

d12 Monthly

INNS & TAVERNS
ISSUE

Issue 24
June, 2023

IN FROM THE COLD

ENTERTAINMENT & FARE
IN TAVERNS & INNS

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

JUST FOR BARDS &
OTHER ENTERTAINERS

A DIFFERENT KIND OF BARD

The Forgotten Tavern: A new adventure location



d12 Monthly is a helpful resource for fantasy roleplayers.

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The Inns & Taverns

Issue

Inns and taverns always feature in the games we play. Whether it's staying at an inn overnight or sitting in a tavern, waiting for the next adventure to burst through the door.

Inns and taverns can be more than just a place to stay between adventures. They can be the adventure if you so choose.

The best thing about inns and taverns though, is the opportunity to roleplay. For players to really get to know the locals, as well as their own characters.

This isn't something to gloss over.

So, grab a chair, order some fine fare, and, as always, happy gaming!

- Russ from YUMDM

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About Me

I have been roleplaying for over 30 years and DMing for most of those. I have played over 50 different roleplaying games, but my first love is fantasy - it's like coming home.

Other TTRPGs I like: WEG D6 Star Wars, Feng Shui RPG, & Warhammer FRP.

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Tavern Talk

Mediaeval Taverns & Inns



Inns

Inns, and other lodgings, were usually quite plentiful (even in our own world) during the mediaeval period. They were located in large towns and cities, or along roadsides where weary travellers would rest overnight.

There are several different types of lodgings you can add to your campaign world that will add some depth and character opportunities to your game.

Hospices

These were institutions run by religious orders, such as monasteries or abbeys, which offered lodging to travellers, pilgrims, and the sick. They provided a place to rest, food, and sometimes medical care.

Coaching Inns

These inns catered to travellers using horse-drawn coaches or carriages. They were situated along major roads and provided stabling for horses, food, drink, and lodging for the travellers.

Monastic Guesthouses

Monasteries often had guesthouses or hostels where travellers, especially pilgrims, could find shelter. These guesthouses offered a place to rest, meals, and spiritual support.

Urban Inns

In cities and towns, there were inns that catered to both local and travelling guests. These establishments provided lodging, meals, and sometimes entertainment to their patrons.

Roadside Inns

Found along highways and trade routes, roadside inns offered accommodation and services to travellers. They were popular among merchants, pilgrims, and other journeying individuals.

Castle or Manor House Lodgings

Castles and manor houses occasionally accommodated noble guests, providing them with lodging and hospitality during their travels.

Pilgrim Hostels

Along major pilgrimage routes, hostels were established to provide shelter specifically for pilgrims. These were

usually simple accommodations run by religious orders or local communities.

Taverns

Fantasy mediaeval taverns are establishments that provided food, drink, and entertainment for locals and travellers alike.

Taverns can differ wildly based on what time period your fantasy campaign emulates, as well as regional and cultural differences, but below is a general guide you can use when designing your taverns.

Purpose

Taverns generally serve as social hubs where people gather to eat, drink, socialise, and sometimes even conduct business.

They are important meeting places for both locals and travellers, offering respite and entertainment.

Taverns are commonly found in cities, towns, and along major trade routes, catering to a diverse clientele that includes merchants, craftsmen, soldiers, pilgrims, and sometimes even nobles.

Appearance

The physical appearance and layout of mediaeval taverns varied.

Some are simple and humble, consisting of a single room with a large communal table, benches, and a fireplace for warmth and cooking.

Others are more elaborate, featuring multiple rooms, private booths, and separate areas for drinking and dining.

The overall atmosphere is often lively and bustling, filled with chatter, music, and sometimes even performances by various entertainers (see *Tonight's Entertainment* article in this issue for ideas for various forms of tavern entertainment).

Fare

Taverns usually offer a range of food and drink options. Ale, mead, and wine were the most commonly consumed beverages, as water was often unsafe to drink.

The food available in taverns depends on their location and resources, but generally includes hearty fare like roasted meats, stews, pottage, bread, and cheese.

Meals were usually simple and affordable, catering to the average person's tastes and budget; although more up-market taverns could have more exotic and expensive fare.

Locations

While taverns were relatively common, their prevalence varied across different regions.

In densely populated areas and busy trading centres, taverns are more abundant, as they play a vital role in facilitating commerce, offering a venue for social interaction, and a place to quench a parched throat.

However, in rural or remote areas, taverns are scarce or absent altogether, as populations were smaller, and other social institutions like manor houses or monasteries fulfil similar functions.

Variations

A couple of variations of the tavern could also be used in your campaign world.

Alehouses

Alehouses, as the name suggests, focus more on serving ale and similar beverages.

They are typically smaller establishments than your average tavern, and are often run by alewives (women who brew and sell their own ale).

Alehouses are places where locals can gather to drink, socialise, and sometimes engage in gambling or other forms of entertainment. They usually serve simple fare, if any.

Public Houses

Public houses, similar to alehouses, are establishments that serve alcoholic beverages.

They were particularly common in England in our real world.

Public houses are more focused on the locals, being primarily communal meeting places where people from the neighbourhood could gather, share news and gossip, and enjoy a drink.

They played a significant role in fostering a sense of community and, unlike taverns,

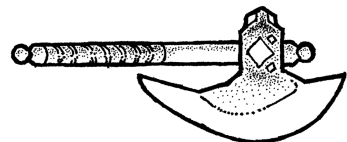
are often found in villages and other smaller settlements.



