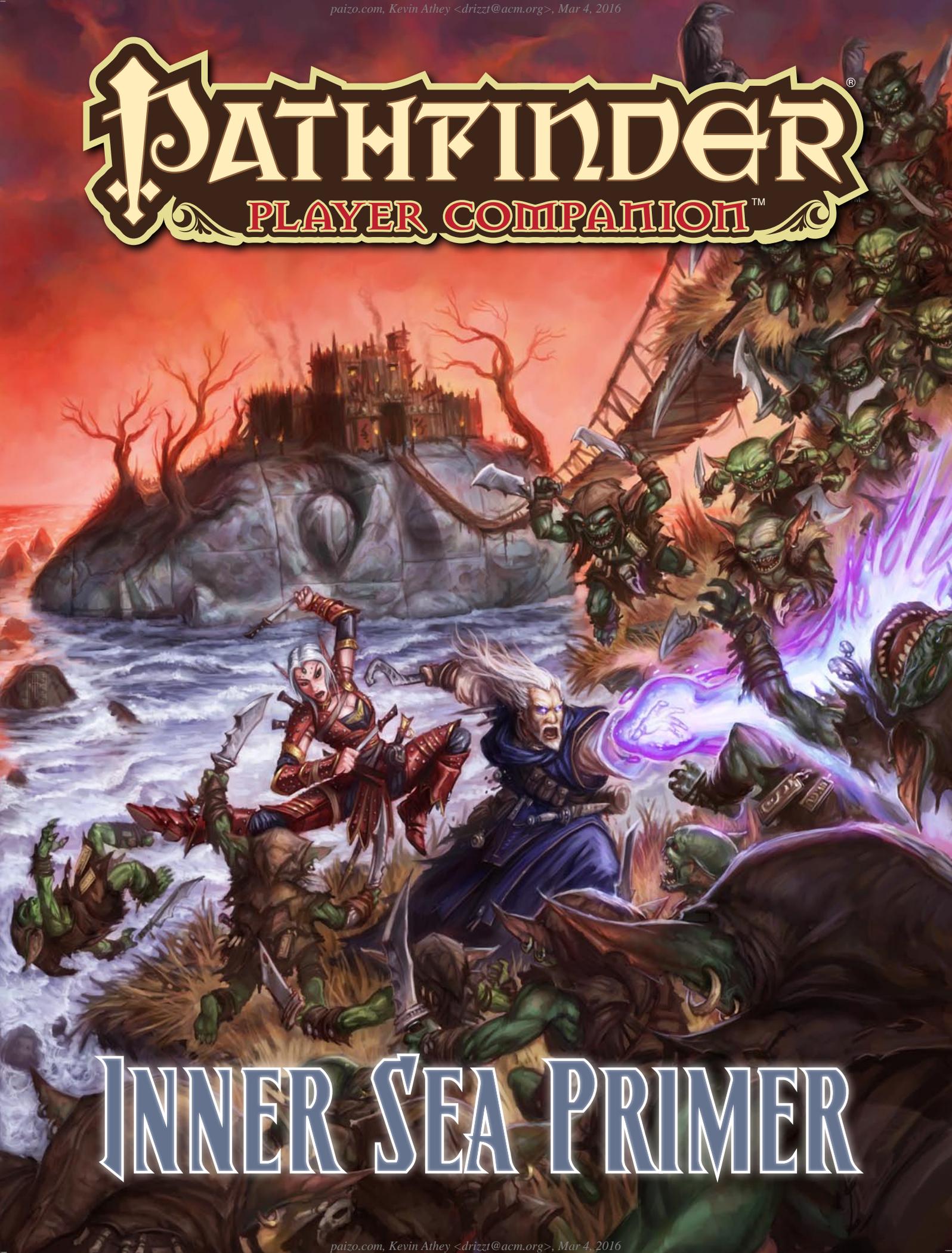


PATHFINDER

PLAYER COMPANION™



INNER SEA PRIMER





INNER SEA PRIMER

This Pathfinder Player Companion book works best with the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide*, and the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*. Although it is suitable for use in any fantasy world, it is optimized for the Pathfinder campaign setting.

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This product makes use of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Advanced Player's Guide*, and the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*. These rules can be found online as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd.

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Printed in China.



THE INNER SEA

Though countless worlds dot the heavens, spinning around distant suns, the heart of the Pathfinder campaign setting is a vibrant planet called Golarion, a place where civilizations rise, empires flourish, miracles grace the skies, and unspeakable evils rise from the shadows to cast a cloak of darkness across the shining cities of the ancients.

In the region known as the Inner Sea, the triumphs of the present are overshadowed only by the ruined wonders of the past, and a daring mortal may challenge the gods or join their number. From the frozen tundra of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings to the carnivorous jungles of the Mwangi Expanse, and from the dervish-filled deserts of Qadira to the elven bowers of Kyonin or even the devil-haunted metropolises of Cheliax, the lands and waters of the Inner Sea brim with danger and untold opportunity for those souls who dare to brave them.

The Inner Sea, which gives its name to the surrounding region, lies between two major continents, Avistan to the north and Garund to the south. Nations flourish along the coasts of the Inner Sea, including the city of Absalom, founded by the deceased god of humanity and representing perhaps the greatest bastion of civilization in the known world. A constant exchange of goods and ideas between these nations creates a vibrant and occasionally deadly tension among the great powers of both continents. These are lands of adventure, where not even the gods know the limits of one character's potential.

This primer offers a basic introduction to the various regions of the Inner Sea, designed to help players and GMs familiarize themselves with the setting and customize their characters accordingly. For more information on any of the aspects presented here, see *World Guide: The Inner Sea*.

INNER SEA PRIMER

HISTORY

Among the common folk of the Inner Sea, little is known about the ancient history of Golarion. Most humans have heard of the magnificent island empire of Azlant, from which Aroden, the Last Man, rose and brought civilization to the uneducated peoples of the mainland. The long-lived elves bear their own tales of their race's ancient exodus from Golarion, and relatively recent return to a land overrun by humans. Yet beyond these few legends, most folk know next to nothing of those ancient days, and for good reason. Roughly 10,000 years ago, the sky opened up and pelted Golarion with falling stars in a cataclysm known as Earthfall, shattering entire civilizations and raising a cloud of dust that blotted out the sun and plunged the Inner Sea into an age of both literal and metaphysical darkness. During this time, whole nations were wiped from the face of the earth, and new races from the depths of the Darklands made their way onto the surface. When at last the darkness receded, the folk began to rebuild. But though their new nations stretch far and wide, traces of the grandeur that once was remain, the corpse of a world lost beneath its descendants' feet.

What follows is a basic timeline of the Inner Sea, featuring relatively well-known events that a reputable sage might be expected to know. The Inner Sea measures its years in Absalom Reckoning (AR), starting with the year that Aroden raised the *Starstone* from the depths.

The Age of Darkness (–5293 AR to –4295 AR)

- 5293 Earthfall. Falling stars destroy Azlant and the *Starstone* creates the Inner Sea, ushering in the Age of Darkness. The elves depart Golarion.
- 5102 The orcs break through to the surface world and rampage across much of Avistan, driven upward as the dwarves tunnel toward the surface in their Quest for Sky.

Age of Anguish (–4294 AR to –3471 AR)

The world, broken and shattered, begins to mend itself as its peoples struggle for the power to heal the scarred land—or dominate it. The Spawn of Rovagug emerge from the depths for the first time.

Age of Destiny (–3470 AR to –1 AR)

- 3470 Ancient Osirion is founded and stands as a beacon of civilization, reaching its peak in –3000 AR.
- 1281 Taldor is founded, eventually growing into an empire that dominates southern Avistan and much of the Inner Sea.
- 892 The wizard-kings Nex and Geb go to war with each other in a conflict that lasts more than a thousand years.
- 632 The Tarrasque emerges in the lands to the east and lays waste to countless cities.

Age of Enthronement (1 AR to 4605 AR)

- 1 The hero Aroden raises the *Starstone* from the heart of the Inner Sea, ascends to godhood, and founds Absalom.
- 896 Aroden mortally wounds the wizard-king Tar-Baphon on the Isle of Terror.
- 1707 Taldor's armies establish the province of Andoran.
- 1893 Norgorber passes the Test of the *Starstone* and becomes a god.
- 2361 The Varisian hero Soividia Ustav founds Ustalav.
- 2497 The demon Treerazer begins defiling Kyonin.
- 2632 The elves return to Golarion from their place of exile.
- 2765 Cayden Cailean drunkenly passes the Test of the *Starstone* to become a god.
- 3007 Taldor founds the province of Cheliox.
- 3203 The dreaded wizard Tar-Baphon returns to life as the Whispering Tyrant and begins terrorizing central Avistan.
- 3313 The Witch Queen Baba Yaga creates the country of Irrisen out of the eastern Lands of the Linnorm Kings.
- 3827 The Shining Crusaders imprison the Whispering Tyrant in Gallowspire.
- 3828 Taldor founds the province of Lastwall to guard against the Whispering Tyrant's return.
- 3832 Iomedae successfully endures the Test of the *Starstone* to become Aroden's Herald.
- 4081 Cheliox breaks from Taldor, taking with it Andoran, Galt, and Isger, beginning the ascent of Imperial Cheliox.
- 4137 Cheliox assaults Absalom and fails.
- 4138 Cheliox founds the colony of Sargava in Garund.
- 4307 The Pathfinder Society is founded in Absalom.
- 4338 Shadow-haunted Nidal falls to Cheliox.
- 4499 Choral the Conqueror founds Brevoy.
- 4576 The first militant order of the Hellknights is founded.

Age of Lost Omens (4606 AR to modern day)

- 4606 Rather than fulfilling prophecy and returning to Golarion, Aroden dies. Demons and Abyssal energy overrun Sarkoris, transforming the barbarian kingdom into the Worldwound. The Eye of Abendego forms off the western coast of Garund.
- 4609 Khemet I retakes Osirion from the Keleshite satraps.
- 4632 The province of Molthune secedes from Cheliox.
- 4640 The diabolical House of Thrune seizes control of Cheliox.
- 4655 Nirmathas breaks away from Molthune.
- 4661 Razmir, the Living God, establishes the nation of Razmiran in his own name.
- 4667 The people of Galt break away from Cheliox in the brutal Red Revolution.
- 4669 Andoran proclaims independence from diabolical Cheliox in the People's Revolution.
- 4674 The Shackles pirates unite under the banner of the Hurricane King.
- 4710 The current year.

ABSALOM



City at the Center of the World

Alignment: N

Capital: Absalom (303,900)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, elves, gnomes, half-elves, half-orcs, halflings

Major Religions: Abadar, Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Iomedae, Irori,

Nethys, Norgorber, Sarenrae, Shelyn

Languages: Common, Kelish, Osiriani

Absalom, the City at the Center of the World, is the largest, wealthiest, and most famous of all the cities in the Inner Sea region. It is also the capital of the nation of Absalom, which encompasses the isles of Kortos and Erran in the eye of the Inner Sea. Said to have been founded by the god Aroden himself, Absalom is built around the *Starstone*, which sits in a cathedral atop a pillar of rock surrounded by a bottomless pit at the very center of the city. The *Starstone* Cathedral can be reached by three bridges—but only those who seek vast treasure or divinity ever try, and precious few succeed. Absalom is the premier trading hub of the world, attracting travelers from across Golarion, who bring their customs, coin, and cultures with them.

Absalom's many neighborhoods include the Ascendant Court, home to hundreds of churches; the massive fortress of Azlanti Keep; the mercantile quarter called the Coins; the Ivy District of the artists; the wealthy Petal District; and the Wise Quarter, which contains governmental buildings. Outside the city, the Cairnlands are filled with countless siege castles—the abandoned, ruined fortresses of would-be conquerors.

It is said that whoever controls Absalom can rule the world, and it is certainly the case that factions plot endlessly to conquer the city, both from outside and within its walls. Perhaps no other city in all of Golarion holds more possibilities for adventure, intrigue, and excitement around every corner.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Absalom.

Absalom Hotspur (Regional): You grew up on the streets of Absalom and have worked as both guide and bodyguard for visitors to the city. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Initiative checks and Knowledge (local) checks.

Cosmopolitan (Regional): Your exposure to the huge variety of cultures across the Inner Sea has given you an ear for languages. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Linguistics checks, and Linguistics is always a class skill for you.

ANDORAN



Birthplace of Freedom

Alignment: NG

Capital: Almas (76,600)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, elves, gnomes, halflings

Major Religions: Abadar, Cayden Cailean, Erastil, Iomedae, Shelyn

Languages: Common

Throughout its history, Andoran has served empires—first Taldor, and later Cheliox. In both cases, Andorens threw off their ties when their distant masters grew too oppressive. In 4669 AR, Andorens revolted against the rise of diabolical Cheliox, and in so doing, created a revolution that threw down the old nobility and empowered merchants and common citizens in a fledgling democratic experiment. The country's adventurers see themselves as liberators and evangelists against feudalists, monarchists, and slavers. Though Andorens do not always agree with each other, they are united in their hatred of slavery, and seek to stamp it out wherever possible. Andoran's mission is to spread freedom—personal, economic, and intellectual—and it has created elite units of soldiers, called the Eagle Knights, devoted to this purpose.

Andoran is a beautiful country, covered with fields and forests, streams and lakes. Though it once saw extensive battles on its fertile plains, the wars have since gone elsewhere, and it is now primarily peaceful. The people of Andoran work hard to ensure that it remains so.

The country is devoted to egalitarianism and opportunity, though old habits die hard for some. The elites who lost their properties when they refused to back Andoran's secession from Cheliox still plot ways to restore their power, and enemy agents come from across the Inner Sea to bring down the infant government by arming militant guerillas, fomenting sedition, and preaching against the legitimacy of the Common Rule.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Andoran.

Andoren Freedom Fighter (Regional): You've dedicated your life to fighting against oppression, tyranny, and slavery. You gain a +1 trait bonus on attack and damage rolls against slavers or any creature holding someone against their will.

Freed Slave (Regional): You were either born or sold into slavery, but were freed by Andoren abolitionists. Your strong will helped you persevere in captivity, and gave you strength to start again from nothing in your new life in Andoran. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Will saves.

BELKZEN

Savage Orc Homeland

Alignment: CE

Capital: Urgir (28,700)

Major Races: Orcs, half-orcs, humans

Major Religions: Lamashtu, Rovagug, Zon-Kuthon

Languages: Orc



When the dwarves broke free from the Darklands, they pushed the orcs before them, and once they reached the surface, they tried to exterminate their ancient enemies for all time. The orcs fell back into the mountains, but led by a warlord named Belkzen, they finally turned the tide and overran a dwarven Sky Citadel. From within its walls, they held the dwarves back and even launched counterattacks. Bruised and bleeding, the dwarves withdrew, and the Hold of Belkzen was born, drawing orcs from across Avistan to unite under a single tattered banner.

Belkzen sits high in a large, jagged, and isolated valley subject to tremendous yearly floods as the snowpack in the mountains above melts. Mammoths, saber-tooth tigers, and other megafauna call the valley home, and wander where they will. Sites of incredible power and ancient age, such as the Cenotaph of the Whispering Tyrant and the Brimstone Haruspex, home of oracular orc priests, dot the harsh landscape as well, drawing adventurers seeking their secrets and would-be warlords hoping to control them.

