

PATHFINDERTM CHRONICLES



GUIDE TO
KORVOSA

by Mike McArtor



KORVOSA TIMELINE



This timeline touches on some of the most important events in Korvosan history.

- c. 2500–4406:** Sklar-Quah tribe of Shoanti inhabit the floodplains along the Jeggare River, where they defend the pyramid known to them as Mashka-saht-puyuhoke.
- 4404:** Halleck IV, Emperor of Cheliox, charges Field Marshal Korvosa with the founding of a colony in the untamed (and unexploited) frontier region known as Varisia. Korvosa's long-time rival in the King's Navy, Admiral Mercatio Kiameleu, petitions for and receives a similar charter.
- 4405:** The two rivals clash over funding. The field marshal moves his army into the northern border region of the empire and begins assembling civilian volunteers.
- 4406:** Field Marshal Korvosa leads his army through Bloodsworn Vale into Varisia. Strong Shoanti resistance slows the campaign, forcing the Chelaxians to bivouac throughout winter at the foot of the Mindspin Mountains.
- 4407:** Field Marshal Korvosa breaks the siege on Endrin Isle. Waydon Endrin becomes commander of garrison. Kiameleu establishes a settlement on a wide indefensible beach at the mouth of Conqueror's Bay.
- 4408:** Alika Epakena born. Admiral Kiameleu returns to Cheliox and attempts to have Palin court-martialed, but Korvosa and Endrin intervene on her behalf. Emperor Halleck IV demotes Kiameleu and gives his command to his first mate, Veldraine.
- 4409:** First fully laden galleon returns to Cheliox loaded with Varisian goods. Waydon Endrin forms Sable Company with surviving marines to launch strikes against massed Shoanti.
- 4410:** Field Marshal Korvosa dies. Montlarion Jeggare named second lord magistrate. Settlement of Kiameleu attacked and razed by Shoanti with no survivors. Captain Veldraine chastises Kiameleu for its poor placement, then founds village of Veldraine at a natural harbor nearby.
- 4413–4429:** Sable Company harries Shoanti on mainland.
- 4415:** Waydon Endrin retires. Keyra Palin named fort commander.
- 4416:** Battle of Veldraine establishes the village as a subjugated holding of Korvosa.
- 4417:** Montlarion Jeggare dies. Waydon Endrin named third lord magistrate.
- 4419:** Keyra Palin destroys Shoanti boat launch at mouth of Falcon's River. Temporary defenses are built to guard the harbor. Called Palin's Cove.
- 4420:** Veldraine and Fort Korvosa begin regular supply convoys to Palin's Cove.
- 4421:** Keyra Palin gives birth to twins, Lucian and Brianna Endrin.
- 4423:** Delegates from Janderhoff arrive in Korvosa for first time.
- 4429:** The Great Fire. Lord magistrate Endrin, Alika Epakena, Keyra Palin, and nearly a quarter of the town's population perish, including nearly the entire garrison.
- 4432:** Work begins on stone keep on site of former Fort Korvosa.
- 4435:** First Battle of Mainshore retains tentative foothold on mainland coast.
- 4438:** Stone keep completed. First appearance of marsh giants near Palin's Cove.
- 4439:** Second Battle of Mainshore. Foothold on mainland coast lost to Shoanti raiders.
- 4442:** First wall built on mainland. Third Battle of Mainshore results in sound loss for Shoanti, who withdraw en masse to the Grand Mastaba.
- 4442–4446:** Shoanti launch raids against the mainland buildings from their pyramid stronghold.
- 4445:** First bridge built connecting Endrin Isle to mainland.
- 4446–4449:** Siege of the Grand Mastaba.
- 4452:** Laccius Brawm becomes Korvosa's first serial killer with three murders.
- 4456:** Emperor Fane II of Cheliox grants the Endrin family noble standing, creating House Endrin.
- 4457:** Laccius Brawm caught and admits to eight victims. He is publicly tortured and executed.
- 4458:** House Arkona sends *Reprieve* to nation of Vudra.
- 4461:** *Reprieve* returns laden with exotic wares and spices.
- 4462:** Shoanti resume organized attacks on Chelish holdings.
- 4464:** Main walls of Castle Korvosa completed.
- 4472:** Treaty of Crystalrock signed between Janderhoff and Korvosa.

timeline continued on back inside cover



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by Mike McArtor

A Pathfinder Chronicles™ supplement

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRO

Welcome, Friend, to the remarkable city of Korvosa—Gateway to Varisia! The majesty of fair Korvosa marks it as one of the premiere cities of the world. Indeed, with the exception of magnificent Egorian—capital city of esteemed Cheliax—there is likely no greater city on, above, or within all of Golarion!

—Mercer Cucuteni, Magistrate of Tourism

From acrobatic sky-borne battles between imps and pseudodragons to filth-covered otyughs bursting up from the sewers below, Korvosa offers numerous excitements both common and uncommon. Undead prowl the famed Vaults beneath Korvosa's walled necropolis, all manner of vermin roam the rooftop city-within-a-city of the Shingles, and treacherous thieves and thugs patrol the slums of Bridgefront and Old Dock. Yet among all this danger and excitement the city thrives as a cultural and economic powerhouse—relatively speaking—with opportunities for any visitor, regardless of morals and guiding principles.

NAVIGATING THE CITY GUIDE

Each chapter in this book covers a specific topic. Overlap exists, of course, because within a city all things are connected. For the most part, though, information on a

single topic exists solely within its main entry. The main exception is in Chapter 5: Secrets, which expands on the information presented in earlier chapters.

In addition, many pages contain sidebars that touch on topics only tangentially related to the surrounding text, if at all. These sidebars give an in-depth look at some aspect of the city that doesn't fit in anywhere else.

Especially in Chapters 2 and 3, footnotes appear at the bottom of many pages that point to elsewhere in the book (or beyond) where you can find additional information on a mentioned topic.

Chapter 1: This chapter provides a brief look at the city and touches on subjects not covered in detail later in the book.

Chapter 2: The largest chapter of the book, this gazetteer of Korvosa looks at points of interest throughout the city. The chapter also provides a short overview of Korvosa's geography, its surroundings, and its holdings.



Chapter 3: This chapter looks at the movers and shakers of the city, whether individuals or organizations (noble houses, military groups, the thieves' guild, gangs, and so on).

Chapter 4: A brief history, this chapter gives a look at several important turning points in Korvosa's past.

Chapter 5: This chapter looks into the secretive underbelly of Korvosa, revealing the skeletons within the city's closets (metaphorically and literally).

Appendix: Further information on some of the most important people of Korvosa, as well as special training techniques of the Sable Company and the Acadamae, are detailed here.

CITY BASICS

At its height, before the death of Aroden and the departure of the separatists who founded Magnimar, Korvosa topped 23,000 inhabitants. It lost nearly 10,000 because of the resulting chaos of the time, but in the last century it regained half that many. As a result of its rapid contraction and slow re-expansion, many of the affluent sections of Korvosa remain underpopulated. With increasing trade and abundance of area into which it can expand, Korvosa could comfortably fill out to a true metropolis.

KORVOSA

Large City conventional (king); AL LN

GP Limit 40,000 gp; **Assets** 36,972,000 gp

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 18,486

Type isolated (90% human, 4% dwarf, 2% elf, 2% halfling, 1% half-elf, 1% other races)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

King Eodred Arabasti II, ruler of Korvosa; **Queen Ileosa Arabasti**, wife of king; **Seneschal Neolandus Kalepopolis**, keeper of Castle Korvosa; **Field Marshal Cressida Kroft**, leader of the Korvosan Guard; **Commandant Marcus Thalassinus Endrin**, leader of the Sable Company; **Lictor Severs DiVri**, leader of the Order of the Nail; **Lord Glorio Arkona**, de facto leader of Old Korvosa; **Toff Ornelos**, Acadamae headmaster.

Symbols

People identify their affiliations symbolically, from the colors of their uniforms to the specific design of their coats of arms. Some commonly seen Korvosan symbols are:

Colors: Korvosa's symbolic colors are the black and red of Cheliox (deepened to a rich crimson), with the addition of silver to distinguish it as an important colony (in its own eyes, at least).

Mascot: The city claims as its mascot the powerful hippogriff, dozens of which perch within the high aerie of the Great Tower and serve as the mounts for the city's elite Sable Company.

Motto: Korvosa's motto is "Trosker ep Styrk," Ancient Taldane for "Fidelity and Strength."

DESIGNER NOTE: WRITING KORVOSA

As you flip through it, you might notice something peculiar about this game accessory: a lack of game. With the exception of the title page, parts of this page, and the appendix, this entire book is written in character, just as it might appear to your PCs. Think of this as a massive player's handout, although you should probably tell your players to stay away from Chapter 5. In theory, you can use Korvosa for any setting in any edition of any game, much as you could use a guidebook to London or Rome.

Korvosa exists because James Jacobs willed it so and I crafted it so, but my creation of this wondrous city did not happen alone. Just as Rome was not built in a day, neither was Korvosa built by one person. Here, then, is a list of people I'd like to thank for their contributions (great and small) to this book: James and Wes for letting me write it and for answering my questions about it; Nick, Rich, and Tito for their ideas of what the city needs; Ann, Gigz, and Troy for their help with brainstorming people and places; and my mom and dad for making me the geek I am today. Special thanks also to the University of Washington: Bothell/Cascadia Community College library for providing me a warm and quiet place to write this book.

