Golarion's timekeeping, leaving many sadly unaware of the traditions of other ancestries. Don't be fooled; while many non-humans indulge our time-keeping system, each also has their own method of tracking dates and times.

**Dwarves:** The forge-day is the primary time-keeping device for subterranean Grondaksen dwarves. It alternates between 12 hours of sleep and 20 hours

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# Curiosities



## The Perseverance Clock

This clock once used volunteers to cast shadows and mark where those shadows should fall. Each acolyte vowed never to move until they felt enlightened as to the nature of time, eventually contributing their bones to its current form.

## Absalom Time Exchange

This artifact, one of the few responsible for shifting dates between calendars that survived the War of Five Wealdays, holds the key to at least 50 different calendar systems, several of which have otherwise been lost to the ravages of history.



## Drip Clocks

The rainwater that drips from these daily clocks drains into a basin with walls that measure the progression of the year. At year's end, the water is siphoned into the well of a nearby house, ensuring that no drop is wasted.



of waking activity, synchronized with the cycle of forge warming and cooling. While surface-dwelling Ergaksen dwarves tend to use the timekeeping methods local to their individual communities, the age-old pact that brings Ergaksen couriers belowground every 24 forge days in return for precious metals ensures that most have a forge-day wheel or ring that enables them to track the 24-day cycle. Mountain-dwelling Holtaksen dwarves tend not to use the forge-day at all, but they track battles meticulously, using a system of glory ribbon knots to mark major victories, injuries, and losses. If they fall, these notations help their comrades tell their battle story before the ribbon is torn and distributed.

**Elves:** Thanks to their long lifespan, elves speak less of years than phases—periods of time long enough to fully engage in an action or passion. The exact number of years in a phase ranges from 20 to 26 and varies by elf, determined by the age when they reach full physical maturity. Emotional and mental maturity take

longer, with elves considered to be adolescents until they complete their fourth phase, though based on my encounters with elves, they are much stricter about what is considered “mature” compared to other ancestries. Those who interact with other species, often during their second or third phases, are seen by their fellow elves as going through a period of wanderlust that will end when they either realize the futility of befriending short-lived creatures or become one of the Forlorn. Many do return to elf society after what they call “a handful of years,” a phrase that sounds imprecise but means exactly 25 years.

**Gnomes:** We may all feel that time passes differently depending on our mood and activity, but gnome timekeeping takes this to a new level, assigning colors to times that appear to roughly correspond with how long they feel. A blue hour might in fact be a four-hour span, while a red one takes only a few minutes, and each color also ties roughly to activity, purpose, and an understanding of life energy that escapes me (and most

# Ezren's Calendar

<i>Erastus</i>		<i>4722 AR</i>				
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Moonday</i>	<i>Toilday</i>	<i>Wealday</i>	<i>Oathday</i>	<i>Fireday</i>	<i>Starday</i>
					1	2 <i>Dinner at Mask and Moon with Uvara</i>
3 <i>Archerfeast - Remember to buy arrows!</i>	4 <i>Talmandor's Feast Day - Send gift to Audira</i>	5	6	7 <i>Meet with barrister about Throne contract</i>	8	9 <i>Lunch with Miss - Bring back their book!</i>
10 <i>Valeros's Birthday - Find keg of Ulseberry Ale</i>	11	12 <i>Respond to missive from Mayor Awasaal</i>	13	14 <i>Kovosan Founding Day - Wish Cressida well</i>	15 <i>Kianidi Festival Starts - Send letter to Jeme!</i>	16
17 <i>Burning Night - Leave Thronestep by morning!</i>	18 <i>Reminder: send letter to Jeme!</i>	19	20	21 <i>End of Kianidi - Did you send the letter?</i>	22	23 <i>Breakfast with Ky and Meri - Anniversary soon?</i>
24 /	25	26 <i>New wand shipment is in at Relics &amp; Remembrance</i>	27 <i>Book boat trip to Goka for next year</i>	28	29	30 <i>Goblin Flea Market Today!</i>
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non-fey mortals). I'm not sure if this timekeeping method is connected to the colorful murals of fabric and paper that you sometimes see hanging in gnome houses, but I do know that it's thought to help preserve some of the energy of the First World and stave off the Bleaching that most gnomes on our world fear.

**Goblins:** As goblins' general distrust of the written word extends to clocks and calendars, most goblin time-keeping is tied either to fire or song. Goblin embersongs, traditionally sung around a dying fire, differ in tune and lyric from region to region, but each follows a precise rhythm that makes them excellent measures of time. In western Varisia, for example, asking a goblin to cause a distraction three "All's Aglow" choruses from now is precise enough to set any clock to. While embersongs are generally used for shorter periods of time, the length of fires measure longer spans, helped by goblin communities' typically skillful fire management. Common measures include cookfire (2–3 hours), nightfire (6–8 hours), and blaze (2–3 days). While these are consistent in local communities, they differ between regions, with frost goblin measures tending to be the longest.

**Halflings:** Halflings' quick, keen instincts and love for jocularly reflect in their timekeeping. Though most use

the timekeeping system of their homelands, each region has countless slang terms for specific amounts of time, including "luck's width," meaning the few crucial seconds between triumph and mishap, and "six-foot shadow," which pokes fun at non-halflings' lack of awareness and means an interminable amount of time. Another timekeeping term is "two plucks," which is particularly common among fieldworkers in Chelax. It appears to mean the amount of time two halflings can hold an idle conversation before being caught or disciplined by their bosses for slacking off on their duties.

**Orcs:** Orc culture was shaped and scarred by the dwarven Quest for Sky, so it's unsurprising that an orc day is a near-inverse of the forge day. Also running for 32 hours, the traditional orc day uses the 12 hours that the forge day designates for sleep as its primary time for hunting and battle, with the remaining 20 hours broken into two 10-hour stretches: one for combat training and the other for rest. Since coming aboveground, many orcs now use the avoidance of harsh daylight as their main measure of time but have kept some remnants of the original orc day, spending the dark hours between sundown and sunrise as a time for battle and dividing the daylight hours into two halves—one for training and one for recovery.

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# EVERYDAY LIFE

*"A Look at the Life of Golarion" by Viega Waxwing, traveling curandera*

The world is full of stories about Golarion and the people in it. But the people those stories are about? They're all adventurers. They pick up their swords or axes or magical fingers or whatever and they go out and fight evil folk and save the world. That's all fine and good, but it isn't what the world is. This world is filled with people and almost none of them are adventurers. They're farmers, and shop owners, and cooks, and people living their lives the best they can. Every one of them has their own story, and while their stories might not have hydras or runelords, they're still worth hearing. So, if you want to head out into the world and hear them, there's some information you're going to want to know. Whether you're visiting small towns around Avistan or seeing the great cities of Garund, this'll be useful.

## A DAY IN THE LIFE

For some, the day begins before the sun rises. In pre-dawn hours, creatures like elk and deer that forage throughout the night are finishing their last meals before bedding down for the day. Hunters need to be awake and in the field before their prey settles down to sleep. Likewise, fish are active in the very early hours, and fishers need to be on the water to take advantage of that. Shop owners and their staff begin rising to prepare the stores to open when the sun rises.

But for others, the day is just ending. Overnight bakers who spent the night creating breads and pastries pull the final products out of the ovens and lay them out for the bakery day staff to sell when the store opens. Late-night revelers stumble to their beds, and bar and tavern staff lock up and begin cleaning so they can head home.

As the sun begins to light the sky and roosters crow, the rest of the town comes alive. Farmers head out to tend their fields and animals, laborers carry their lunch pails to their work sites, and stores unlock their doors. Merchants begin their trade with shopkeepers and open their stalls for public purchases. Hunters begin the cleaning, cutting, and packing of their kills, and fishers head back to harbor to take their catches to the fish markets.

By midday, a town is bustling with activity. The sounds of commerce and hammer on anvil echo through the streets. The smells of tanned leather and cooking dance about the air. Eateries open up for lunch and much of the workforce halts their day to eat. Laborers often pack their own food and gather in friend groups to socialize and enjoy their meals. Some shops close for an hour or two while their staff goes to patronize a neighboring restaurant, while other businesses rotate staff so they can remain open.

Quiet descends on a town in the afternoon. As it gets later in the day, folks are ready for their work to end. But this is when hunters and trappers are bringing their goods into town and setting up their stalls. As the sun begins to set laborers pack up for the day, but the busiest hours

for stores and merchants are just beginning. On their way home people stop to purchase the goods they need. Groceries, supplies, skins, gifts, decorations, the ordering of services, anything else. They may also stop by the blacksmith, tanner, or carpenter to pick up the completed work they ordered earlier in the week. After dark, once the shopping rush dies down, the restaurant rush begins. Store staff, some too mentally and emotionally drained to cook after a long day of social interaction, pick up dinner. Families take their once-weekly day to eat out. Business partners meet to discuss their work over a meal. Overnight workers rise and get their breakfast.

A town quiets again in the late evening as most of the residents lay down to rest. Bakers begin preparing tomorrow's bread and pastries. Bars and taverns service their last patrons, and overnight shifts of the city watch begin their usually uneventful nighttime patrols.

While many of these daily routines are universal, some of them change in different environments. Large game and fish aren't common in desert areas like Thuvia, and hunters are rarer than trappers. Desert temperatures can be unforgiving during the cold nights and scorching days, so trappers are most active during the dusk and dawn hours. Likewise, farming within a jungle region like around Nantambu is quite different from farming in the plains, and a farmer's schedule may add more time for chopping tree growth and processing wood for later use than it would elsewhere. With smaller and fewer fields to manage, less of the day needs to be spent with them. In coastal regions, fishers may spend more time on the water, collecting crab or lobster traps and catching additional sea life; their processes are different and more time-consuming than river or lake fishing. Additionally, large deep-sea fish are often more active in the afternoon.

All of this assumes a good-sized, static settlement. But not everyone lives in those. There are plenty who settle in more remote areas or live a more nomadic lifestyle. These come with their own challenges and their own rewards as well.

People who live by themselves away from communities might have an isolated cabin, or may have made their home in a cave. It's not even that strange to have settled in an old ruin. While some folks consider the solitude a boon, it does mean they lack the support structures living in a settlement offers. A person in isolation needs to be able to cover a lot of the roles several people would in a settlement. They need to be a hunter. They also need to be a farmer. And a blacksmith, and a carpenter, and a tanner, and a tailor, a healer, and, well, you get the idea. This is a lot of work, but it can also be quite rewarding. People who live this lifestyle often gain a reputation for being eccentric or even unsettling by the few other people they have regular contact with, as it can be easy to lose a sense of etiquette and social grace when you don't interact with others much. Choosing to live a life of

solitude with limited social interaction is something that can be hard for other people to understand.

When city folk think about nomads, they often imagine drifting from place to place without direction, but that's rarely the case for nomadic people. Some follow game. Some herd livestock and move between pastures. Some are merchants who spend their lives traveling between centers of trade, carrying their dwellings with them. Whatever their reason for being mobile, these groups encounter more communities and settlements than a static town does. The relationships they have with these towns vary. Some are good trade partners or ports of call; in others, they're met with distrust. For people who live in static settlements, the nomadic lifestyle can seem strange, even threatening. It's easy to dismiss or vilify what you don't understand.

## LANGUAGES

There are few places in Avistan where Taldane won't get you by. But that's all it will do—get you by. It's a trade tongue in most places, you see? It spread with the Taldan Empire and stayed so a merchant here can talk to and trade with a merchant there, or a scholar north with a scholar south, and then another merchant at even another place, all from different countries, different continents even. But in most places, it doesn't have the nuance and depth of native languages.

You'll be hard pressed to find a village or town without a single Taldane speaker, and in larger settlements, plenty of people will speak it. But there are places where not one soul has had need to learn it. For a long time, goblins didn't trade with any of us “longshanks,” and we weren't always so kind to them that there was opportunity to talk to us. So Taldane isn't so common among them. There's also plenty of places where folks would rather just speak their own tongues. (Most folks do. Don't you?) So when you walk into a dwarven town, expect to hear a lot of Dwarven, and don't be surprised when the townsfolk prefer to speak Dwarven with you.

If you really want to show you respect people and their ways, one of the best things you can do is make an effort to communicate in their language. Even if you struggle, most appreciate the attempt. When you're gearing up to travel somewhere new, finding out what locals in that part of the world speak is part of the prep. Headed to Varisia? Then you should know most there speak Varisian. But it's also good to know that most aren't going to appreciate the usage of Chelaxian colloquialisms, even when they can understand them. Are the places you're headed in Varisia going to point you to the Shoanti? They may be able to communicate with you in Taldane or Varisian, but it would do you good to be able to speak Shoanti. Headed to Tian Xia? Well then, understand that Tien is a trade tongue, and just like the Inner Sea, there's a lot of people in Tian Xia and they speak a lot of languages. Learn Tien so you can get by

everywhere, and then learn the basics of the local tongues for the places you're headed.

It's like this everywhere. Like I said, learn how to greet someone, how to keep yourself fed, and how to get yourself pointed to the privy wherever you're headed. If you can, learn more than the basics. It's respectful, you'll have better a trip with better experiences, and those you meet in your travels will appreciate it and respect you a whole lot more. And anyway, a little learning isn't going to hurt you.

## ANCIENT LANGUAGES

Language is an ever-evolving thing in Golarion, especially since it draws on so much culture and history. The Inner Sea in particular has a number of older languages that form the basis for its modern languages or were widespread at their time. Here's the information I found on these ancient languages.

**Ancient Osiriani:** This precursor to modern Osiriani shares many similarities and differs mainly in its hieroglyphics and lexicon. It seems anyone that speaks Ancient Osiriani can communicate with modern speakers, although with some difficulty. You can find Ancient Osiriani in the Golden Road region, particularly in Osirion of course.

**Azlanti:** Azlanti was probably the dominant language of its time and formed the basis for dozens of languages all over Avistan and Garund. Remnants of it remain to this day and countless scholars keep the language alive in the Saga Lands and among the Ruins of Azlant.

**Cyclops:** This language seems to have been widespread before the rise of humanity. The language of the cyclopes of Ghol-Gan seems to be the basis for modern Jotun, though Jotun incorporates a number of Thassilonian roots as well. A few speakers of Cyclops reside within the Shackles.

**Jistka:** The language of the Jistkan Imperium shares many words with Ancient Osiriani, though with different definitions, which possibly contributed to their conflict. Scholars and royalty seem to be the majority of Jistka speakers in modern day. These speakers are concentrated in the Golden Road region but are scattered throughout Avistan.

**Orvian:** This language hails from the furthest depths of the Darklands and is likely still in use in many remote parts of the region. Significant portions of Orvian became part of modern Undercommon.

**Tekritanin:** The language of the Tekritanin League was made up of many regional dialects. The origin of some of these dialects have been seemingly lost to time, creating a nigh-unsolvable mystery for modern linguists.

**Thassilonian:** Thassilonian formed a part of the basis for the modern Varisian language. It makes use of three runic alphabets that are returning to prominence thanks to efforts in New Thassilon and the greater Saga Lands.

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# INTERIOR DESIGNS

Architecture is different from place to place, so you can't expect a house to be the same in Arcadia as it is in Brevo. You can't even expect a house to look the same in Taldor and Andoran. But at the end of the day houses

throughout the Inner Sea have the same function. The layout may change, but there's also much in common. Here are examples of what you'll find in most houses in the region.

## Rural Home

### Bedrooms

Bedrooms are comfortable escapes from the otherwise busy house. In a multi-generational home, shared areas are almost always in use. It's nice to have somewhere private and peaceful a resident can retreat to for alone time.

### Open Space

Desert homes often have open floor plans. This allows for cross drafts important to evaporative cooling in hot months. A thick curtain soaked in water is hung in front of windows, which cools the air that passes through it.

### Food Storage

Dehydrating food is common in arid places. Salted and dried fruits, vegetables, and meats keep considerably longer, are easier to store and add to meals, and make for excellent small snacks during the day.

### Kitchen

Open kitchens help keep the kitchen from becoming too hot. Heat from cooking disperses to the rest of the home, keeping the temperature in the kitchen lower and allowing other temperature-control methods in the home to manage it.

### Desert Materials

Mud is an excellent insulator, so bricks for the walls of desert houses are made of a mixture of mud and straw. During winter, sunlight is trapped inside, keeping homes warm. In summer, sunlight is blocked, keeping them cool.

### Low Floors

Lowering the floor of the main living area allows the earth to do much of the work regulating temperatures in the room. The circular design allows for easy socialization and the inclusion of everyone in the room in conversation.

### Local Flora

Plants can give needed color to the environment around the house. But the heat and lack of water means flowers need to be planted in shaded locations and watered manually. Many of these flowers also have medicinal properties.

### Desert Colors

Vibrant blues, yellows, reds, and oranges complement the browns of the desert and add a vibrancy and life to buildings. So brightly painted door and window frames are common, but so are wall murals!



# Urban Home

## Forest Materials

Wood is a readily available resource in forested areas, making it a common material for home construction. To protect the wood from the elements, specifically rainfall and humidity, it's usually finished with oil, wax, or lacquer.

### Yard

High precipitation creates a lot of natural growth. Yard care is important so homes don't get overrun by plant life. Trimming grass and bushes and managing wildflowers is as much an art as a necessity.

### Roof Design

Pitched roofs direct rainfall away from the more vulnerable wooden portions of the home. Channels are created at the edges of the roof, guiding water so it falls from the house at specific places into barrels for later use.

### Compact Accommodations

Urban homes can't be as sprawling as rural homes and often incorporate space-saving designs. Raised bunks allow furniture to be placed below them. Armoires include hanging space as well as drawers, making efficient use of space.

### Chimney

In addition to absorbing the smells of oils and grease, with proper air circulation, a kitchen chimney allows for cooking heat to vent directly outside the building, along with smoke, keeping the kitchen as cool as possible while cooking.

### Decorative Items

Creative use of art, like statues or figurines, gives each home a unique appearance or theme. It also often reflects the personality of the people who live in the home and sets the atmosphere visitors should expect.

### Gravel and Stone

Gravel helps slow the growth of unwanted plant life in specific areas. Walkways or other areas where plants are unwanted may be filled with gravel deep enough that plants can't take root. Large flat stones help with footing and appearance.

### Hearth & Home

Rooms located near a centralized fireplace warm up more quickly. Fireplaces for specific rooms can be costly, not just to build, but in needing more firewood. Doors can be closed to block the heat so the rooms stay cooler.



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## RURAL LIFE

They say life is slower out in the country. It may be, or it may be that it's just different. It's often more practical to do things in ways city folk may not consider, or may view as old fashioned. It's easy enough to confuse that for simpler even when it's not the case.

The cultural aspects of everyday life are shaped by people's histories, stories, beliefs, and worldviews. But the foundational parts for survival, like how they get their food and resources, are often similar among groups in similar environments.

### FOOD

Everyone needs to eat, and feeding a town is no small thing. But there are plenty of options out in rural areas. Most towns have a few farms, though the types of farms vary. Some may have a little of everything, while others specialize. Farms provide most of the produce, meat, and dairy staples. Some of the milk from dairy farms gets bottled, some gets churned into butter, and some is processed for cheeses. All those goods and foodstuffs are then sold to butchers or grocers, who prepare them for sale and put them out to market for you or me to buy. Other businesses, like taverns or inns, buy straight from the farmers.

Farms aren't the only businesses supplying food. Most towns have specialties based on plants or animals that live in the area. In a coastal town, plenty of folk fish out on the sea, and they sell their catch in fish markets on the docks. But in other towns it might be apples, or olives, or deer.

Speaking of deer, most people living in rural places do some amount of hunting and fishing as well. It's usually cheaper to go out and catch and prepare your own food. It can make for a pleasant day away from the everyday and a tasty supplement to your regular diet, so a family fishing day is a common enough fun excursion. But it's not easy, either.

While taverns and restaurants exist in rural areas they're not as numerous as in cities, and often rely on uncommon ingredients and dishes that the people living in the town might otherwise never experience. Inns emphasize local specialties and give travelers an introduction to community cuisine, and any meal you take at an inn probably shows off the best from local farmers. Taverns sport their own brews, or those of other residents. Beers and meads often utilize local specialty crops for unique flavors. Ever tried a dolphin testicle beer? I hadn't either. There's a tavern in a tiny town in the Shackles called Little Oppara that serves one. It's darn tasty if you don't know how it's made. They smoke the testicles in dung, say that gives the beer its flavor. That's the unique and sometimes strange kind of drink you get in small town taverns.

### TRADE

Coin has its place out in the rural areas, just like it does anywhere else, but it's not as practical as it is in a

city. A farmer that needs a new shovel could sell their potatoes for coin and use that coin to buy the shovel from the local blacksmith. But really, it's just easier to talk to the blacksmith and determine how many potatoes they feel a shovel is worth and work out a trade both are happy with.

That's not to say folks out in rural places don't have any use for coin. A potato and a shovel both have an understood value in coinage, and most residents do have coin and are willing to sell their goods and services for it. This way of life just lends itself better to trade. Stores, taverns, inns, and the like are still most likely to expect payment in coin, and most expect travelers to pay for goods in coin. But among the community, the exchange of goods is often done through trade.

Likewise, traveling merchants will often expect payment in coin, but trade goods can also be easier to convert in other countries than coins that may lose value when they cross a border. And many merchants appreciate a good trade for supplies they would otherwise have to buy. It's fairly common for a community to trade an excess of whatever they produce for the entirety of a merchant's stock of something else. In this way communities that don't often interact are still able to trade with each other.

Most communities are able to produce some type of good in greater numbers than they need. These towns often rely heavily on exporting what they have in exchange for things they need or want. One community may send their excess of barley to a neighboring township who sends back poultry. Then both can enjoy chicken soup!

### RELIGION

Many deities rule over this world and they each govern different parts of our lives. Priests often devote themselves to a specific god, but out in the rural places of the world, that doesn't serve the community well. Many rural priests, while devoted to one god, know the rites and services of several other deities. This way they can confront the many challenges their congregations face in their everyday lives.

Non-clergy may also devote themselves to a specific deity, but this isn't as common. Even those that do often say simple prayers or perform small rites to other gods when appropriate. A farmer may offer prayers to Pharasma when it's time to birth calves; to Torag for good quality when acquiring a new plow; to Feronia when sowing a field; even a prayer to Gozreh when in need of rain.

Erastil, being the god of agriculture, is commonly worshipped in places that rely heavily not only on farming and animal husbandry but on community support. Most other gods that aren't evil, and even some that are, have their place in rural communities, though not as significantly as Erastil.

### ENTERTAINMENT

Rural communities celebrate like nothing you'll see in

a city! A harvest festival is prepared for over several weeks and often lasts several days. Not only does the entire community participate in the celebration, but, more often than not, they also contribute to the preparation. These festivals are productions designed to bring everyone together in every aspect! At such a festival you will find tremendous amounts of food, home cooked and delicious. You'll also find dancing and music; clever games testing a player's wit, agility, and strength; and colorful stories and costumes. And that's not even including the competitions, like the largest specimen of a specific produce or the fattest cow, or races like who can gird their oxen with plow fastest. And these aren't limited to festivals, but such celebrations are thrown for weddings, birthdays, community anniversaries, and holidays. If there's any reason to celebrate, it will be celebrated with spirit!

Even when there aren't celebrations occurring, almost every settlement has a place where locals can gather to socialize. A favorite tavern might be quiet during the day, but it'll explode with laughter, song, and drunken debate once the workday ends.

## COMMUNITY

Rural communities are typically tight-knit, and it seems like everyone knows everyone else. That means people talk. A lot. So when something happens, it won't take long for the entire town to know. The way the gossip flows, well, information isn't so hard to come by in small towns. Vetting that information, though? Good luck with that! You're also not going to be able to keep a secret. Assume everyone knows you're there, who you are, and anything you've inquired about. Small towns aren't a place to go to ground.

That familiarity also means if you need help with something, nearly anyone you ask will be able to point you in the direction of someone who can get you what you need. And it won't be hard to ask. Small towns are often friendly places, not nearly as indifferent or even sometimes cold as big cities can be. Expect several greetings while you navigate the place. Be prepared for a lot of questions; people are going to want to get to know you. That's an important part of the cohesion of a small community. Knowing, understanding, and trusting each other is what community is all about.

## RURAL HOUSING

The following table provides a number of different types of homes and their prices. The prices for housing are the cost to purchase a home outright and the monthly cost. Characters who prefer to rent a home can use the monthly rent costs listed instead. These costs are meant to represent an average cost in most rural areas, but can vary significantly based on location, local regulations, and other factors as determined by the GM. GMs who wish to modify these costs should generally remain within a 15% adjustment of the listed costs. Characters with connections or that have earned local respect might

## RURAL TRAVEL

Of the many ways to get around, the most obvious is your own two (or more) feet. Horses are pricey, to buy and to keep, but they're also useful in a lot of ways. Sooner or later most country folks end up getting one or more (or a more cost friendly riding mule), and a solid cart as well. A boat makes traveling the River Kingdoms quicker, and a team of dogs and a sled are real useful way up north. If you've got the coin, a teleport spell or some other similar magic will get you close enough to where you want to go. But most of us won't be going that way—you need noble, or better yet, adventurer money for that. For a lot less coin, you might be able to buy a ride with a merchant.

## ADVENTURERS IN RURAL AREAS

When adventurers show up, well, good luck. Most towns aren't prepared for adventurers. They come with a lot of money, and it gets spent. That can be a good thing, but too much money entering a place too quickly can end up wrecking the economy. Towns near sites adventurers are likely to explore are often prepared, and some even set themselves up as destinations for adventurers: "After dealing with the Tomb of Awful, enjoy our Pillows of Wonderful." But really there's no way to tell where or when they may show up. When they do, it's pretty safe to assume there's going to be some amount of violence and property damage. Some towns don't have the resources or desire to deal with them and refuse adventuring parties admittance. But it's not all bad; there's often some problem adventurers can be useful for solving.

receive discounts on these of up to 10% of the total cost. The cost for additional rooms on a home are assumed to range between 5% to 15% of the home's base cost and includes the cost for material and labor, though the GM is free to vary this as necessary.

TABLE 1: HOUSING COSTS

House payment (10 year period)	Price	Monthly
Thatch hut (poor home)	100 gp	2 gp
Wood cottage (comfortable home)	300 gp	6 gp
Stone house (quality home)	2,000 gp	40 gp
Wood, stone, and metal manse (fine home)	6,000 gp	120 gp
Villa (luxury home)	15,000 gp	300 gp
House	Monthly rent	
Thatch hut (poor home)	8 gp	
Wood cottage (comfortable home)	20 gp	
Stone house (quality home)	80 gp	
Wood, stone, and metal manse (fine home)	240 gp	
Villa (luxury home)	600 gp	

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## RURAL FASHION

Style depends on the place, environment, culture, and time. What's fashionable in one city may not be in style somewhere else, and more culturally influential places tend to inspire trends elsewhere. Rural communities take a lot of their fashion trends from larger cities, though they may lag behind. But there are some things that never go out of style. Practical or useful items remain in use, if not in fashion, almost indefinitely.

### Hats

For outdoor workers all over the world, sun hats are a necessity. The specific look varies drastically, but they're typically made of straw and are designed to protect the wearer's head and shoulders from the sun.

### A Worker's Lunch

Work in rural communities often means not having easy access to home or food without some amount of travel. Workers often take meals with them to their work sites in sturdy metal pails with the food sealed inside.

### Cloakings

Cloaks are typically made from treated cloth, wool, or animal skins and furs. They keep a wearer warm in the cold and dry in the rain or snow. Styles will vary from place to place, but the core design remains the same.

### Fishing Rod

There are few places in the world where no fishing of any sort happens. Fishing is most often done for food, but is also done for leisure or sport. Vast arrays of tools for fishing include rods and nets.

### Shirts

Tunics are simple tops that are easy and cheap to produce. They appear the world over and are the most common torso garment. Typically they cover from the tops of the shoulders to the waist, though some are longer.

### Tools

Tool belts are often associated with specific crafts, like carpentry, but they have a very broad range of use and are exceptionally common items. The belt loops accommodate most handled tools, and the pouches can carry small items.

### Work Aprons

Aprons protect clothing from the wear and tear of all kinds of work. Splashes, sparks, heat, and really anything that could damage a tunic or trousers are absorbed. Work aprons are usually heavy and thickly padded, which gives them greater durability.

### Footwear

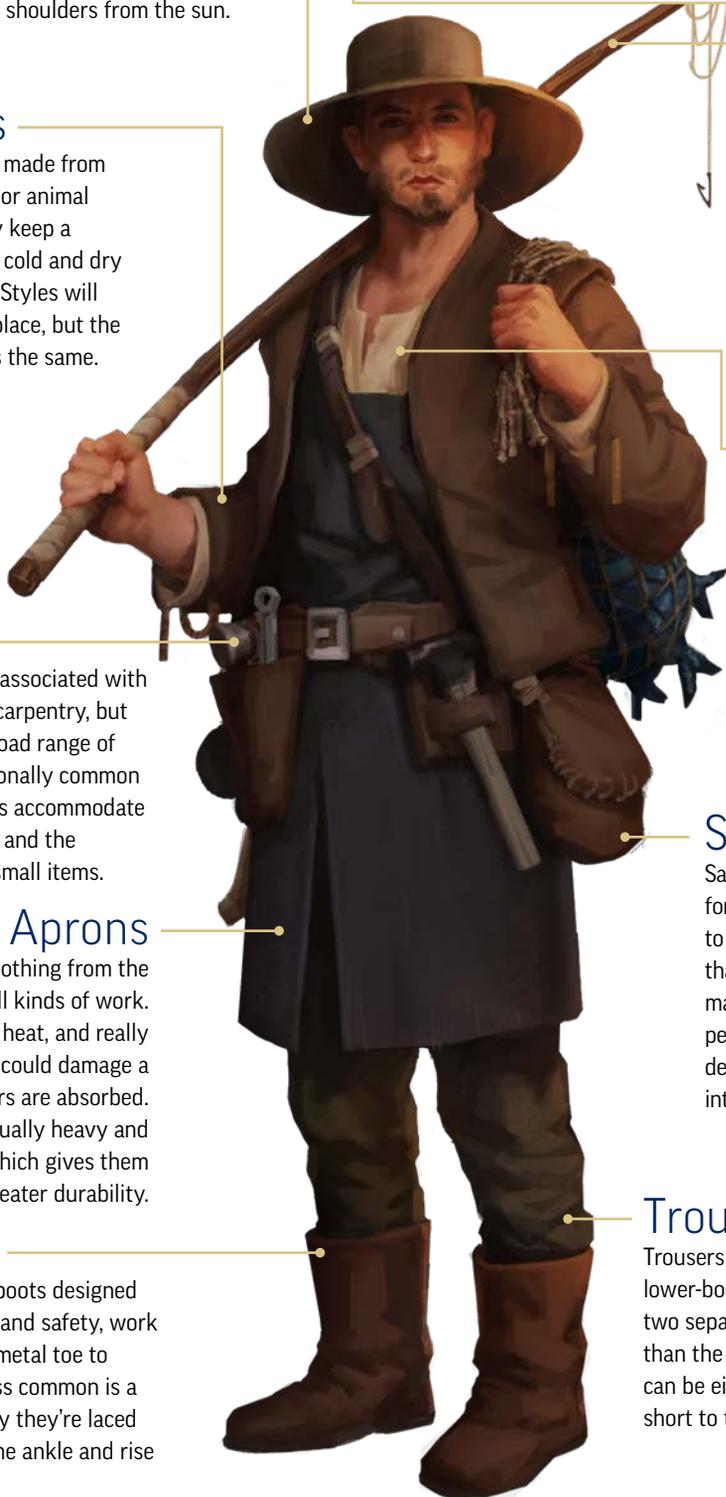
Tough and durable boots designed for both endurance and safety, work boots often have a metal toe to protect the feet. Less common is a metal shank. Usually they're laced tightly to support the ankle and rise to mid-calf.

### Satchel

Satchel design, once primarily for carrying books, has evolved to accommodate nearly anything that can fit within one. Satchels make good canvases for personalization and are often decorated to reflect the owner's interests and personality.

### Trousers

Trousers are the most common lower-body garment in Avistan. The two separate leg coverings, rather than the one in garments like robes, can be either long to the ankle, or short to the knee.





## Bandannas

Bandannas have several uses. They can be worn on the neck to protect against sunburns. In regions where dust storms are common, they may be worn over the mouth and serve as an air filter. Their most frequent usage, though, is as a head covering, usually for decoration or to hold back hair. In some places, like Varisia, they have cultural or religious significance. Some wear them over most of the face to conceal their identity, a practice common among bandits and thieves. Typically bandannas are very colorful with star shapes, paisley, or culturally significant patterns.



## Fishing Galoshes

These thigh-high boots or chest-high overalls are coated with liquid rubber for waterproofing. They allow the wearer to wade out into deeper water while staying dry, but more importantly, they give greater traction when walking on slippery river rocks. Liquid rubber originates in Arcadia, where it's used in the creation of game pieces, balls, clothing, and other items. It's created by mixing a substance harvested from certain trees native to Arcadia with oils, which cause it to harden slightly and gain an elastic quality. It can be coated onto clothing and forms an elastic waterproof membrane once it sets.



## Swimwear

Beaches, lakes, rivers, and water holes can be great leisure spots. Swimming is a favorite pastime for many people and most rural towns have a body of water somewhere nearby where residents or visitors can take a holiday and enjoy the water. Clothing specifically for swimming is a relatively recent invention. Swimwear is designed to allow the wearer to enjoy the water without being dragged down by materials that become heavy when wet. Different types of swimwear exist for different water activities, ranging from active games and sport to more relaxed sunbathing.

## Winter Coat

In extreme cold environments, like in the northern reaches of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, jackets aren't enough to keep someone alive. For those places heavy winter coats are necessary. These jackets are heavily padded, lined with thick animal furs, and buttoned up tightly to maximize how much heat they retain. They often have hoods that can be tightened to fit snug on the head, leaving only a small portion of the face exposed. Some include material that can be pulled up to cover the chin and mouth. Goggles are a common accessory to protect the eyes from glare and wind.



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## URBAN LIFE

Life in the city is very different from life in the country. The work is different, with less of it requiring manual labor. Communities and cultures grow up around activities and hobbies rather than proximity and survival, and city life has a greater emphasis on status and social presence. In small towns an individual stands out; everyone knows everyone and that makes everyone someone. In the city, life isn't so personable. An individual can become an unknown and faceless entity lost in the crowd. But there's also so much more to do, experience, and see in the city.

### FOOD

The food in a city is brought in from farms out in the countryside and is made available to city residents through grocers. Marketplace stalls exist, but they're not as common as in rural communities, as a farmer must travel a good deal further to the city to set up shop, and time spent in a stall is time lost in the field. It's more efficient to sell to a grocer and get back to work. In some cities the farmer, fisher, or hunter may sell directly to a grocer, but in most they sell to a distributor who handles the transportation of goods and sells to grocers or eateries.

Eateries flourish in cities. From low-end taverns and midday delis to high-end restaurants catering to affluent crowds—and an array of options in between—city residents have a wealth of options to choose from. Cities tend to have a greater diversity among residents than small towns, and as a result also have restaurants offering cuisine from a broad range of cultures, often run and staffed by people from those cultures. This makes the dining experience quite a bit more authentic than in rural communities, where a restaurant may be staffed by locals with little experience with the food they're preparing. Dining out is a more common activity for city residents than rural ones, and for many is an important part of the big city experience. Wealthier residents might dine out exclusively and never prepare their own meals at home.

Inns in the country often have kitchens to feed their patrons, but city inns frequently forgo kitchens in favor of fully equipped and staffed restaurants that cater to both guests and city residents. Where rural inns may highlight local specialties, urban eateries lean heavily on much more generic regional food. They still serve the common foods for the region, just without the unique spin found in rural diners.

### TRADE

Coin rules the land in cities, and it flourishes in the many bustling marketplaces and shops. While trade may be common in place of coin in rural regions, bartering is exceptionally rare in urban centers.

Shop specialties often vary between their rural and urban counterparts. A blacksmith in a rural community may be accustomed to creating farming implements, but

a blacksmith in the city may find these projects rarer, instead working on metal musical instruments like flutes or specialized cutlery for a restaurant. Similarly, a general store may find its shelf space better filled with arts and crafts supplies than animal feed. Specialty and artisanal stores that don't exist out in the country, or are exceptionally rare, are a common sight in cities. A music store carrying instruments and tools of the trade for musicians, for example. But shops that flourish in the country may not exist in the city. Sporting goods stores that sell hunting and fishing equipment can be successful in small rural communities, but might fail in large cities.

One of the biggest differences in commerce between rural and urban communities is services. Cities rely much more heavily on, and provide more opportunity for, selling services rather than goods. A person might hire a coach to take them from one end of the city to another, or pay a courier to deliver an item or message. A city resident has ready access to legal services like lawyers or barristers, while their rural counterpart may have to travel dozens of miles to find even a single notary.

A city likely also has a larger market for the arts. A greater potential audience, and access to educational institutions dedicated to the arts, means making a living creating is more tenable, and buying and selling art is more commonplace.

### RELIGION

Temples for almost every non-evil deity can be found in most major cities. In fact, many cities have entire districts dedicated to religion! Unlike the countryside, where a single clergyperson serves a community and performs the rites of many gods, in cities clergy focus on their specific deity. For the layperson, there's still some amount of revering multiple gods and acknowledging each in daily activities that fall under their purview, but it's also more common to follow a specific god or philosophy. Usually a person decides which deity they most identify with, one whose sphere of influence best overlaps with the person's interests. Abadar is the mainstay for many urban residents. His focus on law and commerce, things that govern almost everything that happens in a city, gives him a great deal of influence. Smaller faiths and other spiritual groups, like mystery cults, can be hard to find in rural areas, but are likely to exist in cities, though they still may prefer to remain quiet and secretive.

Church driven community outreach and support programs are more common in cities than in the country. With larger, and often wealthier, congregations, churches are able to field a large corps of volunteers for these projects. Soup kitchens, donation centers, medical clinics, and personal support programs for those in need are available from several temples.

With more than a dozen active churches in any major city, a holiday or religious celebration is almost always occurring for those interested. In most cases everyone

is welcome to attend regardless of affiliation so long as they respect the beliefs and ceremonies being celebrated.

## COMMUNITY

Community is different in cities. Out in the country you can expect everyone to wave and offer a greeting when you pass, but cities often appear less welcoming. In truth, that's often not the case; friendliness is just expressed in other ways. In general, don't expect waving and greetings unless you engage someone first, and locals probably aren't going to understand why you're engaging if it's just to exchange pleasantries. Residential areas and neighborhoods may function like a small town, but commercial or industrial areas are more distant.

Communities in cities often grow up around activities rather than proximity. In a village you may be pointed in the direction of someone who enjoys chess, but in Magnimar you can join a chess club to play with, learn from, and possibly serve as a small social network. Clubs often even compete in leagues. For almost any competitive, intellectual, artistic, or leisure activity, like-minded folks can be found who are either already in a club or willing to start one. Not all of these groups require active participation. Fans of sports teams do little more than cheer on their favorite team, but can be some of the most intense communities, and you might find yourself part of that community simply by expressing you like a team (or in a rivalry if you don't!). Likewise, support groups, religious organizations, and political groups can become strong parts of people's identities, leading to close community relationships among their members.

## ENTERTAINMENT

Cities are full of activities and entertainment, from busy bars and taverns to more grand spectacles. The arts are always active. Theater, opera, and dance performances are ongoing with shows nearly every night. Spas and bathhouses are common destinations. Museums ranging from art galleries to architectural displays to collections of historical artifacts can be found in most urban areas, with some, like the Natural and Ancient History Museum in Oppara, serving as major tourist destinations. Likewise, large coliseums can be found in many cities. Typically built to cater to a variety of sporting activities, these stadiums host events year-round featuring displays of individual strength and athleticism, arcane ability, competitive local leagues, and on occasion regional competitions. Some are even known to be able to host small scale naval competitions!

Community-wide festivals aren't as common in cities as they are in the country, but in most large cities people celebrate a variety of annual holidays, often extensions of festivals celebrated regionally or even locally before the city grew. Religious holidays are only officially celebrated for the major religions associated with a city, but the sheer amount of holidays celebrated by more than 20 religious traditions, before considering minor

## URBAN TRAVEL

Out in the country owning some mode of transportation is almost a necessity, but in cities there are more options for getting around. The more compact nature of cities means foot travel is the most common option and doesn't take as long as it can in more sprawling towns. Carts, carriages, and similar services are also available to take anyone anywhere in the city for a fee. Owning, and more importantly stabling, a horse is a difficult and pricey proposition for urban residents. Most homes don't have stables or anywhere for a horse to sleep (villas and estates may, but those are usually reserved for the wealthy) and rent at communal stables can become expensive quickly. Those same communal stables often have horses available to rent, however.

## ADVENTURERS IN URBAN AREAS

Cities are far better equipped for adventurers than towns. A sudden influx of money can still be damaging to the economy, but there are more activities to enjoy and more shops to patronize to help distribute an adventurer's coins. It's also easier for adventurers to go unnoticed in cities; larger populations are often also less connected populations. Unlike small towns where the arrival of a group of travelers becomes the talk of the town, newcomers come and go in cities without most locals ever noticing. And while adventurers may be able to offer their services to small towns in need of assistance, there's little they can do for big cities. Beyond picking up odd jobs for (usually rich) individuals, and participating in bar brawls or combat tournaments, adventurers aren't usually in cities for long. Adventurers' guilds are starting to pop up in cities though, which could mean a greater adventurer presence in the future.

deities and philosophies, makes celebrating them all untenable. Anyone looking to celebrate those holidays can usually find celebrations within a temple dedicated to their deity.

## URBAN HOUSING

Characters that wish to buy homes in urban markets can use the prices noted on Table 1 on page 17. These prices use the same guidelines for adjustments as the rural housing costs. Additionally, a character might instead purchase an apartment, which is typically half the cost of a home of similar quality (a comfortable apartment would cost 150 gp, for example). Renting an apartment typically runs one-fourth of the cost for renting a home. Some cities might have local support programs that can reduce these costs further. As space can be limited in urban environments, adding rooms to an urban home is usually more expensive, running upwards of 25% of the home's cost. This additional cost includes the cost of permits and fees required for such an undertaking.

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## URBAN FASHION

City fashion serves two purposes: it's for comfort and it's for show. In the country people dress practically, but fewer people work manual labor jobs in the cities. With less worry about wear and tear and physical damage, and a much greater likelihood of social encounters, clothing design can focus more on appearance. And with more to do in the city, urban locals often have several outfits for many different occasions.

### Parasol

Similar to an umbrella but intended to keep out sunlight rather than rain, parasols have become associated with the upper class. They're priced such that anyone can afford a simple one, but high-end parasols can cost as much as a horse!

### Satchel

These satchels are more specialized than normal over-the-shoulder satchels. They include pockets designed specifically for brushes and paint jars to minimize the damage travel can do. They also have a slim compartment for a paint palette.

### Plumage

Feathers are a seemingly simple and easily acquired accessory that add a pleasant accent to any outfit. The more colorful, the better! However, if not mindfully acquired, the collection of feathers can do a lot of damage to bird populations, and activist groups have begun to protest them.

### Formal Looks

Formal clothing is often far less comfortable than normal day-to-day clothes, but the goal is to be seen, not comfortable! Formal social events are a regular occurrence in big cities, and having appropriate wear when invited is important.

### Now Showing

In the country the theater is often viewed as an activity for the rich, but in reality it's accessible by anyone. Cheap tickets may not get great seats, but even the worst seats still have a clear view.

### Shirts

The less physical nature of city life means clothing can be a little fancier. A wraparound tunic is comfortable while affording the wearer a slightly more formal, and therefore classier, look than its rural pullover counterpart.

### Well-Armed

Carrying a weapon is as much a show of status as it is for protection. Many cities require weapons be secured with a peace knot, designed to make drawing the weapon difficult. Bright colors make them easier to see.

### Legwear

The words breeches and trousers are often used interchangeably, but there are differences. Breeches are usually fastened along the leg with buckles or buttons, where trousers are not. Breeches are also typically short, ending mid-calf and tucked into high boots.

### Pouches

Belt pouches allow easy carrying of coins, gems, or other small items. Many are simple in design, but an industry around artistic and custom pouches has grown in Absalom, and residents are often keen to show off their unique pouches.

### Footwear

Made with soft leather, these boots are designed to be comfortable and fashionable. Lighter than work boots due to the lack of metal, they're designed for riding and walking. Polish gives them an excellent shine for formal events.





## Academae Uniform

Major cities the world over have colleges and universities. These educational institutes typically have specialties in which they train their students. Medical schools train students in the body and how to heal it; agricultural schools train people in the arts of animal husbandry and farming; schools of magic instruct students who will go on to become wizards. At more general colleges, students get a well-rounded wealth of knowledge. These schools tend to unify their student bodies with official dress codes of their own uniforms, such as these from the Academae in Korvosa.

## Musical Instruments

Every culture has its own style of music. Many learn to play instruments common to their region and build on their cultural style by interpreting it their own way, or even incorporating other styles. An Ustalavic musician familiar with the tambourine may also appreciate the Andoran flute and incorporate that into their own music, leading to a unique blend of two different styles. Most cities host colleges for the arts where students learn about music and musical theory.



## Religious Symbols

High-society residents often follow a single deity, usually one whose dogmas reflect social etiquette and status. Gods associated with knightly virtues, or genteel behavior, give an air of chivalry. Wearing a religious symbol of these gods allows socialites to consciously cultivate their reputations. Whether or not they truly worship that deity in private varies—some are devoted enough, but for others religion is an act. In either case public behavior reflects those values, and they do usually participate in the church of their chosen god. Iomedae is especially popular in these social circles.

## Tricorn Hats

Cocked hats fit nicely in the arm when taken off the head, and are easy to carry when inside buildings. As formal etiquette requires hats be removed when indoors, they gained popularity with Andoran military personnel, which then later translated to popularity with everyone else. They have laces that link the three sides together, giving them the nickname “tricorn.” These laces can be loosened to allow the sides to fold down into a standard wide brim to give better protection from the elements. In popular fiction they’re associated with pirates, but it’s rare to find pirates wearing them.



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# FESTIVALS & HOLIDAYS

*“A Time to Celebrate” by Idreth Bayad, traveling journalist*

Festivals and holidays mark our progress against the world’s inexorable turning. While many are intended to commemorate an event or preserve traditions across generations, some of our most beloved holidays exist simply to celebrate the bonds we share with each other. Our most raucous feasts and festivals occur during the dead of winter when it would be most prudent to hoard food and rest. In my experience, those are the days to plan your travels around. Those are the days that will leave you with memories of laughter, beauty, and longing.

## HOLIDAYS

There may not be an abundance of holidays in one particular location in the Inner Sea, but from a broader perspective, the region as a whole perpetually celebrates them. When I tutored students in the sword, it seemed wherever I traveled I ran into a holiday that was about to begin or had just ended. Preparation for holidays creates an air of excitement and anxiety. Every holiday is a chance for a business to come back from the verge of bankruptcy, for youth to find first love, for the unassuming to prove their mettle in a drinking contest. The anticipation for a holiday is made material in the weeks preceding it, during the construction of temporary stalls or renovation of an existing hall or temple.

I have joined in many holidays and festivals, and by my estimation, they can be grouped into six categories of celebration: arts, folk, memorial, national, religious, and seasonal. Days focused on the arts might celebrate the works of a particular artist, like Batul al-Alim in Qadira. I see folk celebrations more as local, unofficial days celebrated by places as part of long-standing tradition. While these are least likely to be known outside their locale, they’re the most popular by far in their respective homes. Memorial celebrations tend to be more somber affairs, commemorating tragedies or specific events, like Saint Alika’s Day and the Night of Tears. National holidays, on the other hand, are usually instituted by governments and focus on a nation’s history, power, and operation. Religious celebrations are just as well-known. Churches make them official and usually celebrate them in multiple regions. Finally, seasonal celebrations are, without a doubt, the most beloved holidays and festivals. These occasions include some of the Inner Sea’s biggest celebrations, like Sunwrought Festival and Crystalhue.

## FESTIVALS

Whereas holidays are tied to events that occur on a specific day, festivals arise out of the circumstances and patterns of life. They usually last several days and might have a more flexible purpose or origin. Typically, the point of the festival is pure debauchery. Few things in life are better.

Harvest Feast, Winter Week, and Jester-cap are three of the most popular festivals. Harvest Feast celebrates the end of field work and is a massive feast indulging in the fruits

of farmers’ labor. Harvest Feast also serves as a reminder that the lean times of winter are approaching. Following that, Winter Week is a sprawling festival designed to fight off the worst isolation of winter. Winter Week sees people joining with other households for food and games and, perhaps most importantly, a week of courtship. Jester-cap, on the other hand, is a day of unabashed trickery and practical jokes. The point is to laugh—after all, something has to remind us how ridiculous life is. While most festivals are light affairs, some can be a bit more serious in tone. The Kianidi Festival in Garund is a way for tribes to communicate and settle disputes, and also for each tribe to show off mementos of their travels.

## LIFE EVENTS

Milestones marking important life events are a common cause for gathering and celebration.

### BIRTH

When the Age of Enthronement ended and turmoil spread throughout Avistan, parents in the region changed how they celebrated the birth of a child. Traditionally, the seventh day after a child’s birth is known as Dedication, a day in which parents give their newborn a full name and hold a magnificent feast for family and friends. Now, many Dedications are explicitly religious. Instead of a large feast, parents spend money on offerings to a chosen deity, even naming their child after the deity in hopes of garnering the god’s support and protection. Non-religious families, however, still hold to older Dedication traditions.

### BIRTHDAYS

On their birthdays, children throughout the Inner Sea are brought to their Dedicated deity’s holy site to renew their connection to the deity. Most families hold modest parties. The elves of the Mierani Forest, however, celebrate a child’s twelfth birthday as the end of childhood (but not the beginning of adulthood). They ask children to select a related adult as a mentor and complete a special hunt, proving their devotion to Ketepphys. A guardian’s aegis ritual is performed for the mentor and child, ensuring the child will come to little harm during their quest.

### MARRIAGES

In Avistan, weddings are typically held during the balm of spring and summer. Most are held outdoors and feature a scenic view of mountains, lakes, or forests if possible. Decor tends to be light and naturalistic, as is the fare served during the party. Festivities last through the evening and then the newlyweds leave together for a honeymoon. Weddings in Garund tend to be held indoors due to the sweltering temperatures. Festivities often last for several days, and with each day that passes, more distant relatives and friends are invited. In both continents, use of the heartbond ritual is common when resources allow it.

## FUNERALS

Funerals tend to be dedicated to whatever deity the bereaved followed. Given the preponderance of monsters, spirits, and the undead across the world, many funerals focus on laying the dead to rest peacefully and permanently. The rest eternal ritual is common, and if the ritual can't be performed in full, a symbolic version is performed instead.

In Brevoyn, however, the influx of idle crusaders has led to a funerary storytelling tradition. Individuals close to the departed will step forward, drink to the deceased, then tell a story of them. These stories usually portray the deceased as heroic, but as tellers get deeper into their goblets, they start to tell embarrassing tales as well. Funerals like this transform from something somber into a sort of tongue-in-cheek airing of grievances and joyful remembrance.

## HOLIDAYS AND FESTIVALS

The following list notes some of the major holidays in the Inner Sea region and a few of the minor ones.

### ABADIUS

- 1st. **New Year, Foundation Day (Absalom)**
- 20th. **Ruby Prince's Day (Osirion):** Birthday of Osirion's monarch.

### CALISTRIL

- 2nd. **Merrymeade (Druma)**
- 19th. **Loyalty Day (Cheliox)**
- Last **Oathday. Batul al-Alim (Qadira):** Day for performing and celebrating the writings of poet Batul al-Alim.
- 29th. **Fateless Day (Mahathallah)**
- 29th. **Leap Day:** Added every 4 years for calendar accuracy.