The many tribes of the Hold of Belkzen live in peace with one another during the plentiful rainy season, but when the dry seasons begin, they fall naturally into savage competition again. The land's resources are too meager for them to unite for long under a single leader. A few human compounds, such as Trunau, exist here as well, standing against the enemies who throw themselves against their walls.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Belkzen.

Dominator (Regional): The blood of dominance runs thick in the savage home of orcs. You receive a +2 trait bonus on all attempts to demoralize an opponent in combat using the Intimidate skill.

Linebreaker (Regional): Growing up along the border between Belkzen and Lastwall has taught you how to storm enemy battle lines and quickly overwhelm them. When charging, add 10 feet to your base speed.

BREVOY

Struggle Between Noble Houses

Alignment: CN

Capital: New Stetven (32,850)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves

Major Religions: Abadar, Gorum, Pharasma

Languages: Common, Draconic, Hallit, Skald, Varisian



Approximately 200 years ago, Choral the Conqueror (with the aid of his red dragon allies) united the warring countries of northerly Issia and southerly Rostland under a single banner, and his descendants in House Rogarvia enforced that harmony with the force of the sword. Now the Rogarvias have vanished; the former rulers of Issia, the Surtovas, have taken control; and the fragile alliance between the two erstwhile rivals is on the brink of shattering. Even so, Brevoyn is a strong trading partner for a number of nations, including Mendev, Numeria, and even the bandit River Kingdoms.

Issia is a place of rugged hills covered with scrub and scree, its poor soil making for equally poor farmland. The people are primarily fishers, though centuries ago they were feared raiders, striking up and down the Sellen River.

Rostland is the breadbasket of the north, a vast and fertile plain lying to the south of the Gronzi Forest. It is dotted with farms worked carefully by families protected by the Aldori swordlords. The swordlords are among the greatest sword fighters of the Inner Sea, but they are obsessed with honor and personal standing.

The ancient city of Skywatch in the Icerime Peaks—once an Aldori stronghold and home to a magical observatory—sealed itself off from the outside world on the very same day the Rogarvias disappeared. None have entered or exited its walls since then, and no magic can penetrate the barrier.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Brevoyn.

Issian Noble (Regional): You are a scion of one of the warring noble houses of Brevoyn, and are well versed in maneuvering through the cutthroat world of Brevic politics. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (nobility) and Sense Motive checks.

Swordlord's Page (Regional): You have trained under the Aldori swordlords, and though not yet a swordlord yourself, you have learned how to strike hard with your weapon. You gain a +1 attack bonus to confirm critical hits when using an edged weapon you are proficient with.

CHELIAX



Diabolical Empire in Decline

Alignment: LE

Capital: Egorian (82,100)

Major Races: Humans, gnomes, halflings, tieflings

Major Religions: Abadar,

Asmodeus, Erastil, Iomedae, Zon-Kuthon, diabolism

Languages: Common, Infernal

Aroden's death threw Chelias into an uproar. The Starfall Doctrine stated unequivocally that the god would come to replace the Emperor of Chelias in 4606 AR and usher in a reign of peace. Instead, Aroden's demise opened a void of political and religious power into which the nobles of Chelias rushed. For more than 30 years, civil war raged until at last the House of Thrune produced its ultimate weapon: an alliance with Hell. When the church of Asmodeus became part of the official government bureaucracy, many of its provinces rebelled rather than serve Hell—Andoran and Galt revolted, and Korvosa and Sargava became independent.

Despite these setbacks, Chelias remains one of the most powerful nations on Golarion. Its Imperial Navy controls the entrance to the Inner Sea, and its traders reach across the lands of the known world to bring back exotic items and rarities. The Chelish nobility are treacherous and manipulative, as one might expect diabolists to be, always maneuvering for position in the eyes of the Thrune court.

The state-sponsored worship of Asmodeus ensures that citizens voice their subservience to Hell, though their true allegiance might lie elsewhere. Chelaxians have become untrusting and insular, and sell each other to Asmodean inquisitors or the Hellknights without a moment's hesitation. Chelias enforces an absolute discipline of law and order, and what would be considered vices in other countries are merely highly taxed businesses here.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Chelias.

Aspiring Hellknight (Regional): Your family has a long tradition of service in the Hellknights, and your strict upbringing and training have given you a forceful aura of command. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Intimidate checks, and Intimidate is always a class skill for you.

Secret Revolutionary (Regional): You seek to return Chelias to its heyday before the rise of the House of the Thrune. You have trained yourself to resist any questioning or torture should you ever be caught. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Will saves against mind-affecting effects, and on Fortitude saves against drugs or poisons.

DRUMA



Merchant's Religious Paradise

Alignment: LN

Capital: Kerse (18,300)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves

Major Religions: Abadar, Torag, Prophecies of Kalistrade

Languages: Common, Dwarven

The isolated hill country of Druma holds the most productive gem and precious metal mines in Avistan, making its leaders—religious adherents of the mercantile *Prophecies of Kalistrade*—wealthy beyond imagining, just as their prophecies foretold over 2,000 years ago. In Druma, money isn't everything—it's the only thing.

The dwarves, once active in Druma, are turning inward, leaving human Kalistocrats increasingly in charge of the country. The leaders of the country are only part-time bureaucrats in the Resplendent Bureaucracy of Druma, but they are full-time plutocrats. Only the less wealthy serve the bureaucracy full time, but they do so only in order to increase their personal wealth. Many refugees from Druma's more dangerous neighbors come here to try to make a career for themselves, but their lack of material wealth cements them into lower social strata. Many seek to better their station by joining Druma's military, the Mercenary League. The ubiquitous "Blackjackets" escort Drumish caravans and trade delegations, and patrol the Inner Sea to protect their masters' interests. Their only mission is to ensure that Drumish prosperity increases—and thus that the bonuses they are paid increase as well.

The faithful of Kalistrade tolerate nonbelievers, but wear elbow-length white gloves to avoid contact with them. Nonbelievers never advance far in the bureaucracy, no matter what their other merits may be, and adherents of the Prophecies always favor each other in financial dealings.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Druma.

Devotee of Kalistrade (Regional): As an adherent of the *Prophecies of Kalistrade*, you understand the importance of a good deal. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Appraise checks, and a +1 trait bonus on Bluff checks when trying to make a deal with nonbelievers.

Purchased Loyalty (Regional): As a member of Druma's Mercenary League, you are utterly loyal to the holder of your contract—at least until it expires. Once per day, when protecting someone who has bought your services, you may roll twice when making a Will save against charm effects and take the better result.

INNER SEA PRIMER

FIVE KINGS MOUNTAINS

Fractured Dwarven Nation

Alignment: LG
Capital: Highhelm (39,917)
Major Races: Dwarves
Major Religions: Torag
Languages: Dwarven



The Five Kings Mountains are the center of dwarven culture on Avistan, located between the nations of Andoran and Druma. The mountains are nearly impassable, and the dwarves who live within the peaks have fortified them heavily. The capital, Highhelm, which lies under Emperor's Peak, is one of the famed dwarven Sky Citadels, ruled by the dwarven high king by virtue of the Kerse Accord of 2332 AR that united the many fractious dwarven kingdoms of the mountains.

These mountains are treacherous territory on the surface, and many outsiders have lost their lives in the avalanches and heavy snowfalls that characterize the place. Those who know their way around the mountains, however, can find the secret paths that lead to the hidden tunnels and cities of the dwarves. Each of these cities sits atop mineral deposits of enormous value, and the dwarves within the mountains spend their lives mining, working, or trading the metal. They are supremely pragmatic, and work hard to ensure their people survive.

The dwarves lend aid to Isgar and Andoran when the threat of the goblins of the Chitterwood grows too strong, but they do not venture far from their mountains unless specifically called to do so. Indeed, the Five Kings Mountains are surrounded by danger, and it is little surprise that the dwarves have become so insular and protective of their homes.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Five Kings Mountains.

Mountain Guide (Regional): You are skilled at getting along in the mountains, enabling you to find hidden trails and secret entrances into the caverns beneath mountains. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (geography) and Survival checks when in mountainous areas, and Knowledge (geography) is always a class skill for you.

Perseverance (Regional): Your time in the Five Kings Mountains has taught you that any obstacle can be endured and overcome. When you have more than one Will saving throw to overcome an effect (such as from *greater command* or *hold person*, or by using the good fortune ability of the Luck domain), you receive a +3 trait bonus on the extra Will saves against that effect.

GALT

Eternal Revolution

Alignment: CN
Capital: Isarn (42,700)
Major Races:



Humans, half-elves, halflings
Major Religions: Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Erastil, Iomedae, Norgorber, Shelyn
Languages: Common, Hallit

Galt's history is full of philosophers, artists, and other culture-changers whose creations have impacted the world. That history is falling by the wayside, however, one bloody stroke at a time. The Red Revolution began shortly after the House of Thrune took control of Chelax. Rather than submit to the diabolists, Galtan philosophers began to undermine the pillars of the divine right of kingship. The words of Hosetter and Jubannich inflamed the populace and inspired rebellion; the people overthrew the Chelaxians and created the Revolutionary Council in order to build a new land. The first things they built, however, were the *final blades*, horrifying devices that brought swift, humane justice—and perverted Galt's love of life into a love of blood.

Now, rather than securing a reliable government, this blood-soaked land has seen over a dozen governments in 60 years, each more fragile and brutal than the last. The grand hopes of the Red Revolution have degenerated into the anarchy of the Eternal Revolution, fed by Chelish agents and the descendants of the noble families that fled at the start of the Revolution. The only constants in Galt now are change itself, and the unending hunger of the *final blades*.

Galt is no safe place for strangers, and those who dare to enter this blood-soaked land to plunder the priceless treasures of the now-gone aristocracy must be sure to protect themselves from the roving mobs seeking to water the fields of anarchy.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Galt.

Inspiring Speaker (Regional): You have learned the arts of oratory, and know how to speak to crowds to rile them up or to calm them down. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks when addressing crowds of 10 people or more.

Silent Watcher (Regional): You can sense an ugly mood brewing in a crowd, and know how to dodge wrathful mobs when they seek victims for their anger. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Sense Motive checks in crowds, and a +1 trait bonus on Stealth checks in city streets.

GEB



Domain of the Dead

Alignment: LE

Capital: Mechitar (42,000)

Major Races: Humans, undead

Major Religions: Nethys, Urgathoa, Zon-Kuthon

Languages: Kelish, Osiriani

Geb is unique among the nations of Golarion, a land where an undead ruler reigns over a vast network of necromancers, legions of skeleton warriors, zombie slaves in the fields, and human chattel who exist solely to feed the hunger of the undead aristocracy. The country was devastated by the wars between the wizard-kings Nex and Geb. When Nex called down cataclysms upon Geb, Geb responded by animating the slain as undead soldiers. When Nex disappeared, Geb vowed not to rest until he was sure his nemesis was beyond vengeance—he returned as a ghost chained to his own hatred, and now rules with his lich-consort, the Harlot Queen Arazni.

More than 4,000 years later, the two countries are nominally at peace; indeed, Geb makes no overt moves against any external enemy, but the consequences of the struggle are plainly evident in the populace of undead that permeates every strata of society. Sentient undead are common throughout Geb's society, and are accorded full rights as citizens. The living (called "the quick") enjoy equal citizenship, depending upon their status; but pens of human thralls raised in captivity provide nourishment for the dead and power for the spells of the Blood Lords, the royal necromancers sworn to serve Geb.

The southern reaches of Geb neighbor the Mana Wastes, and all manner of abominations cross the border into Geb to rend and destroy all they find there. The twisted forests harbor terrors beyond imagining—and in Geb, that speaks volumes.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Geb.

Enemy of the Undead (Regional): Your disgust at the way the undead aristocracy of Geb treats the living has inspired hatred in you. You gain a +2 trait bonus on saving throws against any spells or spell-like abilities from an undead creature.

Friend of the Dead (Regional): Your close association with the intelligent undead of Geb has imparted some of their otherworldly essence to you, and this essence helps you in your dealings with the undead. You gain a +2 trait bonus on Diplomacy checks against sentient undead.

IRRISEN



Land of Eternal Winter

Alignment: NE

Capital: Whitethrone

(24,900)

Major Races: Humans, fey, frost giants, winter wolves

Major Religions: Lamashtu, Zon-Kuthon

Languages: Hallit, Skald

Nearly 1,400 years ago, the territory that became present-day Irrisen belonged to the mighty Linnorm Kings. During one particularly harsh winter, a host of blue-skinned trolls and cold fey marched down from the Crown of the World, led by the ghastly crone Baba Yaga, a sorceress from the Great Beyond. The Queen of Witches quickly subjugated the region, killing any who resisted and enslaving the rest. The fighting ended just 23 days after it began, and the nation of Irrisen was born. The land has been locked in the heart of winter ever since.

This fey land has few friends in the frozen north. The Linnorm Kings are on constant guard against the raids that steal their supplies, weapons, and children. The Mammoth Lords have an uneasy truce, but recognize the slow buildup of troops on their western border as a prelude to another monstrous invasion. None can say what Baba Yaga will do when she returns to Irrisen from her latest century-long jaunt across the Great Beyond, but all fear her godlike mastery of witchcraft.

Symbols play an important role in Irrisen in warding away bad luck and the ire of Baba Yaga and her children. Cat, dog, gate, and tree motifs can be found throughout all of Irrisen adorning its peoples' doors, lintels, tools, clothing, weapons and armor, and hearths. Cats and dogs are common pets and living symbols of good luck in nearly every settlement, and no home ever lacks a gate through which they can enter. While ravens are adored and are common familiars, crows are seen as bad luck and are hunted and killed on sight.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Irrisen.

Winter Warrior (Regional): You grew up in the icy lands of Irrisen, and surviving in the cold snows of winter is second nature to you. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Stealth and Survival checks in ice- or snow-covered terrain.

Winter's Soul (Regional): The eternal winter of Irrisen is as much a part of you as it is the land. You may cast *ray of frost* once per day as a spell-like ability. This is cast at your highest caster level gained; if you have no caster level, it functions at CL 1st.

INNER SEA PRIMER

ISGER

Thrall of Cheliox

Alignment: LN

Capital: Elidir (11,900)

Major Races: Humans, elves, dwarves, gnomes, halflings

Major Religions: Asmodeus, Erastil, diabolism

Languages: Common



When the House of Thrune ascended to the throne of Cheliox, many Chelish holdings broke free from the Empire. Isger did not, and both Galt and Andoran point to its abject thralldom as an illustration of the necessity of revolution. Isger had little choice; Cheliox could let its other colonies slip away, but Isger occupied trade routes crucial for the survival of the empire. In cruel thanks for this vital support of its imperial aims, Cheliox imposes heavy duties on Isger, both monetarily and politically.

