



## A Traveller's Guide to Balic

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Balic lies near the eastern end of the Balican Peninsula, a range of arid hills between the arms of the Estuary of the Forked Tongue. The slopes of the hills are mild and verdant by Athasian standards, sporting grain fields, vineyards, olive groves, and progressively drier pastures, divided into large, slave-worked noble estates.

Most travellers bound for the city-state follow the Road of Legions, the major passage along the spine of the peninsula. Balic's wall cuts off the tip of the peninsula, running about two miles between the arms of the Estuary.

### THE CITY GATES

Three gates pierce Balic's western wall. Travellers following the Road of Legions to Balic arrive at the Great Gate, the heavily guarded main entrance. The Great Gate is almost always open and always sees heavy traffic, as the Road of Legions leads directly into the heart of the city.

To the south lies the Palace Gate, so called because it leads through the city's Villa Precinct to the Megaleneon, Balic's central hill atop which stands the White Palace of Andropinis. This gate is always closed, and opens only for those who have the right permits - or the right connections - to enter the well-to-do estates beyond.

North is the Guilders' Gate, which gives access to the Guilders' Precinct and Balic's harbour. Although this gate is usually open, to allow easy passage for merchant traffic, it is closely monitored for contraband by the city's templars.

Balic's harbour is another point of access to the city-state. A great fleet of silt skimmers takes shelter here. Scores of the sailing vessels - both wheeled and psionically powered - call Balic home, carrying the commerce of the local merchant houses from Altaruk and Ledopolus all the way to the distant Silt Archipelago or the shores by Raam and Draaj.

### WHERE TO STAY

Balic has dozens of inns and boarding houses, catering to all manner of clientele, from merchants to mercenaries, adventurers, and sailors of the Silt Sea.

The Olive Tree, just off the Road of Legions in the Arena Precinct, offers cheap but secure lodgings for travellers, and is the first stopping point for many visitors to the city.

The Furled Sail is a rough, dangerous place that caters to the crew and passengers of silt skimmers moored in the harbour. Dust from the Silt Sea drifts in piles around the building and gets into all the food and drink, but it remains popular.

The Grove View lies, as its name suggests, within sight of Andropinis' orange groves. Although a high-quality inn, it is also subject to frequent visits by the Dictator's templars.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

There are stables all along the Road of Legions, both outside the city and within its gates. Their prices do not vary too much - the owners cooperate to keep the market agreeable to all - but the quality of the livery is generally good. Visitors will have no trouble in finding somewhere safe for their mounts. The stables outside the city will also care for chariots, wagons, and even argosies for a price.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

As would be expected, Balic is home to many taverns, food-halls, and eateries. From the elven stalls on the Shining Bridges that surround the Agora market, to the dockside dives, to the fine restaurants of the Villa Precinct, there is something here for every palette.

The Thespian House in the Market Precinct, known for its bawdy productions, is of interest to some visitors. Rumour has it that it secretly serves as a meeting place for the Veiled Alliance. Preservers seeking this organisation could do worse than to dine here and inquire about the house special.

### WHERE TO SHOP

There are shops all over Balic, but the best are found in the Market Precinct. This part of the city is dominated by emporiums and warehouses of the prevailing merchant houses. Some of these compounds are small cities within the city, housing hundreds of mercantile agents and labourers.

At the eastern foot of the bluff adjoining the Megaleneon is the Agora, Balic's central marketplace and the location of its primary merchant emporiums: House Rees, House Tomblador, and House Wavir.

Elves are barred from selling goods within the Agora, so elf vendors fill the bridges that lead to it. Visitors heading for the Agora face a gauntlet of elf peddlers and pickpockets before they reach the main bazaar.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

The aforementioned elven market on the Shining Bridges is the primary location for such goods, but some of Balic's active theatrical community have ties to the Veiled Alliance, and discreet enquiries with them may yield desired results.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

While the elven market seems like an obvious choice for such purchases, the best source of poisons in Balic is a reclusive bard known as Whispering Katari. Despised by the city's nobles for some reason, she can be reached by making contact with the serving girls at the Red Mekillot tavern on the docks, who act as her go-betweens with customers.

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Work is easy to find in Balic. House Wavir in particular offers generous incentives to persuade agents and freelance adventurers to join the household. Employees are constantly in demand, particularly warriors, rogues, and psionics. The same can be said for the other merchant houses, all of which are always on the lookout for skilled operatives.

Balic's navies, mercantile and military, offer further options for those interested in travel. The city-state's silt skimmers travel far and wide across the Sea of Silt, reaching the Silt Archipelago and even the islands of the Road of Fire. They are keen to hire competent crew.

### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

Apothecaries and similar establishments are common in Balic but for clerical healing, the best choice is a shrine to elemental air, high on the slopes of Mount Laeron. Although reaching it requires an arduous climb, the priestess who tends the shrine is usually happy to help those who have made the effort.

### WHERE TO TRAIN

Training opportunities are rife in Balic. For warriors, the best choice is House Jarko. Although a merchant house, Jarko has long held the finest gladiatorial stables in the Tablelands, and offers excellent training to warriors of all stripes.

Clerics can find tuition at any of the small shrines that dot the city (clerics of silt are very well catered to, especially in the docks and along the eastern rim of the city) and druids can often find teachers in the plantations and groves around Balic.

Wizards will, as always, struggle find reliable teachers, but those who cultivate connections with the city's actors will eventually be able to contact someone who can help them.

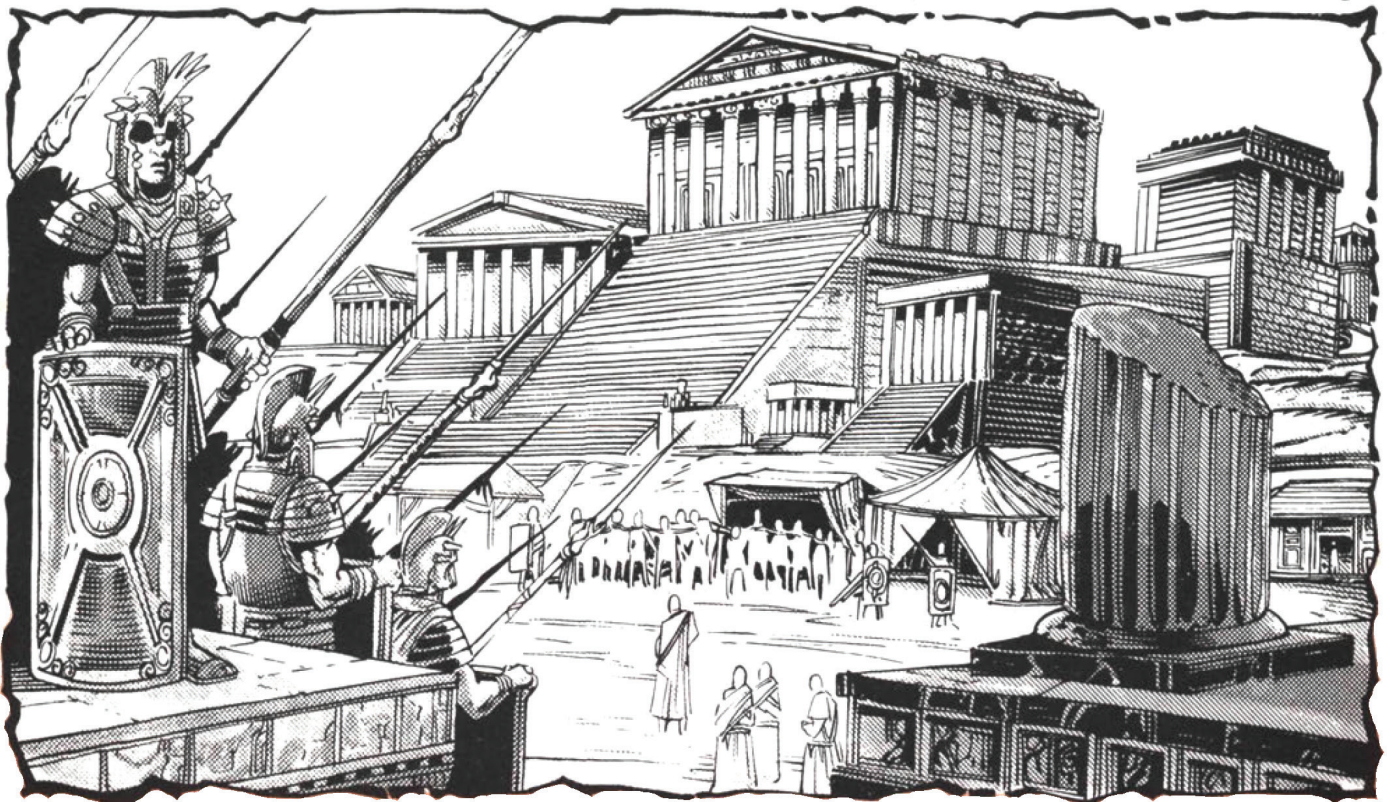
Psionics can enjoy excellent facilities at the Cerebran, a high-quality psionic university on the outskirts of the city. Sponsored by Andropinis, the Cerebran is nevertheless allowed to administer itself, and there are no templars or soldiers stationed on its grounds.

### PATRICIANS

Balic's nobles are known as patricians. The patrician class is composed of the leading landowning families; each family owns a slave-worked estate of grain fields, vineyards, olive groves, and pastures in the lands west of the city. Many of Balic's most prestigious public offices, such as military command and important templar positions, can be filled only by candidates of the patrician class, so the families amass a great deal of influence by placing their sons and daughters in public service.

### PRAETORS

Praetors are the templars of Balic. By popular vote, they are elected to their offices for 10-year terms. Once they have won their positions, Andropinis invests them with the magical power necessary to perform their duties. The Dictator's minions carefully screen candidates and arrange voting districts and slates to produce the results that Andropinis desires. On occasion, an unwanted praetor is elected despite the Dictator's arrangements; unfortunate accidents often befall such people shortly after they take office.







## A Traveller's Guide to Celik

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Celik is situated at the southern end of the Trade Road, deep in the desert waste known as the Endless Sand Dunes. The last forty miles of the Trade Road run through more verdant terrain, scrub plains that dominate the landscape around the city. Travellers approaching Celik for the first time might mistake the city for ruins uncovered by the wind. But Celik is two cities, a dead one and a thriving, growing trade centre, its buildings a mixture of toppled, gray stone and carefully repaired edifice.

### THE CITY GATES

Celik has only one gate, known as the Bastion. The Trade Road runs directly through it from the north and into the city. The Bastion is always closed because the Endless Sand Dunes surrounding the city are untamed and overrun with monsters. House Mareneth controls the Bastion and admits any intelligent, healthy beings who agree to its terms of residence and service.

These terms provide citizens to Celik with food, water, a place to live, and small amounts of spending money to use in the taverns and gaming halls run by the Starchasers elf tribe, who occupy a district within the living city. In return for this, citizens provide labour of varying sorts for House Mareneth, until any accrued debts are paid in full.

### WHERE TO STAY

Celik does not have many inns, but those that it does have are kept busy by the small but thriving community that has sprung up in the ruins.

The Mareneth's Pride is the oldest and best known of Celik's inns. Owned and run by House Mareneth, it is a grandiose affair, as safe and secure an establishment as can be expected in the city. Its prices are excessive, but this is to be expected in the ruined city.

The Fallen Star is run by the Starchasers elf tribe, located in a ward of the city under their control. The elves permit all citizens of Celik to come and go freely, because the Fallen Star sports a sizeable gambling hall that the elves use to skim a healthy profit from their customers.

The Bastion Hall lies not far from the city's only gate and caters almost exclusively to adventurers seeking their fortune in the ruins. Used to their comings and goings, the owner of the inn is a retired dwarven adventurer called Kannar who turns a blind eye to many of the unusual circumstances that seem to follow adventuring types around.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

Both the Bastion Hall and the Mareneth's Pride have their own stables, but the best livery in town is to be had at House Mareneth's headquarters.

There, a former elven crodlu herder called Lanky Laria provides expert service, free advice, and keeps her costs reasonable. Her staff respect her and work hard to earn her respect in turn. Laria long ago earned her keep but chooses to remain in Celik for reasons best known only to her.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

The Fallen Star, mentioned above, has a busy taproom that supports the inn and attached gambling house. With dancers, bards, open firepits and a variety of entertainment, it is one of the most popular places to eat and drink in Celik.

The Canal House, situated in an inner ward of the city under House Mareneth's control, overlooks one of Celik's dried-out canals. The building it occupies clearly dates back to when the canals were filled with water, because stone docks reach out over the sandy channel below. Extensively renovated, the Canal House is as upmarket as a half-ruined city like Celik can manage, with eye-watering prices to match.

Rasker's Rack is a thoroughly unpleasant dive located at the edge of House Mareneth's territory, run by a foul-mouthed and foul-tempered mul called Rasker. Despite the Rack's reputation, its food is surprisingly good (Rasker's cook is an inventive nikaal known as Gaathesh the Glutton) and the place is often used for underhand deals out of sight of Celik's ruling house.

### WHERE TO SHOP

Like other cities, Celik has markets and other amenities, but all trade takes place under the auspices of House Mareneth or one of the elven tribes that frequent the city (primarily Clearwater elves, but the southern tribes of the Stormwalkers and Starchasers also have a presence). While House Mareneth tries to keep trade reliable, the competing elven markets and a thriving subterranean black market in the city's old sewers mean that all manner of goods, authentic and otherwise, can be found in Celik.

The main drawback to shopping in Celik is the fact that prices are elevated well above standard for the rest of the Tablelands. Finding goods that cost ten times their normal price, or even more, is not unusual. Water is particularly expensive. This is due to Celik's remote location and the fact that the ruins are filled with loot, which the traders seek to profit from however they can.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Celik's numerous elven markets mean that spell components are easy to acquire. The Clearwater elves in particular are quite open about the sale of these, as the lack of a sorcerer-king and templarate mean that the laws of the other city-states are hard to apply here. House Mareneth does discourage open use of magic, but knows that there are better battles to fight and appreciates the usefulness of wizards in exploring and reclaiming the ruins.

#### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

As with spell components, Celik's elven markets are the perfect place to locate poisons. The Starchasers in particular do a strong trade in various unsavoury concoctions. If one is averse to dealing with the elves, a tari known as Whistler lairs in Celik's labyrinthine sewers and is willing to deal with those who desire a quiet and quick purchase of alchemical goods.

#### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Adventurers can make good money taking on hunting contracts in the ruined parts of Celik for House Mareneth, provided they can survive what waits within the ruins. Of course, they have to be careful about the terms of their employment. Many adventurers wind up as indentured servants of the merchant house.

