

~WORLD OF BRANDES~
THE SHACKLED CITY

~PLAYER'S GUIDE~

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Setting

The Northern Coast

The vast Gorlon Ocean separates the Western Kingdoms and the Plateulands from the Southlands and the realms of the East. Along the north coast of the ocean lies vast stretches of untracked jungle. As the ocean routes between the Western Kingdoms and the Southlands grew so did settlements along the area that came to be known as the Northern Coast. The area has only become settled and tamed in the years since the war and so the power bases there employ a newer mindset and follow more modern lays.

One such power structure is a loose republic of city states known as the Alliance. Each city has it's own laws and authority within it's borders but peace is maintained in the area and piracy and banditry are combated by the cities working together.

In the central Alliance Region, where the Serpent Tail Range extends south toward the coast and the Sanguine River meanders close to the mountains lies the city of Caldera. Caldera is one of the few prosperous cities inland because it lies on a major path north through the Spine Mountains toward the Yew Lands and then on to the Bolas Plains to the east and the Crossroads of the World to the north.

Culture

Sitting as it does in the middle of a long ocean trade route between the Southlands to the east and the Western Kingdoms and Plateulands to the west the Northern Coast is a cultural

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melting pot. The area was settled after the Reconstruction Era ended when the peoples of the world again sought to expand. Settlers sought to offer ports to the ships that plied the seas and through that strong maritime tradition the cultures of those three areas flowed into the Northern Coast and created a kind of melting pot.

People

The people of the Northern Coast are a hardy, determined, and self-reliant bunch. They carved their home from the jungle and live in constant struggle with the dinosaurs and demons that emerge from the steamy depths. It is not an easy place to live but the peoples have made it their destiny to do so and there are none that can take it from them.

The population of the region is primarily fae races but many hardy goblin races have found a fondness for the area. Since the Northern Coast sits on major maritime trade routes east from the Plateaulands the vorr'cHak are not uncommon in the area though they tend to dislike the heat and moisture of the jungle climate.

Climate

The Northern Coast sits near the equator between the massive Spine Mountains and the sprawling Gorlon Ocean. Winds from the Plateau pick up moisture from the tropical waters and are channeled southeast by the mountains, creating thick rainforests along the tropical and subtropical Northern Coast.

The area shows no real change with the turning of the seasons but in the fall the winds shift and the rainy season starts. This often leads to flooding in the lower elevations but the people have come to adapt.

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Caldera

Details

Population: 4,500 adults (large town). Mixed (65% human, 9% halfling, 8% dwarf, 6% elf, 4% orc, 3% goblin, 2% hobgoblin, 2% ogre, 1% vorr'cHak).

Economy: (3,000gp limit) Coffee, exotic woods, cut gemstones, obsidian, dyes, spices.

Authority Figures: Lord Mayor Severen Navalant, male human; Lord Terseon Skellerang, male human (captain of the Caldera Guard).

Town Emblem: A watchful eye wreathed in blue flames.

Description

Believed to have been founded by Surabar Spellmason, Caldera is the most populous area in the Caldera Region. Nearby villages include Redgorge, Kingfisher Hollow, and Hollowsky. The Caldera region is in a tropical jungle

The town's buildings are tightly packed and built from volcanic rock and wood. Cobblestone roads form paths around a small lake of warm water, which fills a small bowl before flowing south toward the city of Sanguine. Although the town's sewage seeps into the lake, local clerics routinely purify the water for the citizens in exchange for charitable donations to their temples.

A 50-foot-tall fortified wall of black malachite encircles the city.

Caldera is ruled by a Lord Mayor, elected to his position every two years by the noble council. The post is currently held by Severen Navalant, whose term expires in roughly 20 months. Other important individuals in the city include Lord Terseon Skellerang, captain of the Caldera Guard, the members of the noble families, and Caldera's few wealthy merchant interests.

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Caldera's major exports come from two sources: mines and plantations. Both industries are based in the hills surrounding the city, and are managed by the various noble families who live in the area. Obsidian and diamonds are the primary products mined in the region. Plantations usually produce rice, sugarcane and coffee. Most of those who dwell in the city itself are merchants, scholars, or workers in the mines and plantations in the lowlands. Water is never scarce in town, but most of the city's food must be imported from surrounding towns since the local fishing and farming enterprises are meager at best.

Citizens have historically paid a modest yearly flat tax of 1 gp, while merchants and nobles pay a 5% income tax each year. In addition, a 1sp gate tax is charged for non-citizens who enter the city by any of its four gates. All inhabitants of Caldera that own a building, or are part of a family that owns a building, are considered citizens regardless of economic status. Most Calderans have a simple malachite ring made or given to them when they reach the age of maturity. The ring always bears the town emblem. Nobles often purchase very elaborate rings, or have extravagant brooches made to show their citizenship.

Currency in Caldera

Caldera uses the currency minted in the capital city of Sanguine: rings (pp), suns (gp), moons (sp) and stars (cp).

Trade bars in 100, 500 and 1000gp denominations are also used.

Districts

High City: This upper class district rests on the slopes of Caldera Mountain in the northeast of the city. This district is where the wealthy and elite of the city reside. The noble families all have residences here and all of the city's government and administration is in this area. The neighborhood of Gladetown is a beautiful and lush area where most of the city's elves dwell.

Merchant Quarter: The southwestern part of the city on the flat eastern banks of the Sanguine River and Caldera Lake is the Merchant Quarter. The district is named for the abundance of shops and merchants that exist here. However, the district also houses most of Caldera's middle class citizens, those with comfortable lifestyles and healthy living needs.

Low City: This district is what most people think of when they think of the west banks of Caldera. The district is run down and destitute. Crime and violence are rampant and the people live in squalor. Located between the docks and the swamp this district is where the rouges and shadow denizens of the city tend to migrate. Notable neighborhoods include the tannery and nearby goblin shantytown and the thick tangle of streets that makes up the docks area. The lower elevation of Low City and the moist ground prevent a sewer system from being installed, like the rest of the city. This district relies on the frequent rains to flush the ditches.

North Caldera: This small low-class district rests in the northwest corner of Caldera. The district caters mostly to travelers but the shops and establishments fail to rival similar establishments in the Merchant's Quarter.

Temples

Church of Solanis the Life Bringer (Merchant Quarter): A two-story structure with white marble walls. Headed by High Son Sarcem Delasharn (male human).

Temple of Xulan (North Caldera): Currently headed by Asfelkir Hranleurt (male orc).

Cathedral of Ralendi (Merchant Quarter): A beautiful, towering structure run by Embryl Aloustinai (female human).

Glade of Tulana Alaan'os (High City): A small open glade tended by Kristof Jurgensen (male elf).

Taverns and Inns

Slippery Eel Tavern: The Slippery Eel Tavern is a favorite tavern for miners, plantation workers, and other working-class citizens. The food and drink are cheap, and the Caldera

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Guard tends to ignore the place, making it a handy site for illicit deals and clandestine meetings. It is located in Low City, and run by Fallo Grymkin (male human).

Tipped Tankard Tavern: This tavern is generally regarded as the best place in the city for common folk to get a drink. It's a favorite place for off-duty city guards, and as such, brawls are fairly rare. It is located in North Caldera, and is run by Rivek Mol (male human).

Cusp Of Sunrise: This high-society club in High City is a favorite place for Cauldron's rich and powerful to meet and relax.

Drunken Morkoth Inn: This is perhaps the most popular inn in the city of Caldera. A regular stop for many merchants and traveling adventurers, the combination of comfortable beds, good food, and reasonable prices make it a favorite among the city's returning visitors. Each of the rooms is decorated with a humongous painting of Caldera's legendary lake monster, a large morkoth. The paintings depict the morkoth in any number of embarrassing and ridiculous scenes, always with the morkoth drunk and confused, and often in incongruous locations. It is located in the Merchant Quarter, and is run by Halpeen Welvihk (female human).

Minuta's Board: This low-cost inn and flophouse caters to anyone who cannot afford to stay at Cauldron's better inns. Prices here are 75% normal, but the owners make no guarantees against theft or loss. It is located in Low City.

Coy Nixie: The Coy Nixie is a high-class tavern and dancehall in High City owned and operated by the Aslaxins. Although prices here tend to be nearly double the normal asking price, the food and drink are rivaled only by the Cusp of Sunrise. These two locations have a healthy competition – while the Cusp is generally held to have better food, drink, and entertainment, there are no membership fees at the Coy Nixie.

Shops

Weer's Elixirs: Owned and operated by Vortimax Weer, a retired adventurer (male human), this cramped shop is the preferred place in Caldera for potions and alchemical items. It is located in the Merchant Quarter.

Garnezarn's Smithy: This smithy in the Merchant Quarter is generally regarded as the finest such establishment in the city of Caldera. Its owner, Phalian Garnezarn (male human), has long held his own against competitors, the Lathenmire Smithies.