### PHARAST

- First **Sunday. Golemwalk Parade (Magnimar, Varisia)**
- 7th. **Night of Tears (Solku, Osirion):** Vigil commemorating those lost in the Battle of Red Hall.

### GOZRAN

- 7th. **Currentseve (Gozreh)**
- 15th. **Taxfest (Abadar)**
- 16th–30th. **Wrights of Augustana (Andoran):** Annual celebration of Augustana's shipyards and the navy.
- 27th. **Gala of Sails (Absalom):** Kite-battling festival.

### DESNUS

- 2nd. **Ascendance Day (Norgorber)**
- 13th. **Old-Mage Day (Mwangi Expanse)**
- First **new moon. Beginning of Burning Blades (Sarenrae):** Beginning of month-long festival in which the faithful dance with flaming blades.
- Last **Sunday. Goblin Flea Market (Andoran)**

### SARENITH

- 1st. **Rushlight Tournament (Tymon, River Kingdoms)**
- 3rd. **Liberty Day (Andoran)**
- Summer **Solstice. Sunwrought Festival (Sarenrae):** Celebration of the year's longest day with fireworks.
- Last **Sunday. Goblin Flea Market (Andoran)**

### ERASTUS

- 3rd. **Archerfeast (Erastil)**
- 14th. **Founding Festival (Korvosa, Varisia)**

- 15th–21st. **Kianidi Festival (Garund)**
- Last **Sunday. Goblin Flea Market (Andoran)**

### ARODUS

- 1st. **The Inheritor's Ascendance (Iomedae)**
- 6th. **Crusader Memorial Day (Mendev)**
- 10th. **Founding Day (Ilсурian, Varisia)**
- 31st. **Saint Alika's Birthday (Korvosa, Varisia)**

### ROVA

- 6th. **Start of Classes**
- Second **Oathday. Signing Day (Andoran, Cheliox, Galt, Isger):** Marks the day the nations declared secession from Taldor.
- 16th–30th. **Autumnal Carpentry Court (Andoran)**
- 19th. **Day of the Inheritor (Iomedae)**

### LAMASHAN

- Second **Moonday. Harvest Feast**
- 6th. **Ascendance Day (Iomedae)**
- 15th. **Kraken Carnival (Absalom):** Kite-battling festival.
- 27th. **Jestercap (Andoran, Druma, Taldor):** Day of pranks.
- 30th. **Allbirth (Lamashtu)**
- 30th. **Festival of the Witch (Irrisen)**

### NETH

- 7th. **Seven Veils (Sivanah):** Day of dancing, feasting, and courting that ends with a masquerade.
- 8th. **Abjurant Day (Nethys)**
- 14th. **Even-Tongued Day (Andoran, Cheliox, Galt, Isger):** Commemorates these nations' freedom from Taldor.

### KUTHONA

- Second **Week (Sunday to Starday). Winter Week**
- 11th. **Ascendance Day (Cayden Cailean)**
- 15th. **Winterbloom (Naderi):** The anniversary of Naderi's ascension.
- Winter **Solstice. Crystalhue (Shelyn):** Day of artistic creation; a time for courtship and romantic proposals.
- 31st. **Night of the Pale:** People gather and revel indoors, waiting for the ghosts of last year's dead to pass on.
- 31st. **Turning Day (Alseta):** Forgiving old debts and beginning anew.

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## FESTIVAL FASHION AND TRADITION

Of the many celebrations I've had the fortune to attend, Merrymeade and Currentseve are two of the most memorable. Merrymeade was started by Druma's Caydenites, who had the brilliant idea to host a massive party to drink the remains of the previous year's alcohol in a symbolic act of drowning unfinished business. Currentseve is more somber, as it's a festival for sailors seeking the protection of Gozreh, deity of storms, to ensure a safe voyage. Like many holidays and festivals, both celebrations have unique garb and activities.

### Merrymeade

#### Cayden Crowns

Small tin crowns made in the shape of vines are placed upon the heads of those who lead donation processions through the city.

#### Handkerchief

Handkerchiefs are used to keep your tankard clean and your face and hands dry. They also serve a ceremonial purpose: surrender! Merrymeade is rife with games, like spontaneous arm-wrestling, singing, and gambling competitions.

#### Cayden's Tankard

Cayden's symbol is the tankard, but I've never once seen a tankard that's purely symbolic. Everyone carries a tankard during Merrymeade because the point is to finish all of the old year's leftover drink. Caydenites avoid getting ragingly drunk, but being a bit of a mess is strongly encouraged!

#### Stories to Share

Storytelling games are a cherished part of Merrymeade, as nothing builds trust better than meeting someone and immediately lying to them. Storytellers get a card with a prompt. One must tell a true story and one must tell a lie; the audience has to figure out who told the true story. Whichever side loses, drinks!

#### A Time for Sharing

Generosity and care for the unfortunate and oppressed is a key part of Cayden's legacy. On this night, believers fill ornamental purses with whatever they can spare and deliver donations to orphanages, schools, and hospitals.

#### Scarves

Merrymeade is a pub crawl with outdoor activities that take place in the dead of winter. Given that, celebrants often wear scarves as big as blankets. It struck me as funny until I saw how the Caydenites invite strangers to embrace their scarves, sharing their warmth, food, and joy with the poor, the lonely, and the exiles—even half-orcs like me.

#### Merry Pins

Small pins are handed out as trophies for winners of competitions. They typically take a shape that represents the artisan that made them and the town they were made in.

#### Merry Tunes

No procession would be complete without instruments. Celebrants like to carry small, portable instruments: a handheld wooden flute, an occasional fiddle, or, for the trained, a snare drum.

#### Ragged Coats

The Caydenites' giving brings them into conflict with the followers of Kalistrade, who care only for amassing wealth. Further flaunting their disdain for Druma, the Caydenites wear dark coats of green or beige, often old and patched-up.

#### Pub Logs

Participants carry booklets meant for collecting stamps from the taverns they've visited. Besides it being a fun way to look back on previous Merrymeades, it also serves as a record of where you were in case you wake up without your shoes.



# Currentseve

## Sailor's Ink

Tattooing is very popular on this holiday. Sailors often get tattoos from the places they've been to, but at home, they're tattooed with short passages of songs and poems dedicated to Gozreh.

## Gozren Robe

Celebrants in Thuvia, where the festival is most popular, wear a traditional loose robe made from cotton. Robes are usually shades of sea green, cyan, or other colors associated with Gozreh. The robe typically has wide vertical stripes in darker colors like navy. It falls to the ankle and is often worn with sandals.

## Sashes

The family and friends of each soon-to-depart sailor work together before the holiday to craft a ceremonial sash. They're made from linen and are embroidered with natural patterns related to the sailor's home.

## Lucky Mints

Mint candies are surprisingly popular but for a sensible reason: the metallic taste of blood in the mouth is considered a bad omen, so people gift each other tins of breath-refreshing sweets to ward against bad luck.

## Sailing Games

Dominoes are sold during the festival, as sailors need entertainment during their journeys. Currentseve sees people playing dominoes at every cafe and doorstep, and a few special tournaments are held by the seaside.

## Hair Ties

Many people tie their hair back with strips of white linen, a style popular with the clergy of the temple dedicated to Gozreh located in Duwwor.

## Pearls

Pearl jewelry is a luxury item that confers ultimate protection upon the wearer. Pearl earrings in particular are the mark of wealthy, successful sailors.

## Wreaths

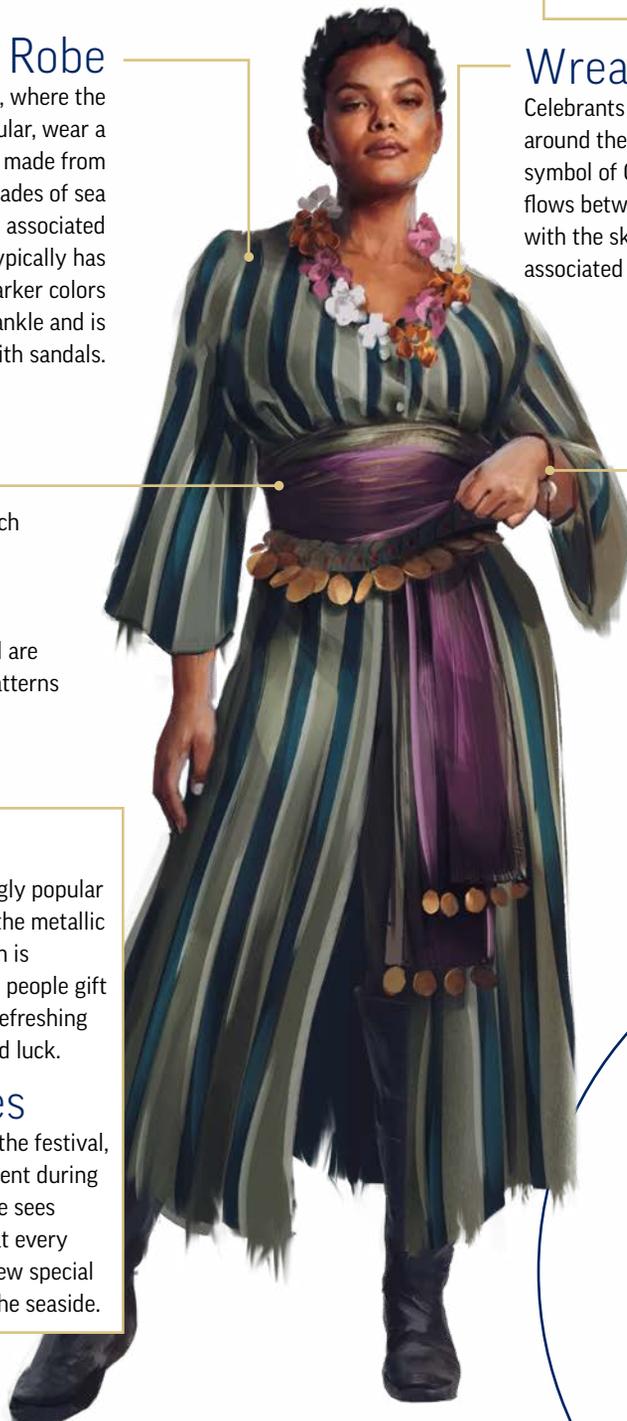
Celebrants place wreaths of flowers around the necks of sailors. Flowers are a symbol of Gozreh, as they're a deity who flows between a male aspect associated with the sky and a female aspect associated with the sea.

## Remembrance Bracelet

The most special gift given during Currentseve is a simple bracelet bearing half a seashell. They're sold in sets of two—one half is given to the sailor and the other remains to be worn by their beloved. These are often given as a form of proposal ring from the lover remaining ashore.

## Sailing Meals

Families of sailors prepare small, painted boxes of special food for the sailors to take with them. Common foods include asida, a dish that consists of dough cooked to a pudding-like consistency and topped with syrup, and a sausage stuffed with lamb, rice, local herbs, and chopped liver known as usban.



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## Dance of the Beasts

The main event for the night is a dancing competition. In this game, a participant approaches a dancing couple and challenges one of the pair. The challenger and challenged dance together, and the observer chooses the person they will go on to dance with. The goal is to escape the floor with a partner.

## Gruesome Decorations

Entrails and blood provided by a butcher are used in fortunetelling rituals. These rituals are genuine and usually performed by an orc or half-orc ritualist. Here, they're performed with all the gravity of hundreds of years of history.

## Allbirth Performances

Throughout the night, performers go on stage to play music, read poetry, and act out excerpts from plays. A popular theme in these works is the artist's experience embracing, rejecting, or reinterpreting their heritage as a descendant of Lamashtu.

## ALLBIRTH

Of all the holidays I've experienced, Allbirth has been the most thrilling. It began as an occult celebration of monsters performed by the followers of Lamashtu, the Demon Queen. At some point, a group of half-orc and goblin youth in Katapesh began to celebrate the holiday half in jest and half seriously, and it became a secretive masquerade party. That trend has gained popularity, and what was once a day of bloodcurdling ritualistic sacrifice has become a day of temptation and celebration for those of us who see Lamashtu as our ancestor.

## Monstrous Art

Throughout the night, attendees can also marvel at sculptures of monsters and demons created by local artists. Each Allbirth doubles as an art gallery and sculpting competition, as artists fill the halls with depictions of creatures Lamashtu birthed.

## Abyssal Heartbreak

The final act begins when two individuals (typically the best dancer and best sculptor) are elected to play the role of Lamashtu and Pazuzu. The deities were once lovers, but Pazuzu later betrayed Lamashtu. The chosen individuals play out a scene of their destined reunion, engaging in theatrical combat.

## Lamashtan Masks

The halls of every Allbirth party are lined with masks that resemble Lamashtu. They take the shape of a jackal's head with three eyes, and are painted gold and splattered with real blood provided by a butcher.

## Allbirth Meals

In Katapesh, food tends to be hearty and rich in flavor, such as thick stews of lamb fat and okra, or meat sauces of beef and cumin, served over flatbreads. The quality of an Allbirth is judged mostly by the food.

## Allbirth Drinks

A common refreshment is a fermented beverage made from the sap of the box elder. The sharp, sweet alcohol known as beast syrup helps smooth the transition from dancing to one-on-one conversation.

## Closing Treats

Dessert is served after the combat. In Katapesh, it consists of *kuindiong*, a pudding made from milk, semolina, and sugar, as well as roasted nuts and fruits like candied dates. Afterward, attendees escape into the night.

## Curtains

Another popular decoration is a curtain woven from vines and sprigs of three-leaf box elders. They're placed over alcoves and doorways for privacy.

# ALLBIRTH FASHION

Allbirth is always a masquerade, so attendees dress in traditional, opulent, or wholly original costumes that blend the frightening with the alluring. All attendees wear masks, which are often shaped like a monster or demon from myth. Though Allbirth began as a holiday for the descendants of Lamashtu, many other ancestries are frequently invited to Allbirth parties (usually wearing costumes that draw from their own culture's legends). Heirlooms, weapons, and armor that have withstood actual combat are the most eye-catching accessories.

## Reserved Outfits

Clothing makers will sometimes loan pieces to Allbirth attendees, ensuring everyone gets to wear an opulent costume. Attendees can reserve a piece they see someone else wearing if it's a loan, and then pay and receive it on a future date.

## Vavakia Horns

This attendee is wearing a crown with two short extensions that resemble vavakia horns. Mortals who enslave others are culled and transformed into vavakia. By wearing vavakia horns, the attendee is invoking a reminder of the punishment that awaits those who crush others beneath them.

## Vavakia Mask

The attendee is also wearing a vavakia mask, as Lamashtu is remembered as the mother of vavakia. The jackal mask is the most common, so wearing a mask that invokes a more esoteric part of Lamashtu's mythos draws attention.

## Celebrant Armor

Real armor is often added to costumes. It serves as a reminder of conflict, as well as a testament to the wearer's experiences. It also serves as practical armor should the wearer be chosen for the evening's ceremonial combat.

## Chainmail

This bloodstained loop of chainmail makes for an engrossing conversation piece. Though Allbirth began as a holiday for young adults, it quickly transformed into a way to bear witness to the hardships and violence older half-orcs and goblins survived.

## Armor Decoration

Though armor is primarily functional, Allbirth attendees take great interest in decorated armor as part of a costume. Local artisans produce ornamented pieces like this, which often focus on how nature arms itself.

## Celebrant Weapons

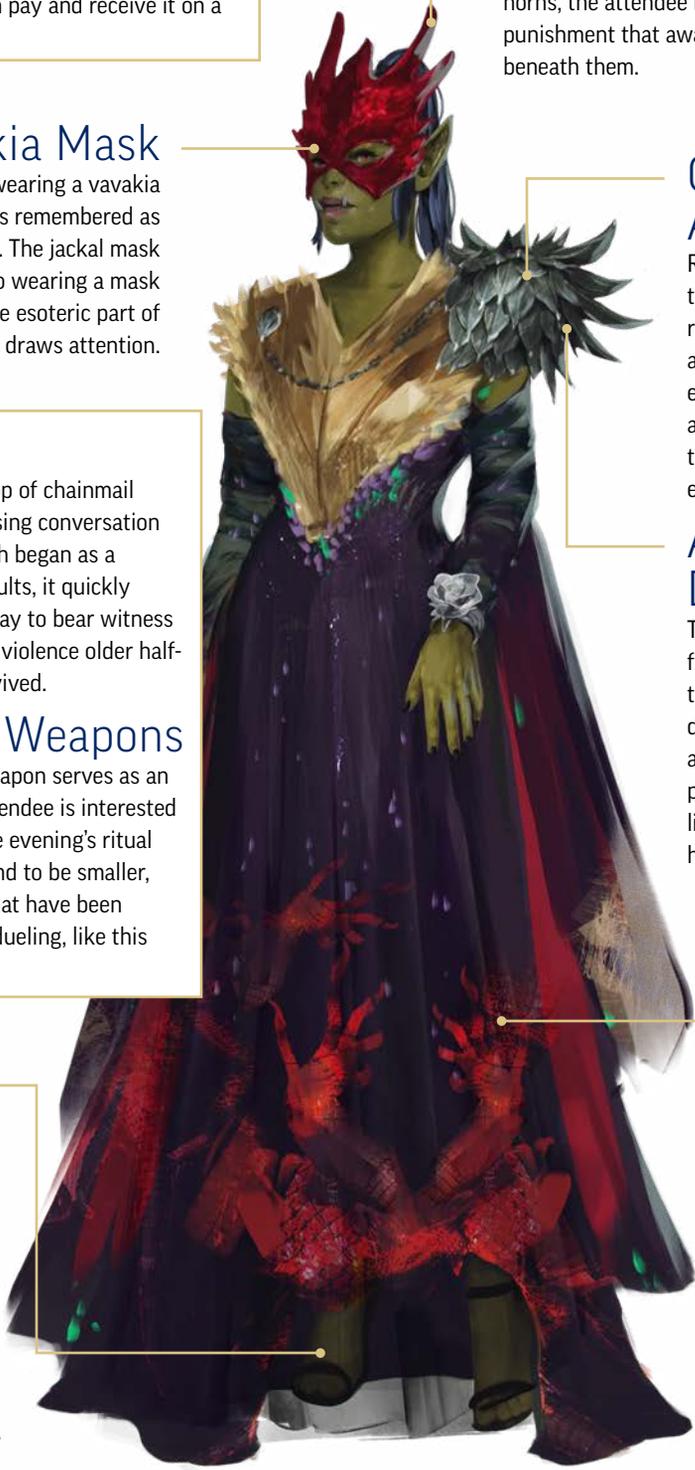
The presence of a weapon serves as an indicator that the attendee is interested in participating in the evening's ritual combat. Weapons tend to be smaller, ornamental blades that have been dulled for nonlethal dueling, like this swept-hilt rapier.

## Celebrant Footwear

In warmer climes like Katapesh, attendees tend to wear sandals. Regardless of where Allbirth takes place, attendees make sure to wear something they can dance in without too much pain.

## Belkzen Imagery

For those with orc heritage, symbols featuring the iconography of the Belkzen holds are extremely popular. Here, attendees can swap family legends and origin stories without fear of judgment.



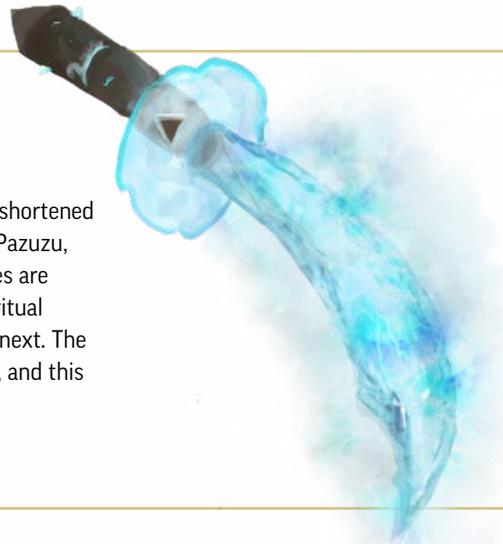


## Allbirth Sculpture

This is a sculpture of a shemhazian demon that won the sculpture contest at a recent Allbirth. As I've alluded to several times, artists who work on projects for Allbirth delight in carefully and thoughtfully subverting what we've come to expect from monsters. Here, the shemhazian doesn't look delighted in the torment it inflicts upon the damned, but rather tortured itself. Why is it so humanoid, and why is it in anguish? Does it regret the pain it wrought during its mortal days? Does it hate its own form, though it was crafted by Lamashtu? If it must torture its prisoners for eternity, is it not also imprisoned itself? Can anything ever be born of its suffering?

## Chillheart

This is one of the two blades Lamashtu is said to wield: the Chillheart, in shortened kukri form. It's given to the loser of the ritual combat, be it Lamashtu or Pazuzu, who is expected to hold onto it until the following year. Though the blades are replicas, they are both real, enchanted weapons. They aren't used in the ritual combat, as they're meant to be a prize that connects each Allbirth to the next. The blades gain their own history as they travel around with the competitors, and this tradition is so revered they're almost never stolen.

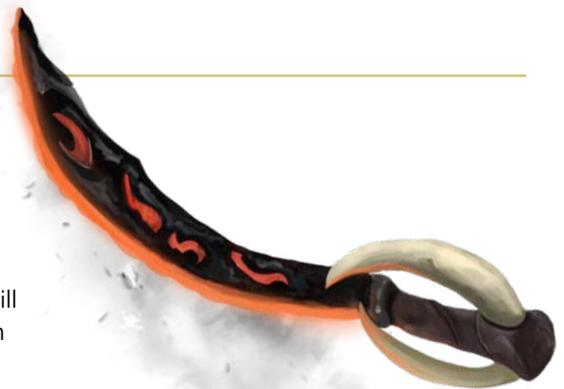


## Dancer's Band

Depicted here is an accessory used in the dancing game. All participants receive one of these bands, which represent three common aspects of Lamashtu. Whenever there's a challenge, the winner of the challenge takes one band from the dancer they defeated. If you're eliminated immediately, you leave the dance floor partnerless (but then get to mingle with the other eliminated attendees). The goal of the game is to eliminate a few people, then try to escape the dance floor without being challenged. You can redeem your collected bands for prizes or keep them as a trophy.

## Redlust

This is the other of Lamashtu's blades: the Redlust. Though the blade is said to be able to change its length, this model has been made in the image of a falchion. It's given to the winner of the ritual combat, who will bring it to the next Allbirth, then present it to whoever replaces them in the same role they previously played.



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# TRADE

“Coins & Commodities: The Key to Profit in the Inner Sea” by Trademaster Tythildera “Tythi” Ilisirae, Abadaran barrister

Welcome to the crossroads of the world, a burgeoning marketplace of ideas and wares that consumes ill-advised, brash traders who underestimate the value of their commodities and themselves. Never forget that a king in another land is powerless, but a merchant in another land is a king. If you follow my advice and keep your wits about you, you can easily leave with tenfold your initial investment. Of course, no one can blame you if you trade your wagon for a storefront and caravan for a guild, fully embracing the allure of the vibrant bazaar we call the Inner Sea.

If trade is the rain that keeps the tree of our economy growing, then Abadar’s church is the loam that keeps its roots from rotting. While governing bodies and guilds set regulations, even my esteemed Barrister’s Guild relies on the church’s diligent enforcement. Without its devotion to fair enterprise, the economy would undoubtedly wither, as even the most optimistic traders would hoard their fortunes. The church is the closest thing a merchant has to a neutral party in an otherwise ruthless business: notarizing contracts, setting interest rates, standardizing currency, and doling out swift justice to correct otherwise irreparable damage to a fair and balanced market. The church’s reliable banking systems also allow a merchant to travel without carrying huge heaps of gold and making themselves an attractive target to local bandits.

Any merchant in the Inner Sea region should be prepared to notarize their contracts with the church of Abadar. Even the premium contracts I write for foreign merchants, as watertight as they are, might be dubiously perverted with a seemingly innocent stroke of the quill. Of course, none of my contracts have ever failed my clients, but I do business only with the best and brightest, like those who invest in *Golarion’s Finest Guide to the Inner Sea* (a worthy investment, is it not?). If an unscrupulous business or guild attempts to deflect with petty lies about the church’s fees or blather on about trust, I recommend you leave immediately without saying a word. While they may have been operating in good faith, if they have been embargoed by the local Abadaranans, you risk your invaluable reputation by doing business with them. While the church of Asmodeus and the Hellknights have barristers for hire, their service charges sometimes carry high prices. No legitimate Abadaran will charge more than a cursory fee for their notary services and legal advice, and when you’re in an unfamiliar jurisdiction, you can’t always trust secular authorities.

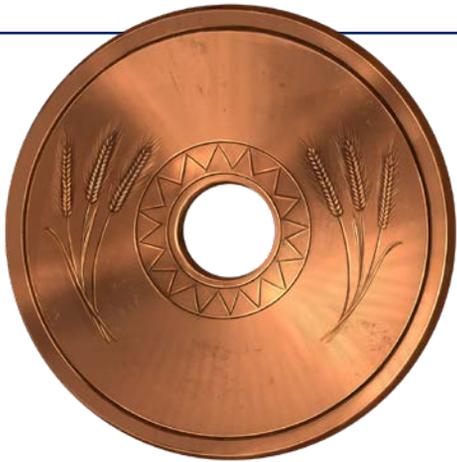
The legal limits for interest rates are usually set by nations and city-states under the council of a high priest of Abadar. This service helps balance the scales of international trade across the Inner Sea; nations trying to artificially inflate their economy find their businesses selectively sanctioned to prevent instability

from spreading. Only a few mortal arbiters know the complex methodology by which the church sets these interest rates. As a result, the prices of commodities have remained relatively stable, thanks to this classified methodology and the consideration of different markets.

More well known are the church’s standards for minting currency. Working hand-in-hand with the church, the silver weight of Absalom has become the standard by which to measure all Inner Sea currency. The stability of Absalom’s mint is kept in check by the scrutiny of the city’s noble class, which has for centuries kept a close eye on the bank, looking to undermine the establishment for cheap political clout. There’s a pervasive myth that the silver standard was adopted to discourage conniving devils from interfering in mortal commerce, but in all likelihood, the ancient standard comes from the metal’s common occurrence and how quickly its purity can be tested.

While magic can instantly test the purity of a silver coin, the silver standard has always proven to be a double-edged sword. Its judicious regulation is why a crop can consistently feed a farmer’s family rather than become a blood-sucking monster that feeds on the farmer’s family. Most markets strictly regulate the use of teleportation magic to move cargo. In addition to vehement protests by shipping guilds, the leaders of the Inner Sea have come to a mutual understanding that becoming reliant on expensive and relatively rare spellcasters wielding fickle magic puts their nation’s financial futures in a precarious position. Goods transported any distance by teleportation magic must be marked as such and are subject to additional fees and tariffs. Dire circumstances, such as plague and famine, can occasionally waive these restrictions, but even an institution as efficient as the church requires judicious investigation that makes this procedure the exception rather than the rule. Justiciars of Abadar use a pair of specially attuned keys that can detect if a product was moved using conjuration magic, pointing to the spell’s origin or destination where the church’s champions will begin their hunt of the perpetrator. This tax also applies to commodities from other planes, keeping our market competitive with goods like gemstones from the Elemental Plane of Earth.

Other taxes, laws, fees, and fines are too numerous and change too often to reproduce with any accuracy in a printed publication. You should always consult a registered barrister in whichever jurisdiction you plan on doing business. An established church of Abadar is always a good place to go for an agent or recommendation. My services are available, and my offices are always within spitting distance of *Golarion’s Finest* publications, but there are less experienced agents across the region trained in the nuances of trade with inexperienced or foreign merchants.



## Copper Piece

Called the Katapeshi Copper Grain, these coins are believed to predate the Pactmasters. There are rumors undead are repelled by the Sarenite religious symbol, leading superstitious merchants, especially around Lake Encarthan, to see them as a symbol of fortune.

## Silver Piece

Oprak Towers are silver pieces reminted on Azaersi's orders. You can make a good impression in Oprak by offering to convert any old Molthuni currency you find and using Oprak Towers with hobgoblin merchants who hope to cement Oprak's legitimacy.



## Gold Piece

The Grand Duchy of Alkenstar stamps its gold Lucky with unique serial numbers. Always check these coins twice, as some eccentric collectors, native gamblers, and superstitious inventors will pay a premium for an Alkenstar Lucky with a serial number they consider meaningful.

## Platinum Piece

Absalom's Lion-Coin or Platinum Sphinx is one of the most common platinum coins in the Inner Sea. The Absalom Mint melts and remints the coins of other nations, and the platinum pieces from Absalom are the purest in the world.



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# Path of Aganhei



LANDS OF THE LINNORM KINGS  
Kalkgard

REALM OF THE MAMMOTH LORDS  
Whitethrone

IRRISEN

SARKORIS SCAR  
Nerosyan

MENDEV

BREVOY  
New Steven

Yin-Eclassari

NEW THASSILON  
Yin-Shalast

Yin-Shalast

NUMERIA  
Starfall

IRONBOUND ARCHIPELAGO

VARISIA

BELKZEN  
Ughr

USTALAV

RIVER KINGDOMS

## Stranger's Lattice

GRAVELANDS  
Calliphas

RAZMIRAN  
Thronestep

STEAMING SEA

HERMEA  
Promise

OPRAK  
Hunthul

TANRAN

KYONIN  
Iadara

GALT  
Isarn

## Sellen Passage

MOLTHUNE  
Canorate

DRUMA  
Kersa

FIVE KINGS MOUNTAINS  
Highhelm

## Varisian Run

RAVOUNEL  
Kintargo

NIDAL  
Pangolais

ISGER  
Eldhr

## North Tack

CHELIAX  
Egorian

ANDORAN  
Almas

TALDOR  
Oppara

ARCADIAN OCEAN

INNER SEA

ISLE OF ERBAN

ISLE OF KORIOS

ABSALOM  
Absalom

## South Tack

Aztr

RAHADOU  
Merab

THUVIA

OSIRION  
Suthis

QADIRA  
Kathar

MEDIOGALTI ISLAND

SODDEN LANDS

KATAPESH  
Katapesh

MWANGI EXPANSE

NEX  
Quantum

MANA WASTES

## Obari Crossing

Obari Ocean

THE SHACKLES  
Port Peril

JALMERAY  
Niswan

FEVER SEA

VIDRIAN  
Anthesis

GEB  
Mechtar

# Trade Routes

## TRADE ROUTES OF THE INNER SEA

Trade might not make the world go round, but it will help you get around the world! Following an established trade route is the most reliable way to journey across the Inner Sea. Below are some of the most important trade routes, but this list isn't exhaustive; every year presents changes both subtle and sweeping to existing treks.

The scenic **North Tack** begins in the expansive Qadiran spice market of Sedeq around the Obari Crossing. It follows the shore of Qadira to Katheer and then into Zimar before heading due west to Absalom. Most ships resupply in Diobel or Escadar before continuing north to the Taldan hub of Cassomir, which has better deals than Zimar and is one end of the Sellen Passage. Continuing westward, you'll hit Almas, Ostenso, and Westcrown before ending in Corentyn.

The celebrated **South Tack** follows the southern coast of the Inner Sea, starting in Katapesh, same as one end of the Obari Crossing. It follows the Osirion coast north to Sothis before heading north to Absalom. Continuing to the tax-heavy port of Totra, ships tack westward to Thuvia; Aspentharr and Merab are especially profitable stops when the cities are full of wealthy patrons looking to buy a sun orchid elixir. Manaket in Rahadoum will pay a premium for technological components, but the city's real value is avoiding tolls at the Arch of Aroden. The South Tack ends in Azir, where you can find affordable gemstones and foreign produce if you're brave enough to deal without the protection of Abadar.

The famous **Obari Crossing** connects the eastern terminals of the North and South Tacks, starting in Katapesh and headed south to Quantum, Alkenstar, and Mechitar—three excellent ports always looking to exchange magic goods, components, and produce for wool and ore. From there, you'll want to ply your trade at the Commerce District of Niswan in Jalmeray, but be wary of the price of imported eastern wares, unless you don't plan on following the route past Sedeq to the lands of Casmaron and Vudra.

The risky **Sellen Passage** is a network of riverways that connects central and eastern Avistan to the Inner Sea. Beginning in Cassomir, the passage takes you through the Verduran Forest to a vibrant trading hub around Kallas Lake. Savvier traders know goods sold at the lake can always be found cheaper if you continue north through the River Kingdoms. The western rivers lead to Kyonin and Lake Encarthan, where, despite recent turmoil, the riches of central Avistan converge on the shores of Nirmathas, Ustalav, Molthune, and Druma. The northern routes of the Sellen Passage lead to Mendev, where settlements along the Sarkoris Scar are always in need of raw materials. The passage ends at the Lake of Mists and Veils, another thriving market between Brevoiy, Iobaria, Mendev, and Numeria.

The impressive **Varisian Run** presents a valuable opportunity for connections with newly established nations. The route begins in the burgeoning market of

Magnimar and travels east toward Korvosa. It then continues south along Avistan's coast toward Nisroch, the silver-rich port of Kintargo, and the ever-decadent city of Vyre. Continuing along the western coast, the run eventually crosses to Garund to reach Khari and hugs the Rahadoumi coast, skirting Mediogalti Island before proceeding southeast into the Shackles. From here, it reaches Drenchport, Hell Harbor, and Port Peril. Once it wraps down to Bloodcove, the route splits. One branch heads up the Vanji River toward Nantambu. The other travels south to Senghor, eventually crossing Desperation Bay and arriving at Anthusis. For its final leg, it travels across land to terminate in Umnyango, formerly Kalabuto.

The demanding **Path of Aganhei** technically begins in Korvosa, following the Varisian coastline beyond Magnimar to the antique-rich shores of Xin-Edasseril. For many caravans, the path begins in the copper-rich ports of Kalsgard, the hub of the Thanelands. From there, land caravans head north, past the Crown of the World and into Tian Xia. Traders from Hillcross in the Realm of the Mammoth Lords join up the main path in the Crown of the World. Deals on Tian goods can be found in the Thanelands and Irrisen. The Erutaki fur traders live along the icy coasts of the Steaming Sea, where bold crews attempt the dangerous Thremyr's Run to the Songil Sea. Though the route is tested by time, survivors of the dangerous path can and will often retire after a few successful crossings.

The lengthy **Antarkos Sweep** begins in Katapesh, where the Obari Crossing and Southern Tack meet. It heads south past Geb, where it wraps around the Garundi coast, skimming the Antarkos Ocean before reaching Anthusis in Vidrian. Goods from southern Garund include crystals from Dehrukani, dinosaur leather from Droon, Anuli spices from Holomog, unique dyes from Tirakawhan, and silk textiles from Nurvatcha. Kaz'ulu is an especially popular trading hub, where one can find goods from all over central and southern Garund.

The innovative **Arcadian Triangle** runs from Senghor in the Kaava Lands to Segada in Arcadia, dotting colonies in the Ruins of Azlant, where basic commodities can often be traded for rare Azlanti components and relics. Arcadian and Avistani traders frequently make treks to and from the Broken Continent without completely crossing the Arcadian Ocean, journeying south to avoid run-ins with both pirates and the elves of the Mordant Spire.

The journey from Solku in Katapesh through the Ndele Pass to the Mwangi Expanse is the first stretch of a route called the **Diamond Webway**. Guides in the free trade city of Kibwe—itsself a plentiful source of diamonds, gold, and salt—lead caravans through central Garund.

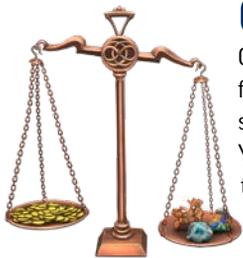
The **Stranger's Lattice** in Varisia facilitates trade across the Cinderlands, a necessary land route given the Yondabakari River's massive drop on the Storval Rise. The lattice converges in Kaer Maga, where it extends south from Korvosa to Janderhoff and up the Storval Stairs from Riddleport to Xin-Shalast. This route is especially profitable for those dealing in unique relics, occult implements, and rare harrow cards.

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## TRADE GOODS

While different markets and regions have their specialties, several goods are common throughout the Inner Sea. The church of Abadar has maintained a relatively stable price for most of these goods for decades, and the prices featured here received verification at the time of this writing (12 Calistريل, 4722 AR). Keep in mind, the quality and repute of an item or its vendor are sure to affect the price. Shop savvy!



### Copper

Copper (100 sp per ingot) mines from northern Garund have been shutting down in recent years. Your best bet for cheap ore is from the Kopparberget of the Linnorm Kingdoms, usually refined in Kalsgard. You also won't run into the Aspis Consortium.



### Silver

Silver (1,000 sp per ingot) goods tarnish over time and can sometimes be picked up for a tidy profit. Don't bother melting it down yourself; most alchemists and fiend-hunters alike will pay market value after a quick shine.



### Gold

Gold (10,000 sp per ingot) is a more dangerous cargo than any artifact. Red-hued fishgold costs the same around Lake Encarthan but can be traded for a steady profit to foreign jewelers. I find the returns aren't worth the risk gold incurs.



### Tin

Tin (300 sp per ingot) is used to make pewter and bronze. While copper speculators are looking north, Osirian mines are still extracting more than enough tin. Pewter decorations and dinnerware are valued in Galt, where silver can attract the wrong attention.



### Iron

Iron (10 sp per ingot) is used in everything from cookware to curveblades. Cold iron (100 sp per ingot) from deep mines, such as those of the Five Kings Mountains, can provide a lucrative opportunity for those traveling to markets threatened by demons and fey.

### Fish

Abendego salmon (5 sp per pound) is popular along the Path of Aganhei, where the dried fish is likened to a delicacy. Grilled steaming sea snake (50 sp per pound) is a fashionable dish popular with the nobles of Oppara. Less premium local fish are far more affordable.



### Wine

Wine (10 sp per bottle for fine wine) from Zimar has made a triumphant return to connoisseurs' larders as the region redoubles its efforts, but Asmodean Red is always a safe bet. Sparkling Galtan wine predating the revolution can be worth a small fortune to the right collector.



### Ale

Ale (2 sp per keg) is a near universal commodity every town from Sandpoint to Brunderton thinks they have perfected. You won't profit from selling to a pub, but sharing with weary travelers on the road can be a wise investment.



### Cotton

Cotton (20 sp per bulk; 1,000 sp per bale) farmers from northern Garund refuse to do business with anyone who bothers a species of local white-tailed blackbirds. A single flock of trained birds can pluck most of the seeds from a bale of cotton in a day.



### Wool

Cullerton wool (10 sp per bulk; 240 sp per sack) from Lambreth is especially sought after for its softness. Large enough caravans often request the Black Eagle's protection down the Sellen River, but if you cross Lord Arnefax, you'll have more to worry about than bandits.



## Cloth



Wool cloth (40 cp per bulk; 1 cp per square yard), linen cloth (60 cp per bulk), and cotton cloth (80 cp per bulk) are often bought and sold by the same vendors. My partner assures me you will earn more profit learning to dye your own fabric.

## Leather



Leather (2+ cp per square yard) can be sold for a premium if you can find an intact hide from a rare or magical creature. Don't forget basic tanning supplies in case your caravan is ambushed by some rude, 10-foot-tall, six-legged wagon demolisher.

## Lumber



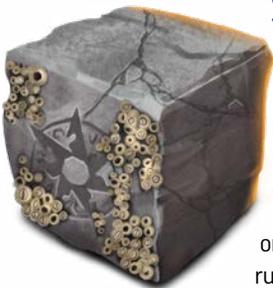
Most lumber (1 cp per 40 board feet) customers just want a cheap building material and are fine with Andoran fir. If you have the right contacts, you can earn a pretty penny shipping Darkmoon mahogany, Holomogi heartwood, or darkwood.

## Brick



Bricks (17 cp per 1,000 bricks) are an undervalued commodity. While they're cheaper than stone and not really worth shipping, you can earn a pretty penny having storehouses of bricks and tiles on hand in case of an earthquake or monster attack.

## Stone



Stone varies in price, as many locals just use whatever they can scrounge from all the ruins in Avistan. Golem-making artisans always need infused stone (35+ sp per pound), either from constructs or elementals or dredged up from ruins like the Irespan.

## Marble



Colored marble (100 sp per slab) is quarried in Arcadia and occasionally sold in Kintargo or the River Kingdoms at a steep profit, given the lengthy process of shipping. Marble can even be safely shipped up the Sellen River, as it's too cumbersome for bandits or pirates.

## Dyes and Inks

Dyes, paints, and inks (1 sp per vial for common colors, more for rarer colors) of a certain color can be most easily found by matching a local flag or heraldry. I suggest looking for a temple of Shelyn if you want to find a buyer for rare pigments.



## Wheat

Wheat (6 sp per bushel) is often used instead of coin in rural communities. Contracts for wheat futures can be lucrative in the Shining Kingdoms but are considered exploitative in less fertile regions—they're outright illegal in Ustalav and Rahadoum.



## Relics

There's a market for artifacts and relics of all varieties across the Inner Sea, with markets swelling for goods from Arcadia. The Blakros Museum and Pathfinder Society in Absalom both have deep pockets, but it's often worth the extra effort to find individual specialists.



## Monster Parts

Appendages are popular among researchers, spellcasters, and cowardly, upper-crust trophy "hunters" looking to pay extra for confidentiality. Always look for parts that are most relevant to a creature's legend, such as an owlbear's beak or gumiho's tails.



## Mechanical Components

Never sell the components of complex machines for scrap. Inventors and other specialists will pay a premium for disassembled traps and smashed-up constructs, especially of Azlanti or Jistkan make.



## Cards

Illustrated cards are a portable, fungible commodity highly valued by collectors and spellcasters alike. For reasons I can't explain, a silly children's game sweeping the Grand Bazaar in Absalom has created significant demand for ancient or rare cards, Harrow or otherwise.



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# CUISINE

*“Flavors of the Heart: One Rakshasa’s Guide to the Inner Sea” by Maharajah Lakadbaghasura*

To tour the Inner Sea is to sit upon a throne of salt and spice, and I feel both pity and contempt for those who overlook what gifts she bears. Trite rabble, familiar with Immenwood’s lumberyards, possess neither knowledge nor appreciation for the delicate birch syrup in which they soak their fried butter cakes. It’s only here, in Golarion’s heart, where one experiences genuinely cosmopolitan offerings—Absalom oysters rubbed in Qadiran oils and spices alongside Chelaxian crusty bread smeared in Andoren sheep’s milk cheese and Osirian marmalade, all chased with Taldan bubble wine. Here’s to life’s indulgences!

To describe the cuisine of the Inner Sea basin, we must first describe the climate: dry in its summers and mild in its winters, an idyllic land of sunshine and salt spray uniquely suited to the cultivation of olives, citrus, and grapevine. Across the centuries, I have witnessed the ebb and flow of culinary fads as trends erupt and wane with the opening of each new port. Still, if the flavors of the Inner Sea can be defined, then it’s by these ingredients.

Wild-caught game—elk and venison, hare and coney, grouse and pheasant, or even wild boar—are typical enough to find in dishes across southern Avistan. However, livestock is still king when it comes to consistent availability. Chickens and their eggs are famous for their low maintenance, yet sheep and goats remain most common, as these hardy animals adapt well to varied climates. These creatures are responsible for most cheeses, which can be firm, soft, or crumbly, and vary in flavor from rich and buttery to tart or astringent. Cheese keeps well in wax and is prevalent throughout the Inner Sea region, from the sweet and nutty cheeses of Andoran to the pungent and smoky cheeses more favored in Chelax.

Swine produce fewer valuable byproducts, save lard, yet pork commands the highest prices, as it’s “the beast with one hundred flavors.” It’s a rare chef who can master them all and an even rarer gourmand who can genuinely appreciate such artistry. Cattle are also viable livestock, although beef is more rarely consumed outside large cities. This is due to the paradox of requiring both vast pastures for grazing and a significant enough population to consume the meat before it spoils. As a consequence, their slaughter is often reserved for holidays, feasts, or other large celebrations, although their meat can, of course, be preserved using salt or even necromancy.

The Inner Sea is a bounty of sea bream, bass, mackerel, trout, eel, squid, and octopus, which might be stewed, stuffed and fried, or baked slowly in clay pots with shallots and nightshade. Absalom is famous for its shellfish: oysters, clams, scallops, crabs, and lobster. Coastal towns and cities make their living from the sea, and where fresh seafood is available, it makes up a majority of dishes.

Wheat is cultivated across Avistan and Garund, and bread is a daily staple throughout both continents. Rustic, crusty loaves are universally beloved, and unleavened flatbreads are especially popular in northern Garund and Absalom. Fruits, vegetables, and legumes exist in nigh unimaginable variety, with the most commonplace harvests including olives, grapes, lemons, oranges, figs, collard greens, chard, radishes, beans, potatoes, leeks, shallots, turnips, parsnips, carrots, eggplants, nightshades, capsicum, cabbages, cucumbers, apples, plums, blueberries, and blackberries. Many of these plants can be both cultivated and foraged. Osirion and Qadira, in particular, are rich in palm dates, and bananas and pineapples are regularly imported from more tropical regions to the south.

## HIGH-QUALITY ITEMS

In this author’s humble opinion, formed over a great many lives, the rarity of an ingredient has little bearing on its quality. I’ve sampled the bitter, acrid taste of dragon flesh and found it far less delectable than the sweet meat of the unremarkable human. Still, some ingredients are worth the fanfare they receive.

One notable specimen is the snapper drake, native to the Inner Sea and especially popular on the shores of Avistan. In truth, it’s a species of fish, but so named for its superficial resemblance to the river drake. This is due in equal parts to its coat of hardened scales that deflects weapons, razor-sharp spines that can slice through nets, and long fangs that pose a danger to anyone foolish enough to try and catch one. Their flesh, however, is exquisite and rich. Dark in color and high in fat, their meat has a taste reminiscent of a full-flavored salmon with a velvety texture. A single portion of this fish can easily command 20 gp.

Another ingredient I consider a rare treat is behir caviar, which must be served fresh and can be locally cultivated only in Garund. Best utilized as a garnish or spread, its preparation is sensitive. The eggs of the serpentine behir, typically small and laid in tight clutches, must be unfertilized. They must first be washed, and then soaked in spiced vinegar—while being kept fresh—until the shells completely dissolve. They’re then straight away cured in salt, chilled, and should ideally be served immediately. Those traders who import these eggs into Absalom are rumored to have struck deals with savvy behirs, paying some unknown price in exchange for their eggs. A clutch of raw eggs might sell for 25 gp but, once prepared, can easily fetch 100gp and garnish six meals.

## PREPARATION TECHNIQUES

Most homes throughout the Inner Sea region contain a wood-burning oven, usually made from clay or stone,

and more rarely from iron. In places of business, such ranges are often specially designed to produce specific levels of heat and ventilation for products, such as breads, smoked meats, or dried fruits. Alternatively, open-flame cooking is also practiced extensively. Most families possess at least a kettle or stockpot, a skillet or frying pan—and in Absalom, Andoran, and Taldor, often a clay baking dish.

One unique aspect of Inner Sea cooking is the prevalence of olive oil. Sometimes used simply as a dressing, fried foods in this region are almost universally cooked in it. Seasonings are plentiful due to trade, accessible to even the lowest classes, and used copiously. Meats roasted over hot coals are sometimes rubbed in thick layers of spices to form a crust as they cook, and grapevine is a favorite fuel for smoking. Nonetheless, the most straightforward preparation for any dish is to incorporate its ingredients into a simple stew, simmering it below the boiling point over long periods until it cooks down and becomes rich in fats and starches. While rustic, such dishes are familiar throughout Golarion and sure to make any traveler homesick.

At the forefront of innovation, however, is magical augmentation. Even mere initiates of the arcane can enhance or change a dish's flavor using *prestidigitation*, can slice open a whole ingredient and seed it with spices or fruit only to mend it back together, can cleanse their pantries using *purify food and drink*, or can use preserve to prolong the life of expensive ingredients. Such culinary arcana is in high demand in venerated establishments, and such kitchens seem delighted to take every opportunity to flaunt the presence of spellcasters among their staff.

## SPICES AND SEASONINGS

The people of the Inner Sea have bottomless appetites for spices and seasonings, and in this manner, we're most certainly alike. Salt continues to be the most traded seasoning in the world, dwarfing all others by pounds to ounces in sheer volume. Though vast in quantity, it's humble in price, costing a mere 5 sp per half-pound bag.

In contrast, fen pepper, that humble piper vine fruit from Varisia's Mushfens, has become the most in-demand spice in Golarion. As the pepper trade grows, these precious black beads with their pungent, nose-clearing aroma have become a staple of Inner Sea cuisine.

Copious spice usage isn't a new phenomenon in the Inner Sea region, and herbs such as basil, dill, rosemary, coriander, fennel, thyme, marjoram, oregano, tarragon, and parsley commonly brighten dishes alongside citrus and nightshade. Savory or sweet dishes are enhanced by cumin, paprika, turmeric, cinnamon, or ginger. None of these spices are especially rare, and most can be bought in the price range of 1 sp per ounce.

The crown jewel of the spice market belongs to a flower that grows only in the plains north of Katheer—the rainbow crocus. The bloom itself is beautiful, the color of burnt honey, but its culinary value lies in its stigmas. These threads, which project from the bloom's center and transition in color as the flower matures, are plucked by hand and then dried. This spice, called “coruscant,” comes in a variety of hues and flavors depending on the flower's maturity at the time of harvest. These notes range from sweet to floral, grassy to honey. Every stage is complex, and the vibrant colors bleed into dishes, imparting telltale hues. The price for coruscant ranges from 1 to 3 gp per ounce, with more mature varieties commanding higher prices.

## DRINKS

Wine is the drink of choice around the Inner Sea, where grapes flourish in untold variety. Even lesser establishments can be expected to offer a complimentary table wine—often a strong or coarse vintage cut with water—although such wines have no place at esteemed tables, especially considering the region flows with exceptional wines from Taldor and Cheliox. Honey wine is enjoyed, though less regarded, but the most decadent of all is bubble wine. These wines, fermented with yeast and sugar, tickle the nose and delight the senses in ways that capture the imagination. First produced near Carpenden Hill, the original vintage is simply shorthanded to “Carpenden.” The vineyards were tragically lost in the revolution, making these bottles exceedingly rare, if not priceless. Nonetheless, Taldan vintners have created their own varieties that approach—yet fail to outshine—the original.

Ales are almost equally popular, tending toward light brews with crisp, spicy flavors and subtle, bitter finishes. Brewers from the Inner Sea region traditionally use coriander and orange peel, avoiding the malts and yeasty flavors common to other regions.

Not all drinks are alcoholic, of course, and tea thrives as well. The tea houses of Oppara are nigh legendary in both the social and cuisine world of the Inner Sea and the spiced teas of southeast Garund rival them in fame. Mint teas are especially popular across Garund and have made their way to parts of Avistan. Likewise, black tea and coffee are commonly imbibed in the morning and afternoon, and the fusion of cuisines has led to the adoption of additives, such as lavender and rose water. Bricks of tea rival the presence of salt in culinary markets.

Raw or spiced milk is also enjoyed, chiefly among day laborers who favor hearty breakfasts. Sheep's milk is too rich for drinking, of course, so goat's and cow's milk are the most readily available. A fermented milk beverage called “kesh,” popular in southern Garund and tasting of tart yogurt and cottage cheese, is also easy enough to find.

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## Anishani and White Wine

The meal began with a shot of anishani—an anise-flavored liqueur traditionally imbibed before meals to stimulate the appetite—and the first four courses were accompanied by a crisp white wine from Taldor, aged two years.

## Figs Stuffed with Goat's Cheese

The figs were arranged stem-end down, atop freshly cut basil leaves. They were delicately sliced and splayed to resemble blooming flowers, and then stuffed with a tangy and nutty goat's cheese before being drizzled with apricot honey.