For most, though, a visit to Celik means a chance to go delving in the ruins for themselves, devoid of sponsorship from House Mareneth or any other entity. In few other places on Athas is there an established community that supports this kind of activity. Visitors to Celik are often quite able to find work for themselves in the simple act of exploring what remains of the ruins.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

Finding healing in Celik is either a matter of visiting an apothecary (House Mareneth runs one near the Bastion) or seeking aid from elven elemental shamans. There are also a few temples and shrines, most notably the House of the Infinite Sands (earth), the Black Glass Fane (magma), and the Balefire Barrow (fire). The latter in particular welcomes visitors, if they are willing to make a donation and sit through a sermon to the ancient dead of Celik.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

House Mareneth provides training opportunities to any who desire them, but they add the costs for this training to any debts currently borne by the client. Extensive training may simply lengthen the period of servitude owed to the house - travellers should bear this in mind when approaching Mareneth for assistance.

This aside, clerics can find training with the elven shamans or at one of the city's temples, and wizards will find preservers (and defilers) among the elf tribes willing to assist them.

For warriors and rogues, there are many who follow these professions already living and working in Celik, and most are amenable to sharing their expertise for the right price. The same applies to psionicists, but there is apparently a strange psionic aura that hangs over Celik, and most psionicists find it uncomfortable to remain near the ruins for very long.

#### INDENTURED SERVITUDE

Celik's civilised area is ruled by Patriarch Korsun Mareneth. The trade lord is little better than a petty despot, using his house and caravan guards to maintain order. Additionally, mercenaries are hired to protect the walls of House Mareneth's holdings from the denizens of the unrecovered ruins. Any would-be treasure hunters would do well to buy a licence from Korsun to delve into the ruins. Failure to buy a licence can result in indentured servitude as well as a heavy tax on the items recovered. If a treasure hunter can't afford the licence, a short period of indentured servitude will suffice, but it is well known that House Mareneth will extend this period in any way it can.







## A Traveller's Guide to Draj

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Draj lies at the heart of a vast mud flat surrounded by miles of verdant belt. As travellers approach the city along the Road of Kings, they may notice sun-bleached bones lying half-buried on the side of the road. The bones are the remnants of slaves who tried to escape the city-state, but were too weak to travel far under the merciless sun. Weak and starved, these slaves did not go long before collapsing.

Travellers will notice the distinct shape of the Great Pyramid rising into the air as they near the city, and the long stone causeway that connects Draj to the Road of Kings, spanning its mud flat. Fields of crops also attract the eye, with toiling slaves working relentlessly under the lash of a templar's whip.

### THE CITY GATES

Upon reaching the causeway that spans the mud, travellers will find no gates. At the far end of the bridge, there are two towers, replicas of the Great Pyramid, manned by templars and half-giant guards. It is here that visitors are questioned about their purpose in coming to Draj. The templars will ask about travellers' business, what they plan to sell or buy in Draj, and whether they are known to any Draji. Visitors may be searched for any reason at any time; possession of spell components is illegal and punished severely. Use of magic is also strictly prohibited, so any wizards must refrain from using their art near the guard towers, or hide it well.

Templars typically charge 5 bits per leg for visitors. Thus, a dwarf will be charged 1 cp, while a kank will cost 3 cp.

Once past the guard towers, travellers need to pass through the Golden Moon Gate in order to enter the city. Draj has no walls - the mud flat serves as an impassable moat - and the Golden Moon Gate is the only way into the city.

### WHERE TO STAY

For visitors with no connections inside Draj, the best way to find a place to stay is to head into the Merchant District. Of course, one is better off staying on a clan compound but, if travellers do not know anyone inside the city, the public inns are the place to stay.

Travellers will find numerous inns in the Merchant District, run by local merchants or House Tsalaxa agents. Typical fare is 1 cp per night, though the price may vary depending on the reputation of the establishment or the desires of the customer.

Half-giant-size sleeping accommodations are rare, though one inn, the Great Cleaver Inn, does have the capacity for a few larger-sized customers, who are charged extra. Most inns are located along the main entry road, making them easy to find, though a few of the shoddier places are off the main road in small alleys and dark plazas.

The Snarling Jaguar is a well-known establishment in Draj, though travellers who don't want to attract the attention of templars should stay away from it. However, it is a good place to find many of the important and wealthy people of Draj.

For visitors requiring less obvious accommodations, but still wanting good service, the Dark Mirror Lodge can be found slightly off the main road, not far from Golden Moon Gate.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

There is a small mud flat between the main Draji mud flat and the mainland where travellers may leave their mounts. This small mud flat is connected to the stone causeway and enables poorer travellers to leave their mounts outside the city and avoid paying the entrance fee. If the mounts are required inside the city, however, there is an animal pen not far from the entrance gate that charges by the day. Travellers must remember that no mounts are allowed inside Two Moon City.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

Many places serve food in Draj. Their cuisine is renowned across the Tablelands, and anyone leaving the city without sampling its culinary delights is missing one of Draj's finest assets. Again, the Snarling Jaguar serves excellent meals, since the high-paying customers demand good-quality food.

For less expensive meals, but no less delicious, the Lirr's Tail can cook up a fine repast. They are known in Draj for making the best erdlu stew and steamed corn.

If visitors wish to eat less exotic meals (and less expensive), many bakeries can be found in the Merchant District. On every morning, when the sun rises, the smell of freshly baked bread triggers great rumblings in the bellies of hungry patrons.

### WHERE TO SHOP

The Merchant District has most everything a buyer wants. Weapons are easily bought, though templars tend to hang around weapon shops. People looking for art should go into the Artisan District, where exquisitely crafted sculptures and tapestries can be bought, though they are expensive. Some custom artwork can be ordered, though the Draji shy away from making art that doesn't glorify war or violence in all its forms.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Bards and elves are the usual sellers of magic components in Draj. Some wizards and Veiled Alliance sympathisers also take the risk of selling illegal components. The rare visiting elven tribes bring exotic materials from all over the Tablelands, while bards have made a profession of dealing in illegal goods. The Bard's Quarter stands at the edge of the Merchant's District, where the templars rarely venture unless they are in great numbers.

#### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Poisons are the domain of the bards, who have mastered the mysteries of extracting venoms and poisons from the most dangerous animals and plants. Almost any kind of poison can be bought, from the simple love potion to complex poisons requiring multiple exposures. Bards are rare in Draj, but when elven tribes visit the city, buying poison is a lot easier.

#### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Anyone wishing to find employment should look to either House Tsalaxa, or the artisans. House Tsalaxa often employs mercenaries and artisans often need help hauling stone blocks or carrying obsidian to be carved. Apprenticeships are also available with the various merchants and artisans, though the Draji are wary of outsiders. Should anyone be really down on their luck, they may sell themselves as slaves to work on the farms, though this may include many weeks or even years of service.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

The Temple of Fire is the best source of healing, since it has a larger retinue of priests than the other temples. The Temple of Water is the cheapest place to get healed, though services are limited. This temple is the closest to the main gate, in the Merchant District. The Temple of Earth also provides healing services, located just outside Two Moon City.

The new Temple of the Storms, devoted to the element of rain, provides healing services, though the price is steep. Rugar Stormbringer, the head cleric, is less scrupulous about who he heals. People looking for some anonymity are better off paying the extra price and going to see the cleric of rain.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

People looking for combat experience are in luck in Draj. The Draji regularly hold training exercises, and nobles are keen to test their abilities against outsiders. The price is usually higher than in the rest of the Tablelands, but the Draji are natural warriors.

Clerics can find training at the elemental temples, although the impoverished water temple usually doesn't accept trainees. The temple of fire is the best choice; Imotec is a competent cleric with a large support staff. Should any rain cleric desire training, Rugar isn't looking for apprentices but preaches to all who listen.

Anyone wishing to participate in the Games is welcome to come to the arena. The templars regularly accept gladiators from other city-states and pay relatively well for them to fight.

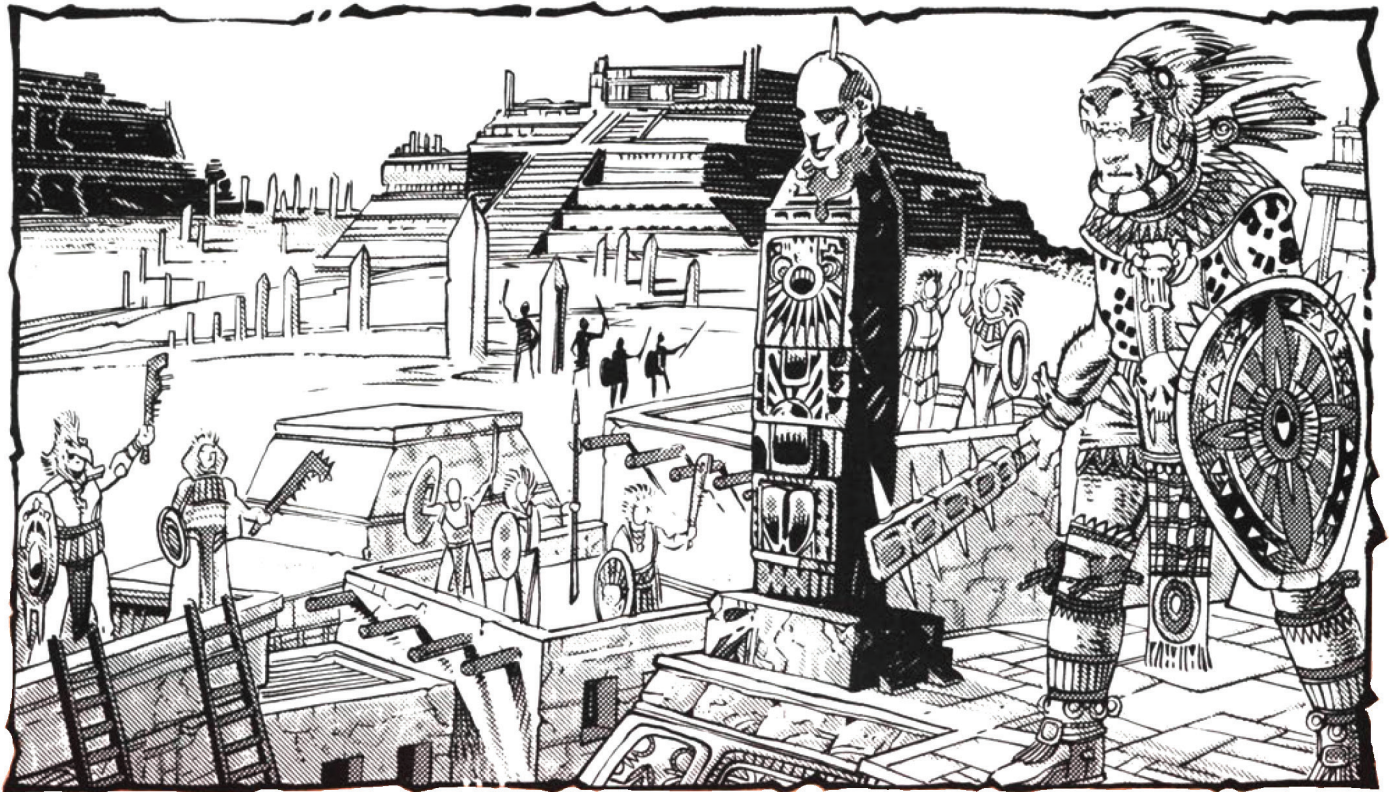
#### DEALING WITH OFFICIALS

Moon Priests have great authority among the general population, though less power in relation to nobles. They are not immune to bribes, so the same tactics that work elsewhere are just as effective in Draj. No templar will jeopardise Draj's security, nor bring outsiders into Two Moon City at night, for any price.

The government employs telepaths at the city gates, and during interrogations, so transgressors should be weary of mindbenders.

#### LOCAL CUSTOMS

Draj does not have many rules or complex customs, though visitors may find the war-worshipping aspect of its culture troublesome. Everywhere one looks, there are statues or tapestries or paintings glorifying death and war in all its forms. The Draji value warrior prowess, and insulting a Draji's combat abilities brings swift retribution.







## A Traveller's Guide to Eldaarich

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Eldaarich lies on an island in the Sea of Silt, and can normally only be reached by a series of bridges, guarded by Fort Holz and South Guard. From walls and towers, defenders stand ready to throw back any attacker. If faced by a serious threat, the defenders can quickly knock a handful of key supports from under the outer bridges to spill the enemy into the silt basin below. Meanwhile, the bridges that cross directly into Eldaarich can be retracted, completely cutting off access to the city-state.

Most visitors to Eldaarich come no closer than the settlement of Silt Side, to the north of Fort Holz. Here, trade with the outer world takes place. Few are they who are permitted any closer.

### THE CITY GATES

Two gates grant access to the city's interior: one to the southwest, leading to the bridges to South Guard, and the other to the northeast, watched over by Fort Holz. Neglected roads, nearly reclaimed by scrub brush and tall grass, lead away from the city across the outer bridges and eventually to the mainland. Except for those rare occasions when templars are entering or exiting, the gates are kept closed and barred. They have swung fully open only one time in seven hundred years.

Fort Holz also sports extensive shipyards and docks, chiefly used to launch expeditions to the mines at the nearby Four Towers islands. Vessels could approach these docks and, if not destroyed by the war machines stationed there, seek permission to use the harbour.

### WHERE TO STAY

Because foreigners are not permitted in the city, Eldaarich has no inns. Pleasure houses, smoking dens, and wine cellars offer distractions from the city's misery while also providing shadowy corners where conspirators can hatch their plots. The Screaming Goblin is the oldest and best known of these, a sprawling labyrinth of booths and cubby-holes, frequented by some of the city's worst criminals. Nobody knows what the titular goblin is – most presume it to be some horrendous beast or malignant form of undead from the legendary past of Athas.

Outside of the city, travellers can find shelter at Silt Side, where the Giant's Skull inn lets rooms for reasonable prices. Several oases along the Road of Kings also offer accommodation.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

There are stables at Silt Side run by House Azeth that cater to all customers who have coin to part with. At South Guard, the stables are privately owned by the nobles of that settlement. They can be persuaded to offer livery to visitors, but only if they deem those visitors suitable. The nobles of South Guard consider themselves to be cosmopolitan and can be quite choosy.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

In Eldaarich itself, visitors are not permitted and will struggle to find safe places to eat. Although there are plenty of taverns of varying quality, the ban on foreigners makes these hard to access. The Red Guard's Rest, not far from the northern gate, has been known to turn a blind eye to strangers, but few other places are so lax.