The trade routes along Isger’s famed Conerica River form a web of roadways providing access to Druma and the invaluable markets around Lake Encarthan. First Taldor, and then Cheliox, stripped away the few natural resources Isger possessed long ago. Now the greatest threats to Isger now come from within: the goblins of the Chitterwood have left thousands dead, and the few remnants of Isger’s outnumbered and underarmed army must patrol the trade routes or suffer the wrath of Cheliox. This opens up the rest of the country to banditry, and the only recourse for the government is to post bounties on the brigand leaders, open to anyone.

The Goblinblood Wars created thousands of orphans. In response, the church of Asmodeus created orphanages to feed and clothe the forgotten young, folding them into the bosom of Asmodeus and creating terrifying, black-hearted adults: Hellknights and monks who pattern their studies on the darkest arts of Hell.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Isger.

Bounty Hunter (Regional): You have made it your mission to help bring the bandits of Isger to justice. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Survival checks to find or follow tracks, and a +1 trait bonus on Perception checks to avoid being surprised.

Isgeri Orphan (Regional): You grew up in one of the many Asmodean orphanages that dot the Isgeri countryside. Whether or not you took to their teachings, your strict indoctrination at the hands of the “devil nuns” has toughened your body to punishment. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Fortitude saves.

JALMERAY

Kingdom of the Impossible

Alignment: CN

Capital: Niswan (10,300)

Major Races: Humans

Major Religions: Irori, Nethys, numerous Vudrani religions

Languages: Vudrani



An island off the coast of Nex, Jalmeray is the westernmost of the Impossible Kingdoms of Vudra. Here, genies serve humans in massive gold and marble palaces, indoor fountains circulate wine instead of water, and sprawling but perfectly symmetrical monasteries of Irori instruct hundreds of skilled monks. To visitors from other Inner Sea nations, everything in Jalmeray seems much larger and far grander.

The Jalmeri are expert binders of genies and other elemental creatures, and they have wrought a fabulous series of monuments and monasteries on this island, which was gifted to the Vudrani maharaja Khiben-Sald by the archmage Nex 4,000 years ago. The greatest monasteries are called the Houses of Perfection, where students learn to hone their minds and bodes with a rigorous discipline. Any who can pass a series of challenges are invited to study with them, but the challenges are daunting: would-be students must race a djinni, wrestle a shaitan, and outwit an efreeti. But even those who fail to gain entry into these monasteries may still study at one of the lesser schools, provided they have shown some skill or talent in the fighting arts.

While few outsiders really understand the strange arts taught in Jalmeray, the even stranger folk of the Impossible Kingdom have won the respect—if not the trust—of other Inner Sea nations, and the island is largely at peace with its neighbors.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Jalmeray.

Candidate for Perfection (Regional): You have begun training to enter one of the Houses of Perfection, and have honed your body, mind, and spirit into one well-trained weapon. You gain a +1 trait bonus on attack of opportunity attack rolls made with unarmed strikes.

Secret of the Impossible Kingdom (Regional): You have studied the ancient lore of Vudra at a monastery in Jalmeray, and have learned a mystical secret that empowers your spellcasting. Pick one spell when you choose this trait—from this point on, whenever you cast that spell, you do so at +1 caster level.

KATAPESH



Bazaar of the Bizarre

Alignment: N
Capital: Katapesh (212,300)
Major Races: Humans, gnolls, gnomes, half-orcs, jann
Major Religions: Abadar, Irori, Nethys, Sarenrae
Languages: Common, Kelish, Osiriani, Tien, Vudrani

It is said that in Katapesh a buyer can find anything her heart desires—anything at all. While Absalom may be the center of Inner Sea civilization, Katapesh is the beating heart of Golarion's trade routes. Anything, from the mundane to the bizarre, can be bought or sold in the stalls, stores, and streets of Katapesh's bustling capital. The trade policies of Katapesh—or rather, lack of any prohibitions on trade—allow the city to offer delights unavailable anywhere else on Golarion, such as the narcotic pesh. Even more illicit contraband can be found in the Nightstalls market: poisons, diseases, smuggled relics, forbidden magics, and more. Katapesh is also a bustling slave city, and the Eagle Knights of Andoran make it their business to harass slavers traveling to and from Katapesh.

Most of Katapesh's deserts and savannas are still untamed, and barbaric gnoll tribes range the plains in search of slaves to sell in the bazaars of the city—where, oddly, they are welcomed, though outside the city the gnolls are despised.

Power rests firmly in the hands of the mysterious Pactmasters, inhuman creatures swathed in flowing veils and robes that conceal every inch of their 7-foot-tall frames. These plutocrats impose few laws, but those they do are enforced by the metal Aluum, golems powered by the souls of elderly slaves.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Katapesh.

Merchant's Child (Regional): One of your close relatives was a gifted merchant in the bustling bazaars of Katapesh, and taught you early in life how to see the innate value in any object. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Appraise checks, and Appraise is always a class skill for you.

Pesh Addict (Regional): You spent several years addicted to pesh, a habit that you may or may not have kicked. You start with only half of the normal starting cash, but your knowledge of the pesh lifestyle grants you a +1 trait bonus on Bluff, Knowledge (local), and Sense Motive checks. One of these skills (your choice) is always a class skill for you.

KYONIN



Kingdom of the Elves

Alignment: CG
Capital: Iadara (56,340)
Major Races: Elves, gnomes, half-elves, humans
Major Religions: Calistria, Desna, Nethys
Languages: Elven

Just before Earthfall, the majority of elves abandoned Golarion through magical portals known as “elf gates.” When the demon Treerazer was exiled to Golarion in 2497 AR, the demon's corruption of Kyonin's lush forests stirred the elves to action on the distant world where they had taken refuge, and they soon marched back to Golarion to answer the challenge. Though they were unable to destroy Treerazer, they did imprison him in the twisted wood called the Tanglebriar—and then they tried to make sense of their changed world.

Filled with pastoral beauty and picturesque landscapes, Kyonin is the largest enclave of elves on Golarion. Its capital city, Iadara, is a glorious affair of wood, silver, and crystal spires built in perfect harmony with the forest. Its beauty, however, is deceptive—Iadara is shrouded in layer upon layer of artistic illusion. In ages past, these illusions transformed the entire city into a canvas, but of late the illusions reflect the citizen's isolationist tendencies, and magical fog and vines frequently conceal the city.

Kyonin is a standoffish realm where the elves can seek refuge from a human-focused world paced far too quickly for their tastes. While gnomes are largely tolerated by the elves, the few visitors from other races allowed within Kyonin's borders are pointed toward the human-run community of Greengold, where humans run their own carefully governed community within elven lands—an ongoing experiment to determine whether the elves can truly trust other civilized races.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Kyonin.

Iadaran Illusionist (Regional): You have lived in Iadara for so long that you are very familiar with illusions. You gain a +1 trait bonus on caster level checks with illusion spells and a +1 trait bonus on Will saves to disbelieve illusions.

Treerazer's Bane (Regional): Having fought in many battles against the demon Treerazer, you have learned the best ways to kill the various creatures under his control. You gain a +2 trait bonus on weapon damage against demons, evil fey, and plants and animals corrupted by evil.

INNER SEA PRIMER

LASTWALL

Watchful Border Kingdom

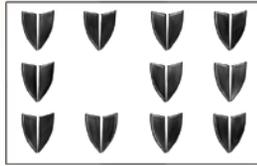
Alignment: LG

Capital: Vigil (9,780)

Major Races: Humans, half-orcs

Major Religions: Gorum, Iomedae

Languages: Common, Varisian



Founded to watch over the Whispering Tyrant's remains in Gallowspire, Lastwall is a bulwark against the greatest evil mankind has known, as well as against the ever-present threats of the orcs of Belkzen and the undead terrors of Ustalav. The primary duty of the crusaders who hold Vigil is to ensure that the seals on the Tyrant's tomb remain inviolate, and they are always seeking recruits to help protect the settlements of Lastwall—and by extension, central Avistan—from the roving monsters that spill out of the Hungry Mountains.

Lastwall's people are a hardy folk. Although they live in the shadow of great evils, they are warm and friendly to outsiders, especially those who have come to help hold the line. In recent years, the number of knights-errant and glory seekers visiting Lastwall has greatly diminished, due in large part to the call to arms in Mendev against the teeming hordes of demons that infest the Worldwound. Many in Vigil grow concerned that they might not have the strength to hold off the orcs of Belkzen for much longer.

The high spires of Castle Overwatch in Vigil afford a commanding view of the blood-soaked westward plains on the Belkzen frontier, as well as the mist-shrouded highlands of Ustalav to the north. The horsemasters of Vigil breed and train mighty destriers and swift coursers, and the stables around Vigil are known for the quality of their bloodlines. Vigil also hosts the Crusader War College, where crusader tacticians have worked to best marshal their magical and military resources to defeat their numerically superior enemies.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Lastwall.

Crusader Tactician (Regional): You have studied at Vigil's Crusader War College, and are skilled in both heraldry and siege tactics. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (engineering) and Knowledge (nobility) checks, and one of these skills is always a class skill for you.

Lastwall Cavalry Rider (Regional): From the moment you were old enough to walk, you learned how to ride the mighty warhorses of Lastwall. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Ride checks, and Ride is always a class skill for you.

LINNORM KINGS, LANDS OF THE

Frigid Viking Homeland

Alignment: CN

Capital: Kalsgard (72,080)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, giants, gnomes, fey

Major Religions: Desna, Erastil, Gorum, Torag

Languages: Skald



The Linnorm Kings rule a frigid, rugged land of rich taiga, treacherous marshes, and great boulder-strewn moraines left by departed glaciers. The coastline is bracing and cool, and it rains half the year and snows heavily during the rest. Farther to the east, the land grows increasingly cold, up to the frozen borders of Irrisen.

Life is hard for the natives of this realm, particularly in the depths of winter. As a result, many able-bodied adults engage in trade in the summer months, bringing from the south additional food, luxuries, and various oddities of the Inner Sea. Such travelers also pack their axes and small, circular shields, in case an opportunity to plunder presents itself. Every citizen is a Viking at heart, and distant lands are less dangerous than his cold homeland.

The land itself is dotted with small, fortified steadings and a few large, stone-walled cities, with nothing but wilderness between them. Fell beasts come up to the city walls at night, pawing even at the gates of Kalsgard. The wilderness between steadings is also dominated by fey creatures and linnorms, for a rift between Golarion and the First World runs over the hills claimed by the Linnorm Kings. The faerie peoples are common here, along with gnomes, trolls, and nature spirits.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Lands of the Linnorm Kings.

Friend of the Fey (Regional): You have a special relationship with the fey, having grown up in close proximity to them. You gain a +2 trait bonus on Diplomacy checks against fey creatures.

Viking Blood (Regional): You have the imposing build of a Viking, and people of the south fear your unpredictable nature. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Intimidate checks, and Intimidate is always a class skill for you.

MAMMOTH LORDS, REALM OF THE



Lost Land of the Distant North

Alignment: N

Capital: None

Major Races: Humans, half-orcs, giants

Major Religions: Desna, Gorum, Rovagug

Languages: Giant, Hallit

On the far northern side of the Kodar Mountains stretches an ancient land where prehistoric beasts still roam. It is a savage no-man's-land, a wilderness as yet unclaimed by would-be conquerors. The hostile nature of the realm and its natives has so far kept those who would seek to tame it at bay.

As befits its name, the Realm of the Mammoth Lords is best known for its great beasts—creatures that have died out in other, warmer realms to the south, such as mammoths, mastodons, aurochs, bison, and short-horned deer. Armored glyptodons and giant ground sloths browse on the tough, woody brush, stalked by cave lions and saber-toothed tigers. Even dinosaurs occasionally range the Tusk lowlands and the freakishly warm canyons at the base of the great ice shelf that forms both a glacial wall and the region's northern border.

The Mammoth Lords do not possess a central organization. Tribes gather along family lines, combining with other tribes to form “followings” of powerful warriors and leaders. Upon a leader's death, her followers break into smaller tribes, or choose or seek to join another charismatic leader. Leadership is determined by great deeds, guile, and acts of heroism, so the turnover is high.

The Mammoth Lords have no capital city. Instead, the natives of the land follow the various herds of great beasts and return to what passes for civilization only when they must. The Realm of the Mammoth Lords has few towns, and most of those exist as a concession to travelers.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Realm of the Mammoth Lords.

Mammoth Master (Regional): You have experience trapping and training large creatures such as mammoths, mastodons, woolly rhinoceroses, and other megafauna. You gain a +4 trait bonus on Handle Animal checks related to these creatures.

Superstitious (Regional): You are distrustful of any magic that goes beyond your native shamanic ways. As long as you do not possess any levels in a class that grants arcane spellcasting power, you gain a +1 trait bonus on all saving throws against arcane spells.

MANA WASTES



Magic-Dead Wasteland

Alignment: LN

Capital: Alkenstar (53,600)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, giants

Major Religions: Abadar, Erastil, Irori, Torag

Languages: Dwarven, Kelish, Osiriani

Lying between Nex and Geb, the Mana Wastes are an ever-shifting nightmare of magic-blasted desert forever twisted by the ancient spell duels of the wizard-kings and their potent servants. This forbidding landscape is the fluctuating, unclaimed border between the two nations. The destruction summoned across this vast stretch of desert has made the landscape into something mutable and strange, and while this chaotic, crazy land seems like the very stuff of magic, the place is in fact dead to magic: all available magical power has been consumed by these chaos storms, and any who attempt spellcasting here now are simply wasting their energies.

The Mana Wastes' unpredictable danger and otherworldly inhabitants promise a swift death for most explorers, but some few political exiles, escaped slaves, and dissident thinkers find their way through the Wastes to the Grand Duchy of Alkenstar, an independent city-state of technological marvels in the western foothills.

Without magic to aid them, the people of Alkenstar have turned to alchemy, engineering, and metallurgy to survive. The dwarves of the Sky Citadel of Dongun Hold provide the engineers, alchemists, and metallurgists of Alkenstar with metals and minerals, and these artisans then design intricate clockwork machines and breathtaking structures. Alkenstar's impressive Gunworks churns out most of Golarion's gunpowder weapons, though the Grand Duchy keeps most of the guns it produces. Alkenstar gunmarshals wield their firearms in defense of the nation—making Alkenstar one of the most heavily defended countries in Garund.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Mana Wastes.

Alkenstar Defender (Regional): You have lived in Alkenstar and served in its militia. You know just where to aim to do the most damage. You gain a +1 trait bonus on all rolls to confirm critical hits with ranged weapons.

Mana Wastes Survivalist (Regional): You grew up in the blasted badlands of the Mana Wastes, or have spent a lot of time there, and the harsh land has toughened your body. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Fortitude saves.

INNER SEA PRIMER

MENDEV

Crusader Theocracy

Alignment: LG

Capital: Nerosyan (64,700)

Major Races: Humans

Major Religions: Iomedae

Languages: Common, Hallit



Mendev is a place of duality: a shining bastion of law and goodness positioned hard up against the Worldwound—a burgeoning sinkhole of evil that threatens all of creation. It is a land of pilgrims, crusaders, opportunistic rogues, and a simmering clash of cultures from south and north. Descended from Iobarian exiles and ne'er-do-wells, Mendev of old was home to more than a few Issian pirates. Friend and ally to lost Sarkoris, it was otherwise seen as a small and inconsequential kingdom. Everything changed with the death of Aroden, when tales of demonic monstrosities spewing from the distant north spread throughout Avistan at the beginning of the last century. These tales of terror launched the Mendevian Crusades, now on their fourth iteration.