## Crown of Roast Venison

The venison was served before dessert, perfectly rare and surrounded by a precious display of duchess potatoes. The rack was twisted to form a crown and subsequently filled with a salad of lemon couscous, pine nuts, and figs.

## Quail Egg-Stuffed Quail

This dish is more commonly stuffed with figs or dates, but I found this version quite exquisite. The eggs used for stuffing were soft boiled, wrapped in sausage, coated in breadcrumbs, and finally deep fried in oil. Simply marvelous.

## Honey-Glazed Wild Carrots

The carrots were a surprise—beautiful for their variety of oranges, purples, and yellows, yet unassuming. The caramelized butter and honey glaze was balanced by a punch of chili salt, fen pepper, lemon, and thyme, which cleansed the palate splendidly.

## Shellfish and Rice Coruscant

The most impressive dish of the night was a still-steaming pan of vibrant purple rice, which served as a bed for multitudes of shellfish. The color, of course, came from fully mature coruscant and imparted a complex, buttery, honeysuckle taste.

## Wood Ear Mushroom Queen's Cheese Soup

Queen's cheese is an exquisitely soft and velvety cow's milk cheese from Andoran. It formed the base of a rich and heavily peppered soup made with heavy cream, browned butter, caramelized onions, and freshly harvested wood ear mushrooms.

## A NOBLE'S FEAST

A meal fit for nobility—or for any, in this modest author's opinion—would be laughable if it included fewer than four courses. In my lifetime, I have dined both alongside and upon esteemed nobles and artisans. Each taste was unique, and I relish the memory of each experience. Among these, however, I do recall with fondness and vivid clarity the best meal I've ever eaten. Herein I describe it, that you might experience it secondhand.

## Molded Egg Custard Pies

Dessert consisted of individual servings of egg custard, baked upside down in decorative molds before being flipped onto small plates. They were dusted with cinnamon and sugar before our eyes and then immediately caramelized by the *produce flame* cantrip.

## Red Wine and Coffee

The three courses before dessert were accompanied by a fruit-forward, deep red Chelaxian wine that had notes of tobacco and licorice. Dessert was accompanied by a dainty cup of concentrated black coffee to aid in digestion.

## Savory Plum Tart

The plum tart cut the butteriness of the previous dish without being overly sweet. Sugar plums and creamed cheese were contrasted against caramelized onions and grape must vinegar in this savory-sweet palate cleanser. Fresh basil added brightness to the dish.

## RECIPES

As your most humble of guides, I would be remiss if I were to describe such exquisite dishes only to impart nothing of their artistry and craft. In that vein, I now share some recipes of the Inner Sea. They're simple fare, beloved by merchants and peasants alike. Delight your fellow travelers by preparing them for your next adventure.

### Diobelian Baked Fish

*In coastal towns and cities, it's common to substitute the catch of the day into seafood dishes.*

#### Ingredients

- 2 pounds firm white fish fillets (halibut, cod, sea bass, or trout)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 large lime, zest and juice
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 yellow onion, sliced thin
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 chili pepper, finely diced (remove seeds for milder taste if desired)
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 cups diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1-3/4 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- Heat oven to 375°F (190°C).
- Pat the fillets dry, and season with salt and pepper. Arrange the fillets in a shallow, lightly oiled dish and drizzle with lime juice, reserving zest.
- In a large skillet, heat the oil and add the onions. Cook the onions, stirring often, until they begin to brown, and set aside. Add garlic and cook until fragrant. Add in chili pepper, tomato paste, paprika, nutmeg, tomatoes, white wine, heavy cream, and half the cooked onions, and bring to a simmer. Continue simmering on low heat, stirring often, until the sauce is reduced to 3/4 its original volume. Pour sauce over the fillets. Arrange remaining onions on top, and sprinkle with parsley.
- Bake for 30 minutes, until fish is opaque and flakes apart. Garnish with lime zest and serve with couscous or rice.



### Thuvian Spiced Meat Pastries

*These pastries are often made using lamb or goat. They're a staple in Duwwor and other areas of Thuvia with traditional farming communities while also being a popular street food in larger cities.*

#### Ingredients

- 1-1/2 pounds ground lamb or goat
- 2 large shallots, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
- Puff pastry dough, rolled out to a 12×12-inch (30×30 cm) square
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- Heat oven to 425°F (230°C).
- Combine the ground meat, shallots, garlic, mint, parsley, salt, pepper, cumin, and coriander in a bowl. Separate by hand into 9 equal portions.
- Brush the pastry dough with beaten egg and cut the dough into 9 equal squares.
- Place 1 portion of the meat mixture in the center of 1 piece of dough and fold corners toward the center, pinching to seal the edges as tightly as possible. Repeat with remaining portions.
- Arrange the sealed pastries on a lined baking sheet, and brush each pastry with beaten egg.
- Bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with yogurt or chutney.

## COCKTAILS

Tonic, wine, or ale; it matters little what you drink as long as it's well timed and paired with your meal. If your dish is bright in flavor, reminiscent of a summer's evening, pair it with a light or crisp drink. If your dish is rich, steeped in savory notes or gravies, pair it with something proportionately full-bodied or chocolaty. Embody this advice, and perhaps one day I, too, will grace your table.

### Anishani Tonic

*In the Isle of Kortos, anishani is a popular pre-meal drink. While often sipped straight, it's sometimes mixed with other ingredients to dilute the alcohol and bring out its sweeter notes. Any anise- or licorice-flavored liqueur can take the place of anishani, but I urge you to find proper anishani for the best results.*

#### Ingredients

2 ounces anishani  
2 ounces lemon juice  
1 teaspoon sugar  
Mineral water

Lemon garnish (optional)

- Chill the inside of a glass with clinging ice, and add anishani, lemon juice, and sugar. Swirl in glass for several seconds and top off with mineral water. Garnish with lemon (optional).



### Carpenden Twist

*True Carpenden is rare, but it can nonetheless make for a delightful daytime drink with the subtle addition of fruit and sugar. If you can't afford Carpenden, any bubble wine will do.*

#### Ingredients

1 raw cane sugar cube  
1/8 teaspoon orange flower water  
Carpenden, chilled  
1 teaspoon almond extract  
1 orange peel twist

- Place the sugar cube in a glass, and pour orange flower water over it.
- Add the almond extract, and fill the glass slowly with Carpenden.
- Cut a thin strip of orange peel, and twist it against the inside rim, squeezing the oils into the glass. Leave as garnish.



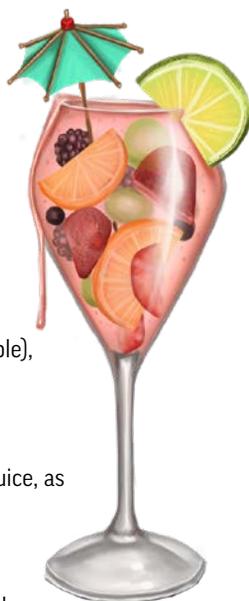
### Fruit Cornucopia

*In port towns that receive large varieties of fruit from the far corners of the Inner Sea region, bruised fruit can often be obtained at lowered prices. These can be combined as a salad or to brighten a drink.*

#### Ingredients

3/4 cup strawberries, diced  
3/4 cup tart green apple (or pineapple), diced  
1/2 cup pomegranate seeds  
2 oranges, peeled and chopped  
2 cups orange juice (or other fruit juice, as preferred)  
1 cup white rum  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint  
2 tablespoons sugar (plus additional for glass rims if desired)  
1/4 cup lime juice  
1/2 teaspoon lime zest  
Lime garnish (optional)

- Mix all ingredients together in a large bowl and let stand, tossing until sugar dissolves.
- Rim V-shaped glasses with sugar (optional).
- Spoon fruit and liquid evenly into glasses. Garnish with lime (optional).



### Spiked Mint Tea

*Mint teas are popular in many parts of northern Garund and are the customary drink to offer guests. As these teas are exported, it's no surprise alcoholic versions have also become popular.*

#### Ingredients

4 parts iced mint tea  
2 parts sweet whiskey  
1 part spiced simple syrup  
3 fresh mint leaves (plus 1 leaf for garnish if desired)  
Ice chips

- Completely remove stem from mint leaves, and muddle 3 leaves in the bottom of a cocktail glass. Add spiced simple syrup, whiskey, and tea, then top with ice chips. Twist a mint leaf between your fingers and use as garnish (optional).

### Spiced Simple Syrup

1 cup sugar  
1 cup water  
1 cinnamon stick  
1 star anise  
2 whole cloves  
1/4 cup crystallized ginger

- Combine all ingredients in a pan and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and allow the syrup to cool before straining and removing solids.



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# FASHION

*“An Eye for Details and Shadow for Detailed Eyes” by Farah Torney, author and socialite*

The summer solstice is around the corner, which means it's time to talk about all the fabulous trends coming up for the 22–23 seasons. We've got all the details on the year's on-trend silhouettes, the fabrics Absalom's most exclusive designers have been loving, and an in-depth article on waterproofing your leathers and wools at home. We'll also be looking at the top hair, makeup, and accessory trends, what to look for when choosing a beautician, and everything you've ever wanted to know but were too afraid to ask about piercings—they're not just for Kuthites anymore!

## BASIC CLOTHING

From commoners to kings, people from all walks of life wear clothing on their bodies for warmth, protection, and glamor. Most garments are made using fabric and other textiles, though animal products like leathers and furs, shaped metals, and strange magical materials are also used.

Most clothing worn around the region is made from linen, cotton, and wool. Linen and cotton are textiles made from the fibers of flax and cotton plants, respectively, and wool is an animal fiber sheared from sheep, goats, and other animals—the baccali alpacas in Druma are particularly prized for their exceptionally soft wool. Linen is strong, absorbent, and practical, whereas cotton is softer and less prone to wrinkling. In hot climates, linen is favored for undergarments and clothing for its absorbent and fast-drying properties, while the much warmer wool is favored in cooler climates for similar reasons. Wool's water resistance makes it a practical choice for coats and cloaks no matter your station, and both wool and leather can be treated with waxes to waterproof them, making them excellent choices for wearers who need protection from the elements.

Like wool, silk is an animal fiber, though it's obtained from the cocoons of silkworms and other insects or from the spinnerets of arachnids. It's an expensive textile valued for its softness and luster. Garments made of silk are worn by wealthy merchants, nobles, and royalty who can afford it, alongside fancifully dyed cottons and textiles woven into plush velvets or intricate brocade patterns.

A common Inner Sea outfit consists of underclothes like a chemise or shirt and breeches, a pair of woolen tights, a tunic, pants or a skirt, leather shoes, and a hat or headscarf to keep the hair clean and offer some protection from the elements. Undergarments like shirts, breeches, and chemises are worn to absorb sweat and odors, preserving the longevity of outer clothing. Foundation and support garments, like corsets and bustles, support the body and change the shape and silhouette of the wearer, padding the wearer's shape to conform with current trends. Wool cloaks are popular choices for cold and rainy weather. Most clothes are loose-fitting and worn away from the body or belted at the waist, as the time and expense required to tailor close-fitting silhouettes largely reserves them for the wealthy.

In addition to better tailoring, expensive outfits may also include blouses and shirts decorated with ruffles, trim, and other details, worn as outer layers rather than undergarments. Because the wealthy can afford to wear fresh clothes every day and have servants to perform frequent laundering, they have less need for full-body undergarments and instead opt for shapewear.

The suits of leather and metal armor worn by most adventurers are custom-fit and cover most, or all, of the body. Consequently, full-body ensembles with high necklines, accentuated shoulders, tapered waists, and tight-fitting boots or pants carry a connotation of danger and excitement.

## BEAUTY OF THE BODY

Any fashion-forward dresser knows that the clothes are just one part of fashion. Hair styling and decoration, face and body makeup, tattoos, piercings, and other accessories can all make or break a look. Without a keen eye for self-editing, even a great ensemble can fall flat.

The most popular makeup looks call for eye, cheek, or lip color, but daring makeup artists create illustrations and optical illusions with paint, contouring, and shapes, using the body as their canvas. Changing the style and color of your hair also has a huge impact on your silhouette! An updo can add height and drama, highlighting your décolletage and neck jewelry, while wearing it down will give you a mysterious edge.

For anywhere from 2 cp to 20 gp, you can pamper yourself by having a beautician do your hair and makeup. Some beauticians even paint nails and hair with temporary color, helping you to fully express yourself and tie your ensemble together. This year, aesthetic services are especially popular with adventurers, whose fingers and toes need extra care from an expert manicurist after weeks spent exploring their latest haunted dungeon. Don't be afraid to treat yourself when you overcome the figurative haunted dungeons in your own life, too!

Due to their permanent nature, many tattoos either bear symbolic significance or convey core aspects of their bearer's aesthetic taste. The devout often bear their deity's religious symbol, while a daredevil monster hunter might have a tattoo of each creature they've slain. For an incredible tattoo that will be sure to make you the envy of all your neighbors, artists trained in illusion magic can create animated tattoos that move across your body or change to tell a story. Like all specialty spellcasting, these moving works of permanent art might be costly—but they also create a truly unforgettable impression.

Most skin on the body can be pierced and decorated with jewelry that stays in place. Piercings, like other accessories, can be changed to suit your mood or match the rest of your look. Many beauticians perform skin piercing in addition to their other services, with prices starting at 5 cp for common placements like the nose or earlobe.

## QUEEN CHIC

Every day, Avistan's powerful queens shape the political destinies of their nations and create fashion history with looks adopted by their courtiers at home and by thousands of savvy fashionistas abroad. We've got an exclusive exposé on the latest looks Queen Anastasia Nikolaevna of Irrisen and Queen Telandia Edasseril of Kyonin were seen sporting in court, plus tips on how to get these queens' styles for yourself, even without your own Tea Singe original.

### Court Pomp

Irrisen's new Queen started a fashion revolution with this hairstyle she calls the pompadour, where a generous volume of hair sweeps up from the forehead. Gorgeous!

### Winter Warmth

This beautiful wool riding jacket is sure to keep the queen warm, day or night. It features a glamorous high neck and full mutton sleeves.

### Crystal Capelet

This stunning couture capelet was created for Queen Telandia by Tea Singe of Absalom's famous Sundown Street. Singe spent two years sourcing the cape's 10,000 crystals.

### Kyonin Crown

The *Viridian Crown* is a circlet made of living, flowering vines. Its appearance magically changes with the seasons, so Kyonin's monarchs are never out of style.

### Green Envy

Queen Telandia is known for sometimes draping herself in living plants. Get her style yourself by slipping the stems of flowers or leaves through your buttonholes.

### Figure That Figure!

Anyone can achieve the queen's silhouette with a large bustle padding the hips and rear and a long corset sweeping up over the full bust.

### Petal Skirt

Kyonin's queen loves tiered skirts made from thin silks and sheer fabrics like chiffon or cotton voile that billow around her or build fluffy, transparent layers.

### Bright Baubles

Queen Anastasia's gorgeous couture gown is embroidered with 10,000 glass beads that glimmer and catch the light when she tours her snowy queendom.

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## BACK TO SCHOOL

Students across Golarion are returning to their studies (or embarking on new journeys) this fall, and we have the inside scoop on the fresh new fashions of the upcoming academic year! From coats to keep you warm on a cool night to book bags, shoes, and aprons, we're highlighting the bold new threads of the Magaambya's latest initiates and the uniforms of the new scholars-in-training and junior inspectors enrolled at Ustalav's Lepidstadt University.

### Blanket Statement

A comfortable blanket coat to keep you cozy in class. Lay it out on the grass for a study picnic on the Magaambya campus!

### Ruffled Shirts

Ruffled detailing, whether along cuffs, necklines, or the fronts of blouses, remains overwhelmingly popular in Ustalav for fashionable people of all genders.

### Killer Coat

Nights in Ustalav are cold and gloomy, but you can keep the chill from your bones by layering up with a long canvas duster.

### Pattern Match

These colorful patterns are rich with symbolism and significance, though in Nantambu they usually depict stories and proverbs rather than indicate social standing or wealth.

### Bag of Holding?

The Magaambya's students need lots of materials for their studies and Perquisite! Keep everything on-hand while on the go in a stylish leather shoulder bag.

### Keeping Clean

Gruesome lesson plans are no match for a sensible apron. Cotton smocks may be common in the kitchen, but leather is favored by inventors and surgeons.

### Made For Walking

Hurry across campus and between classes in style with a pair of sensible, low-heeled shoes. The tassel details lend quiet elegance to any outfit.

### Doctor's Order

A practical and sturdy doctor's bag gives students of Ustalav's universities ample space and ready access to their important school and medical supplies.



# TIMELESS CLASSICS

Fashion fads may come and go, but some style staples are never off-trend. No place mixes the old with the new quite like New Thassilon. The exciting rediscovery of perfectly preserved Thassilonian antiques has ushered in a renewed interest in ancient garments and previously outdated tailoring and weaving techniques, offering a rare opportunity to compare and compliment Thassilonian finds with antiques from Casmaron and Garund. Heirloom fashions across Golarion, such as those from Qadira, have found a second chance at the spotlight.

## Royal Runes

We used to call them Varisian tattoos, but the history behind these magical glyphs is back on the map. Thassilonian rune tattoos are better than ever!

## Lost Lace Found

Thassilonian antiques untouched by time have brought back forgotten techniques for needling fine Thassilonian laces, often embellished with golden thread and countless tiny, delicate beads.

## Mixed Metals

People of New Thassilon never choose only gold or silver for their jewelry! The Thassilonian trend is to pair several metals together in a single outfit.

## Peekaboot!

Pants and skirts made from Thassilonian lace or sheer, wispy silks are often worn with embellished boots and jeweled tights visible beneath them.

## Trim Decorations

Nothing is more stylish in Qadira than a well-kept mustache and beard or bedazzling your jaw, chin, or brow area with sparkling gemstones and glitter makeup!

## Short Sleeve, Long Jacket

Layers are the key to creating depth and luxury in your look. A long coat or cape can make you look taller if it hits your legs at just the right spot!

## Classic Comfort

This traditional style of baggy trouser is worn by all genders across Casmaron. Beautiful trims and patterned weaves elevate this basic garment to a whole new level!

## Shining Shoes

Your shoes might be the last thing you put on, but a good shoe can pull a whole look together! Embroidered details are luxurious and eye-catching.



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## TOUGH TRENDS

Brave adventurers, freedom fighters, and revolutionaries are all the rage following the return of the Silver Ravens and the genesis of the new passionate daredevil warriors, the Firebrands! Stand up against corruption in your own life in rebel-chic style by following the great trends of Alkenstar's tough desert desperados or looting the looks of the Shackles' fearsome Free Captains. No one will dare come for your style when you're part of this new adventurous craze!

### Everyday Armor

Studs, plates, and patches made from leather and iron give your outfit the rough edge it needs to fit in with any crew.

### Cast Your Own Shadow

You can keep the hot Mwangi sun off your crown in style just like the Free Captains by donning a fearsome bandanna or wide-brimmed hat.

### Ill-Gotten Gold

Show off that booty this summer with statement necklaces and earrings! Layer all your biggest jewels together for a look no other scoundrel can match.

### Rough Lookin'

Ward off the sun, sand, and errant sparks like the daring outlaws of Alkenstar with a pair of tinted spectacles or reinforced protective goggles.

### Rowdy Accents

Fringe trims and chains decorating jacket sleeves, epaulets, and other garments can be used to add a sense of drapery and movement to fitted looks.

### The Captain's Coat

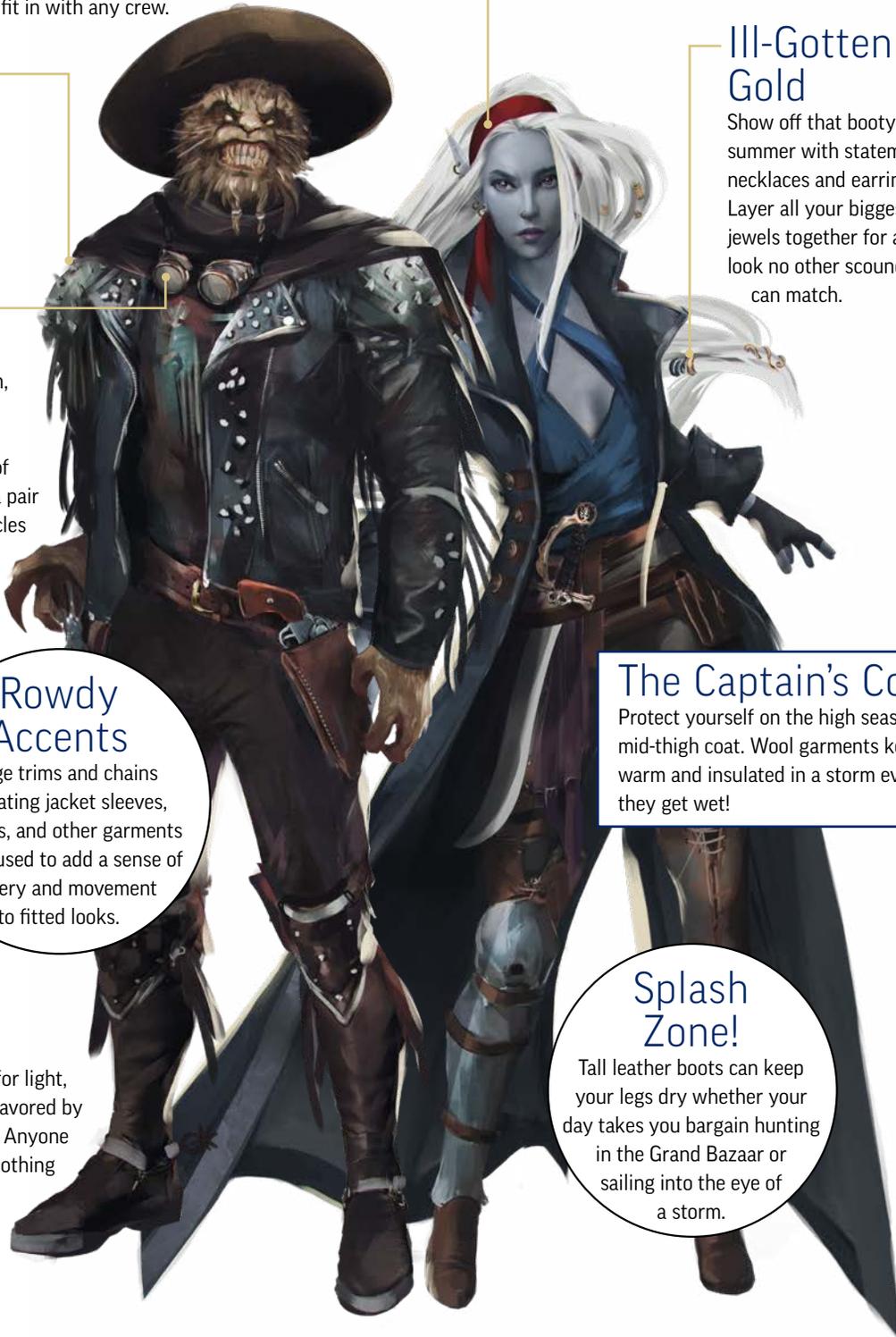
Protect yourself on the high seas with a mid-thigh coat. Wool garments keep you warm and insulated in a storm even after they get wet!

### Lots of Leather

Leather is used for light, flexible armors favored by nimble warriors. Anyone looks tough in clothing like jackets, trousers, and boots made with reinforced leather.

### Splash Zone!

Tall leather boots can keep your legs dry whether your day takes you bargain hunting in the Grand Bazaar or sailing into the eye of a storm.



# ACCESSORIES

Accessories play a supporting role in completing and complimenting your look. They include held items, such as handbags, hand fans, canes, and umbrellas, and worn accessories, like jewelry, stockings, shoes, hats, and belts. Hair, makeup, and small accessories are a great way to achieve a new look every day, even with a limited wardrobe. A new hat, cape, or pair of gloves can change your look day-to-day and stop anyone from noticing you wear the same coat four days out of the week.

## Colorful Neckbands



Cravats and ascots are neckbands that can be cheaply made using bits of leftover fabric. A collection of neckbands is an easy and sophisticated way to introduce variety, color, and print into your wardrobe.

## Dueling Capes



Capes and cloaks are fashionable accessories that keep the elements off and vary from plain to extravagant. A short cape draped over one arm can also be used by a clever fencer to conceal daggers, confuse opponents, and parry oncoming blows.

## Glowing Jewels



Jewelry like rings, necklaces, and earrings are enjoyed by people of all genders to compliment and complete an outfit. Expensive jewelry features gemstones and precious metals, while less expensive pieces might use beads, wood, and yarn.

## Hand Muffs



Cozy fur handwarmers are a fashionable way to keep your hands free from chill during cool weather. Luxury muffs might be made with fine silks and fox pelts or contain a pouch for a flask of hot water to warm your fingers.

## Handbags and Pouches



Handbags are accessories used to carry small necessities. Some are plain and practical, while others are ornamented with fine trims, laces, and other baubles. Fashionable people may own multiple handbags, using them to coordinate and change up their looks.

## Sensible Aprons

In the kitchen or workshop, an apron is a practical barrier that protects your good clothes from mess. Colorful and patterned aprons are also an inexpensive way to customize your look when you can't wear a whole new skirt.



## Shoanti Tattoos

Tattoos are a permanent way to decorate your body. For some, like the Shoanti people of Varisia, they're more than mere accessories. This sleeve tattoo depicts a spark bat, the totem of the Tamiir-Quah woman who bears it.



## Spectacular Spectacles

Some spectacles function as vision aids, featuring corrective lenses that improve the wearer's vision. Others are only worn for fashion and are used as accessories like jewelry, augmenting an ensemble and changing the shape of the wearer's face.



## Varisian Scarves

Scarves and shawls are great ways to ward off the sun, rain, and wind. Some Varisian scarves are made with concealed pockets to hold your valuables or trimmed with tiny chimes and bells that sing when they catch a breeze.



## Walking Canes

Walking sticks can be mobility aids, fashion accessories, and self-defense weapons. Typically made of wood or metal, canes vary from simple sticks to elaborate sculptures, with some luxury canes featuring screw-off grips to change their look or reveal a hidden compartment.



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# ART & ARCHITECTURE

“Let’s Get Beautiful” by Deraaka, Connoisseur of the Creative

Greetings, mortals! It’s Deraaka, author of the fiendishly brilliant *Devil’s Art* review pamphlets and frequent visitor to all things artistic on Golarion. Seen a tiefling human sitting front row center at the opera, dressed in a shade of silk that sets off the red of her eyes? That was me! And while at the time you may have gasped or clutched your dagger or simply stared at my glorious horns, I went there for the same reason I write here—to show that art is for everyone. So, buckle up and hold onto your skin. It’s about to get beautiful.

## ART

No matter where you are in the Inner Sea, or which town you’re being shooed out of, you never have far to go to find brilliant art. Even the tiniest of farmsteads have the classics—a country landscape captured in the bold colors of honeygum paint or a charcoal sketch of harvest day. And so often, they’re functional as well as beautiful. Think of the call-and-response carry songs of sellers on market day, the food carvings that go from sculpture to meal, and the walking sticks so beautifully whittled you’re not sure whether to carry them or mount them on your wall.

Of course, not all rural art is about work. Sometimes it’s about community—flax-draped dancers flowing from one striking pose to the next to celebrate Midsummer, a skew play making the crowd laugh with a parody of local events, the rolling intervals of a classic river song as it welcomes sailors home. And sometimes it’s just fun! After all, who doesn’t love a tale of star-crossed lovers or the latest hedge mystery featuring a magical investigator?

Are you a city dweller? Don’t worry—there’s plenty to tempt you, too. Cities bring artists together, creating a delicious blend of styles, forms, and disciplines. Take tavern songs: listen closely to my favorite, the cheeky “Last Night We Whistled Twice,” and you’ll hear the playfulness of a bird-bone flute solo, the under-beat of Mendevian war drums, and more halftones than a Vudrani finger-lute recital. And where else but a city would you be able to listen to a bard’s circle pass the telling of a story back and forth, or see a fully staged song cycle?

Whether you’re from Absalom’s Ivy District or the furthest reaches of Irrisen, there are a few pieces of art I’d bet my left hoof you’ve at least heard of. For years, I’ve thought readers would tire of the alternate versions of Golarion that shadow story writers dream up, but every bookshop I’ve ever visited has at least one issue of *Another Absalom*. The only thing more common? *The Endless Dance*. So many towns have been visited by a 10-person dance troupe claiming to be the continuous, free-flowing dance that has been going non-stop since Aroden lived that I’m not sure it even matters which one

is telling the truth (though between us, I’m fairly sure I know).

In truth, I wish all art was that easy to find and enjoy. If you’re looking for a lavish Chelaxian opera, for instance, you’ll have to pay a premium at a major opera house like Three-Horned Hall or the Canorate Songspire. Even close to home, too many art gallery showings are invitation-only. Still, if you get the chance, I wholeheartedly recommend checking out any of the new multimodal sculptors who combine physical materials and illusion magic, a painting exhibition (the best this year are the smoke paintings that use actual smoke), and whichever “secret” experimental dance show you can finagle entrance to. No luck? Try waiting for the annual look-back show held by your closest city art guild—they spend most of the spring traveling between towns to show off new work.

It also helps to sample as much art as you can wherever you may find it. Stop fleeing goblins and you can listen to their exquisite song battles. Put up with a lecture on humanity and you may glimpse an elven family mural. And if you ever—EVER—have a chance to watch a troupe of glimmer gnome aerobats, drop what you’re doing and go.

## THE ARTIST’S LIFE

Now, none of this beauty would be possible without the artists themselves, who often work long hours to try and make a living. I’m sure you’ve heard of single paintings selling for 100 platinum pieces or paying 10 gold for good seats at a lavish performance, but many artists still struggle. Performers often have to barter entertainment for lodging and supplies, while painters and sculptors either work as craftspeople or try to support themselves by selling small “mantle art” versions of their work at festivals. Writers, meanwhile, struggle to distribute their work without resorting to illicit book hawkers, who keep most of the profits, or adventurers, who can be flaky. In any field, only a few work for a major company or wealthy patron, and while art guilds do their best to subsidize promising newcomers, they rarely have enough money for everyone. By far the most common employers are local churches, as even the poorest and most remote of parishes wants something to convey the glory of their deity.

On the plus side, a few artists have been creating experimental co-ops that live together, pool resources, and stagger sales so each only must create one or two works a year—I wish them luck. For the rest of us, if we can, let’s reward the art that touches our hearts with a bit of our hard-earned coin.

## ARCHITECTURE

Before you head off to enjoy your next artistic experience, look around you. An architect likely

designed the space you sit in right now, making it functional, stable, and (hopefully) beautiful. I often call architects “hidden artists” because their masterpieces are everywhere. Some are artisans who oversee every aspect of the design and building process and create classic icons that shape trends. Others see themselves as building designers, focused on their architectural vision. They often partner with craftspeople on execution, allowing them to work on several structures in quick succession. Some even form architectural collectives, which split the creative work between members and bring in specialists in areas like metallurgy or acoustics to make each work distinct.

Whether you’re working with a massive collective or a single artisan, it’s generally best to hire a member of one of the Inner Sea’s various building design and architecture guilds. Formed after a few disastrous dome collapses and a decade of “salt brick slump” resulting from the degradation of poor construction materials, the guilds ensure fair pay and quality materials for both architects and their builders. They also offer a guarantee of the building’s stability for at least 10 years, making it in their best interest to be sure their members are all skilled architects. To their credit, architecture guilds usually focus solely on ability, not education or background. Some guild architects are graduates of schools like Kaer Maga’s Thousand Paces, a sprawling complex that lets students redesign the buildings every few years, or the Stone Forge, where students learn by creating designs for local Highhelm families—but many skip formal education altogether in favor of apprenticeship.

Whether they seek formal or informal training, aspiring architects are generally taught using a “hands, head, heart” progression. Students first work with stonemasons, metalworkers, woodcarvers, and other crafters to get a hands-on understanding of the materials they’ll be using, then spend time examining the works of other architects theoretically. Finally, they’re asked to travel to guilds across the Inner Sea for at least a year in search of real-world inspiration. While they’ll only be able to serve in a junior role on any guild building projects for the first two years after their return, many architects point to this final voyage into the world of architecture as a source of inspiration for years to come.

## A WORLD OF BUILDINGS

Aspiring architects are asked to travel during their training to deepen their knowledge of the architectural variety found from region to region across the Inner Sea. Talented workers and masons are always needed for construction projects somewhere on Golarion, and these jobs help prospective designers fund their education while teaching them the basics of the craft. While trade routes offer some ability to obtain

materials that aren’t native to the local environment, many architectural styles were established at a time when builders worked with whatever was close at hand. This could be lumber (in forested areas), stone (in places either more barren or with more dwarven influence), a mix of sand or mud to create brick (in deserts, swamp regions, and, occasionally, plains), or some type of local plant life. Wood remains the most common of these materials, but despite lumber’s ease of use and portability, stone buildings tend to loom the largest over the horizon. Some of these are the result of giant labor or arcane magic, but all who create or commission stonemasonry do so for its bold shapes and endurance over time. On the other end of the spectrum, architects who use plant life—wattle-and-daub, thatch, covervine—that degrade over time have always tended to value function over form.

Weather has also historically played a major factor in architects’ building choices, as they work to adapt building plans to the reality of local conditions. In Cheliax, for example, demand for Arcadian marble is both aesthetic and political. With its red-through-black veining and its ability to hold heat in the summer and cold in the winter, inhabitants and guests are left slightly uncomfortable and off-balance.

Generally, though, architects work to make their buildings as comfortable and long-lasting as possible. Coastal architects often elevate the floors of their buildings and use alchemical agents that protect against wind and flood damage, while desert builders prioritize the retention of water and cool temperatures, creating structures with thick walls, flat roofs, and smaller, off-center windows that provide indirect light. Mountain architects, on the other hand, use dramatically sloped roofs to prevent snow build-up and favor large, open windows. Dwarven influence can also be seen in a good deal of mountain architecture, which often uses stone even when access to it is somewhat limited.

These fundamental design elements date back to a time before the rise of architecture as a career in the Inner Sea, when building was seen more as a communal challenge for craftspeople than the result of an artist’s vision. The fall of Azlant hurt perceptions of the field, with soaring architectural feats viewed as acts of hubris and rejected in favor of understated but long-lasting buildings. It wasn’t until the rise of popular belief in Abadar and Shelyn that humanity became invested in architecture as an art form once more—acolytes of both deities were given charge of building beautiful temples and shrines toward the end of the Age of Darkness. Their designs helped inspire others, not just beginning a trend of architectural design taking guidance from religious buildings that persists to this day, but also becoming a symbol of light and hope during a dark era for Golarion.

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## ARTISTS

Does the art make the artist, or the artist make the art? Whichever school of thought you subscribe to, it's hard to deny the influence and talent of these artists, each of whom has helped shape their discipline in the minds of scholars, the public, or both. Whether infamous or famous, I would be honored to meet all but one of these paragons of art—and cross my fingers that the feeling would be mutual.



### Ailson Kindler

Ailson Kindler claims to be retired but still manages to publish a new semi-fictional gothic romance every few months, much to the delight of her fans. My personal favorite is her latest, the mummies and murder novel *Wrapped in Regret*.



### Jiri

Jiri may have helped popularize carry songs, but they haven't forgotten their roots—50% of the profits from performing their breakout hit “Over Head, Under Shoulder” go toward the market sellers they once worked alongside in Katapesh and Merab.

### Avayah

The erotic sculptures of my fellow tiefling Avayah, which feature succubi embracing in loving sexual positions, show up in the most unexpected places—I've even seen a full chess set of her miniatures, with her beloved *Moonlit Melding* as queen.



### Kal Jun

I'm not sure how Kal Jun creates his miniature nature paintings, but finding *A Peach Sunset* inside the seed of the fruit you just enjoyed is an unmatched pleasure well worth the price of planting it in a distant land.



### Bedjhan

Famed half-orc pointe dancer Bedjhan uses her height as a defining part of her grace, moving with a still-unrivaled combination of strength and fluidity. Her leading role in *Echoes of Everfall* routinely brings audiences (and yours truly) to tears.



### Merivesta Olinchi

Satirist Merivesta Olinchi is often credited with inadvertently starting the spread of skew plays. When even her murder by the Red Mantis couldn't slow the success of *The Conception Exception*, other writers saw parody as a potential path to fame.

### Del Ravanis

I hate including tavern singer Del Ravanis on any list, but his fans are too loud and legion to ignore. Still, for the record, his most popular tunes (including “Never the Worse for Wear”) were all stolen from better artists.



### Talierael

Elven poet Talierael's fading free verse, in which words disappear as you read them to reveal a hidden meaning, is always both moving and insightful, and their chapbook *Look (Away)* is rightfully considered a masterpiece of the new fadeverse movement.



## FAMOUS PIECES

In the end, it's the art that's most remembered by the masses. While some artists' names do live on in the minds of audiences, it's usually the pieces themselves that outlive the legacy of their creators. These works are but a small sampling of some of my personal favorites.



### Cold Spell

Though there are at least 16 different novels in Sarvella's popular Rabbit in a Hat hedge mystery series, featuring the irrepressibly brilliant mage Tril Spinner and her sardonic poppet-familiar-turned-sidekick Bunny, *Cold Spell* is widely considered to be the best since the 4701 AR novel that launched the series, *Catch Me If You Cantrip*. While the novel focuses on Tril and Bunny's ill-fated vacation to Highhelm, which is cut short by a dwarven clan leader's mysterious freezing death, it has become infamous due to the reveal (and I apologize for ruining the ending) that you, the reader, were the murderer all along.

### Hearts of Stone

Telda Hammereye was known primarily as a stone sculptor, but her 4080 AR piece, created on the 100-year anniversary of the volcanic eruption known as the Rending, is made primarily of silver and iron scavenged from the ruins of Jernashall. The row of jagged shards, believed to be a reference to the Five Kings Mountain, is inlaid with a list of clans that were eradicated during the event, and the small pool of what appears to be quickiron nestled in the center makes it appear as if the land itself bleeds in sympathy with the lives lost that day.



### Night Whispers

This stunning collected work reproduces the poems and tangle-tales of Isa Skyheart, a Mbe'ke dwarf whose political fables led to her capture by Free Captains working on Sargava's behalf in 4697 AR. While the complex interweaving of characters and themes in her tales—which might seem to be about a trip to the market but actually highlights the injustices suffered by enslaved people—could have perhaps given her enough plausible deniability to secure her freedom, she instead doubled down. Her later work contains much more pointed stories, some with outright calls for revolution, which might have led to her mysterious death in 4716 AR.

### Foreverie

With the proliferation of troupes claiming to be the authentic Endless Dance, this charcoal and color pencil sketch may be the only real way to know which one is telling the truth—if you look closely at the faces, clothing, and background in this depiction of the dancers mid-jump, you'll notice them changing as the real-life performers and locations do (though never with enough clarity to fully confirm the dancers' identities). Some reports of the drawing pre-date its official creation in 1001 AR by an unknown elf artist, leaving many to wonder at the magic that makes it possible.



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## A Love That Loss Can Bear

Is *A Love That Loss Can Bear* a traditional Chelaxian opera or a Kortosi dance piece? I believe the key to its success is that it's both. Audience members can listen to a stirring lament of lost love against an all-string orchestra, watch the dancers beside it partner in a series of lifts and turns that paint the emotion as nothing more than a fleeting indulgence, and marvel at the imagined conversation between them. This masterful melding of forms, created in 3225 AR by a group of students at Kith bardic college who called themselves The Six, may never be equaled.

## Reflections V (Unfinished)

While Galtan artist Irlyna Vosh was assassinated in 4668 AR before she could finish this painting, and it lacks some of the color depth and shadow play of her other city scenes, the dramatic splash of her blood across the canvas is widely believed to be her dying attempt to continue her life's work of turning gritty realities into beauty.

While various Galtan revolutionaries have interpreted the painting as everything from a condemnation of class inequality to a call for change through violence, most scholars outside of the region believe it was, in fact, a mundane painting of her favorite cafe.



## Splatter!

Mimsy Galant, who published the first edition of this annual art folio in 4617 AR, claims to have captured every iteration of every mural ever painted in Brastlework's famous Splatter Alley. While this seems impossible, given how quickly the many artists who leave their mark on the alley walls paint on, around, or over each other's work, copying these works of art from the wall to the page has become a rite of passage (and source of income) for many Inner Sea artists, who usually indicate they're ready to move on by painting a mural of their own.

## Tales from Another Absalom

Love *Another Absalom* stories? Wish they never had to end? These popular performance pieces by Shahari Orr reimagine and build on these tales of life in the shadow plane. Enjoy Orr's use of shadow puppetry and her darkly humorous (and occasionally raunchy) musical takes on what might have befallen characters after their stories ended, which she has been producing monthly since 4707. Wondering which one to see first? *If I Knew My Name* was first performed in 4713 but returns every year with new insights that fill in some of the gaps in Olaiwe Winson's classic series of memory mage tales.



# ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

While many architects claim to work entirely from divine, infernal, or personal inspiration, most are influenced by the designs of their peers. The styles listed here, which include some of the most currently discussed and copied in the Inner Sea, may be seen by individual artisans and designers as guidelines to follow, rebel against, or attempt to shift, but they will certainly, at the very least, be considered when beginning a new architectural design project.

## Absalomic

This blend of highlights from several Absalomian architectural trends yields colorful and fanciful designs that usually include the curved walls of the Castrovelian era, painted-brick patterns common in early Taldan construction, broad Keleshite windows, and a central Tian-style garden.



## Aiudaran

This style, which is inspired by elven construction, features rounded-edged walls, hanging vines sculpted in metal, and recessed stone arches that evoke the aiudara, each of which is filled with a lifelike mosaic of a distant land.



## Earthbound

Adherents of this style believe that all building materials should be found within a day's walk of construction—they favor light building materials like wood, thatching, and fallen leaves and often evoke trees and other elements of nature in their designs.



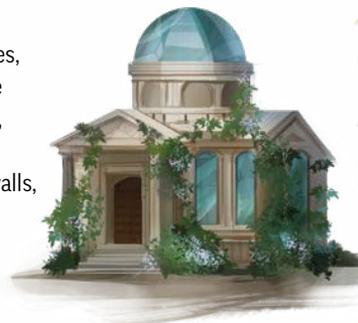
## New Thassilonian

Inspired by Thassilonian ruins, this style features towering stone-block walls whose pieces fit together without the visible use of any adhesive or joining material, often carved with decorative runes that appear to glow thanks to the use of inset gemstones.



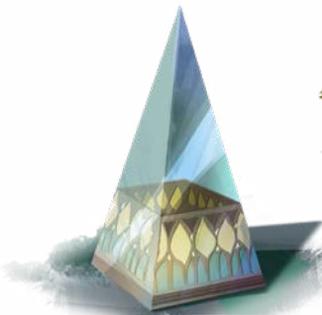
## Shelynite

Much like Shelynite temples, Shelynite buildings feature multiple sources of beauty, usually in the form of flowering vines on outer walls, arched rooms that create natural musical resonance, and the use of artwork everywhere from ceiling murals to window mosaics.



## Shory

The Shory Empire's legacy continues to impact architecture to this day. While Shory-style buildings aren't made solely of glass and crystal as seen in the ruins of Kho, elaborate glass mosaic facades and crystal spires help to replicate the aesthetic.



## Sunswept

While the truncated pyramids of this style reveal some Osirian influence, its soaring glass curves pay homage to the sun orchid's petals, and structural features are built in groups of six to honor its precious elixir.



## Thronic

The barbed spires that jut from the tops of these buildings, sometimes called Throne's thorns, must meet exacting width, height, and angle requirements to avoid running afoul of Chelaxian authorities. Unfortunately, these requirements change frequently, leading to an inconsistent skyline.



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## FAMOUS STRUCTURES

While you, dearest reader, may not be an apprentice architect, you can still replicate a journey across the Inner Sea to observe some of the region's greatest buildings with the following list. While this handpicked chronicle includes notable structures, there are many more to be seen, some of which may be only a few days' travel from you!



### Cyphergate

This massive stone arch, which straddles the entrance to the Riddleport harbor, is likely one half of a ring now buried within the rocks of the harbor bottom. In recent years, cyphermages seeking to test the theory that the gate was used by Runelord Karzoug have begun trying to excavate the bottom half, despite the danger this poses both to the harbor and nearby residents. Their work, though likely responsible for the occasional tremors felt by those who live nearby, has unearthed some still-inconclusive evidence that the ring may have once spun as part of its mysterious function.

### The Desert Lighthouse

This towering port in Avilan, on the edge of the Ketz Desert, can be seen from a distance, its docks extending and contracting as sandships come and go. The central conical structure, which serves as a hub for trade, is rumored to have once been inlaid with gold, but a string of high-profile thefts has led to their replacement with polished steel and heatstone. Still, its constant movements reflect enough light no matter the time of day or year that it has become a place of refuge for those lost either in the desert itself or the nearby Tapur forest.



### The Frozen Four

Though their poses all differ, the fact that these four massive statues—*The Lady's Light* in the Mushfens, Ular Kel's *Statue of Altyn Batyr*, the statue of Selkelas half-buried in the Katapesh Desert, and the statue of the unnamed Azlanti man at the mouth of the Ocota River—each appear to have an arm extended toward a now-unknown location has led some travelers to believe they're somehow connected. In response, scholars have begun to investigate for any possible design commonalities, and more than one scammer sells maps to the supposed place where their gazes intersect.



### Irespan

Even in its current ruined state, the Thassilonian structure known as the Giant's Bridge looms over Magnimar, standing over 300 feet above sea level and 100 feet wide. Almost as impressively, the broken edges of the span still faintly glow with whatever power was used to create them, and there's the slightest gap between the support pillars and the bridges' main bulk that points to some lingering magical force. Unfortunately, exploration of this phenomenon has been sidetracked by endless debates as to whether the openings and columns within each support pillar performed a function or were merely decorative elements.





## Journey's End

Each of the 12 cylindrical towers in this temple-turned-spa in Triela is topped by a small *throneglass* dome. The spa features a large mural on its walls celebrating one of the guises Aroden used to travel among mortals. As the angle of the sun changes throughout the day, it illuminates different aspects of the mural to aid in personal reflection (and today, spa and health treatments). The building's motif of reflection can also be seen in the large reflecting pool under its central dome, though much of this central room, including its etched walls, has suffered from several ill-advised restoration attempts.

## The Osiriani Pyramids

The four pyramids recently uncovered in the Valley of the Pyramids look similar from a distance, but each of these impressive monuments has a different material embedded in the limestone and granite blocks used to construct it. Osirionologists believe these materials help to demonstrate which pyramid was designed for which pharaoh—dried bone for the Fiend Pharaoh, a faded blue material yet to be identified for the Cerulean Pharaoh, specks of quartz crystal resembling ice diamonds for the Radiant Pharaoh, and veinstone-inlaid symbols that might be remnants of an ancient calendar for the Pharaoh of Numbers.



## Rivermen's Guild House

This Port Freedom building is one of the few in Vidrian left untouched by Sargavan colonization of the region and is an excellent showcase of pre-colonial Vidric architecture. Not only is it utilitarian, with a basement level that connects directly to the nearby docks through a series of private internal walkways, but it showcases many of the disparate architectural influences absorbed by Vidrian during its past as a cosmopolitan and resource-rich port, including a three-tiered, quasi-pyramidal structure—which calls to mind both Cloudspire and the Osirion pyramids—and multicolored columns that echo the magical ones used in the Magaambya's Circle.

## The Ruby Fortress

Brevoy's Ruby Fortress is impressive from afar but also holds a surprise for those who make it inside the central black rectangular tower, notably made of stone instead of wood. The fortress's entire ceiling is covered with jagged stone spikes called the Dragon's Teeth, which appear to tremble when the wind blows fiercely enough. It's said the teeth will fall if the fortress is ever breached, and the place itself can express displeasure with the current holder of the Dragonscale Throne by impaling them, an act that might have given the fortress (which holds no visible rubies) its name.



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# PASTIMES

“Rolling for Broke and Other Reputable Hobbies” by “Tall Otto” Talbus, Riddleport gambler

Lots of people don't have the joy of writing for this fine publication and kicking back with a nightly card game to earn the day's bread and beer. No, lots of people have to work. Some of them have to work really hard, probably, I don't know. But when it comes to describing leisure time, I've got you covered. “Leisure” might make you think of laziness, but the pursuits people across the Inner Sea enjoy during their downtime are far from idle. Some prefer pastimes that are just as lively as hard work, particularly in the case of sports or exercise, but others give their bodies a break while expanding their minds or just passing the time with friends and family.

## LEISURE

After a day of hard work (or hard gambling), it's pleasant to simply relax. Leisure activities are among the Inner Sea's most predominant pastimes. These include low-energy activities like baking simple foods, sharing hot drinks, or simply swapping news. People like to hold onto those they value as they relax, whether holding hands or curling up with one another. Tale-telling is among the most popular of leisure pastimes, and a good storyteller can delight friends and neighbors alike. Sometimes, these activities conceal practice at a skill: sewing keeps the eye and mind sharp, and children who enjoy playing dress-up or experimenting with makeup are exploring fashion in a way that can serve them well as they grow up. Many people enjoy leisure activities alone as well, whether reading a good book, writing in a journal, or simply taking a nap.

**Collecting:** Many across the Inner Sea are collectors by nature, but the things they collect vary considerably. People who live near the seashore might collect shells, while those living inland might collect flowers or pretty stones. Collecting bugs, coins, or feathers is fairly universal, and aristocrats might collect art, wine, weapons, or unusual animals. Wizards and occultists collect spells, even those that are of little or no use to them. Those with an interest in divination or simply artwork often collect different versions of harrow decks, each beautifully illustrated in a different style. Some people even collect intangible things like legends or riddles, penning them into books.

One thing that generally holds true is these collectors like showing off what they've discovered, and you can delight nearly any collector by asking about what they've acquired. Personally, I've never seen a reason to collect much of anything other than money, but having an interesting collection of pretty things to show off is a good way to break the ice with people across the Inner Sea region.

**Crafting:** Not everyone who practices a trade does so professionally. Many amateurs like practicing a craft as a hobby, immersing themselves in the details of their particular skill and sharing what they know with

others. Aristocrats famously practice needlepoint and pianoforte performances, but they're far from the only ones who derive joy from decorative sewing or playing music. Even an amateur woodworker, potter, tailor, or jeweler is good to know, and I make it a point of never criticizing someone for hobbies where they make something with their hands. Their skill is always greater than mine and I might have some need for their talents in the future!

**Exercise:** Many people like to get exercise in their free time, especially if their employment requires intense mental work rather than physical labor, or if their work keeps them in one place all day such that a change of scenery is welcome. Gentle walks through fields and farms is the most popular form of exercise, as it can be enjoyed with others or alone. Some people prefer more vigorous exercise and take up strenuous hikes, swimming, or rock climbing. Areas that pose dangers from bandits or monsters are foolish to explore without some protection, so many people venturing far carry a weapon, even if only a dagger or shortsword.

Weapons aside, many types of exercise require some equipment. To enjoy rowing, for example, one must buy or borrow a canoe or rowboat for an excursion, and anyone who enjoys exploring wintry lands needs a proper coat and accessories like snowshoes. Skilled climbers like to have a climbing kit on hand and rarely stop talking about different types of rope. Some types of exercise occupy a line with leisure: fishing is a popular pastime, but it's often punctuated with such passive silence that a quick nap is sure to result.

**Games:** Oh, do people like to play games! Indeed, some of us believe the only thing more thrilling than a game is a game with a friendly wager on the outcome. Games might be incredibly physical, as with some team sports like basilisk or many children's games (where they obtain all that energy, I honestly don't know), or can be almost entirely mental, as with many board games, card games, and riddle contests.