Quality

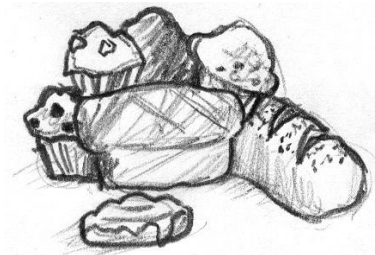
It's important to note that the availability and quality of inns and taverns can vary greatly.

These establishments can range from small and dismal, to humble and basic, to more luxurious establishments, depending on their location, purpose, and the resources available.



That's A Fare Deal

Food & Drink Served at Inns & Taverns



Add a little depth to your world with what fare the PCs will be ordering while waiting for their next big adventure.

Food

Serve your PCs a hardy meal. The quality and availability of these meals may differ across regions and quality of the tavern. Use these to come up with some menu items in the local inn or tavern.

Pottage

Pottage is a staple dish in many inns. It is a thick and hearty stew made with a mixture of vegetables, grains, and sometimes meat.

The ingredients varied depending on what was available and could include onions, carrots, cabbage, peas, beans, barley, and meat like beef, pork, or poultry.

Roast Meat

Roast meat, such as beef, pork, lamb, or poultry, is a common and popular dish in taverns. The meat is cooked over an open

fire or on a spit and served with accompanying sauces or gravies.

Pies

Pies are a popular tavern dish, both savoury and sweet. Savoury pies are filled with ingredients like minced or diced meat (such as beef or venison), vegetables, herbs, and spices. Sweet pies are filled with fruits, such as apples, pears, or berries, often sweetened with honey.

Stews and Casseroles

Stews and casseroles are commonly served in taverns. These dishes are made by simmering meat, vegetables, and legumes in a flavorful broth or sauce.

Game Meats

Venison, rabbit, and other game meats are frequently served in taverns, especially in regions with forests where hunting is prevalent. These meats are typically roasted, grilled, or stewed.

Fish and Seafood

Depending on the proximity to water, taverns near coastal regions or rivers might offer fish and seafood dishes. Common options included salted fish, freshwater fish, oysters, mussels, and shellfish.

Sausages and Cured Meats

Various types of sausages and cured meats are often served. These include sausages made from pork, beef, or game, as well as cured hams, and smoked meats.

Bread and Cheese

Bread is a staple food in taverns, and is often served to accompany meals. Or as a meal by themselves with cheese, both hard and soft varieties, offered as well.

Tarts and Pastries

Taverns serve tarts and pastries as desserts or sweet treats. These could include fruit tarts, custard tarts, almond pastries, and honey-soaked pastries.

Alehouse Stew

Specifically associated with taverns, the "alehouse stew" is a dish made by simmering ale or beer with various ingredients such as meat, vegetables, and herbs. It is a hearty one-pot dish.

Drinks

And something to wash that meal down. The availability and popularity of these drinks could vary across different regions and social classes in your campaign world.

Ale

Ale is one of the most common and popular drinks. It is made from fermented grains, such as barley, and is usually flavoured with herbs, spices, or fruits.

Mead

Mead is a fermented beverage made from honey. It is sweet and often has a high alcohol content.

Wine

Wine, especially red wine, is more commonly available to the upper classes.

Cider

Cider, made from fermented apples, is commonly drunk, especially in regions where apples are abundant.

Mulled Wine

Mulled wine, also known as spiced wine, is a popular winter drink. Red wine is heated and flavoured with spices such as cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg, often sweetened with honey or sugar.

Hypocras

Hypocras is a spiced wine that in our world originated from the Ancient Greeks. It is made by infusing red or white wine with a mixture of spices, including cinnamon, ginger, cloves, and nutmeg.

Braggot

Braggot is a type of beer made from a mixture of malt and honey. It has a sweet flavour and is often served during special occasions or festivals.

Small Beer

Small beer is a low-alcohol beer made from the second or third runnings of a mash. It is typically weaker in flavour and alcohol content than regular ale or beer.

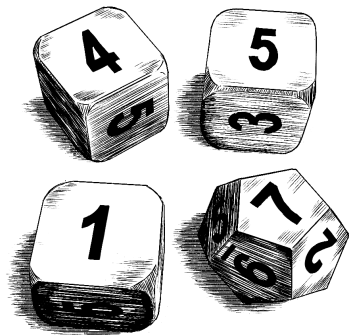
This was often drunk by peasants during meal breaks throughout the day.

Birch Sap

Birch sap, collected from birch trees, is sometimes fermented to create a mildly alcoholic beverage. It is consumed in areas where birch trees are plentiful.

Roll 'Em

Dice Games Played In Taverns



Grub Bundles

This is a game of pure luck.

History

It is said that a group of farmers came up with this game in the town of Hillstone - a town along the Trade Way - and was transported to the north and south of the Freelands via merchants along with their goods.

Rules

There are six rounds and each player takes turns in rolling 6D6 with the objective of gaining all the same number after three rolls apiece.

Each time the number needed comes up on a die it is placed to the side and the remaining dice are rolled.

The number needed starts at 1 for the first round, and goes up by one for each round (2 on the second, 3 on the third, etc).

Whoever gets the highest number of dice of the number required wins the round. If there is a draw between players, then each one rolls a single die and whoever rolls the number of that round first, wins.