Foreigners engaged in the holy wars against the Worldwound now outnumber the native people of Mendev, who have been pushed aside and treated as an underclass. In theory, these crusaders follow the righteous Queen Galfrey, Sword of Iomedae, a Mendev-born Chelish duchess trained in Brevoy's Aldori battle arts. In practice, mercenaries and professional soldiers now outnumber the pilgrims, and many crusaders remain focused on rooting out demonic influence in the Iobarian underclass or taking their liberties at the point of the sword.

All the while, slowly but surely, the reality-bending chaos of the Worldwound consumes more of the world, spreading its malign influence ever southward. Sooner or later, Mendev's *wardstones* will fail, and unless checked again, the Worldwound will eventually encompass all of Avistan.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Mendev.

Child of the Crusades (Regional): Your parents stood strong against the demons of the Worldwound, facing down the worst of this world and the Great Beyond. You have inherited their indomitable spirit, and you gain a +2 trait bonus on all saves against fear.

Cynic (Regional): As a Mendevian native, you have seen all manner of people claiming holy motives, and you have learned to judge them by their deeds, rather than their words. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Sense Motive checks, and Sense Motive is always a class skill for you.

MOLTHUNE

Territorial Expansionists

Alignment: LN

Capital: Canorate (27,450)

Major Races: Humans, elves, gnomes, halflings

Major Religions: Abadar, Erastil, Iomedae

Languages: Common, Varisian



The frontier colony of Molthune was the first province to declare independence from Cheliox. Others, like Galt and Andoran, quickly followed suit. The leaders of Molthune's rebellion lacked the strength and guile to hold their new land together, however, and so pieces of it were lost, with most forming the nation of Nirmathas. Nirmathas is a thorn in the side of Molthune, and the General Lords of Molthune are bent on reclaiming the Fangwood from their neighbor.

The military is the dominant social structure of Molthune. City dwellers are considered Imperial Citizens; laborers are not. While many laborers resent their position, others take pride in their work, seeing it as one part of a greater whole that allows Molthune to maintain its proud traditions while forging a new, independent future. Imperial Governor Markwin Teldas recently proclaimed that any laborer can become a Citizen by serving in the armies of Molthune for a 5-year period.

Ancient law and tradition, tempered by military pragmatism, define most aspects of life and conduct in Molthune. Some wonder that anything gets done under such a system, but once activated, the Molthuni Imperial Army moves with stunning agility, speed, and force. Although overwhelmingly human and primarily of Chelish descent, the Imperial Army easily absorbs foreigners, and even monstrous troops, so long as they follow orders. Hobgoblins, centaurs, nagas, and lawful lycanthropes are all proud, valued Molthuni soldiers in their specialized units.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Molthune.

Imperial Soldier (Regional): You've served in the Imperial Army of Molthune. Choose one of the following skills: Heal, Intimidate, or Ride. You gain a +1 trait bonus on that skill, and it is always a class skill for you.

Signaler (Regional): By watching Imperial troops, you know how to use flags, smoke signals, and other methods to send secret messages, and gain a +5 trait bonus on Bluff checks to receive secret messages and a +5 trait bonus on Sense Motive checks to intercept messages.

MWANGI EXPANSE



Unexplored Jungle Wilderness

Alignment: N

Capital: None

Major Races: Humans, elves, gnomes

Major Religions: Gozreh, Lamashtu, ancestor worship, demon lords, Green Faith, regional traditions

Languages: Polyglot, regional dialects

Some of the oldest human ruins in the world lie scattered throughout the interior jungles of Garund. The reclusive tribes from whom the forests and wildlands take their name trace their heritage to forgotten kingdoms of great achievements, but they have fallen far since the days of their zenith, and their glorious past remains a mystery.

No accurate maps of Garund's interior exist, and the native tribes of the Expanse seldom declare formal borders. Several locales within the trackless wild attract potent malevolent spirits, sentient plant colonies, juju zombie cults, or similar hazards, making them shunned by natives and explorers alike. The western shores are favored by pirates and smugglers; the inner lands hold vast jungles where no law holds sway.

At the southwest edge of the jungle lies Mzali, oldest of the ruined cities of the Mwangi Expanse and the most heavily populated by far. About a century ago, the population of the great overgrown city exploded when pilgrims from all over the Expanse came to see a bizarre phenomenon for themselves. The shamans of a strange religion produced the mummified remains of Walkena, a boy prince of the near-mythical original Mwangi society. Within the last 30 years, the child mummy sprang to cruel life, issuing orders to his prosperous cult that whipped his followers into a rage against the colonists of Sargava and all outside influences in the Expanse, and open warfare has been the rule ever since.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Mwangi Expanse.

Artifact Hunter (Regional): You know the legends of the Mwangi Expanse and the places where great treasures were rumored to have fallen. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (geography) and Knowledge (history) checks, and one of them is always a class skill for you.

Jungle Walker (Regional): You have learned how to navigate the darkest jungles of the Mwangi Expanse, and how to avoid the most dangerous hazards of the land. You gain a +2 trait bonus on Survival checks in jungle terrain.

NEX



Monument to a Lost Wizard-King

Alignment: N

Capital: Quantum (60,000)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, elves, gnomes, halflings

Major Religions: Abadar, Calistria, Irori, Lamashtu, Nethys, Norgorber, Pharasma

Languages: Common, Kelish, Osiriani, Vudrani

Nex boasts the most cosmopolitan cities of Garund's east coast, such as its capital of Quantum, which rivals the extravagance of Oppara in Taldor or Sothis in Osirion. Monumental palaces and spires crowd Quantum's chaotic streets, which wind past hanging gardens, open-air mazes, and bustling souks. The crumbling statues of Nex and the ancient heroes who traveled with him and forged his kingdom look out upon the city's roofs and balconies, a constant reminder of the man who made Quantum and the surrounding land his own.

Territorial ambitions in the south brought Nex into conflict with the necromancer Geb, inheritor of a rich magic tradition tied to a lost colony of ancient Osirion. The two fought disastrous wars over centuries, which largely ended when Nex vanished in the midst of a Gebbite attack that choked the air with poisonous fog. The ancient war with Geb left an eternal stain upon Nex and its culture, but open warfare faded into reluctant trade centuries ago, and these days Nex imports most of its foodstuffs from Gebbite plantations worked by zombie slaves.

Society in Nex centers around Quantum, as it has for countless centuries. The city attracts a wide assortment of inhabitants, from ambitious wizards to summoned outsiders to merchants from Druma, Jalmeray, Vudra, and even Tian Xia. The city thrives upon its diversity of thought, trade, and influence and shows little tolerance for xenophobes. A creature considered a monster or worse in the ports of the Inner Sea is merely a citizen in Nex.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Nex.

Oenopion Alchemist (Regional): You studied with the alchemists of Oenopion, perfecting your craft in the homunculus factories, golemworks, and ooze colony. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Craft (alchemy) checks.

Quantum University Graduate (Regional): You graduated from one of Quantum's justly famous arcane academies, and the rigorous program of study has honed your mind. You gain a +2 trait bonus on concentration checks when casting arcane spells.

NIDAL

Shadowy Servitor State

Alignment: LE

Capital: Pangolais (18,900)

Major Races: Humans, half-orcs, halflings

Major Religions: Asmodeus, Desna, Zon-Kuthon

Languages: Common, Shadowtongue, Varisian



If Cheliox is haunted by devils, Nidal is haunted by shadows. When Earthfall rocked Golarion, the warrior clans of ancient Nidal cried out for the protection of their long-forgotten gods, but instead attracted the dubious attentions of the shadow god Zon-Kuthon. He offered them protection in exchange for their unquestioning obedience for eternity. Facing extinction with the blotting out of the sun, the proud horse-lords of Nidal relented, ensuring the nation's survival but enshackling itself to the Midnight Lord forever.

Opposition to Nidal's Umbral Court means death, and citizens swiftly defer to the orders of even the most minor of their lords. Some of the most powerful members of the aristocracy include the Black Triune of Pangolais; the dark druid Eloiander of Ridwan; and the persuasive sorcerer Kholas, adviser to Queen Abrogail II in Cheliox. As the diabolical majestrix relies more and more heavily upon the grim power of Nidal to maintain her rule, those who whisper in the shadows of the Uskwood quietly prepare to make slaves of their one-time masters.

In the north, hidden agents of the goddess Desna toil ceaselessly to undo the dark works of Zon-Kuthon's faithful. Worship of Desna is a hushed, illegal practice, carried out beneath the open stars. If the humble priests and priestesses of the Song of the Spheres can somehow break the stranglehold of the Umbral Court, it is hoped that the Midnight Lord himself might be swept back into his prison in the Great Beyond.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Nidal.

Nidalese Shadowcaster (Regional): You have studied with the feared shadowcasters of Nidal. Choose one spell with the shadow descriptor—from this point on, whenever you cast this spell, its effect manifest at +1 caster level.

Uskwood Hunter (Regional): You have served the Umbral Court, discreetly following interlopers through the twilight city streets of Pangolais to pinpoint their locations for the authorities. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Stealth checks, and Stealth is always a class skill for you.

NIRMATHAS

War-Torn Wilderness

Alignment: CG

Capital: Tamran (9,730)

Major Races: Humans, elves, half-elves

Major Religions: Erastil, Gorum, Iomedae

Languages: Common, Varisian



When Molthune broke away from Cheliox, it claimed all of the Fangwood as far as Lastwall, but the woodsmen, trappers, and fisherfolk soon realized that the new mandates from the regional capital at Canorate simply changed the flow of exploitation from one city to another. Resentment flared as the promise of a new era collapsed, and a minor guerilla war erupted into revolution, led by the trapper Irgal Nirmath. When he fell to an assassin, his followers named the territory Nirmathas in his honor.

Molthune has repeatedly invaded its wayward province, and every time, its armies have retreated after pyrrhic campaigns against foes who refuse to stand still or stay down. Every Nirmathi considers herself an army of one, with every household and village an independent company. While they usually respond to the Forest Marshal's call to battle, disparate groups of Nirmathi often ignore battle plans in favor of their own ideas. These bands often spend as much time feuding with rivals as stymieing Molthuni incursions. Their efforts are like hacking at limbs without touching the root of the problem—amid these individual acts of heroism, the Nirmathi as a whole struggle to do more than survive.

Everything in Nirmathas is mediated by the ideals of freedom, self-sufficiency, and liberty above all else. Even the best ideas are ignored or rejected if there is the faintest hint of compulsion. To infringe upon individual rights and freedoms is to invite blood feud. The partisans of Nirmathas have learned well how to survive. Whether they can succeed in forming a nation remains to be seen.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Nirmathas.

Fangwood Diplomat (Regional): You've lived and worked among the disparate guerrilla groups of the Fangwood. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Diplomacy checks, and Diplomacy is always a class skill for you.

Nirmathi Militia (Regional): You have served in one of the militia bands of Nirmathas, and have learned valuable skills. Select one of the following skills: Profession (soldier), Ride, or Survival. You gain a +1 trait bonus on that skill, and it is always a class skill for you.

NUMERIA



Savage Land of Super-Science

Alignment: CN

Capital: Starfall (32,400)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, gnomes, halflings

Major Religions: Desna, Gorum, Iomedae, Nethys

Languages: Hallit

Once the greatest of the River Kingdoms, Numeria today is a land of grim barbarians and dark magic, its fierce people ruled over by a cabal of tainted magicians devoted to artifacts they do not understand. These secrets are not of this world, brought to Golarion with the dramatic crash of a colossal metal mountain from the sky, which scattered pieces of itself across the country.

While its barren landscape leaves little for trade, Numeria is famous in more civilized southern lands as the primary source of skymetals, seven rare metallic alloys sheared from the metal mountain that fell from the sky. These alloys are all useful in the creation of unique weapons and artifacts, and each has its own distinct properties. Of these, adamantine is the most common, and word of the wonders of “Numerian steel” has long since spread to the farthest corners of Avistan and Garund.

Numeria’s capital of Starfall is a grim and brutal place, a decadent mockery of the royal courts of the south. Here, the barbarian king known as the Black Sovereign reigns unchallenged, supported by the perverse sorcerers of the Technic League and their Gearsman servants. In its filthy streets, strange metal men from the Silver Mount enforce the dictator’s decrees, while those who revel (or pretend to) in the king’s carnal celebrations grow fat on the toil of others or become addicted to the vile, intoxicating liquids that seep from the wreckage of the Silver Mount.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Numeria.

Technic Tinkerer (Regional): You managed to uncover some lesser secrets of the Technic League, and have mastered a minor bit of magic. Choose a 0-level spell. You may cast that spell once per day as a spell-like ability. This is cast at your highest caster level gained; if you have no caster level, it functions at CL 1st.

Touched by the Sky (Regional): Somehow, you managed to retrieve a rare vial of fluid from a piece of crashed wreckage on the plains of Numeria. Before you could be caught with the contraband, you drank it. You now have the ability to stabilize a dying creature with a touch as a standard action.

OSIRION



Land of the Pharaohs

Alignment: LN

Capital: Sothis (111,989)

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, elves, gnomes, halflings

Major Religions: Abadar, Irori, Lamashtu, Nethys, Norgorber, Pharasma, Rovagug, Sarenrae

Languages: Osiriani

Osirion once controlled much of what are now the nations of Thuvia, Rahadoum, Katapesh, and Geb, but complacency ultimately ended Osirion’s reign of cultural and martial supremacy. After 5,000 years of pharaonic rule, Qadiran agents infiltrated the corrupt bureaucracy underpinning Pharaoh Menedes XXVI’s regime and quietly neutralized it. Unable to respond effectively, Osirion soon experienced a series of empire-wide slave revolts, each clandestinely engineered by the Padishah Empire of Kelesh, who soon subsumed Osirion as a satrapy.

Hundreds of years later, when Khemet I the Forthbringer emerged and purported to offer proof tracing his direct lineage to Osirion’s First Age, he was quickly instated in a tidal wave of populist enthusiasm. Khemet’s brief demonstrations of his divine ability to recruit the elder elementals of Osirion’s deserts to his banner persuaded the remaining sultans to evacuate and return to their homeland, paving the way for a nearly bloodless coup.

Osirion is the home of one of Golarion’s most expansive deserts, punctuated by a dynamic source of freshwater: the famed River Sphinx. Fed by two tributaries called the Crook and the Asp, the River Sphinx is a lifeline for huge swaths of Osirion’s population. The river, however, brings many trials to test the people who live along its banks, including enormous, black crocodiles (hetkoshu) hippos, and seasonal flooding.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Osirion.

Antiquities Smuggler (Regional): You have moved contraband relics from Osirion’s elder days for years, and have learned some tricks. Choose one of the following skills: Appraise, Bluff, or Sleight of Hand. You gain a +1 trait bonus on that skill, and it is always a class skill for you.

Osirionologist (Regional): You have studied the history of ancient Osirion, and may have even ventured inside one of the great pyramids. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (engineering) and Knowledge (history) checks, and one of them is always a class skill for you. In addition, you may choose Ancient Osiriani as one of your bonus languages.