Residences

Many people in Korvosa own their residences, but most rent. The costs of these dwellings vary depending on their location and style (as described here).

Manor: These largest of all private dwellings belong only to nobles and relatives of the king. They typically rise to at least two stories and contain no fewer than five rooms (bedrooms and studies), two privies, a bath, a large kitchen and pantry, and a cellar. Most have large family or living rooms. Large, usually well-manicured yards surround these free-standing structures. Manors are never for rent.

House: One of the more uncommon types of dwellings, houses look like small manors, with one or two floors holding up to four rooms, a privy or two, a bath, a kitchen and pantry, and usually a cellar. Many have either a family room or a living room, but not both. Houses have their own yards, usually consisting of narrow strips of hardy plants. Houses are rarely rented out.

Townhouse: Most people in Korvosa live in townhouses. A townhouse is a narrow dwelling that abuts another building on at least one side. Most townhouses begin on the second floor of a building, rising above a shop or other business of some kind, which is also usually owned by the resident. Townhouses otherwise resemble small houses and always belong to those who live in them. This ownership usually extends to the ground-floor spaces meant for businesses.

Apartment Suite: Some buildings do not have ground-floor businesses and instead contain nothing but living spaces. The largest and nicest of these buildings contain apartment suites, one-story dwellings with one or two bedrooms and



SPEAKING KORVOSAN

The people of Korvosa universally speak Chelaxian (frequently known as “Common”). Korvosans have, over time, created their own slang unique to the city. In order to help you blend in while exploring Korvosa, make sure to (correctly) use the following phrases.

Chel: Mildly derogatory term for people of Chelish descent. Widely used as a contemptuous dismissal in the rest of the world. In Korvosa, the word has evolved into a hate-filled ethnic slur. Use of this word constitutes a grave affront in the city, and using it against the wrong target likely finds the offender beaten, lynched, or killed.

Dancer: Cutpurse, pickpocket, or other thief who works crowds. Comes from the belief that most thieves are Varisians and most Varisians like to dance. Actual dancing performers are called “performers.”

Empty: A beggar, vagrant, or homeless person. Most Korvosans consider an empty to be someone without meaning or purpose, whose existence doesn’t matter and whose life and death occur without mention.

Frontier: Someone who lives in Bridgefront or is otherwise poor. Not a polite term and frequently used as a mild (sometimes playful) insult among younger aristocrats and nobles. Connotes dirtiness.

Gater: Someone who lives in Northgate. Common term even used by Gaters themselves.

Horser: Highly inflammatory term for a Shoanti or other savage primitive. Holds strong connotations of bestiality.

Imper: A young student of the Acadamae. Older students respectfully receive no nickname, as they wield the power to kill those who insult them.

Moth: A full-blooded Varisian. Because so much of the population in Korvosa descends at least partially from Varisian stock, most people don’t consider it an insult, using it as a nickname for the nomadic people. Full-blooded Varisians differ on their acceptance of the term: some use it themselves while others bristle at its connotations.

Pincher: Someone very poor who scrapes by on only a few copper pinch a month.

Sails: One or more ships.

Solly: Someone who wishes to unionize or form a guild. Short for “solidarity.” A dire insult in Korvosa (even if the recipient does support the formation of guilds), sometimes considered the foulest thing to call a Korvosan.

Solly Slop: Rubbish, excrement. At one time, this referred to the bland porridge of unskilled laborers (the most common agitators for unionizing in the city). Today, Korvosans consider the phrase vulgar and not to be used in public.

all the amenities of townhouses. An apartment suite never fills a floor on its own and usually opens onto a common hallway. Apartment suites can be purchased or rented.

Tenement Flat: Tenement flats lack their own privies, baths, and kitchens. Instead, they share communal rooms dedicated to these purposes. Two or three of them can squeeze into the space of a single apartment suite. Tenements are only available for rent and cannot be bought by their residents.

Studio: The smallest of all dwellings, a studio consists of a single open space, often with just enough room for a bed and one or two other pieces of small furniture. Studios share communal privies, baths, and kitchens. They are only available for rent and cannot be bought by their residents.

LIFE IN KORVOSA

Like any other city, Korvosa has a few particular nuances that make it and its citizens unique. The following overview only begins to touch on what it means to be a Korvosan.

Korvosan Mindset

Those who live in Korvosa respect and admire ostentatious displays of wealth, power, or knowledge. They consider confidence and competence the greatest of assets, and they deride or heckle those who display weakness, indecisiveness, or inability. Korvosans are quick to judge and slow to forgive. A quick perusal of this book reveals that Korvosans like to

capitalize their words. The people of Korvosa feel this trait gives them an air of greatness and importance.

In addition to power, Korvosans love predictability. They like to regulate their lives, creating strict regimens for themselves that they then slavishly follow. Upsetting a Korvosan’s routine can ruin his entire day and likely makes him cranky. To this end, Korvosa strictly enforces its laws (which often have harsh punishments far in excess of the law codes of other non-evil governments) and rewards those who play by the rules. That said, Korvosa also recognizes that not everyone plays by the same rules, so it compensates by applying regulations to nonviolent criminals in the form of vice taxes (see Taxes) and official recognition of the city’s single thieves’ guild.

Regulation and law dominate Korvosa and how it lives. The city’s charter, an officially sanctioned document created by Emperor Halleck IV of Chelax in 4406, bears 247 amendments. These amendments add to the city’s unbreakable laws (those which no leader can modify, except by additional amendment) and are considered as binding and official as the charter itself. In addition, a thick, multivolume body of work spells out Korvosa’s many other laws and regulations, as well as the punishments for violating them.

Taxes

Like everybody else, the people of Korvosa hate to pay taxes. The city does not cripple its inhabitants with taxes, but it does have a few notable fee structures.



TEN CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS

Punishments for violent crimes in Korvosa are harsh, but the general populace considers them fair. Non-violent crimes carry differing punishments depending on the disposition of the criminal: A member of the thieves' guild (the only legal guild in the city) or a registered gang might receive a lighter sentence than does a freelancer, depending on the crime in question. The following selections of crimes and their punishments (listed in order they are applied) should not be construed as all-inclusive. Korvosa's legal code fills multiple thick volumes.

Crime	Punishments
Treason	Torture, death; no appeal
Murder	Torture, death; no appeal
Rape	Torture and castration, imprisonment (10–20 years), death; no appeal
Armed Robbery	Pay restitution or lose a hand, imprisonment (10–20 years)
Arson	Pay restitution or branding, imprisonment (10+ years); plus murder charge if fire kills
Unionizing	Branding, imprisonment (5–10 years); no appeal
Accidental Death	Pay restitution or torture, imprisonment (5–8 years)
Robbery ^T	Pay restitution or lose a hand, imprisonment (2–10 years), pay restitution
Drug Use	Imprisonment (4–6 months pre-trial, plus 2–3 years if guilty)
Burglary ^T	Pay restitution, imprisonment (1–2 years)

T: A member of the Cerulean Society (thieves' guild) or a registered gang can expect to receive a lighter sentence of around half the common punishment for these crimes.

Any dinghy, boat, or ship that docks in Korvosa must pay a dock fee. The fee ranges from 1 sp to 100 gp depending on the size of the vessel and the location of the dock. Only 20% of this fee goes to the city—the dock's owner takes the rest.

Korvosa's high property tax is based on an outdated system that calculates it based on the square footage of a building's ground floor. A convoluted formula modifies this simple conceit by accounting for multistory buildings, additional residents, and a mixture of uses within the same building.

Because the care and feeding of sins and vices comprises a healthy percentage of the city's underworld operations, and because taxing them directly is far too difficult, the city recently enacted vice taxes. Those who practice such activities gain amnesty from prosecution if they claim the income and pay the proper dues. Violent crimes never gain amnesty from this program.

Business

By charter amendment, Korvosa does not allow merchants, laborers, or tradesmen to form guilds (worse still, in workmen's eyes, it does allow for criminals to form a thieves' guild—currently the Cerulean Society). This practice prevents

these groups from price-fixing, the city's main concern, and allows the city to maintain control over much of its labor force. Most workers within the city are self-employed or work for a master to whom they apprenticed in their youths. The city relies on these cottage industries and the skilled workers who make them profitable, so of course it has one entire volume of laws and regulations devoted to the protection and rights of workers. Thanks to the Korvosan drive to succeed, though, the city's merchants also do well for themselves.

Numismatics

The Bank of Abadar mints uniquely Korvosan coins used throughout Varisia. Korvosa ties the value of its coins to those of Chelaxia, such that Chelaxian coins are also considered legal tender in the city.

Copper Pinch: Usually referred to as simply a pinch (plural and singular), dropping "copper." Calling multiple copper coins "pinches" elicits laughs and painful tweaks on the arm or backside.

Silver Shield: Frequently called by its full name to differentiate it from the shields used for protection.

Gold Sail: Always called by its full name to differentiate it from the similar term "sails" (see the Speaking Korvosan sidebar).

Platinum Crown: Occasionally referred to as simply a crown, dropping "platinum."





CHAPTER TWO: PLACES

Beautiful Korvosa gleams in the southeastern corner of Varisia and acts as the sole refuge of civilization in an otherwise untamed land. Well, yes, I suppose Magnimar might pass itself off as a civilized village, but really, the only place to find true culture in wild Varisia is within the mighty walls of Korvosa.

