

ETH ALDUR

THE FIRST FLAME

***THE CITY OF MAGMA, THE CLIMBING CITY.
THIS DWARVEN CITY IS CARVED INTO THE PERIMETER OF A
VERTICAL SHAFT OVER A CAULDRON OF MAGMA.***

TORCHLIGHT
PRESS



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ETH ALDUR

THE FIRST FLAME



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RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run this adventure, you need the Fifth Edition core rulebooks.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

The core 5th Edition monster book contains stat blocks for most of the creatures found in this adventure. Monster stat blocks created specifically for this adventure will be included at the end. When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block in the core monster book. If the monster is not included in the core monster book, it will be included in the appendices of the adventure.

Adjusting Encounters

This adventure contains advice for adjusting encounters based on the number of characters in the party. You are empowered to modify the number of enemies in an encounter and their hit point totals as you see fit. If you need to adjust the difficulty of an encounter during combat, you can alter hit point totals without the player characters ever knowing and have enemies retreat or reinforcements arrive as needed.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout this adventure:

hp	hit points
AC	Armor Class
DC	Difficulty Class
XP	experience points
pp	platinum piece(s)
gp	gold piece(s)
ep	electrum piece(s)
sp	silver piece(s)
cp	copper piece(s)
NPC	nonplayer character
LG	Lawful Good
NG	Neutral Good
LN	Lawful Neutral
N	Neutral
CN	Chaotic Neutral
LE	Lawful Evil
CE	Chaotic Evil
NE	Neutral Evil



The Dwarven City of Eth Aldur

Eth Aldur — the City of Magma, the Climbing City. This dwarven city is carved into the perimeter of a vertical shaft over a cauldron of magma. The denizens of the city are expert metalworkers, miners, and explorers of the underearth.

For GMs sending their players to see the wealth of the underearth, this broiling city offers a variety of characters and plot hooks to engage your players.

THE FIRST FLAME

The city of Eth Aldur was founded by a lone dwarven traveler that heeded a divine mandate to journey deep into the unknown reaches of the underearth and found a new home. They followed the paths carved out by vast chasms and bubbling veins of magma. Eventually, many hundreds of miles from the kingdoms they left behind, they found the caves promised by their god: a vast vertical shaft in the earth over a dormant magma pool.

The traveler, known only as the “first flame,” spent the remainder of their life dutifully carving out the foundations of Eth Aldur. As the first flame lay dying, new clansfolk arrived at the city, similarly called by divine mandate to make the journey. They inherited the foundation prepared by the first flame and continued the work of building a life here.

Over the millenia, the magma beneath the city has risen, pushing the city’s inhabitants higher into the caves as the lower sections are melted and consumed. At the same time, the city’s influence has flowed throughout the catacombs of the underearth, crystallizing in a multitude of neighboring towns, hamlets, and outposts in the surrounding region.

POLITICS

Queen Askad Steelback

Askad is a 289 year old female mountain dwarf forester. She has long, straight, black hair and green eyes. She has rough white skin. She is obstinate and forgetful.

Accompaniment. Queen Askad is always accompanied by an entourage consisting of her personal assistant and a retinue of ten guards.

Clans of Eth Aldur

There are three clans that wield power in Eth Aldur: the Torchbearers, the sept of the Steelbacks, and the sept of Barrelchin. Together, they form a triumvirate beneath the queen that handles minor disputes in the city.

The queen of Eth Aldur and the head of the Torchbearer clan play a careful political dance.

Torchbearer Clan

The Torchbearer clan exercises control over the southern half of the city, including the bazaar, rothe pens, great hall, and the major breweries and taverns. Members of the clan often take honored service jobs, either inside the city at establishments or with the city guard.

The Torchbearers chart their lineage multiple millennia back to the foundation of Eth Aldur. Their surname was chosen in honor of the “first flame” that prepared the city’s foundation. Due to the unique nature of the clan’s origin, the surname is passed by birthright (sometimes adoption in the case of young children) or the queen’s decree.