INNER SEA PRIMER

QADIRA

Gateway to the East

Alignment: N

Capital: Katheer (132,450)

Major Races: Humans, half-elves

Major Religions: Irori, Rovagug, Sarenrae

Languages: Kelish



An ancient kingdom of arid deserts and exotic cities, Qadira is the westernmost satrap state of the Padishah Empire of Kelesh. It thrives on trade but longs for war. Qadira is not the wealthiest of lands in the Keleshite empire, but even its frontier cities possess marvels that much of Avistan can only wonder at, from its peacocks and flowering trees to its animated siege engines and enchanted sandships—able to sail above the dunes and powered by elemental winds—that cross the desert sands.

The Qadiran fleets are well-armed and well-maintained. No frontier kingdom can neglect its defenses, and Qadira's wooden wall of ships is its first line of defense in the west. Its ogre raiders, flying carpet scouts, and camel cavalry are defenses in the north and east against Taldor and various desert giants, bandits, and night-prowling ghuls. Dozens of abandoned towers, fortresses, and even cities litter the northern border of Qadira, each the breeding ground of monsters and bandits.

The capital of Katheer is a place like no other, full of every spice, race, and form of magic, and home to the largest population of camels beyond the Kelesh homelands to the east. The palace of Xerbystes II stands here, as do dozens of academies of mathematics, philosophy, and history. In the schools and bazaars, the activity is great, and many foreign scholars frequent Katheer's libraries. The busiest places of all, though, are the camel pens and the port, where ships sail daily to Quantum, Katapesh, and Absalom.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Qadira.

Genie-Caller (Regional): Your exploration of the magic for calling genies has increased your overall aptitude for summoning. Once per day, you may cast one conjuration (summoning) spell as if your caster level were 2 higher than normal.

Rider of Paresh (Regional): You call the Plains of Paresh home, whether you were born among the plains' tribes or in the glittering towers of Katheer. The horses are your kin. When mounted and making a charge, your mount's speed is increased by 10 feet. You must have the Mounted Combat feat to take this trait.

RAHADOU

The Kingdom of Man

Alignment: LN

Capital: Azir (72,370)

Major Races: Humans

Major Religions: None

Languages: Common, Osiriani



For thousands of years, Rahadom has charted a resolutely secular path. No one denies the existence or power of the gods, but their aegis comes at too high a price for the people of Rahadom. While a lack of religion brought the region the peace it so desperately desired, it also brought its own costs. Plague has ravaged the cities of Azir and Botosani three times in the past 500 years, and the prospect of famine hovers over the fragile land like a shroud. A century ago, Manaket was among the most lush ports of the Inner Sea. Today, it is choked by encroaching desert sands, and its famous gardens are a memory of the distant past. While few dare speak it aloud, nervous whispers abound that the gods have finally decided to punish the people of Rahadom for their insolence. Still, they resolutely hold to their ancient laws.

Visitors to Rahadom often arrive via ship at Azir (known by many as "Port Godless") to trade for the country's fine cloth, exotic produce, and priceless gemstones. Foreigners must submit to a thorough search by the Pure Legion, a group of trained soldiers who watch for signs of religion. Possession of such contraband carries heavy fines and potential exile, while preaching religious doctrine leads to imprisonment or worse. Self-disciplined behavior is the rule, but within those bounds, morality is largely at an individual's or a family's discretion. Narcotics, enthusiastically imported from Katapesh, are common in cities, although sloppy addicts are not tolerated. Slavery is commonplace.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Rahadom.

Rahadoumi Cultist (Regional): You're a secret member of a forbidden faith in Rahadom. You have learned to hide your beliefs and how to identify others of your faith. You gain a +5 trait bonus on Bluff checks to receive secret messages, and a +5 trait bonus on Sense Motive checks to intercept secret messages from others of your faith.

Rahadoumi Disbeliever (Regional): As a Rahadoumi who rejects covenants with gods, your belief is strong enough to repel divine spells. You gain a +2 trait bonus on saving throws against divine spells, but you must make a saving throw even when that magic is beneficial to you.

RAZMIRAN



Theocracy of the Living God

Alignment: LE

Capital: Thronestep (17,340)

Major Races: Humans

Major Religions: Razmir

Languages: Common, Hallit

The living god Razmir came to the northeastern shores of Lake Encarthan 47 years ago and claimed his dominion. He appeared first to the people of Xer, then part of the Arch-Duchy of Melcat, and told them of his power. Razmir claimed to have taken the Test of the *Starstone* in far-away Absalom, and through this test to have attained divinity. Using his powers, Razmir set about gathering a flock by ousting the local magistrate and the Trades Guild—a front for thieves and extortionists.

Today, Razmiran is a society governed by force and intimidation. The faith's ruthless priests control every facet of the state and economy from behind iron masks (in imitation of their god). While the common folk toil at their fields or trades, the faithful take a portion of their work known as the Tithing Step. The clergy, meanwhile, enjoy a life of comfort, as their station in the faith grants them a great deal of power and wealth. Those who dare to defy the faith face severe punishment—imprisonment, exile, or even execution. This leads many to join the faith as a path to prosperity, regardless of their true beliefs. Such acolytes are sent to the Exalted Wood for training and come back changed, acting in league with the faith despite any previous misgivings.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Razmiran.

Acolyte of Razmir (Regional): You are an adherent of the Razmiri faith, or once were and have since renounced it. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (local) and Knowledge (religion) checks, and one of these skills is always a class skill for you. This bonus increases to +2 when dealing with specifics of the Razmiri faith.

Soldier of the Faith (Regional): You have served Razmir as a faithful enforcer, or upon one of the “faith barges” plying the waters of Lake Encarthan, and have learned the enforcement techniques of Razmiran. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Intimidate checks, and Intimidate is always a class skill for you.

RIVER KINGDOMS



Independent Realms of Low Character

Alignment: CN

Capital: None

Major Races: Humans, elves, gnomes, half-elves, half-orcs

Major Religions: Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Desna, Erastil, Gorum, Gyronna, Hanspur, Lamashtu, Norgorber

Languages: Common, Hallit

The River Kingdoms are where the desperate go to escape their pasts and carve out new lives. The lords of the nearly two dozen River Kingdoms constantly fight among themselves, and small mercenary companies battle for ownership of each hamlet and bridge. One result of the frequent infighting is that food in the River Kingdoms is quite valuable. Few souls dare to farm or raise livestock for fear of banditry. What little food is grown is kept secure in castle granaries or well-guarded cattle pens; food suppliers become local heroes, and mistreated farmers or cattle herders have been known to torch their lands and find new towns, where they receive a hero's welcome.

Those who hide here and grow strong include hardened criminals, exiled nobles, firebrands, religious zealots, slavers, and necromancers, but even these treacherous folk tend to follow the strong code of River Freedoms. Those who rule are strong, wily, and willing to do anything to keep their hold on power. The governments of the River Kingdoms range from brutal despotism to pure anarchy, and represent every step in between.

The only thing that can briefly unite the River Kingdoms is a threat from Galt, Numeria, or Razmiran, and even then, each princeling vies with his fellows to lead the resistance. Larger realms find the River Kingdoms to be useful sources of mercenaries and a convenient place to exile undesirables. Attempts to seize and hold River Kingdoms territory prove expensive, thanks to the locals' martial skills, honed by years of infighting.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the River Kingdoms.

Bandit (Regional): Since you were young, you've been a member of one River Kingdoms bandit gang or another. Choose one of the following skills: Escape Artist, Intimidate, or Stealth. You gain a +1 trait bonus on that skill, and it is always a class skill for you.

Riverfolk (Regional): You've grown up on the tributaries of the Sellen River system, and are as comfortable on boats as on land. You gain a +2 trait bonus on Profession (sailor) checks and any skill checks involving rope use.

INNER SEA PRIMER

SARGAVA

The Lost Colony

Alignment: N

Capital: Eleder (8,900)

Major Races: Humans

Major Religions: Abadar,
Gozreh, Iomedae, Shelyn

Languages: Common, Polyglot



The lush plains of Sargava carve a swath of civilization out of the western Garund coast and the dense jungles of the Mwangi Expanse. Once dominated by Mwangi tribesmen, Sargava was first settled by Chelish colonials in 4138 AR, under the ambitious whims of the mad prince Haliad I. A jewel of the empire, distant Sargava stood as a symbol of Cheliox's might at the height of its power.

That all changed when Aroden died and the eternal hurricane called the Eye of Abendego formed, leaving the colony cut off from its motherland. When the devils took control of Cheliox, Sargava rebelled and paid a bounty to the Free Captains of the Shackles to defend Sargava against Cheliox's fleets. Now the former colony must live on its own, surrounded by pirates and hostile Mwangi tribes attempting to reclaim their lands, either through direct insurrection or through more novel means, such as luring monsters to the colonists' holdings by staining them with kaava musk.

The colony's territory includes a number of treasures of the Mwangi Expanse, such as the Deeptreasure Mines, Barkskin Lake, and the Stasis Fields below the Bandu Hills. Though the country is perilous—deadly, in fact—travelers from Cheliox and other parts of Avistan are frequent visitors to the colony, seeking the natural beauty and ruins of ancient civilizations that characterize Sargava. Chelish agents are also common, seeking some way to reintegrate the rebellious colony with its infernal mother.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Sargava.

Jungle Guide (Regional): You've made your living outfitting and guiding expeditions deep into the Mwangi interior in search of ancient ruins and lost cities. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Handle Animal checks, and a +1 trait bonus on Survival checks in jungle terrain. One of these skills is a class skill for you.

Sargavan Guard (Regional): You served in the Sargavan Guard, either as a colonial sub-praetor or as a native Mwangi regular, and have grown accustomed to marching in hot temperatures while wearing armor. When you wear armor of any sort, reduce the armor check penalty by 1, to a minimum penalty of 0.

SHACKLES, THE

Treacherous Pirate Isles

Alignment: CN

Capital: Port Peril (43,270)

Major Races: Humans,
gnomes, half-orcs, halflings

Major Religions: Besmara,

Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Gozreh, Norgorber, Pharasma

Languages: Common, Polyglot



The pirate lords of the Shackles sail from an assortment of outlaw ports, hiding their illicit activities behind the cover of the ravenous Eye of Abendego. Forgotten ruins of an ancient civilization dot the island chain, their crumbling stone walls carved with horrible depictions of cannibalism and blood sacrifice. So disturbing are these images that 600 years ago Chelish explorers marked the region cursed and haunted on their maps and continued south to found the colony of Sargava.

Over the past 30 years, the corsairs of the Shackles have enjoyed unprecedented success. All of the Free Captains are skilled at skirting the dangerous fringes of the Eye of Abendego, giving them an easy way to evade less experienced pilots. The Shackles today consist of a motley collection of bandit and slave ports, where freebooters find safe harbor and trade their ill-gotten plunder with unscrupulous merchants. A powerful Free Captain rules each port, divvying the loot from recent raids and dispensing pirate justice as needed.

The Shackles have only one true ally—the former Chelish colony of Sargava. In exchange for defending the colony from Cheliox, the Free Captains now receive regular tribute of lumber and slaves from Sargava. Elsewhere, the marauders of the Shackles are feared and hated, particularly by Cheliox and Rahadoun, who bear the brunt of the Free Captains' depredations.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Shackles.

Shackles Seafarer (Regional): You're familiar with the treacherous coastlines, currents, and tides of the Shackles, and can use that knowledge anywhere. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Knowledge (nature) and Knowledge (geography) checks while on the ocean. You also gain a +1 trait bonus on Swim checks, and Swim is always a class skill for you.

Stormrunner (Regional): You have sailed on some of the roughest seas on Golarion, and have skirted the Eye of Abendego. You're accustomed to the pitch and yaw of sailing vessels, even in a storm, and gain a +2 trait bonus on Acrobatics checks to keep your footing on uneven ground or unsteady surfaces.

SODDEN LANDS



Hurricane-Ravaged Wasteland

Alignment: CN

Capital: None

Major Races: Humans, merfolk, sahuagin

Major Religions: Gozreh

Languages: Common, Polyglot

At the precise moment the god Aroden is thought to have died, the greatest hurricane Golarion has ever known suddenly formed in all its fury just off the west coast of the continent of Garund. Within days, the Eye of Abendego had completely destroyed the coastline of the neighboring nations of Lirgen and Yamasa. From there, the pulsing flood waters pressed further and deeper inland, forcing a massive and unprecedented evacuation. Today, a century later, the Eye continues to howl, and the remains of the nations it destroyed are known as the Sodden Lands, a perpetually storm-battered region, largely uninhabitable by the likes of humanity.

The Sodden Lands no longer possess large-scale, unifying leadership. Instead, the tiny pockets of civilization that remain bow to their own rulers, typically chieftains or small, despotic juntas. The fallen cities act as brief shelters for nomadic tribes or as lairs for monsters. The sky-reaching towers of the observatories of Hyrantam, for instance, are now interconnected by crude networks of rope bridges and pulleys built by the last of the Lirgeni who still remain behind, determined to survive. Unfortunately, the same ancient observatories now act as a draw for forgotten aberrations from the depths of the Arcadian Ocean.

Divers and undersea explorers spend massive amounts of money launching expeditions to retrieve the lost treasures of these kingdoms. Those who return with their sanity intact enrich themselves and their investors immensely, yet any who return alive are considered lucky.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Sodden Lands.

Abendego Spellpiercer (Regional): You have spent time in the gales of the perpetual hurricane, and can cast spells even when battered by the elements. You gain a +2 trait bonus on concentration checks when spellcasting.

Oagan Diver (Regional): You know how to operate the diving bells of Oagon at the mouth of the Black Flow. You've dived the streets of sunken Lirgen yourself, and you know what to expect. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Swim checks, and Swim is always a class skill for you.

STEAMING SEA



Remote Northern Islands

Alignment: CN

Capital: None

Major Races: Humans, elves, gnomes

Major Religions: Desna, Erastil, Gorum, Gozreh, Torag

Languages: Azlanti, Common, Elven, Hallit, Skald

The portion of the Arcadian ocean situated just off the northwestern coast of Avistan, the Steaming Sea stretches from Chelixa's border up into the frozen reaches of the Crown of the World, where glaciers the size of nations shatter upon each other and low-hanging mists give the sea its name. No single nation rules the whole of the Steaming Sea, and for most residents of the region's lonely shores and scattered islands, its waters are neutral territory, belonging solely to those who fish them.

The Ironbound Archipelago is the largest group of islands in the Steaming Sea, over half of which is claimed by the clans of the Linnorm Kings. The far western tip of this archipelago hosts the strange, masked denizens of the Mordant Spire. These unsettling gray elves seem cold and alien, and are among the few fluent Azlanti speakers in the Inner Sea region. Their legendary skimmers swoop swiftly and stealthily over the waves, guarding the ruins of lost Azlant from any who would seek to plunder them.

Farther south, the gold dragon Mengkare enacts his "Grand Experiment" to perfect the human race and create a utopia on the isle of Hermea. Immigration to Hermea is strictly controlled by Mengkare himself. Undercover scouts scour the Inner Sea for worthy heroes and paragons who are then invited to join the nation's slow march toward perfection, provided they agree to follow the dragon's wisdom in all matters. Children born on the island are tested when they reach 16 years of age—those who succeed are offered citizenship, while those who fail are banished from Hermea forever.