Lathenmire Smithies: This smithy is owned and operated by twin Dwarven brothers Roxor and Foxor (male dwarves) and is situated in the Merchant Quarter. The expertise and low costs of the Lathenmire's has allowed their shop to prosper against skilled competition.

Zanathor's Provisions: A general store in North Caldera run by Bjellkir Zanathor (male human).

Sure Foot Livery: The Sure Foot Livery is the best clothing and tailoring shop in town. The business is run by a no-nonsense halfling woman named Tippy's Surefoot. It is located in North Caldera.

Tygot's Old Things: Tygot Mispas (male halfling) runs this well-stocked antiquity shop in the Merchant Quarter. The shop specializes in non-magical art objects gathered from across the known world. Tygot frequently buys old documents and art objects from local adventurers. The shop is a two-storied structure with a small flat on the upper floor and a well-organized business area on the lower.

Garthun Imports: This well-kept building houses the offices of Adrick Garthun (male human), a prominent merchant whose import of alcohol, tobacco, exotic sweets, and seafood has catapulted him to the height of success. Adrick often travels to Sanguine to import special items for customers. It is located in the Merchant Quarter.

Skie's Treasury: Numerous stores in Caldera sell magic items and gear, but only one of them makes its sole business buying and selling magic items to adventurers – Skie's Treasury. Skie's Treasury is owned and run by Skie Aldersun (female halfling). The modest building is constructed from blocks of volcanic stone. The facade of the building bears dozens, if not hundreds, of symbols and sigils that have been carved into the face of the stone. One door and a pair of tiny windows face the road and overlook the lake below. Above the door, a sign proclaims the establishment to be Skie's Treasury, but more impressive are the numerous

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items of treasure – rings, coins, wands, necklaces, rods, potions, scrolls, and more – that seem to slowly orbit the sign and shine with soft golden light. Every now and then, two of the items bump against each other, ringing softly like a wind chime. It is located in High City.

Alameda Moneylenders: Coins can be exchanged for trade bars and gems at this quiet shop just north of the Merchant Quarter Gate on a side street in the Merchant Quarter. No surcharge is levied for exchanging coins for trade bars or gems. Owned by the Alameda family, a close-knit dwarven clan, their primary trade is the exchanging of coin, but they also offer banking services. Opening an account requires a flat fee of 10gp, with a 5gp monthly charge required for each month afterwards.

Westkey's Map Emporium: Dundar Westkey (male dwarf) runs this small shop in the Merchant Quarter that sells maps. It is a new shop, and as such generally only stocks general maps of the area.

General Buildings

Lakeside Pavilion: This open pavilion is one of the oldest structures in Caldera. Said to have been formed via magic cast by Surabar Spellmason himself, the pavilion is traditionally where the lord mayor issues announcements and decrees. It is located in Merchant Quarter.

Town Hall: Caldera's town hall is a single-story building and one of the oldest structures in the city. The building serves as a place for the Lord Mayor and his advisors to hold meetings with the nobles and important people in the city. Records of ownership, historical documents, and similar archives can be had here. It is located in High City, West.

Caldera Guard Barracks: These buildings house the bulk of Caldera's town guards. The central area of this walled compound is used for training, and the low, single story keep is the aboveground facade for the Caldera Prison, a five-level underground facility that can hold hundreds of prisoners. The guard captain, Lord Terseon Skellerang, lives in a one story, green roofed house in the southwestern corner of the compound. It is located in North Caldera.

Bluecrater Academy: This tower houses the educational centers of Caldera. Only the nobles are allowed to send their children here to learn the ways of statecraft and feudal economy. Bluecrater hosts an impressive library but is only accessible to nobles and patrons of Bluecrater. Bluecrater Academy is adjacent to the Town hall in High City.

Parade Grounds: This open field in High City serves as the location for all the events of the annual Flood Festival and other, smaller, public events. The parade grounds lie adjacent to the town hall and often serves as a drilling field for the Calderan Guard when it is not in use for other functions.

Noble Families in Caldera

Taskerhill: Lord Ankhin Taskerhill is the inheritor of the fabulously wealthy Taskerhill mines and estates. Ankhin is the richest man in Caldera, and now that he is a widower (his wife having recently passed away) he is also one of the most sought after men within its walls. House Taskerhill controls the lands and mines in and around Redgorge but with his life so firmly planted in the city he dolls out responsibility to vassals.

Lathenmire: Beswink and Lioral Lathenmire are the current heads of the House Lathenmire, which has not yet officially been given the patent of nobility, but is expected to overcome that obstacle before the end of another decade. Beswink started life as the third son of a poor weaponsmith. When he caught the eye of Lioral, the only daughter of a successful merchant, he had the chance he needed to turn the tide of his fate. With the help of his new bride, Beswink began to buy out the other weapon and armor smithies in Cauldron. Coupled with the trade routes established by Lioral's father the two quickly became one of the most financially influential couples in Caldera.

Tercival: Sir Alek Tercival, a paladin of Solanis, is the last surviving member of this land rich, monetarily destitute, noble family. Tercival owns acres of undeveloped land and scattered farms on the road to Redgorge.

Navalant: The current Lord Mayor is the sole inheritor of a powerful family that claims to have been given the patent of nobility by Surabar Spellmason himself. The family controls

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large orchards north of Kingfisher Hollow, and it is rumored that they have a standing pact with the fey in the area, which allows them to maintain their control on the rare wood trade out of the region. Even though Severen is the last member of his line, he is not on speaking terms with his parents, who disapprove of the fact that he married into the Hollow family. However, it was this marriage (fruitless, currently) that brought Severen's name to the attention of the Noble's council, and ultimately led to his appointment 13 years ago.

Aslaxin: The Aslaxin family is currently the most powerful house in the town of Kingfisher Hollow, now that the Taskerhills have moved most of their interests into the city. The Aslaxin rice crops are one of the greatest sources of food in the region, and their dominance of the food import trade seals the family's continued power in the region. However, the true gem of the Aslaxin empire is the art trade.

Skellerang: Lord Captain Commander Terseon Skellerang was, as is the tradition in Caldera, granted nobility for the course of his appointment. Terseon has never had time for a wife or family, but he is still fairly young, and plans on having a family later in his life.

Knowlern: Lady Ophelia Knowlern inherited control of this house when her father and brother died in a mine explosion, and she has been loath to marry, giving up her power. She makes her home in Hollowsky, where she can better look after her interests in the area's mines. At the behest of Jenya Urikas, she often sits in as a voice of reason and compassion at Caldera's council meetings.

Rhiavadi: Lady Thifirane is the only living member of this ancient house. She lives alone (discounting servants) in what is widely considered the most ostentatious display of wealth in the city, a multileveled, towered structure in High City. Though she controls interest in several businesses in the region, it is known that she has little patience for them and allows most decisions to be made by subordinates. She is a very sought after bride, but the rumormongers of Caldera doubt if she will ever find a partner.

Vhalantru: Lord Orbius Vhalantru was given the patent of nobility shortly after moving to Caldera 15 years ago. Immediately upon arriving to the city he gave a huge sum of money toward the restoration of several town structures, including the Town Hall. The grounds of Vhalantru's manor are among the most beautiful in Caldera.

Vanderboren: The Vanderborens, Lord Premiach and Lady Aeberrin, are the newest of Caldera's nobility, having received the patent of nobility only nine years ago. The house is Caldera's answer to real-estate tycoons, and they own several important buildings and businesses in the city, including Sure Foot Livery and the Lantern Street Orphanage.

Social Classes in Caldera

Nobles: The nobility are the rich aristocrats descended from a few, select families. They stand alone as the celebrity elite of society. Only nobles are allowed to run for governmental position or position of real authority. The nobles are the leaders of society.

Landed Gentry: One step below the nobles are the people or families that own land in the Caldera region. Any land not specifically under the control of a landed family is considered owned by the city. Any landowner is considered a citizen of Caldera and is allowed to vote in elections and present issues to the noble council. Owning even a single building within the walls of Caldera makes a person landed. The nobles, the final arbitrators of land ownership, have been known to punish or grant favor to landed families by granting or taking away land they own.

Peasants: The peasantry makes up the bulk of the population. These are the people and families locked into work contracts, usually as miners or fieldworkers. Peasants are effectively the property of the landowner they are contracted to. They have the option of buying out of their contracts and becoming freepeople but are often spending their meager earnings on the needs not provided for by their landowners.

It is illegal for a peasant to abandon a work contract and such contracts are often for life. However, a landowner may choose to end a contract at any time and are required by Calderan law to provide at least basic needs to their peasants. Landowners also have the option to sell or trade workmen and their contracts among each other and often do so to earn favor, or pay off debts.

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Freepeople: Freepeople are the people of the region who are neither tied into a work contract and do not own land. Newcomers to Caldera or peasants that have paid off their contracts make up the bulk of this class. Freepeople have the option to come and go as they please but they do not enjoy the benefits of citizenship even if they are born and raised in Caldera. Often landowners will hire freepeoples to round out a work or mercenary force but will usually only do so in duress due to the need to pay a fair wage to them.