In Silt Side, House Azeth runs a boarding house that caters to traders – its adjoining taproom has decent food and drink at a reasonable price. In South Guard, by comparison, there are numerous restaurants frequented by the local noble families. Of these, The Fifth Tower is the most expensive, but is worth the price for its views over the sweeping expanses of the Silt Sea.

### WHERE TO SHOP

Silt Side is the best choice for those seeking provisions, and not only because Eldaarich itself is likely off-limits to them. Within the city, prices are far higher and supply is variable. At Silt Side, where House Azeth maintains a thriving trade outpost, most goods from across the Tablelands and the North can be had for only a small mark-up.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Eldaarich has no Veiled Alliance – it is said that Daskinor destroyed it several centuries ago – but there are spellcasters at work in the city. All are in hiding and thus hard to locate but there are rumours that preservers from nearby Kurn occasionally visit the city. One might make careful enquiries around Silt Side to see if any members of House Azeth might help make contact with them.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Eldaarich has no elven market, and few of the desert runners frequent its client settlements. Within the city, however, there is an area known as the Bowels – here, one might be able to locate purveyors of poison. The Bowels are a warren of tunnels and caves dug out below the city. Inhabited by a terrifying assortment of miscreants who would put the worst slums of Raam to shame, the Bowels are extremely dangerous territory and should be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Almost all work in Eldaarich will be at one of its client settlements – Silt Side or South Guard. Employment can be found within the city itself, but it is extremely hazardous. The Eldaarich are deeply paranoid and gripped by infighting. Some seek the assistance of outsiders in their mutual rivalries but they would discard these foreigners as soon as their presence became a problem. Accept such commissions at your peril.

House Azeth, by comparison, is enterprising and enthusiastic when it comes to taking on fresh blood. The Eldaarish are not their only customers - their caravans reach as far as Draji - and so they are keen to employ Athasians with up-to-date knowledge of the southern cities.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

In Eldaarich itself, healing is in the hands of the templarate. An order of templars known as the Haleban (specifically responsible for Management of Knowledge, Facts, and Public Works) provides healing to the Eldaarish, or are supposed to. More frequently, internal strife within the order and among the Eldaarish themselves makes this an unreliable service. Instead, the Eldaarish turn to a number of smaller apothecaries and folk healers who ply their trade throughout its winding streets.

Outside of the city, there are elemental shrines at South Guard, sponsored (and effectively owned) by noble families, and a small group of druids who tend that settlement's plantations. All of these make sound choices for those seeking healing.

Similarly, there is a large temple to silt at Silt Side, which is happy to provide healing and assistance to visitors, if the visitor is willing to pay. Overseen by a busy dwarf called Prost, the temple mainly caters to silt sailors and the like.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

The best opportunities for training lie outside the main city. Priests should visit the nobles' elemental shrines in South Guard and the druids who tend its fields. Warriors might be able to find trainers at Fort Holz, if they can persuade its commander to grant them access. Wizards will find few willing to train them, but forging contacts with House Azeth may allow them to meet preservers from Kurn rumoured to visit Eldaarich. Rogues are the only class likely to find trainers in Eldaarich, and then only if they are skilled enough to brave the Bowels and live.

Psionics are currently illegal in Eldaarich, due to Daskinor's latest paranoid delusions. Followers of the Will and the Way should not identify themselves to any among the Eldaarish.

#### PERVASIVE PARANOIA

Daskinor's madness has infected his city and its culture. Everyone in Eldaarich believes that treachery is at work to undermine or destroy them. People go about in hooded robes to conceal themselves in hopes of thwarting their rivals, and most retreat from confrontation. Assassination is common, and templars and nobles wage a secret war as they seek to eliminate their enemies. Eldaarich is an insane city, and every fear, no matter how far-fetched, is real and present in the hearts and minds of its people.







## A Traveller's Guide to Gulg

### APPROACHING THE CITY

When approaching Gulg, you should feel free to camp off the People's Road. Be aware, however, that elf tribes often camp off the main road and prey on foreign visitors. There are also tribes of primitive hunters and gatherers in the forest who do not speak the common trade language. They are not necessarily hostile but will attack if they feel threatened. If visiting Gulg, it is well worth the time and effort to learn a few of the city's customs. More than one visitor has found himself in the oba's dungeons for unwittingly offending the locals.

### THE CITY GATES

While there are several gates to the city, foreigners must enter through the Queen's Gate. This is the largest gate; it lies at the end of the People's Road. Merchants refer to this as the Caravan Gate. You will be required to declare what you are carrying, in what quantities, and why you are coming to the city. Do not lie to the gatekeepers – the guards are overseen by clairsentient and telepathic templars. These servants of the queen are able to quickly determine the veracity of any entrant's claims. Also, it is a crime to resist telepathic contact from a templar. If you attempt to close your mind psionically, you will be arrested immediately on grounds that you are hiding something. The toll to enter the city is 5 bits per leg. Thus, both a man and a crodlu are one ceramic piece each, while a mekillot costs two ceramic pieces on its own.

### WHERE TO STAY

When visiting Gulg, you should stay in the dagada of a friend if at all possible. Here you will be extended the courtesies and protection of your friend's neighbourhood. If you don't know anyone in Gulg, you can stay in one of the public dagadas, which offer a daga and a meal for 5 bits per night. These public places serve as the inns of Gulg and are run by the oba's templars. The Dagaous, or House of Outsiders, is a fairly reputable place, although public dagadas in general are much less secure than the residential areas and tend to attract vagrants, freebooters, outcasts, and adventurers. A few public dagadas are run along the People's Road outside the city. These dagadas are run by private individuals who are often expatriates from other lands. The Kaponome Dagafari, which means Ancestral Tree Home of the People Without Ancestors, is a good public dagada. It is not actually a treehouse but simply a clay-walled dagada. Staying in one of the public dagadas outside the city is sure to decrease your chances of attracting the attention of the templars.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

The public dagadas will allow you to board a kank or crodlu if you are staying there. Otherwise you are advised to keep your mount with you to avoid theft.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

The sellers in the evening market clearings will have bread and watered wine for sale. *Do not* attempt to purchase any, for you will run the risk of being imprisoned for black marketeering. However, a friend who is a citizen may buy such goods for you and give them to you as a gift. If you know no one, the merchant camps outside the city will sell food to travellers, as will any of the public dagadas.

### WHERE TO SHOP

The widest variety of goods is available outside the city in the merchant camps. Native goods from Gulg can be found in the market clearings on market days, but foreigners are required to trade only in the Queen's Trade House. This operation is set up primarily to deal in large quantities with exporting merchants, but on a slow day the templars will deign to conduct business with individuals.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

The best place to find magic components is in any elven dagada that you can find. The number of elves varies, and sometimes there is no elf tribe in the city. You can try to find some elves camping outside town, but be advised to be on your guard. If you are a preserver, you may also try to contact the Veiled Alliance. Defilers may seek magic by checking for employment with the queen, but such positions are always permanent. If a particular component is required and you are having no luck finding it, you can always hire a thief.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

If you find yourself in need of poison you can take your chances in the Drum Circle, a bard dagada. This place is filled with heady incense and hypnotic drumming. *Do not go in alone!*

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

While the exchange of goods with foreigners is strictly controlled, services are more freely traded in Gulg. Craft dagadas will provide a room and board to foreign craftspeople if they display enough ability. The city-state makes occasional use of mercenaries, particularly for short missions away from Gulg. The best place for a foreigner to find work, however, is the camps of the foreign merchant houses. They often hire people for short-term jobs and offer the potential of a longer career for trustworthy and competent agents.

### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

The elemental temples will provide care for injured travellers in exchange for a fee or service. There is no temple of water in Gulg. Be wary of Umjai, the high priest of the House of Sky. He is closely connected with the queen's templars.

Note that only druids and templars have the power to raise the dead; they are unlikely to perform the rite on a stranger unless there is an extraordinary benefit to the spellcaster. Lalali-Puy personally reviews the case of any person a templar wishes to raise.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

Most professionals can train for a fee within Gulg. Only foreign fighters and rangers will be unable to find willing masters to help them advance. This is not due to the lack of those professionals in the city, but rather to the belief that such skills are not something that can be learned independently of Gulg culture. If you are willing to fully enter Gulg society, you may find a mentor. Any person seeking training is advised to learn enough of Gulg's customs to appear extraordinarily gracious.

#### DEALING WITH OFFICIALS

Gulgans distrust foreigners by nature. You are advised to avoid the oba's templars if at all possible, but if you must encounter them, try not to lie. Providing incomplete information is much safer than lying to the templars, for they often have the psionic ability to detect such things. Bribery can be effective, but only if a personal relationship has been established over several meetings before a "gift" is offered. To hurry such a procedure will offend the official and probably land you in the dungeons.

#### Customs in Gulg

Gulg life is replete with rituals that constrain every activity. It is important to observe the basic rites surrounding daily life so that you can avoid imprisonment or deportation - or sometimes even death.

#### GREETINGS

Among citizens, making a fist with the right hand and briefly raising it to the lips is the gesture used for both arrival and departure. The phrase "dotome" (or "you again") indicates pleasure in greeting another person. Templars and respected persons are greeted by flashing two open palms at the individual. This seems a carry-over from the sign of harbouring no weapons.

#### FAREWELLS

Although no gesture is associated with departures, the phrase "latolo" is, which translates literally as "talk later." The phrase is actually an abbreviation of "Mola tomay lotana," which means, "We will have more time to keep talking about these things later on when we have more to talk about". The phrase may seem cumbersome and even comic to an outsider, but it has a certain poignancy, particularly when used by troops before battle.

#### EXCHANGES

Reflecting the belief that all property belongs to the oba and that all citizens are equally entitled to its use, a purchaser interested in an item will always begin, "I would like my share of what you are holding." In an attempt to entice prospective buyers, a seller will offer, "Would you like your share?"

#### MEALS

Before eating, people are always expected to wave the food in front of themselves, as if offering it to the others present. To forego this pleasantry is to paint oneself as a miser.

#### ENTERING A HOME

Upon entering a home, people are expected to tap their feet against the outside wall. This is meant to shake away any ill will or bad spirits clinging to the people. If visitors enter a home without observing this formality, it is looked upon as an act of aggression.

#### EXITING A HOME

When leaving a home, people are expected to again kick the wall before leaving. This is meant to make sure that any good luck in the house stays behind and does not leave with the visitor.

#### THE QUEEN

Perhaps the crime that lands most foreigners in prison is looking directly at the Sunlight Home. Everyone except the queen's templars must avert their eyes when approaching the palace. If a visitor is unfortunate enough to have an audience with the queen, he or she is expected to lie prostrate on the ground before the queen until she bids the person rise. The visitor still may not look directly at the queen until she bids otherwise.







## A Traveller's Guide to Kurn

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Kurn lies in a lush meadow on the eastern edge of the White Mountains. The Road of Kings runs north from Draj through scrub plains before terminating at the city's southern gate.

Kurn welcomes travellers from the south and its main merchant family, House Azeth, maintains frequent caravans along the Road of Kings, as well as client trade villages. The approach to Kurn is relatively well-guarded and visitors will have little trouble gaining access to the city.

### THE CITY GATES

Kurn has two gates, although travellers will only have cause to use one of them. This gate, the aptly named South Gate lies where the Road of Kings enters the city through its southern walls. The gate is always open (barring some mishap) and manned by guards and templars, but they do not meddle with most travellers unless given clear reason. House Azeth caravans are often seen in a staging area just outside the gate.

The city's northern gate, Protector Gate, is always shut and only those with permission from the templars may pass through it. The gate gives access to a secluded road that runs north into the foothills of the White Mountains, ending at a towering fortress called Fort Protector. This fortress watches for incursions from the Barrier Wastes that lie beyond the White Mountains and is generally not accessible to visitors.

### WHERE TO STAY

Kurn is a dying city. Almost a ghost town, it is home only to a few thousand residents. This means that visitors have only a few legitimate choices when it comes to accommodation. If a traveller is not averse to risking a run-in with the templars of Oronis, the city's aloof and distant sorcerer-king, they could probably find an abandoned property to squat in - the city is full of them. Failing that, a few inns do call Kurn home.

The Golden Eyrie is actually located outside of Kurn's walls and caters primarily to aarakocra visiting from Winter Nest. Uncomfortable within the city itself, the aarakocra enjoy the inn's open courtyards and rooms built high on stilts above the ground. It is particularly popular with aarakocran traders.

The Wasp House is located in the heart of Kurn's market district. Sponsored by House Azeth, the inn is a bustling place with an extensive series of immense paper nests sprawling across the hillside behind it. Sporting a lively and popular taproom, the Wasp House is an ideal place to stay in town.

The End of Kings is a large inn near Kurn's South Gate, so-named because it sits at the terminus of the Road of Kings. Large and ramshackle, it is nevertheless always busy, frequented by visiting merchants who care little for fine accommodation, so long as the beds are soft and clean.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

There is a large stables at the End of Kings inn, but it is poorly tended, little more than a series of corrals. For more reliable livery, the discerning traveller chooses the Sleepy Kank, at the edge of the market district, run by a surprisingly erudite ssuran called Thaassi. Friendly to her customers, she has a sharp tongue for her staff, with the result that the Sleepy Kank is popular and well-maintained.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

The taproom at the Wasp House is one of the most pleasant destinations for food (and drink) in Kurn, but others in the city also offer decent fare.

Guthay's Smile occupies a large quadrangle deep in the market district, its buildings encircling a courtyard with its own well. Leafy and well-tended, it caters to the city's wealthier folk. Diners should beware, however; the staff are known to add extra charges to the bill and artificially inflate prices wherever they can.

For a more down-to-earth experience, the Cup and Hammer, located near the Protector Gate, offers lower prices and a much more basic menu. The food is satisfying, if sometimes unimaginative, but the tavern has few pretensions about its nature or clientele (many of whom are warriors stationed at Fort Protector).

### WHERE TO SHOP

Although Kurn is clearly a city in decline, with its noble and templar quarters practically deserted, its merchant and tradesman districts are always crowded. Thanks to the efforts of House Azeth, the city maintains strong trade links with the south (through House Tsalaxa of Draj, among others) and with the aarakocra, elves, and ssurrans of the northern lands. Its economy enjoys modest success, contrary to the city's apparent desolation.

Consequently, visitors can find most trade goods at Kurn's markets. Kurn's *claves* - social groups that fulfil various functions in the city - have strong craft and artisan skills and bring a variety of wares to market. Aarakocra of the White Mountains, ssurrans of the Scorched Plateau, and a range of elven tribes also visit Kurn's markets, making a wide range of produce available.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Kurn is an interesting exception to the general rule that wizards are hunted outcasts on Athas. Although magic is technically outlawed in Kurn, its templars turn a blind eye to the sale of spell components and there are several places on the market where they can be bought with only a modicum of discretion. Aarakocra preservers are the easiest to approach, and can be found with ease at the Golden Eyrie inn just outside town, if no luck is had locating them in the city's markets.

#### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Although there are few nobles to sponsor them, bards maintain a strong presence in the tradesman's district of the city. Unlike other Athasian cities, where bards are primarily assassins, in Kurn their skill in the alchemical arts has reached full flower. The bards of Kurn are master herbalists, alchemists, and innovators. Most famous among these is the healer Iotef, who has invented any number of strange concoctions. Poisons are the least of his available offerings.

#### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Work is hard to come by in Kurn. The slow decay of the city means that many of the requirements of life have simply fallen away. House Azeth remains interested in specialists who have a broad knowledge of the south - their trade links with Draji mean that they can always make use of well-travelled folk - but there are few other employers of note.

An exception to this would be mercenaries who are willing to provide loyal service to the city for good coin. There is a sizeable legion stationed at Fort Protector, just to the north of Kurn, and its elite Black Brethren are always looking for new recruits - so long as they are reliable and can deliver trustworthy service.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

In addition to the aforementioned bards such as Iotef, there is an entire clave of healers in Kurn. Several apothecaries dot the tradesman's district and are willing to provide healing services to those in need. For clerical shrines, aarakocran air shamans visiting from Winter Nest are the best choice. They can be found at the Golden Eyrie outside town.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

As with employment, training opportunities are thin on the ground in Kurn. Bards, of course, will find more than they thought possible with the healer's clave, and warriors may be able to persuade troops stationed at Fort Protector to provide some assistance in the martial arts.

Clerics, however, will struggle to find permanent shrines where they can seek guidance (although aarakocra and surran clerics visiting the city may be willing to provide teaching). Druids, strangely, seem completely absent from Kurn, despite the fields surrounding the city.

Preservers, on the other hand, will find it relatively easy to locate teachers, although none of any particular power. But low-level wizards can be located with a few discreet questions at the city's market.

There is no psionic school in Kurn, and mindbenders will find themselves left largely to their own devices. Some psionicists serve in the Black Brethren, but they seldom teach their skills to outsiders.

#### DEMOCRACY IN KURN

Kurn is unique in that its citizens govern themselves, under the distant auspices of the sorcerer-king Oronis. All citizens except templars may hold public office, with elections held at regular intervals and time in office limited to set terms. A body called the Tribunal governs the city; at its head sits the Presider, who is Kurn's highest elected official. Members of the Tribunal are referred to as Tribunes and, together with the Presider, they draft Kurn's laws. The templars then enforce these laws, but hold no public authority beyond this.







## A Traveller's Guide to New Kurn

### APPROACHING THE CITY

New Kurn lies in a fertile valley in an eastern arm of the White Mountains. A secluded road leads west from Fort Protector, which guards the entrance to the hidden valley.

New Kurn is not open to uninvited guests. Only those who have been approved by the sorcerer-king Oronis may venture into the paradise that New Kurn has become.

Brave (or foolhardy) souls seeking access to the city through the high passes of the White Mountains are warned that creatures loyal to Oronis are said to lair on the peaks, with orders to slay anything that tries to approach the city through the mountains or by air.

### THE CITY GATES

New Kurn has no gates, save for the fastness of Fort Protector, and no walls, apart from the White Mountains. A thick forest lies at the heart of New Kurn's valley; the city itself is situated within a lush clearing in the forest, on the shores of a small lake. One need simply approach the city. Nevertheless, Oronis' templars patrol the forest surrounding New Kurn, and are ever-vigilant for the uninvited intruder.

### WHERE TO STAY

New Kurn has few inns, as it does not cater to transient guests; those who find themselves in New Kurn are generally here for good. There are, however, one or two establishments that cater to special visitors given leave to remain in the city on a short-term basis.

The Lakeside Lodge is situated on the shore of Lake Kurn and is a beautiful building fashioned from dark woods with leafy courtyards and residential chalets that meander down to the waterfront. Run by New Kurn's templarate, the Lodge is the officially approved accommodation for visitors to the city, being both welcoming and a convenient place for keeping an eye on guests. Prices are decent and food is fair.

Deep in the forest itself lies the Loft, a collection of linked treehouses built into the boughs of the great trees that call the valley home. Nominally a school for druidry and the preserving arts, it is also permitted to provide lodgings for its students. Over time, this permission has been extended to foreigners. Strictly speaking, guests are required to be students at the Loft, but its owner, an elderly dwarf called Brakko, turns a blind eye to this criterion, if the guest offers to make suitable donation.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

New Kurn has only a few stables, and these are all located at the edge of the forest and run by the templarate. They are little more than basic corrals to keep mounts under control and out of trouble, but are well-maintained and inexpensive.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

In contrast to its paucity of inns, New Kurn has an almost bewildering variety of taverns, restaurants, and eateries. The utopian approach to life in the city provides its residents with luxury and free time, and there are numerous establishments catering to this. The two most famous are detailed below.

The Dome is perhaps the most remarkable tavern in Kurn because it is located beneath the waters of Lake Kurn itself. Situated in a dome fashioned from *glassteel*, the tavern is magically lit and supplied with fresh air, providing its clientele with stunning views of the flora and fauna deep below the lake's surface. Food, drink, and entertainment are of outstanding quality (with prices to match), making this one of the most stunning dining experiences on Athas.

On the valley slopes, a long, low building with expansive verandahs is home to the Roc's Rest, a boisterous and often overflowing tavern, notable for frequent live entertainment in the form of music, dancers, acrobats, and other performers. Drink is cheap, food is unremarkable, but the atmosphere is invigorating.

### WHERE TO SHOP

Trade goods of all kinds are readily available in New Kurn, although prices can be high due to the effort required to bring goods to market here. House Azeth trades with many clients, but they are not permitted entry into New Kurn, so there is a laborious process of ferrying produce through Fort Protector involved. But, for the patient, most items can be had for a price.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Spell components are readily available in New Kurn – it is one of the few places on Athas where the arcane arts are practised openly. In addition to the aforementioned school at the Loft, there is also an academy at the Unveiled Tower, residence of Oronis. Both of these locations are ideal places to shop for components. Defiling magic, it should be noted, is outlawed.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

As in Old Kurn, members of the healers'clave are the best source for alchemical goods of all kinds, poisons included. New Kurn does have a number of true bards, however – members of the secretive Shadow Clave, which works clandestinely to neutralise the enemies of New Kurn. These state-sponsored assassins are a further source of lethal tools, assuming one can find them.

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

If a visitor has been granted access to New Kurn, it means that Oronis feels that they can contribute in some way to his ongoing restoration project. In such a case, work will most likely already have been laid before the newcomer.

Similar to Old Kurn, mercenaries of all stripes – priests, wizards, and psions, not just warriors – are in high demand in the city. Its defence is of paramount importance, and adventurers who are able to be loyal and discreet will find many opportunities to put their skills to use.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

The healers'clave is well-represented in New Kurn, with apothecaries common throughout the valley. The templars of Oronis also offer healing to his people – their local headquarters are easy to locate in New Kurn. In addition to this, there are many shrines to elemental water near the lake. The most prominent of these is the Silvered Hall, a building of astounding beauty run by a devout and garrulous priest.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

Opportunities for training are widespread in New Kurn. Oronis desires his people to excel in all things and ensures that training facilities for all manner of professions are available and affordable.

Clerics will find shrines dotted throughout the valley. Water is obviously well-represented, but all elements find their home in the utopia of New Kurn. Druids in particular will find many of their kind throughout the valley's forest.

For preservers, New Kurn is a paradise. The Loft and the Unveiled Tower are two of the finest magical schools on Athas, and the sponsorship of Oronis ensures that preservers will want for little.

Warriors can find teachers at Fort Protector and in a number of training halls in the city, and rogues can seek tuition from the Shadow Clave.

For psionicists, the best teacher of the mental arts is Valiar Forasta, an apprentice to Oronis himself. She melds the psionic arts with those of the preserver, and is a deeply insightful woman, happy to take on students.

#### A UTOPIA IN MAKING

With the same democratic laws as Old Kurn, New Kurn benefits from the full flower of Oronis' restoration project. Hunger and thirst have been eradicated, no creatures are hunted out of existence and no plants are plucked completely from a given area. Oronis tries to instil his people with serenity, peace, and an appreciation for all life. His templars work to promote his plans and prepare to someday strike out from the valley with the knowledge of how to restore all of Athas. Until then, they'll work to finish the restoration of the valley and to perfect the society that Oronis has inspired.







## A Traveller's Guide to Nibenay

### APPROACHING THE CITY

When approaching Nibenay, avoid camping in the fields off the main roads. Within 10 to 15 miles of the city, virtually every inch of ground lies under someone's claim. To avoid being imprisoned (or worse) for trespassing, you are better off finding a room at an inn, a caravansary, or at one of the client villages of the noble houses. The nobles abide by traditional customs of courtesy toward strangers and will often give travellers shelter in the slave barracks for a small charge. Nibenay is a city of incredible opportunities, but be advised that it is unwise for foreigners to travel the streets alone. There are many dangerous characters, and some of the city's laws don't extend protection to visitors.

### THE CITY GATES

One of the many delights of the city of Nibenay is its "dancing gates." Each of the city's elaborately carved gates has a balcony hanging across it, with Nibenese musicians continually playing hypnotic melodies. The music has the power to compel people to walk in rhythm to the performer's music. Animals respond in a like manner and seem to become calm as they approach the city. The sight of huge caravans and lines of porters all swaying to the songs of the minstrels has earned these gates their moniker.

Of the city's four gates, only the Reservoir Gate is restricted to use by the templars and the army of Nibenay. The Mekillot Gate is wide enough to accommodate a huge argosy; it leads to the merchant emporiums of Sage's Square. The South Gate should be avoided because of its proximity to the thieves of the dangerous Hill District. The West Gate is smaller and opens into the shops of the freemen merchants and tradespeople.

Entry into the city is a simple matter of paying a toll. Only the most suspicious characters are detained by the templars here.

### WHERE TO STAY

There are a large number of inns and boarding houses throughout Nibenay that will meet a wide variety of tastes. If you are conducting business in the city, it is not unusual to be invited to stay at the home of the person with whom you are dealing. This may not always be in your best interest, however. Druids may find themselves welcomed at the house of a noble if they are willing to survey the noble's property and tend to any problems that might be developing in the fields or hot springs. Clerics can find temporary shelter in the temple of their votive element. If you are neither druid nor cleric, however, and have absolutely no money, quite a few vagrants simply sleep in the tunnel-like alleyways beneath the shelter of the stone-vaulted roofs.

The Open Door is a popular inn near Sage's Square. The proprietor, Baylee Baran, caters to merchants and traders. The Borderstone is a cheap place near the elven market run by a half-elf named Pottooth. He has a reputation for minding his own business.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

Most inns have facilities to board kanks and crodlu. Inixes and other larger animals must usually be taken to a livery stable, of which there are several near each of the city's gates.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

The mazelike streets of Nibenay are often cluttered with vendor stalls and small shops of freemen huddled against the carved walls of the city. Rice is the staple of the Nibenese diet and can be purchased throughout the city. Exotic foods of all kinds can be found in the all-night marketplaces. Be wary of drinking too much in unfamiliar establishments. Many slavers trawl the streets late at night in search of drunk and wayward travellers to add to their "stock".

### WHERE TO SHOP

Many of the market districts in Nibenay conduct business at all hours. The centre of trade in the city is Sage's Square, a large plaza of gray ash surrounded by the largest and most opulent emporiums of the dynastic merchant houses. Virtually anything that people are willing to pay for - from the Ringing Mountains to the Sea of Silt - can be found in the markets of Nibenay at any time of the day or night.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

On the east side of the city an ancient and deserted walled palace called the Hill has been taken over by the predator classes of the city. The elven market in the outer ward of the Hill District is a source for virtually any easily transported material component of spells. Naturally, the buyer should exercise the caution appropriate to conducting business with elves.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Deep within the crumbling inner courtyard of the Hill, the bards of Nibenay have built a squalid nest of mud-brick shacks. Virtually any poison can be purchased for the right price if you are adept at negotiating with these dangerous people.

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

There always seem to be opportunities for the enterprising in Nibenay. Merchant and noble houses frequently require mercenaries and specialists. The woodcutters in the Crescent Forest will gladly hire groups to protect them from predators and headhunters from Gulg. Tradespeople will often take on apprentices or hire people to deliver orders to remote areas. The templars at the Temple of Trade can help enterprising newcomers establish businesses of their own. The king's templars also occasionally hire outsiders for work, particularly when such work involves a mission to a foreign city.

### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

The elemental temples all offer healing services to travellers. The temple of elemental water sits on a small island surrounded by a water-filled moat near the south wall of the city. This temple administers almost exclusively to the noble houses. The temple of earth, built deep within the cliff wall overlooking the city's north side, is also supported primarily through the contributions of the noble families. These relationships stem from the nobles' traditional ties to the land and the hot springs. The temples of elemental fire and air administer to the free citizen class of the Nibenay region. Their priests are often called out to the tenant farms to mitigate the effects of a windstorm or drought. In general, the Nibenese freemen are very pragmatic about the elemental cults and look to them strictly for material well-being.

### WHERE TO TRAIN

It is not difficult to find people willing to train you in Nibenay. Warriors can find a number of public combat halls in the city as well as in the gladiatorial stables of the noble and merchant houses. The merchant houses are particularly happy to allow a visitor to train with their gladiators if the subject is willing to pay. Like warriors, rogues can often find a master who will train them - though often it is in exchange for an unusually dangerous service.

Clerics can turn to the elemental temples for additional training. Druids, on the other hand, may have some difficulty locating a mentor. There is a chance, however, for the persistent seeker to find a master in the Crescent Forest. Occasionally, a

druid can be found in residence at a noble house, but these priests are less likely to have any interest in teaching initiates.