—Mercer Cucuteni, Magistrate of Tourism

The city of Korvosa wears its Chelish heritage proudly on its every building, tower, and rooftop. As the oldest human settlement in Varisia (a claim frequently debated by Kaer Maga), Korvosa considers itself the founding seat of civilization in an otherwise lawless region. Thanks to it and the spread of its people, Varisia has become a relatively safe place to live. Korvosa also calls itself the largest city in Varisia, and while this remains true (despite Magnimar continuing to gain on it), it once housed even more people than it does now. This shrinking of its population has left some parts of the city (particularly those near the southern end of the hill) underpopulated, even as the poorest members of society crush together in Old Korvosa.

NEIGHBORS

Korvosa does not—much to its constant chagrin—reign supreme within Varisia or even its immediate vicinity. It shares control of the area with three other power centers—one dwarven, one Chelaxian, and one of unknown origins.

Citadel Vraid: Built at Korvosa's expense for Chelixa's Order of the Nail, this impressive structure stands atop a narrow table within the southern arm of the Mindspin Mountains. Nearly impervious and built to intimidate as much as protect, Citadel Vraid dominates the valleys and passes it overlooks. The Order of the Nail calls the citadel its home and from the black gothic castle the Hellknights patrol in southeastern Varisia. In theory, the Hellknights of



Citadel Vraid are allied with Korvosa and frequently act as shock troops when the Korvosan Guard feels outmatched or doesn't want to risk its own soldiers. Truthfully, the Order of the Nail serves only itself and remains on Korvosa's "side" as long as the city pays it.

Janderhoff: The dwarves of Janderhoff quarry the dark surfaces of the Mindspin Mountains to extract prized black marble. They supplement this by mining veins of valuable ores, such as thick bands of dark magnetite (iron) and chalcocite (copper), a vast strand of silver, and a thin thread of mithral. Every pebble of black marble and every gram of silver the dwarves extract goes to Korvosa, while they openly sell goods they work from the iron and copper ores to whomever can afford their prices. The mithral they keep for themselves. Thanks to more than two centuries of trade and mutual protection, Janderhoff and Korvosa maintain a healthy and synergistic relationship.

This trade partnership extends beyond the two cities, as Janderhoff acts as a middleman of sorts for Korvosa and the Shoanti of the Storval Rise. Because the two groups hate one another but also desperately wish to trade with one another, the dwarves act as intermediaries. While they charge only minimal fees for their services, the dwarves of Janderhoff continue to make steady profits.

Kaer Maga: When the people of Korvosa began to explore the region around them, they eventually came across the walled-in city of Kaer Maga, along the edge of the Storval Plateau.

The respective rulers of each city instantly took a dislike to one another. For more than a century, the cities vied for influence over southeastern Varisia. This conflict came to a head in 4663, when King Chadris sent an entire regiment of Korvosan Guards to besiege Kaer Maga. This ill-advised siege lasted for two months and cost the Korvosans 117 lives. Despite Korvosa losing the siege in the traditional sense, King Chadris accomplished his goal of forcing Kaer Maga to relinquish its claims on the lands below the Storval Plateau. In the four decades since the Treaty of Sirathu,¹ the two cities have existed in an increasingly cooperative state of peace, with (mostly illicit) trade between them growing with each passing year.

HOLDINGS

More than just a city, Korvosa exerts direct control or strong influence over much of southeastern Varisia. Its power stretches as far west as the Fenwall Mountains and Ashwood Forest and as far north as the Storval Rise. Alone among all settlements in that area, Kaer Maga resists falling under

Korvosa's control. The following descriptions touch on the most important of Korvosa's holdings and how they relate to the city.

Abken: Founded as a commune by peace-loving riff raff, Abken's existence continues to baffle and chafe at Korvosa's strict and militaristic leadership. The "family" who lives within the walled compound of Abken occasionally pays taxes to Korvosa, in the form of a variety of foods (many of which are quite tasty and are likely the sole reason the commune is allowed to continue to exist) and the occasional shipment of illegal cabble-weed and flayleaf (see the Drugs of Korvosa sidebar). These payments usually occur when the town is reminded, such as when the leader of the nearby garrison of Korvosan Guards is in a bad mood and feels like harassing the town leaders.

Biston: The unusual fishermen and farmers of Biston reside in a series of caves within a stone cliff abutting Lake Syrantula. Founded by the Korvosa-born adventurer Jhenni Biston when she and her comrades cleared out the caves, the town of Biston long held a strong sense of independence. This independent streak resulted in conflict in 4658, when a group of separatists led by Jhenni's grandson, Randas, attempted to break free of Korvosa's rule. Korvosa responded with overwhelming force, sending half the Sable Company and an entire regiment of Korvosan Guards to crush the rebellion and establish

TEN LARGEST BUILDINGS

These are Korvosa's largest buildings, in order of total square feet of all floors above the surface (cellars and other entrances to the Vaults do not count). Kendall Amphitheater, while quite large, does not count as a building for the purposes of this list.

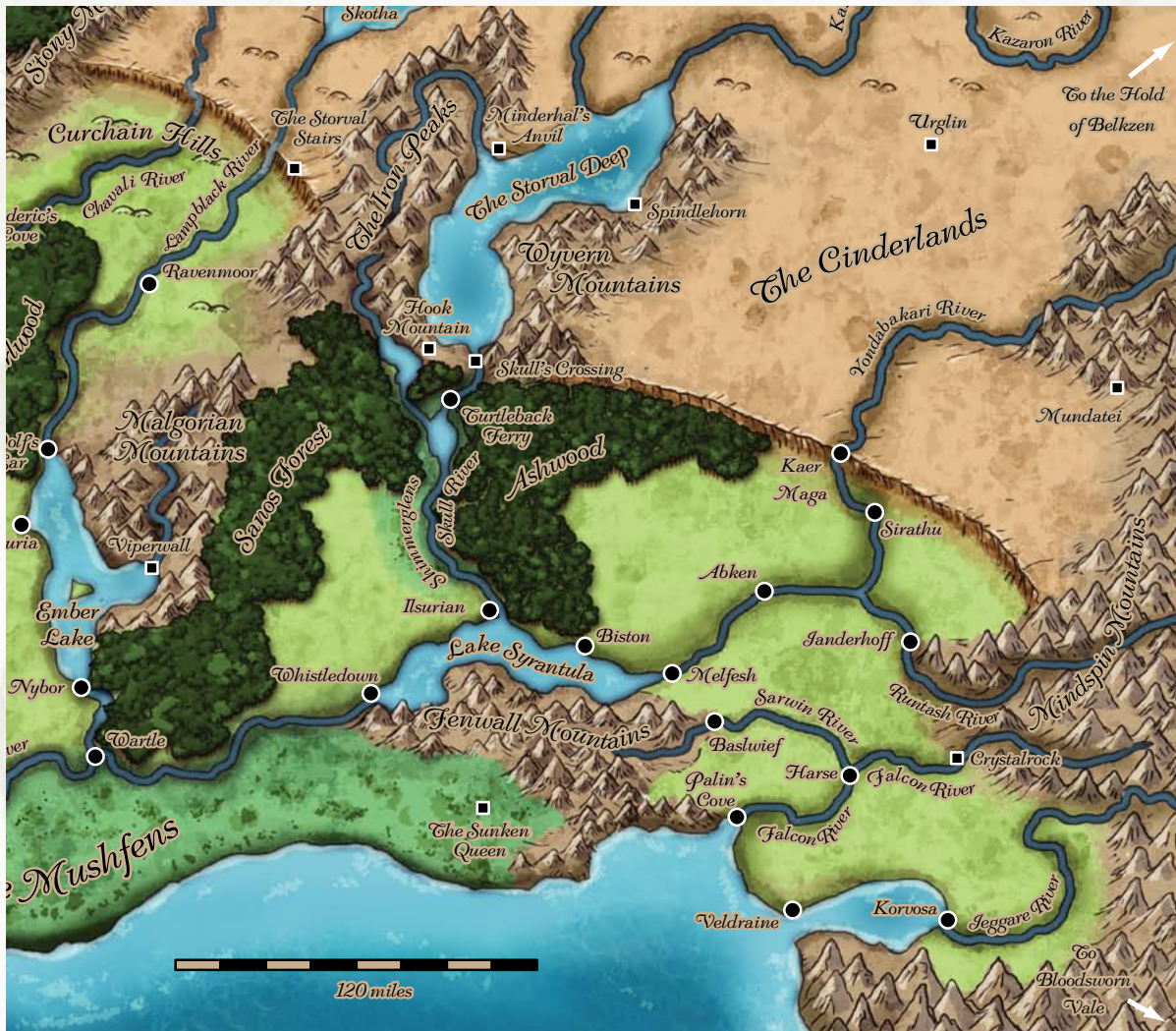
1. Hall of Summoning
2. Keep of Castle Korvosa
3. Great Tower
4. Pantheon of Many
5. Jeggare Museum
6. City Hall
7. Longacre Building
8. Old City Hall
9. Verso Hall
10. Temple of Asmodeus

martial law. All of the agitators and rebels were dragged back to Korvosa, where they universally faced death. Korvosa only recently lifted martial law in the community.