If, at the end of all six rounds, two or more players have the same number of winning rounds, then another round is played to decide the winner.

Dragon's Hoard

Dragon's Hoard is a game of luck and risk.

History

The dwarves of Ashmount invented this game to occupy themselves between battles, and it is said the dice were made from the bones of their fallen enemies.

Rules

Players start with an initial score of zero. Each player then takes turns rolling three six-sided dice.

The goal is to collect the highest total score without rolling any "dragons" (rolls of 1).

After each roll, the player can choose to keep their current score or continue rolling.

If a player rolls any dragons, their turn ends, and their score for that round becomes zero.

There are usually three turns per game, but this can vary and is usually decided before the game starts. The player with the highest score at the end of the game wins.

Tonight's Entertainment

A List of Tavern Divertissements



Taverns often have shows and entertainment to keep the patrons there longer and drinking more.

Below are a list of performances that could be in a tavern on any given night.

Minstrel Performance

A skilled bard strums a lute and sings ballads of epic adventures, love, and tragedy, captivating the audience with their melodious voice and enchanting tales.

Juggling and Acrobatics

Agile performers juggle flaming torches, knives, and other objects, showcasing their dexterity and coordination. Acrobats perform breathtaking flips, twists, and balancing acts, leaving the crowd in awe.

Fortune Telling

A mysterious fortune teller with a crystal ball or a deck of tarot cards offers glimpses

into the future. Patrons line up to have their fortunes revealed, hoping for insights and guidance.

Storytelling

A skilled storyteller weaves fantastical tales of mythical creatures, legendary heroes, and ancient folklore. Their animated storytelling style keeps the audience engaged and transports them to far-off realms.

Drinking Games

Patrons participate in lively drinking games, challenging each other to contests of speed, accuracy, and endurance. Games like "Dwarven Ale Toss" or "Gnomish Pint Pyramid" bring raucous laughter and friendly competition.

Puppet Show

A puppeteer masterfully manipulates a cast of whimsical characters, entertaining the crowd with a comedic or dramatic performance. The puppets engage in witty banter, engage in daring adventures, or retell classic tales with a humorous twist.

Acting

A makeshift stage holds a few actors who wear coats, dresses, and wigs to entertain the crowd with parodies of the famous or local officials, raucous (of often ribald) comedies, or reenactments of famous adventures.



Song & Nature

Various Bards



Bards come in three broad types.

You can use these types in your campaign to show changes over the ages, or to showcase different types of bards in various nations, races, or environments.

For example, you could use traditional bards for elves only, mediaeval bards for humans, and minstrels for halflings.

Or you could have entertainers from one nation, mediaeval bards from another, and traditional bards in barbarian tribes.

The three broad types are: traditional bards, mediaeval bards, and entertainers, (plus a fourth - the jester - to round out the list).

Traditional Bards

These are your traditional Celtic bards of our real world. They use druidic magic and form the triumvirate along with the Druid and the Ovate (Shaman).

Mediaeval Bards

These bards are on the payroll of rulers of more organised and urban societies, like kings. They often form guilds. These bards are found in more urbanised nations.

Entertainers

Entertainers split into two main groups: the **troubadour** and the **minstrel**. The former being in the employ of nobles, while the latter were more travelling entertainers.

Jesters

A fourth possible class is that of the jester, who was in the employ of kings and other rulers, and who enjoyed many privileges for being so. They both entertained and informed the court.

The Classes

The OSE Advanced Player Guide does a pretty good job of showcasing the traditional bard, so I have focused my efforts on the mediaeval bard.

The entertainers and the jester may be better left to NPCs.

The mediaeval bard class is available to play instead of the traditional bard if allowed by the GM.

Mediaeval Bards

Requirements: INT 11

Prime requisite: CHA

Hit Dice: 1d6

Maximum level: 14

Armour: Leather and chain only

Weapons: Missile weapons, one-handed melee weapons

Languages: Alignment, Common

Mediaeval Bards are professional singers, musicians, and poets. As well as their personal artistic pursuits, they also composed verses and poems in honour of their Kings, lords & soldiers' achievements.

They celebrate victories, chant the laws of the nation, and give poetic genealogies and family histories. And they are repositories of legendary stories, songs and poetry.

Hereditary Privileges

Being employed by the rich and powerful has its advantages. Mediaeval bards receive a handsome payment each month from their king or lord, or the equivalent in gifts. The exact amount is dependent on the employer and the skill (ie level) of the bard, but 25GP/level would not be unreasonable.

Consular Immunity

Bard receive immunity from most laws, tariffs, and taxes from their home and

Mediaeval Bard Level Progression

Level	XP	HP	THAC0	Saves				
				D	W	P	B	S
1	0	D6	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15
2	2,000	2D6	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15
3	4,000	3D6	19 [0]	13	14	13	16	15
4	8,000	4D6	17 [+2]	13	14	13	16	15
5	16,000	5D6	17 [+2]	12	13	11	14	13
6	32,000	6D6	17 [+2]	12	13	11	14	13
7	64,000	7D6	14 [+5]	12	13	11	14	13
8	120,000	8D6	14 [+5]	12	13	11	14	13
9	240,000	9D6	14 [+5]	10	11	9	12	10
10	360,000	9D6+2*	12 [+7]	10	11	9	12	10
11	480,000	9D6+4*	12 [+7]	10	11	9	12	10
12	600,000	9D6+6*	12 [+7]	10	11	9	12	10
13	720,000	9D6+8*	10 [+9]	8	9	7	10	8
14	840,000	9D6+10*	10 [+9]	8	9	7	10	8

* Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

many civilised nations that recognise their employees right to rule.