Languages in Caldera

The languages spoken in Caldera are diverse due to the blending of cultures. The official, and most widely spoken language, in Caldera is the language of Sanguine, often just called Sanguine Standard. All official announcements and governmental business is conducted in Sanguine Standard.

Sanguine Standard is a dialect of the maritime language spoken by the traders and wayfarers that ply the trade routes of the Northern Coast. It is a collaborative language pulling many words and phrases from the major influential cultures of the regions abutting the Gorlon Ocean.

Other major languages spoken in Caldera are derived from the major cultures that share a proximity to the Northern Coast. From the Western Kingdoms it is common to hear some of the major tongues such as Brelish, Jarvic, Lewlian, and Dusaunic. The common language of the trade peoples from the Plateulands, often referred to as Sandspeak, is common as well as the language of the vorr'cHak. From the north it is not uncommon to hear Yewlian. The Southlands have sent many languages with their travelers including Orrim, Valin'osian, Terraque, and Allengard.

Less common languages include the many dialects and tribal languages from the Plateulands, such as the individual languages of the city states. The same is true of the tongues from the Bolas Plains. Lesser spread languages from the smaller Western Kingdoms have been heard but are not as common as their more well known brothers. Languages from the eastern cultures such as Krathik-Suul of the Jade Islands have been known to filter as far as the Northern Coast. The tribal dialects of the savage races and tribes in the jungle and Spine Mountains have been known to find their way to the streets of Caldera as well as ancient dialects of more prominent local languages such as Yewlian or the dead language of the Spine Mountain Dwarves.

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Caldera Environs

Redgorge: This village was the first settlement in the area outside of Caldera. Founded about 500 years ago, Redgorge was at one time a much larger settlement, but it never fully recovered from a demonic assault long ago. Redgorge sits in a narrow strip of flat ground between a cliff and an immense quarry of red pebble gravel. West of the village, a prodigious line of fortifications known as the Basalt Bastions protect the land, their massive walls unguarded and draped with vines. These fortifications, as impressive as Caldera's outer walls, tower over the village itself. They were built ages ago by Surabar Spellmason's powerful spells in a single week, to aid in the defense of Redgorge against the denizens of the Demonskar.

Today, Redgorge is a farming and mining village. The old Stonemasons District, where Surabar Spellmason once dwelt, is visibly depopulated and most its buildings lie empty and in ruin.

Demographics (village): Conventional; AL CG; population 617 adults; 200gp limit; Assets 6,000gp; Mixed (79% human, 9% dwarf, 5% halfling, 3% elf, 2% orc, 2% other).

Authority Figures: Mayor Sind Nebern, female human Ari7; Pragat Millak, male human Ftr6 (constable); Baron Thenis von Taskerhill, male human Ari4 (mine manager).

Important Characters: Mallory Gibson, female human Com6 ("Redgorge Supplies and Dry Goods" proprietor); Daughter Gulana Falanis, female elf Clr4 (Solanis/clergy); Belkin, Lucy, James, and Rhonda, male and female humans War4 (deputies); Rutgehr Lutkin, male dwarf Exp3 (blacksmith); Garis, male human Exp3 ("Redhead Miner's Inn" proprietor).

Others: Town Militia, War2 (12); Exp3 (8); Rog3 (2); Rng2 (1); Com1 (583).

Kingfisher Hollow: The town of Kingfisher Hollow is the second largest settlement in the Caldera Region and is also the primary location for the region's plantations – fields of rice, tea and fruit surround the town.

Demographics (large town): Conventional; AL NG; population 2,021 adults; 5,000gp limit; Assets 505,000gp; Integrated (37% human, 20% halfling, 18% elf, 10% dwarf, 7% orc, 5% goblin, 3% other).

Authority Figures: Lord Mayor Sir Miles Berrik, male human Ari6.

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Important Characters: Kheldegan Tolm, male dwarf Exp7 (“Tolm’s Superior Outfitting and Dry Goods” proprietor); Dame Dara Whitewood, female human War6 (constable); Sister Alonsa, female human Clr5 (Ralendi/clergy); Sergeant Grendar Kuln, male orc Ftr4 (watch-captain); Sarel Bankdown, female elf Exp2 (“Griffon’s Nest Inn and Tavern” proprietor).

Others: Town Guards, War 3 (2); Militia, War1 (101); Clr2 (2); Ftr2 (2); Exp3 (2); Exp 1 (56); Ari3 (2); Ari1 (10); Com1 (1,838).

Hollowsky: The village of Hollowsky is the smallest of the four settlements in the Caldera Region.

Demographics (village): Conventional; AL CG; population 460 adults; 200gp limit; Assets 2,000gp; Mixed (79% human, 9% dwarf, 5% halfling, 3% elf, 2% orc, 2% other).

Authority Figures: Mayor Rennis Gibson, male human Ari5

Important Characters: Bailiff Yewlis Oorla, female elf War4 (constable); Jenna Fenster Exp3 (“Shrelana’s Rest Inn and Tavern” proprietor).

Others: Town Militia, War2 (12); Exp2 (4); Rog1 (1); Com1 (440).

The Lucky Monkey: This is a popular roadside tavern on the northwest road. It is operated by clerics of Shrelana and houses a shrine to the goddess.

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Agriculture in Caldera

Fruits of the Land

The environs of Caldera offer a unique growing environment suitable for many staple and exotic fruits and vegetables. All were found growing naturally when Surabar and his settlers first arrived some six hundred years ago, and have helped to feed each succeeding generation of Calderans.

Rice: The staple food source for the entire region it is found on the table of commoner and noble alike nearly everyday. Cultivated in the lowlands to the west of Caldera the wetlands near Kingfisher Hollow are also famous for its large, healthy plantations. Grown in large enough quantities to enable export, the rice is harvested and packed into 50lb sacks, then loaded onto carts pulled by water buffalo for transportation to Caldera where it is warehoused, and auctioned for transportation to Sanguine and on to the rest of Brandes. Small sub-markets also exist for rice wine, vinegar, and paper.

The use of water buffalos as beasts of burdens over mules and oxen has been common since the arrival of humans to the area. They are easily domesticated strong animals that are easier to maintain than mules or oxen. A common saying amongst the locals when referring to the movement of something from one location to another is "It is being buffaloed." They are not however, for the long overland voyages to Sanguine. Mules, small elephants, and oxen are preferred for these journeys. A water buffalo trained as a beast of burden costs the same as an ox.

Sugar Cane: While few growing zones exist for this sweet plant within the protective radius of Caldera, the few that do produce a quality yield exist near Hollowsky. On these plantations the cane is cut and bundled into 50lb bushels, most is stored and auctioned on location, or processed into the sweet grains that Calderans enjoy in their morning teas. Those bushels auctioned are most frequently bought by local rum distilleries to produce Caldera's favorite

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alcoholic beverage. Besides being ingested straight, the rum is also mixed with the juices of several native fruits most notably pineapple, coconut milk and limes.

Tea: Before the ambiance of coffee became a fad amongst the merchant and noble class of Caldera, there was, is and always will be Caldera's favorite beverage, tea. Grown on the fertile slopes of the hills between the mountains and the jungle on large plantations and exported as far away as the Terraque-Len, Caldera tea is third following copper and malachite as the leading export. The leaves are harvested, and sacked in 100lb sacks before being buffaloes to Caldera for auction or consumption.

Twenty years ago, when the coffee plant was introduced it caused several minor problems. First amongst them was competition between local tea plantations and the new coffee plantations over space. Both plants thrive in the same altitudes. This led to a short war known as the coffee war where the leading coffee plantations came to blows over land with the established tea growers. Captain Skellerang and the Caldera Guard were commentated by the Lord Mayor for handling of this delicate matter.

It is not within the scope of this text to detail all the many teahouses, each with their unique blends in Caldera. But it will suffice to say that it would be a very enjoyable task to frequent each one and sample this exquisite beverage. Tea in Caldera is served either hot or cold, sweetened or not.

The reading of tealeaves is the most common form of divination amongst the soothsayers and oracles of the Caldera area.

Coffee: The bloody introduction of coffee into the Caldera economy has already been touched upon. Grown in the same foothills as tea, Caldera coffee is grown mainly on the eastern foothills between the city and Redgorge. The coffee has a distinct earthy flavor, with a deep almost black color and wonderful spicy aroma.

The largest of the coffee plantations is the 'Cauldron Plantation'. Here the coffee is grown, harvested, pulped of their seeds, cleaned and sun roasted. Once roasted it is packaged in 10lb sacks and sent up to Caldera by buffalo where it is warehoused and auctioned.

The Cauldron Plantation produces one premium coffee with a much more intense flavor and heartier aroma. Known as 'Cauldron Gold' these beans are roasted in a special underground roaster heated by a lava flow. Cauldron Gold is sold exclusively at the Cusp of Sunrise, and is available only on the black market or as a gift from the Cauldron Plantation.