Baslwief: Born in Harse but loyal to Korvosa, Jayden Baslwief worked as a surveyor and cartographer. While following the path of Schwed Harse, he came upon a wide clearing on the banks of the Sarwin River within the foothills of the Fenwall Mountains that would make an excellent site for a village. He petitioned Korvosa for a charter and, in 4563, he and a group of his friends and family founded Baslwief. The mining performed in Baslwief augments the flow of metals out of Janderhoff, and the competition between the two keeps prices relatively low in Korvosa.

Harse: Sarwin Harse honored her father in 4536 by founding a village at the confluence of the Sarwin and Falcon rivers. Harse quickly became an important stopping place for dwarven merchants heading for Palin's Cove and Veldraine, although it proves too far out of the way for the convoys passing between Janderhoff and Korvosa. Most importantly,

1. This treaty ended the war with Kaer Maga and gave all of that city's holdings to Korvosa.



though, Harse serves as a gateway to Korvosa's other inland holdings, allowing it to prosper.

Melfesh: Korvosa's largest inland holding, Melfesh controls the Runtash River with its massive drawbridge. The town charges tolls for ships wishing to pass, partnering in trade with Janderhoff, which receives a cut of the tax. Ships from Magnimar and its holdings pay a much higher toll (up to double) than those from Korvosa or even other countries. These tolls have led to heated exchanges more than once, prompting Korvosa to house a relatively large garrison in the town. As a result, Melfesh is also the most heavily defended inland Korvosan holding, providing military support to Biston and Baslwief.

Palin's Cove: For roughly the first century of its existence, the strategically vital Palin's Cove relied extensively on food and supplies from Korvosa. Surviving as little more than a military outpost for many years, the settlement proved its worth in more than a dozen sieges laid (and lost) by the Shoanti. Modern Palin's Cove is an industrial marvel, with forges, refineries, smelters, and a plethora of other manufacturing concerns pouring black smoke into the sky.

The town bristles with catapults, ballistae, and trebuchets, which also comprise its primary exports.

Sirathu: Poorest of Korvosa's holdings, Sirathu only recently came under the city's control, as Korvosa wrested it from Kaer Maga with the Treaty of Sirathu in 4663. A dirty community without hope, Korvosa's elites wonder at its continued existence. Recently, however, the village gained a bit of fame when rumors spread of a young girl there blessed with a minor gift of Pharamasma.

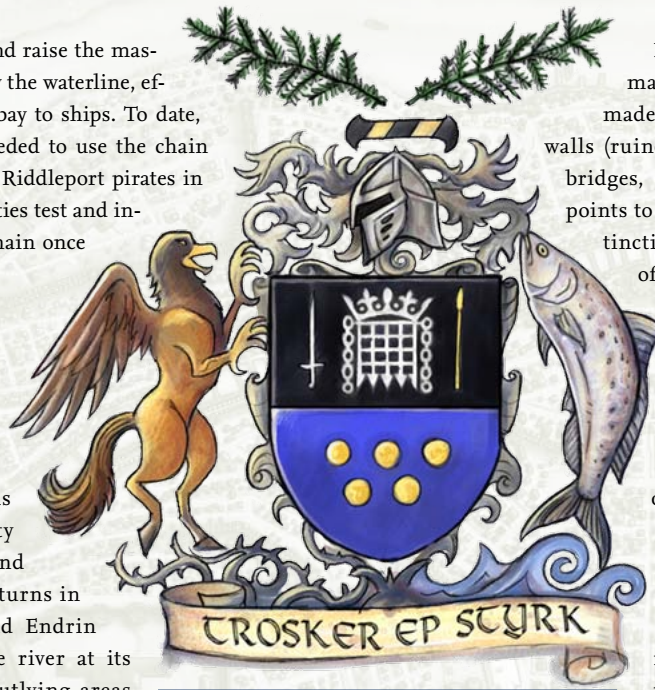
Veldraine: The second-oldest Chelaxian settlement in Varisia, Veldraine has long depended on Korvosa for trade and support, even as Korvosa has relied on it for naval protection. It is the holding most reliant on Korvosa for its existence, which it more than makes up for with its nigh-impenetrable defense of Conqueror's Bay. Veldraine's ships act as Korvosa's navy and its small but prestigious naval academy trains the best sailors and ship captains in Varisia. In addition to its powerful navy, Veldraine also guards the bay with its impressive chain. A massive feat of engineering, the chain is miles long and is anchored deep within a basalt shelf opposite the town. An immense winch allows teams of men and oxen to

wind the slack links and raise the massive chain to just below the waterline, effectively blocking the bay to ships. To date, Veldraine has only needed to use the chain once, during a raid by Riddleport pirates in 4685, although authorities test and inspect the winch and chain once per month.

CITY OVERVIEW

Korvosa sits at the end of Conqueror's Bay, where the Jeggare River spills into the sea. The city fills the spit of land formed by two sharp turns in the Jeggare River and Endrin Isle (which splits the river at its mouth), with a few outlying areas on the far shore of the Jeggare. It stands on two hills: Garrison Hill on Endrin Isle and Citadel Hill on the mainland. The Narrows of Saint Alika separates Endrin Isle from the shore. Off the coast of the southern end of Citadel Hill rises Jeggare Isle, a small rock that juts from the sea and provides a foundation for Palin's Lighthouse.

Five landmarks give Korvosa a distinctive skyline. Three of these landmarks exist on a truly colossal scale and have survived for millennia. Castle Korvosa stands atop a massive pyramid that rises to a flattened top. The Pillar Wall stretches across most of the southern end of Citadel Hill, a 100-foot-tall remainder of what once must have been a magnificent barrier. Just beyond the western terminus of the Pillar Wall stands the Gatefoot, which obviously originally belonged to a part of the wall and that likely served as part of a gateway of some kind. The other two landmarks, while impressive, do not come close to the size or grandeur of the ruins. Standing at the northernmost point of the Merciless Cliffs, the Great Tower reaches 270 feet in the air and serves several military roles for the city. Directly south of it stands the equally impressive Hall of Summoning, the center of operations for the Acadamae.



KORVOSA'S OFFAL SECRET

Built where the land meets the water and straddling a major river that dumps into the most prosperous clam field in Varisia, the lower sections of Korvosa face a huge, stinking problem: their own waste. Many of the sewers beneath Korvosa drain into massive cesspits to the south, but the isolated wards on Endrin Isle trust to an alternative means of disposal: otyughs. The otyughs of Korvosa have more than tripled in number (and can still only barely keep up with the city's offal) since Lord Magistrate Dess Leroung imported them from Chelixa almost two centuries ago.

Large steel plugs in the streets, opened by equally massive crank-driven winches, separate the city's population from its surly waste disposers. These otyughs occasionally break out of the sewers and rampage through Korvosa, where they're subsequently corralled and incarcerated again by guardsmen wielding longspears coated in tranquilizing poisons.

The only people allowed to live within the Acadamae either teach at or attend the college. Instructors live in apartment suites within the walls for free, while the rent for students' tenement flats and studios are included in their already expensive tuition.

Prestigious and highly esteemed, the famed Acadamae attracts students from as far away as distant Geb,² and

Besides its impressive landmarks, Korvosa's other famed man-made features include its impressive walls (ruined and otherwise), its beautiful bridges, and its famed Vaults. These it points to with pride, but not all of its distinctive features attract the attention of potential visitors and residents.

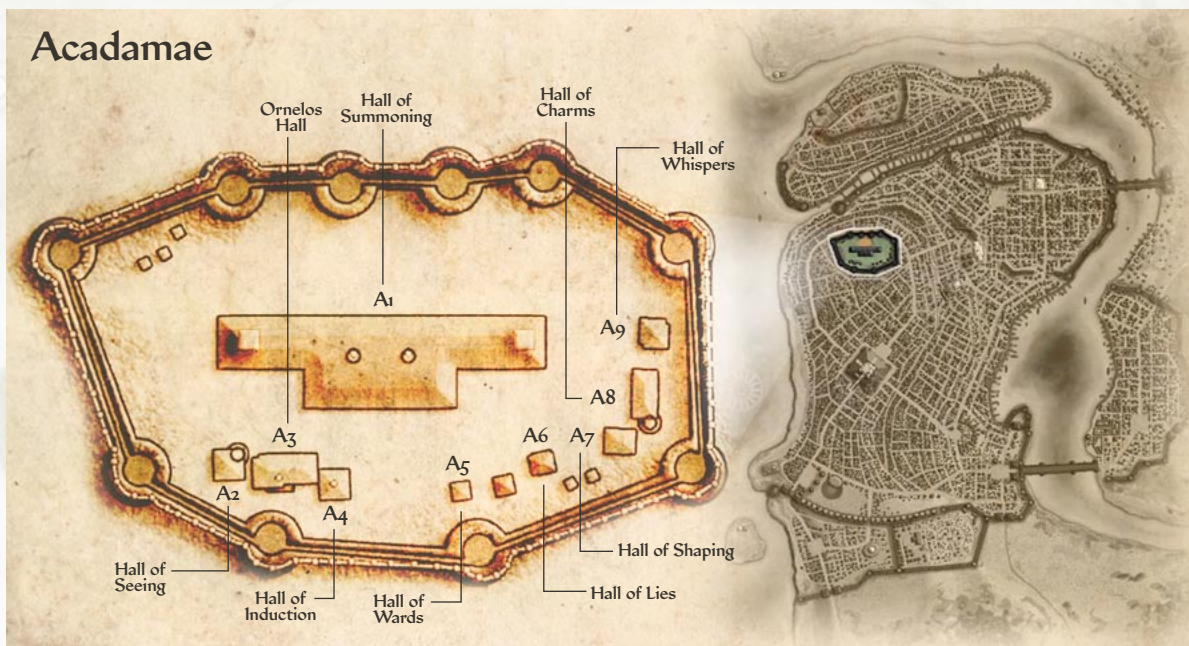
Chief among the shameful features is the rooftop area of the city known as the Shingles, which serves as both a highway for bandits and a refuge for monsters, thieves, and other undesirables.