Traits

The following are regional traits for the Steaming Sea.

Hermean Paragon (Regional): You are a product of Hermea's breeding programs—either your parents were chosen to be citizens, or you were, but later failed to live up to the island's high standards. Whatever the case, you are quicker than normal members of your race, and gain a +2 trait bonus on Initiative checks.

Mordant Heritage (Regional): You have lived among the Mordant Spire elves and know their strange ways. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Swim checks and a +1 trait bonus on saving throws against enchantment effects.

TALDOR

Decadent Failing Empire

Alignment: N

Capital: Oppara (109,280)

Major Races: Humans, gnomes, half-elves, halflings

Major Religions: Abadar, Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Norgorber, Sarenrae, Shelyn

Languages: Common, Kelish



Once the greatest empire of Avistan, Taldor has settled into a slow spiral of decadence and decline, watching its greatest achievements wash away in the currents of history. The first half of the Age of Enthronement was the Golden Age of Imperial Taldor. In its heyday, Taldor stretched from the World's Edge Mountains to the Arch of Aroden on the shores of the Arcadian Ocean, including Andoran, Cheliox, Galt, Isgar, Lastwall, Molthune, and the River Kingdoms in its empire. But Qadira invaded Taldor in 4079 AR, and though Taldor successfully repelled the Qadiri invasion, it lost most of its colonial holdings—including Andoran, Galt, and Isgar—to the nascent Empire of Cheliox. Taldor's imperial ambitions were shattered, never to recover.

Now, clinging to a pretense of high society and avant-garde culture, Taldan society is shortsighted, degenerate, and moribund. Thousands of noble houses constantly jockey for position and control of the various departments of the nation's Byzantine bureaucracy. Greed and distrust characterize Taldan politics, and betrayal and assassination are the preferred methods for the aristocracy to increase their stations.

Taldor's influence continues to wane, as it has for some time, yet, many of the nations that now rule Avistan were once a part of its great empire. Without Taldor, they themselves would not have existed, and the proud Taldans know this.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Taldor.

Chivalrous (Regional): You were raised on tales of heroic knights and benevolent wizards from Taldor's Golden Age, and try to emulate their great deeds. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Diplomacy and Knowledge (history) checks.

Wealthy Dabbler (Regional): You study magic at one of Taldor's many social clubs, wowing your friends with your expertise in the simplest of magical exploits. Select two non-harmful arcane cantrips. You can cast these two cantrips once per day each (caster level 1st). If you have levels in a class that can cast these cantrips, your caster level for these cantrips is equal to that class level.

THUVIA

Desert Land of Eternal Youth

Alignment: LN

Capital: Merab (56,870)

Major Races: Humans

Major Religions: Gozreh, Nethys, Pharasma, Sarenrae

Languages: Osiriani, Polyglot



Nearly 5,000 years ago, an alchemist discovered the secret of the *sun orchid elixir*—a potion that temporarily halts the process of aging. The tremendous demand for the elixir, and the impossibility of producing enough, led the alchemist to contact the other cities of the desert, offering them a share of the wealth to be made from selling the elixir. These city-states united under the name of Thuvia.

By ancient pact, the right to sell the elixir rotates between each city-state on a monthly basis, and it is the duty of the host city to provide an escort for the six vials of elixir produced each month. Thuvia has become tremendously wealthy from the sale of the meager production of the elixir, to the extent that the industry of Thuvia is based around the *sun orchid elixir*. Entertainers and merchants dealing in exotic services and luxuries migrate from city to city, catering to the foreigners in the month that the city hosts the elixir. As a result, each of the cities has a massive open market that stands largely vacant in the 4 months that pass between the cycle—the fifth month is always a time of festivals and celebration.

Aside from the Citadel of the Alchemist, the interior of Thuvia is a mysterious and unknown land. Legends speak of Osirian tombs buried within the shifting sands, holding fantastic treasures and artifacts of the mighty God-Kings. There is an entire industry dedicated to the creation of false maps supposedly showing the paths to hidden tombs, but it's always possible an adventurer could stumble upon a true document.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Thuvia.

Desert Nomad (Regional): You were born and raised in the burning sands of Thuvia's desert interior. You gain a +4 trait bonus on any saving throws made to resist the effects of being in hot conditions, and a +1 trait bonus on all saving throws against fire effects.

Thuvian Merchant (Regional): You have traveled the great circular trade route around Thuvia, following the sale of the *sun orchid elixir* from city to city, and are used to haggling with foreigners. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Appraise, Bluff, and Sense Motive checks made for business deals and transactions.

USTALAV



Fog-Shrouded Land of Gothic Horror

Alignment: NE

Capital: Caliphast (15,640)

Major Races: Humans

Major Religions: Desna, Pharasma, Urgathoa

Languages: Common, Skald, Varisian

Cursed with a history of tragedy and faded glory, the Immortal Principality of Ustalav clings to its legendary past even as it struggles to forget centuries of horrors. Fifteen centuries ago, the warlord Tar-Baphon resurrected himself as a vile lich-king, and for more than 600 years, the Whispering Tyrant ruled an empire of abominations rooted in the country's corpse. When the Shining Crusade finally succeeded in imprisoning the dreaded immortal within his fortress of Gallowspire, the victorious knights freed the lich's living slaves and returned the principality's shattered counties to its beleaguered people.

In 4670 AR, three of Ustalav's western counties shrugged off the rule of their ancestral counts in a bloodless revolution, renaming themselves the Palatinates. A less civil conflict erupted 19 years later, resulting in the devastation of Ardeal's eastern reaches, leaving it a forsaken land now known only as the Furrows. Today, Ustalav stagnates under the rule of an aging, impolitic leader, and the threat of royal infighting looms on the horizon. Fearing rebellion, the counts of Ustalav draw inward to their decrepit provinces, coveting their remaining power and further fractionalizing the decaying nation. And in the west, the voice of an ancient evil whispers once more. Thus, Ustalav teeters, as it has again and again through the centuries, on the precipice of ruin.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Ustalav.

Superstitious Ward (Regional): You're not frightened of the old wives' tales of vampires and ghosts, and though you try to avoid the undead, you've learned how to deal with them. You may cast *disrupt undead* once per day as a spell-like ability. This is cast at your highest caster level gained; if you have no caster level, it functions at CL 1st.

Ustalavic Noble (Regional): You come from an aristocratic family, though your family has long since lost any power or prestige it once had. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Diplomacy and Knowledge (nobility) checks. In addition, your starting money is increased by 100 gp—your “birthright,” such as it is.

VARISIA



Wild Frontier Region

Alignment: N

Capital: None

Major Races: Humans, dwarves, elves, giants, gnomes, half-orcs, halflings

Major Religions: Abadar, Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Desna, Erastil,

Gozreh, Lamashtu, Norgorber, Pharasma, Urgathoa, Zon-Kuthon

Languages: Common, Shoanti, Varisian

Once the seat of the Thassilonian Empire, this land was brought low by Earthfall and remained wild for thousands of years, inhabited only by barbarian tribes known as the Shoanti and the nomadic Varisian survivors of Thassilon's fall. In 4405 AR, Chelish soldiers drove the warlike Shoanti into the rugged regions to the northeast, while colonists adopted a tenuous peace with the native Varisians. It was at this time that the ancient frontier came to be known as Varisia.

Although no central government controls Varisia, three city-states have emerged, each of which could someday claim control over the region: Korvosa, a city of Chelish loyalists ruled by a monarchy but cleaving close to Cheliax; cosmopolitan Magnimar, where with enough luck and skill, anyone can rise to a place of power; and dangerous Riddleport, a city of crime lords and academics studying the remnants of Thassilon's artifacts.

Varisia remains a true wilderness. Along the coastal reaches, hundreds of goblin tribes dwell in sea caves and thistle-thick woodlands. Farther inland, ogres and trolls hold court on rugged mountaintops and in deep forest glens. Yet the true lords of the wildlands are the giants, descended from the slave castes of ancient Thassilon, and their periodic raids against humanity make for constant and brutal reminders that this realm is far from tame.

Traits

The following are regional traits for Varisia.

Shoanti Tribesman (Regional): You were born or adopted into a Shoanti tribe. Choose one of the following skills: Climb, Survival, or Swim. You gain a +1 trait bonus on this skill, and it is always a class skill for you.

Varisian Wanderer (Regional): You were raised among or have spent time with a group of Varisian nomads, whether travelers, Sczarni criminals, or entertainers, and have learned their ways. Choose one of the following skills: Perform (choose one type), Profession (fortune-teller), or Sleight of Hand. You gain a +1 trait bonus on this skill, and it is always a class skill for you.

INNER SEA PRIMER

HOSTILE TERRITORIES

The shining civilizations of the Inner Sea burn bright with knowledge and learning, a beacon in the unforgiving night. Even those places that suffer under the gaze of Hell or the cruel caprices of the Witch Queen still offer hope, wit, art, and the other gifts of life. But there are places in the Inner Sea where these sparks have flared and died, leaving behind nothing but evil.

The Darklands: There is another world hidden below—a world that slumbers under city foundations, dreams below the deepest roots of the oldest forest, and plots in hidden places as far below the surface as the mountains are high. The endless caverns and twisting tunnels of this world are known by many names, but in the world above they are collectively known as the Darklands. A brutal, deadly place, the Darklands have bred their hostility into those who dwell within—duergar, drow, svirfneblin, and monsters beyond imagination.

The Darklands are even more horrific than the most outrageous tales. Although most surface dwellers believe the Darklands to be one continuous region of danger, the underground realm in fact consists of three distinct regions, each deeper than the last: the isolated cave networks of Nar-Voth; the sprawling, seemingly endless caverns of Sekamina that hold rivers and even great underground lakes; and the mysterious, vast vaults of Orv.

Mediogalti Island: Of the hundreds of islands off the coast of Garund, none is more storied than Mediogalti Island. If rumor and innuendo can be believed, Golarion's deadliest assassins, the Red Mantis, use the island as their base of operations. Their Crimson Citadel is supposedly hidden deep in the island's jungles.

The most dangerous, evil pirates from all over the world's oceans visit the port city of Ilizmagorti. It is purported to be a haven for anyone brave enough to sail into it and clever or canny enough to survive the stay. Harbor taverns around the Inner Sea are abuzz with rumors of the gold, jewels, and other bounty stashed on Mediogalti—and the ghosts of those who died placing them there.

The rest of the island is covered in lush tropical jungles home to a large number of reptilian creatures. Anyone brave enough to explore the jungles finds thriving tribes of kobolds and lizardfolk, not to mention an abundant population of various breeds of dinosaurs.

The Worldwound: The death of Aroden destroyed more than the faith of his followers. In the distant north, it changed the world, knocking Golarion out of metaphysical alignment in the direction of the Abyss, a nightmare realm in the Great Beyond screaming with wicked souls and vicious demons. This catastrophe tore open the fabric of reality, creating a cosmic blight limned in black flame known as the Worldwound.

The closer one approaches to the Worldwound, the more the physical world itself becomes unpredictable. Terrain changes before the viewer's eyes, shifting form with a torturous deliberation that seems to cause pain to the earth itself. Foul creatures spew from the madness at the center of the blight, monstrosities from the depths of the Abyss.

The Worldwound has no capital, as the demon spawn rampage across the land. Any demon who exerts enough power can claim lordship over a petty fief, but her authority is only as great as her strength. Such power lasts only as long as fear holds underlings in thrall and no stronger demon comes along to take it from her.

BEYOND THE INNER SEA

Mighty civilizations have risen and fallen across the world in the thousands of years of recorded history. Some have vanished from the face of Golarion, while others remain vibrant centers of civilization. And far beyond lie even greater mysteries.

The most storied of these was **Azlant**, the first center of human intelligence. An island empire of incredible beauty, grace, and culture, Azlant rose to undreamed-of heights of technological and magical mastery, but was smashed down in the cataclysms of Earthfall. **Thassilon**, founded by Azlanti exiles in northwest Avistan, was a mighty empire that found power through dealings with strange and terrible creatures. It saw its culmination in the rule of the Runelords, who drew power from human sins, but was destroyed with Earthfall as well. Plague-stricken **Iobaria**, once capable of great architectural feats, is now barely a shadow of its former glory. **Ninshabur** was a powerful, expansionist empire that threatened Osirion and Taldor until its destruction by the Tarrasque. All that remains now are ghosts.

Other places of note include **Arcadia**, a verdant, natural wonderland populated by the proud and vicious folk called skraelings by colonists from the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. **Kelesh** holds the Padishah Empire, of which Qadira is a satrapy. **Tian Xia** is an ancient land, and has produced several empires; it is farthest from the Inner Sea, and so the most mysterious. **Vudra** is composed of more than a hundred mahajanapadas, or semi-independent kingdoms ruled by rajahs in service of the maharajah. The emperor-like maharajah descends from the legendary Khiben-Sald, a godlike hero who united the kingdoms in antiquity and who even spent a decade as an honored guest of the Garundi wizard-king Nex.

Mystics and sages also speak of the **Dark Tapestry**, a place both mental and physical, called "the darkness between the stars" and home to vast horrors that strike madness into all who behold them. The Tapestry is both millions of miles away and a mere twist and turn in space from Golarion.

COMBAT

SWORD STYLES OF THE INNER SEA

Each environment in the Inner Sea demands new approaches to combat. Every area faces a different enemy, and every fighter sees new challenges specific to her surroundings. As a result, the sword fighting styles of the Inner Sea range from the defensive parries of the Aldori swordlords of Brevoiy to the traditional falcata-and-buckler style of the rondelero duelists of Taldor. Masters of each style extol the virtues of their own paths, yet objectively, none can say which is best.

Presented below are three fighter archetypes, each with its own particular strengths. The Aldori swordlord is a master of defensive fighting, striking fast and retreating to a position of strength, always dazzling his enemies with

the weave of his skill. The Qadiran Dawnflower dervish masters the scimitar, making lightning-fast strikes in a whirlwind of steel. The Taldan rondelero is a master of the falcata and buckler, using a style that seems

deceptively simple but is capable of inflicting grievous harm on both an opponent and his armor.

Each of these archetypes includes a set of class features that replace specific class features from the fighter class. If you decide to create a character using one of these archetypes, you must take all of its class features. This may block you from ever gaining certain familiar class features, but they are replaced with equally powerful options. All of the other class features found in the core class and not mentioned among the alternate class features remain unchanged and are acquired normally when your character reaches the appropriate level. A character who takes an alternate class feature does not count as having the class feature that was replaced for the purpose of meeting requirements or prerequisites. A character can only take multiple archetypes when the archetypes do not replace or alter the same class feature from the core class as another archetype; thus, a character could not take more than one of these fighting styles. See pages 55–56 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for the fighter class features, and page 72 of the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* for more information regarding archetypes.