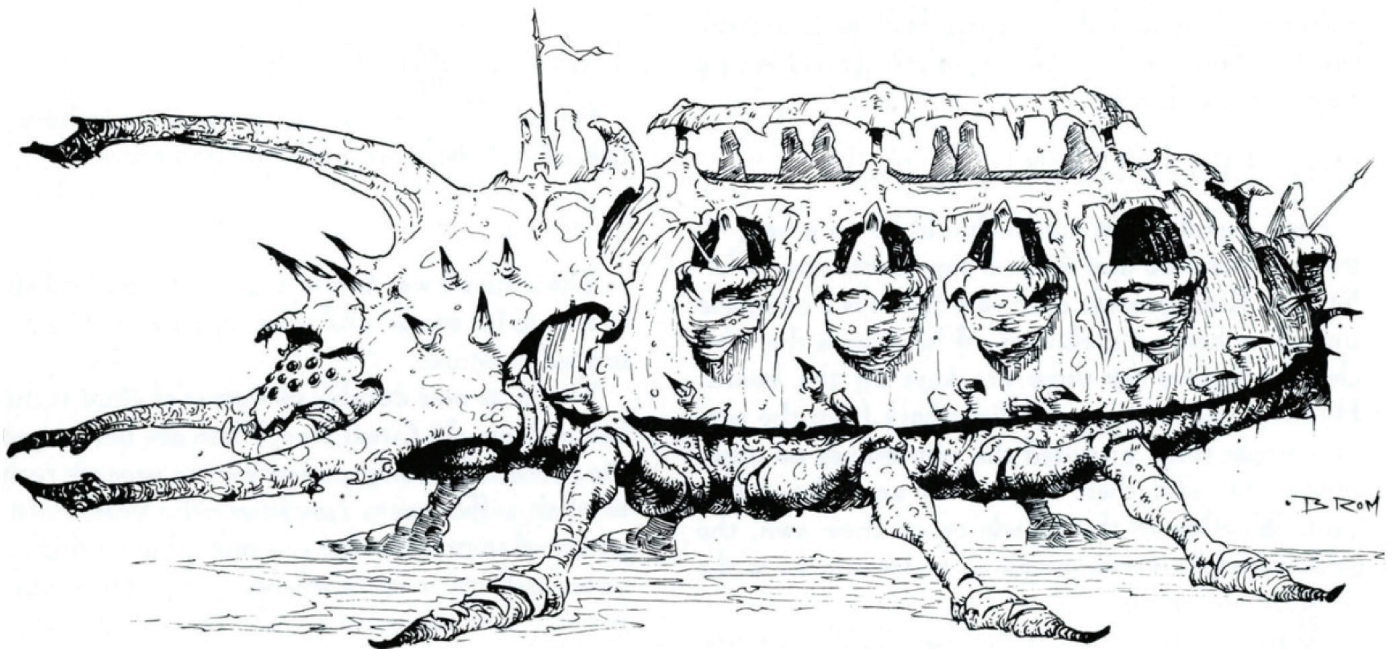
Wizards will face all the difficulties that they face elsewhere on Athas. Persuading a mentor to train you in spellcasting requires a long period of finding a wizard, let alone establishing his or her trust. The Veiled Alliance is rumoured to be active in the city, but they are very distrustful of strangers. There is also talk of another organisation that is said to offer a safe haven to even defilers.

### BRIBERY IN THE CITY

Nibenay is a city that thrives on trade. Bribery is a common part of everyday life in the city. You can often bribe freeman merchants and guards. Agents of the dynastic merchant houses are generally loyal, however, and will not compromise the interests of their house. Low-level templars will accept monetary bribes, but they will not break the law or jeopardise the security of the state. Higher-level templars will occasionally show favour to those who send them thoughtful gifts.

### LYING TO CITY OFFICIALS

Templars of the king are used to the distorted claims of merchants and consider the testimony of any freeman somewhat questionable. They are, however, quite adept at torture and psionic interrogation when it is important to extract the truth from someone. If you are caught lying to a templar in regard to an important matter, you may find yourself tossed into the arena dungeons of the Naggaramakam.







## A Traveller's Guide to Raam

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Raam lies at the base of a broad hill surrounded by natural scrubland. Extensive irrigation combined with the water beneath Raam's holdings has transformed the scrubland into a rich, verdant area ringing the city for miles. At its height, Raam rivalled Draj in grain production, and its date orchards were second to none. Now, many fields lay fallow, burned, and salted, the work of raiders and warring nawabs.

The Road of Kings and the Blackspine Road lead directly into the city from the west, south, and east. Noble estates front these roads, each one a small fortress replete with steep walls, turrets, and garrisons to protect the households within. Most nobles try to collect tolls from passers-by. The crude huts of field slaves lie clustered in squalid hamlets between the estates. The three great ways meet at the plaza where the Trade Court stands, near the middle of the city.

### THE CITY GATES

Raam has four gates. To the south, the Mastyrial Gate, decorated with images of that scorpion-like beast, leads towards the old gem mines in the Mastyrial Mountains (mined out long ago). To the west, the Nawab Gate was originally intended for use by noble families only, but that tradition has fallen by the wayside. The Eastern Gate has been officially renamed the Badna Gate and is festooned with images of Raam's official deity, but none of the local use the name. On the north-eastern rim of the city lies the Ghost Gate, which gives access to the outcast Ghost City and the Crematory.

### WHERE TO STAY

With the city's trade in disarray, many inns have closed, their buildings joining the scores of empty, shuttered shops. A few determined places remain open near the city gates, where they compete for increasingly rare customers.

Foremost among these is the Seven-Pointed Star, a large inn with attached stables that has its own private mercenary force. This gives the place a degree of security that makes it popular with visitors and merchants.

Near the Trade Court, the Messenger's Refuge is a rough and uncomfortable inn that keeps its prices low by skimping in every way possible. Nevertheless, the place is clean and simple, and acceptable to those who are willing to endure its bare-bones approach to hospitality.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

The aforementioned Seven-Pointed Star has a well-appointed stables used by many. House Uinjinjum, one of Raam's surviving smaller merchant clans, also offers its premises to those who are willing to pay a little extra.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

While inns like the Seven-Pointed Star and the Messenger's Refuge do offer food and drink, many Raamish prefer to buy from the stalls and street-food vendors who play their trade throughout the city. Raam's various warring factions have an informal agreement that these individuals are off-limits (everyone needs to eat) and so they have become a popular alternative to eating in a traditional tavern.

### WHERE TO SHOP

The circular Trade Court market lies where the Road of Kings and the Blackspine Road meet in the centre of the city, but many of its stalls and shops are shuttered. Locals still peddle their wares here, but do not expect to find a wide variety of goods, and be prepared for wild price fluctuations.

Well-to-do visitors might wish to visit the headquarters of House M'ke. The familial estates still command a large part of Raam's Coins Quarter, but defence is far more important than resuming commerce. Nevertheless, they have been known to admit serious traders and those with considerable coin to spend.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

In a place as lawless as Raam, spell components are not hard to come by. The elven market is usually in the region of the Trade Court and many components can be had there. The Veiled Alliance is said to be favoured by certain high-ranked templars and is more willing to offer assistance than in other cities. Visitors are directed to Raam's outcast Ghost City to begin their search for these reclusive preservers.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Poisons can similarly be acquired from the elven market, but the true purveyors of such goods are the networks of criminal gangs and assassins that pledge their loyalty to Raam's nawabs - the warring noble clans. Chief among these is Nawab Maarham, a crime lord who control many gangs in Raam's poorer quarters. His bards make excellent poisons and he is usually willing to trade - for good coin or for help in dealing with his enemies.

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Raam is a city of opportunity, due in no small part to its continual state of crisis. All the merchant houses are in need of mercenary assistance merely to do business. Those who are skilled in dealing with trouble will have no shortage of options.

Similarly, the warring nawabs are always in search of specialists who can help them deal with their foes. This sort of work ranges from outright murder in the streets, to infiltration, espionage, blackmail, kidnapping and more. All you need to do is prove to the nawabs that you can deliver what they are looking for.

### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

There are no elemental shrines in Raam, as Abalach-Re had them razed and replaced with the *upubadna* - shrines to her god. As a consequence, the city suffers from poor medical care. Sewage systems go unrepaired, vermin infect the food supplies, and hospitals opened one week may close abruptly the next. Chronic diseases plague slave and artisan alike.

### WHERE TO TRAIN

Training is limited in Raam. Warriors can find teachers at Raam's natural gladiatorial arena, and rogues may well be able to find someone willing to train them among the city's numerous criminal gangs. Priests will find almost no-one who will offer them instruction. To do so would risk transgressing laws that mandate worship of Badna.

Wizards may have more luck, given that the Veiled Alliance is tacitly tolerated in the city. Asking around the outcast Ghost City may pay dividends in that regard.

For all its destitution, Raam has dozens of small psionic colleges, circles, and orders; this is the city where Tarandas codified much of the modern understanding of the Will and the Way. The Psiumarkh is the most prestigious of these, and the Yellow Monastery and the Psionoramh are also highly regarded.

### CASTES IN RAAM

Each Raamite belongs to a *caste*, and most remain in their social class until death. Custom disallows marriages between those of different castes; even casual interactions between such individuals are brief and irregular. From highest to lowest, the castes are:

*Priest.* Mystics known as *saddhus* hold the respect of all Raamites. Members include not only clerics and druids, but also teachers and scholars. They usually wear simple ochre or white garments and study elementals and spirits of the land, which they arrange in a complicated mythology. However, their esteemed rank has been compromised by the less worthy priests of Badna.

*Vizier.* Slightly lower in status, the vizier caste includes templars and mansabdars (police officials and soldiers). They wear rich clothing of dyed silk. This cloth comes from the Great Vizier's prized silk wyrms, kept beneath the palace and fed well on prisoners. Administrators, mainly warriors and rogues, collect taxes and provide services. A few honest mansabdars belong to the Veiled Alliance.

*Landowners.* Nawab nobles, tradesmen, and artisans occupy this caste. In the city's current chaos they barricade themselves in homes just short of fortresses, waiting for the situation to sort itself out and fighting among themselves for dominance. They dress like the vizier caste, but with lower-quality cloth instead of silk.

*Labourers.* The largest and lowest caste, this includes servants of the higher castes and slaves. Thin, in ill health, and somewhat desperate, members wear simple white linen shirts, pants, or loincloths. Women scrimp to afford a colourful sari, a full-length cloth wrap. The slave caste is unusual in that, upon gaining freedom, a former slave can assume a new caste.

*Outcast.* For true desperation, though, look to the outcasts, those who work in the despised professions of mortician, tanner, butcher, and others dealing with dead creatures. Members of the castes consider them so polluted that they must live outside Raam's walls in the sprawling slums of the Ghost City.







## A Traveller's Guide to Saragar

### APPROACHING THE CITY

The valley of Marnita, the Last Sea, is ringed on three sides by the Thunder Mountains. Only the eastern edge lies open to the Burning Plains instead. Together, these nearly impassable barriers make a formidable natural fence around the entire valley. Other than a tiny strip of land to the north, where the Burning Plains meet the Thunder Mountains, the only safe route into the valley is through the South Pass.

Once past these barriers, however, a visitor to the valley (known as an "outlander" by the locals) can make their way along the shores of Marnita and approach the city of Saragar itself without hindrance.

### THE CITY GATES

Saragar has no gates. It is an open, airy place of white marble columns, paved streets, and grand architecture. It is policed by Lawkeepers, and outlanders can expect to encounter these and will need to justify their presence in the city, but there are no physical barriers to prevent travellers from walking the streets of this beautiful metropolis.

### WHERE TO STAY

Saragar is a city accustomed to luxury and there are numerous inns and boarding houses. They are used to catering for other inhabitants of the region, not for outlanders, but visitors will not find it impossible to locate lodgings.

The Squark's Rest is a large inn at Saragar's docks. Its guests are primarily sailors and those who work on the city's ships - the entire inn has a decidedly nautical theme to it. Accommodation here is cheap and clean and guests are left to their own devices.

In the centre of the city, the Smiling Moons is a small but cosy affair where guests are expected to be calm, quiet, and happy. Its owner Berrit, an extremely contented elf, used to struggle to find customers but recently had a change of approach. Now he is more relaxed. He still doesn't have many customers, but is no longer bothered by the fact. Outlanders can usually find a room here and Berrit is happy to have them.

On the eastern side of town, facing away from the Last Sea, lies Redwatch Tower. An ancient keep that was once an important guard post, it was converted into an inn three centuries ago and is now a venerable part of the Saragan landscape. It is recommended to outlanders because its owner is a Kuman half-elf called Thalash who has made Saragar his home.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

Saragar has several municipal stables all run by the Lawtenders, a class of civil servant akin to the templars of other city-states. They set prices, apply standards of care, and ensure that clients are happy with the services provided.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

Saragar's taverns, restaurants, and food halls are, on the whole, excellent. Fresh seafood is a staple of the Saragan diet and there are many places that specialise in all manner of dishes, from puddingfish to keel to shark. Most places also have an item on the menu labelled as squark - this is something of a local joke, and the dish is always some kind of house special instead.

For outlanders, however, it is not the numerous quality eateries that are the most noteworthy. Instead, it is the local tradition of communal dining on Saragar's beach. Every evening, families and friends meet up to cook food over firepits dug into the sand. Many Saragans take considerable pride in their open-air cooking skills and outlanders will enjoy an almost idyllic evening watching the sun set over the Last Sea, sharing good food in what is hopefully good company. Certainly, no Saragans complain about the experience.

### WHERE TO SHOP

The most thriving market in Saragar is the Dock Market. Here, goods from all across Marnita make landfall, available for the discerning buyer. Lizardfolk crafts from Undertown, ssuran trinkets from the Scorched Plateau, and even silk from the ghost elves of Sylvandretta can all be had here.

Smaller markets exist all throughout Saragar as well, alongside individual shops providing a good variety of produce. Twice a year, on the Great Trade Days, goods from beyond the Lands of the Last Sea flood the city - these twin festivals are a shopper's paradise.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Wizardly magic is illegal in the Lands of the Last Sea and no inhabitant of Saragar has ever seen it; most would not understand what they were witnessing if they did. Spell components, therefore, are not for sale in the city. Anyone attempting to purchase them runs the risk of drawing unwanted attention from the Lawkeepers.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Poison is antithetical to Saragan culture and is not generally available on the open market. Saragans are aware of poison - the puddingfish, for example, is known for its venom - but would almost certainly report someone wishing to buy it to the Lawkeepers.

That said, there are rumours of an underground organisation that works against the more restrictive dictates of the Mind Lords and their Lawkeepers. Contacting this organisation is very difficult, but a traveller seeking poison for nefarious ends might find them willing to sell. These same rumours suggest that Thalash, owner of the Redwatch Tower might know how to reach them.

#### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Saragans are always happy to help visitors willing to adhere to their ways. Outlanders who are able to fit in will have no trouble finding work, be it at the docks, working at the temples, acting as a guide or scout in the valley, or helping hunt down creatures that have made it into the valley from the outside world.