Bardic Sound

By playing music, singing, reciting poetry, or performing any other oratorical act, the bard can produce magical effects on those in a 30-ft radius.

All effects last as long as the bard performs and for 3 rounds after the bard stops. While performing, the bard can fight but cannot cast spells.

Inspire Courage: Affected allies receive a +1 bonus to attack and weapon damage rolls, and a +2 bonus to saving throws against charm and fear effects.

Countersong: The bard uses their performance to counter magical effects that depend on sound or will charm. All within 30-ft are immune to these magical effects.

Fascinate: The bard uses their performance to cause creatures within 30-ft to sit quietly and listen to the performance. Any obvious threat, such as casting a spell, drawing a sword, or aiming, automatically breaks the effect.

Bardic Knowledge

From 2nd level, a bard has a 2-in-6 chance of knowing lore pertaining to heraldry, noble families, and their history, as well as monsters, magic items, or heroes of folktale or legend. This ability may be used to identify the nature and powers of magic items.

This increases by 1-in-6 each 4 levels obtained by the bard (3-in-6 at 5th, 4-in-6 at 10th, and 5-in-6 at 14th, which is the maximum obtainable).

Mediaeval Bardic Employer

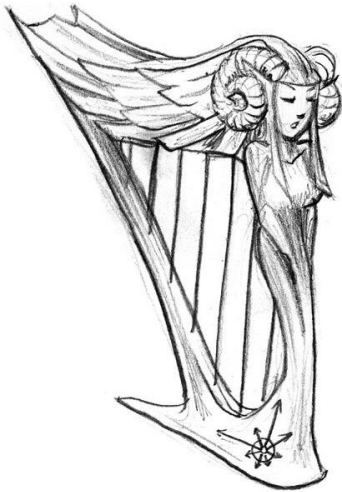
Mediaeval bards are usually employed by kings, lords, or other leaders, but you can also find them employed by monasteries as well.

Furthermore, they also had their own guild, which they could also be employed with. Check with your GM to see if either of these options are available.



Magic to My Ears

Magic Items for Bards



The following magical items cater specifically to bards, amplifying their musical abilities, enhancing their performances, and providing unique magical effects.

Melody's Lute

This enchanted lute resonates with magical power, enhancing the bard's musical abilities.

Game Effects: It grants a +4 bonus to performance checks and enhances spells related to sound or illusion (see *Issue 4 of d12 Monthly* for ways you can enhance spells easily using meta-magic).

Songbird's Amulet

This amulet emits a soft, melodious hum that inspires the bard and their allies.

Game Effects: It grants a +4 bonus (or Advantage) on charisma-based checks and saves to all allies who can hear it.

Echoing Boots

These boots create echoes when needed, which obfuscates the wearer's true position.

Game Effects: They grant a +4 bonus (or Advantage) on stealth checks. Additionally, once per day (long rest) the wearer gains the ability to cast the *Auditory Illusion* spell (*Ghost Sound* or equivalent).

Muse's Inspiration

This magical quill allows the bard to write enchanting poetry and music effortlessly.

Game Effect: Any composition written with the quill grants a +4 bonus (or Advantage) to performance checks.

Harmonic Chimes

When played, these chimes create a soothing melody that pacifies aggressive creatures.

Game Effect: They can be used to cast the *Calm Emotions* spell, enabling peaceful resolutions or diffusing tense situations.

Virtuoso's Cape

This elegant cape enhances the bard's stage presence, causing their performances to leave a lasting impact on the audience.

Game Effect: It grants a +4 bonus (or Advantage) on performance checks and allows the bard to cast the spell *Suggestion* once per day.

Enchanted Manuscript

This spellbook-like item contains a collection of arcane or divine spells tailored for bards.

Game Effect: The bard can cast an additional spell from the manuscript.

Serenade's Harp

This enchanted harp creates a mesmerising aura around the bard, captivating listeners and increasing their receptiveness.

Game Effect: It grants a +4 bonus (or advantage) on persuasion checks and allows the bard to cast the *Charm Person* spell once per day.

Crescendo Blade

This magical rapier resonates with musical energy, allowing the bard to channel their spells through their weapon attacks.

Game Effect: For each level of spell the bard uses, increase the damage by additional D4.

Melody's Veil

This enchanted veil conceals the bard's true identity and enhances their disguises.

Game Effect: It grants +4 bonus (or advantage) on deception checks and allows the bard to cast the *Disguise Self* spell once per day.

Familiar Faces

Tavern Patrons



Taverns are always filled with interesting non-player characters you can use to spice up downtime. Here is a list of NPCs who could frequent the tavern your PCs visit.

I use my MAP method of listing NPCs, adding in age and occupation too. See *Issue 0 of d12 Monthly* for more information on the MAP method.

Gideon the Gambler

Occupation: Professional gambler and cheat.

Age: 35

Motivation: To strike it rich and leave behind his life of grifting.

Appearance: Scruffy beard, greasy hair, always wearing a leather vest and gloves.

Personality: Charismatic conman.

Lirien the Bard

Occupation: Professional entertainer

Age: 27

Motivation: To make a name for herself as the most renowned bard in the realm.