BREVOY: ALDORI SWORDLORD

The Aldori swordlords of Brevoiy are among the deadliest and most feared fighters of the Inner Sea. They have spent long years mastering the Aldori dueling sword, against both other dueling swords and all manner of other weaponry. Their speed and reflexes weave a net of impenetrable steel around them, from which they strike and harry their unfortunate opponents. This variant focuses on avoiding damage and disarming foes; swordlords prefer wearing light or no armor, trusting their skill with their blades for protection. The following benefits only apply when a swordlord is using an Aldori dueling sword and carrying nothing in his other hand.

Suggested Feats: Aldori Dueling Mastery (see *World Guide: The Inner Sea*), Combat Expertise, Dazzling Display, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Aldori dueling sword), Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Lunge, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Aldori dueling sword), Weapon Specialization (Aldori dueling sword).



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Defensive Parry (Ex): At 3rd level, when an Aldori swordlord makes a full attack with an Aldori dueling sword, he gains a +1 bonus to AC against melee attacks until the beginning of his next turn. This bonus increases by +1 every four levels after 3rd. This ability replaces armor training 1 and 4.

Disarming Strike (Ex): At 5th level, when an Aldori swordlord successfully disarms an opponent using an Aldori dueling sword, the swordlord also deals normal damage to the target, but without the normal Strength bonus to damage. This ability replaces weapon training 1.

Steel Net (Ex): At 7th level, an Aldori swordlord can throw up a blazing wall of steel to defend himself. When fighting defensively as a full-round action with an Aldori dueling sword, the swordlord's penalties on all attacks in a round are reduced by 2, and the dodge bonus to AC is increased by 2 for the same round. This ability replaces armor training 2.

Counterattack (Ex): At 11th level, an Aldori swordlord can make an attack of opportunity as an immediate action against an opponent who hits the swordlord with a melee attack, so long as the attacking creature is within the swordlord's reach. This ability replaces armor training 3.

QADIRA: DAWNFLOWER DERVISH

In Qadira, home of the whirlwind, the scorpion, and the djinni, no enemy is as feared as the dervishes of Sarenrae. While dervishes can be clerics, paladins, or rangers, zealous fighters join their ranks as well. These spinning warriors prefer light or no armor and wield scimitars with devastating consequences, moving swiftly over the treacherous desert sands to attack with lightning-fast strikes. They maneuver quickly among their enemies, relying on their speed and their skill to see them through the battle.

Suggested Feats: Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise, Dazzling Display, Dervish Dance (see *World Guide: The Inner Sea*), Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Step Up, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar), Whirlwind Attack.

Burst of Speed (Ex): At 3rd level, a Dawnflower dervish takes only a –1 penalty to her AC after charging. At 7th level, the Dawnflower dervish can charge with no penalty. This ability replaces armor training 1.

Desert Stride (Ex): At 7th level, a Dawnflower dervish can move through 10 feet of difficult terrain each round as if it were normal terrain. This benefit stacks with the benefits provided by the Acrobatic Steps and Nimble Moves feats. This ability replaces armor training 2.

Rapid Attack (Ex): At 11th level, a Dawnflower dervish can combine a full attack with a single move. She must forgo the attack at her highest bonus but may take the remaining attacks at any point during her movement. This movement

provokes attacks of opportunity as normal. This ability replaces armor training 3.

Lightning Strike (Ex): At 15th level, as part of a full attack, a Dawnflower dervish can make one additional attack. This attack is at the dervish's highest base attack bonus, but each attack in the round (including the extra one) takes a –2 penalty. This ability replaces armor training 4.

TALDOR: RONDELERO DUELIST

Taldor's warriors have perfected the art of fighting with the falcata and buckler in an art they call rondelero. They use their bucklers both to defend themselves and to launch unexpected strikes while chopping and hewing at their foes' unprotected bodies and heads with their falcatas. Rondeleros wear any type of armor, but favor bucklers, and are comfortable using both hands for offense and defense.

Suggested Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (falcata), Improved Shield Bash, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Shield Slam, Shield Master, Taldan Duelist (see *World Guide: The Inner Sea*), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (falcata), Weapon Specialization (falcata).

Buckler Bash (Ex): At 2nd level, a rondelero can perform a shield bash with a buckler (use the same damage and critical modifier as for a light shield). This ability replaces bravery.

Buckler Catch (Ex): At 3rd level, a rondelero can catch his opponent's weapon between his buckler and his forearm, effectively wedging the hafts of polearms and hammers or the flats of blades. This functions as a disarm combat maneuver, and the rondelero gains a +4 bonus on the roll. If the rondelero's attack fails by 10 or more, he suffers a –2 penalty to his AC until the start of his next turn. This ability replaces armor training 1.

Strong Swing (Ex): At 5th level, a rondelero gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when wielding a falcata and buckler that applies to attacks made by either hand. These bonuses increase by +1 for every four levels beyond 5th. With a full-attack action, a rondelero may alternate between using his falcata or his buckler for each attack. This does not grant additional attacks or incur penalties as two-weapon fighting does. This ability replaces weapon training 1.

Armor Training (Ex): At 7th level, a rondelero gains armor training 1, and can move at his normal speed in medium armor. At 15th level, the rondelero gains armor training 2, and can move at his normal speed in heavy armor. This ability replaces armor training 2.

Chopping Blow (Ex): At 11th level, as a standard action, a rondelero can make a single melee attack with a falcata. If the attack hits, he may make a sunder combat maneuver against the target of his attack as a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. This ability replaces armor training 3.

FAITH

GODS OF THE INNER SEA

In the lands of the Inner Sea, faith is everywhere. Some mortals give their souls to powerful beings dating back to before creation, others to beings who have recently ascended by way of the *Starstone*, and still others worship outsiders and strange, less popular beings. Yet despite the uncounted number of different gods and pretenders demanding worship, the Inner Sea recognizes a handful of gods as being of particular importance. The influence of these gods reaches far on Golarion, and even those who reject faith and divinity find it difficult to deny the gods' power.

MAJOR DEITIES

Most residents of the Inner Sea region acknowledge a pantheon of 20 gods as the most prevalent and powerful in the region. For more detailed information, see the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* or *Pathfinder Campaign Setting World Guide: The Inner Sea*.

Abadar (LN) is patient, calculating, and far-seeing, wishing to bring civilization to the frontiers and wealth to all who support law. He strikes a balance between good and evil, inspiring diplomats, guiding the pens of lawmakers, and steering coins to those who practice good commerce.

Asmodeus (LE), the Prince of Darkness, is the Lord of Hell. He is the master of discipline and the boot on the necks of the weak. He demands obedience, and is a master of the ironclad contract, making his faithful useful and law-abiding citizens, even if their path to Hell is etched indelibly on their souls.

Calistria (CN), called the Savored Sting, is the goddess of lust, revenge, and luck—a trickster with an audacious spirit. Because of her mercurial nature, she is the favored goddess of the elves, but she also appeals to spies, prostitutes, and thrill-seekers, who see in her a reflection of their own desires.

Cayden Cailean (CG), the Drunken Hero, is a mortal who ascended to divinity by passing the Test of the *Starstone* while inebriated. He is the god of impulse and adventure, righting wrongs, and revelry. His followers reject stricture and structure and hold the brave enjoyment of life as their highest principle.

Desna (CG) is the goddess of dreams, the Song of the Spheres. It was she who hung the stars in the sky and gifted mortals with the desire for mystery and travel.

Clouds of butterflies accompany her, their peregrinations a paean to the joy of exploration.

Erastil (LG), known as Old Deadeye, is one of the older gods currently worshiped in the Inner Sea, and speaks to the urge to domesticate and tame the wild—at least, up to a point. His worshipers are the rural farmers and hunters of the world.

Gorum (CN) appears as a suit of terrible, spiked plate mail armor possessing a pair of fiery red eyes, but with no visible flesh. His faith is strongest among warrior cultures and “barbaric” folk, as he has little use for anyone unwilling or unable to take up arms for battle.

Gozreh (N) dwells at the horizon, where the sea meets the sky; at sea, she has a female aspect, while in the sky, he appears as an old man. Born of the ocean’s fury and the wind’s wrath, she is a fickle deity. Those who depend on the water are sure to placate Gozreh and honor him in the hope that the winds and waves will be favorable.

Iomedae (LG) is another former mortal, a crusader who helped defeat the Whispering Tyrant and became the herald of Aroden. Followers of Iomedae have a strong sense of justice and fairness and an even stronger dedication to martial pursuits and statesmanship.

Irori (LN), the Master of Masters, is a mortal who ascended of his own volition. He is the god of knowledge, healing, and inner strength, and his worshipers are those who pursue personal perfection in their own lives, through meditation, physical exercise, and unarmed combat.

Lamashtu (CE), also called the Mother of Monsters, is venerated by monstrous races. She is said to be the origin of countless horrors on Golarion, and to be the most powerful of the demon lords of the Abyss. Humans who worship her are twisted cultists who dare practice only in secret.

Nethys (N), the patron of those who desire magical power, is the god of the shattered mind, bent on both preserving the world and destroying it—and his followers can fall anywhere along that spectrum, using the gifts they uncover to destroy, invent, or protect.

Norgorber (NE), an ascended assassin, has four distinct sets of followers: spies and politicians who seek secrets; thieves seeking fortunes; alchemists, herbalists, and assassins, who call him Blackfingers; and madmen, murderers, and maniacs, who call him Father Skinsaw.

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Pharasma (N) is the Lady of Graves, the goddess of fate and prophecy, whose Boneyard is the ultimate judgment place of all mortals. Her followers minister to those who are recently departed and destined for their final reckoning, and despise the undead, seeking to cleanse their taint from the world.

Rovagug (CE) was born to destroy the world, but was bound in the Pit of Gormuz in Casmaron by the other gods. His monstrous followers believe his time of release is nigh. They believe only in destruction and hatred, and yearn to drag the world to its end.

Sarenrae (NG), the Dawnflower, is the goddess of the sun, glory, and healing, and her priests dispense gentleness and kindness. But her worshipers are also ruthless in expunging irredeemable evil; like their goddess, they hold both healing and burning purification in their hands.

Shelyn (NG) is the embodiment of love and art. She teaches that beauty comes from within, and that sacrifice is among the purest forms of love. The half-sister of Zon-Kuthon, Shelyn carries the blade of her corrupted brother out of love for what he could have been and might still be.

Torag (LG), the dwarven Father of Creation, attracts both dwarves and humans who seek perfection in their crafts. His followers are strong and unyielding in their faith, and seek to destroy any of the abominations of Rovagug and Lamashtu that cross their paths.

Urgathoa (NE), the Pallid Princess, is said to be the first of the undead and the mistress of disease. Both undead and necromancers seeking the dark secrets of unlife follow her, as do gluttons of all sorts.

Zon-Kuthon (LE) was once a bright and inquisitive god, but his travels past the edges of the Great Beyond corrupted him, and he became a dark and twisted god of pain and suffering. He returned in the Age of Darkness, and his followers want nothing more than to return the world to a time of grim suffering, seeking satisfaction in mutilation, and holiness in the depths of twisted and sadistic lusts.

OTHER RELIGIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES

While the deities listed above are the most commonly worshiped ones in the Inner Sea Region, other deities and faiths have their own followers.

Aroden was the God of Humanity until his death in 4606 AR shattered empires. In the wake of his demise, almost all of his faithful have turned to other faiths, particularly that of his former herald Iomedae.

Diabolism is the veneration of Hell itself. Diabolists believe in rulers and the ruled, pleasure and pain. Not necessarily evil, diabolists fetishize the order that Hell imposes.

The Empyrean Lords serve the cause of good as paragons of the highest form of light and justice.

These powerful angels exist in the realm between outsider and divinity.

Evil Outsiders: Archdevils, archdaemons, and demon lords struggle for power, and some seek worshipers among mortals. Prominent evil outsiders are described in greater detail in *World Guide: The Inner Sea*.

The Green Faith is the worship of the natural world, the celebration of nature and its patterns. It is said to be older than worship of the gods themselves, though other congregations sometimes disagree heatedly.

Razmir is an ascended god who formed his own nation after passing the Test of the *Starstone*, though the residents of several neighboring nations take issue with his aggressive politics and bullyboy priests, giving rise to questions about the exact nature of his divinity.

Other Gods: Other gods are also worshiped throughout the Inner Sea region, including **Achaek** the mantis god, assassin of the gods; **Besmara** the Pirate Queen; **Droskar**, the dwarven god of toil; **Ghlauder**, demigod of parasites; **Groetus**, god of the end of the world; **Kurgess** the Strong Man; **Milani**, goddess of hope and uprisings; **Sivanah**, goddess of illusion; **Zyphus**, tragic god of accidental death; and many racial and regional deities.



MAGIC

ARCANE SCHOOLS OF THE INNER SEA

Across Golarion, people of like minds gather to exchange knowledge and the traditions of centuries. In no field of study is this more true than in magic. Academies, colleges, institutions, and schools of immense arcane power litter the world, where beginners and master thaumaturges alike labor over the ineffable secrets of existence, seeking to wrench power or understanding from the fabric of reality. Each school approaches this study from a distinct perspective.

Some view the study of magic as a riddle to be solved; others

prefer to think of magical power as an equation with variables that offer different results. Still others see the pursuit of magic as the route toward gaining power over the great forces of existence, binding them to the caster's will. All of these approaches contain some truth, but none of them have yet uncovered the true secret underlying and unifying all fields of magic.

Listed here are but three examples of wizards who have graduated from one of these centers of arcane learning. Wizards who choose one of these colleges retain the bonus spells from their arcane school and must select two opposition schools as normal (unless a universalist), but the college changes one or more of the powers granted by the wizard's arcane school. A wizard must take all of the replacement powers associated with her magical college. Once a magical college is chosen, it cannot be changed.

ABSALOM: ARCANAMIRIUM CRAFTER

The most famous magical college of the Inner Sea region, the Arcanamirium of Absalom teaches a broad array of specialties, but its most intensive specialty is no specialization at all. It is one of the primary training academies of universalist magic on Golarion, and the wizards who graduate from the school become well respected, well paid, and highly sought-after in their homelands. An Arcanamirium crafter is one of the builders of the arcane world, assembling magic items with facility, skill, and power. He is intimately familiar with the craft and practice of imbuing items with arcane power, and works with precision even early in his career to help create some of the most powerful magic items of Golarion.

Associated School: Universalist.

Replacement Power: The following school power replaces the hand of the apprentice power of the universalist school.

Metacharge (Ex): As an Arcanamirium crafter, you gain a bonus feat at 3rd level, which must be an item creation feat or metamagic feat. You must still meet all prerequisites for a bonus feat,



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including caster level minimums. When using metamagic feats to create magic items, your skill and understanding of the principles involved in the item's creation give you a +2 bonus on the skill check made to create the item.

CHELIAX: EGORIAN ACADEMY INFERNAL BINDER

The prestigious Egorian Academy of the Magical Arts in Cheliax's capital city teaches a full spectrum of magic, both specialized and universalist, but the college is best known for its Infernal Binding program in the school of conjuration. An infernal binder learns the Names of Hell, and can use those powers to summon and bind devils to do her bidding. If she makes a single mistake in the binding, she opens herself to an eternity of torment. Egorian Academy wizards are recognized across Avistan as premier practitioners of the arcane arts. Many hold high positions in magical colleges across Golarion, but most seek to return one day to teach at their alma mater in Egorian.