GAZETTEER

Many places of wonder and intrigue fill Korvosa. The following descriptions, broken down by the district in which they appear, feature only a selection of the places of interest within the city. Each entry bears with it an alphanumeric code that corresponds with the proper district map included herein. The letters correspond directly to each district: E for East Shore, G for Gray, H for the Heights, M for Midland, O for Old Korvosa, N for North Point, and S for South Shore. Because they stand out so well on their own, the Acadamae and Castle Korvosa receive their own headings, as do the Shingles and Vaults.

The Acadamae

Although it stands within Citadel Crest, the Acadamae does not belong to the ward. Faculty and students of the college live within its imposing walls and outsiders may enter only when they come with a purpose, such as delivering food or performing maintenance, or during the Breaching Festival (see the Breaching Festival sidebar).



even—to the annoyance of the far-more ancient colleges there—Cheliox. The Acadamae teaches all eight schools of magic, but its primary focus lies in conjuration. Regardless of an apprentice's specialization (the Acadamae only teaches specialists) every student at the college must pass a grueling exam in conjuration in order to graduate. Thus, the college does not allow its students to forsake learning of conjuration. Rumors speak of those attempting to quit the school becoming test subjects for students of necromancy, but to date no one has verified these stories.

Shrouded in secrecy, the campus's 30-foot-high walls only barely conceal the grand Hall of Summoning. Visitors and residents cannot hope to ignore the presence of the Acadamae, but since very few people unconnected with the college know what happens within it, the place births abundant (and sometimes ludicrous) rumors.

History: Hoping to spur further settlement of the mainland, in 4473, Lord Ornelos established the Acadamae. The Acadamae stood outside the walls of Mainshore and more than a thousand feet from Castle Korvosa. Both the leader of the Korvosan Guard and the commandant of the Sable Order warned that their groups could not promise protection in that location, but Lord Ornelos seemed unconcerned. Utilizing the Treaty of Crystalrock,³ he secured from the dwarves of Janderhoff both supplies and workers. In less than a month, an imposing black-marble wall surrounded a five-acre area containing only one small building.

From its founding until roughly a century ago, the Acadamae had no true focus as a school for specialists, treating the seven most powerful schools as equals (then as now, divination was always treated as a universal school all students needed to

study). With the collapse of the Empire of Cheliox, the new government's embracing of infernal influences, and the death of Volshyenek Ornelos in 4607, the Acadamae shifted its focus. The college became heavily involved in the conjuration and control of devils. While it does not actively promote an evil agenda, the college nonetheless tolerates devil-summoning and Asmodeus worship. Despite this lenience toward evil, the college remains a truly Chelioxian and Korvosan institution, and as such it does not allow for wanton destruction or chaos. The evil it embraces is precise, organized, and regimented.

The college has grown in the intervening years, and today, numerous buildings fill the walls of the campus, with three more satellite buildings spread throughout the city. The city of Korvosa helps sponsor the college with tax funds, and instructors in the school receive tax exemptions based on the prestige and recognition they bring.

Campus Life: Nearly a town unto itself, the Acadamae provides its students and faculty with everything they need to live. Thus, students of the Acadamae are rarely seen outside its imposing walls. Those who do exit do so in groups as part of their studies or to shop at the Golden Orery (see **H5**). On rare occasions, students sneak into one of the many taverns of the city to relieve stress, although it is far more common for them to sneak alcohol or drugs back onto campus.

While most of the schools work together in relative harmony—and those that don't frequently do not interact at all except in the most formalized ways possible—an increasing animosity between students of conjuration and necromancy have led recently to duels. These formal (and sometimes informal) challenges continue to increase in frequency and viciousness, but as of yet have not led to deaths.

2. A nation in southern Garund ruled by necromancers.
3. The mutual-protection treaty signed with Janderhoff.



A great number of imps make their homes on the Acadamae's campus. These imps frequently take to the air, flitting about above the campus and across Korvosa. They tend to travel in groups, as the city's pseudodragon population views them as foul representations of evil and petty sadism (which, of course, they are).

Students who attend the Acadamae usually have no interest in doing good works. Generally, they seek power at almost any cost. Many become swayed by the honeyed words of the devils they summon, and most of these lose any morality they had and slip inexorably into evil.

Recruitment: The Acadamae accepts nearly anyone who applies, as those who fail become test subjects for those who do not. Occasionally, though, the college doesn't receive enough applicants to fill out its attendance needs, and in those infrequent years it sets up a recruitment drive throughout Korvosa and its holdings.

The Campus: The individual halls that comprise the Acadamae house classrooms specially designed to facilitate their areas of study. For the most part, these buildings architecturally reflect the nuances of the schools they house.

A1. Hall of Summoning: One of the largest single buildings in Varisia, the Hall of Summoning has defined the new look and feel of the Acadamae since its completion almost a quarter-century ago. Nearly five times as large as the prior Hall of Summoning (and an order of magnitude larger than the school's temporary home in Ornelos Hall), the college's newest flagship building features 13 binding circles within its magnificent walls, as well as three immense ones encircling the building itself.

A2. Hall of Seeing: Crystal spheres, mirrors, and reflecting pools fill this hall and influence its architecture. The dome on its roof frequently swirls with clouds and ephemeral images of people and places, as it is actually an immense crystal ball with magical power exceeding even what its size would suggest. The main entry doors of the building look like giant Harrow cards, with the exact cards represented changing every time someone touches them.

A3. Ornelos Hall: The oldest building on campus, Ornelos Hall alone has never been torn down and rebuilt. Ivy covers the walls and centuries of foot traffic have smoothed the steps, but the three interior binding circles remain unscathed and unbroken despite thousands of uses. Since the completion of the newest Hall of Summoning, Ornelos Hall has returned to acting as the administrative building for the Acadamae.

A4. Hall of Induction: Solid dark-iron walls form three sides and the roof of this imposing but plain building known among the students and faculty as the Cube. Only the front of the structure, made from flat iron plates welded or riveted together, breaks the monotony. Inside, the plainness of the Hall of Induction continues unabated,

THE BREACHING FESTIVAL

Every year, the dean of abjuration at the Acadamae sends out a dozen invitations. The top student from each of the seven other schools receives an invitation, as do the leaders of the thieves' guild and four other known gangs chosen at random. These invitations grant the holders temporary amnesty, allowing them to participate in the competition without fear of arrest for past crimes (those who foolishly commit crimes while thus protected usually end up as test subjects in the Hall of Whispers).

In addition to the invited participants, the annual event draws hundreds of onlookers, who fill the Acadamae's grounds and stare in wonder at the secretive college's otherwise closed campus. Students manning the gates prevent beggars and riffraff from entering the grounds, and as a rule no human child shorter than a dwarf may enter. For this one day, the normally staid and infernal wizarding college becomes more like a carnival than an esteemed and world-famous place of learning.

Beginning at sunrise and continuing until sunset, the invitees attempt to penetrate the defenses of the hall and to step foot anywhere within the building. Two-dozen Korvosan Guards patrol the interior of the building, looking for a victor. As part of the rules, only one wizard may stay within the building to defend it against its potential invaders. For the most part, this young abjurer (selected by the head of the school) has little to do but watch, as the building's magical and mundane wards and protections prove more than sufficient.

Every year in which no one succeeds in breaching the building, the prize grows. Since the first festival in 4544, the prize has grown by a few thousand gold sails or a minor magic item every single year. In 163 years, only one person has ever claimed the prize. Only 7 years into the contest, Dyson Fordyce (the fourth son of the lord at that time) managed to step half a shoe beyond the building's threshold, granting him a small fortune. Dyson donated half his winnings to House Fordyce, allowing it to rise to the status of Great House (a title it only held for a century), and used the other half to ensure for himself a life of quiet luxury in the hills outside Veldraine. Since then, the rumored purse for any future victor purportedly exceeds the yearly budget of most noble houses in the city.

with five empty floors containing only a plain spiral staircase in the center. No chairs or chalkboards clutter the vast, open areas within.

The school of evocation focuses its studies on practice and leaves theory to the other schools. Within the Cube, students spend hours upon hours practicing the ancient formulae of specific utterances, gestures, and rare items that produce the desired effects. Instructors patrol the floors, ready at a moment's notice to throw up magical walls to block errant spells cast by foolish or overeager students.



The entire top two floors of the building are lined with multiple invisible walls produced via magic.

A5. *Hall of Wards*: The school of abjuration's building looks relatively mundane when compared to the others, but its plain exterior hides the best-guarded building in Korvosa. Even the Mint of Abadar's myriad defenses pale in comparison to those in place around and within the Hall of Wards. Students from other schools and members of various gangs receive invitations once a year with a deceptively simple offer: step foot within the Hall of Wards. See The Breaching Festival Sidebar.