Appearance: Long curly blonde hair, piercing blue eyes, and always carrying a lute.

Personality: Confident performer, who loves to entertain and inspire others.

Keth the Blacksmith

Occupation: Master blacksmith

Age: 42

Motivation: To create the finest weapons and armour in the land and pass on his craft to future generations.

Appearance: Broad-shouldered and muscular, with a thick black beard and calloused hands.

Personality: Gruff and straightforward.

Nessa the Barmaid

Occupation: Barmaid and waitress.

Age: 21

Motivation: To earn enough money to open her own tavern.

Appearance: Petite and curvy, with bright green eyes and a warm smile.

Personality: Friendly, but with a quick wit and sharp tongue.

Ryke the Mercenary

Occupation: Mercenary and bodyguard.

Age: 30

Motivation: To accumulate enough wealth to start a new life.

Appearance: Tall and muscular, with a shaved head and scars on his face and arms.

Personality: Cold and ruthless.

Elden the Alchemist

Occupation: Master alchemist and potion-maker.

Age: 50

Motivation: To discover new and powerful elixirs.

Appearance: Short and wiry, with thinning grey hair and spectacles.

Personality: Eccentric and reclusive.

Kaelin the Thief

Occupation: Professional thief and guild member

Age: 25

Motivation: To accumulate enough wealth and resources to retire to a life of luxury and comfort.

Appearance: Slender and agile, with a mop of curly brown hair and a mischievous grin.

Personality: Sneaky and cunning, with a penchant for pranks.

Tormot the Scholar

Occupation: Scholar and historian

Age: 47

Motivation: To uncover the mysteries of the past and contribute to the Known World's understanding of its history and culture.

Appearance: Tall and lanky, with a bald head and thick spectacles.

Personality: Bookish and studious, with a passion for uncovering hidden knowledge.

The Forgotten Tavern

Adventure Location

The old city had a famous tavern where adventurers drank, celebrating their victories or mourned their lost companions.

That was 250 years ago.

Background

Deep within the heart of the bustling city of Hedgehill, an abandoned tavern stands as a relic of a forgotten era.

Centuries ago, it was a lively establishment teeming with mirth. Now, it lies forgotten and shrouded in mystery.

The tavern was the epicentre of the city's destruction 150 years ago, caused by the activities of a cult.

A new city was built on top of the old. As new buildings went up, the old city was forgotten, buried beneath the new.

Just recently, the entrance to the old tavern was discovered, but those with long memories warn against entering.

Whispers have begun to circulate among the townsfolk, claiming that the spirits of long-dead patrons haunt the tavern.

Synopsis

The adventurers enter the abandoned tavern and find themselves transported

back in time to the night of the tavern's destruction, 250 years ago.

They must navigate the spiritual echoes of the past, facing spectral entities and unravelling the dark history that led to the tavern's demise.

Along the way, they may discover valuable treasures and uncover forgotten secrets.

As the adventurers explore the tavern, they witness spectral echoes of the past, replaying scenes from the night of the tavern's destruction. These glimpses may reveal crucial information or lead the party to hidden passages and secret areas.

Spirit Realm

The spirit realm (or plane) exists as a sort of mirror image of our own material realm, but time has no real meaning there.

This means certain places in the spiritual realm will appear as they were in the past. The 'when' depends on the spirits and when they were linked to the material realm.

In the case of the *The Reveler's Rest* tavern, the tavern occupants are all linked to the night 250 years ago, prior to the knights entering the tavern and the cultists causing the explosion.

Tavern's History

Centuries ago, the tavern was known as *The Reveler's Rest*, a renowned gathering place where people from all walks of life would

come to celebrate, share stories, and enjoy the merriment of the old city.

However, beneath the jovial facade, a secret society called the *Spirits of Twilight* thrived within the tavern's walls.

The Spirits of Twilight practised forbidden dark arts and sought to harness the power of the spirit plane for their own gain.

Unbeknownst to the staff and patrons, the tavern served as a cover for their clandestine activities.

As the Spirits of Twilight delved deeper into their pursuits, they inadvertently crossed a line, summoning a malevolent entity from the spirit plane. This entity, known as the *Spirit King*, hungered for power and sought to consume the souls of the living.

With each passing day, its influence over the members of the secret society grew stronger.

Unaware of the darkness lurking within the Spirits of Twilight, the people of the city continued to frequent the tavern, unknowingly exposing themselves to the malevolent forces at play. The Spirit King's power spread like a contagious plague, corrupting the hearts and minds of the secret society members.

In their pursuit of power, the Spirits of Twilight began sacrificing innocent lives, offering their souls to the Spirit King. The tavern became a site of unspeakable rituals, its basement drenched in blood and steeped in dark magic.

As the city's leaders caught wind of the Spirits of Twilight's heinous acts, they organised a force to put an end to their atrocities.

On the fateful night of the tavern's & city's destruction, the city guard, led by an order of knights from the Church of Venren (the God of protection), stormed the Reveler's Rest, engaging in a ferocious battle against the members of the secret society.

During the confrontation, a massive explosion erupted within the tavern, destroying it and the city around it. The explosion's origin is unknown to this day.

The Spirits of Twilight, along with the innocent citizens caught in the crossfire, perished, but their spirits remained trapped within the spiritual remnants of the tavern.

The Truth

The explosion was caused by a powerful artefact hidden within the tavern, known as the *Spiritual Tear*.