In Caldera coffee has caught on only amongst scholars, merchants, and younger nobles; the rest of the population being unwilling to give up their love of tea, or unable to afford the more expensive coffee.

The most popular coffee house in Caldera is Java's, which has also become a kind of slang for the drink. Located in High City, near the Bluecrater Academy it is a popular hangout for students, young nobles, and merchants. The proprietor Java Rockhill is a dwarf with a nose for good coffee.

Exotic Fruits: The jungle is ripe with fruits of all colors and tastes. Amongst those four deserve mention as being important to Caldera's economy and culture. The first is the banana. Harvested on plantations near the Lucky Monkey this succulent yellow fruit is harvested while still green, and then buffaloes to Caldera where it is auctioned by weight and transported to Sanguine. The average price for a banana in the streets of Caldera is 1/5th of a copper piece.

A cousin to the banana, the mango is harvested along side the banana in the jungles near the Lucky Monkey. While not widely known outside of the region, it provides a low price for export. It does figure heavily in the local culture and is eaten with nearly every meal in Caldera.

The third exotic fruit popular with Calderans, and heavily sought after by merchants for export, is the pineapple. This juicy, sweet fruit is grown exclusively in the Hollowsky area where several large plantations jealously guard their plants to insure they are not stolen for cultivation elsewhere. Thievery of a plant, if caught by plantation guards, is a painful and bloody death or a decade in the Caldera dungeon for those lucky enough to be captured by one of the Captain's patrols.

The pineapples are harvested green, crated a score to a crate, buffaloes to Caldera and auctioned. Pineapples are considered a delicacy even in Caldera with some families saving all

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year for one. They are traditionally eaten during the summer festival when the plantations begin harvesting. A single pineapple can run as high as 2sp.

The final fruit on the list is the coconut. This common fruit is harvested throughout the lowland regions. Harvesters go into the jungle with weaved baskets and machetes climb the palms, harvest the fruits, and then carry them to market, a dangerous business indeed. A single coconut sells for about the same as a banana or mango. The only sub-market for the coconut is coconut oil, the only vegetable oil easily available in Caldera. In the labor intensive warehouse districts of Caldera vendors selling coconut water, water with chunks of coconut in it, are quite common. The tasty drink is very refreshing.

Meats, Poultry, and Fish

Water Buffalo: One of the most serious problems facing the early settlers to the Caldera area was the lack of an easily obtainable red meat. Hunting alone simply wasn't going sustain the growing population of Caldera with its red meat need. The only readily available source was the water buffalo, and it still remains the number one source of red meat for the populace today. Several ranches maintain a steady business of supplying the city with its need for red meat. None is exported, although dried and salted buffalo is a profitable business as these meats supply the outgoing caravans for their journeys to Sanguine.

Hogs: Less commonly consumed than the water buffalo, the hog is nonetheless available to locals. Brought here by the original settlers, they are now raised by local butchers and on farms and plantations outside the city as well. None are exported, but like water buffalo, salted pork is marketable to traders and travelers.

Poultry: Like the hog, chickens and ducks were brought by the early settlers and are now raised by butchers for their meat and eggs.

Fish: Caldera Lake and the Sanguine River provided the earliest inhabitants with their only obtainable meat source, save the hogs, chickens, and oxen that traveled with them. While the cities clerics help maintain the cleanliness of the water, nowhere else is the statement 'shit rolls down hill' more true than in Caldera. The trout and fresh water muscles that provided much of the early diet for Calderans have diminished over the past 500 years. In the past quarter century, regulation and improved management have done much to balance Caldera Lake's fishing resources and improve cleanliness.

Kingfisher Hollow sets on the shores of a large, fertile fresh water lake, Fed from the springs and creeks of the Cauldron Mountains the lake is teeming with Tilapia, fresh water prawns, and other edible fish. The local fishmongers can be seen plying their nets for the first few hours of the morning. The fish are transferred from the net to barrels of water, and then onto carts, which move the live fish to Caldera's market. Late day catches are salted or pickled in Kingfisher for later transportation. It takes fourteen to sixteen hours for the catch to arrive in Caldera.

Caldera Agriculture Markets

The majority of Caldera's fruit and meat markets are on the wide main streets of the Merchant's Quarter between the Lower Bridge and Hollowsky Gate. Each morning these markets turn into miniature towns complete with all manner of vendors, beggars and thieves and of course a city tax man in his red robe and high hat to insure that the Lord Mayor gets his percentage. The less perishable foods like rice, sugar, tea, coffee, and several of their sub-products are stored inside warehouses near the gates or the docks and auctioned there.

Price Guide

Item	Avg. Wholesale Cost	Market Cost	Special
Rice	20gp/50lb sack	5sp/lp	-
Wine	10gp/bottle	-	-
Vinegar	30gp/10gal barrel	5gp/gallon	-
Paper	1gp/sheet	-	-

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Price Guide (cont.)

Item	Avg. Wholesale Cost	Market Cost	Special
Sugar	35gp/50lb bundle	1gp/lb	-
Rum	8gp/10gal barrel	1gp/gallon	2sp/mug
Tea	125gp/10lb sack	15gp/lb	1cp/cup
Coffee	500gp/10lb sack	55gp/lb	1gp/cup
Bananas/Mango	10gp/10lb	3gp/lb	1cp/item
Pineapple	150gp/lb	10gp/item	-
Coconut	7gp/10lb	1gp/item	-
Oil	5gp/gallon	5sp/pint	-
Meat/Poultry/Fish	5gp/10lb	6sp/lb	-

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Races and Classes in Caldera

Races

Humans: The most populous race the world over and such statistics are the same on the North Coast. Humans thrive in any environment and have been at the forefront of carving civilization out of the jungle.

Elves: Elves are significantly less common on the frontier than most places of the world. The harsh jungle is not the type of environment they prefer and so elves in Caldera tend to remain in the cities and towns. Most of the elves that find their way to Caldera do not stay long. This has not prevented the strong culture of the few elves there are from pronouncing itself. The neighborhood of Gladetown in Caldera is home to mostly elves and the worship of their sylvan deity, Uulana Alaan'os, is common among non-elves as well.

Dwarves: These stout and hardy people seem particularly well suited to the hard life of the frontier and so they thrive. They work the stone of the city, run the mines and their stoic nature and meticulous attention to detail has made them an integral part of the culture.

Halflings: These crafty folk have long been integral parts of human society and culture and often thrive wherever humans are. Caldera is no different. A large halfling population in Caldera can be found in all walks of life. They have a stereotypical tendency toward crime and mercantile exploits but it is difficult to say how much truth there is in this.

Orcs: Orcs are the most populous of the goblin races that have come to Caldera. Their hardy and headstrong nature makes them fit in well with the harsh environment and orcs have no trouble finding work as soldiers, mercenaries or laborers. However, like the other goblin races, they tend to be shunned and treated like second-class citizens by 'polite' society.

Goblins: It is true that wherever orcs migrate goblins follow and that is true on the frontier. Goblins have situated themselves into Calderan society and have existed for generations. Goblin aptitude for artistry and construction, in centuries past, lead to the creation of a secret workshop they called Jzadirune hidden beneath the streets of Caldera where they crafted wondrous and powerful magical items for the city above. The small community was lost over seventy-five years ago when a magical plague devastated the people

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and forced the goblins to shut it down. At first a secret, the location of Jzadirune has been lost to the intervening generations.

Hobgoblins: These people of the plains find the dark confines of the jungle and city uncomfortable compared to their native wide open spaces. However, the hardy and strong hobgoblins have found potential and success as laborers in the mines and plantations of Caldera and as soldiers or mercenaries.

Ogres: Ogres are a frightful presence no matter where they are and their brutish nature tends to keep them on the fringes of society. However on the frontier Ogres thrive as laborers, soldiers or mercenaries and their strength and determination make them welcome additions to the labor force of any town or to any fighting force they dedicate themselves to. Ogres thrive as lone jungle fighters and explores as well.

vorr'cHak: These alien insects tend to feel uncomfortable in the damp confines of the jungle but are, nonetheless, not uncommon on the frontier. Their hardy and loyal nature gives them plenty of opportunity for employment and adventure though few stay. Even on the frontier vorr'cHak are looked at with disdain and mistrust and so few accept them as parts of their communities or organizations. Such attitudes are less within the city itself but such stigmata tends to follow the vorr'cHak everywhere they go.

Drow: These Dark Elves filter up out of the underworld, often for dark and corruptive purposes. On the frontier outcast Drow tend to find more acceptance than other, more civilized areas of the world. However, like anywhere in the world, Drow are generally not trusted and must earn every bit of respect and honor they may have. Drow tend toward criminal or assassin activities while outcasts have a knack for mercantile exploits.