Herald of the First Flame, Anzin

Torchbearer. The current head of the clan is Anzin Torchbearer, a 168-year-old female dwarf with long, wavy, auburn hair and black eyes. She has rough, dirty, golden skin, stands 4 ft. tall, and has a beefy build. She is stubbornly hopeful and has a penchant for collecting small animal skulls.

Steelback Clan

The Steelback clan is a sept of the Torchbearers that broke off as the city grew in size. They control the workshops, smiths, forges, and access to the mines in the western half of the city. Members of the clan often take up work as metalworkers and miners.

Urun Steelback. Urun is a 206-year-old female dwarf. She's bald with cyan eyes and marbled grey skin. She's 3 ft., 10 inches tall and has a massive build that intimidates other dwarves. She speaks directly and carries a pessimistic attitude.

Whitestone Clan

The Whitestone clan is a sept of the Torchbearers that controls luxury products like spices and jewels, and many of the dwelling units in the city. Members of the clan are raised into wealthy mercantile businesses and trades.

Turi Whitestone. Turi is a 240-year-old male dwarf with long, white hair and cloudy eyes. He has soft gray skin and wears a lot of fine jewelry. He's benevolent and lazy, casually flaunting the clan's wealth.

LOCATIONS IN ETH ALDUR

The following locations are keyed to the map of Eth Aldur.

General Features

Lighting. The city is well-lit by the massive pool of magma below the city.

Temperature. The city is sweltering, with the lower levels of the city actually being slowly consumed by the magma below.

Disposition. The dwarven population is unaccustomed to visits from other races and generally treat them with suspicion until proven honorable.

Quest Hooks. There are six quest hooks provided throughout the locations of the city. You can use these quest hooks as inspiration for your own adventures.

Additionally, Torchlight Press will be producing professionally written and illustrated adventures for each hook as part of the Eth Aldur Dwarven Pack.





THE DWARVEN CITY OF
ETH ALDUR
"THE FIRST FLAME"

0 25 75 150
FEET

1 - Trader's Post

The side of the road approaching the city gates is cluttered by a smattering of wagons and pitched tents. A small crowd of dwarves, both merchants and buyers, fill the air with the sound of energetic bargaining, huffing, and grumbling.

The merchants here are not certified by the city and therefore the quality of their goods is not assured. A character that examines an item for sale and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check discerns the item's "catch."

Roll on the below table for some items that can be found at the market.

d10	Price	Item for Sale	Catch
1	1 cp	Candle	This candle only burns for 30 minutes instead of 1 hour.
2	1 sp	Ladder (5 feet)	There's no catch, it's just shorter than your average ladder.
3	2 sp	Clothes, common	A character that wears these clothes must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw every 24 hours. On a failure, they contract lice and have disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks until this disease is removed from them.
4	1 gp	Manacles	The DC to escape or break the manacles is lowered to 15 and the DC to pick the lock is lowered to 10.
5	2 gp	Perfume (vial)	The perfume smells like diesel fumes and chemicals. Wearing the perfume provides advantage on Charisma checks with dwarves and disadvantage on Charisma checks with any other humanoid.
6	3 gp	Merchant's Scale	The scale is poorly calibrated and never returns the correct value.
7	5 gp	Rope, silk (50 feet)	The rope is frayed and snaps if used to hold more than 200 lbs.
8	10 gp	Spellbook	The spellbook is filled with nonsensical arcane markings and only has 25 blank vellum pages suitable for recording spells.
9	200 gp	Spyglass	The spyglass is also a kaleidoscope. To see through the spyglass, a creature must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence check. On a failure, they get dizzy and fall prone.
10	500 gp	Plate	After it sustains 5 hits, the armor's AC drops to 17.

2 - The Gates of Vulridir

Wedged between the singular carved passageway into the city are massive, gold-plated stone double-doors. Carved into the left door is a dwarven figure walking down a dark passage. The right door features a dwarven figure standing before a luminous pool of magma.