There's a large variety of games across the Inner Sea, but the more cosmopolitan a place is, the more likely you are to find a game with rules like those you've encountered elsewhere. Few people have as much spare time as traveling merchants, after all, and they bring card games, simple board games, and the like from town to town. Drouge is considered the game of intellectuals, likely due to players in Absalom claiming so, but it's hardly the only popular pastime. You can find people playing a card game called golem in nearly any bar in the Inner Sea, and many more people play the unwise game of towers than you might prefer. I can't explain why children's games like cooper tag and hide-and-seek are so prevalent, except to observe that some traders bring their families on the road as well.

## HOBBY SHOWCASE

These are a few popular hobbies around the Inner Sea. Plenty more hobbies than this occur across the region, of course, and remote locales might have hobbies that seem foolish or even dangerous to larger communities—don't get me started on goblin “games” like Burp-It-Up. But if you know a little bit about each of these hobbies, you'll be able to share some interests with just about anyone you come across in the Inner Sea region!

### Bounder

Bounder is a gambling game played with three 6-sided dice and two 20-sided dice. The shooter rolls a 20-sided die to set the “point” and a dealer tries to match the point with the three 6-sided dice. The shooter then rolls the other 20-sided die to try to “bound” the dealer's total.



### Cooper Tag

This children's game requires that a few large hoops, such as those taken from an old barrel, be placed on the ground to mark out an area for a game of tag. Anyone tagged goes “into a barrel” and must stand in a hoop until someone else tags them free.



### Feather Pressing

Many people who collect feathers like to display them. Feathers are pressed into a special book with alchemical preservatives to maintain the color and luster. Feathers of rare creatures, such as griffons and couatls, are particularly prized.



### Imperial Conquest

In this strategic board game, up to four players take turns placing tokens on a board where each square is worth varying points, claiming territory by flanking other players' pieces or chaining flanking lines. The game is popular among courtiers, monks, and tacticians.



### Knivesies

This blood sport is played where the law has little interest in preventing such matches. Two opponents with their right hands tied together stand atop a table with a dagger and the wagers of the betting spectators between them. The one who grabs up the most coins, and doesn't die, wins.



### Log Rolling

Popular along the Sellen River but played wherever loggers ply their trade, log rolling is the sport of standing atop a floating log. Sometimes multiple people share a log, and each tries to bounce or roll it just enough to knock off the others while they keep their own balance.



### Prismati

This team sport is played by fey of the Verduran Forest as well as commoners—including children—in Andoran and Taldor. The players throw and catch stones or balls of their team's color, getting them into areas marked by scarves or paint in the same color.



### Stile Art

Art often follows function. Where property and animals are bound in by fences, people might build stiles rather than gates for access. Elegant-looking, carved, or painted stiles earn comment, so many rural amateur artisans build elaborate stiles as a hobby.



### Tolpug Whittling

Many people like carving small objects from a stick with only a carving knife, but people along Lake Encarthan often whittle tolpuqs: stylized animals with large eyes that are said to ward evil away. It's ill luck to finish a tolpuq after sundown.



### Towers

Most people consider the harrow deck used by Varisian fortune-tellers to be a mysterious and dangerous conduit to occult truths. Unwise gamblers sometimes play a game called towers with a harrow deck, playing matching cards with a goal of emptying their hands.



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## GOLEM

Trust me, golem is among the best card games for a professional gambler. You can duck out of a round if your cards aren't falling your way, but you can stay in and exploit a rube if you're on a hot streak and canny enough to pay close attention. Fortunately, golem is common in taprooms and gambling dens throughout the Inner Sea. Regional variants keep the game lively, but it's rarely rude to insist on a game of "pure golem," no matter where you are. Even high-class establishments are likely to have a few games available, with the ante set high enough to discourage riffraff.

**Setup:** Golem usually has three to six players, plus a dealer (or, in a less-professional establishment, players who alternate being the dealer). The game requires a shiny token to represent an amulet and a deck of 52 cards in four suits, numbered from 1 to 13. In many places across the Inner Sea, players use an Old-Mage deck without its wildcards, as they're already numbered from 1 to 13 in four suits. The suits in golem-specific decks are flesh (hearts, or life in the Old-Mage deck), clay (spades, or mind), stone (diamonds, or matter), and iron (clubs, or spirit).

**Play:** Golem is a card game similar to five-card draw poker in that the players try to build the best hand from the cards they're dealt. However, in addition to beating

the other players, players must try to beat a "golem hand" to win the pot.

The hands ranked from best to worst are a straight flush (five cards of the same suit in sequential order, 9 through 13 being the best), four of a kind (four cards that match numerically, one from each suit), a full house or "golem lab" (a combination of three of a kind and a pair in the same hand), a flush (five cards of the same suit in any order), a straight (five cards of any suit in sequential order), three of a kind (three cards that match numerically), two pair (two different pairs in the same hand), a pair (two cards that match numerically), and high card (the highest numerical card in the hand). In any tie, the higher-number card wins (that is, a pair of 13s beats a pair of 12s).

Golem is played as a series of games; one game must be completely resolved so someone gets the pot before the next game begins. The player to the right of the dealer gets the amulet to start the night, and each player must ante by placing an amount (determined by the table, typically ranging anywhere between 2 cp and 5 gp) into the pot.

The dealer then deals five cards to each player. Starting with whomever has the amulet, each player can take one of three actions:

- Establish the current bet (with an amount at least equal to the ante; some establishments limit how

high the first bet can go) or, if there's already a bet established, match the current bet.

- Raise the current bet (again, usually by an amount at least equal to the ante; sometimes with a limit).
- Fold.

Anyone who folds is out of the game and can't come back in until a new game begins. The betting continues going around until all players have matched the current bet or folded.

Next, each player still in the game can discard up to two cards and receive that many cards back from the deck. The discarded cards go face-down in the table's center. Another round of betting occurs, starting at the player with the amulet.

If, at any point, only one player hasn't folded, that player wins the pot and the game ends (if playing at a gambling hall, the hall usually takes 5 percent of the pot as its cut before any payout). If at least two players are still in the game after all bets are matched, those players reveal their hands. The dealer then "frees the golem."

The golem hand—the best five-card hand created from the players' discarded cards—is revealed, and if the player with the best hand beats the golem, they win the pot, and the game is over. But if the player with the best hand doesn't beat the golem hand, that player must add a set amount of coins to the pot (usually an amount equal to twice the ante), and all cards are collected so a new hand can be dealt for the players who were still in the game. This continues until someone wins the pot. The amulet then moves one position counterclockwise at the table, and a new game is dealt.

**History:** With a game as widespread as golem, it's hard to pin down a specific origin point. Most scholars of the game (noting that a "scholar" of a game is someone who's gone broke playing it but still can't let the game alone) peg the origin in Cheliox, before the Even-Tongued Conquest that broke the nation away from imperial Taldor. The city of Corentyn experienced something of a fad around ruins unearthed from the Jistka Imperium. Several ancient construct factories and tombs had been exposed at nearly the same time by rival archaeologists looking to outdo one another. It became the fashion to showcase strange amulets and crumbling monoliths hauled from these ruins. Civic improvements blossomed as aristocrats rushed to show each other up by building gardens around Jistkan golems and filling museums with Jistkan relics.

As soon as some members of the city's elite claimed Jistkan heritage, it became the rage for others to do so as well, studying up on varieties of golems and other constructs to add to their ersatz pedigree. Before long, even servants and children could recite the major different types of golems and even describe, in vague terms, golem-related magic like controlling amulets and batons.

The game of golem appeared across Corentyn during this craze, hitting at just the right time to ride the zeitgeist to immediate popularity. It was played in

aristocrats' salons and dockside taverns alike. The game spread to all ports Taldan traders could take it, although its adoption in the capital of Oppara was slow due to its characterization as a "mere western affectation." (Golem remains less popular in Oppara than elsewhere, even centuries later.)

An incident called the Golem Rage put a quick end to the fad. Several Jistkan relics stuttered into simultaneous animation and smashed villas and plazas alike before collapsing back into dust. No one wanted anything to do with Jistkan relics any longer; the surviving pieces were quietly sold to distant ports and the embarrassing craze was quickly forgotten. Yet, the game of golem still endures in bars, casinos, and parlors across the Inner Sea.

## BASILISK

This popular team sport has two sides, each trying to place a scoring ball into a round goal on the opposite side of a field. There's a second ball in play, called the basilisk, which the players hurl at each other with wicker scoops. Players who touch (or are hit by) the basilisk ball must freeze in place. Though they can't be frozen, any player holding the scoring ball must drop an opaque visor, making it difficult to see while the ball is held. Teammates guide the shrouded player with shouts or touches of their scoops. The sport is popular with rulers who are looking for a safer pastime than tournament jousts and melees, while experienced players are often brutal enough to satisfy a roaring crowd's demand for action.

Basilisk is a team sport, with different members taking on different roles.

- Runners attempt to scoop up the ball and move it into scoring position.
- The guide plays nearest the goal, helping the teammate with the scoring ball place the ball into the goal.
- Two strikers, often the players with the best pitching arms, rarely worry about the scoring ball but concentrate on getting the basilisk ball and hurling it at the opposing team members.
- The goaltender tries to keep the other team, and especially the other team's guide, from getting into the other team's scoring zone.
- The shield's primary task is to intercept the basilisk ball from teammates critical to a play.
- The cleric returns frozen players to the game. If a team's cleric touches a frozen player, that player can immediately rejoin the game.
- The caller is usually, but not always, the team's captain. They have the job of surveying the field and calling out plans of action to their teammates. Skilled callers manage not to confuse their team in the chaos of the game.
- The watcher monitors the opposite team—making sure someone who takes the scoring ball drops their visor immediately, that players hit by the basilisk ball freeze, and so on. To avoid watchers making false calls, the game has its own referees.

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## BASILISK PLAYER

Professional basilisk leagues have developed standardized equipment as the sport has become more popular, though the more backwater your locale, the more likely there is to be variation in outfits. Unsurprisingly, the game has begun to spawn its own fan groups, subcultures, variants, and side games as it has spread throughout the Inner Sea. Betting can take many forms on even a single play in a single game, so we gamblers love basilisk like you wouldn't believe.

### Avistan Basilisk League



The largest international league of basilisk players is the Avistan Basilisk League, although several Garundi nations participate and have petitioned for a name change. The league recently moved its headquarters from Kerse to Almas, ostensibly to make Garundi participation easier but mostly to avoid accusations of corruption in Kerse.

### Riddleport Rollers



Most towns as small as Riddleport don't have an international league team, and just how the notorious pirate Clegg Zincher came up with the money to buy a league membership for his town is still unclear. The Riddleport Rollers' rough-and-tumble antics delight us locals.

### Scoop

Each player carries a curved wicker scoop in their dominant hand. It's held by a wooden crossbar inside a covered hand guard. The curved shape makes it easier to catch and throw a basilisk ball. Most are decorated with team colors and personal icons along the outside.

### Scoring Ball

The scoring ball is lightweight and small, no more than eight inches across. Its light weight makes it hard to throw from a scoop; the scoring ball is generally handed off rather than thrown, although it's not prohibited, because the holder of the scoring ball can't see well.

### Blinding Helmet

The helmet both protects a player from high-speed balls or collisions and also features a drop-down visor that, depending on the specific game rules, makes it either difficult or even impossible for the wearer to see. Casual players might use a blindfold and cap rather than a helmet.

### Basilisk Ball

This is a round ball about a foot across made of mottled green hide, like knobby lizard hide. Many league balls are made of actual basilisk hide and rumored to hold magical paralyzing properties. Ordinary cowhide balls painted green often suffice for informal play.



# RIDDLEPORT ROLLERS

My hometown team is known far and wide as the lovable losers of the international basilisk ball league. There's a persistent rumor that the Rollers enjoy their pre-game parties so much they're drunk during most games, but that's just fine when the crowd is, too. Gambling on Rollers games is some of the fastest betting you'll see in a town known for its gambling dens. The Rollers have a longtime rivalry with the Absalom Stonewallers, but the Stonewallers don't reciprocate the rivalry—or even really acknowledge the “Rolled-Overs” as anything but an easy victory.

## Runners

The two fastest players on a team are the runners and they're often in the best position to pick up the scoring ball and move it down the field. They have shorter scoops than the other players, as they just pass the ball to teammates. The Rollers' star runner is “Galloping” Aiumar Telzen.



## Guide

Some guides are great at a “pass-play,” charging directly for the goal, taking the scoring ball at the last second, and relying on momentum (rather than vision) to score. Riddleport's expert guide is none other than Yima “No Eyes” Vitton, a recent trade from the Merab Vultures.



## Strikers

There's no better striker than Riddleport's Bargrum Stonefingers. Like all good strikers, he doesn't just throw the ball but instead carefully aims in order to ricochet the basilisk ball off a player and make double-tags or the coveted triple-tags.



## Goaltender

A team's goaltender protects the other team's goal, making sure to stay the prescribed distance from it (usually about 30 feet). Mujaika the Wall's tenure as Riddleport's goaltender is unmatched with a record-shattering 148 blocks last season.



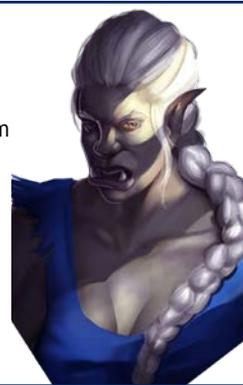
## Caller

The most important job of the caller is to have a clear, loud voice to guide whichever teammate has the scoring ball toward the goal and around obstacles. Team captain Juyari Deephold serves as Riddleport's caller. Her reputation has earned her the title of the “Golden Voice.”



## Shield

The shield carries a scoop that's wider and flatter than other team scoops. It's not quite as large as an actual shield, but it's close enough to give this position its name. With an average of seven interceptions per game, Obbatra “Steelbones” Fangbreaker is a rising star to watch.



## Cleric

A cleric's “touch” applies to contact of any kind; some players knock or trip the opposing team's cleric into a frozen player on their side to get them playing again. Lumanir Lostlight is the Roller's cleric and probably the toughest player on the team.



## Watcher

A team's watcher varies from match to match, as each player rotates out and acts as watcher to rest a bit. While Mazzerak Two-Songs typically acts as a striker for the Rollers, he seems to excel as a watcher, catching fouls even when those blasted refs don't.



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# CRIME & LAW

*"A Legally Protected Discussion of Laws and Law Enforcement: A Strictly Informational Treatise" by Kharmione Nyx*

Face it, Golarion's a big place, and who wants to keep track of all the ways the watch can arrest you this week? That's why you've got Golarion's Finest and that's why you've got me—Kharmione Nyx, pronounced innocent in seven jurisdictions! So keep reading boss, and I'll set you straight on staying on the straight and narrow.

## ENFORCEMENT

First, let's talk basics. The details, they'll be different based on whether you're in Nantambu or Egorian or Middle-of-Nowhere Iobaria, but the basic approach is pretty common all over the Inner Sea (blame Taldor, I think). Out in the hinterlands, you've got your sheriff, and in the city, you've got the watch.

A sheriff (or a reeve, or a bailiff) oversees law enforcement in a rural area. Might work for the lord, might work for the king, might be elected by the locals. Mostly they do government stuff, make sure the crops get planted, but if someone bashes dear old granny's head in with a rock, that's the sheriff's problem. Sheriffs have a lot of power. If the sheriff wants to do something, no one in the village will stop them, so they can search anywhere, interrogate anyone, and lock up anyone they want. Stopping a sheriff means going over their head, and the sheriff's boss is usually a long way away and probably doesn't care. Catch is: a sheriff must live in the community, and a sheriff who throws their weight around doesn't stay sheriff long. Smart sheriffs are careful not to go too far past what the community thinks is reasonable.

A city watch (or guard, or gendarmerie) is different. They're bigger, more professional, and usually care about the legal niceties. Being an officer of the watch makes for a proper career, and most cities have a bunch of watch officers in a bunch of ranks, from your regular patrolling plodder to fancy detectives to senior officers with shiny helmets. They enforce all the laws and ordinances, though they also watch for fires and help the military defend the city, if that ever comes up.

City folks being typically wealthier and more connected means the city watch needs to play at least half-polite. The city watch can't just search a place or interrogate someone against their will without a warrant signed by a judge or a senior officer, and if they arrest someone, they eventually need to produce some charges and evidence. That said, status matters. Hassling some pickpocket? Nobody minds much if they skip the paperwork. Investigating a wealthy merchant? Cross those t's and dot those i's.

All these folks, they've got their jurisdictions, so most of the time if you skip town, you're safe—your stolen chicken isn't worth chasing you over. But if you get people seriously worked up (kidnapping, murder, the really grand sort of larceny), then it's time to meet either the Hellknights or the Society of the Scales.

If you've so much as dropped a piece of chalk in the wrong spot, you're familiar with the totalitarian nightmares

that are the Hellknights. The Scalies are a lot newer and a little more polite. They serve as something like these international watch officers. Basically, time was whenever a crime crossed a border, one fancy helmet had to talk to another fancy helmet to get things figured out. After a while, a number of nations decided to get it all regularized, and now the Scalies are backed by about a half-dozen Inner Sea states. Not that anyone minds too much. Scalies are heroes, you know? They're mostly former detectives with shiny reputations, so people think they've got the right to chase criminals wherever they go and whatever they do. Even though a Scaly is just one person, they can often borrow backup from the locals. There's not a lot of Scalies, but they're smart, sneaky, and they don't give up.

What about the weird crooks, you know, finger-wigglers and so on? Glad you asked. If they're not too scary, then there's methods to deal with this. Usually, you get a couple of your biggest constables and tell them to jump on the magical crook. Hard to cast spells with fifty stone of constable on you. Some of the simpler spells you can work around, too—if your bad guy wizard can turn invisible or teleport a little ways away, throw a scent bomb at them and then follow with dogs, say. Best case scenario, get your own wizard. Most cities have a few watch-wizards on hand.

What about the really scary ones? That gets bumped up the chain and fast. Most places, the people in charge have got somebody who's just as scary and if you attract too much of the wrong sort of attention, they get called in. In Garund, eventually some Magaambyan war wizards will want a word with you. Annoy Queen Abrogail enough, she might sic a pit fiend on you. Some places will hire out. It's hard to get this level of attention, but some folks manage.

## PUNISHMENT

Despite your best efforts, you and the local judicial system are having a long and awkward talk. What happens then? Out in the sticks, the sheriff still reigns supreme—they're usually empowered to hand down any punishment they want, so long as they don't go much past the community consensus. So, if you got caught red-handed, stolen chicken under one arm, that's that. If there's genuine uncertainty though, a lot of sheriffs will bounce it up to the local lord, or a traveling circuit judge, or even to a god (by using a trial by ordeal or trial by combat).

In the cities, it's different. They've got magistrates and they're not afraid to use them. Most of the Inner Sea is based on the old Taldan civil code, so they use what my book-loving sister calls the inquisitorial model. You get hauled up before a judge (three for serious stuff like murder) who runs the trial, interrogates witnesses and lawyers, and passes judgment and sentence. A few places, mostly in the north, use the old Kellid system instead, where the judge is more hands-off and the decision is made by a jury instead. Sometimes you can appeal to a senior judge or the local ruler, but you better be real convincing.

Let's say you get convicted, then what? If the crime isn't too serious, most places go for a mix of fines, forced labor, and corporal punishment. The first two are meant to compensate whoever got hurt in the crime. You stole a chicken, you pay back its worth twice over or go dig ditches and the government pays it. The corporal punishment is usually some kind of flogging or caning, to remind you not to do it again. More serious stuff, it's branding (hot iron or some spell) along with exile, or for the heavy things like murder, they go straight to executions. If you

hurt somebody in a way that can't ever be fixed, most places make sure you can't ever do it again.

Prisons mostly show up in the big cities and rich countries—Middle-of-Nowhere Iobaria can't afford to keep people in jail for long. But for places like Taldor or Cheliox, a big prison with lots of convicts doing hard labor is practically a national status symbol. Imprisonment is also a common way to deal with a rogue aristocrat who you can't just execute, but they usually get to stay in some fancy tower for the rest of their lives.

**TABLE 2: COMMON CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS**

Crime	Typical Punishment <sup>1</sup>
Murder	Execution
Arson	Execution
Summoning prohibited planar beings (varies by region)	Execution
Treason	Execution
Espionage	10 to 30 years labor, often shortened as spies are exchanged or traded back to their home country
Torture	Fifty lashes and 5 to 20 years hard labor, often followed by exile
Other atrocities	Forty lashes and 3 to 10 years hard labor, often followed by exile
Manslaughter	Twenty to fifty lashes, 3 to 15 years of labor, and/or a fine equal to 50% of the character's wealth
Creating undead	Fifty lashes, 3 to 10 years of hard labor, and/or a fine equal to 40% of the character's wealth
Kidnapping	Twenty to forty lashes and/or 2 to 8 years hard labor, often followed by exile
Enchantment, major ( <i>dominate</i> )	Thirty lashes and/or a fine equal to 25% of the character's wealth, often followed by exile
Enchantment, minor ( <i>charm</i> )	Ten lashes and/or a fine equal to 10% of the character's wealth
Assault & battery (permanent injury)	Thirty lashes, 1 year hard labor, and/or a fine equal to 10% of the character's wealth
Assault & battery (no permanent injury)	Ten lashes and/or a fine equal to 2% of the character's wealth
Cruelty to animals	Five to twenty lashes and/or a fine equal to 5% of the character's wealth
Robbery	Twenty lashes and/or 1 to 5 years hard labor
Burglary	1 to 3 years hard labor and/or fine equal to 20% of the stolen goods' value
Larceny	6 to 18 months hard labor and/or fine equal to 15% of the stolen goods' value
Embezzlement	Return of all funds and a fine of 20% of what was stolen
Extortion	Return of all funds and a fine of 20% of what was stolen
Possession of stolen goods	Return of all goods and a fine equal to 10% of the goods' cost
Perjury	A fine equal to 15% of the character's wealth
Forgery (official papers)	A fine equal to 15% of the character's wealth
Forgery (other)	A fine equal to 10% of the character's wealth
Blackmail	A fine equal to 10% of the character's wealth
Fraud	A fine equal to 10% of the character's wealth
Worship of banned gods	2 to 8 years hard labor and/or a fine equal to 20% of the character's wealth
Smuggling	1 to 5 years hard labor and/or a fine equal to 15% of the character's wealth
Vandalism	Ten lashes and/or a fine equal to 2% of the character's wealth
Pickpocketing	Five lashes and/or a fine equal to 1% of the character's wealth
Trespassing	Two lashes and/or a fine equal to 1% of the character's wealth
Multiple offenses at once	As most serious offense, plus 50% of other sentences
Repeated offenses	Increase the sentence by a quarter for each prior offense—excessive offenses result in execution

<sup>1</sup>Punishments can vary from region to region. Countries in the Inner Sea that use fines typically link them to the character's ability to pay.

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# WANTED



## Samel Maleagant

**Senior Priest-Advocate of the Court of Black Paper**

**Known Aliases:** Lucan Lacreix, Aurelian Melcheri

**Wanted For:** Multiple counts of fraud & confidence tricks; worship of Norgorber as the Reaper of Reputation

**Reward:** Three thousand gold measures, by the Bishop Yasmardin Senior

# WANTED



## Bovor Bolvond

**Renegade wizard, approach with caution**

**Wanted For:** Practicing magic while under the influence; casting pyrotechnics in a wooded area; transmuting alligators without a license; reckless magic carpet usage

**Reward:** Two hundred silver shields for his arrest

# WANTED



## The Fisherman

**Multiple murders, considered extremely dangerous**

**Wanted For:** Serial murder: the Fisherman is associated with eleven deaths in Goka, Quantum, and Absalom

**Reward:** Six thousand silver weights for information

**Last Known Whereabouts:** Reported boarding a ship headed for Magnimar

# WANTED



## The Mockingbird

**Thief at large, eluded capture multiple times**

**Wanted For:** Multiple counts of grand larceny and impersonation via magic; the theft of the Star of Vudra sapphire; the theft of Alicio Murrani's Coronation of Taldaris

**Reward:** Seven thousand gold measures for their arrest

# BOUNTY



## Blackjack

**Wanted For:** Harassing self-respecting Korvosan gangsters; uncovering corruption in the nobility; rescuing innocents from the gallows; being a do-gooder for over two hundred years

**Reward:** Eleven hundred gold sails for his death, but only if he stays dead

# BOUNTY



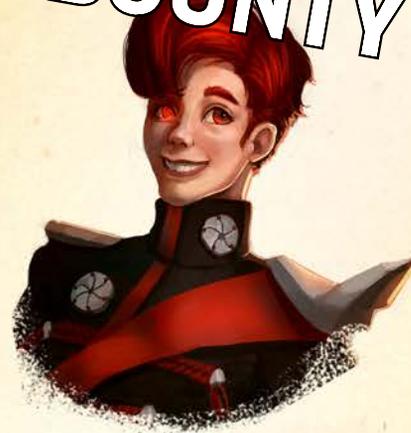
## Aluki Noata-Dufresnes

**Sleepless Detective**

**Wanted For:** Retrieving the Star of Vudra diamond; arresting Lord Hallifrey for the Heron Murders; The Case of the Six Statues

**Reward:** Three hundred silver shields for her to be distracted from Leipstadt, by the Mockingbird

# BOUNTY

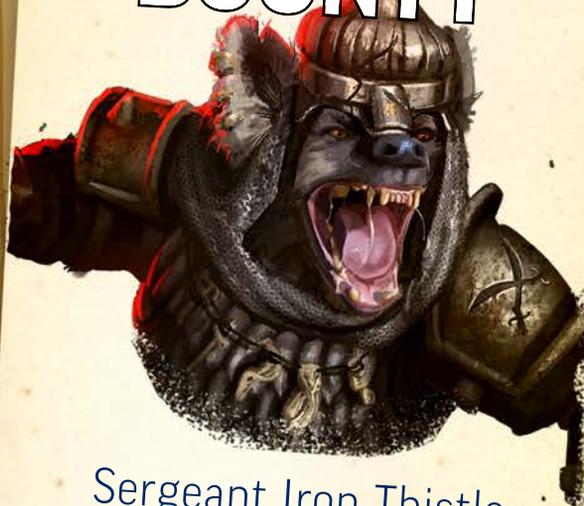


## Paravicar Sevastienne DuAloye

**Wanted For:** Smashing the Four Knife Organization; sinking the *Wind of Besmara*; making Archbaron Tolfraye's blood explode from his body, turn into a blood elemental, and kill his guards

**Reward:** Four thousand gold measures for their death

# BOUNTY



## Sergeant Iron Thistle

**Wanted For:** Ending the Fareish Pesh Ring; catching the Dead Tongue Poisoner; arresting Qarim, fourth King of Thieves

**Reward:** One thousand silver shields for her death or removal, by the Hundred Princes

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# HEADQUARTERS

Both crooks and cops like to have places they can go home to and put their feet up, and luckily for you, I've been in a lot of both. On the left is a former, mid-level headquarters for Katheer's Hundred Princes guild, an organized crime society where Princes of Thieves plan burglaries, smuggling, and drug-running operations. On the right is a guard station for Irrisen's Winter Guard—they've been reformed under Queen Anastasia, but still not folks to get on the bad side of.

## Furniture Shop

A semi-retired Prince runs a furniture workshop as a cover operation. The deliveries of lumber and furniture also provide cover for smuggling goods or people all over the city, hidden in the huge, false-bottomed wagons.

## Storeroom

Hidden away in a false stack of lumber at the back of the storeroom is the guild's temporary treasury. Pesh is stored here before being sent onward, and stolen jewelry stays here until it can be smuggled to a different city to be sold safely.

## Shopkeeper's Quarters

The Prince-turned-cabinetmaker who runs the shop lives here with his family. Thieves who need to lie low sometimes stay in the small guest room as "cousins" from afar, though anyone in serious danger moves to better safe houses as soon as possible.

## The Court

In a pinch, this storeroom of fine furniture can be turned into a court for one of the Kings of Thieves, the Hundred Princes' leadership. Here, disputes are resolved, new crimes are planned, old crimes are celebrated, and on occasion, throats are cut.

## Shrine

A crude outline of Norgorber as the Gray Master is chalked on the back wall of this room. Giving the god his cut of any successful crime is seen as only good sense and sacrifices are hidden beneath a floorboard in the room.

## Sewer Connection

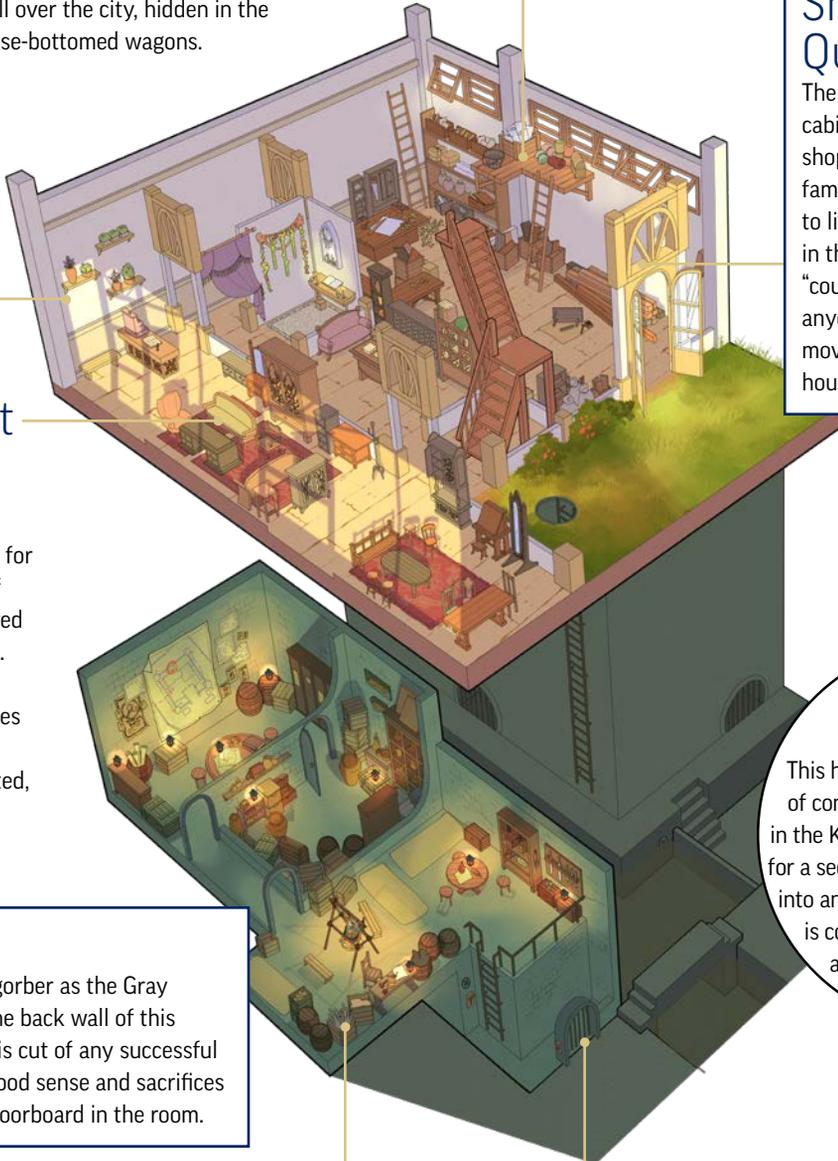
This headquarters keeps a number of connections to an access tunnel in the Katheer sewer system, allowing for a secret, if aromatic, way of getting into and out of the shop. The far end is concealed with a secret door and guarded with several booby traps.

## Laboratory

This lab is mostly used to refine raw pesh into a more concentrated, easier-to-transport form before it's smuggled out. If necessary, the lab can also produce elixirs, smoke bombs, and the like, though the smell of the work is difficult to hide.

## Menagerie

The Hundred Princes train small monkeys to pick pockets or open locks, keep pigeons to deliver messages, and use big dogs, typically Qadiran mastiffs, for security. Most are trained and kept in kennels below the shop.



## Kennels

Winter wolves have their own homes, but the Winter Guard uses many more regular canines in their work. Most of the time, you see huge, shaggy wolves brought along to subdue suspects, or Irriseni Laika dogs for tracking.

## Reception

A duty sergeant here listens to complaints from the public, dispatches guards as necessary, and generally keeps track of everything going on during the guard shift. A large samovar provides oceans of hot tea for guards who stop by to get new orders.

## Records

Case files, crime reports, forensic analyses, wanted posters, and all the rest are stacked in cubbies that line the walls of this room. A clerk is usually found here, helping the less literate or less opposable-thumbed Winter Guards file their reports.



## Captain's Office

A few steps more luxurious than the rest of the station, with comfortable chairs and a small oil painting of Queen Anastasia. A domovoi keeps an eye on most of the station but is most often found by the stove here.

## Morgue

Corpses are brought to this frigid, subterranean chamber, and kept on ice until someone can attend to them. Suspicious deaths are examined by an expert, typically an apprentice winter witch with a little knowledge of necromancy.

## Evidence Room

This room has cold-iron locks, a gutter of running water surrounding it, and wood paneling in ash, oak, and rowan to keep stray magic from getting in or out. The station captain has one key and the duty sergeant has the other.

## Dormitories

Every guard station needs to have some spare guards on hand in case of an emergency, and this is where they stay while on call. The dormitories have beds, washrooms, and a little kitchen. Some of the beds are double-sized for the more trollish guards.

## Cells

These stone-walled basement cells are for holding prisoners until a senior guard or magistrate can deal with them. The cells are absolutely frigid, though prisoners are given heavy blankets of rather malodorous fur to keep them warm.

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# WHAT PEOPLE KNOW

“A Collection of the Collective Knowledge of the Inner Sea” by A. E. Freeling, travel editor

The return of the Whispering Tyrant and the recognition of New Thassilon answered the question every student asks: when will history and geography be useful in real life? It turns out, history reoccurs at the most inconvenient moments. Understanding history provides a baseline for current norms. You don't want to commit the faux pas of asking how a Taldan noble got their family title! Plus, with ancient civilizations returning from the past, history can help you interact with people who are still a few thousand years behind the times. This overview on history and common knowledge is invaluable before any visit to the Inner Sea.

## KNOWN HISTORY

When thinking about the start of history, most begin with Aroden's ascension to godhood at the start of the Age of Enthronement. While we begin counting the years from this event in 1 AR, pre-Enthronement history demands thoughtful consideration. The tragedy of Earthfall—when the meteorite that held the Starstone fell from the sky and brought on the Age of Darkness—spurred the collapse of empires and prominent migrations. Elves left Golarion and didn't return until thousands of years passed; dwarves moved to the surface with their Quest for Sky; orcs were pushed forward as the dwarven migration displaced them; and gnomes came from the First World. These migrations reflect on the map of the world today with the elven nation of Kyonin, the orc holds of Belkzen, and the dwarven Five Kings Mountains.

The Age of Enthronement begins with Aroden's ascension to godhood by raising the Starstone from the sea, creating the Isle of Kortos, where Absalom is located. The calendar system counts from this event, marking years as Absalom Reckoning (AR). While the empire of Taldor predated Aroden, the center of worship in the Taldan city of Oppara enriched the country. Aroden led the charge against Tar-Baphon, whom he killed prior to Tar-Baphon's return as the lich known as the Whispering Tyrant. The Shining Crusade of Taldor was eventually successful in imprisoning the Whispering Tyrant in Gallowspire, though Aroden's herald Arazni was slain in the effort. Iomedae, hero of the Shining Crusade, ascended to godhood by passing the Test of the Starstone shortly after.

After the Shining Crusade, Taldor's reach across the Inner Sea crumbled. It started with Cheliaz's separation, bringing with it Andoran, Galt, and Isgar. The resulting civil war resulted in Cheliaz expanding

while Taldor grew smaller. Aroden's center of worship shifted from Taldor to Cheliaz, blessing the nation for several centuries.

However, all things end. In 4606 AR, Aroden died. This catastrophic event ushered in a new era, as the effects rippled across the continent. Upon Aroden's death, his clerics were permanently debilitated as their divine connection severed. Cheliaz's divine mandate crumbled, and the nation turned to devil worship to maintain its holdings. Even Asmodeus's aid wasn't enough, as Andoran and Galt separated into twin revolutions. The Eye of Abendego, an

ever-raging hurricane, formed off the coast of Garund and sank

nations. The Worldwound appeared as a tear from the material world to the Abyss, and demons overtook the nation of Sarkoris. The Age of Lost Omens began as prophecy failed after Aroden's death.

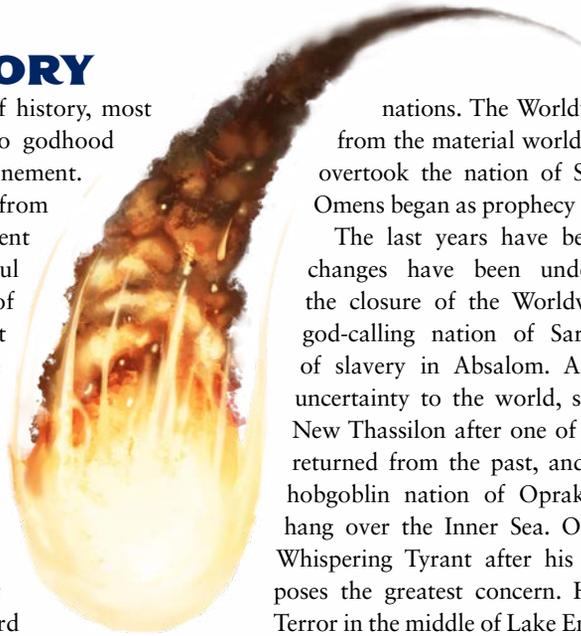
The last years have been eventful. Some major changes have been undoubtedly good, such as the closure of the Worldwound, the return of the god-calling nation of Sarkoris, and the abolition of slavery in Absalom. A few changes introduced uncertainty to the world, such as the appearance of New Thassilon after one of the ancient empires' cities returned from the past, and the establishment of the hobgoblin nation of Oprak. However, new dangers hang over the Inner Sea. Of these, the return of the Whispering Tyrant after his escape from Gallowspire poses the greatest concern. He rules from the Isle of Terror in the middle of Lake Encarthan as an ever-present threat to the nations around. His failed attempt to take Absalom and the devastation of the Gravelands lingers. Travel near the Isle of Terror and within the Eye of Dread requires extensive planning and carries significant risk.

Any traveler should stay abreast of events while abroad in case major developments occur suddenly. History builds upon itself in layers. Those caught up in moments of great history often find the journey rougher than expected.

## COMMON KNOWLEDGE

During my travels in preparation for writing this article, I took some time to speak with locals to determine just what is or isn't obvious knowledge to the everyday person. While my findings are by no means conclusive, and of course, knowledge varies from region to region and person to person, I was able to compile what I consider to be general knowledge within the Inner Sea region. Any readers who wish to visit any part of the Inner Sea can use the following information to bring themselves up to speed on the region.

My first questions regarded history. Most people know the broad strokes noted above. Where things differed were in the details. Some believe Earthfall to be a natural



phenomenon, a calamity brought about by chance, while others believe it to be a punishment from the gods; others still view it as an attack on Golarion by forces from beyond the stars. The Quest for Sky might have been a call from Torag, an attempt to escape a deadly foe, or just a strange challenge the dwarves set upon themselves, depending on whom I asked. Greater understanding and detail came with the proximity or importance of the event to the person. For example, the people of Ustalav have far more knowledge about the Shining Crusade and Tar-Baphon's machinations than of the Chelaxian Civil War.

Generally everyone understands and knows these events happened, but beyond that there was no guarantee that anyone knows the correct story or even anything beyond the event's occurrence. When I asked for details about the Shining Crusade, one person simply noted it was something he'd heard of and had no further insight on the event. Of course, each event has its fans and there are a surprising number of armchair historians or people who learned about events from those who were actually there. Most large cities have someone who took part in the Shining Crusade or the crusades at the Worldwound, and who could tell me stories from the front. Others simply find things like the history of Kyonin fascinating and research it as a hobby. Wherever I went, I found someone who knew facts about major events or could at least point me to someone else a few towns over who did.

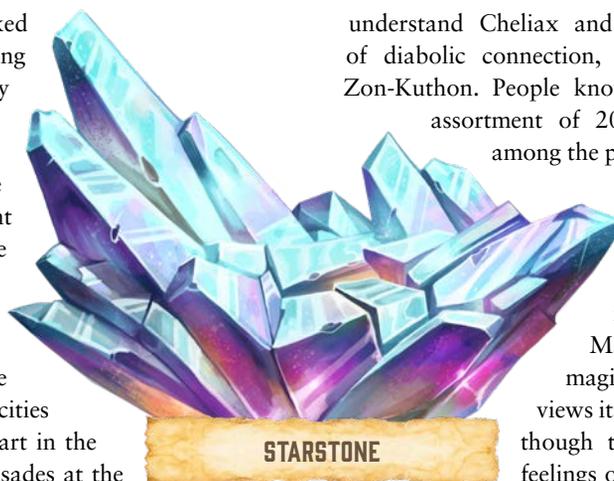
One thing that became very apparent was how much knowledge was regional. The Inner Sea is large and lends itself naturally to breaking down into smaller, common regions—microregions, if you will. These microregions aren't delineated on official maps of the Inner Sea, but most people who live here have a general understanding of where one microregion begins and another ends. From what I've gathered, there are 10 of these microregions within the Inner Sea, each comprising a handful of nations and territories. The locations chosen for these microregions appear to be diplomatic neighbors, nations that share common trade routes, or nations tied together by some kind of event or geographical detail. I'll go further into the exact microregions themselves later on.

Continuing on the theme of regional knowledge, it was clear that beyond the sphere of the immediate settlement or microregion, people are far less aware of events elsewhere in the Inner Sea. While most people are aware of other nations in the Inner Sea, they had trouble

locating some of the nations that are further away from them on a map. (Geb and Nex or Molthune and Nirmathas were commonly confused for each other, for instance.) Events other than those large or notable events, such as the closure of the Worldwound or Absalom's abolition of slavery, are typically unheard of outside a given microregion. (For example, people outside the Saga Lands are unaware of Queen Anastasia's ascension to the throne in Irrisen, and many gave me a former queen's name or even Baba Yaga when asked about the nation's ruler.)

After a fair amount of work, I believe I've determined an appropriate baseline of knowledge among the Inner Sea's citizenry. As mentioned, they're all aware of the other nations and areas within the region. Most understand Chelax and its rulers have some kind of diabolic connection, and Nidal is connected to Zon-Kuthon. People know of multiple gods, but an assortment of 20 are the most well-known among the populace. Everyone is aware of magic, and most understand it comes from distinct sources, though the exact number of sources varies from person to person. The Magaambya is a well-known magic school and most everyone views its members as a force for good, though there are pockets of neutral feelings or even resentment against the academy. While everyone is aware that the Starstone Cathedral is a place that created gods, the exact nature of how this happened is hotly debated and led to an amusing amount of apotheosis theories.

When discussing lands distant from my subjects, I learned the following. Avistan, at least according to our Garundi neighbors, is a land full of wars, feuding nations, and ancient magical empires, and in desperate need of assistance. Garund, on the other hand, is a beautiful land full of rigors and dangers with a hardy people, according to Avistanis at least. Heading east, Casmaron is a massive continent home to the enormous Kelesh Empire and the kingdoms of Vudra. Most believe Casmaron to be a massive desert with an enormous sea in its center. Further east is Tian Xia, which many simply call the Dragon Empires. Inner Sea citizens refer to Tian Xia as a land somewhat like Garund, full of beautiful environments, each full of danger. Of Arcadia, most believe it to be some kind of untouched land, even more so than Garund or Tian Xia. They're aware of the few Avistani colonies there and not much more. Very few have heard the name Sarusan. I received conflicting information about the continent among those who do know of it, suggesting our recorded information is incorrect or maybe intentionally misleading.



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## REGIONS AT A GLANCE

Various microregions have their own share of common knowledge. While immediate neighbors to the regions sometimes know these facts as well, most of the knowledge is localized to the given region.

### ABSALOM AND STARSTONE ISLE

Absalom and the Isle of Kortos are so important and notable to the people of the Inner Sea that it constitutes a microregion all its own. Absalomians and Kortosians are, like everyone else in the Inner Sea, aware that Aroden raised the island on his own. They are also aware of the magical aeon towers that dot Starstone Isle. Most understand the towers are environmentally important in some way, but they ascribe various purposes for the towers. Most people are aware of the Starstone and that it's the source of godhood within the Starstone Cathedral. (Many outside this region believe the Test of the Starstone to be named for the cathedral and not the Starstone itself.) The people here are also keenly aware of Aroden, his various guises, and many of his notable accomplishments.

Absalom residents have a truly eclectic collection of knowledge and trivia from all over Golarion, mostly gleaned from interactions with immigrant neighbors. Residents of elsewhere on the Isle of Kortos tend to have a similarly eclectic set of misinformation, usually consisting of “facts” from Absalom that have been filtered through word of mouth, but they match their city counterparts in their knowledge of languages. Even the most proudly ignorant Absalom sewer goblin could likely serve as a translator in more remote regions of Avistan.

### BROKEN LANDS

Brevoy, Mendev, Numeria, and Razmiran—along with the regions of the River Kingdoms and the Sarkoris Scar—form the Broken Lands, so named because of their generally uncertain nature. Here people are acutely aware of the strange technology that dots Numeria. Specifically, they know its technology seems to be beyond Golarion's ken and possibly originated beyond our star system. While everyone is aware of the Worldwound's closure, fewer know the region is still peppered with Abyssal influence in the form of corruption or actual demons. Most here believe Razmir to be some kind of actual god, but there are general agreements that he seems less powerful than other deities, and his insistence on ruling a nation arouses suspicion.

### EYE OF DREAD

Just west of the Broken Lands is the Eye of Dread, so named due to the influence of Tar-Baphon on the region. The region's nations include Belkzen, Molthune, Nirmathas, Oprak, and Ustalav, as well as the Gravelands and Lake Encarthan, which resembles an eye with the Isle of Terror at its center. Many believe Belkzen to be a lawless land home to disparate orc holds, but people here are aware of the unification of the holds beneath Ardax the White-Hair's banner. Oprak's founding seemed spontaneous, but locals are well aware of the Ironfang Legion's campaign and eventual surrender that led to the nation's birth. Of the Gravelands, most believe it to be totally lost to the Whispering Tyrant's forces, though locals are aware of the Knights of Lastwall's efforts to reclaim the land. As for the Whispering Tyrant himself, most believe he was destroyed outside Absalom years back, but in the Eye of Dread they believe he bides his time on the Isle of Terror.



TAR-BAPHON

### GOLDEN ROAD

The Golden Road is a major trade route that includes Katapesh, Osirion, Qadira, Rahadoun, and Thuvia. The people here have their own ancient empires in their history books in the form of the Ancient Osirian empire and Jistka Imperium. Osirians also know of the Ruby Prince's prohibition against exploration of Osirian ruins, a lesson traveling adventurers learn all too soon. While some believe Rahadoun bans all non-academic magic, the people here are well aware the ban applies only to magic of divine origin. Druids remain free to practice their natural magic. Katapesh is a place where anything can be bought, but locals recognize even the Pactmasters, overseers of the nation's trade, have their limits. Word is the Pactmasters recently banned slavery from their city, though they remain less than transparent as to their reasons why.

I found ordinary citizens of the Golden Road tended to have a firmer grasp on the basic principles of medicine than their Avistani peers, as well as a decent foundation in alchemy, maths, and astronomy. They also had a staggering knowledge of both hospitality customs and tea. It's best never to fake an interest in tea while in the Golden Road, even out of politeness, unless one wishes to be pulled into an hour long discussion on aromas and steeping techniques.

### HIGH SEAS

The High Seas are interesting in that they cover the Arcadian Ocean and the Fever Sea more than anything else. They include Hermea, Mediogalti Island, the Mordant Spire, and the Shackles, though. Here, people

are definitely aware of undersea cities and nations. Within the Shackles, the existence of an ancient cyclopean empire named Ghol-Gan is typically common knowledge. While specifics are unknown, rumors among High Seas trade routes note the gold dragon Mengkare is no longer in charge of the island nation of Hermea. Whether that's because his nation is a success that no longer needs his guidance or some other reason remains to be seen. Those who live among these seas also know Mediogalti Island is home to the Red Mantis Assassins, though everyone is quick to deny it or to play it off as a joke.

## IMPOSSIBLE LANDS

The fantastical nature of Alkenstar, Geb, Jalmeray, the Mana Wastes, and Nex have earned the region the title of the Impossible Lands. Outside the Shackles, few have heard of firearms, but the existence of Alkenstar's important invention is common knowledge here. Most are also aware of the Mana Wastes' formation due to the fighting between the wizards Geb and Nex. Of these two, people here are aware Geb is a ghost and Nex hasn't been seen for some time. Outside the Impossible Lands, many believe the two are still fighting, made immortal through their magic.

In many regions of Avistan, knowledge of magic and alchemy is left to the practitioners of those arts and typically ignored by the rest. This doesn't hold true in the Impossible Lands, where the local tavern-goers might loudly argue slurred arcane theory and street orphans can instantly recognize any spell the city guards might cast.

## MWANGI EXPANSE

The Mwangi Expanse is so large it's a region all its own, which also includes the nation of Vidrian. Here, Old-Mage Jatembe's role in history is common knowledge. His Ten Magic Warriors and their names are the thing of everyday stories, as well. Their school, the Magaambya, is also known almost everywhere except for the most remote of villages. The name of the Magaambya carries a heavy weight, and most people have their own customs to welcome traveling Magaambyan scholars—to the point where charlatans claiming to be Magaambyans sometimes appear. These liars often suffer very bad fates if they are discovered.

People also know of specific dangers throughout the Expanse, such as the strange evils of Nagisa or the demonic influence in Usaro. They know to be wary when opening the door for strangers, in case they turn out to

be a kishi or biloko looking for entry. Locals know to encourage otters to live in local rivers in order to keep mamlambos away. They're also aware of the ancient serpentfolk empire that once spanned the region.

## OLD CHELIAX

Cheliax, its vassal state Isgar, along with Ravounel and Nidal, make up the Old Cheliax region. People are generally aware of Ravounel's secession from Cheliax, but the people of this microregion also know the role the Silver Ravens and revolution played in this event. Thanks to the work of Cheliax's redactors and propaganda, details of the Glorious Reclamation's attempt at taking Cheliax are sparse beyond this region as well.

## SAGA LANDS

Irrisen, the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, New Thassilon, the Realm of the Mammoth Lords, and the frontiers of Varisia make up the Saga Lands. Here, people know of the influence of ancient Azlant and especially ancient Thassilon on the region, though the existence of New Thassilon is furthering knowledge of Thassilon throughout the Inner Sea. The people of the Saga Lands know Irrisen's queens change every century and believe Queen Anastasia is unique among the nation's line of witch queens. Thanks to the Path of Agenhei, people in the Saga Lands have a stronger knowledge of Tian Xia and its people, especially of the nation of Minkai.

## SHINING KINGDOMS

The Shining Kingdoms are home to Andoran, Druma, Five Kings Mountains, Galt, Kyonin, and Taldor. Most here know the history of Taldor's golden age and the Armies of Exploration, as well as the many wars and secessions that made modern Taldor. With Grand Princess Eutropia's efforts to improve communication and diplomatic ties between neighboring nations, citizens of the region tend to be more knowledgeable about recent news and local politics than on average—or at least, more knowledgeable about what the Taldan government wants them to know.

To the rest of the Inner Sea, Galt is an anarchic land forever locked into chaos and revolutions. Things have shifted in Galt recently, and residents of the Shining Kingdoms know the time for revolution has seemingly ended with change on the horizon. While nearly everyone has heard of the great elven exodus before Earthfall, few outside the Shining Kingdoms realize the portal to the elven home world remains active in Kyonin.