The Spiritual Tear was an artefact of immense power, capable of manipulating the boundaries between the material world and the spiritual plane.

The Spirits of Twilight, in their insatiable hunger for power, attempted to harness the energies of this artefact, unknowingly provoking catastrophic consequences.

During the final confrontation between the knights and the members of the secret society, a fierce clash of magical forces

ensued within the tavern's basement. The arcane energies unleashed in the conflict interacted with the unstable magic surrounding the Spiritual Tear, triggering a cataclysmic chain reaction.

Spiritual Tear

The Spiritual Tear appears as a delicate, shimmering crystal suspended in a silver filigree pendant. The crystal itself has a translucent, iridescent quality, as if it contains a miniature universe trapped within. It emits a soft, radiant glow in various shades of pale blue and silver, casting a gentle, calming light around it.

Within the crystal, wisps of spiritual energy twist and dance, reminiscent of swirling mist or shifting constellations. The energy seems to flow and move within the Tear, creating an illusion of depth and movement, as if peering into an infinite expanse. When worn, faint whispers of distant voices can be heard, speaking in hushed tones that echo through the wearer's mind.

The pendant holding the Spiritual Tear is intricately crafted, adorned with ornate symbols. The metalwork surrounding the crystal is delicate, almost filigree-like, forming elegant patterns that catch and reflect the light produced from the artefact.

The Spiritual Tear is beauty and allure that draws the attention of those who seek its power, yet its true nature remains enigmatic and potentially treacherous, its secrets known only to those who can unlock its full potential.

The resulting explosion tore through the tavern, engulfing it in flames and reducing

the city to ruins. The blast's sheer force shattered the physical and metaphysical boundaries between the material plane and the spiritual plane, leaving a scarred and unstable rift in its wake.

Some tales recount witnessing a blinding surge of spiritual energy erupting from the tavern's core, enveloping the entire city in an otherworldly maelstrom.

Others claim to have seen glimpses of the Spirit King itself, an immense, amorphous entity swirling within the explosion's epicentre.

In the aftermath of the devastation, the city's surviving residents were forced to abandon the ruins and rebuild elsewhere.

As the decades went by and no activity was ever found within the city's ruins (other than bandits and goblinoids), the city was rebuilt on top of the old ruins.

To this day, the true nature of the explosion and the fate of the Spiritual Tear remain elusive.

The ruined tavern lay buried beneath the layers of time, waiting for someone to uncover the secrets that lie dormant within the forsaken tavern.

The Cult

Most of the ultimate plans and goals of the Spirits of Twilight cult were lost, but one was known to be the summoning of the Spirit King, an ancient and malevolent entity from the spirit realm.

The Spirit King is believed to be a powerful spirit-demon or even a long-dead dark god. They believe that by summoning this entity, they will gain immense power and reshape the world according to their desires. The Spirits of Twilight cult would typically meet at The Reveler's Rest during specific nights of significance or alignment with celestial events, as such occasions amplified their dark rituals and granted them increased power.

These gatherings would take place in secret, hidden from the knowledge of the tavern's regular staff and patrons.

The Tavern Now

Due to the boundaries between the material realm and the spiritual realm being ruptured, the tavern will seem like it did 250 years ago (before the explosion) at times, and other times, old and dusty.

The tavern itself doesn't actually exist on the material realm (only the stairs down to what used to be the front door remains).

What and who the PCs interact with will seem real, but exists only on the Spirit Realm.

Feel free to give the PCs certain clues (see below) and have them (especially clerics and spiritual-based characters) make checks to learn certain facts.

But remember to not hide information the PCs need behind checks as they may fail them - encourage roleplaying and interaction between the tavern's

inhabitants and the PCs, rather than just rolling dice.

Dead Occupants

The occupants don't know they are dead and in the spirit realm - to them they are having fun at the tavern as usual, and that it is 250 years ago.

Use the NPCs from the article *Familiar Faces* in this issue to fill in the tavern, or come up with some of your own.

Tavern's Owner, Tiberius Goodbarrel

When The Reveler's Rest tavern was still operating, it was owned and operated by a jovial and charismatic halfling named Tiberius Goodbarrel.

Tiberius was known for his welcoming nature, love for a good tale, and exceptional skills as a host and entertainer.

As the proprietor of the tavern, Tiberius ensured that The Reveler's Rest lived up to its name. He created an atmosphere of merriment and camaraderie, where people from all walks of life could come together to enjoy good food, fine drinks, and lively entertainment.

Tiberius had a way of making every guest feel like an old friend, and his tavern became a beloved gathering place in the old city.

Unfortunately, Tiberius had a darker side: Tiberius was a member of the Spirits of Twilight.

Tiberius's involvement with the Spirits of Twilight remained hidden from the general public, and even his family and most of his regular patrons.

He used his role as the tavern's owner and entertainer to gather information, maintain connections, and keep a watchful eye on the activities within the city.

His position allowed him to observe and interact with a wide range of individuals, making him an ideal agent for the Spirits of Twilight's covert operations.

His dual role as a charismatic tavern owner and a member of the secret society allowed Tiberius to maintain a delicate balance between his public and hidden personas.

However, Tiberius eventually betrayed the cult by informing the knightly order about the Spirits of Twilight's plans to conjure the Spirit King.

Tiberius did this as the cult was planning on sacrificing everyone in the tavern, including his wife and children. This was something Tiberius couldn't allow and so reluctantly betrayed the cult.