Golden Gates. The gates are left open and attended by four **guards** during working hours (12 hours a day). After working hours, the gates are closed and attended by two **guards** on the interior of the gates. Forcing the gates open requires three consecutive successful DC 30 Strength (Athletics) checks.

3 - Greater Barracks

This area contains three large buildings and a rectangular tower centered between them. Dwarven men and women clad in various degrees of armor shuffle between the buildings and branching streets.

Captain of the Guard, Thori

Torchbearer. Thori is a 276-year-old female dwarf with black hair and pockmarked pale skin. Despite her role in the guard, she's a pacifist that constantly hums old dwarven tunes. She tends to space out during casual conversation due to concussive trauma.

Quest Hook: Lost Love. A female drow **mage** named Eris, living in the outskirts of the city, hidden in the underearth's dark caves, is threatening to disrupt the Whitestone clan's trade routes.

The Whitestone clan is putting a lot of pressure on Thori and the guard to deal with Eris, but they don't have the resources to deal with it themselves.

The hostilities with Eris began after a relationship between Eris and Rinav Whitestone, a female dwarven woman, was uncovered, sparking confusion and outrage among the elders of the clan. Rinav hasn't been seen outside since the event transpired.

Job Board. Thori sometimes has a need for adventurers, and at such times she posts jobs on a board hanging in the small building centered in this area. Roll two d6's and consult the table below to determine the nature of an available task.

d6	Job Goals	Job Foes
1	Rescue kidnapped travelers	Grimlocks
2	Escort a valuable shipment	Ankhegs
3	Investigate roadside attacks	Undead
4	Deal with an infestation of foes	Bandits
5	A neighboring hamlet or outpost has gone silent	Cultists
6	An unstable extraplanar portal has opened nearby	Elementals



4 - Lesser Barracks

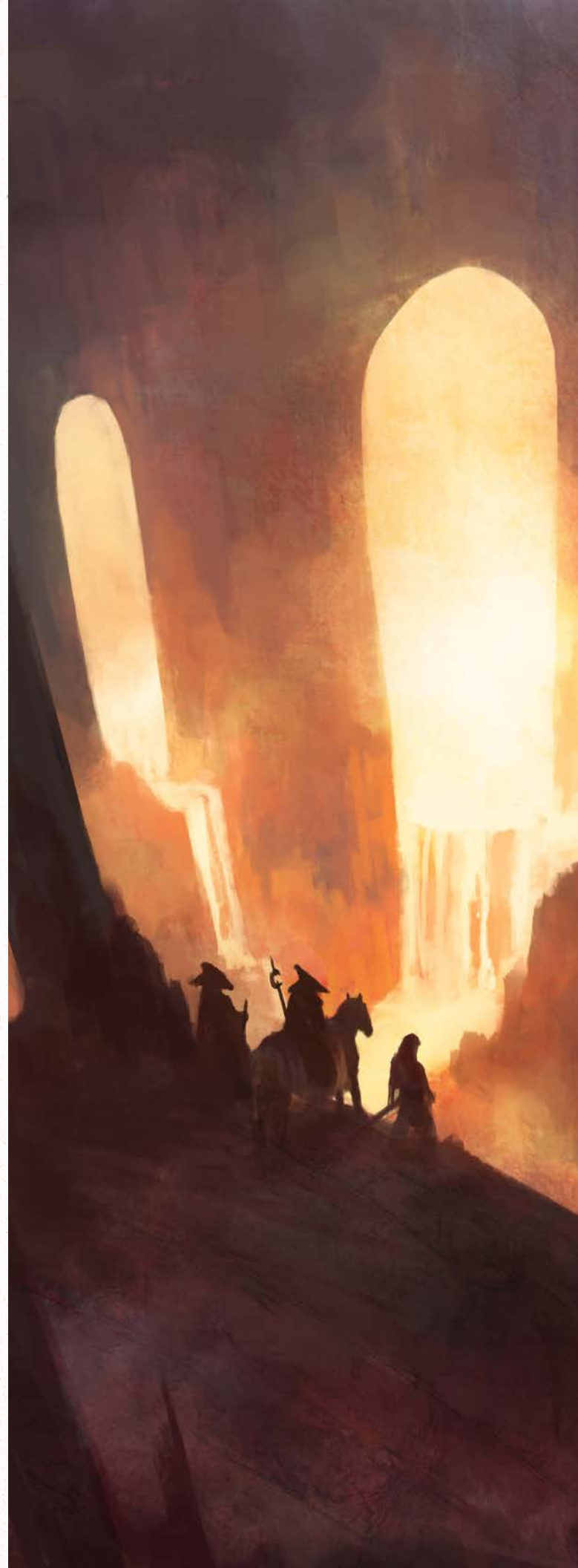
A few guards loiter around this square cavity featuring two non-descript stone buildings and copper piping. The smell of manure radiates from the southern building.