THASSILONIAN SIHEDRON

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# MAGIC

*“Magic in the Eyes of the Inner Sea” by Dr. Viktor Devlin*

For the last 20 years, I have studied a strange dichotomy in the cultures of Golarion. Magic touches nearly every aspect of existence, but few take the time to understand it. Most don't even realize how much magic affects them, or how they affect it. Misconceptions about magic and its nature run rampant throughout the world. It's my duty here, good readers, to help you understand how others comprehend magic, to navigate these beliefs as a mage, and perhaps to teach you something about magic you never knew.

## UNDERSTANDING MAGIC

How the average person sees and understands magic and spellcasters varies from culture to culture, of course, but common threads exist between similar types of regions. In rural farming communities, where most people aren't likely to encounter more powerful magic than the local priest's minor healing spells or a neighbor's inherited cantrips, magic is seen as a novelty. Though sorcerers and other innate spellcasters are sometimes born in these areas, particularly in regions with significant planar activity like Mendev and Cheliax, people in these more far-flung areas simply don't interact with spellcasters aside from the occasional traveler or passing adventurer.

There's a distinctly different story in the cities. Spellcasters become more commonplace the closer you get to urban centers, and once you've arrived in one, they're everywhere: wizards selling their spellcasting services, bustling temples filled with clerics, bards performing in every tavern. Magic isn't a wonder in the city—it's a commodity, something to be bought or sold, or used as part of services. While many pursue magic for scholarship or power, it's often treated as a path to a lucrative career. This isn't to say spellcasters aren't respected, but they're seen in much the same way one would look at a barrister, physician, or another highly educated role in society.

Regardless of where you're from, the people of the Inner Sea region do have some rudimentary understanding of magic, if only through storytelling. They may not be able to tell you the difference between a druid or fey witch—and many wizards have introduced endless confusion with their staunch refusal to introduce themselves by anything other than their chosen school—but most people in the Inner Sea know magic is divided into four traditions, and different mages use different means of casting. And, of course, they all have opinions about these.

The arcane is the most familiar to many, due to its accessibility to nearly anyone with a rudimentary education, making it among the most prevalent in both day-to-day life and legends. At most, there is an assumption that arcane spellcasters tend to be high-class and pretentious, despite the fact that arcane sorcery is nearly as common as wizardry and is less likely to accompany a formal education.

Divine magic is just as common, but seen by many as more special or important than the arcane. It's understood

by even the most common layperson to be a gift from the gods, a source of great miracles. Modest priests, capable of only minor spellcasting—if any at all—unfortunately are commonly expected to help someone beyond saving and take the blame for failure.

The divide between the rural and urban is reversed with an understanding of primal magic. In the urban, druidic magic is seen the same way arcane magic is: a manipulation of the forces of the world and only constrained to nature by happenstance. Beyond the walls of the cities, people know better. They have their own respect for nature, and even if they don't interact with primal spellcasters themselves, they understand nature isn't commanded, and druids and their like must ask.

No form of magic is as misunderstood as occult magic, fitting to its practitioners' extensive study of the unknown. Seen as a creepy magic, it isn't often discussed except in hushed whispers, leading to significant misinformation. While many of these misconceptions are harmful, a few are more amusing than anything. In particular, it's widely accepted by even the educated that bards, with their musical magic and more positive associations, can't possibly use occult magic, but some variant of the arcane.

## RHABDOPHOBIA

In a world so full of magic, it's unusual to see widespread fear or rejection of it. An individual may develop a phobia, as they may with anything, and certain types of magic are viewed as taboo. In particular, necromancy (even so-called “hallowed necromancy”) is taboo nearly everywhere, and stronger enchantments are frowned upon in polite society. Many justify healing magic—which is, in fact, necromantic in nature—as some other kind of magic, which speaks to the types of magic that often illicit fear. Like all things, though, there are exceptions.

Most commonly, you will see distrust of particular kinds of magic. In the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, certain types of magic are associated with both the witches of Irrisen and the linnorms they hunt for their crowns, and as such, tend to be stigmatized. In a similar vein, the Kellids of Numeria have few fond memories of the wizards of the Technic League and react poorly to the arcane (as I can personally attest).

The nation of Rahadoum, in the wake of a devastating holy war, banned religion and divine magic from its borders. This ban extends even beyond clerics; divine witches, oracles, and summoners are still seen as avatars of divine will, and sorcerers are banished as well. While primal magic was, for millennia, placed in the same category in large part due to the same misunderstandings that see bardic magic as arcane, recent years have seen a turnaround, particularly once a druidic circle dedicated to both the Laws of Mortality and their own laws of nature began combating the nation's plagues and droughts.

The crown jewel of fear and suspicion around magic belongs to Ustalav. Its people, particularly outside its capital of Caliphas, treat spellcasters with the same distrust they do anything unfamiliar. Aside from Pharasmin clerics, openly practicing magic—especially occult magic—makes anyone a potential target for suspicion and slander. Incidents of necromancy, strange behavior, or otherwise seemingly magical occurrences inevitably prompt someone to point a finger at known spellcasters, leading many Ustalavic spellcasters to practice their arts quietly.

## PREVALENT MAGIC

Let us now erase the most persistent and common misconception of magic from your mind: spellcasting isn't a rare talent. Few can pinpoint where this idea came from, although we know from our newfound friends in New Thassilon that it doesn't predate the Age of Darkness. To wit, the most recent estimations indicate at least one in five people on Golarion have some form of magical ability, be it innate spells common to their ancestry, an awakened and untrained magical bloodline, some kind of magical education, or another form of magical connection.

This isn't to say all of these people are full-fledged spellcasters. In the course of their lives, they will likely never expand beyond their most base potential: a handful of cantrips and perhaps the weakest of full-fledged spells to aid their day-to-day lives, if that. Some of these people might only have a chance encounter with their own magic a single time in their lives. If we count only practicing spellcasters, the number shrinks considerably, though again not by as much as you would think: only to one in 20. This isn't for lack of ability. Any of those remaining five percent could develop their spells further. On top of this, anyone—and I truly mean anyone—could learn wizardry, the clerical arts, or druidism with time, a teacher, and the right mindset.

In addition, it should be noted these estimates, which try to gauge a reasonable average, don't count certain areas. Obviously, the Mana Wastes are ignored, but so, too, are nations like Nex or New Thassilon, and more localized areas like Oppara or Whitecrown. These lands, where magic is held in much higher regard, are outliers. There, it would be more reasonable to presume nearly half of people have some latent magical talent, and somewhere closer to a third to have cultivated it into a craft, although doing so is less of a calling and more of an expectation.

Even accounting for all this, there is also the phenomenon of so-called “folk magic.” You, dear reader, may have performed magic of your own without realizing it simply through following the traditions of your culture or little habits picked up through family. These practices may seem like superstition or even mundane activities, but acts like singing to your plants to help them grow or tracing a spiral over an expecting parent's stomach can (depending on conditions) have real and documented effects.

## NOTABLE SPELLCASTERS

The world may gush about the likes of Baba Yaga or Nex as the most powerful and important mages, but if you wish to impress others with your worldly knowledge, here are a few less prominent, but still important, workers of magic.

**Lucius Willoweave** (N male elf oracle) has lived for seven centuries and spent the entirety of that impressive life chronicling our understanding of magic and how it has changed. There isn't a class on magical history in the world that doesn't use his works, particularly his exhaustive (if dry) *A Comprehensive History of Magic in the Fifth Millennium, from a Primary Source*.

After the death of **Luna Olros** (LE female human wizard), her research notes were disseminated among select circles of academics. While her research methods were what most would call wildly unethical, the results of her study into the humanoid body and how it channels magic have already laid the groundwork for incredible advancements in our understanding of magic. While her actions can't be condoned, her name will likely be appearing in magical theses for generations to come.

## SIMPLE RITUALS

Taking many forms across the whole of Golarion, what we term as “rituals” are defined by a few key features and otherwise may vary wildly. The first is the procession: the sequence of actions that must be performed as prescribed to achieve the effect. The second is intent, with the caster(s) doing so with the express purpose of achieving their goal. The last is the components: materials consumed during the casting of the ritual. For the most part, all three require a great deal of skill, willpower, or gold to spend, but there are some rituals that are so simple, either due to their inherently low-powered nature or refinement by experimentation, that anyone with the ability to follow directions and spend a bit of gold can cast them.

The most common types of these can be described as folk magic, rituals created and passed down within a local culture. In the Ustalavic county of Barstoi, it's common practice to spit on the ground three times and say a prayer to Pharasma after an uncomfortable encounter with a stranger in case they cursed you; surprisingly, this does seem to ward off minor jinxes. You'll also find throughout the farming communities of Nirmathas that workers will drive rowan stakes inscribed with Sylvan runes into the corners of their fields to ward off pests and mischievous fey, but if asked, they couldn't tell you what the runes mean.

More rarely are structured and simplified rituals pioneered by the mages of Quantum, Korvosa, and other magic-rich cities looking to turn a profit. These rituals are usually sold in kits at magic supply stores and have more tangible effects, such as the instant chef ritual that conjures an unseen servant to make a meal for you, or the nightmare warding that helps ease (non-magical) bad dreams.

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## SPELLCASTING SIGNATURES

The spell signature is the most universal aspect of spellcasting in recorded knowledge. When an individual casts a spell—any spell, from the weakest of cantrips to the most powerful of wishes—it creates a visible array of runes, and sometimes other effects, around the caster. These runes vary from caster to caster, to the point that one familiar enough could identify a concealed stranger by their signature, which is impossible to hide without specific training. The nature of signatures is such that it seems no casters share duplicate signatures. Any patterns that emerge are within a caster's arrays of personal signatures and not among multiple spellcasters.

### Specific Runes

The Precious Gleam is prominent here. That the Thassilonian rune of greed made its way into the signature of a Thassilonian transmutation specialist is unsurprising. Runes associated with a mage's preferred spells or schools of magic are common in signatures.

### Rune Shape

The lines of each rune here are sharp and jagged. This can have many meanings, but all tend to stem from a temperamental nature. This caster may be impulsive, hotheaded, or otherwise prone to sudden action.

### Signature Color

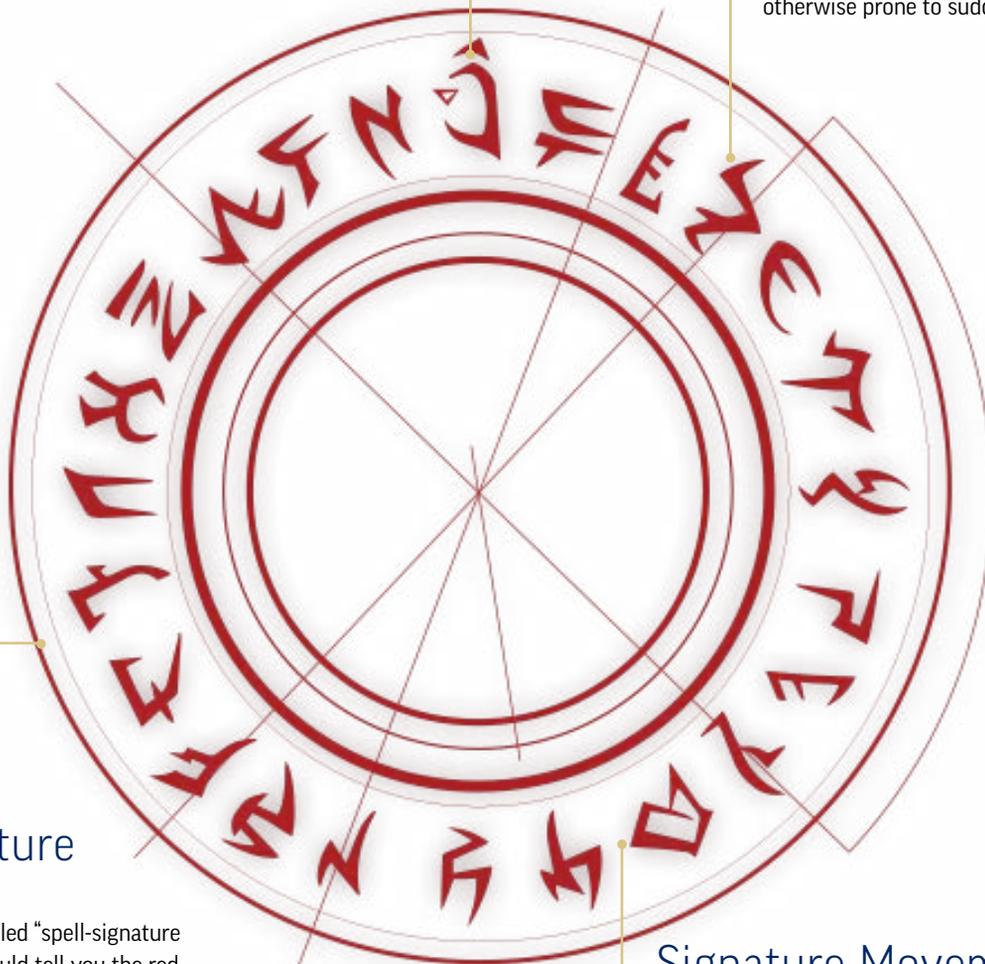
Many so-called "spell-signature readers" would tell you the red color is indicative of an angry or violent person. They know nothing. The color of a spell signature is seemingly random and indicates nothing about the caster.

### Signature Movement

Though I can't depict movement on paper, it's worth noting the runes here were in constant rapid motion. This is more indicative of power than anything else; an excess of magic in the caster's body, hungry to escape.

### Rune Magic Signature

This spell signature belongs to a New Thassilonian wizard who was all too happy to demonstrate rune magic for me. On interview, he said his signature changed over time; not an uncommon occurrence, particularly for Thassilonian wizards.



## Summoning Signature

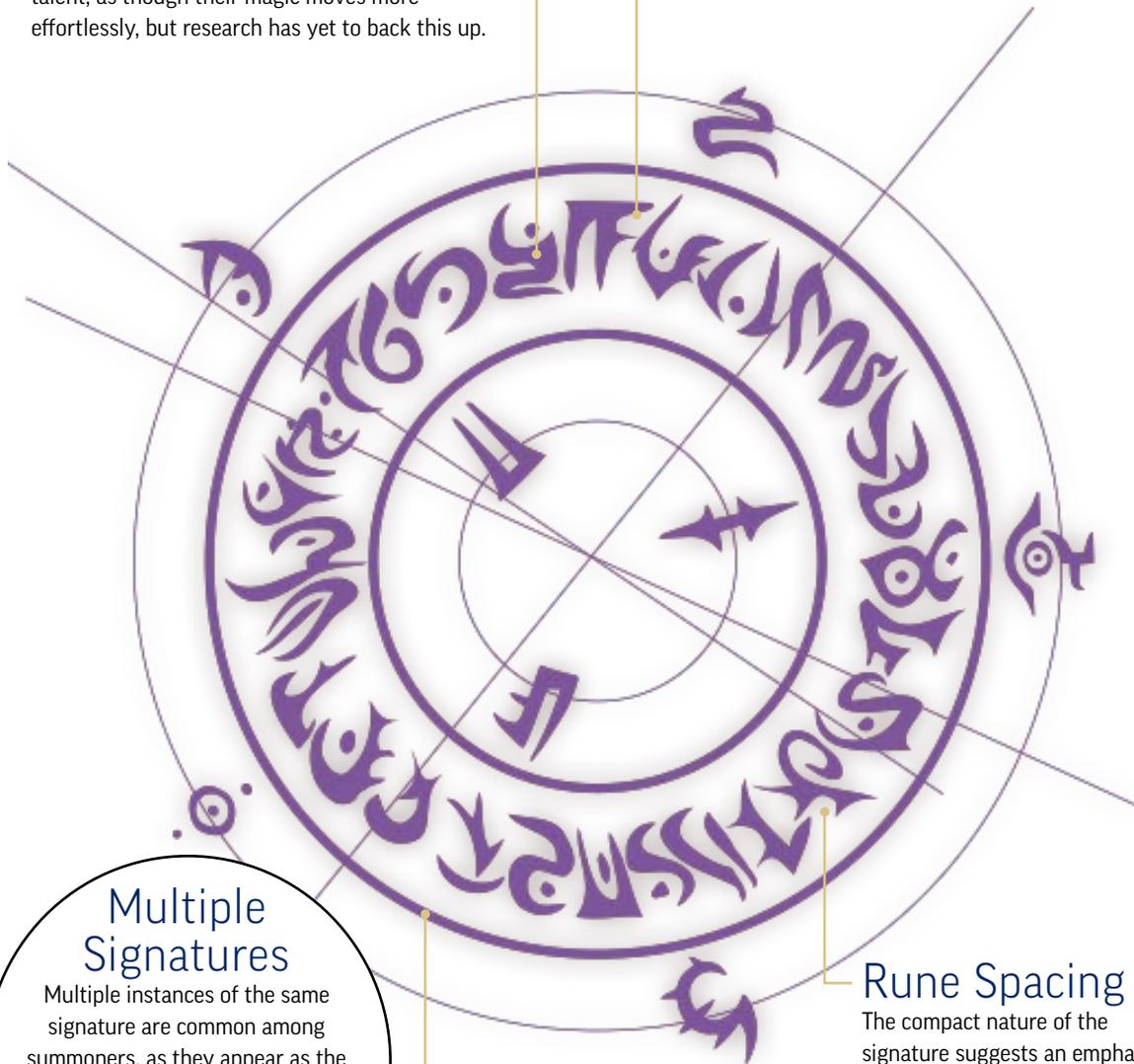
This spell signature belongs to a summoner of whom I made acquaintance in Vidrian. Mages who draw their powers from external sources, like summoners or witches, have signatures that reflect both themselves and their source, even when casting from multiple traditions.

### Rune Placement

The runes in the circle flow into each other rather than existing separately. This is considered by many to be a sign of immense talent, as though their magic moves more effortlessly, but research has yet to back this up.

### Rune Choice

Unlike our Thassilonian friend's example, there aren't any particular runes that stand out or display prominently. This would suggest the summoner, being young and inexperienced, has yet to develop any staple spells.



### Multiple Signatures

Multiple instances of the same signature are common among summoners, as they appear as the intended summoned or called creature manifests. The additional signature or signatures tend to appear within a few feet of the summoning's destination.

### Signature Shape

The circular nature of this signature suggests a sense of harmony between the caster and their magic; this summoner and their eidolon are a good fit for one another. The few loose runes would indicate it isn't perfect, though.

### Rune Spacing

The compact nature of the signature suggests an emphasis on control. This may be of his own magic, his life in general, or others, but is typically seen in more strong-willed and stubborn casters.

## Rune Patterns

Oftentimes, common runes or similar shapes will be repeated throughout a signature, suggesting the spell being cast is a more powerful version of a common spell. The repeated shapes form the foundation of the spell and are typically found in all castings of a given spell, regardless of the spell's potency.

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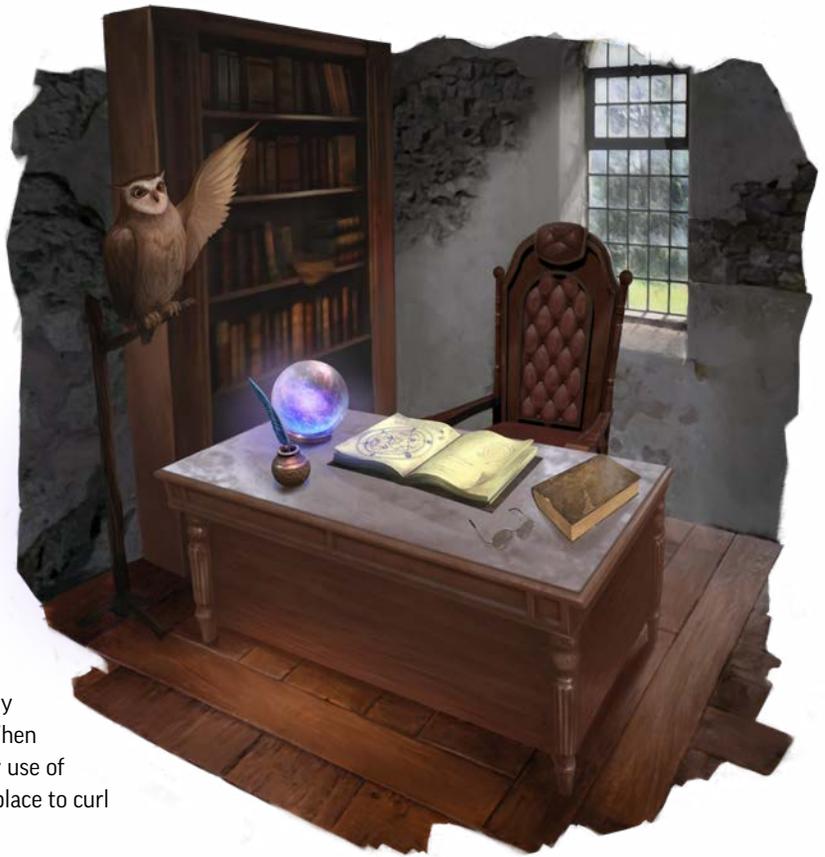
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## SPELLCASTER LAIRS

Stories wax poetic about a wizard's tower or a druid's grove, but it's a widespread phenomenon for spellcasters to have private spaces to study or work on their craft. Commonly known as lairs, these spaces are built to suit their owner's needs, with only minor common threads between them (a cleric, for instance, always needing their lair to serve for prayer). Presented below are only a few examples I was given permission to study for your benefit, but remember no two lairs will be much alike.

### The Library of Alexandre Lamore

This library, belonging to a well-respected Isgeri wizard, is perhaps the most archetypal example of a wizard's lair I could think of. Rather than an inconvenient tower, this library is located on the lower floor of his own home, locked and warded, making it the ideal location to store his spellbook. Given the amount of time spent here in study, Mr. Lamore has foregone a typical desk chair in favor of an imminently comfortable armchair. Most of the tomes here are reference materials used during his private research. Note the spectacles on the table; these are enchanted and allow the deciphering of the complex script Mr. Lamore uses to keep his notes and the contents of his spellbook private. The perch beside him is for his owl familiar; this is one of those few traits you can predict in a lair—they will have somewhere comfortable for any magical companions they may keep with them. When interviewed, Mr. Lamore informed me the primary use of this library, outside of magical study, was a cozy place to curl up with a novel after a long day at work.



### Wilhelmina Dencaster's Studio Shrine

As previously mentioned, a cleric requires a suitable space for worship and prayer in their lair. Many clerics have a more traditional approach, a quiet room of contemplation with an altar or prayer mat. Miss Dencaster, a Kintargan priestess of Shelyn, instead turned hers into a painting studio. Painting portraiture is how she performs her daily prayers. When asked, she insisted the mess wasn't an insult but rather a display of the artistic process for her goddess. At first glance, one might not think this to be a holy space for a cleric, but there are some telltale signs. The religious symbol displayed prominently on the wall is the most obvious, but also note the hanging censers; Miss Dencaster uses these when she paints, burning incense that helps put her, in her words, "in the zone." The zone, on my own observation, is a trancelike state I have similarly seen other clerics enter when praying. When she finished, she handed me her painting—a portrait of me and one of the nicest things I've been given—and demonstrated the spells her goddess provided her that day.



## The Laboratory

The laboratory, like the library, is the sort of lair you might expect from a scholarly mage. Those who delve into occult or experimental magics, such as the witch who owns this lair and wishes to remain anonymous, have somewhat unusual requirements. This environment is significantly more closed than the others, located underground in a fortified location with magically sealing doors in case of an emergency. The workbench is the focal point of the room, where most of the work is done, but not pictured is the significant amount of space behind it where experimentation is put into practice. The specimens on display here were collected from numerous expeditions to—and this is once again a direct quote—“unknowable places.” When asked, they refused to elaborate on either their sources or purposes. Once again, there is a place for the witch’s familiar (this time a snake) to sit while its master works. However, where Mr. Lamore’s owl largely naps on its perch, this witch’s familiar actively assisted while I watched, giving explanation to the single long table stretched over multiple workspaces.



## Miranda Goswin’s Apartment

The typical druid cultivates an outdoor garden or grove for their lair, but a druid living in a city has a much more difficult time with this. Most eschew urban living entirely, and those who don’t usually find somewhere outside its confines to connect to nature. For this young druid in Absalom, neither is an appealing option, but we can see here the effort she has placed into making the best of her one-room apartment. She’s kept it sparsely furnished with only a few surfaces upon which to work or eat, and a bedroll in place of a bed, which she says is to keep herself detached from the comforts of civilization. Similarly, the floor is covered in a layer of dirt, allowing Miss Goswin (and all visitors, as I was expressly forbidden to wear shoes) to feel a connection to the earth. While plants are difficult to grow indoors, especially in such a small space, the flowers in the window and the small tree bring in another aspect of nature.

Watering the flowers and pruning the tree are, she says, how she fully connects to nature each day, restoring her magic in this otherwise urban environment.



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# FOLKLORE & MYTHOLOGY

*“A Storied Collection” by Azimbye Baadurlo, Professor of Folktales and Storytelling at the Magaambya*

I have spent a lifetime pursuing the most meaningful of narratives, those that embody the origins and logic of a people. As I have traveled, I have listened to the stories of many cultures, and have drunk deeply of their traditions and understanding. I believe there is no more rewarding experience than to sit at the feet of an elder or a child as they bring to life a scene of heroism, daring, or trickery from centuries ago. It is my pleasure to share some of these tales with you—may they enrich your own explorations throughout the Inner Sea.

## CREATION MYTHS

Across Avistan, the best-known creation story is “The Rage of Creation,” which tells of how the gods came together when the universe was young to create the mortal realms. Desna lit the stars, and Sarenrae gave life to the suns so their light could reach the new planets’ skies. Ilys and Asmodeus worked together to form the first mortal frames. Achaek stood sentinel over the spreading reality, and the Bound Prince sought to bring mortal death into the worlds. When it was all ready, Pharsma touched the source of the River of Souls and began the flow of mortal life into all worlds. Then Rovagug began his rampages, devouring entire worlds. Despite their differences, many gods united to defeat him. While Calistria distracted him, Torag and Gorum labored deep inside Golarion to create the Dead Vault, a demiplane to imprison the Rough Beast. Abadar crafted a lock and key so complicated only Asmodeus could turn it, and Dou-Bral placed the Star Towers around Golarion. When all was ready, Calistria lured Rovagug into the trap, where he was ambushed by a host of gods. Many of them fell to his rage before Sarenrae cut open the world and dealt Rovagug a devastating blow. Dou-Bral used the Star Towers to sew Golarion up, stunning the Rough Beast and giving Asmodeus time to turn the key in the lock. With that, the young world of Golarion became a cage that protects all of creation.

A creation myth favored by those who study draconic lore tells of creation at the hands of the first dragons, powerful immortal beings who looked upon the chaos at the heart of the newly formed Material Plane and saw life forms within. First, they created the sun and then the 11 planets, giving to each its individual character. They formed mountains and valleys, oceans and rivers, ice fields and steam vents. Then they seeded each planet with plant life, drawing the seeds from the chaos and guiding their budding sentience. They then set to work on the sentient

creatures and the bodies that would house individual souls. Among these creator-dragons were Apsu and Dahak, who set about crafting more of their own kind. Together, they created the chromatic dragons, shaping their keen minds and beautiful forms down to their shimmering scales. They formed the lesser dragons too, including the wyverns and drakes. When the gods battled Rovagug to imprison him inside Golarion, Apsu and Dahak were among them, and their power was key to the victory. But the Devourer’s touch corrupted Dahak’s heart. He began to lay waste to creation, reveling in death and destruction and targeting Golarion. He continues to scheme from his domain in Hell, most recently attempting to manifest through Alseta’s Ring. The Ekujae elves discovered this plot. Though they lost many of their own, they managed to turn Dahak’s power against him and trap his manifestation in the ring’s portals.

Across the Mwangi Expanse, you will hear versions of quite a different creation myth, with the names varying by culture. In the beginning, there was the Sky-parent and the Ground-parent, but nothing else. The Sky-parent was full of clouds, and the Ground-parent was full of mist. They existed for a long time, communing with each other but otherwise alone. Then the Sun-parent pierced the clouds, creating the first day and then the first night. All manner of life began to grow inside the Ground-parent. Very slowly, the first plants and insects emerged from the ground. Then came trees and bigger creatures—first snakes and birds, and then herd animals and predators. Finally, people came from the ground, and they praised their parents, the Sky and the Sun and the Ground. Their parents were proud and entrusted them with the protection and flourishing of all other life.

Each ancestry tells of its own creation. The dwarves say Torag first forged them ages ago, deep in the underground heart of Golarion, and made them tough, stubborn, and wise. The elves are not from Golarion. They speak of creation as a giant tree, spreading its roots and branches throughout the known planets and the unknown planes. Gnomes, too, come from afar. They tell of their origin on the First World, so called because the gods first practiced the craft of creation there. Tengu teach that they long ago descended from the night sky on shooting stars to rest upon Golarion’s highest mountaintops. One halfling creation story is that Chaldira Zuzaristan worked with Desna, using magic to forge all the best things on Golarion, including halflings—but then, in a magical backlash, the goblins were created. Hobgoblins claim a powerful devil named Canzoriant killed the goddess Cantorys and used her staff to transform some chosen goblins into their first ancestors.



## FABLES

In Osirion, they tell the fable of the camelop and the desert drake. One day, as an unsuspecting camelop traversed the desert, she was ambushed by a desert drake. The drake demanded the camelop find him some luckless travelers to prey upon or else forfeit her own life to the drake's hunger. Despite her heavy eyes and slow talk, the camelop was clever and convinced the drake to follow her. So began a journey of a thousand miles, the camelop reassuring the drake that his prize was just out of reach as she wore down his endurance and resolve until, finally, he collapsed and didn't get up. The lesson: When threatened with fire and claws, it's best to take a very long pause.

From the furthest northern reaches of the Saga Lands comes the fable of the gnome and the umonlee. The fearsome umonlee swims through ice and snow, driven by a hunger that is never filled. The creature will pounce and destroy an entire village without warning. But in this tale, a gnome wandering alone in these cold lands happened upon and quickly befriended an umonlee, charming it with smiles and magic tricks. The gnome then found a village and made it her home. Years later, the umonlee came upon the village and began a ferocious attack, but the gnome walked bravely forth and reminded the umonlee of their friendship, causing the umonlee to cease the attack and instead become a protector of the village. The lesson: Make friends wherever you go, for one day, they may a service to you show.

Across Varisia, a favorite tale recounts a debate between a wasp and a butterfly. The wasp brags of being powerful, of exacting revenge and inflicting pain to control situations. The butterfly counters with stories of transformation and adaptation, including her own metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly. There are many versions of this tale, and in some, the debate is quite lengthy and covers many topics. But the debate always ends when a violent storm approaches. Each insect puts their philosophy into action, the wasp attempting to sting the thunder and lightning while the butterfly allows the wind to carry her off. The wasp ultimately perishes in the storm, but the butterfly lives to enjoy a new beginning. The lesson: To take away life's sting, learn to float through everything. (I'm told Windsong Abbey has a religious version of this same dialogue, with the insects replaced by Calistria and Desna, respectively.)

Fables across the Mwangi Expanse also feature insects. My favorites feature the Queen of Bees, a dour and strict ruler who nevertheless learns wisdom. In one tale, she and her entourage are on their way to visit the King of Spiders when they come to a rainbow that bars their way. Although the queen commands her retinue to pass through the banded colors and secure her route, they cannot do so. Try as they might, the light dazzles

their eyes and forces them back to the side where they attempted to enter. They are so delayed that the King of Spiders sends his guards to find them and to offer any assistance they may need. When the guards arrive, they see the problem and immediately set to work weaving a billowing sail to shade the eyes of the bees. Once the shade is in place, the bees easily pass through, as though the barrier weren't even there. The lesson: see things in a different light to help you determine if you're right.

## FAIRY TALES

Perhaps the most infamous of the fairy tales in the Inner Sea region is "Zuddiger's Picnic" by Karn Zuddiger from Pitax in the River Kingdoms. The tale begins with an ordinary crow taking an ordinary spoon from a man who sits down to a simple picnic on the first day of spring. The man chases the crow through a forest, past a gate, across a lake (where the man hops in a leaf-shaped boat), and through a graveyard. He is then plucked up by a much larger crow who flies over a swamp and drops him on the belly of a troll. Eluding the troll, the man stumbles into a forest glade to find a beautiful fey woman holding the crow and the spoon. He trades his sword for the crow and spoon then returns to his picnic, where he roasts the crow for his dinner. Although Zuddiger insists on the first page of his beautifully illustrated book that the story is true, no one believed he had endured any such thing—until he staged the pictures in his book with the remains of people he'd murdered. It seems Zuddiger indeed experienced a trip through the fey realm of Thousandbreaths and met the evil queen Nyriisa. He was subsequently executed, and the books were burned, but his tale could not be so easily destroyed and has spread to many lands.

The town of Tortenberj, located near Fangwood Forest in Nirmathas, has a rather charming tale of two lovers. A young woman was once forced to do more than her fair share of labor for her uncaring parents, who constantly berated her for never doing anything right. A fairy from the woods took pity on the young woman's plight. The strange and elegant creature appeared at the woman's window at night, promising to help the mortal escape from her terrible circumstances. The fairy dressed the woman in the finest of gowns and jewels, so that everyone could see how exceptional she was on the outside as well as the inside. This caught the eye of a local prince, who invited the young woman to a ball, just as the fairy had intended—but the mortal had fallen in love with her fairy benefactor instead, moved by the fey woman's constant acts of kindness! The two fled from the prince's ball hand in hand, and settled in Tortenberj, living a humble but comfortable life until the mortal woman's dying days. Supposedly, their love blessed the town, and Tortenberj has certainly weathered both political turmoil and Tar-Baphon's invasions better than many of its peers.

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Halfings around Cheliax have the somewhat bizarre and whimsical “Tale of the Liar King.” Despite his title, the eponymous figure lied so often and so convincingly that no one knew his real name, gender, or even his appearance. He lied about his profession, one day even going so far to sit on local ruler’s throne and claim that he was actually the king. When the real king returned and ordered his guards to seize the intruder, the Liar spoke so convincingly that the guards imprisoned the king instead. The king called upon his deities to verify his claim, but the Liar had even fooled the gods, who descended and declared that the Liar was the true ruler. It is said the Liar King’s reign was surprisingly prosperous and just, but no one can be certain—after all, the Liar King might have lied about that too.

From the frozen land of Irrisen comes the “Tale of the Snow Guardian.” One evening, a father had to take a sudden journey, leaving his two children home alone, for their mother had died. He built the fire high, made a supper of mashed turnips, and gave each child a twig ending in a small, green flower with the instruction to make a wish if they got scared, but they mustn’t wish for him to return; he would do so when he could, but not before. Not long after he left, the storm grew fiercer, the wind howled, and the fire dwindled. The older child placed her twig by the fire and wished for it to rekindle strong and bright—and behold, it did! The children laid down to sleep, but the storm only grew worse, and the howling of the wind mixed with the howling of wolves. The younger child placed his twig by the door and wished for the howling to stop—and behold, something fell about the little house, cloaking it in silence and letting the children fall fast asleep. The next morning when their father returned, they discovered a white dragon had encircled their home, guarding them from the storm and the wolves.

The “Tale of the Misused Coins” from Cheliax is much less sanguine. There was once an old woman who lay dying. She gave her last three gold coins to her grandson, instructing him to take them to the cathedral. But the young man thought he was clever and reasoned he could enjoy himself and still honor his grandmother’s wishes. He spent the first coin on a lavish meal with his friends. He then spent the second taking these friends to the opera. Afterward, he went to the gambling hall and expected, with the third coin, to earn back the two he’d spent and keep whatever more he made. Luck was with him, it seemed, for he won hand after hand at the card tables and amassed a small fortune. As he celebrated his good luck, a devil appeared, seized the coins and the young man’s soul, and took them immediately to Hell.

## GHOST STORIES

For centuries, the lich king Tar-Baphon, the Whispering Tyrant, ruled Ustalav with cruelty, and fear and death clung as thick as the fog throughout the region. Even the trees grew afraid to show forth new life as the lich king’s will seeped into the land, and they sickened

and died. It was said Tar-Baphon had the power to see everyone in his kingdom, even the little children. When he learned a child’s deepest fears from spying on their nightmares, the lich would perform vile rituals to create an undead horror inspired by their dreams specifically to haunt the child. He would then release that horror to visit the child’s family, cackling at the misery and carnage that ensued.

The crumbling ruins of Wyrngire castle in Ustalav play host to a bloodcurdling tale of the family’s fall. The last lord of the family was a champion who fought against Ustalav’s darkest creatures. Though he didn’t fear pain or death, he was afraid his noble pursuit would claim his loved ones, yet his position as sole heir demanded he marry. On his wedding day, he swore to his wife that he would keep her safe from harm. When the day came that he was forced to leave the castle to slay yet another horror, he made his wife promise never to unlock the front gates, no matter the reason. Yet on the day her husband was due to return, the Lady Wyrngire awoke only to see her own body on the bedroom floor, her throat torn out. She couldn’t recall unlocking the front gates and was terrified her husband would assume she had and blame her for what had happened. Desperate for a way to cover up her death, she ambushed her husband as he entered their bedroom and swallowed him whole so he couldn’t see what had become of her. Although she cradled him within her stomach to calm him down, he began to scream. The legend claims he still screams to this day. The description of the creature the wife became—ghost, demon, monster—varies wildly, depending on the teller and the region of Ustalav the tale is told.

In the Terwa Uplands between the Mwangi Jungle and the Shackles, the Valley of Ghosts draws many visitors to its low, humid forest. In the roiling fog, they see faces of their dear departed, and many travelers imagine they can commune with those they’ve lost if they journey further into the thick mists. One such traveler followed the gentle call of their lost brother’s voice. They saw their brother beckoning, his lithe form barely visible in the gloom. They followed, running down a slope until a sudden drop sent them tumbling, grasping at roots in a long slide. They landed with a sickening crunch and realized their leg was twisted beneath them. As the fog began to close, they heard a faint drum. The ghostly form of their brother split open, manifesting teeth and claws, and pounced! The traveler screamed and tried to crawl away as the sound of the drum grew louder. The Ghost Drummer appeared through the mists, beating a hypnotic rhythm on his wooden drum. The apparition fled, and the Ghost Drummer spoke a gentle word, healing the traveler’s leg. He then led the traveler carefully through the twisting forest to the valley’s edge, with the admonition to never set foot in the swirling mists again.

From the Verduran Forest of Taldor and Andoran comes a quite different tale of being lost in the woods. In one telling, a family traveling at night lost their way

in a forest. As they searched for a path through the thick trees, the youngest child spotted distant lights and, believing the lights belonged to a fellow wayfarer, the family followed them. Alas, the lights led them face-to-face with a gangling monster—a yaganty! The creature menaced them with its flaming fingertips of melted wax and demanded gold in a raspy voice. When the family admitted they had no gold, the yaganty burst forth with flaming wax, burning them all, their screams drowned out by the yaganty's delighted howls.

Throughout the Inner Sea, sailors share stories of a ghost ship that plies the waters, chasing vessels whenever a storm grows dire. As the waves begin to crash over the bow, the ghost ship appears just over the horizon, skimming the top of the seas at breakneck speed. As it draws closer, fear clutches the hearts of all aboard, and some pitch themselves into the sea, drowning in the foaming brine. It seems as though this placates the ship, for once it's claimed a life, it disappears. Some ships carry small animals with them, tossing the helpless creature overboard at the first sight of the ghost ship, but whether that placates the ghosts, none can say. Whenever a ship docks at an Inner Sea harbor empty and devoid of life, everyone says it was boarded by the ghost ship's crew.

## LEGENDARY FIGURES

Our region's most storied individual is Old-Mage Jatembe, so called because he's always described as an old man, even in his earliest tales. His magical abilities are second only to the god Nethys. Indeed, one of the Old-Mage's earliest stories depicts a fascinating dialogue between Nethys and Jatembe, ending with the god agreeing to teach Jatembe what he knows of magic. When Jatembe completed his training, he then trained his Ten Magic Warriors, who joined forces to defeat the cruel, immortal masters of the lost city of Ird. Freeing Ird from its evil rulers was only the first of their heroic acts. Their finest was to establish the Magaambya, the foremost school of magic in the Inner Sea region. At Jatembe's insistence, the Ten Magic Warriors became advisors and protectors (but never rulers) of the people. You can see their images in the mosaics on the 10 towers of the Magaambya to this day.

Nethys also appears in the tales of Azghaad, helping the proud magician to found Osirion. Once Azghaad united the tribes along the Sphinx River, his new nation faced the greatest threat imaginable: Ulunat, a monstrosity spawned by the Destroyer, Rovagug. In the form of

an immense and ravenous beetle, Ulunat besieged the new nation, swallowing entire herds and slaughtering countless people. With Nethys's help, Azghaad created a mass ritual of legendary power, enlisting the people to help. Bravely, they surrounded the devouring beast, channeling the most powerful magic that had ever flowed through mortal hands. The spawn of Rovagug died, and Azghaad founded the city of Sothis around its gigantic carapace. Azghaad and his people then built a spectacular temple to Nethys. You can see both the carapace and the temple in Sothis to this day.

Another nation builder is the hero Aylsande, who united the Andoren people and led the People's Revolt against their overlords, House Thrune of Cheliox. Aylsande disguised herself as a soldier named Captain Hawk and led many raids against the Old Guard. After successfully preventing reinforcements from landing to assist the enemy in the Battle of Freeman's Field, she led the Andoren forces to victory at the Battle of Bemis Heights, losing one of her legs in that effort. Throughout the revolt, she wrote pamphlets and engaged in diplomacy to achieve unity among her people and a peaceful transition of power, ultimately earning her the title of Lady Liberty.

Among the dwarves, the legendary General Taargick holds a place of particular pride. When the dwarves undertook their Quest for Sky, a 300-year migration to the surface of Golarion, they faced enemies throughout the Darklands. Yet nothing hindered them more than internal squabbling. It was General Taargick who finally united the dwarves through a mix of diplomacy, wisdom, and—when those failed—violent coercion. Once crowned their king, he led the Ever-Advancing Legion to Golarion's surface and founded the Sky Citadels.

Quite a different figure from Taargick, Nolly Peltry is a legendary folk hero amongst halflings. A consummate trickster, Nolly is known for outwitting foes of all sorts, be they cruel brutes, powerful demons, or sly spellcasters. My favorite is a tale in which she outwits a hungry owlbear, leading it on a wild chase through a forest. As she wiggles under logs and scampers through trees, the owlbear grows frustrated but still pursues her. Finally, the owlbear collapses from exhaustion, and Nolly can't help but taunt the worn-out beast, leading them to start the chase all over again. The name of this legendary hero has been taken up by another halfling in Ravounel who fought for the country's independence and operates in the Bellflower Network. If you ask the right people upon a visit to Kintargo, you may be lucky enough to meet her.



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# SUPERSTITIONS

Superstitions exist everywhere, differing a great deal across peoples and nations. Some, though, are common enough to straddle multiple regions. Cosmopolitan locals sometimes play superstitions down, being perhaps more self-conscious about the beliefs they grew up with. Isolated regions, however, often hold deeply entrenched superstitions, ones that may seem too strange to be true and yet have origins in local menaces or magical effects.

## Cutting Ties



Any dwarf who sells their first clan dagger brings misfortune to someone they love, and anyone outside the clan who buys such a dagger (whether from a dwarf or someone else) will soon see the death of someone they love.

## Forget Them Not!



If a gnome loses a memento of their travels, they must retrace every step until they find it again. These mementos, they believe, can enable anyone, whether knowingly or otherwise, to steal their past or curse their future travels.

## Glorify the Guardians



In Kibwe, the people often offer food or kind words to the large soapstone statues that sit high on the city-state's protective walls. They never critique or mock the statues for fear of awakening them and drawing their ire.

## Goblins Speak Louder Than Rules



If they don't like a rule, many goblins believe they only have to say it aloud three times for it to no longer apply to them anymore. This has, of course, led many a goblin into trouble.

## Lucky Buttons



Halflings consider buttons to be lucky and sew them all over their clothing when they get a chance, but not in groups of nine. Halflings consider that number unlucky because you can lose a ninth item and not notice right away.

## Lucky Companions

A common superstition throughout Avistan is that it's good luck to travel with a halfling. Having undertaken a long and definitive study for this volume, I'm happy to report this superstition is indeed true.



## Mammoth Misconceptions

The Mammoth Lords are considered very superstitious because of all their zoic fetishes. In fact, their fetishes actually have many purposes, and only some of them are for preventing bad luck.



## Morning, Flowers

Woodland elves won't talk to other humanoids in the morning until they've greeted all the flora and fauna around them, asking for their goodwill, which can take rather a long time when in their forest or jungle homes.



## Named for Death

Orcs are often leery of magic, but they have other superstitions, too. Because they believe anything named can be killed, they avoid naming their weapons for fear those weapons will fail them at their greatest need—weapon names typically come from their rivals!



## Natural Luck

Leshys are said to each carry a keepsake that's so lucky, they'd rather part with their lives than with the item. The truth is far more mundane: most leshy keepsakes aren't that lucky and aren't held in such reverence.



## No Rituals Allowed

The people of Rahadom have little tolerance for superstition, but they're nothing compared to Galt! Should you travel to Galt, keep your superstitions to yourself, as they may be taken as crimes against the state.



## Open Door Policy

During the evening meal each night in Taldor, doors are left unlocked and even open, as though to admit any traveler in need. Although such guests rarely materialize, this act is thought to ensure continued prosperity.



## Pests No More!

Throughout Old Cheliox, bats and spiders are considered lucky. They are never chased from businesses, homes, or barns, though they may be gently urged to find a different location if they take up residence in a bedchamber or kitchen.



## Raised Spirits

An old custom still practiced in parts of Ustalav at banquets wedding feasts is to pour the first glass of wine over the threshold of the chamber. This is thought to bring protection to the home.



## Sands of Sleep

When Osirians travel, they bring along a small amount of sand from their favorite desert and leave a few grains everywhere they sleep. They believe this smooths the roads ahead and helps them return home with ease.



## Silver Linings

In Ravounel, the color red is considered unlucky, while silver and gray are held to be very lucky. Any traveler who arrives in red garb may well find themselves being eyed with suspicion—or quickly draped in a gray cloak.



## Snapping Soddeners

Those in the Soddan Lands never talk about the rain. If an outsider mentions the wretched weather, locals will snap three times to bring out the sun (the efficacy of this remains unknown).



## Storms in a Bottle

Many Inner Sea ships carry a tengu bottle, which contains alcohol and is thrown overboard to appease the storm gods. The tengu themselves never throw out their beautifully decorated bottles or gourds—they simply pour out the offering!



## Thirteen's the Charm

Katapeshi believe the number 13 is lucky (as in, lucrative). They will go out of their way to achieve this number, even breaking a fourteenth item or tearing down a fourteenth room in a building.



## Unkindness of Fortune

The Ulfen people believe ravens are good luck, so much so that they will bring ravens on their travels, including on their ships, and have been said to capture and release large flocks of them before battles.



## Unlucky Number Seven

Varisians avoid the number seven whenever possible. They will leave it off of everything from lists to doorways and will skip it when counting aloud, though they still use the number for accurate accounting.



## Wrong Turns

It is said that if you turn down a wrong street in Riddleport, you must retrace your steps walking backward. If you do not, you will get lost again. This is why you see people walking backward in that city.



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## A TALE OF K GALASERKE

The Epic of Kgalaserke is well-known throughout the region and justly so, as Kgalaserke is certainly one of Garund's greatest heroes. While she features in innumerable stories, there's also vigorous debate as to whether or not she actually existed. Some proffer evidence of a great folk hero who helped found Nantambu, and others point to legends of a fierce warrior from the Terwa Uplands. Still others insist that the vast collection of Kgalaserke tales aren't based on a single person but are creative retellings of actual events from disparate times and places, reflecting the very real need to believe in heroes of extraordinary might. Whatever the truth behind the stories, they are remarkable and represent some of the very best folklore in Golarion.

Because Kgalaserke's adventures can be found in so many different epochs and locations, their styles vary widely. Some are utterly fantastical while others are focused and succinct. In a typical story, Kgalaserke defeats some great evil, often with the help of her twin axes and warrior companions (many of whom have their own elaborate folklore cycles).

Of particular interest is how many stories share broad details and the same characters, even when encountered in different parts of the world. Kgalaserke seems to both

be a character known as Kigala the Bold in the Saga Lands and also Kigala's ally in other versions of the myth. My extensive research on Kgalaserke's historical antecedents led me to a fellow scholar, a traveling writer whom I met in New Thassilon. With this scholar's help, I was able to determine that Kgalaserke seemed to be based on a notable figure in ancient Thassilonian history. Again, the certainty of Kgalaserke's existence remains unclear, but it seems that someone of that name, or at least tales of her, reached the northern reaches of Avistan millennia ago. This figure seemingly found her way into local folklore and lived on, possibly morphing into Kigala to better fit with local themes and archetypes.

The following story comes from Vidrian and is relatively recent, given its narrative style. It provides part of Kgalaserke's origin, explaining how she acquired her famed axes and used them to defeat Azamatt the Weeping Flame, a creature from Garundi folklore more common in central and southern Garund. Kgalaserke's victory incidentally leads to the creation of the Azama volcano in central Garund. Whether or not it's true, I leave for you to decide.

### HOW K GALASERKE GAINED HER AXES

One dark night, Kgalaserke's mother lay dying of fever. A wise woman was brought in to stave off the illness.

After examining her ailing patient, the wise woman told young Kgalaserke that she must bring back fire to save her mother.

“For,” said the wise woman, “to fight fire, there is no remedy but fire.”

Kgalaserke pointed to the fire in the center of their home.

“No,” said the wise woman, “that fire is not strong enough. Go and find a powerful flame and bring it to me on this torch.”

So, the young Kgalaserke took the torch and left in search of strong fire. She had not traveled far when she met a catfolk quietly tending some red-hot coals.

“Please, may I have one of your coals? My mother is dying of a fever, and I must bring strong fire to save her,” Kgalaserke explained.

“I wish I could help,” said the catfolk, who was a cleric of Adanye. “But these coals are a gift from my god, and I must keep them. I will tell you, though, how you might find more like them.”

The cleric explained to Kgalaserke where she must travel and gave the young girl food and a magic cloak, though the cleric didn’t tell the girl the cloak was enchanted. The kind catfolk merely said, “If you are ever afraid, simply pull the cloak over your head and Adanye will protect you.”

Kgalaserke set off through the jungle, traveling through for three more days until she came to the foot of a steep hill. Above her in a large tree, she spotted a black jaguar. Afraid for the first time, she pulled the cloak over her head, but the jaguar continued to stare at her, looking her right in the eyes.

“I see you have the protection of Adanye,” said the jaguar. “But do not worry, for I am Lubaiko, and I will not harm you. You seek a fire that will not satisfy, for it is like the one in your home already: steady and warm. The fire you need must have the power to cleanse and purify your mother’s fever. If you can capture this fire, it will save her!”

Suddenly, lightning struck the tree and the jaguar vanished. Kgalaserke lit her torch in the bright white fire of the burning tree, but as she started home, the flames began to spread throughout the jungle. Before her, behind her, above her—everything was bathed in white fire, and her torch was consumed.

“Oh, Lubaiko,” Kgalaserke cried, “Look what you’ve done! How can I get home to my mother now?”

Just then, a great red-and-orange bird descended and plucked her from the burning jungle.

“Thank you,” said the girl to the phoenix, “but I need the fire of the lightning to save my mother.”

“The lightning is good to cleanse and purify,” said the phoenix, “but it will also destroy. Your mother does not need that fire. The fire you need is from deep within the earth, and there is a creature made of this substance in the mountains to the south. You will need a new torch and a weapon. I will take you to the dwarves.” The phoenix then gave her three magic feathers that held the power to fly.

So, the phoenix took Kgalaserke to the dwarves in the mountain. Their leader greeted her as though she were already the hero she would become.