A6. *Hall of Lies*: Every morning, with the coming of dawn, this building changes appearance. Some days it looks regal, refined, and sophisticated, blending in well with the other halls on campus. Other days it appears run-down, gaudy, or like something from a carnival. The building's changing appearance has no rhyme or reason, but it does sometimes reflect the current mood of the staff and student body (the day after Queen Domina died, for example, it took on the shape of the Grand Cathedral of Pharasma). Regardless of its general appearance, though, its basic shape always remains the same. This building, of course, houses the school of illusion. Within the Hall of Lies, no one can trust what he sees (or hears, or feels, or smells, or tastes).

A7. *Hall of Shaping*: As a part of their graduation test, transmuters must in some way alter the Hall of Shaping. If they cause any part of the hall to collapse, they fail. Students who fail get transformed into songbirds and live out their lives in a large cage on the top floor of the hall. The result of this practice, over the course of many decades, has naturally led to a building constructed from a hodgepodge of shapes, colors, and materials. Some ambitious testers try to improve the hall's aesthetic, to homogenize it. They do not succeed (although they don't necessarily fail the test).

A8. *Hall of Charms*: By far the most beautiful building on campus, the Hall of Charms houses the school of enchantment.

The prettiest girls and handsomest boys spend much of their time within this hall, and students

from other schools try to give it a wide berth. Unfortunately for the avoiders, except for those who choose to forsake the study of enchantment, every student must at some point take classes within this gleaming hall. The Hall of Charms frequently produces unreasonably powerful enchanters who sometimes even rival conjurers for power within the college. Several of the Acadamae's past headmasters came from the Hall of Charms, a fact that continues to baffle and annoy the college's conjurers.

A9. *Hall of Whispers*: Sinister in appearance (more so than normal for the Acadamae) and undeniably haunted, the Hall of Whispers houses the college's school of necromancy. Here, young dabblers in death learn first-hand the dangers and unwholesome powers of their oft-shunned school. Apprentice necromancers make no attempts to hide their displeasure at the treatment they and their school receive at the hands of other students, instructors, and administrators. Dark rumors abound throughout the college that the Hall of Whispers holds in its Vaults a small but growing army of undead—an army whose sole purpose is to topple the school of conjuration and gain control of the Acadamae.

Castle Korvosa

The centerpiece of the city, Castle Korvosa towers over every other building. Two pieces comprise Castle Korvosa: the Grand Mastaba and the high-walled citadel itself. Together, Castle Korvosa rises high above Citadel Hill. Only the king, his immediate family, the seneschal of the castle, and his family may live in Castle Korvosa. Either man can invite long-term guests (such as the king's small harem), but the other can evict these guests at any time (except during times of war).

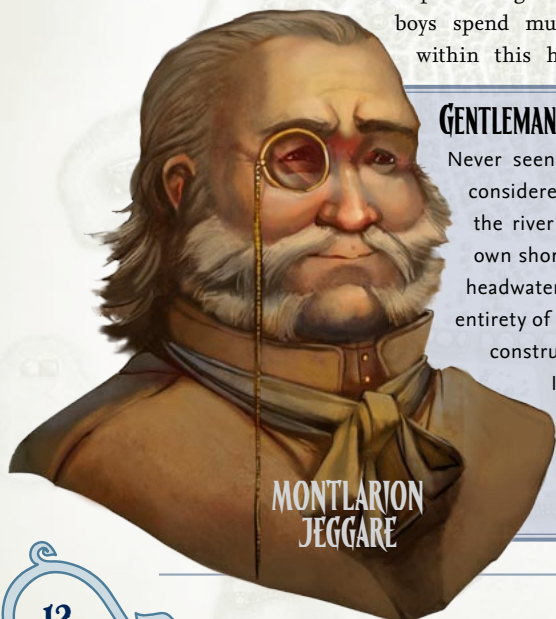
Since the completion of the main walls in 4464, multiple lord magistrates, seneschals, and monarchs have added to the section of the castle within the high stone walls. As such, despite a relatively consistent neo-Chelaxian styling,⁴ the castle's main keep contains many mismatched and randomly placed towers, walls, and stairs.

Descriptions for the individual pieces of the castle follow.

GENTLEMAN EXPLORER

Never seen without his hallmark monocle firmly in place, Montlarion Jeggare (4331–4417) considered himself a gentleman explorer. More gentleman than explorer, his expedition up the river that now bears his name required precious little effort on his part. Despite his own shortcomings, his contingent of marines, trappers, and scouts explored the river to its headwaters, suffering only one death along the way. Jeggare died a pauper, having spent the entirety of his extensive wealth on the care and feeding of Korvosa's earliest settlers and on the construction of much of the town's first attempts at infrastructure.

In addition to the river that bears his name, Jeggare's legacy lives on in numerous other places in and around the city. The low shelf upon which Citadel Vraid stands bears his name, as does the first bridge built connecting Endrin Isle with the mainland. Jeggare's Jug, a large tavern that survived the Great Fire mostly intact, as well as a few statues of various sizes, also pay homage to the town's first philanthropist.



4. Identifiable by its black stone, ugly gargoyles, and multitude of spikes.



Castle Korvosa

Grand Mastaba: This four-sided sandstone pyramid is built to a cyclopean scale. A set of stairs cut for humans rises up the center of the northeastern face of the pyramid. One corner of the massive pyramid appears crumbled and worn, but this is not the result of poor construction. Rather, the attacks of lazy masons and stoneworkers have caused the looting and degradation of the corner, a practice made illegal by Eodred I.

Prior to the arrival of the Chelaxians, the Grand Mastaba served as a Shoanti holy site and strongpoint in the area. The Shoanti built a semi-permanent encampment at the base of the pyramid, as well as a rough wooden palisade atop it. This allowed the natives to control the area for hundreds of years and repulse attacks from other tribes and savage humanoids alike.

When the Chelish colonists finally wrested control of the hill and pyramid from the Shoanti, they found a perfectly smooth pyramid of incredible proportions with a flattened top. Investigation of the site determined that the pyramid's builders constructed it with the flat top in mind, and that it did not bear that feature from incompleteness. When the Chelaxians gained control of the pyramid, they stripped it of the Shoanti's wooden constructions and immediately set to work building a stone wall around the perimeter of the top.

The Keep: The castle itself is formed of an immense black-marble keep. Multiple towers rise from the roofed keep, including the impressively large Epochal Tower (housing a

clock maintained by Goupie Capabopple; see area **M4**) and the impressively tall Seawatch Tower. Dozens of Korvosan Guards patrol the keep at all times, with more living in or near the castle and ready to come to its defense at a moment's notice. Sable Company marines also live in and guard the keep, and they keep a hippogriff aerie in one of the towers therein.

The Crimson Throne, seat of power for the monarchs of the city, stands on the third floor of the keep. It is the only chair on the floor. Visitors and guests are expected to stand or kneel.

East Shore

The only district beyond the channel of the Jeggare River, East Shore is home to a handful of noble houses closely tied to the military of the city, as well as the struggling Theumanexus College. East Shore has no wards to subdivide it.

E1. Theumanexus College: The campus for this small wizard school occupies the grounds of the former manor of House Galdur, a supporter of House Viamio during the Cousins' War. When the war concluded, the emperor stripped House Galdur of its noble title and declared all lands of the family forfeit, including this estate. After changing hands a dozen times, the retired wizard adventurer and newly hired Acadamae teacher Yaris Verso purchased the manor in 4603. Shortly after the rise of House Thrune in Chelax and the Acadamae's infernal shift soon thereafter, Verso donated his Korvosan home to a few idealistic colleagues and left the city.



Where the Acadamae only teaches specialists, Theumanexus offers a generalist approach to wizardry. Although specialists do occasionally graduate from Theumanexus, mostly because they could not pass the Acadamae's strict entrance exam, the apprentices of the college all learn at least the basics of every school and every kind of wizardly implement. Students and faculty of the Acadamae somewhat justifiably look down on those of Theumanexus, who in turn do their best to ignore the taunts and cruel pranks of their more famous competitors.

The campus contains three buildings.

E1a. Geezebottle Hall: Verso's closest wizard friend and the only founding member of the school who remains alive donated the funds to build this impractically designed building. During construction of the building, someone finally pointed out to Tepest Geezebottle that most students would not, in fact, be gnomes, and thus building a structure sized for humans might prove more valuable. Thus, half of this bizarre building contains rooms and dimensions comfortable for humans, while the other half holds three floors sized perfectly for gnomes and halflings. Most of these smaller rooms go unused.

E1b. Toryr Hall: Named for Verso's esteemed apprentice and the school's first headmaster, this small, simple building holds five small classrooms.

E1c. Verso Hall: This magnificent manor house is built in the Old White style of Imperial Cheliox popular a century ago,⁵ giving it a gentrified and classic look. Whitewashed trellises along three walls cover much of the building in century-old climbing roses. The building serves as the school's nerve center and contains a few administrative offices and a half-dozen classrooms.

E2. Leftover's: East Shore's only inn contains 12 two-person rooms in addition to its large, cozy common room. It charges standard rates and offers standard amenities for an inn. The one-armed innkeeper, retired soldier Portenus Gaskelinni, happily tells the story of how a Shoanti berserker relieved him of his appendage just before he returned the favor and separated the Shoanti from his head. Two Oathday nights a month, Gaskelinni's Korvosan Guard buddies stop in and reenact the skirmish (with blunt, wooden swords) for amused audiences.