Animal Control Expert, Atur. Atur Graybelt is a 124-year-old dwarven man with a meticulously-kept beard, even by dwarven standards. He is more confident in his ability to work with animals than talk to other people. He travels with a rehabilitated **ankheg** named Irontooth that has a prosthetic iron mandible.

5 - The Great Towers

50 feet above the path into the city, two fortified, stone platforms are carved out of the cavern walls.

There are four **guards** stationed at each tower at all times.



6 - The Bazaar

The massive bazaar is a cluster of tents always bustling with activity as dwarves barter, bicker, and converse. A clearing in the center of the bazaar is left where a stone dwarven face representative of the founder is laid into the ground.

There are a variety of merchants located here. Roll a d10 and consult the table below to randomly select a merchant.

d10	Merchant	Description
1	Orim Mudbelt	A nervous man that sells ceramic utensils, plates, and other dishware decorated with geometric designs.
2	Nainarv Kegshaker	An aggressive woman that sells artisanal kegs and barrels.
3	Disanz Goldback	An animated woman that sells string instruments: fiddles, flutes, viols, and harps.
4	Gamal Coppertongue	A scout that sells bioluminescent fruits and flowers collected from the underground.
5	Dinain Forgegrog	A quiet and generous man that peddles hunting trophies of beasts and monstrosities.
6	Arkud Mudbreaker	A painfully average man that sells bells and whistles as a cover for fencing illicit goods.
7	Thrari Thunderhead	A loud non-binary dwarf that deals in literature for all ages.
8	Azal Barrelchin	A selfish woman that sells gemstones worth up to 500 gp.
9	Thain Stoneskin	A meditative young dwarf that operates a multi-level marketing business based on selling rocks.
10	Akan Sapphirebraids	A bow-legged older man (veteran) that sells large, chitinous insects as pets.

7 - Grimgrot's Tavern

This modestly-sized tavern is flooded with patrons at all hours of the day.

Fari Torchbearer. This 235-year-old overweight, dwarven ex-soldier is an expert at managing a crowd and defusing tensions. Due to the nature of their work, they're casual friends with a lot of people but close friends with few.



8 - The Great Hall

Four thick stone columns support the ceiling of this expansive chamber reserved for special occasions. Fewer people are meandering through this area.

When the queen or clans of the city need to host large gatherings, they do so here.

Event Equipment. Tables, chairs, banners, a modular stage, and other event equipment are stored in the two chambers to the southeast of the Great Hall. These items are attended by two **guards**, one in each chamber. The items are important to operating events in the Great Hall, but aren't kept under heavy guard because the punishment of death by magma for tampering or stealing the equipment is enough to ward off troublemakers.

9 - Landing Area

An unassuming octagonal stone platform sits in the middle of this tightly-secured chamber, flanked by two stone buildings and a semicircular water reservoir being filled by water pumped through copper pipes. Guards are swarming over this chamber, leaving not a nook or cranny unobserved.

Guard Schedule. There are a total of twelve **guards** stationed here. Two guard the stairs leading into the chamber. Four are stationed around the teleportation circle. Two are stationed inside of the east building. There are guards in the west

building: two are on-duty and the other two are off-duty.

Of the twelve guards, three are permanently stationed in this chamber and work in shifts. The three shift guards are responsible for verifying the identities of the other guards to prevent imposters from gaining access to the chamber through the guard.