“Your arrival was foretold,” said the great dwarf, “and so we have forged these axes for you.”

The leader presented two axes of the finest workmanship, almost as tall as the young girl. “Go now, use them to defeat the Weeping Flame and save our mountains.”

“But I need a new torch to carry home the fire to save my mother,” replied Kgalaserke.

So, the dwarves provided a torchbearer to accompany her, and also three of their finest warriors, and they set off toward the rumbling deep in the mountain.

When they came to the pit where the Weeping Flame dwelt, its gigantic, fiery form clinging to the ceiling of its lair, the dwarves grew scared. Sparks singed their beards, and they would go no closer.

Kgalaserke wrapped herself in the magic cloak, used the magic of a phoenix feather to fly, and drew her axes. She approached the monster carefully, quietly, creeping under its claws. When she saw the soft spot right under its belly, she swung, slicing through the fiery hide.

But Azamatt, that flame that burned before the sky fell, was not to be slain from a single blow. It roared and lashed at the air, but Kgalaserke was hidden from its sight as she flew. She attacked again and again, always at the titanic beast’s belly, and it lashed out at her, again and again, until it burst from the top of the mountain. While it was disoriented, Kgalaserke landed the fatal blow, severing its head with both axes. The Weeping Flame fell back into the mountain, but it was not defeated entirely. Its body dropped into the crater it had hollowed and became the volcano Azama. Although the volcano is fierce and belches forth smoke and lava, think of how much worse it would have been had Azamatt emerged and laid waste to all the mountains!

Kgalaserke persuaded the dwarves to approach the crater and light the torch. They returned to the dwarves’ home, where she told them of the volcano and, to make amends, presented the magic cloak to them. The Cloak of Kgalaserke remains a cherished heirloom among that clan, used by its heroes in great feats to protect their home.

Kgalaserke then strapped the axes to her back, used the magic of the second phoenix feather, and flew home bearing the torch. When she arrived, she presented the orange fire of the mountain, liquid at the top of the torch. The wise woman placed the torch in the fire circle, threw her herbs upon it, and filled the house with purifying smoke. Kgalaserke’s mother awoke, her fever gone, and embraced Kgalaserke.

“You have done well,” said the wise woman, who was really Grandmother Spider. “For you have saved your mother, but also saved the mountains to the south and gained your axes, which will serve you well, for you have many adventures before you.”

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# RELIGION

*“Inner Sea Faiths” by Sherstaani Alousha, devoted traveler, wisdom-gatherer, and cleric of the Pillars of Knowledge*

Few aspects of daily life unite and divide the peoples and cultures of the Inner Sea as profoundly as religion. It's such a fascinating topic, with myriad expressions and possibilities. What a shame, then, that it can be so dangerous to discuss! For as often as discussions of faith lead to incredible conversations or profound insight, depending on where you're traveling, it could just as easily lead to the gallows. Wherever you decide to travel across the Inner Sea, few topics of research will serve you better than understanding your destination's religious customs and rules.

Religious expression comes in such diverse forms across the Inner Sea region that it would be irresponsible of me to generalize about its place in everyday life. At one end of the spectrum—most notably in the land of Rahadoum, but throughout other nations as well—are those who eschew all religions and forego the worship of any deity. Indeed, such atheism is often enforced by law; should you find yourself traveling to Rahadoum, make sure to hide any holy symbols or ritual items you happen to be carrying, and by all means, forego the use of divine magic during your stay. Local authorities will confiscate any religious materials they deem are being used to proselytize, and you'll be lucky to get away with a hefty fine and stern lecture!

At the other end of state-enforced religiosity are those nations with official faiths. Though religion is always personal in some way, in these places, it's also a political choice. Some states have beliefs so entrenched in their governments that those citizens who wish to get ahead must often cozy up to the state religion to do so. This is perhaps most obvious in Cheliox, Nidal, and Mzali, where the state-endorsed deities may surprise or alarm the unfamiliar. An observant worshipper of Zon-Kuthon in Nidal, of Asmodeus in Cheliox, or of Walkena in Mzali may or may not have a deep personal connection to the faith. When you're a guest in these lands, though, assume everyone is just as religious as they appear—it could be a matter not just of preference, but of survival.

Aside from those adamantly against acknowledging deities in their daily lives, most denizens of the Inner Sea carry a religious symbol or two on their person at any given time. In more relaxed and cosmopolitan areas, you'll find a range of deities and levels of devotion. This is true not only in Absalom, the sprawling metropolis at the heart of the Inner Sea Region, but also throughout large parts of the surrounding region. From the Saga Lands to the Broken Lands, and from the Mwangi Expanse to across the Golden Road, most nations in the region permit a good deal of personal choice when it comes to religion.

Of course, the law is just one force that shapes a region's faith; cultural, social, and circumstantial pressures all impact religion, too. There's perhaps more incentive to become a devoted paragon of righteousness

in the Eye of Dread, as merely surviving to the next morning might call for intense faith, but I doubt you'll be spending long in that area of the world. It's also true there are those who hold to a belief in the spiritual nature of Golarion itself, such as members of the Shoanti and the Mammoth Lords. Among them, though devotion to individual deities is rare, religious observance and feeling remain quite strong.

For the average person across the majority of Inner Sea nations, personal choice determines the who, what, where, and when of religious devotion. As you travel the region, you'll find devotees of Shelyn, Pharasma, Cayden Cailean, or Abadar who frequent a local shrine or temple daily, and others who visit only on holy days. But don't be fooled. Some of the most frequent attendees go for reasons unrelated to devotion, as a religious ceremony may be anything from a major social event to an exquisite aesthetic experience. In fact it's not uncommon for some people to pretend to be members of a given faith simply to attend some of the more entertaining events. Most events tend to tolerate these “fair-weather faithful,” as some do in fact become practicing members after enough encounters with the faithful. In some cases, such as with Caydenite gatherings, these non-faithful find themselves being petitioned for a fair amount of offerings to more than make up for their share of the costs of festivities.

Far more common, however, are those average folk across the Inner Sea who, though they may never darken the door of a cathedral, can't go an hour without intoning a prayer or completing a small ritual. In my experience, this personal, less formal approach to religion is no less fervent than its more organized counterparts and is especially common in outlying areas or regions with political or cultural instability. In such places, I've found, religion tends to become infused with daily life, defining how a person interacts with the world and goes about their day. Religion often forms a set of habits more than it does a coherent set of theological beliefs. This practice naturally lends itself to worshipping more than one deity—a fairly typical occurrence across the Inner Sea. Most people have a patron deity, so to speak, who gets most of their reverence and attention, but they don't hesitate to reach out to other gods when the need arises. Which one receives a particular prayer or offering depends on what's going on in the person's life. Even for clerics and others given over to a deep observance of one deity, it's quite common to appeal to another in a relevant time of need. Who hasn't grasped at the grace of Besmara when threading a skiff between rocky shoals in the Shackles? Who would spurn Desna's aid while trying to navigate the River Kingdoms or the Shining Mountains?

For others, this pantheistic observance is more serious, with some worshipping whole (or multiple) pantheons.

I'll explain more about that in a bit, but you should know very few people across the Inner Sea only observe one divinity; for their part, most gods don't get too worked up about it. Let's consider a typical Inner Sea farmer who gives patronage to Erastil. Such patronage doesn't stop her from praying to Gozreh for rain, Sarenrae for sunlight, and Erastil himself for a large harvest. Our farmer has no reason to think Erastil will take any issue with those additional observances; in fact, he might bless her all the more for that added devotion.

## EVENTS AND OBSERVANCES

Religion is perhaps most visible throughout the Inner Sea in regularly scheduled devotions or on festival days, when the whole city or community turns out in marvelous celebration. Religion also surrounds significant life events, marking transitions in a person's life with particular meaning from their faith. For most denizens of the region these can include births, birthdays, comings of age, marriages or similar commitments, and the passing of life. The variety in how these events unfold is almost dizzying, so wondrous in their diversity, so dependent on belief and local customs. I will provide here a sampling from across the Inner Sea, but I must emphasize that I can only begin to scratch the surface.

Celebrations of births are almost always joyous affairs, though there are faiths that don't invest much fanfare in a birth. Throughout Old Chelixa, for example, the ceremony is more legal than religious, as neither Asmodeus nor Zon-Kuthon has much interest in the event. Conversely, among worshippers of Sarenrae, Desna, and Shelyn, a birth is an occasion for a full-blown party. Colorful and vibrant, the ceremony begins at dawn, with the newborn babe being presented to the community of faith with blessings, prayer, and song—and then comes the feasting and dancing that can last all day! Even followers of Pharasma, so often stoic and even somber, let loose for a birth celebration. Pharasmin celebrations tend to begin later in the day and lack the same colorful aesthetic, but the feasting and singing in honor of a successful birth will often last well into the night.

Curiously, the faiths most known for celebrating births aren't those that go all out for birthdays; my guess is this difference stems from a given faith's focus (or lack thereof) on individuality. For truly wonderful birthday celebrations, Cayden Cailean leads the way. His followers make a memorable, if rowdy and drink-fueled, party of any birthday. Irori's followers also make fine celebrations of birthdays, particularly as devotees get older, though these occasions tend to be quieter and more introspective. Perhaps the most unique birthday ritual is found among the most devoted followers of Gozreh, who will run headlong into water—no matter

how cold or storm-tossed—and remain for at least one minute per year as the waves buffet them.

Among those faiths that make less time for birthdays, the coming-of-age ceremony tends to be more important. For followers of Erastil, this event is often tied to a child's first successful hunt, whereas followers of Iomedae tie it to a show of martial prowess. Gorum's followers also require a show of martial ability, but I've heard this is often less a demonstration than a potentially lethal contest, in the name of proving that an adherent has left childhood behind. But it's the halfling god Chaldira who has my favorite coming-of-age ritual: her followers, who value luck and mischief, hide buttons throughout a given area and the child who is coming of age spends the day hunting them with friends and family members. The day is filled with food, frivolity, and, of course, surprises!

Marriages are another life event of religious importance and ritual. Despite their opposing aesthetics, Abadarans and Asmodeans alike make fabulous, extravagant affairs of weddings, with events sometimes involving hundreds of attendees and lasting several days. Worshippers of less lawful deities tend to celebrate weddings on a smaller scale, for their adherents see such pairings as mutable. Indeed, if you're ever invited to a Calistrian wedding, you'll be forgiven for thinking it was merely a fancy dinner party—if vows are even exchanged, they're unlikely to be the highlight of the evening.

The rituals and ceremonies that mark the ending of a life tend to be less celebratory, though not all are somber. The powerful influence of Pharasma over such proceedings inspires similarities in the rituals of followers of several other deities, whether the ritual consignment of Torag's faithful to an earthen vault or the more fanciful devotions that prepare a departed Desnan for sky burial. Even so, many denizens of the Inner Sea turn fully to Pharasma upon the death of a loved one, looking to her black-clad clerics to lead the rites that send the soul forward. The most ostentatious funerals belong to followers of Zon-Kuthon, who flagellate and scream in their physical and emotional pain—definitely not an experience for all. In my experience, the most intriguing funerary rituals belong to certain followers of Nethys, the inscrutable god of magic, and involve illusions that show scenes from the deceased's life as well as other magical effects that share the knowledge and lessons learned from that life. These ceremonies can be lengthy, but they are always, if you'll forgive me, spellbinding.

## NEW RITUAL

Not every settlement has the privilege of hosting a fully initiated cleric of the gods, but almost all possess some knowledge of minor divine blessings, passed down

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from generation to generation. Likely originating somewhere in long-ago Varisia, the following ritual is now a popular addition to birthday celebrations throughout the Inner Sea. However, it's not just limited to birthdays—a wedding, new home, the beginning of a journey, or any such occasion calls for luck! Usually, the recipient is just one individual, but groups have successfully been bequeathed with it through several rituals cast during the same event by separate groups of casters, so long as each of the recipients shared the same food (or drink) and bore their own token. The ritual imbues a token with good luck, and as long as the recipient wears the token, they have access to that luck. Naturally buttons, ribbons, and small charms that can be sewn right onto a shirt, belt, or headband are the most typical tokens used in this ritual, though rings and other jewelry work, too. A rising fad uses a zoic fetish from the Realm of the Mammoth Lords for this ritual—though personally, I'm not sure that's really in the best of taste.

## LUCKY MONTH

UNCOMMON DIVINATION

**Cast** 1 day; **Cost** a favorite food or drink and a wearable token with personal or familial significance worth 10 gp total; **Secondary Casters** 3

## RITUAL 2

**Primary Check** Religion (trained); **Secondary Checks** Crafting, Performance, Society

**Range** 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature and 1 object

You imbue the provided token with luck. You choose a single creature within range during the ritual's performance to become the recipient of the token's luck. That creature has access to the token's luck as long as they're wearing the token. If the token is stolen or lost, they lose access to its luck until the token is recovered. The token loses its luck if it's destroyed or after the duration noted in the ritual's effects has elapsed.

**Critical Success** You can call upon the token's luck. Once per week, when rolling a saving throw or skill check, you can use the token's power and roll twice, taking the higher result. This is a fortune effect. The token keeps its luck for 1 month.

**Success** As a critical success, except you can only call upon the token's power once during the lucky month.

**Failure** The ritual has no effect.

**Critical Failure** Magical backlash creates ill luck. Once per week, the ritual's recipient must roll twice and take the worse result for their first significant saving throw or skill check of the week, as determined by the GM. This is a misfortune effect. This ill luck remains for 1 month and applies to the recipient whether or not they're wearing the token.

## RELIGIOUS ICONOGRAPHY

The use of relics and icons varies substantially across religions, giving us a fascinating lens into the plethora of beliefs across the Inner Sea region. These relics differ within religions as well, being based so specifically on particular rites and ceremonies that vary across locations. In other words, because a Desnan in Magnimar has quite a different approach to worship than a Desnan in Bloodcove, you will find the relics and icons feature certain differences as well.



### Asmodean Tattoos

Among Asmodeus's faithful in Egorian, it's now fashionable to get a small tattoo, on the lower arm or even the hand, of a flaming mace with the motto, "By his flames!" House Thruene is credited with popularizing this saying and tattoo.



### Calistrian Labyrinth

Calistria's three aspects are widely known to be lust, trickery, and revenge. Among the elves of Kyonin, though, she's worshipped for embodying the free pursuit of a personal path. These faithful begin worship by walking a labyrinth.



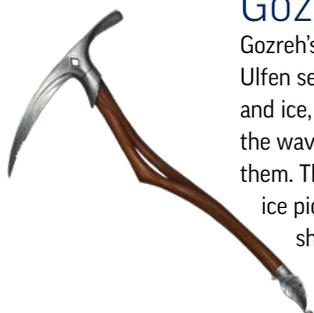
### Desnan Accessories

Desna's followers in the Mwangi Expanse emphasize her role as Queen of the Sky, connecting her to Gozreh. Galaxies and constellations fill her voluminous black wings. Her clerics wear blue cloaks and use chalices carved with stars.



### Estigian Cairns

Erastil is worshipped by stone giants, who call him Estig the Hunter. They see him not as an elk-headed humanoid but as a particularly fine stone giant sporting furs. Their rituals include the stacking of five sacred and rare rocks into careful cairns.



### Gozren Picks

Gozreh's worshippers among the Ulfen see the deity's duality as fire and ice, rather than the winds and the waves usually associated with them. Their Ulfen clerics carry iron ice picks and begin rituals by shattering ice.

### Lamashtan Adornments

Lamashtu is a favorite deity of goblins, who see her primarily as a liberator because she freed their four hero-gods from the clutches of Asmodeus. They wear circlets or capes of black feathers to emphasize her wings when enacting her rituals.



### Norgorber's Secrets

Norgorber, the most mysterious of ascended gods, has four well-known aspects. Some worshippers believe Thamir Gixx, his halfling sidekick, is actually a secret fifth aspect, represented by a poisoned dagger that sports a hole in its blade.



### Pharasmin Relics

Pharasma is possibly the most widely venerated god in the Inner Sea region. For her rituals, the faithful must always wear black and white; they can temper their attire with a bit of silver, and they carry small vials of *holy water*.



### Sarenite Paintings

Sarenrae's favored animals include the dove, the falcon, and the basking lizard. In the nations of the Golden Road, worshippers of the Dawnflower paint images of a lizard sunning itself on rocks or walls to create a miniature shrine.



### Kuthite Tools

Zon-Kuthon's worshippers are mostly concentrated in Nidal, but they exist throughout Avistan. Should you stumble onto a collection of awls, flaying knives, and other odd-looking implements in a cave when the new moon is near, my suggestion is this: run.



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## PANTHEONS

I mentioned above that, throughout the lands of the Inner Sea, you'll meet many who are consistently and conscientiously given to the worship of more than one deity, devoting themselves to an entire pantheon. Some of these believers were raised in it; this is particularly true for the more traditional among elves and dwarves. Other worshippers seek out a pantheon that fits their needs in devotion. These pantheons are some that you're likely to encounter in your travels throughout the region.

Full rules for pantheons are found on page 82 of *Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods & Magic*.

### COSMIC CARAVAN

**Pantheon Members** Ashava, Black Butterfly, Desna, Ketepphys, Pulura, Sarenrae, Tsukiyo, Yog-Sothoth

**Areas of Concern** constellations, fortune telling, night, hope for a better tomorrow

**Alignment** NG (NG, CG, CN)

**Divine Font** *harm* or *heal*

**Divine Ability** Dexterity or Charisma

**Divine Skill** Occultism

**Domains** darkness, fate, freedom, moon

**Alternate Domains** star (*Gods & Magic* 117), void (*Gods & Magic* 117)

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *object reading*, 2nd: *glitterdust*, 6th: *blanket of stars* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 215)

**Edicts** aid those who live in regions where Zon-Kuthon (or other religions that espouse the night as a bastion for evil) holds sway, help the desperate or forlorn to see potential for a better life in the future, spend time stargazing or meditating in moonlight, travel with no particular destination in mind

**Anathema** destroy astronomical or astrological equipment, portray the night as a time of evil, spend the night in the same place twice in a row

**Favored Weapon** starknife

A pantheon rapidly gaining popularity throughout the Inner Sea is the Cosmic Caravan. Astronomers and astrologers will tell you the Cosmic Caravan is a collection of constellations visible in the night sky, said to travel forever in a circle around the star Cynosure. The association of a diverse array of deities and demigods linked to the stars—and the spaces between them—first rose to prominence in western Avistan, particularly in Varisia, Nidal, and Ravounel. The deities worshipped by the faithful are a heady and diverse group that shows the true depth of understanding of this pantheon: Desna and Sarenrae; the empyreal lords Ashava, Black Butterfly, and Pulura; the elven god Ketepphys; and the outer god Yog-Sothoth. Their religious observances take place at night and center around stargazing. While Groetus served as the moon in the original pantheon, the god's treatment of spreading hope as anathema has caused many to swap in the Tian deity Tsukiyo in regions where he's known.

If your travels take you through Nidal, you'll find this pantheon has been gaining ground there against the worship of Zon-Kuthon, whose faithful feel they own the worship of the night. A rising number of Cosmic Caravan worshippers in that nation seek to oppose or, one day, even overthrow the Midnight Lord's theocracy to reclaim the night from the implications that all who dwell in the dark are evil.

### THE DELIBERATE JOURNEY

**Pantheon Members** Abadar, Barzakh, Desna, Ng

**Areas of Concern** caravans, crossroads, knowing the way, travel by road

**Alignment** N (LN, NG, N)

**Divine Font** *heal*

**Divine Ability** Intelligence or Wisdom

**Divine Skill** Survival

**Domains** earth, knowledge, luck, travel

**Alternate Domains** secrecy, wealth

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *longstrider*, 2nd: *knock*, 9th: *resplendent mansion*

**Edicts** plan for travel and bring what you need, identify the best route, make deliberate decisions for the benefit of all who travel, travel with a purpose

**Anathema** fail to prepare for a journey, let chance decide which way to go, put travelers under your care in danger

**Favored Weapon** crossbow

One of the most widely worshipped of all deities across the Inner Sea, Desna is particularly known for her care of travelers, especially the dreamy wanderer. But her aid is also invoked by those whose travel is of a much more intentional nature, such as those who organize caravans across lengthy routes through the Saga Lands or along the Golden Road. The pantheon of the Deliberate Journey includes Desna for her wisdom and support through the many winding roads of their journeys. They also appeal to Abadar, for he's interested in the traveler that carries civilization and wealth to new places. Mapping the routes is important to Abadar for encouraging safety in these aims, as well as for building roads. Ng, the enigmatic Eldest known also as the Hooded, is the patron of those who travel long distances with purpose, and such travelers appeal to him for safety from banditry, treacherous weather, and getting lost. Worshippers turn to Barzakh, known also as the Passage, for aid when at a crossroads, for they are the psychopomp who maintains the Dead Roads, the secret back routes between the planes and the mortal world, as well as looking after migrations and lost souls. Especially when the crossroads is figurative or when death looms near on an ill-fated journey, travelers implore Barzakh to intercede.

### THE ENLIGHTENED SCHOLAR'S PATH

**Pantheon Members** Andoletta, Likha, Shelyn, Soralyon, Thoth, Zohls

**Areas of Concern** academies, professors, scholars, transmission and accuracy of learned knowledge

**Alignment** NG (LG, LN, NG, N)

**Divine Font** *heal*

**Divine Ability** Intelligence or Wisdom

**Divine Skill** Lore or Performance

**Domains** creation, knowledge, magic, protection

**Alternate Domains** glyph (*Gods & Magic* 114), passion

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *share lore* (*Gods & Magic* 109), 3rd: *secret page*, 5th: *strange geometry* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 226)

**Edicts** correct ignorance and counter false knowledge with respect, maintain and extol the value of historical buildings and artifacts, research carefully and accurately, share what you know, teach the truth

**Anathema** destroy books or monuments, keep silent when faced with false information, refuse to share knowledge

**Favored Weapon** staff

This broad and erudite pantheon is a favorite in universities and academies across the Inner Sea. Its adherents unite the optimism and art of Shelyn with the vast knowledge of Thoth to inspire their investigations and writings of artistic, scientific, historical, and magical knowledge. They look to Andoletta, Grandmother Crow, for aid in teaching and instilling knowledge and virtue as well as to Likha to support their efforts to teach (especially with a wide historical perspective), perform plays, and organize recitals and lectures in the name of learning.

They appeal to Soralyon for protection, particularly of historical buildings, monuments, artifacts, and their study of such things. For especially thorny problems and for help in devising new solutions from their research, they turn to the Zohls, the embodiment of Verity. Religious ceremonies tend to be full of pageantry, pomp, and ritual, incorporating plays, chorales, and instrumental music that draw on many different traditions and highlight ancient practices of beauty. These ceremonies occur quite regularly at or near academies across the Inner Sea and I highly recommend you make every effort to attend one. Be aware, though, they do tend to last for hours, so you'll want to plan accordingly!

## HEARTH AND HARVEST

**Pantheon Members** Adanye, Erastil, Mazludeh, Uvuko

**Areas of Concern** community, harvest, home, protection of family and children

**Alignments** NG (LG, NG, CG)

**Divine Font** *heal*

**Divine Ability** Constitution or Wisdom

**Divine Skill** Crafting

**Domains** change (*Gods & Magic* 112), family, nature, protection

**Alternate Domains** earth, healing

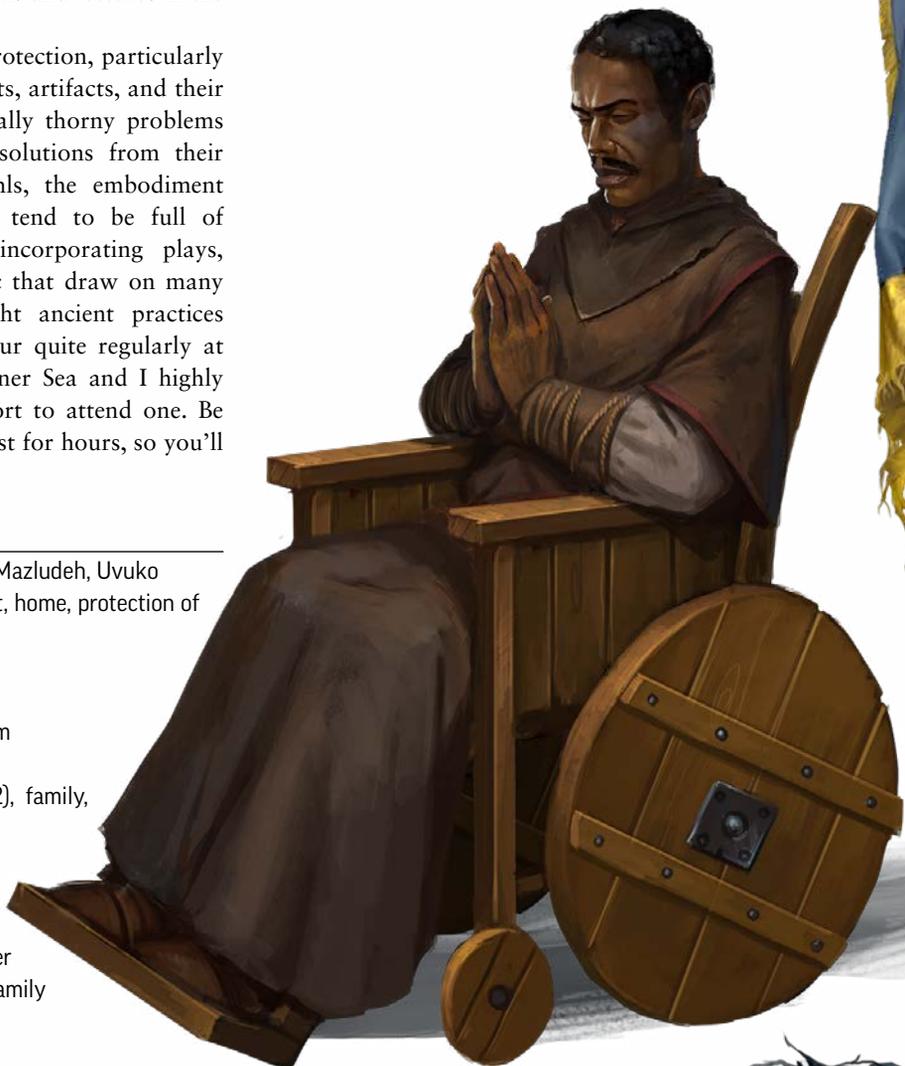
**Cleric Spells** 1st: *ant haul*, 2nd: *shape wood*, 4th: *speak with plants*

**Edicts** harvest with skill, offer hospitality, protect the home, put family and community before self

**Anathema** allow harm to come to children, destroy shelter, refuse to provide for the family or community

**Favored Weapon** sickle

Farmers, foragers, hunters, and some of their urban relatives throughout the Mwangi Expanse look to this pantheon for protection and inspiration, and its popularity is certainly rising beyond the Mwangi, taking hold across the Inner Sea. Whatever the shape of their harvests or the nature of their homes, this pantheon's adherents take seriously the need to live in close harmony with the earth and their communities. They turn to Adanye, the catfolk deity who embodies the warmth of the hearth, and to Mazludeh, known as the Mother of Hearth and Wall, for protection and support of family and community. They look to Erastil, that well-known and widely worshipped god of nature, provisioning, home, and community, for aid in the harvest and the hunt. Because their lives are so closely tied to the seasons as much as the home, they look to the powerful Uvuko for comfort and assistance through all such changes. There is little by way of formal worship for this pantheon: its adherents intone a prayer over their morning duties or enact a ritual before a hunt, so worship is usually a daily practice with little fanfare.



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On occasion, though, their celebrations are truly jubilant. I was fortunate enough to experience one such celebration, some distance outside of Kibwe, in honor of a particularly rich harvest, and the drumming and dancing were second only to the remarkably tasty food. The jungle is a bountiful place and the harvests superb for those who know how to go about them—and how to implore divine aid as they do so.

### THE LABORER'S BASTION

**Pantheon Members** Cayden Cailean, Kurgess, Tlehar, Torag  
**Areas of Concern** laborers, the oppressed, daily work, achievement  
**Alignment** NG (LG, NG, CG)  
**Divine Font** *heal*  
**Divine Ability** Strength or Constitution  
**Divine Skill** Athletics  
**Domains** freedom, might, truth, zeal  
**Alternate Domains** ambition, indulgence  
**Cleric Spells** 1st: *fleet step*, 2nd: *enlarge*, 4th: *creation*  
**Edicts** encourage others to strive toward their own potential, give your all to work and play, have hope that tomorrow will be a better day, stand up for the oppressed  
**Anathema** cheat, give into or spread despair, keep silent when faced with oppression, work without respite or enjoyment  
**Favored Weapon** warhammer

This pantheon is widespread across the Inner Sea region, finding adherents among all those who must labor daily, whether in field or forge, city or farm, logging camp or caravan oasis. Such laborers seek strength in all its many forms. They look to Kurgess, the Strong Man, who was once a laborer himself, for aid in using their full potential, seeking to better themselves and encouraging others to strive toward their own potential, no matter their work. From Torag, they take the strength to be honorable and forthright and keep their word. And they look to Cayden Cailean not just for the strength to truly enjoy themselves when not working, but also to aid the oppressed. Recently, a small but growing number of followers, especially near Mzali, have been including Tlehar, too, as they seek the mental fortitude to give their best even as they hope each day will be better than the last. You'll find that these laborers won't cheat at honorable contests, swindle you, intentionally make anything subpar, or be mean or standoffish when drunk. Their religious observances tend to be frequent and regular but not at all fussy or lengthy. Ceremonies always seem to include food, drink, and games afterwards—or perhaps as part of the observances themselves. Followers of the Laborer's Bastion clearly place more value in companionship and reassurance of their faith than in following a formal script and getting all the rituals right. Personally, I feel at ease whenever I see their religious symbol—a mug and hammer on a sunburst background—as I know I'm among trustworthy, honest folk... even if we don't share a language or the same idea of what constitutes a decent breakfast.

### THE OFFERING PLATE

**Pantheon Members** Abadar, Alseta, Cayden Cailean, Folgrit, Kazutal  
**Areas of Concern** charity, hospitality, community  
**Alignments** NG (LG, NG, CG)  
**Divine Font** *heal*  
**Divine Ability** Constitution or Intelligence  
**Divine Skill** Society  
**Domains** duty (*Gods & Magic* 114), freedom, healing, wealth  
**Alternate Domains** cities, family  
**Cleric Spells** 1st: *soothe*, 2nd: *cozy cabin* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 217), 5th: *secret chest* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 225)  
**Edicts** give to those in need, pass on skills and resources to others, contribute your unique talents to society  
**Anathema** take resources from those who need them, act selfishly, keep knowledge or wealth to yourself  
**Favored Weapon** flail

The Offering Plate is a pantheon centered on selfless acts, charitable giving, and passing along skills or knowledge to improve the circumstances of those less fortunate. Followers believe Abadar agrees the health of a city's economy depends in part upon helping those least fortunate return to the market. Clerics sometimes carry flails that double as collection pots for donations. They find legal loopholes and contractually sound means of channeling funding and supplies to worthy causes in their community. Alseta reigns over transitions, and worshippers of the Offering Plate ask for her help as they assist those in need to transition from poverty and hardship into the next phase of their lives. Followers call upon Folgrit for patience and follow her edicts to take in or find homes for those without families. Kazutal teaches followers of the Offering Plate the ultimate goal of charity is to build a strong and loving community. Cayden Cailean reminds them every person deserves to live a life free of oppressive restraints, as well as a little leisure occasionally to lighten their loads. Many followers of the Offering Plate form traveling groups that share their time and wealth with those in need. These caravans are known as Offering Trains and some trains remain on a permanent route that travels between multiple settlements in the Inner Sea. These trains visit prosperous settlements, collecting what supplies and offerings they can, before moving on to deliver these donations to the less fortunate in other locations. One Offering Train has been making its way from Almas, up along the Sellen River, and delivering goods to the people of Mendev and the Sarkoris Scar for a number of years, earning them the title of the Crusader Caravan.

### SEAFARERS' HOPE

**Pantheon Members** Besmara, Gozreh, Hei Feng, Ylimancha  
**Areas of Concern** coastlines, the sea, seafarers, storms  
**Follower Alignments** N (NG, N, CG, CN)  
**Divine Font** *harm* or *heal*  
**Divine Ability** Constitution or Wisdom  
**Divine Skill** Survival

**Domains** nature, travel, trickery, water

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *gust of wind*, 3rd: *feet to fins*, 5th: *control water*

**Edicts** give thanks for safe passage, respect the sea, view all storms with optimism and perseverance

**Anathema** put off travel until there are calm waters, refuse aid to those stranded at sea, stay too long on land

**Favored Weapon** rapier

This pantheon originated in the Shackles for perhaps obvious reasons, but its worshippers now spread along most every coastline in the Inner Sea, so don't imagine that this pantheon is just for pirates or the less savory types in the import business—though it certainly appeals to them, too. The flashier deities in this pantheon are the better known, for who doesn't associate Besmara, the Pirate Queen, with her swashbuckling antics and Hei Feng, the Duke of Thunder, with the storms survivors still speak of years later? Yet the duality of Gozreh and the sustainability and care of Ylimancha round out this pantheon. The Wind and the Waves and the Harborwing strive for safety and balance between air, land, and sea, and it's for their care that many a frightened, storm-tossed seafarer prays during a perilous journey. Followers of this pantheon aren't given to regular worship unless to utter a simple prayer or recitation on the bow of a ship at sea. Instead, the faithful find themselves most pious when the winds, waves, and thunder are in full force, threatening the survival of the ship, or when they pull into harbor after safely enduring a storm. At such times, joyous celebrations of dancing, singing, and pouring out libations to their gods mark their worship. Faithful followers are also committed to rescuing those at sea and have been known to sail into terrifying storms in search of the stranded.

## URBAN PROSPERITY

**Pantheon Members** Abadar, Alseta, Korada, Tanagaar

**Areas of Concern** peace, prosperity of cities, protection

**Alignment** N (LG, LN, NG, N)

**Divine Font** *harm* or *heal*

**Divine Ability** Wisdom or Charisma

**Divine Skill** Diplomacy or Society

**Domains** change (*Gods & Magic* 112), cities, magic, protection

**Alternate Domains** healing, wealth

**Cleric Spells** 1st: *anticipate peril* (*Gods & Magic* 107), 2nd: *knock*, 4th: *resilient sphere*

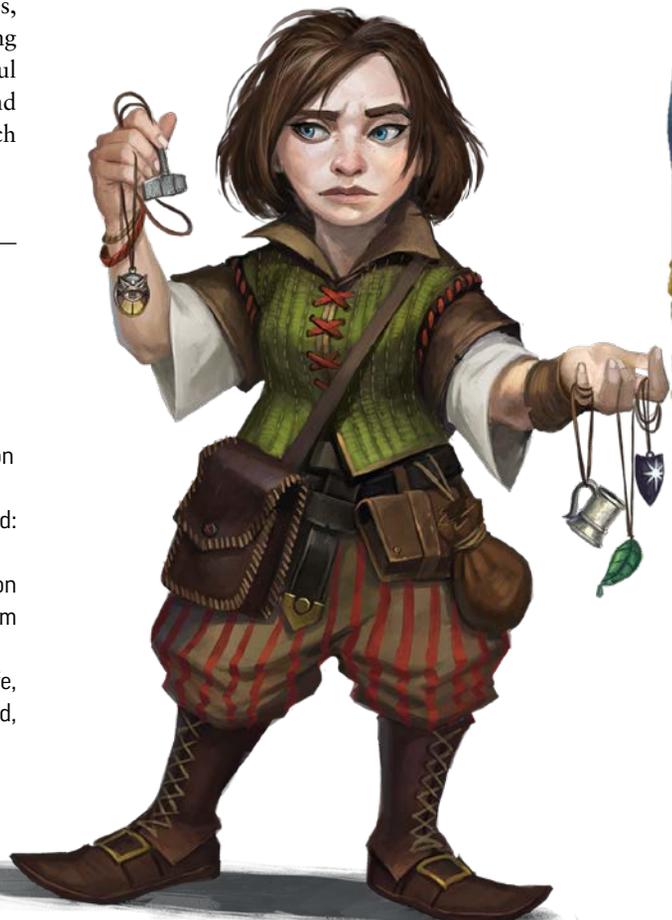
**Edicts** celebrate the benefits of urban life, find common ground and establish harmony, protect your city from intrusion or decay, welcome everyone

**Anathema** betray the safety of your city, disparage urban life, foment animosity or contention, refuse hospitality or aid, move to the country

**Favored Weapon** dagger

Across the Inner Sea Abadar has long been the favored deity of city-dwellers, thanks to his dedication to all things urban. You

won't find a city of any size in the region that doesn't boast a sizable temple to honor his tenets of expanding civilization, promoting prosperity, and following the rule of law. This pantheon expands his focus by enjoining the kinder and more uplifting elements of urban life, shifting away from Abadar's well-known pursuit of wealth to a pursuit of peace and prosperity for everyone in the city. Worshippers of this pantheon invoke Alseta the Welcomer, who watches over city gates to keep invaders out and defenders safe, as well as Tanagaar the Aurulent Eye, who keeps a careful eye over those who protect the innocent at night. Adherents to this pantheon also look to Alseta for guidance in making their cities open and welcoming to all peaceful dwellers therein and for wisdom through the many transitions of urban life; they strive to follow her edict of treating all other beings with courtesy and respect. From Korada, they draw their inspiration in the pursuit of a peaceful mindset and public policy that enjoins harmony, using the law to support redemption. In another departure from what you'll see as a common Abadaran practice, the worshippers of this pantheon don't build opulent, flashy temples. Their shrines often skew toward the simple, as the Urban Prosperity tends to distribute any money it raises to those causes that promote peace and bring prosperity to all. Services are offered daily at dawn and dusk, typically accompanied by serene music and time for contemplation and meditation. If you find yourself in need of some tranquility, I highly recommend attending.



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# NATURE & ANIMALS

*"A Chance to Grow With Nature" by Toya Gixx, urban naturalist*

Everyone benefits from a deeper relationship with the natural world. This is especially true for folks who haven't had access to green spaces or safe interactions with animals. Even in cities, the natural world surrounds us—just think about the screams when someone finds a spider inside! Knowledge about the creatures we live alongside shouldn't be reserved to druids, the clergy of Gozreh, or other specialists. Everyone should know the joy of spotting a favorite flower or rare bird. Likewise, paying attention to other living animals and plants can help us spot larger patterns, much like rustling leaves can herald a storm's approach.

## THE NATURAL WORLD

Fundamentally, it's good to venture into the environment, however that may be. For some, it could be sitting among the plants of a well-paved garden. For others, this might involve regular trips into local forests to forage for food. Still others find solace far outside the walls of cities. Now, I can hear the disagreements already. Cities are inherently disconnected, or there are people who aren't interested, or physical limitations prevent some from spending time outdoors. These barriers make some experiences inaccessible, but nature presents endless ways to engage with it. Whatever the reason, level of ability, or amount of experience, there is an available patch of dirt with sky overhead.

Urban-dwelling residents across the Inner Sea are creative in their ways of accessing open spaces. Public parks and private gardens provide a taste of wilderness more often for the wealthy, while typical residents of most cities make do with smaller patches of land. In less restrictive countries, like Andoran or the River Kingdoms, neighborhoods tend to have open areas that are held in common as a community. These commons are open for gardening, grazing animals, or enjoying the outdoors. Cities with strict limits, like Kaer Maga's walled palaces, may have smaller commons as land is reappropriated for other use. Cheliox's cities infamously restrict access to commons to keep revolutionaries from meeting in public. Even with limited access, there is much to learn from the way plants move through the days and years.

Those who live in more rural areas or small villages integrate their lives with nature. The phase of the moon determines how much light is available at night and how many candles a household will need as a result. Any journey requires a walk through so-called untouched wilderness (though many who live in rural areas say truly untouched land is a myth). Here, the daily connection with nature balances between appreciation, gratitude, and fear of natural forces. Even those with shelter from the elements can measure their years by the world changing around them: ants are more likely to march inside during summer, and mice come in during

the winters. Those in rural communities care for the world around them in return.

A healthy sense of awe protects those who decide to deepen their relationship with the natural world. For example, deciding to hike from Absalom to Diobel may sound like a pleasant trip. However, ensuring a pleasant experience requires proper footwear, an itinerary, and staying alert to the world around you. More than one overzealous novice has lost their life due to dehydration or falling off a cliff. Starting with small excursions and working up to longer travels ensure skills are honed closer to home, making it easier to respond when something goes wrong. For those who feel disconnected from the world around them, building up a daily practice of noticing the world will deepen your ties. I firmly believe every living being deserves to connect with our fellow inhabitants.

Properly prepared, trips outside the bounds of civilization offer endless enrichment. There is no understanding the way the seasons change until you've hiked the Southern Way trail from Taldor to Cheliox. Immersion into Gozreh's dominion for extended periods turns memorized knowledge into truly integrated understanding. After my first month-long trip, I no longer needed to pay attention to a compass or a calendar; I knew the day, direction of the winds, and time based on how sunbeams hit the tree canopy above.

## ANIMAL LIFE

House cats, migrating birds, territorial bears, mice, and other animals live alongside us and mark our daily lives. Most of our relationships are symbiotic. However, the view we have of these creatures varies. Vermin tend to be under appreciated, while creature companions are often forgiven for harmful behaviors. Like much of my advice, I recommend a healthy balance in relationships with animals, incorporating respect and understanding.

Now, I will say when I think of animals, I think we should consider elevating them in our relationships. Consider the Realm of the Mammoth Lords. There, the mammoths make the people's way of life possible. As a result, Kellid followings consider the mammoths part of their families. In the Mwangi Expanse, the Ten Magic Warriors incorporated animals as part of their names. Not every culture acknowledges animals as sources of knowledge or full partners, but more should do so. The difference between my companion and a pet is the amount of respect I pay. My companion Bow, a hognose snake, has saved my life more times than I've saved his.

I recommend attempting to maintain as natural a balance of animal life and civilization as possible. A pet cat let loose can drastically affect the local bird population, so animal-keepers should consider even the secondary effects of their choices. The unusually large spiders of Ustalav's swamps are often an unwelcome

surprise to newcomers. However, removing them results in insects invading your pantry and creating worse problems. If an animal causes you undue harm, you may want to consult a local druid for advice. Often, they can determine what the animal needs and create a solution that works for both.

Solutions between people and animals must include consideration of greater management of the natural world. Individual communities should consider their policies around hunting or trapping wildlife. It's easier to destroy a population than to build it back up. Seriously altering the local population, as happens all too often in the River Kingdoms due to the scarcity of food, creates a cycle of starvation and over-hunting that can be nearly impossible to break. Likewise urban areas should carefully consider interventions. More than one city has responded to rats by releasing cats, only to end up with a rash of feral cats.

Outside settlements and houses, you're often in the homes of other creatures. Being aware of your surroundings will help you prevent an accidental encounter. I strongly recommend familiarizing yourself with the local fauna when traveling in unfamiliar territory. Likewise, it's best to stay on well-traveled paths, as you're less likely to stumble into a den or mating ground. Animal attacks are often the result of a person being somewhere they don't belong. During my time running my practice in Brevoy, the majority of animal-caused wounds were from getting too close to a buck or trying to pet a growling dog.

The most dangerous animal is the one overly anthropomorphized by the people around it. A bear and her cubs deserve to live. However, if a person believes they're helping by feeding the animals scraps, a deadly situation for both bears and people arises. Famous instances of dangerous animal attacks can be traced to inappropriate relationships with people in nearby settlements. For example, the settlement of Bellis in Andoran had a series of wolf-pack attacks outside lumber mills. Upon investigation, these wolves were attracted to improperly secured garbage. Had the community taken a few more precautions, the unfortunate deaths of both mill workers and wolves could have been prevented. In cases where animals present danger and can't be relocated away from settlements, often the only option is to either kill the animal or move the people.

## POLLUTION

Ah, waste. Managing the byproducts of settlements is vital for the long-term health of populations. Sewage, garbage, and other forms of waste spread disease when improperly overseen. In handling pollution, the churches of Abadar and Gozreh work in alignment. Abadar's faithful manage urban centers' waste management planning, while Gozreh's followers ensure runoff doesn't

negatively impact the environment. Waste really is the area where civilizations appear as populations of living beasts, with all the needs and complications that entails.

As one of the largest cities in the world, Absalom must filter every resident or visitor's daily waste, including massive piles of byproducts from local camels, horses, elephants, dogs, pangolins, and other working beasts that reside among the populace. Waste management services must balance competing needs: limited land on the Starstone Isle, hygienic standards for its immense population, and maintenance of local waterways. While the sewer systems beneath the city move much of the sewage from the districts, these sewers have increasingly become homes. At least one prominent group of kobolds, the Sewer Dragons, claims part of the drainage system as their territory, complicating the balance. Outside the city, wastewater filters through a constructed marsh, a novel creation that cleanses the water with engineering, primal magic, and otyughs.

In Numeria, the relics from Starfall and the Silver Mount occupy a liminal space between novelty and dangerous waste. Kevoth-Kul, the Black Sovereign of Numeria, lost decades to the addictive Numerian fluids that seeped from Silver Mount. His ban on the drugs leaves a stockpile of narcotics without purchasers or a safe way to dispose of them. The Silver Mount continues to drain psychoactive fluids from its structure. Abandoned collection sites haven't stopped producing the fluids, leading to likely groundwater contamination. The active sites can produce up to a gallon of fluids a day, which must be stored in dark glass bottles due to reactivity. As storehouses fill up, the question of what to do with the current store becomes more urgent.

The byproducts of magic can't be ignored. The Mana Wastes' blight is the most prominent example of magical pollution and should serve as a stern warning. Even a solitary wizard's workshop can lead to magical runoff that affects nearby animal populations. In Korvosa, the Academiae and its students led to a boom in the local imp population. Additionally, some of these imps show signs of the sin magic studied in the Academiae, including Thassilonian runes in their scales. Any site dedicated to magical study, no matter the tradition, should include a plan on how to manage magical runoff.

Likewise, planar energies can pollute local ecosystems if left unchecked. Famously, the Sarkoris Scar continues to suffer from the Worldwound's long-term effects. The Reclaimers of Sarkoris were forced to raze major cities, as the planar pollution had so deeply corrupted the area. Similarly, while widespread effects haven't yet occurred, hobgoblin troops in Oprak have begun stumbling across earth elementals during regular patrols, a possible side effect of the plane of earth leaking through the Stone Roads.

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## FLORA

While under-appreciated compared to animals, plants are fellow living beings on this world. Plant life deserves our respect, as plants keep our air clean, feed us, shelter us, and provide cures for ailments. Most of us can't communicate with plants, but we can show respect by avoiding undue harm and understanding the role they play in our lives. These plants are a small sampling from my larger *Field Guide to Useful Plants* (both Garund and Avistan volumes available).



### Asmodean Grape

The Asmodean grape is found wild in Cheliox, Ravounel, and the western branches of Andoran. This variety is responsible for the distinctive wines of the region. Originally, it was called the Aroden grape and was said to be one of his gifts.



### Biting Brush

Not all carnivorous plants have splashy, obvious tells. Biting brush is particularly dangerous, as it looks just like run-of-the-mill vines until you're ankle deep and the thorns start biting. I recommend against walking through patches of vines since this plant is hard to identify.



### First World Ragweed

Where most ragweed irritates allergies, pollen from First World ragweed alters perceptions of the world. Avoid patches if possible since clever spellcasters change the pollen to spread primal magic. The plant is identifiable by the pollen's prismatic sheen.



### Flayleaf

Flayleaf, popularly known for its sedative and hallucinogenic properties, grows in a variety of conditions, though most professional growers keep the plant in an enclosed location. Flayleaf spiders, pests that grow exclusively on the plant, necessitate specialized harvesting techniques.



### False Flayleaf

This poisonous plant is nearly identical in appearance to flayleaf. Unlike its namesake, it has a smooth leaf and pale white veins. Adventurous foragers should beware its effects (equivalent to belladonna, though with the inhaled trait rather than ingested).

### Lover's Clover

Lover's clover is a spreading ground cover and staple of many ecosystems. It's edible—I recommend using it in a salad. Stumbling across a patch of lover's clover on a date is a lucky sign for the relationship.



### Mandrake Root

Above ground, mandrakes can be spotted by either their purple flowers or green fruit, depending on the time of year. When safely harvested, the root is used in ritual magic. Consumption isn't recommended, as it's poisonous.



### Ocher Flax

Ocher flax is one of the most popular cultivars of flax, as it produces linen that retains its moisture-wicking properties with increased durability. The name comes from the distinct ocher flowers that bloom when the plant is ready for harvesting.



### Tanglebriar Mushroom

Originally from Tanglebriar Forest, the Tanglebriar mushroom is an invasive species. It's edible, though tales say consuming these mushrooms makes the eater more susceptible to demonic attacks. This is false; however, its growth contributes to tree blight.



### Winteryew

Winteryew has filled many bellies with its nutritious bark and edible seeds. Magic appears to keep it fruitful even outside its typical growing conditions. Accordingly, this plant is one of the few you'll find in Irrisen, where the endless cold kills most greenery.



## FAUNA

While stories of great beasts and cunning predators quickly find popularity, most animals live alongside us in peace. It's easy to take a humble rabbit for granted. My time getting to know the creatures around me has brought me immense joy. They may be slow to open up, but it's worth every moment spent to build trust. These animals are a small sampling from my larger *Field Guide to Animals* (both Garund and Avistan volumes available).



### Baccali Alpaca

A Druman breed of alpaca, the baccali alpaca is prized for its exceptionally soft wool. (Use statistics for a riding pony with a ranged spit Strike that has a range of 10 feet and deals 1d3+1 bludgeoning damage.)



### Dairy Goat

If it weren't for their valuable milk and low cost of care, dairy goats wouldn't be popular. They're foul-tempered but valuable, making most dairy goat farmers wish they never got into the business.



### Honey Pangolin

The honey pangolin lives exclusively in the desert interior of Thuvia. The oldest known member of the species is estimated to be 750 years old. Speculation by researchers presumes they're long lived due to a diet of sun orchids.



### Irriseni Owlbear

A cultural symbol for Irrisen, the Irriseni owlbear is particularly well adapted to frosty conditions. These owlbears are larger than their temperate zone counterparts. (Use statistics for an elite owlbear with cold resistance 5.)



### Jackalope

Most people won't see a jackalope in their lifetime. When a spotting does occur, it tends to be of a migrating pack. Dedicated jackalope watchers maintain lists of confirmed sightings, potential nesting sites, and migration patterns.

### Lion of Taldor

The existence of wild lions in the country is a long-standing legend in Taldor. Each tale differs in its telling, but that lions went extinct after the first Grand Prince of Taldor died is the most popular version.



### Mammoth

In the Realm of the Mammoth Lords, these beasts are both their land's namesake and crucial animals of burden. Kellid followings treat their mammoths as full members of the family, as the following's well-being and health depends on them.



### Sarkorian Wolf

To survive living in the Worldwound, Sarkorian wolves developed defenses against the Abyss. They've become symbols for Mendevian crusaders who struggled to adapt to the world after the war ended. (Use statistics for a wolf with evil resistance 5.)



### Vulture Rat

These scavenger rats live in Geb, where they feast on the remains of the undead. They're adapted to going long periods without sustenance but viciously attack any possible food source. (Use statistics for a giant rat whose jaws Strike has the deadly d8 trait.)



### Whalesteed

Whalesteeds were first tamed in the Shackles as part of an ambush between rival pirate captains. Whalesteed riders are still an unusual sight, as learning to master the skill takes years of training. (Use statistics for a Large bottlenose dolphin.)



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## Artevil

While artevil is pleasant to eat, its purging properties means you shouldn't add too much! It's wonderful for indigestion, provided a privy is close by.

## Curled Cure

Any herbalist with access keeps curled cure on hand. Soothing burns, relieving congestion, and ingesting as a digestive aid are the most common uses.