E3. Horse Shop: As its name implies, this establishment sells horses, as well as ponies, mules, donkeys, the occasional dromedary, and other pack and riding animals. The Horse Shop has the fairest prices in town, often selling at nearly a tenth lower than anywhere else.

E4. Shoreline Drinkhall: This most popular of the few taverns in East Shore does steady business every hour of every day. Three times per day, off-duty garrison guards

5. Characterized by whitewashed walls, ornately decorated eaves, and massive arched windows.



stop in for a drink before heading home or back to the barracks. Longshoremen stop by in the evenings to carouse with friends and grouse about their back-breaking work. Warehouse managers, dock bosses, Korvosan Guard officers, and even the occasional younger son of an East Shore noble family all stop by the drinkhall throughout the day.

Owned, operated, and occasionally patrolled by House Endrin, Shoreline Drinkhall has a reputation for fair prices and stiff drinks, although its meal offerings taste more like military rations than tavern food. Since East Shore is so close to Thief Camp it often fills with Shoanti and Varisians, who seem to instinctively know how to find the drinkhall. Bar brawls occur regularly within the tavern, although not quite with the frequency or danger of bar fights in the Sticky Mermaid.

Gray

Unlike all other districts in Korvosa, Gray's residents mostly stay to themselves and are generally well-behaved. Of course, most of Gray's residents are dead. Gray District holds four tiny wards (the smallest of the city): Gold ward, Everyman ward, Potter's ward, and Sepulcher ward. Burial costs range from 1 cp for internment in Potter's ward to 1,500 gp or more for Gold. The only living creatures who reside in Gray belong to the church of Pharamasma and live within the temple.

Potter's Ward: Thousands of names are engraved into the black walls in the southeastern corner of the district. These names indicate those people buried in mass graves in the ward. Only people who cannot afford the 2 silver shields fee for burial in Everyman ward end up in one of the constantly churned mass burials here. While the other wards tend to give rise to intelligent undead of varying sorts, Potter's ward is predisposed to create the mindless kind.

Everyman Ward: Most people who die in Korvosa end up in this large section of the graveyard. The sizable mausoleums flanking the entrance to the necropolis lead down into a pair of Vaults: one a half-filled (when discovered) Shoanti burial chamber the church of Pharamasma has since expanded and the other an ever-deepening angled tunnel that digs into the side of the hill and branches out to a number of ossuaries. Wealthier people are buried in plots under the grassy hillside.

Gold Ward: Reserved for nobility (and in the past century, royalty), as well as the Commandant of the Sable Company and the Field Marshal of the Korvosan Guard, this ward contains dozens of elaborate mausoleums and crypts of varying sizes. This ward frequently produces or houses powerful intelligent undead within its many vaults.

Sepulcher Ward: This is the smallest of Gray's wards and holds the Grand Cathedral of Pharamasma and a small fenced yard of holy ground. Rumors speak of an extensive vault under the cathedral that acts as a reliquary and ossuary.

Clerics, paladins, and highly religious laypeople frequently end up in this ward, which also reportedly houses most of the remains of Saint Alika.

G1. Grand Cathedral of Pharamasma: In the center of Sepulcher ward stands this, the largest building of the district. As the office and home of Bishop Keppira d'Bear of the Fateful Church of Pharamasma and a retinue of lower-ranking clerics and faithful warriors, the Grand Cathedral acts as a barracks, temple, and keep. Its high, black-marble walls contain few windows (more on the second floor than the first, but even those are mostly just arrow slits).

The Grand Cathedral has served as a secure location multiple times, and despite a half-dozen sieges by undead, it has yet to fall. More commonly, the cathedral acts as a strongpoint and place of rest during the reverse sieges that occasionally plague the district. These reverse sieges occur when formerly interred residents rise and attempt to escape beyond the walls of the district, forcing the clerics to form a living wall around the perimeter. The clerics forming these living walls perform coordinated turnings, forcing the undead back toward the center of the district and the destructive defenses of the Great Cathedral.

G2. Great Tomb of Leadership: One of the largest crypts in Gold ward is the Great Tomb of Leadership, a heavily secured and constantly guarded building that contains the entrance to a vast Vault. This Vault holds the bodies of past military leaders and the city's most decorated soldiers. At all times, one marine and one soldier stand guard in front of the tomb, with another pair patrolling nearby. Both military organizations consider it a great honor to guard the tomb and bestow the relatively easy duty on those likely to earn internment there in the future. The guards at this tomb are duty-bound to stay within 50 feet of it at all times (as marked by a low white marble stone wall) but may use ranged weapons and spells to aid Pharamasman clerics in attacking nearby graverobbers or undead.

The Heights

Standing atop Citadel Hill, the Heights District has a commanding view of the rest of the city, which its residents look down on—both figuratively and literally. Nearly all of Korvosa's power players reside in the Heights, including the queen herself. The Heights District holds three wards: Citadel Crest, Cliffside, and University.

Citadel Crest: Citadel Crest is the wealthiest ward in Korvosa, with more than a dozen noble families and twice that many powerful merchants living within. It contains two of the city's modern landmarks: the Great Tower and the temple of Asmodeus. The cost of land in the ward more than doubles that of the next-most-expensive ward, Cliffside. Violent crimes rarely occur in the ward, although property crimes, especially burglary, occur with surprising and unfortunate regularity. Alone among all the wards in the city, Citadel



The Heights

Crest has no inns. Visitors instead can stay in one of the three noble-owned bed and breakfasts scattered throughout.

Cliffside: Lesser nobles and not-quite-as-wealthy merchants live in Cliffside. Its claims to fame include the Gatefoot, Kendall Amphitheater, and a section of the Pillar Wall. Most of the ward's wealth and political power crams itself up into the northern section of the ward and along the cliff that gives the ward its name. Two Sable Company watchhouses along the cliff and regular patrols from the Korvosan guard make this a relatively safe ward.

University: The seat of mundane higher learning in the city, this ward houses the University of Korvosa (thus the ward's name), the grand Korvosan Museum, and a number of smaller schools and cultural locations of various kinds. Most of the crimes that occur in University fall into the misdemeanor and petty categories, and it has suffered from the fewest murders of any similarly aged wards.

H1. Great Tower: Although the top of Castle Korvosa's Seawatch Tower soars above every other building in Varisia (thanks to the immense pyramid that serves as the castle's foundation), the Great Tower rivals some of the Thassilonian monuments as one of the tallest free-standing structures in the region. The tower stands 270 feet high, with a 100-foot-diameter footprint and a roofline diameter of 40 feet. It has 19 floors divided into a number of different uses, with an extensive Vault system beneath it. Only two known entrances exist into the tower: the main entrance that opens onto the tower's third floor (accessible by a gently arcing bridge) and the hippogriff openings of the top three floors. At its base, the tower's massive granite walls (faced with an inch of black marble with an intervening sheet of lead between)

measure 12 feet thick and are reinforced with a skeleton of steel and black iron. As it rises, the tower's circular curtain wall narrows until it measures only a few inches thick. The internal metal skeleton, an innovation brought from distant Alkenstar,⁶ bears an increasing amount of the tower's structural load until around the 200-foot mark, at which point it bears all of the load.

Queen Domina commissioned the tower in 4684, but she did not survive to see its completion in 4688. Hoping to rival even the Thassilonians and seeking to steal some of the Acadamae's fame (the grand, new Hall of Summoning having just been completed the year before), Queen Domina nearly drained the city's coffers dry to build the tower. Indeed, the original Alkenstar architect and engineers (brought to Korvosa at incredible cost) designed the tower to rise almost 320 feet, but King Eodred II saw no reason to bankrupt the city over the last 50 feet.

The windowless bottom floor of the tower houses the Sable Company's main armory, which rumors claim holds dozens of magic weapons and suits of armor. A branch of the Endrin Military Academy fills floors two through six, with classrooms and advanced training facilities to ready recruits for hippogriff riding. Roughly 200 Sable Company marines (about two-thirds of the entire company) live and sleep within the tower, spread throughout the remaining floors below the hippogriff aeries. The top three floors (17 through 19) and the roof all serve as aeries for most of the city's domesticated hippogriffs.

H2. Upslope House: Between the other two bed and breakfasts (the Frisky Unicorn and Tenna's) in price but easily the largest of the three, Upslope House is large enough to count as an inn. Citadel Crest has an ordinance,

6. A small city-state of the Mana Wastes known for its advanced engineering.



however, preventing such establishments from operating within its borders. Upslope House can accommodate up to 22 people in its 10 rooms.

Rumors whisper that Upslope House stands atop an opening into a natural-cave Vault under the hill, and that servants of some dark power use the Vault for its nefarious plots. Many of these gossipers bandy about the idea of derro as the most likely culprits for haunting the Upslope House's Vault, although most of those rumormongers have no idea what a derro actually is.

H3. The Frisky Unicorn: The least expensive (but far from cheap) of Citadel Crest's bed and breakfasts, the Frisky Unicorn is larger than Tenna's but smaller than Upslope House. The Frisky Unicorn provides little more than a posh room and three meals, and can house up to 13 people in its five rooms.

A narrow turret rises from one corner of the Frisky Unicorn, which in theory grants guests an opportunity to see Conqueror's Bay and nearly the entire city. In practice, though, most guests refuse or simply cannot ascend to the highest floor of the tower, as it houses a nest of capricious and relatively tame pseudodragons. These pseudodragons remain a fixture of the Unicorn thanks to their love of driving off imps from the nearby Acadamae. Despite their occasional usefulness to the establishment, the pseudodragons do make pests of themselves whenever guests flash shiny objects or uncovered food.