Teleportation Circle. The stone platform in the center of the chamber is a teleportation circle. It connects to teleportation circles in several of the neighboring towns for use by the queen or in cases of emergency. Access is also available to leadership of the three major clans (Torchbearers, Steelbacks, and Whitestones) for a substantial fee. Except under extreme circumstances, foreigners are strictly forbidden from viewing or using the teleportation circle.

Dignitary Welcoming Center. The eastern building is a welcoming center and security checkpoint for individuals traveling through the portal. Such individuals must be inspected before and after traveling through the portal to ensure they aren't traveling with illicit or dangerous objects without permission from the queen.

Guard Station. The western building is reserved for the many guards present here. Inside, it has a well-maintained breakroom, an evidence room for confiscated objects, and a smaller sleeping bunker for the guards on permanent rotation.



10 - Grick Pens

Oversized worm-like creatures with faces formed of four large tentacles around a beak slide around the three large mud pens in this chamber. The creatures are being tended to by a small outfit of dwarves.

Grick Keeper, Roxeek. Roxeek is a 43-year-old goblin man with silky, green skin covered in fresh mud. He is courageous to a fault and always obeys his superiors.

His station in the city is unusual, but he managed to demonstrate value to the dwarves here by training gricks for riding and made a small home in the city for himself and his family. Some dwarves of the city aren't fond of the goblin presence, but typically stay in line because the goblins live here under the queen's protection.

Riding Grick. The **grick** here are semi-domesticated and have the following changes:

- Their size is Large.
- They have 33 (6d10) hit points.

11 - Firewater Brewery

This large complex is adorned with massive copper pipes and tanks. Throughout the day, dwarves pushing and carrying crates of alcohol can be observed leaving the brewery and dispersing in every direction.

Chief Alcohol Officer, Fari Torchbearer.

The Firewater Brewery is run by Fari Torchbearer, a bombastic old dwarven man that's always carrying food in his pockets.

Access to Fari is obstructed by a half-dozen layers of middle-management and assistants. Characters can attempt to force their way to Fari by succeeding on three consecutive DC 13 skill checks chosen from the following: Charisma (Persuasion), Charisma or Strength (Intimidation), or Charisma (Deception). Each quest they have completed in Eth Aldur counts as an automatic success for these checks.

Quest Hook: Stolen Kegs. The Firewater Brewery is preparing to host a large event for the three clans. With one week before the event, there is little room for error. Unfortunately, a great deal of their kegs were sabotaged and the remainder stolen. To have any hope of salvaging the event, Fari needs the characters, whom they consider a viable neutral party, to find the stolen kegs.



12 - Golem Workshop

A set of large buildings with massive copper smoke chimneys are set up here. Mud, stone, and metal limbs can be seen being carted between buildings and various defective pieces are dumped into careless piles on the street until they eventually get pushed into the magma.

Opal, the Iron Golem. Opal is a dwarf-sized iron golem with an opal gem emblazoned on the center of their chest. They speak haltingly, which obscures their unusual intelligence — the result of a dwarven wizard using their own soul as a component of the ritual to create the golem.

As an **iron golem**, Opal has the following changes:

- Their size is Medium.
- They have 190 (20d8 + 100) hit points.
- They can understand and speak Common and Dwarvish.
- They have an Intelligence of 18 (+4).

Opal is a subject-matter expert on the following topics:

- The creation of **clay golems**.
- The fabrication of prosthetic limbs.
- Mass production of parts by assembly chains and molds.

Quest Hook: The Iron Maiden. Opal wants to learn more about their creator, a reclusive wizard that came to Eth Aldur from the outskirts of the city before forfeiting their life to create Opal. They want the characters to join them on an expedition to find and investigate where their creator came from.

13 - Cistern

This natural stone cavern holds a large reservoir of water for the city's population. Yellow algae glow underneath the water.

The cistern is an expansive, shallow cave that takes 1 hour to traverse the full diameter of.

Guards. Access to the cistern is protected by three **guards**.