Tiberius' Family

Tiberius Goodbarrel's wife was named Amelia Goodbarrel. She was a kind-hearted and supportive halfling who shared Tiberius's love for brewing and the tavern business. Amelia was known for her exceptional culinary skills and her warm demeanour.

Tiberius and Amelia had two children together: Anor Goodbarrel was their eldest daughter, who had just turned 16 years old. She had inherited her mother's culinary talents and was already showing promise in the kitchen; and Oliver Goodbarrel, who was their younger son, only 10 years old. Oliver was a spirited and mischievous halfling, always finding himself in some sort of playful trouble.

Tiberius deeply cared for his family, and his life as a double agent put them at risk. Tiberius's dedication to protecting his family became a driving force in his quest to thwart the cult's plans and ensure their safety.

Tavern Workers

Apart from Tiberius Goodbarrel and his family, several other individuals worked at the tavern.

Mavel Stonefoot was the tavern's head chef. A stout and skilled dwarf, she was renowned for her hearty meals and exquisite culinary creations.

Old Grimm Ironhide served as the tavern's bouncer and security. A towering, but ageing, half-orc with a stern demeanour, Grimm's imposing presence deterred troublemakers and ensured a safe environment for patrons.

Lorel Fairweather was the tavern's resident entertainer. A talented musician, she enchanted guests with her melodic tunes and enchanting voice.

Novi Greenshade was the tavern's barmaid. A nimble and friendly halfling, she was responsible for serving drinks, taking orders, and engaging in cheerful banter with customers.

Evik Whitestone was the tavern's stablemaster. He took care of the horses and carriages.

Happenings



While the PCs are in the tavern, they will notice certain things and be privy to certain events. These are laid out below. Feel free to use them whenever you feel it is necessary.

1. Tiberius is talking to a hooded man, saying “The rest have come through the back door and all of them are waiting in the basement as we discussed.” The hooded man nods and Tiberius goes back to work. The hooded man heads to the kitchen and disappears if the PCs try to follow him.

2. Two men in hooded cloaks, sitting at one of the booths, are heard saying: “Everything is in place, but we need to wait for the knights.” These two men are part of the city guard and have their armour and livery under their cloaks.

3. Tiberius delivers two drinks to a booth, with a folded up piece of parchment. After reading the note, the two men get up and leave the tavern via the front door (they fade away when they leave). The note simply says “They have all arrived.”

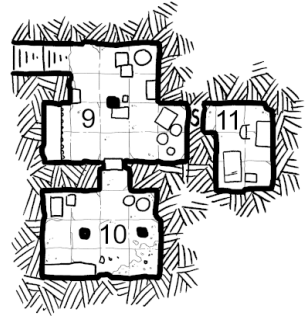
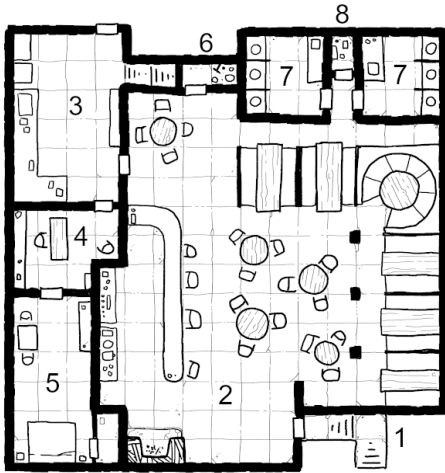
4. The cult will begin their rituals late that night (they are waiting for the moon to be in the right alignment). The ritual will be interrupted by the knights and soldiers as the tavern becomes a battleground.

5. As the PCs move around, rooms are abandoned and dusty on one visit, and full of colour and life on the next visit. Play up the weirdness of the spirit realm.

6. Some of the patrons will be alive one moment, and the next they may become groaning spirits, ghosts, or wraiths.

7. If the PCs encounter flesh-and-blood cultists, and if a combat starts with these cultists, after 2 rounds have the cultists turn into wraiths or some other spiritual undead of your choosing.

8. The climax should be the PCs meeting Malachi Spirithorn, who is located in the basement level, and who will be rather annoyed at the PCs' presence. He will be wearing and using the Spiritual Tear to summon the Spirit King.



Map Locations

1. The Stairs

These **broken and blackened stone stairs** descend down to the front door of *The Reveler's Rest*.

The stairs themselves are all that is left of the actual tavern in the material realm and are blackened from the explosion 250 years ago.

The **front door is solid oak** and is the portal to the spirit realm where the tavern is located. It has an **image of an entertainer on it carved into it**. As well as a **secret sign of the Spirits of Twilight cult**, a black swirl, hidden in the image.

2. Taproom

As soon as the **PCs enter the taproom they leave the material realm behind** and enter the spirit realm. Any character with a **connection to the spirit realm will be aware of this**, and any **clerics will feel odd** as they enter the building.

No matter what time of day it is outside, **it is evening here**. The fire is going strong with a black pot of pottage cooking away, delivering mouth-watering odours throughout the tavern.

Patrons are at tables and in booths, talking and laughing, and drinking and eating.

Tiberius Goodbarrel is behind the bar (which has a long bench behind it so he can see above the bar normally), his wife, daughter, and Novi Greenshade are tending tables and keeping an eye on the pottage.

Some patrons are walking about the room, coming back from the privies, getting drinks, or otherwise chatting with others.