Classes

Barbarians: The barbarians in the lands around Caldera are fierce jungle warriors. They often have to deal with dinosaurs, savage race tribes and demons from the depths of the jungle. These fierce and brutal warriors thrive on the harsh frontier of the North Coast.

Bards: On the frontier the need for mirth and entertainment draws many bards to Caldera. The thick intrigue of the noble court offers the opportunity for subtle manipulators to thrive. There is a rich post-war history that draws seekers of knowledge as well.

Clerics: The gods and religion is an integral part of the life and culture in Caldera. The harsh living of the frontier leads many to seek the solace and guidance of organized religion. Clerics are generally revered as community leaders and heroes. In decades past a devastating flood was halted and reversed by a coordinated clerical effort. This has led to the annual Flood Festival in Caldera during the rainy season.

Druids: The thick and harsh landscape of the frontier causes many to respect and fear it. In such a strong natural environment druids thrive. The harsh jungles and steep mountains make such people feel close to the Earthmother but walk softly so as to not invoke her wrath. Since Caldera is a small city and very tied to the surrounding environment druids are common on the city streets and feel nearly as at home there as they do among the wilds.

Fighters: Fighters can be found anywhere, and Caldera is no different. General warriors find opportunity in all walks of life from soldiers to thugs to nomads and laborers.

Monks: With no academies or monasteries on the North Coast outside of a small monastery in Sanguine these martial arts masters are rare in Caldera. However, the trade proximity to the Southlands makes Monks uncommon but not unheard of. Most Monks in Caldera are solitary travelers though some stay to bring order to the frontier.

Paladins: While clerics and religion is a major part of culture in Caldera these holy warriors are rare. The harsh life of the frontier tends to send people with a warrior nature toward other professions. However, the paladins that do exist have ample opportunity to thrive with taming the chaos of the frontier and the evil that lurks both in the jungle's depths and in the heart of the city.

Psions: These meditative masters are rare in Caldera. Many have come across the mountains from the Yew Lands and the Bolas Plains but few stay amid the chaos of the frontier. The criminal activity and court intrigue that abounds in Caldera offer ample opportunities for psions to thrive.

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Rangers: Rangers thrive on the frontier. The jungle and mountains are their home and many find work as scouts, soldiers, guides and explorers. For warriors rangers are nearly as common as the less specialized fighter.

Rogues: The rogues of Cauldron come in many shapes and sizes. Some are diplomats, whose tongues are sharper than their rapiers. Some work as mercenaries and soldiers while some are nothing more than common thugs. With the wild jungle and ancient ruins that abound on the frontier there is ample opportunity for rogues to find adventure.

Sorcerers: The frontier has a tendency to breed tougher and more versatile people and arcane spellcasters are no different. Lacking the needed schooling those with a natural talent for the eldritch and arcane tend to become sorcerers. Sorcerers thrive in the harsh environment and dark city.

Wilders: Like sorcerers those with a natural psionic talent tend to lack the schooling and training necessary to refine their art. These wild talents thrive in the jungles and city of the frontier.

Wizards: With few opportunities for arcane research and occult study it is assumed that wizards are rare on the frontier but that is simply not true. Many wizards can be found amid the people of Caldera and they are always ready to strike out into the dark jungle in search of some hidden bit of knowledge or lore.

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Character Creation

Ability Scores

Ability Scores will be generated using the Nonstandard Point Buy system with 32 points to allocate as described on page 169 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Any players that provide at least a 500 word background story for their character will receive 36 points to create their character.

Races

Races allowed are standard Brandes races with no restrictions. Added to this list is a new and rare race, the Drow also known as Dark Elves (see Appendix I).

Classes

All standard Brandes classes are available for play. All characters will be created using the rules for Gestalt Characters (see Appendix II).

Oriental Classes: The proximity to the Southlands brings much of the region's strong culture to the North Coast. The culture has many roles and classes specific to it, however these classes are merely aesthetic and different from their western counterparts in name only. Monks are a product of the Southlands but the other major classes are mechanically the same as western classes. Ninjas are simply rogues, samurai are fighters or paladins, shugenja are clerics who often worship and draw spells from the elements, and wu jen are simply wizards or sorcerers. Anyone wishing to play an oriental themed character should make that distinction at character creation.

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Prestige Classes

All prestige classes presented in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* are available for play with few modifications. The Dwarven Defender does not have a race restriction. Due to gestalt characters some prestige classes are discouraged (see Appendix II) but are not forbidden. All Brandes prestige classes are allowed for play.

Regional Background Traits

All characters from the Caldera Region may choose two free background traits if they wish.

Cairn Seeker

You come from a long line of treasure seekers and cairn hunters.

Benefit: Your familiarity with tombs gives you a +1 dodge bonus to AC and a +1 bonus to reflex saves against traps.

Drawback: Your senses have become trained for underground use and you suffer a -1 penalty of Spot and Listen checks when outdoors.

Child of the Jungle

You grew up in the jungle among the savage tribes.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Swim and Survival checks.

Drawback: You are illiterate. You may spend 2 skill points to gain the ability to read and write all languages you can speak. Barbarians must spend 4 skill points instead.

Creature of Darkness

Your time spent working in the mines of Redgorge has made you hardier and accustomed your eyes to the darkness, but your sight suffers in daylight.

Benefit: You gain low-light vision. If you already have low-light vision, you instead gain darkvision 60'. If you already have darkvision, the range of your darkvision increases by 30'.

Drawback: You suffer a -1 penalty to Search and Spot checks when in daylight.

Demon Slayer

One of your parents was a renowned demon slayer.

Benefit: You receive a +2 morale bonus to all attacks and damage rolls against evil outsiders.

Drawback: You suffer a -2 penalty to all saves against good outsiders.

Dream Haunted

You frequently have nightmares of bizarre and alien visions causing you too frequently loose sleep. The dreams have occasionally been prophetic but are commonly just annoying.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus to resist fatigue, exhaustion and *sleep* spell effects.

Drawback: You receive a -2 on any kind of Knowledge or Concentration check.

Gypsy Blood

Your gypsy heritage has given you a penchant for magic and getting what you want. However, other people often mistrust you because of that gypsy reputation.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on two of the following skills: Bluff, Intimidate, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), Spellcraft, and Use Magic Device. You also gain a +1 bonus on charisma checks made to influence other gypsies.

Drawback: You suffer a -1 penalty to all charisma checks against non-gypsies.

Noble Blood

One of your ancestors was a noble and you are somehow distantly related to one of the old noble family's of Caldera. Once you learned of your noble heritage you have never forgotten and tend to look down on the common folk.

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Benefit: You start play with a masterwork melee weapon of your choice and you also gain a +2 bonus to charisma checks made to influence nobles.

Drawback: You have a -1 penalty to all charisma checks made to influence commoners.

Planetouched

You are descended from a lawful outsider.

Benefit: Regardless of your actual alignment, spells and spell-like abilities with the law descriptor treat you as if your alignment were lawful. Magic items are similarly fooled.

Drawback: Regardless of your actual alignment, spells and spell-like abilities with the law descriptor treat you as if your alignment were lawful. Magic items are similarly fooled.

Touched by the Far-Plane

Some people think you're eccentric. Others think you're a little crazy.

Benefit: Your mind is disorganized and chaotic. You gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws against mind-affecting effects.

Drawback: Your inability to concentrate for long makes you suffer a -1 penalty on all wisdom-based skill checks.

Backgrounds

All characters are expected to have at least a vague background explaining their life up to the beginning of the game. This background should include one contact that the character has as well as how the character came to live in the mining village of Redgorge and join forces with the other characters in the party.

The character's moral outlook and goals in life should be decided as well as a plan on how they will achieve those goals during their careers. These goals can be anything from dying rich to becoming a paragon of some elite prestige class. These goals, obviously, may change during the course of the game.

New Feats

These feats can be taken in addition to those listed in the *Player's Handbook*.

Ballista Proficiency

You have trained in ballista operation.

Benefit: You treat ballistae as proficient weapons.

Special: A fighter may select Ballista Proficiency as one of his fighter feats.

Battle Caster

Building on your warrior training you are able to cast deftly through armor.

Prerequisite: Armor Proficiency (Light or Medium)

Benefit: You are able to ignore the chance of arcane spell failure when you are wearing light or medium armor.

Normal: A spellcaster must roll for spell failure when wearing bulky armor.

Special: A dual classed fighter may select Battle Caster as one of his fighter feats.

Brachiation

You can swing through the trees like a monkey.

Prerequisite: Climb 4 ranks, Jump 4 ranks.

Benefit: You can move through wooded areas at your base land speed, ignoring any movement penalty due to terrain. You must be at least 20 feet from the ground to use this feat. This feat only works in medium and dense forests.