Yellow Algae. The glowing yellow algae is a naturally-occurring resource that filters the water so that it is potable and dissolves any organic matter they come into contact with. The algae is poisonous to the touch for beasts and humanoids, which, when they come into contact with any algae, must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour.



14 - Forge of Mardar

A forge with three streams of molten flowing out of it is built on top of a block of stone rising out of the magma and secured by chains. Every couple of minutes, a dwarf dashes between the forge and the smiths across the bridge.

Forge apprentices carry heated metal from here to the smithing platz beyond the smelters.

15 - The Grand Smelters

Six hexagonal buildings of increasing size are arranged in two rows. Smoke billows out of copper chimneys as metal is melted down inside.

These buildings are a hive of activity during working hours and few, if anybody, working here is willing to stop to entertain strangers.

16 - Smithing Platz

The deafening sound of hammers beating against metal reverberates through the city, beginning here on the plateau.

The Steelback clan trains new smithers and operates the anvils here.

17 - Lift to Mines

Built between an assortment of homes, a metal platform raises and lowers miners into the caves above.

This lift provides sole access to the mines below the city.

18 - The Ialadra Library

This library is a small building secluded in the northwest corner of the city, built atop a foundation of enchanted stones that wick away heat to keep the temperature lower.

The library primarily carries books on the subjects of metalworking, geology, and gemstones.



19 - The Golden Throne

Set in a trapezoidal chamber and flanked by two sets of stone columns is the golden throne of the city. The city's queen is accessible to the public here for several hours each day.

Audience with the Queen. The queen is busy, but sets aside a few hours each week for public affairs. The line to ask the queen a question begins around 5am on the second day of each week. Any creatures that enter the line after 7am will not reach the front in time to ask the queen a question. The line stretches across the southern bridge, into the heart of the city, sometimes even reaching the market. The queen begins taking questions at 10am and stops at 3pm.

Quest Hook: What Lies Below. If the characters have completed all of the other available quests, the reigning queen requests an audience with them.

The city's miners broke into an unexplored cavity in the ground and discovered ancient fire giant ruins. The miners explored briefly before they heard a terrifying screech and fled. They have laid plans to collapse the tunnel if necessary, but the queen would rather entice the characters to explore the ruins and report back their findings.

What lays within the ruins may shake the very foundation of Eth Aldur.

20 - Spice Market

A set of buildings are arranged with tarps set up over street market stalls selling a variety of herbs and spices.

The spice market is a bustling display of wealth where the city's elite go to splurge.

The spices sold here have been tailored to dwarven taste and refined over the centuries. Any non-dwarf creature that attempts to eat food topped with these spices must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or become incapacitated in a coughing fit for 1 minute.



21 - Jewellers

Well-maintained buildings are arranged around an open stone courtyard where poised, well-dressed dwarves shuffled around while talking about business affairs and the latest fashion trends. The shops here sell gemstones, jewelry, and fine clothes.

Quest Hook: Bloody Conundrum.

Duraina Whitestone, heir of one of the powerful merchants here, lost a valuable family heirloom — a gem-encrusted signet ring — in a drunken bet with one of their family's connections: a vampire named Alianor Drake. Duriana wants the characters to go to sneak into the vampire's estate and steal the signet ring back.

22 - Post Office

The post office is an elongated octagonal building with a red roof. Through the windows, reams of letters, scrolls, and boxes are being organized for mailing.

Quest Hook: Oracle's Ring. The post office has received a mysterious package with destined for a drow oracle named Talice Rhomduil that lives deep within the caves of the Underearth. The route to Talice is dangerous and the couriers are looking to outsource the job to adventurers.

23 - Shrine of Our Mothers

Twelve statues of the previous reigning kings and queens are assembled here.

Kurgam Grayhide. An elderly dwarven man with a glass eye attends the statues here. He treats each statue with deep reverence and care.

24 - Underearth Entrance

This large, copper-plated stone gate is attended by two guards.

This gate leads to a network of pathways through the underearth, connecting to some of the neighboring towns.



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