Associated School: Conjuration.

Suggested Opposition Schools: Divination, illusion, or transmutation.

Alignment: Lawful Evil, Lawful Neutral, Neutral Evil, or Neutral.

Requirements: An infernal binder must choose a familiar as her arcane bond at 1st level.

Replacement Powers: The following school powers replace the acid dart and dimensional steps powers of the conjuration school.

Planar Knowledge (Ex): As an infernal binder, you gain a +3 bonus on Knowledge (planes) checks.

Assume Control (Su): At 1st level, you can attempt to gain control over a summoned creature by disrupting the bond between it and the caster who summoned it. You must make a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) equal to 10 + the summoning caster's level. If you know the summoned creature's name, you receive a +2 circumstance bonus on the check. If the check is successful, you can control the summoned creature as if you had summoned it for a number of rounds equal to 1/2 your wizard level (minimum 1 round). This does not increase the duration of the original summoning. The original summoning caster can attempt to regain control of the summoned creature as a standard action by making a caster level check against your caster level + 10. When your control ends, the creature reverts to the control of its summoner. At 9th level, you can use this ability to bargain with called creatures as if you were the caster who conjured them. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Intelligence modifier.

Imp Familiar (Ex): At 7th level, you gain Improved Familiar as a bonus feat, and must take an imp as a familiar. The imp replaces your current familiar.

QADIRA: MAGE OF THE VEIL

The city of Katheer is home to a great number of arcane colleges in the Qadiran tradition. Magic has a proud history in this land; its many schools compete with one another to find the best route to understanding the secrets of power.

Among these is the focused school of veil magic. Rather than controlling the elements or transforming the environment, mages of the veil focus on much more subtle magic—blending into their surroundings to watch, observe, and gather secrets, or fading from view completely for the sake of solitude. Most graduates of this college enter the service of the satrap as spies, scouts, or infiltrators.

Associated School: Illusion.

Requirements: A mage of the veil must select *disguise self* as one of his spells known at 1st level.

Class Skills: A mage of the veil gains Bluff, Disguise, and Stealth as class skills.

Replacement Powers: The following school powers replace the blinding ray and invisibility field powers of the illusion school.

Face in the Crowd (Sp): At 1st level as a standard action, you can cause yourself to appear so normal, mundane, and unexceptional that you blend in to your surroundings. All creatures within 30 feet treat you as if you belonged there, effectively ignoring you. Creatures outside of this area may notice that you appear out of place, but as soon as they approach within 30 feet they are affected by the magic and no longer think something is amiss. If you interact with an affected creature in any way, it gains a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 your wizard level + your Intelligence modifier) to disbelieve the illusion and notice you. The effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to your wizard level, or until the illusion is dispelled. The minutes do not need to be consecutive, but must be used in 1-minute increments. This is a mind-affecting phantasm effect.

This ability does not turn you invisible and opponents are not considered flat-footed. It does not allow you to disguise yourself as a specific individual, type of person, or member of another race, so you cannot blend into a group of uniformed guards or appear as a member of an individual's family, and a human cannot blend into a group of gnolls. You can blend in with any group made up of different types of people, such as a crowd of courtiers in a king's throne room, and you can disguise yourself (either through magic or more mundane means) to appear as a specific type of person or another race (such as a uniformed guard or a gnoll) before using this ability.

Master of the Veil (Sp): At 8th level, you can create an illusion that hides the appearance of yourself and any number of allies within 30 feet for 1 round per wizard level. This ability otherwise functions like the spell *veil*. The rounds do not need to be consecutive.

SOCIAL

RACES OF THE INNER SEA

From the bloody revolutionaries of Galt to the genie-wrestling monks of Jalmeray, the broad range of peoples of the Inner Sea region of Golarion represent a swath of human cultures who share their lands with a half-dozen other common races: industrious dwarves, beautiful elves, curious gnomes, eager half-elves, burly half-orcs, and friendly halflings.

Dwarf: The dwarves of Golarion are best known for their skill at mining and crafting, their fierce determination in combat, and their stoic demeanors. Dwarves made their mark on the world with their magnificent castles and fortresses, and they have fought and died over every last one since the day they first emerged from the Darklands. They are Golarion's most diligent workers and steadfast defenders—a people devoted to craft and toil, but equally driven by a potent urge to explore and discover.

Elf: Elves are beautiful, carefree, sometimes ruthless, but always graceful and stylish creatures with large eyes and pointed ears, who dwell in close harmony with nature. Elves—proud, tall, slender, long-lived but fragile—possess an ancient, sophisticated culture and mastery over the arts and magic at least equaling the foremost humans. Just before Earthfall, most elves abandoned the world for their mysterious homeland, but many have since returned to reclaim their ancient holdings.

Gnome: Once an ancient and immortal race of fey, the wily gnomes are a displaced people. Traumatized by their exodus from the First World, they suffer from an affliction they call the Bleaching. All gnomes need new and exciting experiences on a regular basis, or else they start to lose color and awareness, beginning a slow spiral toward insanity and death. This need, paired with their unconventional ethics, has led the race to be recognized as both fickle and chaotic, innovative and daring.

Half-Elf: Unable to ever fit comfortably into either human or elven society, half-elves spend their lives perpetually in-between. They are excellent survivors, able to assimilate into whatever role is needed and find ways to make themselves indispensable as they seek acceptance from without and wholeness within. Outwardly beautiful but inwardly fragile, half-elves strive to master themselves and find in their hearts the strength to command their destiny.

Half-Orc: Half-orcs have long been despised by other races. While many orc tribes value the weaker half-breeds for their natural cunning and conduct raids into human lands specifically to breed more intelligent leaders, humans and most other races see half-orcs as unfortunate and unwanted progeny born of violence or perversion. Their inner conflicts make half-orcs prone to violence and loneliness, with ferocious tempers and burning desires to survive.

Halfling: Despite their involvement in many facets of human society, halflings have a tendency to be ignored and underestimated. Their ability to blend into the background is unparalleled. They know when to bend with the wind, but when they have the chance to seize a grand pile of gold or fame, they never let the opportunity pass by. The small folk cannot resist the temptation of a new adventure, a daring heist, or the lure of the unknown.

Human, Azlanti: The ancient empire of Azlant was highly advanced, but destroyed during Earthfall. The god Aroden was the last pure-blooded scion of that once proud race, and with his demise, the line is now extinct. Those claiming to be Azlanti today are usually Chelaxians or Taldans able to trace their bloodlines back many generations to pure Azlanti stock.

Human, Chelaxian: Chelaxians have a flair for organization and refined cultural taste. The inherent self-confidence of Chelaxians, instilled from birth, has served them well through the death of a god, the fall of an empire, and the rise of diabolists and the official worship of Asmodeus in their nation. They believe they are inherently capable of handling any situation by virtue of their heritage.

Human, Garundi: The Garundi people seem to be among the very oldest in the Inner Sea region, as some truly ancient ruins made by lost Garundi civilizations predate Earthfall and the collapse of Azlant. They have extraordinarily strong bonds to their families and their communities, with intricate social hierarchies and strong customs and rules that date back thousands of years.

Human, Keleshite: The Keleshites are a difficult folk, as their tremendous sense of superiority grates on those unfortunate enough not to be born among their number. Yet their power, learning, and skill are all quite real. They are righteous warriors, jaded mystics, cruel slavers, and

INNER SEA PRIMER

hot-blooded lovers—a race bred from the heat and fire of the desert. They value boldness, wit, and sly tactics over caution or brute strength.

Human, Kellid: The Kellids are a people shaped by threats. Besieged by savage beasts, ice trolls, wicked fey, mechanical monstrosities, orcs, demons, and more, the Kellid tribes have learned to fight constantly—if not monsters, then each other. Although clearly of common descent, Kellids in different nations live in significantly different cultures, with varied religions and mores. Still, they share a predilection for violence and a well-earned distrust of magic.

Human, Mwangi: The disparate Mwangi peoples are the heirs of an ancient civilization and comprise several different—though related—ethnic groups. The name “Mwangi” doesn’t do justice to the folk who inhabit the Mwangi Expanse—from the hundreds of Zenj tribes of Garund’s interior to the Bonuwat of the Mwangi coast, the sophisticated Osiriani-speaking Mauxi to the Bekyar flesh-merchants of southern and western Garund.

Human, Shoanti: The proud Shoanti, descended from the members of Thassilon’s military caste, are considered “barbarians” by the Chelish colonists who drove into the uplands of the Storval Plateau and the hills of northern Varisia. As Varisia becomes increasingly civilized, it’s more common to see Shoanti turn their backs on tradition to dwell in the greater comforts afforded by civilization.

Human, Taldan: Taldans are known for being accomplished scholars, artisans, and practitioners of exotic martial skills, but also as perhaps the most self-important and dismissive culture in the Inner Sea. Both of these reputations are well deserved, as proved by the once-bright glory of the Taldan Empire. Despite their empire’s decline, Taldans retain an arrogance better befitting a people at the height of their power and influence.

Human, Tian: Though the people of Avistan and Garund see the distant Tian as a single race, the people of Tian Xia actually encompass several distinct ethnicities. Many Tians consider the family to be of great importance. They learned the art of genealogy from dragons and in some cases can trace their bloodlines back to the time before Earthfall.

Human, Ulfen: The Ulfen are northerners of uncommon height, pale skin, golden hair, and incredible endurance. They face the worst of the northern winters—frigid winds, harsh snows, and vile monstrosities—with battle songs on their lips and swords in their hands. Ulfens are competitive, athletic, and without fear. They love to fight and have taken feuding to a fine art.

Human, Varisian: Wanderers and nomads, Varisians travel the land in caravans, stopping only to put on their shows. Some Varisians use their gregarious natures and dark good looks to swindle unfortunate marks; it is these few scalawags who give the Varisian people a bad name. Most other folk respect the Varisians for their ancient traditions and vast knowledge but mistrust their motives.

Human, Vudrani: The Vudrani come from distant Vudra, but exploration—for the purposes of trade, conquest, or pure curiosity—has put the people of Vudra on nearly every continent of the world. Vudrani culture is steeped in ancient traditions that define roles, and many do not see it as proper to work above or below the station that the fate of their birth dictates.



COMING NEXT

Wherever human civilizations have spread across Golarion, halflings have followed in their shadow, relying on a cheerful disposition, a low profile, and their innate luck to survive. Learn all about their philosophies and strategies in the player-friendly *Halflings of Golarion!*

HALFLINGS OF GOLARION

by Amber E. Scott

Halflings have long been valued by other races for their dexterity, skill, and luck—often to their detriment. They have survived enslavement by numerous empires, and after centuries of suffering have mastered assimilation, opportunism, and the fine art of disappearing into the background. Yet not all halflings are content to make the best of their servitude, and some fight back against their kind's enslavement through secret underground organizations. Find out all about halflings' little-known culture, rites of passage, relations with other races, survival strategies, and more!

COMBAT

by Hal Maclean

Not everyone is built to go toe-to-toe with a half-orc fighter in combat, and halflings have long since learned that their greatest advantages on the field of battle are their speed, their maneuverability, and the wit to know when to use both of them. As a result, halflings are renowned for their ability with slings—lightweight, discreet weapons perfect for combatants who want to strike from a distance while retaining a low profile. This section contains new information about specialized

types of slings and ammunition specifically designed for halfling wielders, as well as new sling feats that increase slings' power and accuracy.

MAGIC

by Hal Maclean

Most halflings are born lucky, able to coast on the winds of good fortune, but a few are instead able to consciously inflict misfortune on others. Learn how these halfling jinxes sow chaos among their enemies, interfering with their foes' magic and worming their way into their enemies' spells to maximize mayhem!

AND MORE!

Delve into the curious lore of halflings' sacred keepsakes, which allow divine spellcasters extra options when casting certain spells. Get the jump on your opponents with the halfling opportunist prestige class, and customize your halfling with a bevy of new traits!

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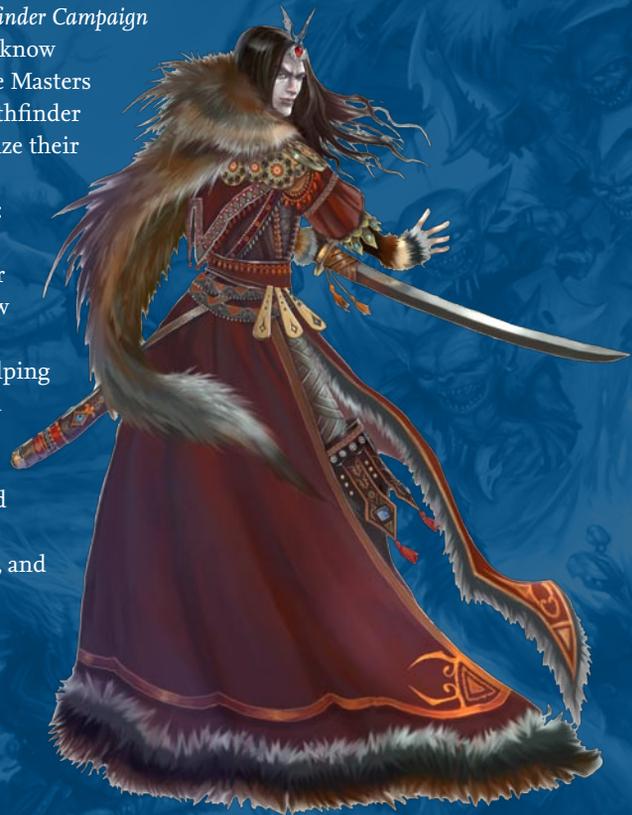


INTRODUCTION TO ADVENTURE!

The Inner Sea is the heart of the Pathfinder campaign setting. From devil-worshipping Cheliox to cosmopolitan Absalom, the savage and frozen Lands of the Linnorm Kings to the steaming jungles of the Mwangi Expanse, there's a place for any character or adventure your imagination can come up with. Yet while a Game Master or player might know all the secrets of the setting, courtesy of the *Pathfinder Campaign Setting World Guide: The Inner Sea*, what does a character know about his or her world? With the *Inner Sea Primer*, Game Masters can quickly and easily introduce their players to the Pathfinder campaign setting, and experienced players can customize their characters with new, setting-specific tricks and traits.

Inside this Pathfinder Player Companion, you'll find:

- ▶ Player-friendly overviews of every nation of the Inner Sea Region, telling characters what they need to know about their homelands—or those of their enemies.
- ▶ New character traits for every country and region, helping to flesh out characters and tie their backgrounds and mechanics into the setting.
- ▶ New archetypes for three Inner Sea sword fighting styles: the Aldori swordlord, the Qadiran dervish, and the Taldan rondelero duelist.
- ▶ A complete overview of the major gods in the region, and what every resident should know about them.
- ▶ Three new arcane schools: the item crafters of the Arcanamirium, Egorian's infernal binders, and the stealthy illusionists of Osirion's mages of the veil.
- ▶ Overviews of the most common races of the region, from elves to half-orcs, as well as the most common human ethnicities.



This Pathfinder Player Companion works best with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game or the 3.5 version of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game, but can be easily incorporated into any fantasy world.



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Printed in China. PZO9414