## Lady's Blessing

My most sacred herb from the Lady of Graves. It hastens border crossings, be it childbirth, conjurations, or death. It's not to be trifled with.

## Drowsy Sun

Be cautious! While its oil helps with drowsiness and night vision, overuse leads to blindness. Don't use more than once a week.

## Toothwort

Handy for toothaches. Best purchased fresh and turned into a paste. Apply to the hurting tooth, but be sure to see if the tooth needs removal.

## Yarrow Powder

While its use is to stop bleeding, yarrow has a pleasing, almost spicy smell. I like to think of it as the adventurer's perfume.

# HERBALIST SHOP

The natural world provides a plethora of medicinal plants, of which I've spent a lifetime learning their uses. This herbalist shop is like the one I ran before I retired to be an educator. Even the briefest understanding of plant-based remedies can help in a pinch. If you're outside city walls, this knowledge can help you survive long enough to get assistance.

## NEW PLANT ITEMS

Each of the plant items listed below has specific benefits, some of which apply when you use a specific action or activity. Alchemical plant items are "herbal items," meaning characters with the herbalist archetype (*Advanced Player's Guide* 176) can use their archetype abilities with them. Items that require using them as part of a Medicine check are kept in your healer's tools, allowing you to access the item as part of the check. Items with the additive trait work just like alchemist feats with the additive trait, except they require consuming the item rather than taking a feat. You can add only one additive to a single alchemical item; attempting to add another spoils the item. You can typically Activate items with the additive trait only when you're creating an infused alchemical item; you can draw the item with the additive trait as part of using advanced alchemy or Quick Alchemy. The additive trait is always followed by a level, such as additive 2. An additive adds its level to the level of the alchemical item you're modifying; the result is the new level of the mixture. The mixture's item level must be no higher than your advanced alchemy level.

### ARTEVIL SUSPENSION ITEM 3

ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

**Price** 11 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

**Activate** Treat Poison

This dried herb is known for its ability to draw toxins from the body, albeit violently. You can administer the suspension orally, Activating the item as part of the same activity you use to Treat Poison. If you succeed at your Medicine check to Treat Poison against an ingested poison, you can reduce the stage of the toxin by one stage, though this can't reduce the stage below stage 1 or cure the poison entirely. If you do, the creature becomes sickened 2 as its body purges the toxin. An artevil suspension doesn't work unless the poison was administered through ingestion; for instance, if a poison can be administered through either ingestion or injury and was administered through injury, the suspension won't work.

### CURLED CURE GEL ITEM 7

ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

**Price** 60 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

**Activate** Treat Wounds

Curled cure secretes a gel that gently warms the skin and stimulates healing. You can Activate the item as part of the same activity you use to Treat Wounds. If you successfully Treat Wounds, you can also reduce the value of one of the targets' clumsy, enfeebled, or stupefied conditions by 1. The target of your Treat Wounds is then temporarily immune to curled cure gel for 24 hours, whether or not your attempt to Treat Wounds was successful.

### DROWSY SUN EYE DROPS ITEM 3

ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

**Price** 9 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

**Activate** Seek

These drops are made from luminescent mushrooms and refined into eye drops, which simulates a creature's natural night vision. When you attempt a Perception check to Seek, you can draw and apply a dose of drowsy sun to your eyes as part of the same action, which grants you darkvision to a range of 30 feet for 1 round. If you do, your Seek action gains the manipulate trait, due to drawing and applying the eye drops.

### LADY'S BLESSING OIL ITEM 1

ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

**Price** 3 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

**Activate** Administer First Aid

Lady's blessing oil is favored by Pharasmin healers who ease the transitions of life. You can Activate the item as part of the same activity you use to Administer First Aid to stabilize a creature. If you use lady's blessing oil, the DC of the check to Administer First Aid is reduced to the creature's recovery roll DC, rather than 5 + the recovery roll DC. However, if you roll a failure on the check, you get a critical failure instead.

### TOOTHWORT EXTRACT ITEM 3

ADDITIVE 1 ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

**Price** 9 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

**Activate**  $\diamond$  **Trigger** You use Quick Alchemy to craft an alchemical poison that's at least 1 level lower than your advanced alchemy level.

Originally used in dental procedures, toothwort numbs the gums by deadening nerves. When the oils are extracted and distilled, toothwort has a secondary reputation among alchemists for enhancing the duration of poisons. When adding toothwort extract to an alchemical poison, you can extend the maximum duration of the poison by 1 round.

### YARROW-ROOT BANDAGE ITEM 4

ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE

**Price** 12 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

**Activate** Administer First Aid

This root is often infused into bandages for life-threatening bleeding. Activating the item is part of the same activity you use to Administer First Aid to stop bleeding on a creature who's also dying. When you do, you can Administer First Aid to stop bleeding and dying as part of the same activity with only one Medicine check. However, the DC for the Medicine check is equal to the 5 + the higher of the two DCs to Administer First Aid.

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### X's Lizard

I've been told this lizard is the best security system you can imagine. Keep hold of your jewelry though—they'll instinctively try to eat it.



### House Eagle

Popular in Andoran as a display of national pride, house eagles are good for anyone who wants a security alarm with their ear-shattering alert call.



### Domestic Opossum

Happy to curl up in any warm spot, the domestic opossum reminds me to slow down, enjoy the sun, and relax.



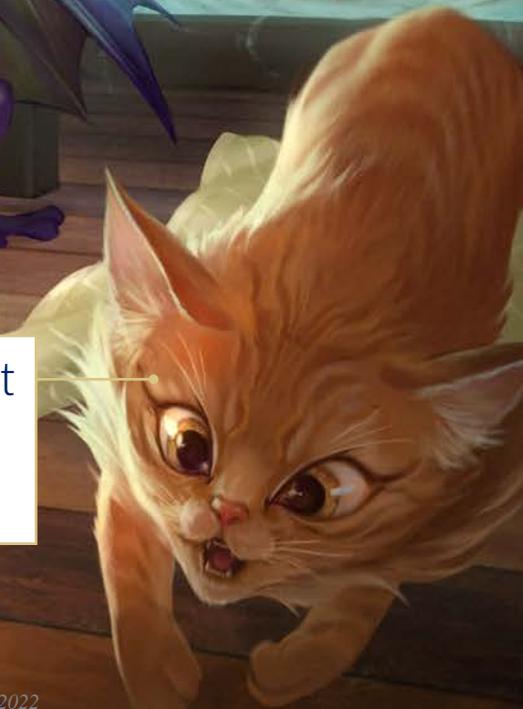
### Cradle Minder

Is it weird if I find them cute? They like being scratched under the chin, though their slimy skin is a bit strange!



### Galtan Orange Cat

I'm not sure if Galtan orange cats hate me or are always in a foul mood. I recommend them only for experienced owners.



### Kayalini

That isn't a monster hiding in the darkness. It's just a kayalini, a favorite pet kayals bring from the Plane of Shadow.



# PET SHOP

While many adventurers focus on practicality, pets can provide comfort during long travels. Particularly sought-after breeds fetch high prices, especially with papers establishing the animal's pedigree. Even livestock is purchasable through pet stores, though the prices vary compared to those raised for farm life due to increased requirements for temperament.

## ANIMALS

The following entries list prices for animals that aren't sufficiently trained for combat and are habituated to lifestyles as pets, making such training all but impossible. These entries don't include animal companion or familiar statistics. The listed prices for animals are average or starting prices; prices will vary or increase significantly depending on the breed and rarity of animal.

**Cradle Minder:** Sought after in Cheliox, the cradle minder resembles an imp. Despite rumors they were given as part of household pacts with devils, these creatures were bred from fiendish frogs. Amphibious, they have leathery wings, frog-like eyes, and a forgiving temperament. They're ideal companions for children, as they tend to bond closely with one person and let out loud croaks when they become aware of danger. They require fiendish earthworms (unique feed) regularly, so ensuring you have a stable food supply is a necessity for ownership.

**Eagle, House:** These smaller falcons feature the brown-and-white markings of eagles and are popular among Eagle Knights. They serve both as a symbol of national pride and help keep watch in the field. They can be kept in a home but require a dedicated perch. They're known for pouncing on and tearing up floor rugs.

**Galtan Orange Cat:** The Galtan orange cat was bred to have short legs and a thick orange coat so it could easily hunt vermin in tight spaces. They were often kept as staff in noble houses. During the Galtan revolution, as noble households fell, these cats were left to fend for their themselves. While there's a substantial feral population, only one breeder of pedigreed Galtan orange cats remains, making them highly sought after.

**Kayalini:** Originally brought to Absalom by kayals fleeing the Shadow Plane, kayalins are shy creatures made from shadow. They resemble small monkeys with reptilian features like claws, short horns, and long, shadowy tongues. When in a new home, they tend to hide under beds or in closets. Around people they trust, they'll sit quietly on a lap for hours.

**Opossum, Domestic:** This tamed version of the wild Arcadian opossum is favored by those who like to match outfits with their pets, as the domestic opossum tolerates clothing and accessories. They're very tolerant of travel and can eat table scraps, making them popular with caravan drivers or ship captains.

**X's Lizard:** Named after the druid that popularized them, these black-and-white lizards have substantial stomachs and a rather slow digestive system. X trained these lizards to keep valuables in their stomachs. They swallow specially treated purses with attached chains that clip to a collar, which can hold objects up to 1 Bulk. The contents of the purse stay safe for one month before slowly dissolving.

TABLE 3: ANIMAL PRICES

Name	Price
Alpaca	75+ gp
Axolotl	40 gp
Badger	15 sp
Bat	3+ gp
Beehive	1 gp
Bird	1+ sp
Bird, house eagle	10 gp
Butterfly or moth	1 sp
Cat	3+ cp
Cat, Galtan orange	10 gp
Cow	8 gp
Cradle minder	50 gp
Dinosaur	10+ gp
Dog	2+ sp
Duck	5 sp
Ferret	1 sp
Fish	1+ cp
Fox	8 sp
Frog	2+ sp
Gerbil or hamster	1 sp
Horse	2+ gp
Kayalini	5 gp
Lizard	1+ sp
Lizard, X's	1 gp
Monkey	3 gp
Mouse	1 cp
Opossum, domestic	2 gp
Pig	5+ sp
Praying mantis	1 sp
Rabbit	1+ gp
Raccoon	5 gp
Rat	1+ sp
Snake	1+ gp
Spider	2+ sp
Squirrel	7 sp
Turtle	3 sp

TABLE 4: ANIMAL CARETAKING GEAR PRICES

Name	Price
Animal bed	1 sp
Cage	5 sp
Collar	1 sp
Feed, standard (1 week's feed)	1 cp
Feed, unique (1 week's feed)	1 sp
Handling gloves	5 sp
Harness	8 sp
Leash	1 sp
Tank, stationary	1 gp
Tank, traveling	10 gp
Treats, standard	1 cp
Treats, unique	1 sp

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# Famous Monster Hot Spots



## MONSTER LOCATIONS

Knowing where to find monsters is the first step in avoiding them. Some foolhardy souls chase glory (and death!) by hunting the creatures down. For those who choose that route, knowing what to look for is the best way to stay prepared. The entries below and the accompanying map detail the appearance of lairs, famous sightings, and common hot spots for specific monsters. The following are only some of the more notable locations for these monsters. They can still be found in other locales and regions, however, and traveling in different regions doesn't guarantee you won't encounter one of the following monsters.

**Assassin Vine:** The carnivorous assassin vine is an adept predator in forests or swamps. They blend into the surrounding foliage, appearing as ivy or other trailing vines. The one clue that you've stumbled into an assassin vine's grove is the presence of the blood-red berries the monstrous plants bear after feeding. Since they adapt to the local environment for camouflage, individual groves appear wildly different. The largest known grove of assassin vines is a collection of nearly 100 individual specimens in Tanglebriar. Since the vines have adapted to the natural fiendish influence, they appear like twisted brambles and briars around a falsely peaceful glade.

**Bloodseeker:** The simple bloodseeker is responsible for more deaths than any creature of legend. They come from their breeding pools, suck livestock dry, and disappear once again. Every outpost has a farmer who can talk about a prize sow flying away as bloodseekers carried her off. The mud-packed dens of bloodseekers tend to form in abandoned buildings or swampland. Often, you can hear their buzzing before you see the den itself. Unfortunately, finding a den tends to be the last act of a desperate farmer, as the bloodseekers are only too happy for the self-delivered meal.

**Gelatinous Cube:** A gelatinous cube turns any space into its lair, much as it turns any well-traveled passage into a scouring ground for food. A gelatinous cube moves slowly and rarely rests, as its entire body focuses on gathering stray nutrients and dissolving them. A fair amount of these stray nutrients comes from foolhardy travelers. A sure sign a gelatinous cube is near is if a long-abandoned underground space is spotless, without signs of cobwebs or dust. Nex reports more gelatinous cubes within its borders than any other comparable country, likely one of the many results of Geb and Nex's endless conflict.

**Goblin Dog:** Neither goblin nor dog, these large rodents are favored by goblins as mounts. They're cowardly ambushers that focus on attacking otherwise weakened prey. Apart from goblins, they don't tend to bother people much—unless you're injured, fatigued, or otherwise vulnerable. If they find you in such a state, you'll likely get a rare look at their burrowing lairs. Goblin dogs are plentiful across Avistan, though they're particularly concentrated in Varisia with

both goblin populations and ample predators from which to scavenge. If you have the unpleasant luck of getting bitten by one, take care that the wound doesn't become infected.

**Manticore:** Manticores nest in mountains or on rock pillars, both for protection from armed warriors and to enjoy tossing their victims far below. Many manticores relish the comfortable life of pulling a person into their nest before eating them. While manticore nests are easily recognized once you're in one, identifying where they are before this happens is vital. Take care when moving under any cliff faces with particularly large nests near the top, especially in the Mindspin Mountains. If you see signs of frequent impact on the surface below, such as the bodies of small mammals, leave as quickly as possible.

**Otyugh:** Filth-eating otyughs tend to gather wherever garbage collects, and there's no place with more garbage than the sewers of Absalom. The otyughs of Absalom have created a society, complete with titles, demarcated territory, and in-fighting. Much of the discussion is over who gets the choicest refuse pits. Those with more status enjoy spots near prominent eateries or dumping sites. A well-to-do otyugh enjoys a comfortable corner of the sewers underneath a grate, while less lucky ones must fend for themselves and carry trash back to their home. At least one criminal enterprise made a deal with an otyugh in the sewer below it, where it provides a steady supply of choice refuse while the otyugh takes care of any bodies dumped into their domain.

**Reefclaw:** The first reefclaw I ever saw was just outside Port Peril in the Shackles. At the time, I didn't understand the panic over their appearance. After I learned of their intelligence and preference for drowning their prey, it became clear getting into the water with one is a good way to never come out. They're smart enough to eavesdrop on conversations and plan hunting parties. When they catch something—or someone—they can eat, they drag them to underwater brood sites and pick the bones clean. Once they're done, reefclaws bury into the sand to digest their meals. A field of bones under the water is a sign a reefclaw lair is near; keep your eyes on the ocean floor.

**Warg:** With a person's intelligence and jaws that can open to swallow prey whole, wargs devastate the areas they haunt. Orcs and hobgoblins often recruit wargs into their armies, offering food and shelter in exchange for support in battle. After a war ends, wargs tend to stay around, claiming lairs for their own and driving out other animals in the region in the process. Since the end of the Goblinblood Wars in Isger, the Chitterwood has been scarred with fires that drove the goblinoids out. The wargs that brokered for territory have also prevented it from recovering. Tales of the Chitterwood say if the forest turns quiet around you, wargs are watching and preparing to strike. No one has seen their lair and lived to talk of it, but rumors say they've taken over an old graveyard and sleep in mausoleums with the long-abandoned dead.

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# WEATHER & CLIMATE

*“Leave the Furs at Home: A Wanderer’s Advisory on the Weather of the Inner Sea” by Eingar Snowhide*

My mother always insisted that first, I should never lose the wanderlust of the Ulfen people, and second, I should take easy gold when offered. When asked to spend the better part of three years striding across the Inner Sea to record the weather for someone else to read, I said yes. I can say with the certainty of a cold Irrisen winter it hasn’t been the most comfortable of times, and I am used to dressing for it. Most of the climes I visited are far hotter than my home, and I quickly needed to discard my good cloaks as they became more of a burden than protection. Read of my travels so you don’t suffer the same loss.

## PREDICTING THE WEATHER

Varied are the ways to predict what weather may befall you. The Wind and the Waves is well known for sudden changes of mood and bouts of ire, but they often give fair warning for those wise enough to look for signs. The gale-speaker on the ship on which I began my journey granted me an ingenious tool: a storm gauge. Attuned to the natural energies that compose a fierce storm—and imbued with a touch of primal magic—the small glass tube contains a bluish liquid that rises and falls based on proximity to a rainstorm. Purchase one at your earliest chance; the device is invaluable to keeping yourself dry. Remain warned that shelter is not always readily available, and the surest means to protect from the weather is to dress for it.

Divination magic is commonly used to look forward in the short term, though it’s unreliable outside a few days. Primal magic is a tool that can direct the immediate weather to some degree, but the power to fully quell or redirect a storm is rare. Still, no small town is complete without an elder or other community figure with the magic to impact or at least predict the weather. Should you ever come to a settlement that doesn’t possess one, I advise you not to linger.

Up north, my people have a saying: “broken ice on shore, the tides at war.” Shattered ice can indicate the presence of powerful waves or some other disturbance of which to be wary. The people I have met in my travels use their own adages. I will include some, with their meaning as it was explained to me.

**Shaking of the trunks, breaking of the land:** Used in Nex where earthquakes are preceded by shuddering trees.

**Open roots go deep:** A saying that doesn’t quite translate from Elven but means areas composed of only strong trees have heavy rain.

**Desert winds have teeth of sand:** A warning in Osirion and Thuvia that winds can rise to speeds fast enough for the sand to scour flesh.

**Thunder is deadlier than cannons:** Merchants on the High Seas are no stranger to pirates from the Shackles, but a storm can sink a ship even quicker.

## CLIMES OF THE INNER SEA

Having now cataloged the climate of the Inner Sea’s major regions, I present my findings here. I recommend reading through the entire section to better understand the Inner Sea as a whole.

### ABSALOM

The Isle of Kortos at the core of our Inner Sea has what many consider perfect weather, no doubt an intentional boon from the Last Azlanti. Spring and autumn last a good while, ensuring winter and summer don’t drag on. Winters here were alien to me, with temperatures rarely below the freezing of water and only a handful of light snowstorms. Summers are warm, especially to my mind, though never painfully hot.

While temperatures are generally in a comfortable range, the Starstone Isle boasts other weather of greater note, namely, the winds. The winter months are known for the Gozfrost winds that make staying outdoors a rather unpleasant affair. The spring Gozhome winds bring rains that last for months. The Porthmos Winds in Sarenith clear the skies to give the island its idyllic summers, and the winds of Rova bring more rains to prepare the island for winter. Many citizens I spoke with set their schedules not on the clocks or sun, but on the winds instead.

If you intend to take full advantage of the isle’s climate, be aware of the phenomenon known as the Welt, which grows in the northwest of the island. Caused by some tampering of magics beyond my understanding, the land has begun to decay and is far from an ideal place to visit.

### BROKEN LANDS

Though its fairly regular Avistani seasons make the weather of the Broken Lands seem all of one cloth, each nation varies greatly in one quality: dampness. The further south and east one travels, the higher the humidity, until you reach the River Kingdoms. There, the air is practically a nourishing soup for how thick it is.

The energies of the Worldwound, though it’s now closed, still swirl throughout the Sarkoris Scar, bringing with them the blood rain and dry lightning storms of the Abyss. The area may eventually settle back to whatever it once was, but at present, a clear sky can snap to chaos in an instant. Boils of lava still occasionally burst from the ground, so be wary of warm earth beneath your boots. Fiery winds often travel east, creating warm fronts over the Lake of Mists and Veils. The air pressure generates intense rains that hammer the northern half of Brevoy.

In contrast, the atmosphere of the River Kingdoms holds its moisture with a miserly fist, rarely giving it back to the earth in the form of rain. Dense and clammy air bleeds the water out in a slow plasmolysis, leaving most surfaces damp from more than just sweat. It was here I

was forced to discard my first fur cloak, as it gathered mold after mere days in my pack. Should you pass a mound marked with a runestone outside Leydis, you might choose to pay your respects.

## Eye of Dread

The most varied in weather from nation to nation, the region around the Eye of Dread sports many dangers and quirks of which to be aware. The Hold of Belkzen hosts a dusty, arid region with little rainfall or snow. Haunted Ustalav features year-round mists that burn away by noon and suspiciously has fewer daylight hours than its neighbors. Of the nations the less foolhardy would desire to travel, Nirmathas and Molthune are slightly more humid than a perfectly balanced climate, such as Absalom's, and feature a fair amount of light rain.

Thriving darkly off the corpse of fallen Lastwall, the Gravelands are not a place I dared travel. Instead, I gathered eyewitness accounts from Knights Reclaimant, who reported eerily low temperatures for the region, though not frigid. Through magic or devious machinery, a dark film fills the sky, obscuring the sun into dim light so the Whispering Tyrant's forces may move about at all hours. For obvious reasons, I don't recommend a visit.

The new nation of Oprak wasn't accepting unexpected travelers when I last passed through the area, though I did spend a week in the Mindspin Mountains on my journey south before the arrival of the Ironfang Legion. The range is cool even in summer, with scattered sunlight in the afternoon as the sun passes across the western edge to Nidal.

## Golden Road

No region I visited felt less like home than the Golden Road. The northern strip of Garund is unbearably hot to my Ulfen temperament, but stranger still is the sheer lack of moisture. The humidity of the Mwangi Expanse or River Kingdoms is absent here, replaced by scorching blasts of wind that feel like a campfire being thrown at you. The heat from the air may be lighter, but it saps your strength and willingness to move all the same. What sparse shade found in the blasted deserts offers little comfort. Only the coasts and rivers provide any reprieve, with water and lush greens to cool some of the burning sun.

On the western edge of the continent and close to the Eye of Abendego, Rahadom enjoys relatively cooler ocean winds that stream in from the hurricane at all hours. The Steaming Sea's coastline receives regular rainfall in the summers, keeping the landscape some measure of green. As you round the tip of the Barrier Wall through the capital of Azir, things turn bleaker, opening to scorched sands that stretch for hundreds of miles and persistent winds.

The prevailing winds from the Eye of Abendego carry across the Golden Road through Thuvia and Osirion,

depositing gritty rain from the desert sands as far as Qadira on the opposite shore. The southern area of that nation keeps the oppressive temperature of its fellows thanks to these gusts, though the northern section that has been won from Taldor over the centuries was lush and tolerably warm as I traveled through it.

## High Seas

With barely any land to speak of, the High Seas that frame the eastern edge of the Arcadian Ocean are subject to the whims of Gozreh and the aquatic creatures that call it home. Summer storms can last for weeks, followed by a dangerous becalming of the wind that has stranded countless ships. Independent from the climes of the nations upon which their waves break, the seas keep their own weather. To the north, the Steaming Sea lives up to its name with thick tendrils of fog reaching for the clouds from the water. South, the Fever Sea swelters with tropical heat, making journeys there uncomfortable.

I could find no ship captain greedy enough to pilot me within range to study the Eye of Abendego, which likely was to my benefit. The persistent hurricane consumes vessels of every size, with winds that can be felt for miles before it appears over the horizon. At the closest my captain would venture, we were buffeted by turbulent waves. A shard of timber struck the deck, and I feared the ship had broken in two—until the bosun showed me the wood was of a different color.

## Impossible Lands

Living up to its moniker, the Impossible Lands defy most accepted conventions of weather or climate. With the mainland nestled in the rain shadow of the Shattered Range, the earth consists of mostly strangely colored dust and dry dirt. Still attempting to recover from the oppressive blight imposed by the necromancer Geb, the land of Nex remains barren despite the magically polluted torrents that blow in from the ocean. As for Geb itself, the nation sports a nearly tropical climate that leads to teeming vegetation, as if the land is making up for the living spark absent in its denizens.

Cutting a barrier between the two nations are the Mana Wastes, a climate so bizarre I'm at a loss in how to describe it. While magic functions unreliably in the blasted desert, so do the laws of nature. I encountered a cloud of burning ashes that froze to snowflakes as they reached me. Over the course of two hours, there was a thunderstorm, tornado-speed winds, and sudden lightning strikes that turned to stone the second they touched the earth. Some mind stronger than mine must tell me how it was all possible.

The Isle of Jalmeray's weather is mainly tropical, though its quirks were baffling at first. With so many genies residing on the island, each with their own elemental magics and levels of comfort, the climate in certain areas can wildly

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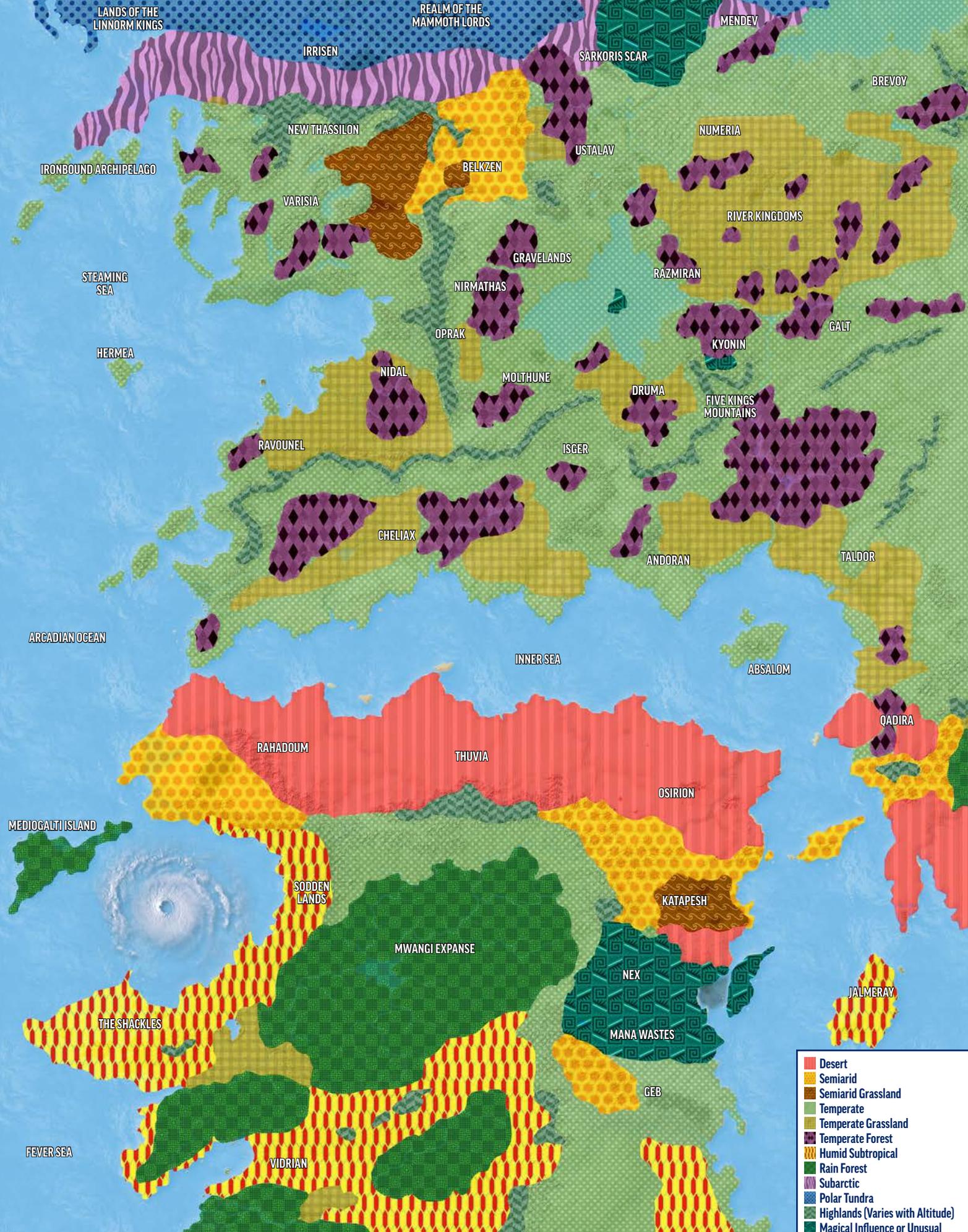
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# Weather Patterns



shift on a whim. The efreeti will raise the temperature in the morning, only to have the djinni and marids lower it by midafternoon. The inhabitants of the island hardly seemed to notice, always keeping easily foldable cloaks on them. While not as thick as I'm accustomed to, I have grown fond of the one I picked up there.

## MWANGI EXPANSE

My slow trip through the Mwangi Expanse was more enjoyable than I had predicted. "Now Eingar," I hear you say, "surely the heat of the jungle was unpleasant for your northern constitution." I can't lie, but there is much to behold in the weather of the Expanse besides its temperature. On top of being deposited in the Sodden Lands by the ship that took me across the High Seas, I arrived during the rainy season, and a waterspout followed us almost up to the dock. The constant mists in the mornings were somewhat reminiscent of the rime clouds at home, bringing a sense of familiarity even so far south from the snows.

The skies over the Sodden Lands remain dark year round, having choked the sun since the death of Aroden. This keeps the coast colder than the rest of the Expanse, with days reaching just warm enough to have no need of a cloak. Some amount of rain was near constant during my time there, even if only a drizzle. I was told the precipitation lessens during the dry season, though on the coast, it's still common enough the name barely applies.

Venturing to the interior of the Expanse, the jungle's tree line gives way to savannas where the wind can move freely, and sheet lightning becomes common in the drier heat. My guide across the Bandu Hills warned of rockslides and flooding during the rainy seasons—rightly so, as we witnessed half a cliffside slough away before us at the end of our journey.

## OLD CHELIAX

While the temperament of the people is far from my favorite, the region that's occupied by the once-great Chelaxian Empire does sport suitable weather by which to live and travel. Summers can grow quite hot, though cool breezes from the Arcadian Ocean bless the western coast of the area. Snowfall is present in the winter, though not overbearing beyond the peaks of the Menador Mountains. Come spring, the peaks melt quickly, leading to avalanches and flooding at the opening of the season.

If too much sun is a worry for you, a visit to Nidal could be worth your time (should the insular nation allow you access). Zon-Kuthon's influence over the country keeps the skies in a perpetual state of gloom, whether it be darkened storm clouds above the port of Nisroch or the less natural pure darkness over Pangolais. The heat of the day still finds its way past the dark cover but stays blessedly moderate even in the summer.

## SAGA LANDS

Ah, my ancestral home. The Saga Lands boast a variety of comfortable climes, with Varisia's cool summer for the

weak to the Lands of the Linnorm Kings where the winter lasts most of the year and builds character. The witches of Irrisen maintain their eternal winter, blasting frigid air west to us and east to the Mammoth Lords. Whether New Thassilon is insulated from this by the mountains separating them or by some Azlanti magic, I can't say.

The southern coast of Varisia is replete with humid swamps, windy grasslands, and forests that shed their leaves at the slightest hint of snow. Fog and storms blow in from the Steaming Sea in the spring, keeping the temperature cool even as the season fades to summer. On the Storval Plateau, dust storms carry the ash of wildfires and lightning across the appropriately named Cinderlands, suffusing the area with a dry heat like that found on the Golden Road.

Upon my journey back north, I was granted passage through Eurythnia at the behest of Runelord Sorshen's Travel Ministry. I received quite the welcome, with many important merchants and dignitaries encouraging me to write well of the kingdom and boost tourism. Disappointment was clear on their faces when I explained that I was only there to report their weather. I did, however, manage to replace some of the cloaks I had lost on my journey.

## SHINING KINGDOMS

In a rather pleasant change of pace, the climate of the Shining Kingdoms is almost perfectly average. The summers are hot, the winters are cold, the spring and autumn a reasonable compromise between them. Situated toward the middle point of the Inner Sea region and with no history of extreme magical tampering, the weather here is as natural as one can find. Winds carry slight storms from the Inner Sea, watering numerous forests and plains that recede and flourish with the years.

Kyonin manages comfortable temperatures in the summer, thanks to near-complete canopy cover. The forest leaves don't change color come winter, for I'm told they feel the passage of time as elves do—drawn out and aloof. Some of the scouts told me Tanglebriar is far hotter, suffused with demonic energies, but I decided it was not worth the risk to verify myself.

## NATURAL DISASTERS

In such an eventful place as the Inner Sea region, it seems earth-shaking occurrences happen with frequency—so much so that the actual shaking of the earth (or other natural disaster) often goes unnoticed. This doesn't make such events any less dangerous. As you travel across the region, be aware of these hazards and where they may be encountered.

**Avalanches:** The stillness of a mountain peak often belies a danger that could strike at any moment. Weakened snow can collapse down the mountain slopes, gaining speed and power and growing large enough to engulf anything that lies in its path. Most avalanches occur during storms or heavy snowfall, and any traveler out in such conditions is already dead, either from the

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cold, the snow, or the things that come with it—yet sometimes, packed slabs of snow are weakened by their own weight but still hold on until seemingly fair weather lulls inexperienced explorers into a false sense of security. A wise guide learns to spot a potential avalanche before it happens. Once it starts to fall, it's likely too late to outrun it.

During my travels, I came across a number of people in warmer climes who were convinced an avalanche could be started by a loud shout or a cross word. I know many an Ulfen braggart who can prove that this is not the case.

**Earthquakes:** Left fractured and disrupted by the centuries-long war of two powerful wizards, it's no wonder the land of Nex and the Mana Wastes experience several earthquakes (*Core Rulebook* 518) a year. The trees in Nex have deep roots, which cause the trunks to shake uncontrollably as the quake rises to the surface. Locals take this sign as a warning to seek shelter.

North in the Sarkoris Scar, the land has yet to heal from the sealing of the Worldwound. Shifting ground is common, particularly in the center of the Scar where the plane was most damaged. I'm told by geologists the sliding plates beneath the earth will one day give rise to mountains, though few of us will live to see it.

**Flooding:** Where there are valleys and rains, there will always be flooding (*Core Rulebook* 518), but a few locations around the Inner Sea are particularly susceptible. Snowmelt from the Menador Mountains often soaks northern Chelias in the spring and early summer. Previously, the nation had irrigation networks to protect itself, but with the decline of the empire, those, too, have fallen to disrepair.

Surprisingly, the Sodden Lands on the coast of the Mwangi Expanse don't often flood with disastrous consequences. After decades of being hammered by storms, the people there have adapted with well-irrigated roads and stilted buildings to avoid rising waters. Further inland near Lake Ocota and the rivers is where most true flooding occurs, with the waters surging over the banks after heavy rains.

The River Kingdoms is likewise prone to floods in the spring, though with water so abundant and the people prepared with boats at a moment's notice, it hardly seems a concern to them. Waist-deep water is expected in the spring, and only strong currents generated from the sudden freeing of a blockage cause any real sense of danger. Even in my home of the Linnorm Kings, we have a good amount of unexpected water. Snow packs more tightly than its melted counterpart, and come spring, Kalsgard's frozen streets can get a sudden washing.

Though much rarer due to the lack of rainfall, any desert can be prone to flash floods when the storm clouds finally darken their horizons. With their landscapes of rock or porous sand, without trees or grass to trap the moisture, heavy rains can turn into rivers within an instant. Those seeking secure shelter only from the skies are often unprepared to face a high speed torrent as it snakes along the earth.

**Hurricanes:** Spring and summer are often hazardous along the coasts of the Inner Sea, bringing not just rain but hurricanes with some frequency. While the permanent and stationary hurricane that is the Eye of Abendego may be the most famous, its smaller brethren aren't to be ignored. Hurricanes that form on the High Seas can come across ships suddenly, evolving from a mere storm into the very manifestation of Gozreh's fury. Those on land usually have more warning, but they often fare little better: in the face of winds that can pick up a house and fling it like a horseshoe, one can do little except to hide beneath the earth or flee.

On the west coast of the Mwangi Expanse, the rainy seasons bring hurricanes as well as simple storms. The Eye of Abendego seems to birth relatively lesser cyclones that are thrust upon the Sodden Lands by prevailing winds. Structures along the shore are typically built with the understanding that they are temporary, as constructing something to withstand the weather is exorbitantly expensive. Though uncommon, two hurricanes can enter each other's orbit, creating a storm system far greater than the sum of its parts. Such disasters have the strength to reach far inland, causing massive destruction.

Jalmeray once enjoyed full protection from cyclonic storms when the dominance of djinni was absolute. Now that the relationship has turned to a more equitable partnership, the island can fall prey to the odd hurricane. During lean times when the rajahs and ranis let their payments to the genies lapse, djinni cease their watch of the Obari Ocean's weather streams, and in so doing, fail to quell a dangerous storm. After such an event, mortal rulers are quick to resume their payment.

**Landslides:** Related to avalanches and floods, landslides are more insidious and unpredictable to the unwary. While travelers on mountain slopes at least know the risk, a landslide can both collapse an entire hillside and smother a village a fair distance away from it. They are often caused by heavy rains but just as often lie in wait until fair weather. Slow-moving mud flows at least offer a chance for their more distant victims to seek safety, but faster mudslides strike with the speed of water and the weight of the earth.

Predicting a landslide is difficult, as the flaws that cause it are hidden beneath the grass and earth. I learned over time to be wary of hills without plants or trees, mining sites, and houses built on the sides of earthen slopes.

**Thunderstorms:** No stranger to violent weather, the High Seas are fraught with some of the more dangerous thunderstorms (*Core Rulebook* 517) around the Inner Sea. Either through magic or a strange twist of nature, the lightning produced by these storms is a bright orange color that flashes across the surface of the water like poison spreading within veins. Sailors have told me tales of thunder so loud it shreds sails and splinters masts. These storms come with much rain but little wind, marking them different from the hurricanes of the region, if no less frightening.

The cool air blown in from the Eye of Abendego clashes often with the warm climate of Rahadoum, causing bouts of thunder and lightning without the telltale presence of a conventional storm. It's common to find portions of the desert heated to glass by the fall of a lightning bolt, peppering the dunes like pockmarks. These "thunder falls," as the locals call them, are particularly dangerous due to mistrust of the divine and of most magical means that could protect the atheist populace from them.

Thunderstorms of substantial size also occur in the Mana Wastes, much as anything can hold true in a place that defies patterns. Made particularly difficult by the unpredictability of the Mana Wastes' weather, these squalls descend without the usual tell-tale signs of an impending storm. Travelers can easily find themselves under darkened skies riddled with lightning when, moments earlier, there was no trace of wind or cloud, making them all-the-more dangerous.

**Tornadoes:** Massive columns of wind, tornadoes (*Core Rulebook 519*) plague many areas of the Inner Sea with enough open ground for the funnels to travel across. Nirmathas and Molthune in particular must deal with a tornado season each spring. Hostilities between the two nations typically halt during this time, as more than one set of opposing troops has been annihilated by the sudden appearance of a twister.

In the area of Varisia known as the Storval Plateau, tornadoes can form during spring and autumn, offering reprieve from the violent elements only in the winter months. The wind pulls up massive volumes of dust, scattering it for miles, eroding away rock and trees alike. Shoanti of the Cinderlands sometimes include these tornadoes in their rites of passage, celebrating riders who manage to out-ride the storms.

Windy springs in Taldor give rise to tornadoes amid the open ground of the eastern plains. The majority of the nation's cities are out of harm's reach, but the various towns and villages that dot the landscape aren't so lucky. Adventurous young nobles sometimes take up storm chasing as a hobby, riding alongside the path of a twister's destruction and providing amateur meteorology notes.

**Tsunamis:** Every port city or town along a coast exists in quiet fear of being washed away by the greatest of waves. While most are safe from such a fate, some areas in the region are at risk of tsunamis (*Core Rulebook 519*). The shores of Nex and Geb are often struck by massive waves caused by the shifting of the ocean's floor—or perhaps by aquatic behemoths rumored to lurk in their oceans. Though Quantum is shielded by Valkus Isle from the worst of these, Mechitar isn't so fortunate. The Blood Lords built a massive retaining wall beyond the port from the countless bones of the nation's mindless undead.

In the Broken Bay to the west of the Land of the Linnorm Kings, tidal waves are common in the spring as glaciers begin to break apart and displace the sea.

Most of these waves are big enough only to cause flooding, though there have been instances of some swallowing whole islands. Bildt has begun training a small fleet of ships to slowly break down select icebergs at the end of winter in an attempt to control the displacement of the water.

**Volcanoes:** Short of Earthfall, volcanoes (*Core Rulebook 519*) may be the most intimidating disaster of the natural world. Eruptions shake the bowels of the earth, causing earthquakes and tsunamis in addition to the volcano's own dangers. Lava flows can destroy whole cities, while superheated ash storms can spread for miles beyond the mountain itself. Volcanic activity below the ocean's surface formed most of the Shackles' archipelago. These volcanoes are likely still active, a looming threat to the islands' inhabitants.

Andoran hosts the famous Droskar's Crag, an active volcano that once reshaped the land around it with its eruption. It looms over the Five Kings Range still, belching smoke and ash from its snow-capped peak. In the winter, the snow mingles with the ash cloud, leaving ominous drifts of black and gray snow across northern Andoran.

The Kodar Mountains host a number of smaller volcanoes, but none as prodigious as the Eye of the Unmaker, a smoking caldera where a hold of Belkzen orcs make their home. These Endseers are respected among the orc holds, and they seem to have found a way to flourish amid the lava and toxic fumes. I haven't been able to determine precisely how or why they chose such a dangerous location, for orcs don't readily share their secrets with outsiders. I should hope, however, that if the volcano were close to erupting, we would receive some warning from them as a courtesy.

**Wildfires:** Fire is one of the most important tools of civilization, but when unchecked, it's also a dangerous force of nature. No matter the origin, wildfires (*Core Rulebook 519*) are difficult to control and spread faster than gossip in a village square. Most common in the autumn when forests are dry, the Chitterwood in Isgar burns frequently. This is usually due to a wayward goblin getting overly playful with a torch, turning a spark into an inferno.

The tall grasses in Taldor's eastern counties are also fertile ground for wildfires, caused by humanoids or a stray bolt of lightning in the right place. The soil becomes rich in nutrients after a good blaze, leading to the practice of controlled burns to generate better farmland. These have been known to grow out of control, however, resulting in Princess Eutropia working with the senate to find less dangerous alternative solutions.

While properly cared for by the elven denizens, the forests of Kyonin are no more immune to wildfires than any other. The density of the trees means fire can spread almost indefinitely across the nation in all directions. Each settlement has its own fire brigade and water stores in the event of a blaze, using both magical and mundane means to contain outbreaks.

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# RARE EVENTS

A collection of extraordinary, supernatural, or otherwise notable and unusual events cataloged by Fulmadara Briarquill

Enclosed are my notes regarding once-in-a-lifetime events that reoccur across the Inner Sea. In the lifetime of an average ancestry, that is. No small wonder they asked the elf to do this, don't you think, Taldira? At any rate, it just so happens many of these events are set to return within the next few years, so if one is in the right place at the right time, they might catch one. I do hope this publication reaches the masses in time for them to see.

-dictated, not read, Fulmadara Briarquill

The following rare events are naturally occurring phenomena for GMs to use in their games around the Inner Sea. These downtime activities can be done by any characters present at the event, using any of the listed applicable skills and the DC of the event to determine the degree of success achieved. The GM can determine if other skills or saving throws might be applicable for a given event. Characters who choose to use the Aid reaction are also subject to the effects from the character they Aided. Each character can attempt the downtime activity only once per occurrence of the event, even if there's enough time to perform it more than once. Sometimes the benefit from a normal success is very different than a critical success, rather than a downgraded version. If you get a critical success, the GM can explain the benefits of both and allow you to choose the one you prefer.

As these are rare events that only occur after a number of years, it's recommended that GMs use these activities sparingly. The benefits are a reward, like items or extra feats; they will affect a character's power and capabilities, and should be measured accordingly. While they're technically temporary, sometimes a campaign with little downtime will be complete within a month or a year, making them effectively permanent as far as the story is concerned. On the flip side, the penalty from a critical failure could be something the character has to deal with for a significant portion of the campaign.

## ANIMAL MIGRATION

Across the plains of southern Taldor roam massive prides of lions, the nation's symbolic animal. The large cats feed on various herd animals of the area, and every 12 years hold a massive migration to another corner of the plains. Researchers suggest the prides instinctively know their feasts are richer when their prey is given time to repopulate. Adventurers and other enterprising types use this migration to study or capture lions as companions. The migration usually takes the lions just under a month, though the exact timing depends on the path through the plains.

### GREAT MIGRATION

EVENT 6

RARE DOWNTIME PRIMAL

Applicable Skills Athletics, Nature, Stealth, Survival

You run with the mass of lion prides for 1 week, doing your best to keep up with their loping strides. As you do so, the thrill of their wild freedom overtakes you, and you become more like a predatory cat with each step. Attempt a DC 24 check.

**Critical Success** Your predatory senses heighten to an intense degree. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Nature and Stealth checks and gain scent as an imprecise sense with a range of 60 feet. Your instincts remain sharpened for 1 year.

**Success** Your senses heighten, and you gain a greater understanding of natural predators. As critical success, except you don't gain scent and your senses are heightened for only 1 month.

**Failure** Keeping up with the prides proves too difficult for you, and you injure yourself. You take a -10-foot penalty to your Speeds for 1 week.

**Critical Failure** Your meddling causes several cubs to become injured, something that weighs on your conscience. You can't use the Command an Animal action and take a -2 circumstance penalty on Nature checks; both of these effects last for 1 month.

## BLOOD RAINS

Just when one believed Ustalav couldn't be more unnerving, in sweep the blood rains every 37 years. The origins are unknown, but storms of thick, red droplets of rain roll across the nation for a day. The precipitation clots as if it were blood, though thorough testing by alchemists results in indeterminate findings. Regardless, and perhaps most disturbingly, it appears being caught in this rain can be good for one's health. Usually.



### SANGUINE CASCADE

EVENT 6

RARE DOWNTIME NECROMANCY OCCULT

Applicable Skills Medicine, Occultism, Religion

You walk the streets as the blood rains pour down on you for 1 day. The water is sticky and begins to seep through your clothes and into your skin. Attempt a DC 24 check.

**Critical Success** You gain a taste for blood that invigorates you at the mere scent. Whenever a creature within 30 feet takes persistent bleed damage from one of your

abilities or effects, you gain temporary Hit Points equal to the damage dealt or half your level, whichever is lower. These temporary Hit Points remain for 1 minute. You gain the temporary Hit Points whenever the creature takes the damage, not when you inflict the persistent bleed on them. This effect lasts for 1 week.

**Success** The rain is pleasantly fortifying, giving you a sense of vigor. Creatures gain a +2 circumstance bonus to checks to Treat your Wounds. This effect lasts for 1 week.

**Failure** Something in the rain is wrong. You feel as if your body wants to shed itself of blood. You gain weakness to persistent bleed damage equal to half your level for 1 week.

**Critical Failure** Your vitality appears to have been torn from you. You become drained 2. As long as the drained condition persists, you take a -2 circumstance penalty to curses, diseases, and poisons. Reducing this drained condition by 1 requires 1 week of rest.

## CANOPY MOLTING

The forests of Kyonin are known for having year-round foliage, bearing the weight of winter snows without complaint. However, much like the elves who make the nation their home, this is only an illusion of immortality, not true agelessness. Every seventy-fourth autumn, the leaves of Kyonin's trees change color and eventually fall from the canopy, like a great serpent shedding its skin. The elves of the nation treat this as a solemn time of reflection and a reminder of their place on Golarion.

## AUTUMN'S REFLECTION EVENT 8

RARE DOWNTIME NECROMANCY PRIMAL

**Applicable Skills** Medicine, Nature, Religion, Society

You stand among the falling leaves of Kyonin's forests for 1 week and reflect upon the eventual mortality of ageless things. The dead canopy swirls around you, suffusing your being with its decaying energy. Attempt a DC 28 check.

**Critical Success** You gain *harm* as an innate primal spell you can cast once per day, heightened to a level equal to half your level, rounded up. You lose the ability to cast the innate spell after 1 year.

**Success** As critical success, except the spell is heightened 1 level lower (minimum 1st level). You lose the ability to cast the innate spell after 1 month.

**Failure** The leaves slice at your body, leaving your skin raw and prone to splitting. You gain weakness to slashing damage equal to half your level for 1 week.

**Critical Failure** You become susceptible to forces that drain your life force. You're permanently drained 1, and when you roll a failure against an effect with the necromancy trait, you get a critical failure instead. This effect has the curse trait and can be counteracted by *remove curse* or similar effects.

## DANCE OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN

In the far north near the Crown of the World, the days

stretch on, and night is only a scant few hours. Though weak and able to do little to warm the landscape, the light reflects off the surface of the ice, often creating optical illusions. Every decade or so, the sun remains in the sky for a full day and shines at just the right angle, warding off the night and bringing forth a group of dancers composed of pure light.

## GLACIAL WHIRL EVENT 14

RARE DOWNTIME ILLUSION

**Applicable Skills** Acrobatics, Performance, Society

You join the dancers of light in their concert for 1 day, following their steps as they move faster and faster. You must be quick and perceptive to keep up with the dance, gliding gracefully across the snowy fields. Attempt a DC 34 check.

**Critical Success** The dancers' light hangs in your eyes, allowing you to discern what's real and what's not. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Perception checks and Will saves against illusion effects. When you come within 10 feet of an illusion that can be disbelieved, the GM rolls a secret check for you to disbelieve it, even if you didn't spend an action to Interact with the illusion. The lights fade from your eyes after 1 month.

**Success** You manage to adjust fairly well to the distractions of bright light. The flat check for concealment from the dazzled condition becomes DC 3 for you for 1 month.

**Failure** Your eyes can't keep up with the rapid movement. You concentrate too hard, and a bright afterimage of the dancers burns across your vision, causing you to become dazzled for 1 week.

**Critical Failure** The reflection of the sun off a glacier catches you directly in the eyes as you move around. You become permanently blinded.

## GATHERING OF THE SUN ORCHID

One of the most sought-after items in the whole of Golarion, the fabled sun orchid elixir is a potent tool for turning back the aging hand of time and is a bounding step toward immortality. Simply to see it brewed would be a dream come true for me. Hmm? Oh, yes, Taldira, I suppose I am rambling. The closest one can get to being involved in the elixir's creation is to gather the plant itself. I call this a rare event because the supply of the sun orchid seems to have been dwindling of late, such that finding enough for more than one batch happens less than once a decade. There are telltale signs of a new harvest emerging, however, after which numerous groups will no doubt brave the deserts to find as much of the rare orchid as they can.

## SUN ORCHID HARVEST EVENT 12

RARE ALCHEMICAL DOWNTIME NECROMANCY PRIMAL

**Applicable Skills** Crafting, Nature, Plant Lore, Survival

Following the signs of a new blooming of sun orchids, you scour the heart of the Thuvian desert for any sign of the flowers for 1 week. Once found, care must be taken to harvest

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it correctly. Contact with the life-giving flower can boost your life force. Attempt a DC 32 check.

**Critical Success** You harvest a sun orchid and become invigorated by contact with the flower. While invigorated, you regain your maximum Hit Points when taking a full night's rest. Additionally, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to saving throws against effects that cause the clumsy, drained, or enfeebled condition. This invigorating feeling lasts for 1 year.

**Success** As critical success, but you don't gain the bonus to saving throws.

**Failure** You aren't able to find a sun orchid and instead stumble upon a danger of the desert. Your party faces a severe encounter as determined by the GM; encounters occur once for each character who experienced a failure result, including an additional encounter for each character who Aided a failed result.

**Critical Failure** Your search comes up empty, and you fail to take precautions against the heat of the desert. As failure, but you become fatigued before the encounter begins.