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General Feats	Prerequisite	Benefit
Ballista Proficiency	-	Proficiency with ballistae
Battle Caster	Armor Proficiency (Light or Medium)	You are able to ignore the chance of arcane spell failure when you are wearing light or medium armor
Imp. Battle Caster	Armor Proficiency (Heavy)	You are able to ignore the chance of arcane spell failure when you are wearing heavy armor
Brachiation	Climb 4 ranks, Jump 4 ranks	Swing through the trees like Tarzan
Brutal Throw	-	Add Str to thrown attacks
Power Throw	Brutal Throw, Power Attack	Apply Power Attack to thrown attacks
Extra Contacts	Cha 11	Increase max contacts by 4
Faster Healing	Base Fort save +5	Heal faster than normal
Guerilla Scout	-	+1 Initiative, Listen and Spot become class skills, or +1 to Listen and Spot
Guerilla Warrior	-	Reduce Armor Check penalties by 1, Hide and Move Silently become class Skills, or +1 to Hide and Move Silently
Swift Step	-	Plus 5' to Speed
Throw Anything	Dex 15, Weapon Proficiency, BAB +2	Throw non-ranged weapons as ranged weapons

Brutal Throw

You have learned to hurl weapons to deadly effect.

Benefit: You can add your Strength modifier (instead of your Dexterity modifier) to attack rolls with thrown weapons.

Normal: A character attacking with a ranged weapon adds his Dexterity modifier to the attack roll.

Special: A fighter may select Brutal Throw as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Extra Contacts

You make connections and alliances easily.

Prerequisite: Cha 11

Benefit: Increase your maximum number of contacts by four.

Normal: Without this feat, a character is normally limited to a number of contacts equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum 1).

Special: You can take the Extra Contacts feat multiple times. Its effects stack. Each time you take the feat, you add another four to your maximum number of contacts.

Faster Healing

You recover faster than normal.

Prerequisite: Base Fortitude save bonus of +5.

Benefit: You recover lost hit points and lost ability score points faster than you normally would. Consult the following table for improved healing times.

Hit Point Recovery

	Feat	Feat w/ Heal	Normal	Normal w/ Heal
Strenuous Activity	1	2	0	1
Light Activity	1.5	3	1	2
Complete Bed Rest	2	4	1.5	3

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Ability Score Recovery

	Feat	Feat w/ Heal	Normal	Normal w/ Heal
Strenuous Activity	2	3	0	0
Light Activity	2	3	1	2
Complete Bed Rest	2	3	2	4

Guerilla Scout

You know how to use your senses to greater effect.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to Initiative checks. Listen and Spot are treated as class skills for the purposes of spending ranks and maximum number of ranks available regardless of your class. If these skills are already class skills you receive a +1 bonus to all checks when using those skills.

Guerilla Warrior

You know how to move stealthily even when armored.

Benefit: When you are wearing light or medium armor, reduce the armor check penalty by 1 (minimum 0). Hide and Move Silently are treated as class skills for the purposes of spending ranks and maximum number of ranks available regardless of your class. If these skills are already class skills you receive a +1 bonus to all checks when using those skills.

Improved Battle Caster

Building on your warrior training you are able to cast deftly through armor.

Prerequisite: Armor Proficiency (Heavy), Battle Caster

Benefit: You are able to ignore the chance of arcane spell failure when you are wearing heavy armor.

Normal: A spellcaster must roll for spell failure when wearing bulky armor.

Special: A dual classed fighter may select Improved Battle Caster as one of his fighter feats.

Power Throw

You have learned to hurl weapons to deadly effect.

Prerequisite: Str 13, Brutal Throw, Power Attack

Benefit: On your turn, before making attack rolls, you can choose to add the benefits of Power Attack to attacks made with thrown weapons.

Special: A fighter may select Power Throw as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Swift Step

You have learned to move faster than normal.

Benefit: Your base land speed is increased by 5ft.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times and its benefits stack.

Throw Anything

In your hands any weapon becomes a deadly ranged weapon.

Prerequisite: Dex 15, proficiency with weapon, base attack bonus +2.

Benefit: You can throw a melee weapons you are proficient with as if it were a ranged weapon. The range on weapons used in conjunction with this feat is 10ft.

Normal: You can't throw a melee weapon without taking a -4 penalty unless it has a range increment, such as a hand axe or dagger.

Background Feats

These feats all relate to a character's upbringing and must relate somehow to their background. Some of these feats are available only to 1st level characters.

Artist

You come from a culture in which the arts, philosophy and music have a prominent place in society.

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Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Perform checks and to one Craft skill that involves art (your choice) such as calligraphy, painting, sculpture or weaving.

Background Feats	Prerequisite	Benefit
Artist	-	+2 Perform and Craft (your choice)
Blooded	-	+2 Initiative, +2 Spot
Bullheaded	-	+1 Will save, +1 Intimidate
Cosmopolitan	-	+2 Knowledge (your choice) and that skill becomes a class skill
Courteous Magocracy	-	+2 Diplomacy and Spellcraft
Discipline	-	+1 Will saves, +2 Concentration
Education	1 st level	+1 Knowledge (all), Knowledge (all) becomes class skill
Forester	-	+2 Heal and Survival
Horse Nomad	-	Weapon proficiency with composite short bow, +2 Ride
Luck of Heroes	-	+1 on all saving throws
Mercantile Background	-	+2 Appraise, +2 Craft (your choice) or Profession (your choice)
Militia	-	Proficiency with leather armor, longspear, longbow and short sword
Mind Over Body	1 st level	Add Int mod to hp instead of Con, +1 hp with every metamagic feat
Resist Poison	1 st level	+4 Fort saves vs poison
Saddleback	-	+4 Ride
Silver Palm	-	+2 Appraise and Bluff
Stealthy	-	+2 Hide and Move Silently
Street Smart	-	+2 Bluff and Gather Information
Strong Soul	-	+1 Fort and Will, +1 saves vs energy draining and death effects
Survivor	-	+1 Fort saves, +2 Survival
Thug	-	+2 Initiative, +2 Intimidate
Thunder Twin	1 st level	+2 Cha-based checks, see description
Treetopper	-	+2 Climb, keep Dex bonus to AC and no +2 for foes while climbing

Blooded

You know what it means to fight for your life, and the value of quick wits and quicker reactions when blades are bared and deadly spells chanted. Enemies find it difficult to catch you off guard.

Benefit: You gain a +2 to Initiative and +2 to all Spot checks.

Bullheaded

The stubbornness and determination of your kind is legendary. You are exceptionally headstrong and difficult to sway from your intended course.

Benefit: You receive a +1 bonus on Will saves and a +1 bonus on Intimidate checks.

Cosmopolitan

Your exposure to the thousand forking paths of the city has taught you things you normally never would have uncovered.

Benefit: Choose a nonexclusive skill you do not have as a class skill. You gain a +2 bonus on all checks with that skill and that skill is always considered a class skill for you.

Special: This feat may be taken multiple times but its benefits do not stack. If you take this feat multiple times its benefits apply to a new skill.

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Courteous Magocracy

You were raised in a culture where mages held authority. Where spellcasters are common, cautious courtesy is the norm and everyone has an eye for magical goods.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on Diplomacy and Spellcraft checks.

Discipline

Your people are admired for their single-minded determination and clarity of purpose. You are difficult to distract by spell or blow.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Will saves and a +2 bonus on Concentration checks.

Education

Some lands hold the pen in higher regard than the sword. In your youth you received the benefit of several years of more or less formal schooling.

Benefit: All Knowledge skills are class skill for you. You get a +1 bonus on all skill checks with any two Knowledge skills of your choice.

Special: You may only select this feat at 1st level.

Forester

You are knowledgeable about the secrets of the forest and wise in its ways.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on all Heal and Survival checks.

Horse Nomad

You have been raised in a culture that relies on riding and shooting for survival.

Benefit: You treat the composite short bow as a proficient weapon and you gain a +2 on Ride checks.

Luck of Heroes

Your land is known for producing heroes. Through pluck, determination and resilience, your people survive when no one expects them to come through.

Benefit: You receive a +1 luck bonus on all saving throws.

Mercantile Background

You come from a family that excels at a particular trade and knows well the value of any kind of trade good or commodity.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Appraise checks and a +2 bonus on skill checks in one Craft or Profession skill of your choice.

Militia

You have served in a local militia, training in weapons suitable for use on the battlefield.

Benefit: You gain automatic proficiency with leather armor, longspear, longbow and short sword regardless of class.

Mind Over Body

The arcane spellcasters and psions of some lands have learned to overcome the frailties of the body with the unyielding power of the mind.

Benefit: You may use your Intelligence modifier instead of your Constitution modifier to determine bonus hit points. You gain +1 bonus hit point every time you gain a metamagic or metapsionic feat.

Special: You may only select this feat at 1st level.

Resist Poison

Over years, some among your people slowly expose themselves to poisons in controlled dosages in order to build up immunity to their effects. A few are thereby weakened but the strong adjust.

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Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves to resist poison.
Special: You may only select this feat at 1st level.

Saddleback

Your people are as comfortable riding as walking.
Benefit: You receive a +4 bonus on all Ride checks.