Old Grimm Ironhide stands at the end of the bar, looking around the room and the PCs as they enter.

Everything is as it was the night of the explosion, before the knights arrived (closer to midnight).

If the PCs mill about they will be **greeted by one of the wait staff** and asked what they want. A table and one of the booths are free at this point.

If the **PCs cause any trouble, Ironhide will protect the staff and Tiberius will try and calm the PCs down**. The other patrons will also shout down the PCs if they try anything, being firmly on Tiberius' side.

If the PCs stay and eat and drink they will feel refreshed as the food and drink are quite good. **As the night wears on, certain events happen** (feel free to have these happen whenever they seem appropriate). They all contain clues about what is happening here.

3. Kitchen

Mavel Stonefoot is busy here chopping, carving, and preparing food for the patrons. She is super busy and will not have time to stop and chat. For a dwarf, she moves pretty quick and defends herself well with the meat cleaver.

If pressed, she will say some men went down into the cellar after coming in the back way, but Tiberius said it was okay.

If the PCs open the back door, all they will see is a solid piece of rock, which is part of the foundation of the new city above.



4. Office

This is Tiberius' office. However, **it looks a mess**. The table contains papers and writing implements has been knocked over, spilling the ink onto the floor, and the papers are scattered.

It looks as though someone has searched the place.

5. Bedroom

The bedroom is in a messy state just like the office, but inside is a number of men dressed in dark robes, ransacking the room.

These men are cultists, and Malachi Spirithorn has told him to search the

barkeep's rooms looking for evidence that he has betrayed the cult.

It seems as though Malachi is suspicious of Tiberius.

The cultists will attack the PCs, but will also try to leave the room, and head to the basement.

6. Storeroom

This is a general storeroom. There is not much of interest except for a few buckets, a shovel, a couple of bags of sawdust, and a few other tools.

However, some patrons sneak into this closet for drunken trysts.

7. Privies

These are your basic privies with several holes in a wooden frame which leads to a cesspool under the tavern. One is for males, the other females.

8. Storeroom

Another storeroom. This one contains buckets, mops, and brooms, as well as old rags, and bottles of vinegar for cleaning.

9. Cellar

This looks like an ordinary cellar, with storage boxes and barrels here and there. The door to Area 10 is always locked and Tiberius has the only key.

10. The Forgotten Cellar

Beneath the tavern lies a forgotten cellar, accessible through an old locked door from the main cellar.

This room is filled with some crates and barrels, but also 8 cult members. Dried blood stains the floor.

They are dressed in dark robes and have necklaces with the silver swirling symbol of the Spirits of Twilight around their necks.

In one of the barrels, there is a hidden bottom containing a hidden cache of gold (250GP), gems*, and the Spirit Bow.

* The gems here are: onyx tear (250GP), bloodstone (400GP), starfire opal (500GP), and an azure sapphire (800GP).

11. Hidden Study

This is where Tiberius meets with the head of the cult, and where the cult leader is currently. He is in this room with two high priests of the cult, discussing their final plans for the night's summoning.

The head of the cult is Malachi Spirithorn, a charismatic and enigmatic figure who possessed great knowledge of the arcane arts and a relentless thirst for power.

Under his leadership, the secret society grew in numbers and influence, delving deeper into dark rituals and harnessing the energies of the Spirit Realm.

It was Malachi who first discovered the existence of the Spirit King and sought to control its power. He believed that by binding the entity to his will, he could ascend to unparalleled heights of magical supremacy.

The Spirit Bow

Crafted from rare enchanted wood called Whisperwood.* The Spirit Bow allows the archer to fire spectral arrows that appear when the string is pulled back, and phase through solid objects. These arrows can hit ethereal targets and those who are in the spirit realm, deal force damage equal to D10+INT of the wielder.

This makes it a formidable weapon against the haunting entities within the tavern.

* Whisperwood is a timber derived from the trees that grow in the sacred groves of a small forest of the same name. Legends speak of the trees in this forest possessing an otherworldly aura, their wood resonating with the whispers of forgotten spirits and ethereal energies. The bow-smiths who have the knowledge and skill to work with Whisperwood carefully harvest the timber during specific lunar cycles and perform sacred rituals during its crafting to enhance its mystical properties.



Malachi Spirithorn

Specific stats for Malachi aren't given as this adventure location can be played at any level. Use the information below on Malachi's powers to construct an appropriate Malachi in your own campaign world.

Dark Sorcery

Malachi has a deep understanding of necromancy, spirit magic, and the manipulation of spirit energies.

Ethereal Conjuring

Malachi can summon and command spirit creatures. He has the ability to call forth spectral minions to serve him, command ghostly apparitions, or even bind and control spiritual entities to do his bidding.

Immunity to Spirits

Due to his extensive dealings with the Spirit Realm, Malachi had developed immunity to the influence of spiritual entities and their powers.

Random Encounters

If the PCs start walking around to investigate, they may run into a spirit of some sort.

Table: Random Encounters

D4	Encounter
1	Spectral Patrons
2	Poltergeist Spirits
3	Wraith
4	Ghost

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Next Month

For July, we are getting dirty and smelly in the Sewers & Other Dark Places issue.



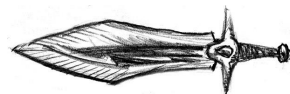
Arm yourselves and prepare for the worst as you head under the city to find out who, or what, lives down there.

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