Those who refuse to conform to the Saragan way of life, however, will find cold shoulders turned their way throughout the Lands of the Last Sea. This is not a place where the rugged individualist thrives.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

Saragar has excellent healing facilities. There are civic apothecaries all over the city and healing is provided free of charge to citizens at the Triune Temple and the Psionics Academy. Outlanders would be expected to pay a small fee, of course. Saragar also boasts shrines to the elements - the Voice of the Deep on the shores of Marnita, and the High Halls of Stone and Fire on the outskirts of town are the best known of these.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

Although wizards will find no training opportunities in Saragar, other classes will struggle less. Warriors can make use of municipal training halls and priests will find assistance at the city's elemental shrines. Rogues may find it harder, but spending time contacting Saragar's mysterious Underground may yield dividends.

Psionics will have the easiest time finding trainers, as Saragar boasts an excellent Psionics Academy. Here, psionic teachings are at their pinnacle and a mindbender will benefit from expertise that has been thousands of years in the making.

#### HAPPINESS

Being happy is a core aspect of Saragan culture. The people of Marnita value it over all other things. Saragans are unfailingly polite, considerate, and take great pains not to complain or criticise. This can be difficult for outlanders to understand, particularly when it manifests in a refusal to engage with negative experiences or emotions. Saragans simply ignore these wherever possible. Outlanders should bear this in mind at all times.







## A Traveller's Guide to Thamasku

### APPROACHING THE CITY

On the western end of the Glowing Desert, the land drops to form a fertile ledge on the edge of the Jagged Cliffs. Primeval forest surrounds a large lake and a lush clearing where the halfling city of Thamasku resides.

The city is built partially into the lake, though visitors from other parts of Athas might notice that, in general, it's more vertical than it needs to be. The cliff-dwellers have a vertical view of the world due to their long association with the rock walls of the Jagged Cliffs, so, buildings in Thamasku are tall and narrow, stretching toward the sky instead of from side to side.

### THE CITY GATES

Thamasku has no gates and no walls. The rhul-thaun halflings who call it home trust to its remote location to keep it safe from unwanted attention. Visitors who approach the city will doubtless be challenged by airborne windriders long before they are close to Thamasku, and by the *vher-elus*, the city's lawkeepers, before they actually set foot within its confines.

### WHERE TO STAY

The Thamaskans use the same word for inn and tavern: "safehome", which indicates the trust that the halflings place in the hospitality of others. Visitors who are extended this hospitality can enjoy rhul-thaun accommodation in peace.

The Mirrored Host is an upscale safehome for those wishing a luxurious night's stay or an elegant meal. Mirrors, which are uncommon among these halflings, cover many of the interior walls, giving this place its name. The Mirrored Host is extremely expensive, however, especially when compared to inns in the Tablelands.

Those looking for cheaper lodgings should visit the Water Singer, located on the shores of Ghaven Lake. Its spectacular views more than make up for the spartan trappings and threadbare quilts.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

Thamaskans use a variety of mounts, most of which are life-shaped creations. There are several stables in the city, run by life-tenders, who specialise in the care of such creatures. More mundane mounts will raise an eyebrow, but it is not beyond the capabilities of the life-tenders to manage them.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

Thamaskans live in relative luxury and peace and so are able to dedicate a considerable amount of their leisure time to pursuits such as fine dining and drinking for pleasure. As with inns, there are several fine safehouse taverns located throughout the city, catering to various types of client.

Cal-adek's Safehome is well-known throughout the city as the meeting place for warriors, mercenaries, and adventurers. It is also a place where spies, thieves, and even killers can be hired to perform less-than-legal assignments. Cal-adek asks no questions of her customers, she simply demands that everyone "keep a peaceful head about them while they stay here". Wise customers heed this simple request, for Cal-adek has a fair amount of hired muscle herself.

Poets' Rest is a safehome located in the Art Quarter. It is frequented by artists and performers of all kinds. The place is inexpensive and the food is of poor quality, but its patrons keep coming back for the atmosphere of the place.

### WHERE TO SHOP

Within Thamasku itself, there are three marketplaces where various merchants sell their wares. Although created as a convenience, so that everyone in the city would be close to a market, each of the three has taken on a distinctive flavour and style.

The southern market, also known as the fish market, primarily sells fresh fish and other foodstuffs. Though the other two marketplaces do sell provisions, the freshest, best quality items are found here.

The western market is controlled almost completely by life-masters. The merchants here sell life-shaped creations of every description to all who need them.

The eastern market is a craft faire. Artwork, woodcrafts, stonework, pottery, and other crafted items and supplies are found in great numbers. No finer merchandise of this kind can be found anywhere on the cliffs.

The whole eastern district of Sol-fehn, a village close to Thamasku, is called the Art Quarter, and it is filled with galleries, studios, theatres, and related businesses. There are few centres of culture in all of Athas that can rival the talents found here.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Wizardly magic is unknown to the rhul-thaun. It is not illegal – they simply have no concept of it. As a result, spell components are impossible to purchase in Thamasku.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Thamasku is home to a secretive band of thieves and assassins known as the *Ban-ghesh Guild*. This group is a powerful criminal organisation involved in extortion, blackmail, corruption, and darker endeavours. The brave or the confident might be able to persuade them to part with poisons.

The other group in Thamasku that regularly deals in such matters is known as the *Chahn*. The Chahn are terrorists who seek nothing less than the destruction of rhul-thaun society. Anyone dealing with them should exercise the utmost caution.

#### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Actual work is hard to come by in Thamasku. There is little that an outside could offer the rhul-thaun that they do not already possess or would be interested in acquiring. There are occasional clashes with other denizens of the Jagged Cliffs, and creatures that dwell in the immense mire at its base. Those seeking to earn some coin should inquire whether assistance is required in dealing with such problems.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

The rhul-thaun are skilled in the healing arts. Professional healers set broken limbs, assist during childbirth, instruct the sick in various cures and remedies, and sometimes administer herbal and life-shaped medicines. Although they no longer remember all of the principles behind life-shaping, many of the details of that art have given the halflings a better understanding of the operation of the body than that of most other Athasian races. Visitors seeking healing will find the rhul-thaun to be among the best they have ever encountered.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

Training opportunities for warriors and rogues are available from the windriders, climbers, and wind-dancers, all of whom are well-represented in Thamasku. Priests will struggle to find training, although druids are recommended to inquire at the city's aviary, where a powerful druid is said to make his home.

While wizards will find no trainers at all, psionicists will discover that the rhul-thaun are masters of the psychic arts and will be able to locate instructors with ease.

#### ECONOMICS

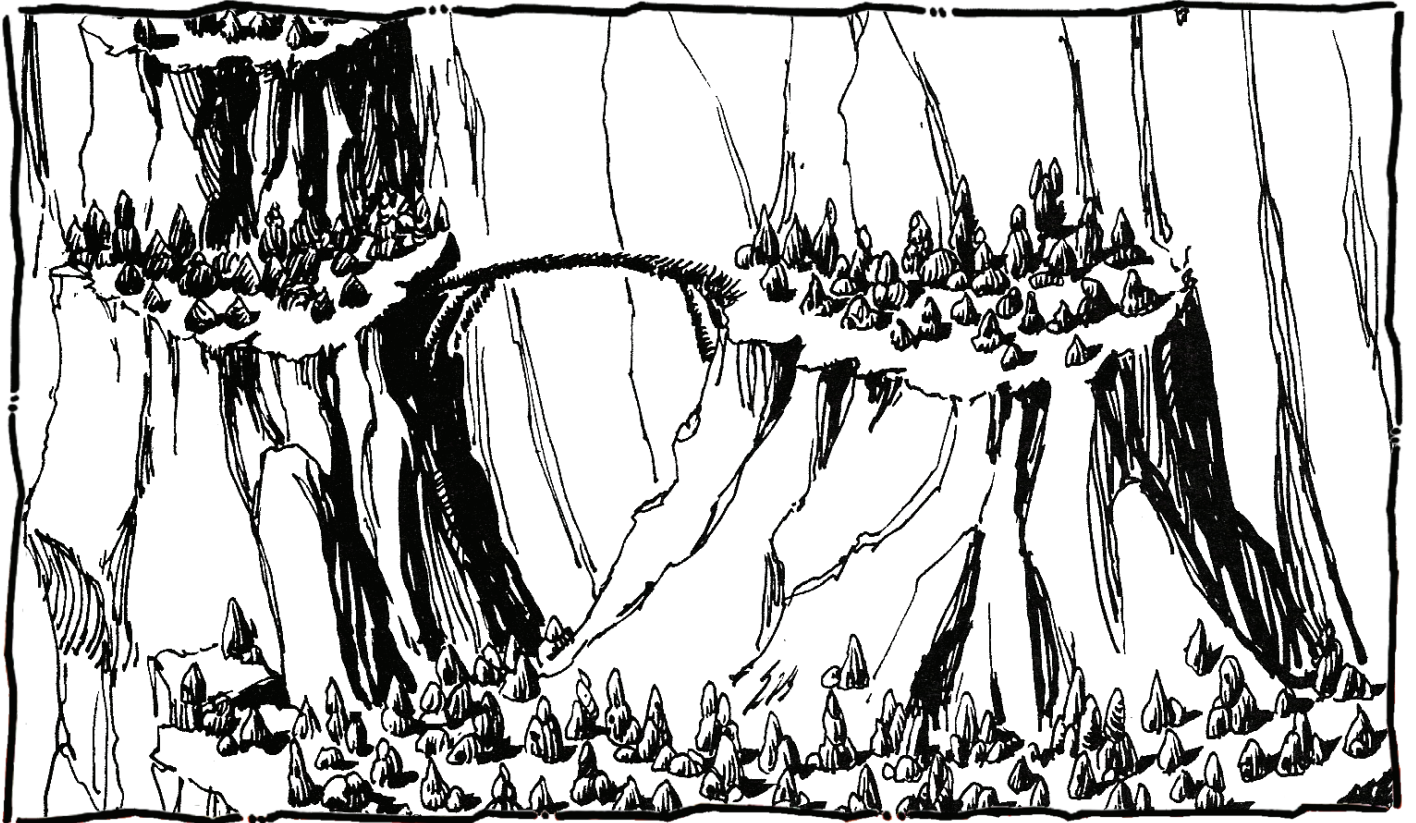
The economic system of the rhul-thaun is based on an ancient currency of small, oval leaf-like growths created by their ancestors. These organic coins have the feel and weight of very hard pieces of animal shell or reptilian scales. The oval pieces, called *ghav-egoths* ("life wealth" or "the value of life") can no longer be created - the methods and rituals of their manufacture is lost. Because of this, there is a shortage of ghav-egoths and much of modern commerce is conducted by barter.

There is no actual exchange rate between ghav-egoths and the ceramic pieces of the Tyr Region. Despite this, a ghav-egoth will purchase an amount equivalent to that of the ceramic piece. The point is, however, that this "currency" cannot purchase anything in a marketplace in Tyr or Balic, for example, and a ceramic piece is not recognised as having the same value as a ghav-egoth to rhul-thaun merchants.

#### THE LIFE-SHAPED

Life-shaping is the art that allows the rhul-thaun to create everything from simple tools to large buildings out of living tissues. This ancient, arcane craft is the unique aspect of the civilisation established by the halflings of the Jagged Cliffs.

There are three types of life-shaped creations: Those that comprise living tissue but are not actually independent creatures; living creatures themselves; and the organic products of living creatures. Much of the difference between them lies in their care and requirements. It should also be noted that the organic products in the last category are not alive, but merely organically derived. The other two classes of shaped objects are actually alive.







## A Traveller's Guide to Tyr

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Travellers approaching Tyr pass through verdant plantation-lands where crops receive more water than the unnumbered slaves who tend them. These fortress plantations belong to the city's nobles and garner great wealth for them by providing nearly all of Tyr's food. Standing armies fiercely guard each plot of land and will greet trespassers with force more often than not. Strangers are not advised to approach the estates of Tyrian nobles uninvited.

Outside Tyr's Caravan Gate, there is usually an impromptu market (sometimes elven) and a cluster of makeshift shrines (usually to elemental fire). The Stadium Gate rarely enjoys any such activity, and the Golden Gate is closed to normal traffic.

### THE CITY GATES

Tyr has three Gates. Its busiest gate is the Caravan Gate, leading onto Caravan Way. This gate receives the majority of Tyr's traffic and is made from enormous slabs of agafari wood, bound with iron. Manned by half-giant guards and templar overseers, the gate's traffic is heavily scrutinised, leading to frequent queues and a host of attendant businesses. Food vendors, shrines, and stalls cluster the approach to the Caravan Gate, making an entrance to Tyr an experience in itself.

The Stadium Gate is for merchants with the correct permits, who do business with traders in the nearby Artisan's District. It's main use, however, is to move creatures and gladiators to and from Tyr's arena with a minimum of fuss. It is also used by those seeking a discreet entry or exit to the city - assuming they have the ceramics to ease the passage.

The Golden Gate leads directly to Tyr's Golden City and is closed to normal traffic. A stone block bearing the visage of a fearsome beast is normally dragged across the gate by half-giants, sealing it.

### WHERE TO STAY

Tyr's inns and boarding houses vary wildly in quality and price. Some may be able to find lodging with allied noble families or merchant houses. Others may lodge with members of their race. For those with no other option, there are always the Warrens and the hope that an abandoned ruin can be found - and kept.

The Golden Inix Inn on Caravan Way offers good accommodation and food at reasonable prices. The proprietor, Mila Risani, is a powerful psionicist and keeps her customers in line with her mastery of the Way.

For those who want the finest, and can afford it, there is the Sweetwater Inn. Located in the Nobles District, the inn caters to visiting nobles and senior traders with gold in their pockets.

At the other end of the spectrum is the Drunken Giant on Shadow Square. A wineshop and inn, the Drunken Giant is rumoured to have ties with Tyr's Veiled Alliance.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

Some inns have stabling facilities but it is not unusual for large beasts to be refused entry to the city entirely. For those who gain access, Tyr's most famous stable is the Messenger's Mount, just inside Caravan Gate.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

Tyr has a broad range of eateries, from the stalls on Caravan Way to high-class venues offering some of the finest dining experiences in the Tablelands. Meat is the staple of the Tyrian diet - baazrag, erdlu, kip and z'tal skewers served with unleavened bread is daily fare. Shadow Square and Artisan's Way offer low-cost food, while the well-patrolled streets of the Noble's Districts to either side of Caravan Way sport more refined offerings.