## PLANAR PORTALS

In your journeys across the Material Plane, you're sure to find many places where the barrier between our world and others cracks. The most famous of these is the now-closed Worldwound in the Sarkoris Scar, but other portals of note remain in stable locations, flickering from inactive to active for a few days every so many years. Why these tears happen on a dependable schedule or how they manage to close themselves is anyone's guess, though students of the planes could benefit from witnessing them open.

### SARKORIS SCAB

### EVENT 8

RARE ABJURATION DOWNTIME EVIL

**Applicable Skills** Athletics, Occultism, Religion

Though the Worldwound was closed by the Fifth Crusade in 4713 AR, the repercussions still linger in the Sarkoris Scar. At the site of the portal's closing, a much smaller tear blinks in and out of existence for a week every 3 years. You spend a week to ward the area with binding symbols and other methods to contain any demons that might escape. Attempt a DC 28 check.

**Critical Success** You close the portal, and Iomedae blesses you for assisting in the defense of her forces. You can cast *lay on hands* once per day as a divine innate spell. The spell is automatically heightened to half your level. You also gain a +1 circumstance bonus to saving throws against effects originating from demons. This benefit lasts for 1 month.

**Success** You manage to seal the tear. The experience helps you steel yourself against demons. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to saving throws against effects originating from demons for 1 week.

**Failure** You become afflicted with Abyssal energies. You gain a weakness to cold iron and good damage equal to half your level for 1 week. During that time, you take good damage regardless of your alignment.

**Critical Failure** The Abyss flows through you for a moment, catching the attention of others. You gain a weakness to cold iron and good damage equal to your level for 1 month. During that time, you take good damage regardless of your alignment. In addition, a demon takes notice of you and can use *plane shift* once to arrive at your location.

## THE STORM OBELISK

Charged by the constant storms that hammer the Sodden Lands, there stands an obelisk of ancient design just outside Hyrantium. Created for an unknown purpose, the structure acts as a lightning rod of sorts, gathering bolts of electricity from the storms and directing the energy into a magnetic wellspring below. Every 12 years, the wellspring discharges, spelling danger (or for the daring, a challenge) to all around it.

### LIGHTNING DANCING

### EVENT 3

RARE DOWNTIME ELECTRICITY PRIMAL

**Applicable Skills** Acrobatics, Nature, Survival

You stand around the obelisk for 1 week, waiting for the wellspring to overflow and hopefully dodge the lightning that follows. It's ill-advised, but so is the adventuring life. Attempt a DC 20 check.

**Critical Success** Static electricity suffuses your limbs, arcing electricity over objects you touch. Your Strikes with melee weapons and unarmed attacks deal 1d4 additional persistent electricity damage for 1 year.

**Success** The practice gained from jumping between lightning bolts is surprisingly useful. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to saves against effects with the electricity trait.

**Failure** The lightning strikes you, charging your body with a magnetic pull. You take a -2 circumstance penalty to AC against attacks made with a metal weapon, as determined by the GM. Additionally, you're considered to be wearing armor for the purpose of effects such as *shocking grasp* that present additional danger to creatures wearing metal armor. Your magnetized state remains for 1 week.

**Critical Failure** You're struck by a particularly strong bolt of lightning, leaving you with astraphobia. Whenever you take electricity damage, you must also succeed at a Will save against the DC of the damaging effect. On a failure, you become frightened 2 (frightened 3 on a critical failure). It takes at least a month of downtime spent on incremental therapy to remove this effect.

## SURGING TIDES

In the far northeast of the Inner Sea region lies the Lake of Mists and Veils, a near-constant fog resting across its surface. Every 22 years in the autumn, the water levels rise, inexplicably absorbing and overtaking the mist. The shoreline disappears and gives way to a seepage of lake water. The natives of the area call this the Messenger Tide, believing some immortal thing in the depths of the lake reaches out to communicate through the water. Those who wish to see if it's true submerge themselves

in the high water, hopefully changed the better for the experience.

## MESSENGER TIDE

## EVENT 10

RARE DOWNTIME OCCULTISM WATER

**Applicable Skills** Athletics, Occultism, Society, Survival

You wade deep into the Messenger Tide, diving below the surface for as long as you can each day for 1 week. Something in the aqueous dark calls out to you, beckoning you to hear what it has to say. Attempt a DC 29 check.

**Critical Success** You gain understanding of the full message.

You gain the ability to breathe water, imprecise wavesense (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 344) with a range of 60 feet, and the amphibious trait. The benefits last for 1 year.

**Success** You learn some of the secrets the entity in the water sought to impart. As critical success, except you don't gain wavesense. The benefits last for 1 month.

**Failure** The voice from the deep confuses your perception of speech with its message, causing you to speak in snippets of odd languages and strange sounds. You must attempt a DC 5 flat check when using any ability or effect with the auditory or linguistic traits or the effect fails. This effect lasts for 1 month.

**Critical Failure** The tides are displeased with your lack of understanding, weighing down your body in water. You automatically fail all Athletics checks to Swim for the next month.

## VOLCANIC STREAM

Within the Five Kings Mountain range sits the ever-threatening volcano, Droskar's Crag. Still active after 800 years since the last eruption, the mountain continues to grow and occasionally belch ash from its snowcapped peak. Once a century, it hurls forth an especially violent stream of burning air and strangling smoke, trying to incinerate those caught in it.



## DROSKAR'S BREATH

## EVENT 5

RARE DOWNTIME FIRE PRIMAL

**Applicable Skills** Athletics, Medicine, Nature, Survival

Whether by bad fate or intention, you're caught in the ash cloud of Droskar's Crag as it releases its fumes, requiring 1 day of downtime to escape. The air scorches your lungs

as you breathe, and visibility is almost nothing. The only good news is the mountain is not erupting—yet. Attempt a DC 22 check.

**Critical Success** The superheated air somehow proves good for your pulmonary health, keeping your chest warm. You gain cold resistance equal to half your level for 1 year.

**Success** You manage to survive, picking up some tricks on how to navigate through smoke. You automatically succeed at the flat check to target creatures that are concealed only by smoke or fire for 1 month.

**Failure** You escape in time to survive, but the fumes damage your lungs. You contract stage 2 of choking death (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 118), without an initial saving throw.

**Critical Failure** Your breathing becomes ragged and susceptible to negative effects. You use the outcome one degree of success worse than the result you rolled on saving throws against inhaled poisons or effects of an inhaled or gaseous nature (such as the *ash cloud* and *stinking cloud* spells, and others as determined by the GM). You can remove this effect with a 4th-level or higher *restoration* spell.

## WINDS OF THE DEVIL

On the peaks known as Devil's Perch in the southwestern Menador Mountains, the winged people known as strix celebrate a weather phenomenon every forty-second spring. The air around the mountain crags whips across the rocks at dangerous speeds. Young strix take up the challenge of racing the wind, making turns around the cliff faces so tight that crashing is a near certainty. While this weeklong event is mainly designed for those with wings or natural flight, inventive travelers may be able to find ways to participate.

## STRIXWIND RACE

## EVENT 14

RARE AIR DOWNTIME PRIMAL

**Applicable Skills** Acrobatics, Nature, Survival

Through magical means or by locating a workable path through Devil's Perch, you dash alongside the rapid winds for 1 week. As you do so, the unknown power that gives them strength seems to surround you. Attempt a DC 34 check.

**Critical Success** Even without wings of your own, the streams of air manage to lift you off the ground. You gain a fly Speed equal to your Speed for 1 week.

**Success** The winds cling to your feet, even after you leave them behind. You gain resistance equal to your level against falling damage for 1 year.

**Failure** The sound of rushing air sticks in your ears, disrupting your hearing. You're deafened, except the flat check to perform an action with the auditory trait is even harder than usual, with a DC of 11 instead of 5. This effect lasts for 1 week.

**Critical Failure** A bothersome gust begins to follow you, cropping up at the worst of times and skewing your aim. You take a -2 status penalty to all attack rolls for 1 month.

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# THE STARS

“Looking Back at the Heavens That Watch Us” by Eusho Nighteyes

No matter where on fair Golarion, the skies offer us our most faithful and enigmatic travel companions—from the day’s sun that both warms and scorches, to the twinkling sea illuminating one’s nightly ventures. They hold great importance in navigation, and the astronomical sciences feature prominently in magical studies, religion, and superstitions. Those curious enough might seek the stars’ true nature. Are they gateways to other worlds, skybound mystical nodes, or a greater power’s portentous messengers? Perhaps something more fantastical? The most substantial truth, I have found, is no two places harbor identical beliefs regarding these celestial bodies.

## THE SUN AND THE MOON

Often, Golarion’s sun and moon are viewed as a pair—distant but intertwined in the cosmos—the two most prominent celestial bodies in our sky whose effects upon our lives can’t be fully enumerated. The sun, called the “Burning Mother,” among other monikers, is exponentially larger than our planet. Golarion orbits the sun, which is the closest star to it, leading to the 1-year calendar. While inhospitable to all but the hardest of entities (often elementals), this burning ball of fire is vital to our way of life: heat and illumination, the changing of seasons, sustenance of many plant species, and more.

Our moon, primarily bereft of life, is but a fraction of Golarion’s size. While our planet orbits the sun, the moon instead orbits Golarion—the sun can also shine on all parts of the moon, invariably causing the moon’s nocturnal light and phases (further discussed below). However, the same side of the moon always faces Golarion during its orbital movement, which causes changes in our planet’s tides. Consequently, some people who live along the coast of Tian Xia call the moon “Hei Feng’s Mirror,” believing it reflects the god’s temperament and the coming waters.

In matters of mystical importance, the sun and moon both hold significant meaning. Solstices and equinoxes are marked by peaks in ambient magical activity, making these occurrences popular for conducting rituals—from basic seances to advanced callings. The full moon, in addition to its part in lycanthropic transformations, has a similarly prolific effect on spellcasting, arguably being the most potent time for rituals compared to other moon phases. Such magical connections are further exacerbated for rituals involving deities associated with celestial bodies. Historically, the moon has proven more susceptible to the efforts and experimentations of Golarion’s myriad spellcasters—a consequence of closer proximity. Azlant magi at one point attempted to colonize the moon (which they called Somal), a project they ultimately abandoned. Consequently, the moon still hosts a link to the Abyss that spawned a lush region on its surface, the Moonscar, and scattered regions of volatile magical energies known as the Pockets, each featuring strange habitats.

Eclipses, whether solar or lunar, often create volatile magical circumstances on Golarion and have coincided with era-defining events—should capable entities take advantage of their effects. In the past, eclipses have thinned the barrier between the planes, opening ways into lost (or, more often, sealed) demiplanes, if not outright creating bridges from the Material Plane to the Outer Sphere. Mass callings, particularly demons, have notoriously occurred during eclipses. Culturally, solar eclipses are typically viewed as events of ill omen throughout most of the Inner Sea, a residual sentiment from when the sun was blotted out during the Age of Darkness. It hardly helps that, in the past, malicious parties have taken advantage of ensuing panic around eclipses, sowing their own fabricated chaos or timing hostile political takeovers to prey upon superstition. Curiously, certain regions instead hold the end of a solar eclipse as an event to celebrate, observing these instances with festivals, though these affairs can provide the backdrop for further troubles.

## THE STARS

The vast, star-filled sky represents all manner of possibility. Physically, each star is exponentially more distant than our sun. With this distance, one might presume they illuminate countless worlds of their own, as ours does to Golarion. In a less visible aspect, the stars are particularly important in spirituality, for each one’s core (including that of our own sun) holds a portal to the Positive Energy Plane; from such portals do souls enter the Material Plane, find their way, and theretofore join mortal vessels.

Cultures throughout the Inner Sea have identified stars that appear in consistent patterns as constellations, each one attached with a particular meaning. As Golarion orbits the sun, some of these constellations fade from our view of the sky; consequently, various cultures use specific ones, as well as individual stars, to measure the time of year with the seasons, or use certain stars to mark major events, such as harvests, holidays, and other rituals of cultural importance. The stars are also commonly involved in the foretelling of future events, especially the Cosmic Caravan in Varisian culture (more on those later). The stars give credence to other mystical beliefs. Some rituals can be empowered when conducted under the presence of the Sorcerer, for example, and particular schools of magic might yield more potent results while some other associated star or constellation graces the sky. Iruxi society also has many astrological practitioners, including spellcasters who draw their powers from the stars. At one point, Lirgen was a nation dedicated to astrology and divining fortunes; it’s quite unfortunate its abilities ultimately failed to prevent the kingdom’s downfall due to the Eye of Abendego.

The constellation known as the Stair of Stars leads to one of the most well-known stars in Golarion’s sky: Cynosure, which maintains a constant and near-static position around the night sky. Astronomers have described

Cynosure as having some special alignment to Golarion, explaining how other constellations seemingly revolve around it. In terms of navigation, this quality makes the pole star invaluable no matter where one travels, as it can serve as an anchor point from which to orient a journey's course. Mention Cynosure to particularly devout worshippers of Desna, and they'll likely mention, if not elaborate upon, the goddess' abode there.

## THE COSMIC CARAVAN

Used prevalently in Varisian culture, the Cosmic Caravan refers to a set of 13 constellations visible from northern Avistan that maintain consistent movement around Cynosure from year to year. Each one is attached with a sign, which, unsurprisingly, aligns with a theme one might associate with caravans and traveling. The 13 constellations are as follows, listed in order of their appearance in a calendar year.

The **Thrush** (18 Kuthona–20 Abadius) is the first constellation; it's believed to herald the others of the Caravan like how songbirds greet travelers.

Depicted as a serpentine angel, the **Lantern Bearer** (21 Abadius–16 Calistril) guides the rest of the constellations, temporally and metaphorically.

The **Newlyweds** (17 Calistril–11 Pharast) are depicted as an intertwined couple; it's not an uncommon sight to see weddings take place under this constellation, hoping to the cosmos for a happy start to married life.

The **Bridge** (12 Pharast–18 Gozran) signifies the beginning of the span between winter and spring; among travelers, it's representative of protection from lurking dangers.

Depicted as a dancer, the **Daughter** (19 Gozran–13 Desnus) appears at the onset of spring, at times a celebration of youth; this constellation's presence reputedly has acute effects on primal magic, and various cultures associate it more closely with worship of the sun.

The **Rider** (14 Desnus–20 Sarenith) is seen as the protector of sorts of the Cosmic Caravan. Viewed mostly as a cavalier whose demeanor might be that of a stern guardian or inspiring reveler, the constellation is associated with camaraderie.

The **Patriarch** (21 Sarenith–20 Erastus) is perceived as the leader of the Caravan, being the one to guide the Wagon and, by extension, all those carried by it. While not overly associated with mysticism, it was once a prevailing belief in the Shining Kingdoms that individuals born under this constellation were destined to be the greatest of sovereigns.

The **Wagon** (21 Erastus–10 Arodus) symbolically carries the Caravan across the skies.

A constellation attached with two distinct meanings, the **Pack** (11 Arodus–16 Rova) represents creatures that trail the Caravan; they might be loyal beasts whose numbers serve to bolster safety or scavengers lurking for an opportunity.

The **Mother** (17 Rova–30 Lamashan) appears in the months preceding the winter. Viewed as a cauldron over a fire, this constellation is considered the heart of the Caravan, representative of familial bonds.

Astrologers and other diviners look fondly to the **Star Gazer** (31 Lamashan–20 Neth) for particularly vague or distant predictions. It's also popular among spellcasters who invoke their powers using the stars. Apropos to its name, this constellation is typically depicted as an individual regarding the skies.

The **Stranger** (21 Neth–29 Neth), invariably named as such due to its comparatively shorter appearance, is depicted as a single, staring eye; some scholars believe this constellation might be affiliated with particularly esoteric planes, if not entities.

The **Follower** (30 Neth–17 Kuthona) is the last constellation of the year (thereby following the other stars in the Caravan), visible during primarily dark nights. It has been closely associated with death, including superstitions and purported effects on death-aspect magics.

In addition to the meaning attached to each constellation, astrologers study how the movements of heavenly bodies can be used to foretell coming events or otherwise interpret cosmic forces normally beyond mortal understanding. The Cosmic Caravan is the preferred astrological tradition throughout the Inner Sea, particularly in Varisia, though its usage goes as far back as Lirgen and even the Azlanti Empire. Primarily, the Cosmic Caravan functions as a focal point around which many of Golarion's astrologers study the movements—particularly alignments—of other identified planets, our sun, and celestial bodies that might pass into our system. The bulk of their work goes into celestial divination, which involves interpreting cosmic movements to predict coming events and, in some cases, discern further details in the present.

A prominent theory for the Cosmic Caravan's origins claims it dates as far back as the Age of Enthronement, established by Azlanti scholars who mapped out the constellations in their era and whose methodologies then trickled into later cultures. From these previously observed patterns of stars, the Caravan as we know it garnered its current names and associated meanings. Within Varisia, there are growing sentiments about the Cosmic Caravan's true meanings, attempting to attach more concrete interpretations to the constellations' symbolism. Some believe the Caravan refers to Varisia's lost history—an ancient group of itinerants who first explored the region, vanquishing legendary foes and making the land safe enough to be settled by later people, such as the Thassilonian Empire's predecessors and other civilizations thereafter. These heroes' deeds were so great their efforts were recorded in the very stars, the loftiest of honors. A similar theory believes the Cosmic Caravan came not from Golarion itself. The story and meaning behind those constellations hailed from travelers who

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# The Cosmic Caravan

 THE FOLLOWER

 THE STRANGER

 THE STARGAZER



 THE MOTHER

 THE PACK



 THE

ΚΥΤΗΟΠΑ

ΠΕΤΗ

ΛΑΜΑШАН

РОВА

ΑΡΟΔΥΣ

ΤΥΣ

# THE LANTERN BEARER

IE THRUSH

# THE NEWLYWEDS



# THE BRIDGE

# THE DAUGHTER

# THE RIDER

# THE PATRIARCH

WAGON

<b>Abadius</b>	2 ● Sunday	9 ◐ Sunday	17 ○ <small>Moonday Long Moon</small>	25 ◑ Toilday	31 ● Moonday
<b>Calistril</b>	8 ◑ Toilday	16 ○ <small>Wealday Fated Moon</small>	23 ◑ Wealday		
<b>Pharast</b>	2 ● Wealday	10 ◑ Oathday	18 ○ <small>Fireday Rebirth Moon</small>	24 ◑ Oathday	31 ● Oathday
<b>Gozran</b>	8 ◑ Fireday	16 ○ <small>Starday Flood Moon</small>	23 ◑ Starday	30 ● Starday	
<b>Desnus</b>	8 ◑ Sunday	15 ○ <small>Sunday Blossom Moon</small>	22 ◑ Sunday	30 ● Moonday	
<b>Sarenith</b>	7 ◑ Toilday	14 ○ <small>Toilday Sweet Moon</small>	20 ◑ Moonday	28 ● Toilday	
<b>Erastus</b>	6 ◑ Wealday	13 ○ <small>Wealday Lover's Moon</small>	20 ◑ Wealday	28 ● Oathday	
<b>Arodus</b>	5 ◑ Fireday	11 ○ <small>Oathday Swarm Moon</small>	18 ◑ Oathday	27 ● Starday	
<b>Rova</b>	3 ◑ Starday	10 ○ <small>Starday Harvest Moon</small>	17 ◑ Starday	25 ● Sunday	
<b>Lamashan</b>	2 ◑ Sunday	9 ○ <small>Sunday Hunter's Moon</small>	17 ◑ Moonday	25 ● Toilday	31 ◑ Moonday
<b>Neth</b>	8 ○ <small>Toilday Black Moon</small>	16 ◑ Wealday	23 ● Wealday	30 ◑ Wealday	
<b>Kuthona</b>	7 ○ <small>Wealday Cold Moon</small>	16 ◑ Fireday	23 ● Fireday	29 ◑ Oathday	



## Moon Phases 4722

journeyed across worlds beyond our own; however, the more pessimistic of those who believe this theory view the Follower to be an ominous portent of what is to come from beyond the stars.

Other constellations exist beyond the Cosmic Caravan; throughout the Inner Sea, the same stellar pattern might be known by varying names. Many of these constellations have meanings seeded in divine faith, such as the Key or the Sea Wraith. Others received their name and meaning from mythic creatures or historical events whose details have blended into legends. Another detail to keep in mind is the Cosmic Caravan, much like other astrological traditions, has been informed and colored by the historical and cultural biases of the peoples who established them. Other regions unsurprisingly feature their own celestial groupings. For example, in Tian Xia,

the Dragon Empire's zodiac includes 12 constellations whose importance, as determined by Tian astrologers, ties to the moon phases rather than their position in the skies. The many people of the Mwangi Expanse, from the Jahaxi to the various tribes of the Mualijae, have established their own nomenclatures and interpretations for various constellations.

### MOON PHASES

Golarion's lunar months are approximately 29 days long, following the moon's phases as it waxes from new to full and wanes to new again. While the moon's passage across the sky is useful for measuring time, the various phases can also impact magical spells and rituals; new moons are a time for initiation or releasing rituals, while full moons are often seen as a time for potent, creative spellwork.

## MOON CYCLE NAMES

The chart on the facing page notes the moon cycles and the respective name for each cycle. The chart and subsequent names are based on seasonal patterns in Golarion's Northern Hemisphere; in the Southern Hemisphere, the Sweet Moon would align with Kuthona, and the Lover's Moon would be the first of the year.

**Long Moon:** Sometimes called the Silver Moon—due to winter's argent light, in honor of Abadius's namesake, or both—the Long Moon cycle marks the winter stretch after the solstice when nights are long and spring feels distant. Communities in the Inner Sea region hold the Longnight festival on the full moon; revelers celebrate through the night in defiance of the winter darkness, welcoming the dawn as a promise that spring will return.

**Fated Moon:** Calistril's full moon can be particularly potent for those who wish to fulfill—or escape—their fate. This legend may share an origin with Fateless Day, the Leap Day tradition held by followers of Mahathallah who claim souls can escape Pharasma's judgment once every four years. As Calistril is seen as the end of the year in some cultures, this moon also symbolizes endings and beginnings, and is sometimes known as the Fool Moon—though whether this was intended as a hopeful outlook on new journeys or on the folly of navigating cold nights by moonlight is unknown.

**Rebirth Moon:** Pharast heralds spring in the Northern hemisphere, and as winter's grasp fades, the equinox ushers in the next cycle of growth and life for the natural world. Just as Pharasma oversees birth, death, and time, this full moon watches new life awaken as the old cycle ends.

**Flood Moon:** This cycle's name harbors no mysteries: Gozreh's namesake heralds heavy spring rains and sometimes raging floods in coastal climates. It's considered a lucky time for spellwork and rituals surrounding abundance, birth, and elemental power, especially for primal practitioners. In lands where flooding is rare, Gozran's synodic month is sometimes called the Song Moon, both for the melodies of spring's songbirds and of farmers tending fresh new fields and gardens.

**Blossom Moon:** Desnus brings a riot of color as the days continue to grow warmer and longer, and flowering plants open to greet the sun. Decorative garlands and wreaths adorn heads and homes alike, and the days of the waxing moon are said to be particularly lucky for travelers and for launching new ventures. Desna's blossoms are also gathered for the Remembrance Moon festival on the night of the full moon in honor of the lives lost opposing the Whispering Tyrant in the Shining Crusade.

**Sweet Moon:** The Sweet Moon holds both literal and metaphorical significance, as fruits and berries fill market stalls and bright summer nights reach their peak at the solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. This cycle brings a reminder of gratitude as summer fairs and festivals abound with a plethora of attractions and seasonal delicacies.

**Lover's Moon:** The slower days and warm nights of Erastus inspire countless poems, romantic declarations, and serenades in the summer moonlight. Temples of many

faiths find Erastus to be their busiest month for weddings and union ceremonies, with celebrations continuing well into the night. Less ardent astronomers stubbornly refer to this cycle as the Thunder Moon for the summer storms that sweep the Inner Sea region, but the poetic name remains more prevalent.

**Swarm Moon:** Perhaps in concession to more pragmatic voices, the Lover's Moon gives way to the Swarm Moon of Arodus. Some late-summer insects threaten ripening crops, while others add their melodies to the hot, dry evenings. Notable poet Talierael, keeping with the insect theme but seeking sweeter imagery, wrote instead of the Honey Moon in accordance with the nectar of bees' labor during the late-summer days.

**Harvest Moon:** The equinox marks the end of the growth season and signifies a period of gratitude for the year's abundance. Also known as the Salmon Moon, Rova's moon cycle initiates the process of reaping and storing food to prepare for winter for farmers and bears alike.

**Hunter's Moon:** Nature's offerings are still bountiful after the agricultural harvest is complete; preparation for winter continues for all creatures with foraging and hunting. Some conspiratorial scholars suggest the origins for the moon's name come from sinister practices of Lamashtu's acolytes, holding vile rituals in the lengthening nights to honor their goddess, but collective wisdom holds the name simply comes from those who fish the waters and stalk the forests in search of autumn game.

**Black Moon:** The origins of Neth's moon phase name are similarly contested, but a few theories are prominent. Herbalists claim the most potent herbs and fungi are harvested under the full Black Moon, including the exceptionally rare black voidcap mushroom. Scholars and priests of Nethys link the moon's name to his sacred color, and assert this is a fortuitous time for research and introspection. Secular pragmatists suggest winter nights are long, and that should be reason enough.

**Cold Moon:** The winter solstice brings the longest night of the year. On clear nights, the frigid temperatures seem to enhance the illumination of starlight and moonlight alike, their luminous brilliance tempering the seemingly endless darkness, bringing a frosty sparkle to any snowfall on the ground. This clarity, along with the opaque reflections offered by the ice, enhances scrying magic and inspired the alternate sobriquet Mirror Moon.

**Spirit Moon:** While each season typically has three full moons, every two or three years, a fourth full moon will occur in a season, leading to 13 full moons in the calendar year instead of the usual 12. Almanacs traditionally name this the Spirit Moon, as it's associated with mysterious rituals and astral travels, but it bears many names across Golarion. In Kyonin, elves know it as the Fey Moon and tell cautionary tales of heightened mischief from the First World. Many communities in the Mwangi Expanse know this moon as the Wanderer, while in the neighboring Sodden Lands, Terwa star readers call it the Exile Moon and claim it brings portentous dreams and omens.

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## ASTROLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS

Whether you were born under a special star or chose a path in reverence of one, your life has been influenced by the celestial bodies. You value beliefs associated with them, or perhaps born under such ill omens, you act in scorn of such ideas, as if to fight fate itself. You might travel to follow a constellation's trail, and along the way, you undertake whatever travails come your way in pursuit of personal enlightenment. You might have even learned to use the stars to foresee and stop impending misfortune or help usher tragedy along.

### ASTROLOGICAL AUGUR

#### BACKGROUND

RARE

During your formative years, you learned the stars are a gateway to mystical power or glimpses into the future. Perhaps you grew up surrounded by Iruxi culture or were raised in one of the remaining Lirgeni sanctuaries. You've studied the constellations, using their alignment to predict fortune (or misfortune) and gaining magical powers unlike any of the other astrologers you know. Your readings might primarily focus on the Cosmic Caravan, or perhaps you use other stars to guide you, like the zodiac of Tian Xia.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Wisdom or Charisma, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in Astrology Lore. You can cast *augury* as a divine innate spell once per week, and the spell's effects can see up to 1 hour in the future rather than 30 minutes.

### DOOMCALLER

#### BACKGROUND

RARE

In the stars you see not guidance or wisdom but a twinkling door to the impending end of all things. You might have been raised in this ideology, gleaned it from superstition, or received a prophetic vision. Regardless, you've come to view the stars and whatever power they evoke as a path to doom, a curse to warn the masses. Others might spurn your warnings, while some might join you in enlightening the ignorant. To you, there's no greater truth than the coming end, and you know that whatever the cause for it will come from the stars—or perhaps the stars are just a gate to a more terrifying beyond.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Intelligence or Wisdom, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in Occultism and Star Lore. You also gain the Stellar Misfortune action.

**Stellar Misfortune**  $\diamond$  (divination, misfortune, occult)

**Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** A creature you can see is about to attempt a saving throw, attack roll, or skill check;

**Requirements** You must be under the night sky with the stars visible; **Effect** You call upon the power of a dooming star, exacerbating the target's bad luck. The target must roll the triggering check twice and take the worse result.

### ECLIPSEBORN

#### BACKGROUND

RARE

You were born at the exact moment of a solar or lunar eclipse. At the eclipse's junction, or not long after, a catastrophe fell upon the area of your birth—perhaps it affected only the people around you, a city, or even spanned the entire region. Whatever the scope, those present at your arrival came to believe the eclipse was the omen of ill fortune, and you were its harbinger. You grew up distinctly aware others viewed

you as a child of misfortune and, to a certain extent, they were right.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Charisma or Constitution, and one is a free ability boost.

Decide with the GM what catastrophic event coincided with your birth; you're trained in a Lore skill related to that event. You can cast *ill omen* as an occult innate spell once per day. After you Cast this Spell, but before you regain the ability to cast it the following day, the GM can force you to reroll a successful saving throw, attack roll, or skill check as misfortune finds its way back to you. This is a misfortune effect. If this effect causes you to fail the associated saving throw, attack roll, or skill check, you can cast *ill omen* again a second time that day.

### NOCTURNAL NAVIGATOR

#### BACKGROUND

RARE

You have a great affinity for the night skies. You watch the stars, and you feel they speak secret messages specifically to you, which help you navigate your surroundings or perhaps determine your next course of action. Often, the stars have led you to places of great adventure, where you find new experiences and challenges. You might have come to make use of your talents as a guide for traveling groups, or maybe you preferred using your talents in pursuing a star-driven journey for personal enlightenment.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Dexterity or Wisdom, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in Survival. Whenever you can clearly identify the stars, if you roll a success on a check to Sense Direction or otherwise orienteer, you get a critical success instead; if you roll a critical failure at such a check, you get a failure instead.

### SIGN BOUND

#### BACKGROUND

RARE

You were born under a powerful manifestation of a specific constellation, and its connection to you is obvious. You tend to feel most at ease while your constellation is prominent and can draw upon your sign's influence from time to time. When you gain this background, choose a specific constellation, such as the Thrush or the Wagon. Your associated constellation determines one of the ability boosts you gain and an innate spell, as noted on page 123. The list includes benefits for the constellations of the Cosmic Caravan, but you might have been born under a different constellation and gain different benefits as determined by the GM.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to the ability tied to your sign, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in Astrology Lore. You also gain the ability to cast an occult innate spell, as determined by your sign. The

frequency with which you can cast this spell is listed below; cantrips can be used as often as you wish. As normal, you cast non-cantrip innate spells at the lowest level available to that spell, such as 2nd level for *Speak with Animals*, and cantrips are heightened to half your level. Additionally, once during the prominent time for your sign (such as 12 Pharasst-18 Gozran for the Bridge), you can cast your sign's spell without expending its normal use.

**The Thrush (Dexterity):** *ghost sound*; at will

**The Lantern Bearer (Wisdom):** *light*; at will

**The Newlyweds (Charisma):** *charm*; once per day

**The Bridge (Constitution):** *endure elements*; once per week

**The Daughter (Charisma):** *guidance*; at will

**The Rider (Strength):** *phantom steed*; once per week

**The Patriarch (Strength):** *know direction*; at will

**The Wagon (Constitution):** *longstrider*; once per week

**The Pack (Dexterity):** *Speak with Animals*; once per week

**The Mother (Wisdom):** *remove fear*; once per week

**The Star Gazer (Intelligence):** *true strike*; once per week

**The Stranger (Charisma):** *message*; at will

**The Follower (Intelligence):** *stabilize*; at will

## STARLESS ONE

## BACKGROUND

RARE

You were born on a night when not a single star was in the night sky. While this is likely due to a haze, cloud cover, or other natural phenomena, there is always a chance that the stars hid from you on purpose. You have never been able to rely on the stars to guide you and you choose to exert your own will on your fortune rather than rely on the heavens. You've learned to reject outside influence on your fate, maintaining control of your own destiny.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Wisdom or Charisma, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in Occultism and Astrology Lore. You also gain the Reclaim Destiny action.

**Reclaim Destiny**  $\diamond$  (divination, occult) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** You are about to attempt a check and are affected by a fortune or misfortune effect that modifies the triggering check; **Effect** You break the influence over your fortunes and claim a stable hold over your fate. You ignore the fortune or misfortune effect and can roll the triggering roll normally.

## SUN DANCER

## BACKGROUND

RARE

You've been taught the Burning Mother's blessings could be invited through dances done under its presence, such as in welcoming the first rays of warmth in the spring. You could have been the apprentice of some primal caster who wished to harness the sun's power for their incantations or lived in a community who reveres the Daughter of the Cosmic Caravan through displays of veneration for the sun. Whatever the case, you developed a supernatural connection to the sun.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Charisma or Dexterity, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in Performance. You gain the Fascinating Performance skill feat. If you use this feat outdoors in direct sunlight, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to the skill check.

## TIDE WATCHER

## BACKGROUND

RARE

Where you hail from, the ocean is the lifeblood of your community; knowing how it changes according to the moon was integral to everyday life. You've studied the moon's phases to predict the rise and fall of the ocean waters. Eventually, you gained a supernatural ability to foretell to some degree of accuracy the coming of more severe changes, such as tidal waves or encroaching storms. At times, it fell on you to warn settlements of such oncoming natural disasters.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Charisma or Intelligence, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in Nature and Ocean Lore. During the night when you can see the moon, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Survival checks to discern weather patterns and predict upcoming weather conditions—this bonus increases to +2 if you're in the vicinity of the ocean.



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# GLOSSARY & INDEX

This appendix contains brief explanations and page references for the content presented in this book, including new rules, locations, deities, organizations, and so on. New rules content is marked with an asterisk (\*).

- Abadar** Lawful neutral god of cities, law, and wealth. Known as the Master of the First Vault. *Gods & Magic* 12-13
- Absalom Reckoning** The most commonly used calendar in Avistan and Garund, consisting of 52 weeks across 12 months. The current year is 4722 AR.
- Abyss** An endlessly winding, chaotic evil plane full of dangerous chasms. Home to the fiends known as demons. *Gamemastery Guide* 142
- Achaekek** Lawful evil god of assassins, divine punishment, and the Red Mantis. Also known as He Who Walks in Blood. *Gods & Magic* 52
- Adanye** Lawful good goddess of hearth, imagination, protection, and solitude. Known as The Warmth of the Hearth. *The Mwangi Expanse* 132
- aiudara** Powerful gates created by elves to allow travel across great distances. Also known as elf gates.
- Alseta** Lawful neutral goddess of doors, portals, thresholds, and traditions. Known as the Welcomer. *Gods & Magic* 53
- Andoletta** Lawful good goddess of consolation, respect, and security. Known as Grandmother Crow. *Gods & Magic* 82
- animals and pets\*** 103
- Arcadia** One of Golarion's continents, lying west of the Inner Sea region past the ruins of Azlant. *World Guide* 6-7
- Arcadian Ocean** The ocean between Arcadia and Avistan.
- Ashava** Chaotic good goddess of moonlight, dancing, and lonely spirits. Known as the True Spark. *Gods & Magic* 82
- Asmodeus** Lawful evil god of contracts, pride, slavery, and tyranny. Known as the Prince of Darkness. *Gods & Magic* 14-15
- Aspis Consortium** A trade organization that spans the Inner Sea region and often opposes the Pathfinder Society. Known for its unscrupulous practices. *Character Guide* 65
- Azlant** One of the most powerful nations during the Age of Legend. The empire was destroyed during Earthfall, and its ruins remain as islands in the Arcadian Ocean. *World Guide* 8, 62-63
- backgrounds\*** 122-123
- Barzakh** Neutral deity of compasses, travelers, and vigils. Known as the Passage. *Gods & Magic* 88
- Bellflower Network** A secretive organization dedicated to the liberation of halfling slaves, especially in Chelixa. *Character Guide* 65
- Besmara** Chaotic neutral goddess of piracy, sea monsters, and strife. Also known as the Pirate Queen. *Gods & Magic* 55
- Biloko** Crocodile-snouted fey that are particularly violent and hunt in the southern reaches of the Mwangi Expanse. *The Mwangi Expanse* 126, 294-295
- Black Butterfly** Chaotic good goddess of distance, silence, and space. Known as the Silence Between. *Gods & Magic* 83
- Bleaching** A process brought on by ennui that decolors and ages a gnome, typically culminating in the gnome's death.
- Calistria** Chaotic neutral goddess of lust, revenge, and trickery. Known as the Savored Sting. *Gods & Magic* 16-17
- Casmaron** One of Golarion's continents, located immediately east of the Inner Sea region. *World Guide* 7
- catfolk** Humanoids with feline features and a love of discovery. *Advanced Player's Guide* 8-11
- Cayden Cailean** Chaotic good god of ale, bravery, freedom, and wine. Known as the Accidental God. *Gods & Magic* 18-19
- celestial** Creatures who hail from or have a strong connection to the good-aligned planes.
- Chaldira Zuzaristan** Neutral good goddess of battle, luck, and mischief. Known as the Calamitous Turn. *Gods & Magic* 58
- constellations (Cosmic Caravan)\*** 118-119
- Cosmic Caravan** The collective name for 13 unique constellations visible from the Inner Sea. One of the constellations is always visible in the night sky regardless of the time of year. Also the name of a pantheon linked to these constellations. 92, 117-120
- crimes and punishments\*** 65
- Crown of the World** The northernmost of Golarion's continents that connects Avistan to Tian Xia. *World Guide* 7
- Cyphermages** An organization of mages dedicated to the study of ancient magic and monuments throughout Varisia.
- Darklands** The immense area of caverns, vaults, and passages beneath the surface of Golarion. *World Guide* 7-8
- Dead Roads** The metaphysical network connecting the Boneyard to the Material Plane. Used by psychopomps to travel between these planes.
- Desna** Chaotic good goddess of dreams, luck, stars, and travelers. Known as the Song of the Spheres. *Gods & Magic* 20-21
- Droskar** Neutral evil dwarven god of cheating, slavery, and toil. Sometimes called the Dark Smith. *Pathfinder #148* 58-63
- Eagle Knights** A state-funded military sworn to defend Andoran. Some branches work to end slavery in the Inner Sea region. *Character Guide* 65
- Ekujae** One of the three groups that make up the Mualijae elves, Ekujae predominantly live in the western Mwangi Expanse. *The Mwangi Expanse* 42-51
- Eldest** A group of deities who keep their attention on the First World. *Gods & Magic* 78-79
- Empyreal Lords** Powerful celestial beings, demigods, and deities that represent the tenets of good. *Gods & Magic* 82-85
- Erastil** Lawful good god of family, farming, hunting, and trade. Known as Old Deadeye. *Gods & Magic* 22-23
- Ergaksen** One of three major dwarven groups, Ergaksen live on the surface of Golarion. *Character Guide* 17
- Erutaki** A common human ethnicity in the Inner Sea region spanning the Crown of the World. *Character Guide* 6
- events\*** 112-115
- Eye of Abendego** An enormous, ceaseless hurricane nestled between Mediogalti Island, the Shackles, and the Sodden Lands. *World Guide* 63-64
- Fever Sea** The name for the portion of the Arcadian Ocean that lies off the western coast of Garund.

**fiend** Creatures who hail from or have a strong connection to the evil-aligned planes.

**Firebrands** A rebellious organization known for its members' daredevil acts and resistance against oppression. *Character Guide* 66–75

**First World** A plane that overlaps the Material Plane and is said to be a "rough draft" of existence. It is home to vibrant landscapes and fey. *Gamemastery Guide* 141

**Folgrit** Lawful good goddess of mothers, children, and the hearth. Known as the Watchful Mother. *Gods & Magic* 126–127

**Gholinom** An alghollthu city deep beneath the sea off the western coast of Rahadoum. *World Guide* 69

**Goka** A large city-state in western Tian Xia. *Pathfinder #167* 60–65

**Golarion** The most important world in the Lost Omens campaign setting. *World Guide* 6–9

**Gorum** Chaotic neutral god of battle, strength, and weapons. Known as Our Lord in Iron. *Gods & Magic* 24–25

**Gozreh** Neutral deity of nature, the sea, and weather. Known as the Wind and the Waves. *Gods & Magic* 26–27

**Grandmother Spider** Neutral goddess of family, illusion, stories, twilight, and weaving. Known as The Weaver. *The Mwangi Expanse* 136

**Grondaksen** One of the three major dwarven ethnicities. They typically live underground. *Character Guide* 17

**Harrow** A method of divination that uses cards known as a harrow deck to tell fortunes. Especially popular in Varisia.

**Heaven** A plane that embodies order and compassion and is home to the celestials known as archons. The plane is lawful good. *Gamemastery Guide* 143–144

**Hei Feng** Chaotic neutral god of sea, storms, tengu, and sailors. Known as the Duke of Thunder. *Gods & Magic* 63

**Hell** A cruel, constructed plane separated into nine distinct layers and home to the fiends known as devils. The plane is lawful evil. *Gamemastery Guide* 144

**Hellknights** A set of knightly orders with a strict focus on enforcing law and order. *Character Guide* 76–85

**Holtaksen** One of the three major dwarven ethnicities. Commonly live atop mountains and along their slopes. *Character Guide* 18–19

**housing costs\*** 17

**Iobarra** A nation in western Casmaron that has become an unsettled frontier after a number of plagues.

**Iomedae** Lawful good goddess of honor, justice, rulership, and valor. Known as the Inheritor. *Gods & Magic* 28–29

**Irim** An aquatic elf city beneath the sea off the northern coast of Ravounel. *World Guide* 69

**Irori** Lawful neutral god of history, knowledge, and self-perfection. Known as the Master of Masters. *Gods & Magic* 30–31

**Isle of Erran** A small island off the northern coast of Starstone Isle. Home to Absalom's navy. *World Guide* 21

**Isle of Terror** A small island in the center of Lake Encarthan that serves as the Whispering Tyrant's center

of operations. It is wracked with terrible storms and home to undead horrors. *World Guide* 41

**Jaha** A massive walled city located in the northern portion of the Mwangi Expanse. *The Mwangi Expanse* 196–207

**Jistka Imperium** An ancient empire that ruled northern Garund circa –3600 AR.

**Jotun** The language of giants and related creatures.

**kaava** Small humanoids bearing short feathers that reside in the western Mwangi Expanse. *The Mwangi Expanse* 127, 300

**Kaava Lands** A temperate region in the western Mwangi Expanse. *The Mwangi Expanse* 160–161

**Kazutal** Neutral good goddess of safety, liberty, and community. Known as Mother Jaguar. *Gods & Magic* 64

**Keleshite** A human ethnicity in the Inner Sea region, common among the nations of the Golden Road. *Character Guide* 6–7

**Kellid** A human ethnicity in the Inner Sea region, originating among the mountains and steppes of northern Avistan. *Character Guide* 7

**Ketephys** Chaotic good deity of forestry, hunting, and the moon. Known as the Hunter. *Gods & Magic* 128–129

**Korada** Neutral good empyreal lord of foresight, forgiveness, and peace. The Open Hand of Harmony. *Gods & Magic* 84

**Kurgess** Neutral good god of healthy competition, sport, and physical development. Known as the Strong Man. *Gods & Magic* 65

**Lamashtu** Chaotic evil goddess of aberrance, monsters, and nightmares. Known as the Mother of Monsters. *Gods & Magic* 32–33

**Lands of the Linnorm Kings** A region in northwestern Avistan known for its harsh environs and fierce leaders. *World Guide* 112–113

**Likha** Neutral deity of history, acting, and storytelling. Known as the Teller. *Gods & Magic* 132–133

**Lirgeni** A human people originally from Lirgen, displaced by the Eye of Abendego. *The Mwangi Expanse* 30–31

**Lubaiko** Chaotic neutral goddess of wildfire, bad luck, inspiration, and turmoil. Known as The Spark in the Dust. *The Mwangi Expanse* 138

**maps\*** 34, 104, 108

**Material Plane** The plane located within the Inner Sphere that encompasses the known universe, including Golarion and its solar system. *Gamemastery Guide* 138–139

**Mazludeh** Neutral good goddess of balance, community, negotiation, and twilight. Known as Mother of Hearth and Wall. *The Mwangi Expanse* 140

**Mbe'ke** A dwarven ethnic group that predominantly lives in the Mwangi Expanse. *The Mwangi Expanse* 62–71

**Minkai** A large empire located in eastern Tian Xia. Known for its recently quelled civil instability.

**monitor** Creatures who hail from or have a strong connection to the neutrally aligned planes.

**moon phases\*** 120

**Mualijae** The collective term for the three elf ethnic groups whose nations are located within the Mwangi Expanse.

**Nethys** Neutral god of magic. Known as the All-Seeing Eye. *Gods & Magic* 34–35

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GLOSSARY & INDEX

- Ng** Neutral god of the seasons, secrets, and wanderers. Known as the Hooded. *Gods & Magic* 79
- Norgorber** Neutral evil god of greed, murder, poison, and secrets. Known as the Reaper of Reputation. *Gods & Magic* 36-37
- Obari Ocean** One of Golarion's oceans. Located between Casmaron and Garund. *World Guide* 9
- Old-Mage Jatembe** The great wizard who founded the Magaambya and helped rekindle the art of magic during the Age of Anguish. *Legends* 62-65
- oread** A type of geniekin descended from a being from the Plane of Earth. *Ancestry Guide* 104-107
- Outer Sphere** The outer portion of the Great Beyond, consisting of nine planes with a strong link to particular alignments and philosophies and that serve as the homes for many gods: Axis, Abaddon, the Abyss, the Boneyard, Elysium, Heaven, Hell, the Maelstrom, and Nirvana.
- pantheons\*** 92-95
- Pathfinder Society** A globe-trotting organization dedicated to exploration and the reclamation of lost relics. *Pathfinder Society Guide*
- Pharasma** Neutral goddess of birth, death, fate and prophecy. Known as the Lady of Graves. *Gods & Magic* 38-39
- Plane of Earth** An Elemental Plane exemplified by solid stone, endless caverns, and rich mineral veins. *Gamemastery Guide* 139-140
- plant items\*** 101
- poppet** Small constructs originally designed to serve as companions or servants. They occasionally gain a greater spark of life, transforming them into independent, sapient creatures. *Grand Bazaar* 60-65
- psychopomp** A family of monitors spawned within the Boneyard to convey souls to the Outer Planes. Most are true neutral. *Bestiary* 270-271
- Pulura** Chaotic good goddess of constellations, homesickness, and northern lights. Known as the Shimmering Maiden. *Gods & Magic* 84
- Razmir** Self-proclaimed lawful evil god of law, luxury, obedience, and the nation of Razmiran. Known as the Living God. *Legends* 92-93
- recipes\*** 42-43
- Red Mantis** A group of assassins who serve the mantis god Achaek and reside on Mediogalti Island. *World Guide* 65-66
- ritual\*** 90
- Rovagug** Chaotic evil god of destruction, disaster, and wrath. Known as the Rough Beast. *Gods & Magic* 40-41
- Runelord** A powerful wizard that ruled in ancient Thassilon. Each runelord is tied to an aspect of sin magic.
- Sarenrae** Neutral good goddess of healing, honesty, redemption, and the sun. Known as the Dawnflower. *Gods & Magic* 42-43
- serpentfolk** A family of serpentine humanoids. Also known as sekmins. *The Mwangi Expanse* 129, *Bestiary* 2 236-239
- Shadow Plane** A plane located on the far side of the Ethereal Plane that is a twisted reflection of the Material Plane. *Gamemastery Guide* 141
- Shelyn** Neutral good goddess of art, beauty, love, and music. Known as the Eternal Rose. *Gods & Magic* 44-45
- Shoanti** A human ethnicity common across the Storval Plateau, the frontiers of Varisia, and beyond. *Character Guide* 8
- Shory** An ancient empire prominent in central Garund around -2500 AR and famous for its flying cities.
- Silver Ravens** The rebel group that helped liberate the city of Kintargo and establish the nation of Ravounel.
- Sivanah** Neutral goddess of illusions, mysteries, reflections, and secrets. Known as the Seventh Veil. *Gods & Magic* 69
- Soralyon** Neutral good god of guardians, monuments, and magic. Known as the Mystic Angel. *Gods & Magic* 84
- Starstone** A unique gemstone that crashed to Golarion during Earthfall. It was eventually raised by Aroden and placed within the Starstone Cathedral in Absalom. Mortals can attempt to ascend to godhood by reaching the stone and taking the Test of the Starstone.
- Starstone Isle** Another name for Kortos. *World Guide* 13
- Steaming Sea** The name for the portion of the Arcadian Ocean that lies off the western coast of Avistan.
- strix** Winged humanoids, most of whom live in and around Cheliah. *Ancestry Guide* 132-137
- Tanagaar** Lawful good deity of night, owls, and watchfulness. Known as the Aurulent Eye. *Gods & Magic* 128-129
- Tanglebriar** A large swamp in southern Kyonin. Domain of the demon lord Treerazer. *World Guide* 128
- Tar-Baphon** A necromancer killed by Aroden, Tar-Baphon rose again as the lich king known as the Whispering Tyrant; he threatened the Inner Sea region for centuries before being imprisoned. In 4719 AR, he broke free to terrorize the region once more. *Legends* 104-105
- tengu** Humanoids who resemble birds. *Advanced Player's Guide* 24-27
- Thassilonian** The language of the people of Thassilon and New Thassilon.
- Thoth** Lawful neutral god of magic, the moon, wisdom, and writing. Known as the Lord of Divine Words. *Gods & Magic* 124-125
- Tian** A group of human ethnicities originally hailing from the nations of Tian Xia, now common along major Avistani trade routes, including the Crown of the World. *Character Guide* 8-9
- Tian Xia** One of Golarion's continents. Located far to the east of the Inner Sea region, past Casmaron. *World Guide* 9
- tiefling** A planar scion descended from or influenced by a fiend. *Advanced Player's Guide* 39-41
- Tiehar** Neutral good goddess of iron, love, and rebirth. Known as The Rising Sun. *The Mwangi Expanse* 141
- Torag** Lawful good god of the forge, protection, and strategy. Known as the Father of Creation. *Gods & Magic* 46-47
- Tsukiyo** Lawful good god of jade, the moon, and spirits. Known as the Prince of the Moon. *Gods & Magic* 71
- Ulifen** A human ethnicity common in the northern reaches of Avistan. *Character Guide* 9
- Uvuko** Chaotic good god of metamorphosis, cycles, growth, and fertility. Known as The Diamond Ring. *The Mwangi Expanse* 142
- Vidric** A human culture born of the people of Vidrian, many

of whom have mixed or forgotten Mwangi heritage. *The Mwangi Expanse* 28–29

**Vudra** A vast peninsula in southeastern Casmaron, home to the Vudrani people. *World Guide* 7

**Vudrani** A common human ethnicity in Vudra, Jalmeray, and the surrounding regions. *Character Guide* 9

**Walkena** Lawful evil god of Mzali, the sun, fire, and militant nationalism. Known as The God-King or The Child-God. *The Mwangi Expanse* 143

**Whispering Tyrant** Another name for the lich Tar-Baphon. *Legends* 104–105

**Worldwound** An enormous rift that opened in the nation

of Sarkoris, allowing the demonic hordes of the Abyss to spill forth and destroy the region until closed by heroes. Its demon-blighted surroundings are now known as the Sarkoris Scar. *World Guide* 26, 32–33

**Ylimancha** Neutral good god of coastal waters, fishers, and flying creatures. Known as Harborwing. *Gods & Magic* 85

**Yog-Sothoth** Chaotic neutral god of gates, space, and time. Known as the Lurker at the Threshold. *Gods & Magic* 91

**Zohls** Lawful good goddess of determination, investigation, and truth. Known as Verity. *Gods & Magic* 85

**Zon-Kuthon** Lawful evil god of darkness, envy, loss, and pain. Known as the Midnight Lord. *Gods & Magic* 50–51

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