Silver Palm

Your culture is based on haggling and the art of the deal.
Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Appraise and Bluff checks.

Stealthy

Your people are known for their stealthiness.
Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Hide and Move Silently checks.

Street Smart

You have learned how to keep informed, ask questions, and interact with the underworld without raising suspicions.
Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Gather Information checks.

Strong Soul

The souls of your people are strong and difficult to separate from their bodies.
Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on all Fortitude and Will saves and an additional +1 bonus on all saves to resist energy draining and death effects.

Survivor

Your people thrive in regions that others find uninhabitable, and excel at uncovering the secrets of the wilderness and surviving to tell the tale.
Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on all Fortitude saves and a +2 on all Survival checks.

Thug

You know how to get the jump on the competition and push other people around. While others debate, you act.
Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Initiative checks and a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks.

Thunder Twin

You have one or more twins, fraternal or identical, that you share a deep connection with.
Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on all Charisma-based checks. You may detect the direction of your twin, if he or she is alive, on the same plane, and you succeed at an Intuit Direction check (DC 15) or Wisdom check if you do not have the skill. A failure on this check gives no information. You may retry once per round as a standard action.
Special: You may only select this feat at 1st level.

Treetopper

Your people are at home in the trees and high places, daring falls that paralyze most other folk in abject terror.
Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on all Climb checks. You do not lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class or give your attacker a +2 bonus when you are attacked while climbing.

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Appendix I: Drow – Dark Elves

Feared and reviled throughout the Lands Above, the drow (or dark elves) are perhaps the most numerous, powerful, and widespread of the Underdark's native peoples. The majority of the dark elves live in city states ruled by various noble Houses. Each House commands its own army of fearless drow soldiers, cunning wizards, and zealous priestesses, as well as large contingents of slave soldiers, such as bugbears, ogres and minotaurs. In fact, half to two-thirds of any drow city's population consists of humanoid slaves and rabble, all of whom are subject to the cruelty and whims of any passing dark elf.

Dark elf city states lie below dozens of surface realms, often unbeknownst to the upperworlders who live above them. The rulers of some drow cities prefer to leave the surface races alone and turn their attention toward gaining power through the endless scheming and feuding of the noble Houses. Others, however, view the surface lands as theirs to pillage and plunder whenever they choose.

Personality: Most drow are cruel, arrogant, and hedonistic. Their eternal game of advancement at the expense of others, which is encouraged by the spider goddess herself, has transformed the world of the dark elves into a race of scheming backstabbers eager to increase their own station by pulling down those ahead of them and crushing their inferiors underfoot. Drow trust no one and nothing, and most are incapable of compassion, kindness, or love. Many dark elves are actively murderous and delight in the giving of pain.

While dark elves neither honor their promises nor maintain personally loyalties once it becomes inconvenient to do so, their pride lends them a certain sense of style and an appreciation of subtlety. Drow can be courteous and urbane, even to deadly rivals. They enjoy surrounding themselves with things of beauty, giving hardly a thought to cost. Any drow city features breathtaking architecture and elegant revels marked by dark and delicious entertainments, but only a fool would lower his guard in such an environment.

Physical Description: The skin of a drow can be any shade from dark grey to polished obsidian. His hair can be pale yellow, silver, or white, and his eyes can be almost any color, including blood red.

Drow are short and slender compared to surface elves, but are strong for their size. Most dark elves—especially nobles—are strikingly handsome individuals; Lolth does not favor meek, plain, or unassuming worshipers.

Relations: Drow regard all other races as inferior. Some they view as potential slaves, others as deadly vermin to be exterminated. None, however, are considered truly equal to the dark elves. Drow maintain a grudging respect for duergar and mind flayers, since the grey dwarves and illithids also built powerful cities and have demonstrated strength to stand up to repeated assaults from the dark elves. Though they despise humans and all other surface folk as weak creatures, the drow save their true venom for surface elves. The dark elves hate their kinfolk with a blind passion and seize any chance to strike at their ancient enemies.

Alignment: The great majority of drow are evil through and through, and most tend toward the chaotic end of the spectrum. In general, drow believe in doing what they want to do, when they want to do it. Drow who turn to good are few and far between, but such can become powerful champions against tyranny and cruelty.

Religion: Most drow cities are dominated by priestesses of Lolth, the Spider Queen. As the special patron and protector of the dark elves, Lolth demands abject obedience and unflinching ruthlessness from her followers.

Drow who have turned away from the Spider Queen are rare, but they do exist. Good-aligned drow often worship Solanis, the Life Bringer. Evil drow who choose not to subject themselves to Lolth's tyranny often worship Narathotek and his vile godlings.

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Languages: Drow speak Undercommon and a dialect of Ancient Elven that features many words and constructions borrowed from their Underdark neighbors. They also have a unique sign language (Drow Sign) that permits silent communication at a range up to 120 feet. Drow Sign is not an automatic language for drow; a dark elf character must learn it either by designating it as one of his bonus languages or by acquiring it normally via the Speak languages skill.

Names: Drow names often feature double letters and are usually pleasing to the ear.

Male Names: Belgos, Bhintel, Elkanter, Houndaer, Kelnozz, Malaggar, Ryltar, Szordrin, Vorn.

Female Names: Alaniira, Charinida, Drisinil, Faeryl, Ilivarra, Irae, Myrymma, Pellanistra, Xune, Zarra.

Surnames: Dhuunyl, Filifar, Lhalabar, Pharn, Tlin'orzza, Xarann, Yvarragh.

Adventurers: The vicissitudes of House fortunes make adventuring an attractive profession for many drow. Some drow foreswear their race's cruel ways and seek to do good in the world. Others remain evil, using adventuring as a means of accumulating the power and magic necessary to avenge themselves upon the rivals who brought them low.

Drow Racial Traits

+2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma. Drow are swift and agile physically but lack the endurance of other races. Their hard life has led to a tendency toward swift thinking and charming personalities.

Medium size. Drow have no bonuses or penalties due to their size.

A drow's base land speed is 30 feet.

Immunities (Ex): A drow is immune to magic *sleep* spells and effects.

Racial Bonuses: A drow has a +2 racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells and effects, a +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities, and a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks. A drow who merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if he were actively looking for the door.

Darkvision: A drow has darkvision out to 120 feet.

Spell Resistance: A drow has spell resistance equal to 11+class level.

Spell-Like Abilities: A drow with an intelligence score of 13 or higher can use the following spell-like abilities. 1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire*. Caster level equals drow's class level.

Light Blindness (Ex): An abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds drow for 1 round. In subsequent rounds, the drow are dazzled as long as they remain in the affected area.

Weapon Proficiency: A drow receives Martial Weapon Proficiency (rapier), Martial Weapon Proficiency (short sword) and Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow) as bonus feats.

Automatic Languages: Undercommon and Drow. Bonus Languages: Common and Regional.

Favored Class: Cleric (female) or wizard (male).

Level Adjustment: +2.

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Appendix II: Gestalt Characters

In this high-powered campaign variant, characters essentially take two classes at every level, choosing the best aspects of each. The process is similar to multiclassing, except that characters gain the full benefits of each class at each level. If the two classes you choose have aspects that overlap (such as Hit Dice, attack progression, saves, and class features common to more than one class), you choose the better aspect. The gestalt character retains all aspects that don't overlap.

The gestalt character variant is particularly effective if you have three or fewer players in your group, or if your players enjoy multiclassing and want characters with truly prodigious powers. This variant works only if every PC in the campaign uses it, and it results in complicated characters who may overwhelm newer players with an abundance of options.

Building A Gestalt Character

To make a 1st-level gestalt character, choose two standard classes. Build your character according to the following guidelines.

Hit Dice: Choose the larger Hit Die. A monk/sorcerer would use d8 as her Hit Die and have 8 hit points (plus Constitution modifier) at 1st level, for example.

Base Attack Bonus: Choose the better progression from the two classes.

Base Saving Throw Bonuses: For each save bonus, choose the better progression from the two classes. For example, a 1st-level gestalt fighter/wizard would have base saving throw bonuses of Fortitude +2, Reflex +0, Will +2—taking the good Fortitude save from the fighter class and the good Will save from the wizard class.

Class Skills: Take the number of skill points gained per level from whichever class grants more skill points, and consider any skill on either class list as a class skill for the gestalt character. For example, a gestalt barbarian/bard would gain skill points per level equal to 6 + Int modifier (and have four times this amount at 1st level), and can purchase skills from both the barbarian and bard lists as class skills.

Class Features: A gestalt character gains the class features of both classes. A 1st-level gestalt rogue/cleric, for example, gets sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding, 1st-level cleric spells, and the ability to turn or rebuke undead. Class- and ability-based restrictions (such as arcane spell failure chance and a druid's prohibition on wearing metal armor) apply normally to a gestalt character, no matter what the other class is.