### WHERE TO SHOP

The main trade hub in Tyr is Iron Square, where Caravan Way meets the base of the ziggurat. Here the great merchant houses have their fortified emporiums. Artisan's Way, near the Stadium Gate also has an excellent selection of shops and businesses. The elven market, located near Tyr's Elven Bridge, caters to shadier customers, and the legendary Night Trader's Way in UnderTyr is purported to offer goods unknown to even the sorcerer-kings.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

At the northern edge of the Warrens, where the slum is bordered by the city's dried Elven River, lies the city's elven market. The river bed, bridge, and surrounding streets are home to a sprawling market manned by whichever elven tribe is visiting Tyr at the time. Here, careful buyers can find most of what they need for the arcane arts. For rare or dangerous components, Night Trader's Way in UnderTyr is a better place to look.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

South of the elven market, just behind Shadow Square, is Tyr's bards' quarter. Establishments such as the House of Fingers or the Hungry, Hungry Halfling offer discretion and danger in equal amounts. Tyr has several powerful bard cliques, all of which are happy to offer their services to the discerning buyer.

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

As in most other cities in the Tablelands, merchant and noble houses are frequent employers of mercenaries and those happy to get their hands dirty - or bloody. The king's templars are also always on the lookout for skilled masons and others who can assist with the construction of Kalak's ziggurat. And there are always those looking for adventurers willing to brave the perils of UnderTyr in return for sizeable rewards... or a horrific fate in the dark below the streets.

### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

Tyr's few shrines all offer healing services to travellers and favoured noble families can sometimes call on the assistance of the templars. Others with the right connections (or coin) seek psionic healing at the School of Thought, while the less well-off are forced to pay for poultices and bandages at the markets or one of the city's poorly stocked apothecaries.

### WHERE TO TRAIN

For warriors, the best source of training remains the gladiatorial stables of the noble families. Tyr's arena is particularly active and there are frequent games staged there. Merchant houses also offer training, often in return for a season of service instead of payment in coin.

Clerics and druids will find it harder to locate training. For clerics, there are a few elemental shrines that may be amenable, but druids would be better served by visiting the foothills of the Ringing Mountains, where others of their kind watch over the passes that lead to the Forest Ridge.

Wizards find it no easier in Tyr than anywhere else in the Tablelands to find teachers. The Veiled Alliance is rumoured to have a base deep in the Warrens, but they are also said to kill any who go looking for it.

Psionics seeking instruction are best served at the city's famous School of Thought. This psionic academy lies in the Golden City, so prospective students need the right contacts to attend.

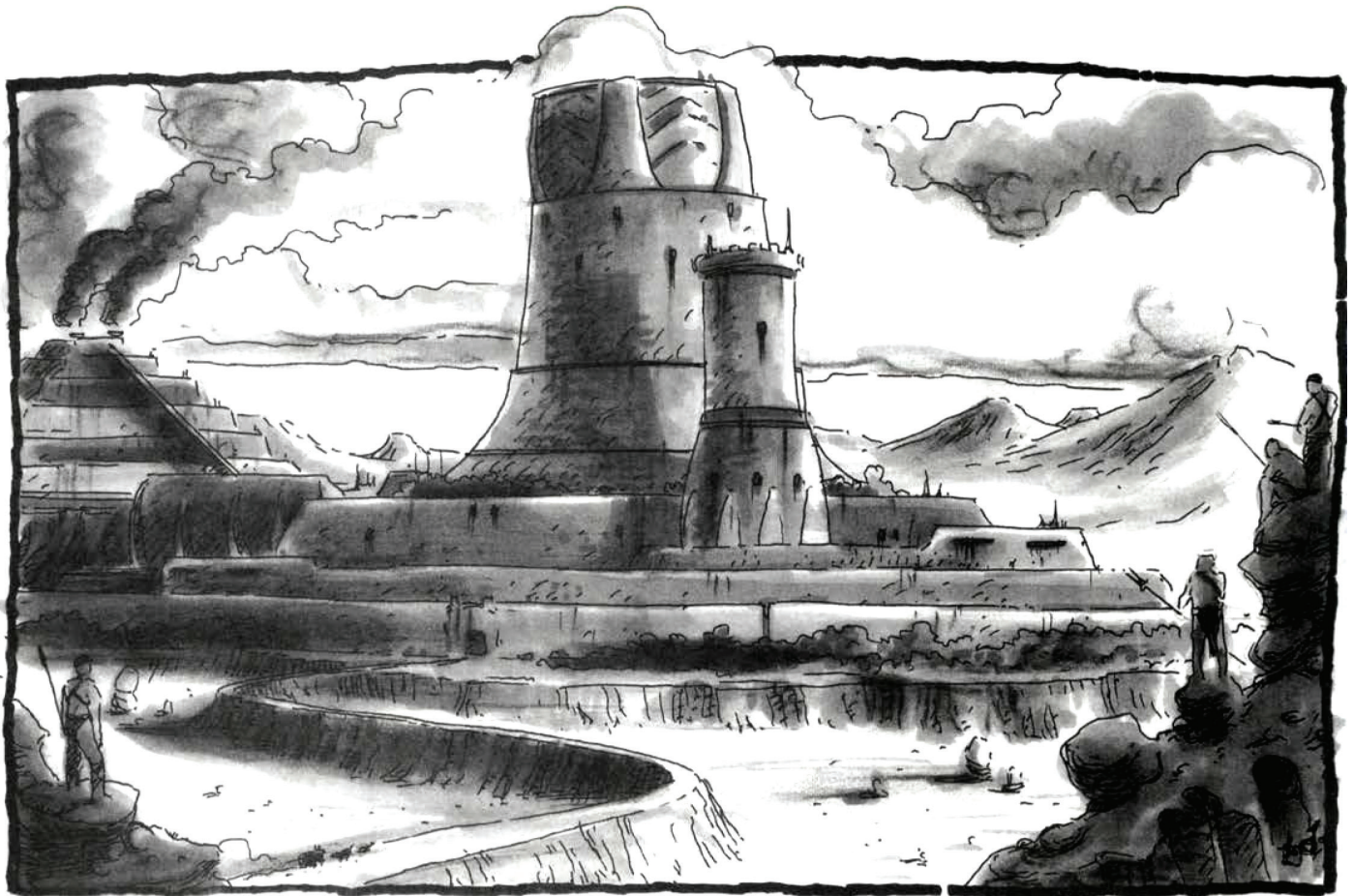
### UNDERTYR

Tyr is ancient, and has been razed and rebuilt many times. Each generation has added fresh layers to the debris, so that now Tyr sits atop a labyrinth of forgotten vaults, sunken cellars, buried amphitheatres, dried rivers, petrified forests and more. Much wealth is said to lie waiting beneath Tyr.

UnderTyr sprawls beneath the city like a lethal honeycomb. There are even stories of hidden access routes to the Golden City and Kalak's inner sanctum, although few are brave enough to test these rumours. Entrances to UnderTyr are all across the city, some better known than others. But not a year goes by without someone discovering a sub-basement beneath their home or business with hatches and tunnels that lead into the labyrinth below.

### DEALING WITH OFFICIALS

Kalak's templars are a fractious bunch. The economic crisis created by Kalak's obsession with building his ziggurat has led to increased in-fighting in their ranks, and rivalries have flared. The careful visitor can take advantage of these divisions, but all should be wary of relying too heavily on this approach - Kalak's templars would just as easily enslave you and put you to work on the ziggurat as they would use you as a pawn in some power play. Tyr's nobles, on the other hand, see this time as one ripe with opportunity, and have found themselves able to exert unexpected influence over city officials. Currying favour with a noble family can provide surprising dividends in Tyr.







## A Traveller's Guide to Tyr

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Some inns have stabling facilities but it is not unusual for large beasts to be refused entry to the city entirely. For those who gain access, Tyr's most famous stable is the Messenger's Mount, just inside Caravan Gate.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

Tyr has a broad range of eateries, from the stalls on Caravan Way to high-class venues offering some of the finest dining experiences in the Tablelands. Meat is the staple of the Tyrian diet - baazrag, erdlu, kip and z'tal skewers served with unleavened bread is daily fare. Shadow Square and Artisan's Way offer low-cost food, while the well-patrolled streets of the Noble's Districts to either side of Caravan Way sport more refined offerings.

### WHERE TO SHOP

The main trade hub in Tyr is Iron Square, where Caravan Way meets the base of the ziggurat. Here the great merchant houses have their fortified emporiums. Artisan's Way, near the Stadium Gate also has an excellent selection of shops and businesses. The elven market, located near Tyr's Elven Bridge, caters to shadier customers, and the legendary Night Trader's Way in UnderTyr is purported to offer goods unknown to even the sorcerer-kings.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

At the northern edge of the Warrens, where the slum is bordered by the city's dried Elven River, lies the city's elven market. The river bed, bridge, and surrounding streets are home to a sprawling market manned by whichever elven tribe is visiting Tyr at the time. Here, careful buyers can find most of what they need for the arcane arts. For rare or dangerous components, Night Trader's Way in UnderTyr is a better place to look.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

South of the elven market, just behind Shadow Square, is Tyr's bards' quarter. Establishments such as the House of Fingers or the Hungry, Hungry Halfling offer discretion and danger in equal amounts. Tyr has several powerful bard cliques, all of which are happy to offer their services to the discerning buyer.

### WHERE TO FIND WORK

As in most other cities in the Tablelands, merchant and noble houses are frequent employers of mercenaries and those happy to get their hands dirty - or bloody. Since the fall of Kalak, many are those seeking help in establishing themselves in the new era... or just looking for protection in these unsettled times. And there are always those looking for adventurers willing to brave the perils of UnderTyr in return for sizeable rewards... or a horrific fate in the dark below the streets.

### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

Tyr's few shrines all offer healing services to travellers and favoured noble families can sometimes call on the assistance of the templars. Others with the right connections (or coin) seek psionic healing at the School of Thought, while the less well-off are forced to pay for poultices and bandages at the markets or one of the city's poorly stocked apothecaries.

### WHERE TO TRAIN

For warriors, the best source of training remains the gladiatorial stables of the noble families. Tyr's arena has re-opened and there are frequent games staged there. Merchant houses also offer training, often in return for a season of service instead of payment in coin.

Clerics and druids will find it harder to locate training. For clerics, there are a few elemental shrines that may be amenable, but druids would be better served by visiting the foothills of the Ringing Mountains, where others of their kind watch over the passes that lead to the Forest Ridge.

Wizards may find it slightly easier in Tyr than elsewhere to find teachers. The Veiled Alliance, although still secret, is known to exist and rumoured to have a base deep in the Warrens, but they are also said to kill any who go looking for it.

Psionics seeking instruction are best served at the city's famous School of Thought. This psionic academy lies in the Golden City, so prospective students need the right contacts to attend.

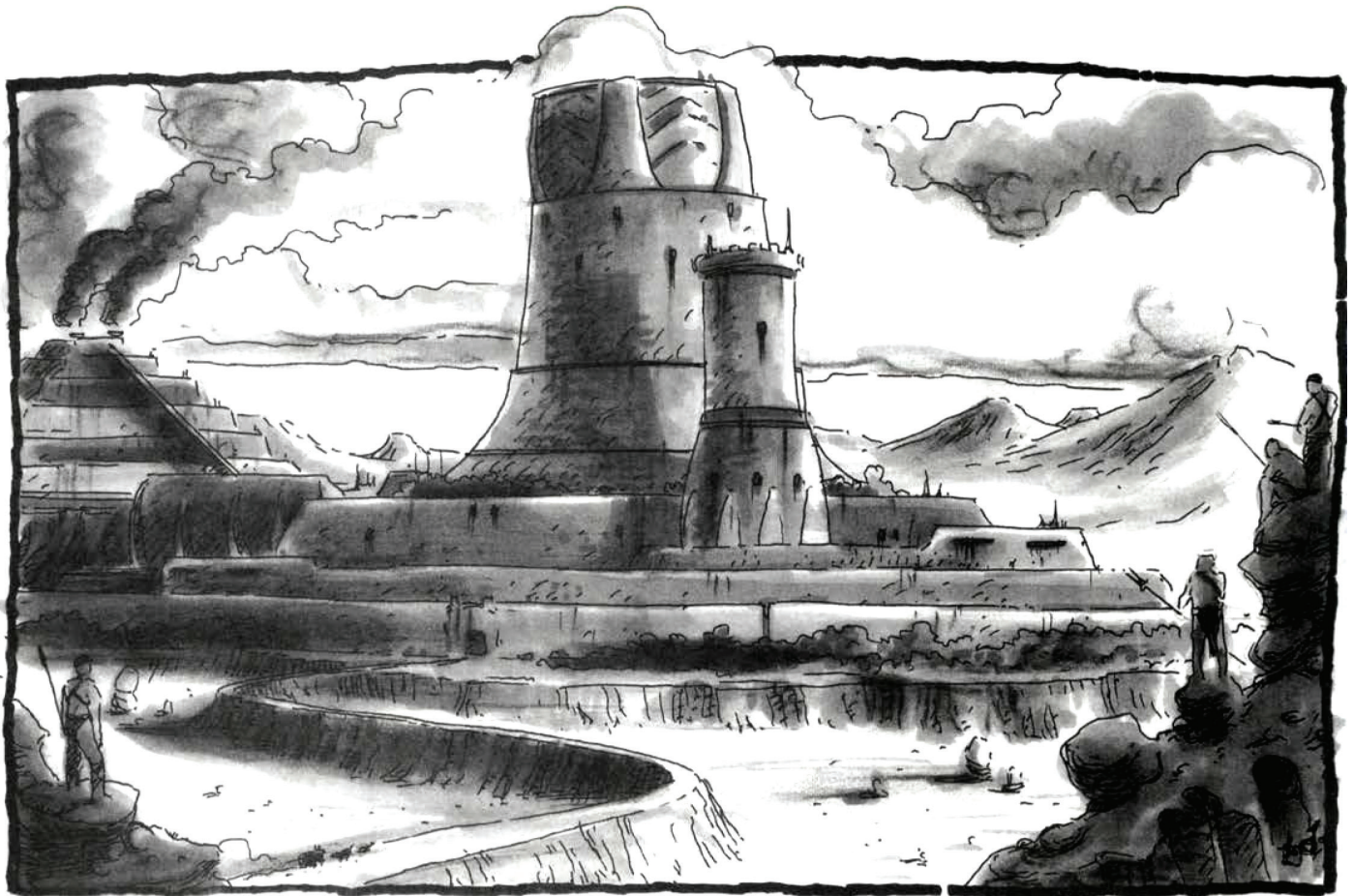
### UNDERTYR

Tyr is ancient, and has been razed and rebuilt many times. Each generation has added fresh layers to the debris, so that now Tyr sits atop a labyrinth of forgotten vaults, sunken cellars, buried amphitheatres, dried rivers, petrified forests and more. Much wealth is said to lie waiting beneath Tyr.

UnderTyr sprawls beneath the city like a lethal honeycomb. There are even stories of hidden access routes to the Golden City and Kalak's inner sanctum, although few are brave enough to test these rumours. Entrances to UnderTyr are all across the city, some better known than others. But not a year goes by without someone discovering a sub-basement beneath their home or business with hatches and tunnels that lead into the labyrinth below.

### POWER GROUPS IN TYR

Kalak's templars have lost their spell-casting abilities with the death of their monarch, but retain their positions as administrators. The newly-formed Council of Advisers is a more reliable source of authority, and their Tyrian Guard keep the peace in ways the templars never could. Tyr's nobles, many of whom now sit on the Council, are struggling with the merchant houses for power, but their influence is as changeable as the wind, and visitors should beware of allying too closely with one family or house. The chief source of turmoil and untapped power in Tyr is, however, the freed slaves. Sometimes a mob, sometimes a voice for change, they are always unpredictable. The future is in their hands.







## A Traveller's Guide to Ur Draxa

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Ur Draxa lies at the heart of the Sea of Silt, beneath the Great Ash Storm, within the Valley of Dust and Fire, surrounded by a sea of lava, behind walls that are 720 feet high. Merely glimpsing the so-called City of Doom is a feat beyond most creatures on Athas, let alone actually gaining access to it.

### THE CITY GATES

Ur Draxa's first gate lies some 25 miles from the city itself, on the near side of the sea of lava known as the Ring of Fire. Called the Gate of Doom, it is an immense black arch inscribed with arcane sigils. The Ring of Fire is impervious to all forms of magical transportation (except flight) and the Gate of Doom is the only way across it. It only opens at the will of the Dragon – and those who attempt to bypass it soon learn that it possesses formidable magical and psionic defences.

The Gate of Doom transports its users across the Ring of Fire, depositing them before the immense outer walls of the city. Nine gates pierce this wall; each one is 130 feet tall and 60 feet wide, its border etched with powerful runes. The gates themselves are featureless slabs of blank stone that open only for those authorised to enter.

The gate that faces west, towards the Gate of Doom, is known as the Grand Gate. It is more ornate than the others, but functions in the same way. All gates are heavily guarded.

### WHERE TO STAY

Ur Draxa has few inns that cater to outsiders, since the city's isolation makes foreign visitors exceedingly rare. However, a small number of luxurious boarding houses in each sector allow visitors from other sectors to stay and do business without having to travel back and forth each day. As a result, almost all the clients of these inns are members of the city's noble citizenry.

Rathay's Towers, in Chuur Sector, is currently one of the more popular boarding houses in the city. Situated in Ur Draxa's most populous sector, it is doing a thriving trade and is busy enough that careful visitors could spend time here without arousing suspicion. The rumours that Clan Rathay, which owns the establishment, is engaged in covert warfare with a rival clan only help provide cover for the judicious traveller.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

The nine sectors of Ur Draxa have varying levels of population – some are well populated, others are almost wilderness. Availability of livery in the towns and villages of each sector depends on how many people are living there. With the support of one of the sector's clans, finding somewhere to stable mounts is a simple matter. Without such support, visitors would need the assistance of slaves, who are notoriously cautious.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

Some sectors of Ur Draxa are in a state of decay, once-settled lands reclaimed by wilderness. Numel and Gulidnay Sectors are good examples of this – travellers will find them replete with game for the taking. For those visitors who want a less demanding way to obtain food, there are several taverns worth their attention.

The Sleeping Lirr in Zuraag Sector lies on the estates of Clan Jharek. Originally intended for use by warriors heading to the sector's outer gate, the Fire Drakes company in particular, it has grown to become a popular meeting place for members of all clans. Clan Jharek's strict neutrality in the feuds between other clans has helped the tavern's reputation, and the frequent presence of warriors from the Fire Drakes helps maintain its trouble-free atmosphere.

The Red Wench in Chuur Sector is a small place, mainly frequented by the slaves of the Chuur Red township. They keep a decent menu, with low prices, and ask few questions of their patrons. Rumours among the slaves state that the Red Wench is the focal point for rebels in Ur Draxa. None would admit to this and pressing the issue could prompt unpleasant consequences for the questioner.

### WHERE TO SHOP

There are markets in every sector of the city, of varying quality. The amount of produce available at a market is influenced by how populous and successful its sector is. Goods are traded from one sector to another, so scarcity is rare, but prices in a struggling sector are higher than in one that is prosperous. Each sector is known for a particular type of produce, as detailed below.

Ulth Sector is known for its fruit, harvested from the orchards of Clan Gyarth. Xairas Sector is home to finely crafted goods made by the slaves of Jezelred village. The best agricultural products and livestock come from Chuur Sector, where Clan Thiem owns well-tended fields. For fine art, visitors are directed to Raxes Sector and the estates of Clan Raxes, or Clan Zuraag in Zuraag Sector – although modern Draxans consider such pursuits decadent. For weapons, the slave forges of Morzket Sector are a good source of quality gear, as are the armouries of the Hall of Glory in Thalak Sector; the strongly martial nature of those sectors means that there is a steady demand for such equipment.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

Obtaining spell components in Ur Draxa is a perilous undertaking. For those with connections to a clan, it is not difficult – slaves are on hand to procure such things – but word of this almost always reaches the ears of a vizier or, worse, one of the Dead Lords. The more cautious traveller is advised to visit Jezelred village in Xairas Sector and inquire at the local pottery kiln. They may well find amenable ears there.

#### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Unlike in other Athasian cities, poison does not carry cultural taboo in Ur Draxa - it is merely seen as one alchemical product among many. This is probably due to the intense levels of feuding that exist between Draxan clans; poison is a useful tool in bringing these feuds to a close without seeming to break Draxan law that prohibits such feuds in the first place.

Poison can therefore be found at most markets and anywhere that slaves produce alchemical materials. The most famous alchemist in the city, however, is Thon Slayd, leader of Clan Slayd in Gulidnay Sector. An ancient defiler of learning and wisdom, he has forgotten more about alchemy than most other sages learn in a lifetime. If a visitor can pique his interest, Thon might be willing to part with a suitably fearsome concoction.

#### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Finding work in Ur Draxa depends on clan connections. Those who have such connections will be able to leverage them to mutual benefit, helping the clan further its goals in return for influence, support, or simple coin. All others will find themselves enslaved. The Draxans see themselves as nobility - if you have something that they want, they will take it from you. Visitors should exercise caution when attempting to bargain with them.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

The absence of clerics in Ur Draxa means that Draxans turn to apothecaries or the templarate for healing. The Hall of Administration in Chuur Sector has extensive healing facilities for those who have the connections to make use of them.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

As with most things, training opportunities are closely linked to clan influence - those who can draw on such influence are well cared for. Those who cannot risk slavery with every breath.

Ur Draxa is a warrior's paradise. There are military encampments and fortresses throughout the city. A well-connected warrior will have no trouble in finding teachers. Rogues, too, will find plenty of opportunities to hone their skills, either at military facilities or through the city's rebel factions among the slaves.

For wizards and psionicists, many clans have powerful mages and mindbenders who may be willing to offer instruction. Failing this, the Hall of Learning in Zuraag Sector offers schooling to Draxans free of charge. A visitor with the right connections may be able to benefit from these facilities as well.

#### DRAXAN LAW

The templars enforce the ancient Draxan laws. There are only seven laws; any other wrongdoing is settled between the antagonists in the arena or by intervention of the clan leader. Only three punishments exist: slavery, exile, or death. The laws are as follows:

- Obey the Dragon, the Dead Lords, and the leader of the clan.
- Do not arm a slave, nor allow a slave to believe it is in any way the equal of a Draxan.
- Redress wrongs in the arena. Do not feud.
- Do not betray Ur Draxa to an outsider.
- Do not practice elemental (ie, clerical) magic.
- Do not hinder the templars. Violators of the Code must be punished.
- Never dishonour clan, kardan, or city.







## A Traveller's Guide to Urik

### APPROACHING THE CITY

Visitors will find Urik in a hilly region where the Ringing Mountains meet the Tablelands, within a fertile belt maintained by careful irrigation from deep wells. Grain fields and fruit-bearing orchards surround the city-state in neat rows. Urik gleams, its stone walls steeped in yellow pigment made from the sulphurous waters of the nearby Lake of Golden Dreams. Statues of bold, bipedal lions march to war across dizzying walls topped by stone lions' heads serving as merlons, while sentries stand guard, bows never far from their hands.

There are frequent delays for visitors wanting to enter the city. Hamanu's templars often question and search those who wish to gain entry, and levy a tax (5 cp per person and 1 cp per mount). Predictably, this can result in milling throngs making their way slowly through the city's gates.

### THE CITY GATES

Four gates offer access to the city. The Slave Gate sees heavy traffic, including caravans bound to and from the obsidian mines in the Smoking Crown. Nobles and templars enter and exit through the High Gate, and most other visitors pass in and out through the Obsidian Gate and the King's Gate. Half-giant guards, archers, and war templars staff the towers at each gate and rigorously question all who enter.

### WHERE TO STAY

Most visitors to Urik will find themselves staying in the Foreigners' Quarter. This is a small neighbourhood southwest of Potters' Court, which houses people not born of Urik, as well as those of races other than human. Dwarves, elves, thri-kreen, and others find shelter in this cramped community.

The Dustdevil Inn is located at the edge of a section of the Foreigners' Quarter known as the Beggar's Palace, because much of it is vacant and crumbling. Like the neighbourhood around it, the inn is a rough, unsavoury place, but the ale is good and the food is tasty and cheap. Cutthroats, mercenaries, gamblers, and beggars frequent the establishment, and city officials rarely venture into its seedy interior.

The more discerning customer would be better off staying at the Lion's Crown. Located in Urik's High Quarter, it is popular with nobles, visiting dignitaries, and anyone with money to throw away. The inn refuses all clientele who do not appear to be wealthy enough to stay there.

The Empty Urn in the Artisan's Quarter is a respectable boarding house and tavern that caters primarily to the city's merchant classes. It is welcoming to those who do not cause trouble or bring trouble with them. Prices are slightly above average but the quality of the accommodation is excellent and the food well made.

### WHERE TO BOARD YOUR MOUNT

There are stables throughout Urik, all of varying quality. Visitors are warned not to stable their mounts near the elven market that lies in the foreign quarter, as they are likely to be stolen. A safer bet would be Halgost's Halls in the Artisan Quarter, or the venerable Balimarash Mews in the Old Quarter, which claims to be the oldest stable in the city.

### WHERE TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT

Joat's Den is a very popular venue selling simple but delicious food and drink. Carved out of one corner of a hulking customhouse near the Obsidian Gate, it is low to the ground and open to the sky.

The courtyard surrounding Bright Water Well (one of the oases around which Urik was built) is lined with taverns that are open most hours of the day and night. The Brightwater Bucket is a cheery and friendly establishment, frequented by locals and visitors alike.

### WHERE TO SHOP

Most visitors will want to shop in either the Obsidian Quarter or the Old District; the prices are higher in the former, while the latter is cheaper but lacks the full range of goods available elsewhere. The Wanderer's Friend in the Obsidian Quarter is a popular and friendly trading post, stocking everything from wagons and herd animals to all kinds of supplies needed to trek across the harsh Athasian wilderness. The owner, a dwarf named Porpor, is always willing to trade.

The Artisan's Quarter, and Potter's Court in particular, is the best place to find craft goods and Urik's famous pottery. It is a rich commercial district where Urikites shop for foodstuffs, finished goods, and other commodities. Prices are high in the quarter, but the quality is second to none.

### WHERE TO BUY SPELL COMPONENTS

It is very hard to find these in Urik, as the templars use psionicists to check for those who might smuggle them into the city. The King's Cup, an unassuming shop on Potter's Court is rumoured to have connections to the Veiled Alliance, if one has the contacts to open such channels. And there is always the elven market, not far from the Obsidian Gate. The elven market in Urik is more dangerous than its counterparts in other city-states, and few humans explore its nooks and crannies.

### WHERE TO BUY POISONS

Those seeking to buy poisons will need to brave the elven market or seek the few bards who ply their trade in the ruins of the Beggar's Palace. Urikite bards are notoriously wary, however, so expect to expend considerable effort... and coin in the search.

#### WHERE TO FIND WORK

Urik is a regimented, militaristic city and the best employment comes on those terms. Warriors will find plenty of opportunities as mercenaries and gladiators, and House Stel is always looking for those willing to work on its caravans. Other opportunities are rarer – those who can support the city's artisans are most likely to find work – as are those willing to help Hamanu's templars hunt down dissidents and members of the Veiled Alliance.

#### WHERE TO FIND HEALING

The Temple of the Sun is the best place to seek healing services. Its clerics are happy to assist any who are able to pay. If one is willing to listen to sermons on Hamanu's glory, the Temple of the Mighty King in Destiny's Kingdom is another option – here, Hamanu frequently requires his templars to accede to the wishes of the parishioners. Canny visitors can take advantage of this.

#### WHERE TO TRAIN

Training options – like employment – are limited for those not of a martial nature. Warriors can find teachers at the Pit of Black Death, Urik's arena, with House Stel, and at a host of gladiatorial stables across the city.

Clerics can find tuition at the many shrines dotted throughout Urik (primarily elemental earth) but druids would need to look to the surrounding villages for such assistance.

For rogues, the Beggar's Palace area and the elven market offer options, albeit risky ones, and mages will need to seek out the Alliance, either through the King's Cup pottery shop or the Three Sisters Observatory.

Psionics have several choices, from the prestigious King's Academy, to the secretive Potter's School, where masters of the mind meet covertly. There is even a psionic monastery run by an organisation called the Brotherhood in nearby Makla, though they admit few to their ranks.

#### HAMANU'S CODE

In Urik the law reigns supreme, thanks to Hamanu's Code. Or so claims Hamanu. In fact, Hamanu dictates all laws and changes them at his need. But for civil matters in which he takes no personal interest, the Code stands unsurpassed in the Tablelands for utility, comprehensiveness, and ruthlessness.

The templars insist that Hamanu's Code is a divine gift, a blessing that the sorcerer-king bestowed upon his people so they could prosper and grow. In truth, the Code is oppressive and jealously guards the prerogatives of the king, his templars, and the noble classes. Common Urikite citizens understand that the Code exists to protect the powerful, but they dare not grumble. The only good thing that can be said of the Code is that it discourages street crime.

Despite its purported benefits for law and order, Hamanu's Code is changeable, often on the whim of the sorcerer-king. What holds true on one visit to the city may not apply on the next. Furthermore, Hamanu's templars delight in finding loopholes and obscure applications of the Code, so visitors should follow their dictates at all times and keep some coin hidden securely away just in case they find it necessary to bribe a templar for their freedom. The alternative is a life of slavery in Urik's obsidian mines, or as fodder for the arena.