A gestalt character follows a similar procedure when he attains 2nd and subsequent levels. Each time he gains a new level, he chooses two classes, takes the best aspects of each, and applies them to his characteristics. A few caveats apply, however.

Class features that two classes share (such as uncanny dodge) accrue at the rate of the faster class.

Gestalt characters with more than one spellcasting class keep track of their spells per day separately.

A gestalt character can't combine two prestige classes at any level, although it's okay to combine a prestige class and a regular class. Prestige classes that are essentially class combinations—such as the arcane trickster, mystic theurge, and eldritch knight—should be prohibited if you're using gestalt classes, because they unduly complicate the game balance of what's already a high-powered variant. Because it's possible for gestalt characters to qualify for prestige classes earlier than normal, the game master is entirely justified in toughening the prerequisites of a prestige class so it's available only after 5th level, even for gestalt characters.

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Gestalt Combinations

Because the player of a gestalt character chooses two classes at every level, the possibilities for gestalt characters are almost limitless. The following combinations are particularly potent.

Barbarian/Bard: The “bardarian” has two choices in a battle: use a mix of party-aiding spells and attacks, or rage and use inspirational music to urge the rest of the party on as he attacks. Only the bardic music abilities that actually require a Perform check (such as countersong and fascinate) are off limits during a rage. Neither barbarians nor bards wear heavy armor, so gear selection is straightforward.

Barbarian/Wizard: The barbarian brings that d12 Hit Die to the table, and that’s almost all that matters to the fragile wizard. A good Fortitude save is sure to save the gestalt character’s hide a few times, and a high-Intelligence character benefits greatly from the union of two disparate class skill lists. And as a bonus, you’re literate at 1st level. The only downside? You can’t cast spells in a rage. This combination deliberately tweaks the stereotypes of both classes, so you’ll want to spend some time thinking about your character’s backstory.

Cleric/Sorcerer: This gestalt combination is effectively the mystic theurge prestige class on steroids. You can load up on combat spells as a sorcerer, then prepare utility and protective spells as a cleric—which you can always spontaneously cast as healing spells if you like. As a side benefit, your high Charisma helps both your arcane spellcasting and your ability to turn undead.

Druid/Ranger: With the ranger’s base attack bonus, you’ll be a more effective combatant when you wild shape into a predator. The extra skills of a ranger are welcome, and if you choose the archery combat style, you’ll be ready for both ranged combat and an up-close fight in wild shape form.

Fighter/Ranger: If you like feats, this is the class for you. Most fighters must choose whether to split their feats between melee and ranged combat or emphasize one kind of attack at the expense of the other. The fighter/ranger can have it both ways, relying on the fighter bonus feats to improve melee attacks and the ranger’s combat style, improved combat style, and combat style mastery to pick up three good archery feats.

Fighter/Rogue: Every rogue likes to get behind the enemy and dish out sneak attack damage. With this gestalt combination, that trick gets even better because you have the hit points and Armor Class to survive toe-to-toe with the enemy, you’ll hit more often, and you get more attacks, which just means more chances to pick up a fistful of d6s. You can wear heavy armor, but you’ll degrade some of your better skills and you’ll lose access to evasion.

Monk/Cleric: You’ll probably give up your armor, but you can run around the battlefield in a blur, healing your comrades and putting the hurt on the bad guys with such combinations as stunning fist with an inflict serious wounds spell attached. Once you draw up your new character, note how many great cleric spells have a range of touch. The same Wisdom score that drives your spellcasting also improves your Armor Class.

Monk/Sorcerer and Monk/Wizard: With three good saves, more hit points, and the best unarmored Armor Class, the monk covers up many of the weak points of the sorcerer or wizard. The only downside is that the important ability scores for sorcerers and wizards—Charisma and Intelligence—are the two ability scores that the monk cares least about. This can be a tough combination to pull off, especially if you’re using point-based ability score generation.

Paladin/Sorcerer: Charisma does the heavy lifting for this gestalt combination. Why? Two words: divine grace. Like all sorcerers, you’ll send your Charisma score into the stratosphere with the every-four-levels improvement and the best cloak of Charisma you can afford. Every time you get more spells, your saving throws improve as well. The downside? You can’t wear armor like most paladins.

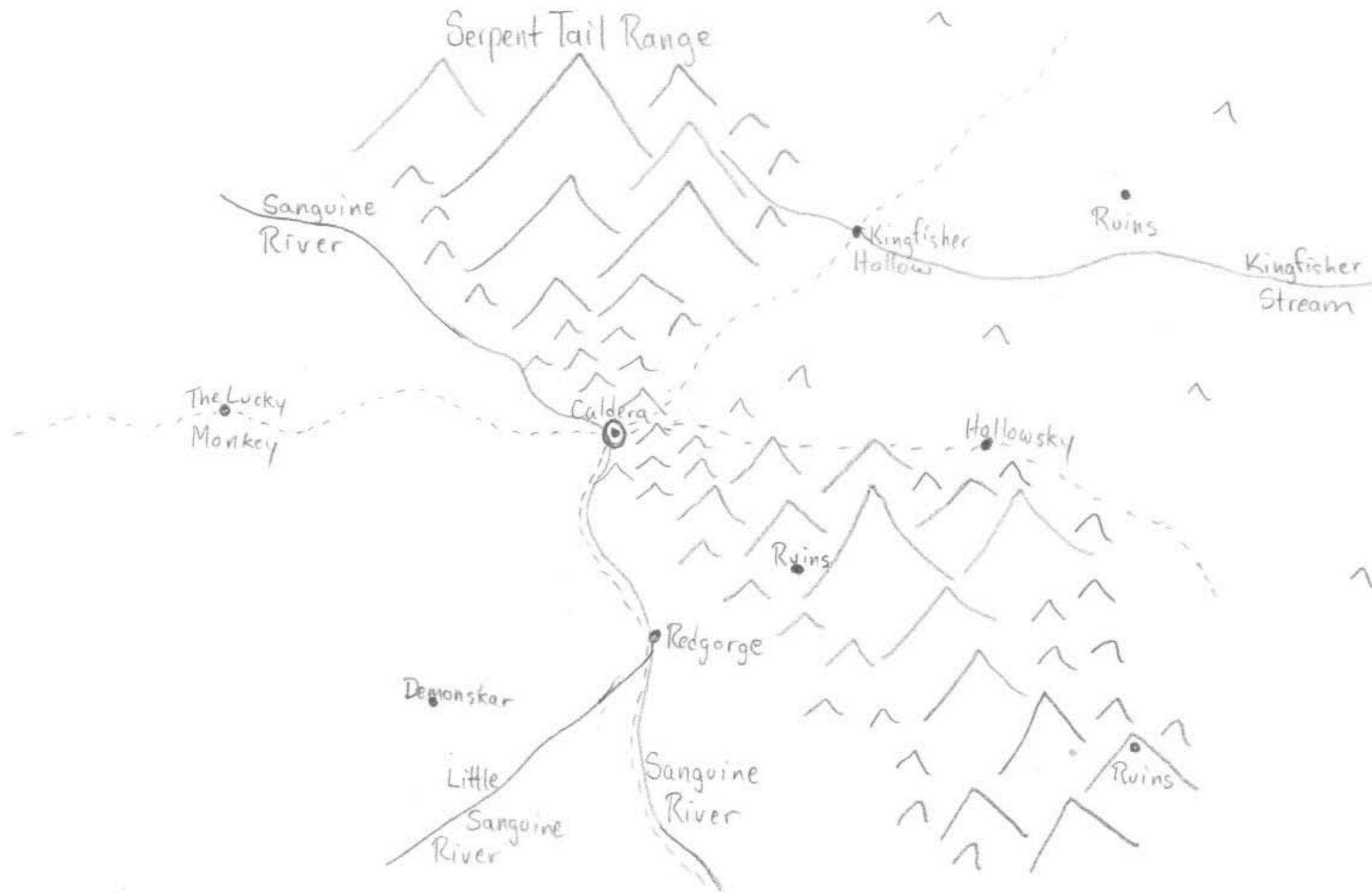
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Sorcerer/Wizard: Unlike most gestalt characters, your hit points, Armor Class, base attack bonus, and saving throws aren't any better than a standard sorcerer or wizard. But oh, the spells you can cast! Unlike a standard arcane spellcaster, you can afford to use your highest-level spells in most of your serious fights. It's a good idea to use your sorcerer slots on combat spells (such as the ubiquitous fireball) and the occasional defense or utility spell (perhaps mage armor or haste). Then you can use your wizard slots for spells that are great against specific foes (such as dismissal) or life-savers in specific situations (gaseous form). You can gamble a little more with your wizard spell selection because you know you have all those useful sorcerer spells backing you up.





The City of Caldera



Caldera Environs

The Village of REDGORGE



KEY

- 1. Redhead Miner's Inn
- 2. Town Hall
- 3. Bailiff's Office
- 4. Shrine of Shrelana

-  = Occupied Building
-  = Abandoned Building