H4. Temple of Asmodeus: Built quickly in 4608 in the hopes of appeasing and attracting Cheliox's new leadership, the star-shaped temple underwent almost yearly maintenance and refurbishments for seven decades. During those remodeling attempts, two different star-point wings collapsed, killing a cleric once and maiming a pair of laborers trying to shore it up the other time. The church of Asmodeus considered the building an insult until 4683, when Queen Domina included a rebuilt temple as part of her extensive (and expensive) building push. Archbishop Ornher Reeb dedicated the new temple, with the help of the Acadamae's headmaster, in an appropriately infernal way, sealing a pact with an erinyes using the blood of 13 virgin sacrifices. While all of these virgins volunteered for the dedication, some observers speculate that a few were charmed or otherwise magically compelled to join the "festivities."

The conclusion of this dedication sent shockwaves through the city, and Korvosa's citizens threatened to riot, raze the temple, and topple the monarchy. Queen Domina calmed the city by expending her own personal wealth to import a powerful cleric, who then attempted to return all 13 sacrifices to life. Only four of the virgins refused the service, and most of the other nine are still alive today.

From the air, the building looks like a large red five-sided star (the holy symbol of Asmodeus) with low, white square sections connecting several of the arms. A red-glass dome stands in the center of the star. The arms of the star rise 30 feet,

THE HEIGHTS

The following costs are averages that vary by size.

OWNERSHIP

Manor (Citadel Crest)	160,000 gp or more
Manor (Cliffside)	80,000 gp or more
House (Citadel Crest)	100,000 gp
House (Cliffside)	50,000 gp
House (University)	40,000 gp
Townhouse (Citadel Crest)	80,000 gp
Townhouse (Cliffside)	40,000 gp
Townhouse (University)	30,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Citadel Crest)	16,000–60,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Cliffside)	8,000–30,000 gp
Apartment Suite (University)	8,000–20,000 gp

RENT PER MONTH

House (Citadel Crest)	300 gp
House (Cliffside)	140 gp
House (University)	120 gp
Apartment Suite (Citadel Crest)	50–200 gp
Apartment Suite (Cliffside)	25–100 gp
Apartment Suite (University)	25–60 gp
Studio (Citadel Crest)	18–70 gp
Studio (Cliffside)	8–35 gp
Studio (University)	8–20 gp

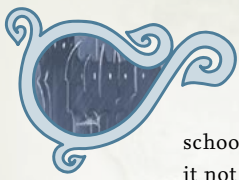
while the white connecting structures stand only 15 feet high. Inside, the red star forms a single room, with an altar dedicated to Asmodeus in each point. Doors open into the wide additions, which serve as living quarters and administrative offices.

Rumors persist throughout the city that the temple of Asmodeus actively supports and encourages the slave trade. Frequent searches by Hellknights, Korvosan Guards, and Sable Company marines always turn up nothing, leading to further speculation that the temple hides a secret entrance to the Vaults.

The church of Asmodeus occasionally competes with the church of Abadar for the right to verify and bear witness to contracts and oaths of fealty or service.

H5. Gilded Orrery: Most of the profits made by the semi-independent Gilded Orrery funnel directly into the Acadamae's coffers. Specializing in items and texts in support of conjuring, the store nonetheless stocks a wide and impressively deep selection of other magical wares and books of arcane lore. The Gilded Orrery deals in such a high volume of conjuration supplies that items related to magical summoning frequently bear discounts of up to one-quarter less than the normal price.

Every student of the Acadamae knows of and shops at the Gilded Orrery, as it works with the college to ensure it stocks the texts needed for every class each semester. Apprentices who graduate may sell back their texts to the



school, albeit at such a low rate that most students consider it not worth the effort. Those graduates of the Acadamae who go on to make names for themselves can feel secure in knowing that any tomes they pen shall appear for sale within the shop. Book signings and discussions therefore occur frequently, usually at the pace of about one per month.

The proprietor of the shop, a plump little woman with wispy gray hairs and an easily formed if mirthless smile, is named Gasta Weagra, and is the niece of the Acadamae's headmaster, Toff Ornelos. Gasta only sells to those affiliated with the Acadamae, those who can impress her with a bit of (non-damaging) arcane magic, or those of House Ornelos or its agents. She absolutely refuses to sell to the monarch or anyone affiliated with the monarchy. Members of the public and outsiders can browse the shop and listen in on readings, but they cannot make purchases.

H6. Jittery Quill: This low-key establishment serves both ale and coffee, making it the favorite haunt of university students and faculty alike. It stays open all hours, six days a week, closing every Oathday at noon and reopening at dusk the next day.

H7. Jeggare Museum: Built and operated by House Jeggare, this large museum houses hundreds (some say thousands) of artifacts pulled from ruins and Shoanti camps all across Varisia. Following in the footsteps of the legendary Montlarion Jeggare, the family has long held a penchant for exploration and discovery.

In addition to its extensive collection of local artifacts, the museum also has a small but impressive assortment of items brought to it by treasure hunters who travel the globe. As such, it holds an Osiriani funerary mask, a tribal shield of an indigenous hunter-gatherer from Garund,⁷ a Minkai⁸ robe known as a kimono, and even pottery shards from distant Arcadia.⁹

One wing of the museum displays Golarion's natural history. Among the wonders presented there are mermaid armor, a collection of boggard spears, the head of a gorilla king, the complete skeleton of an owlbear, an unknown device from distant Numeria,¹⁰ and the hollowed-out egg of a red dragon.

Mercival Jeggare, the museum's curator, happily buys artifacts from "freelance treasure hunters" (i.e., those who aren't members of the family) for reasonable prices.

H8. University of Korvosa: While it pales next to the grandeur of the Acadamae and does not carry with it the additional prestige inherent in magic, the University of Korvosa nonetheless possesses its own reputation for greatness. Founded by Lady Jessa Leroung in 4488, the University of Korvosa consists of five major buildings in close proximity, forming the main campus, as well as three satellite buildings nearby and two in other wards.

a. Leroung Hall: Both the oldest and largest building on campus, Leroung Hall houses the university's academic offices, the 210-seat Jessa Auditorium (second-largest indoor seating hall in Korvosa),¹¹ and a handful of classrooms. The ivy-covered brick-and-marble building anchors the university, standing as it does at the southwestern end of Leroung Plaza. Two tall statues, one of Jessa Leroung and one of Terathan Jeggare (the university's earliest benefactor) flank the main entrance to the hall.

b. Black Hall: Named for the black marble used in its construction, this newest building has an austere and imposing look increasingly popular in the city. The building's few windows make its interior spaces feel gloomy and oppressive. Students and faculty both dislike the building, but, because it houses the most classrooms, nearly all of them find themselves in it at some time.

Those who remain in the building after sunset sometimes report strange noises on the top floor, as if people were walking around on the rooftop. Since the university does not connect to the Shingles and all attempts to investigate these reports come up with no leads, most staff and Korvosan Guards consider these ominous rumors as attempts to have the building closed. Still, the rumors persist, and they have even become more frequent lately.

c. Jeggare Library: The window-filled walls of this building house the university's private library, where students and faculty alike spend long hours copying books and searching for just the right source. Jeggare Library houses the largest collection of private journals in the city, including the original journals of Saint Alika Epakena, Montlarion Jeggare, and Queen Domina. These journals are stored beneath the library, in a Vault that serves as an actual vault. The Korvosan Guard constantly patrols the library, as does an abjuration student of the Acadamae (the protection of irreplaceable city relics outweighs the semi-friendly rivalry of the two institutes of learning).

d. Instructor Offices North: This square, brick and black-marble building holds the offices of three-quarters of the staff.

e. Instructor Offices South: Identical in appearance to Instructor Offices North, this building houses the remaining staff offices. The remainder of its space contains several conference rooms and classrooms.

H9. The Wise Dragon Inn: Prospective students of the University of Korvosa fill this large inn in the spring and summer months. During the school year, though, activity drops off sharply (usually just parents visiting their university students) and rooms are always available. The inn serves no alcohol in its attached restaurant, but it does have two small sitting rooms and a tiny but nonetheless diverse library (which includes *Eidolon* and other works of Ceivil "Redwing" Charms, a noted scholar of Varisia).¹²

7. The continent that forms the southern shore of the Inner Sea.

8. A nation of Tian Xia, a continent on the other side of the world.

9. The continent on the other side of lost Azlant (see note #13).

10. A nation far to the northeast where a massive, constructed object from the stars crashed.

11. Behind the 333-seat Ornelos Auditorium in the Acadamae's Hall of Summoning.

12. See *Rise of the Runelords Player's Guide*, page 2.



At its peak time (Sarenith to Arodus), the inn charges a gold sail more than the city's average, while at its slowest (Abadius and Pharast) it charges five silver shields less.

Maybe as an attempt to acclimatize prospective students or simply because the owner has one as a familiar himself, the Wise Dragon harbors a handful of imps who formerly served as loyal familiars to students and faculty of the Acadamae. Unlike the free imps who live in the Shingles above Old Dock, these imps gained their freedom unintentionally when their former masters died.

H10. Tenna's: Smallest of the three bed and breakfasts in Citadel Crest, Tenna's stands on Volshyenek Loop across from the manor grounds of House Ornelos. While the most expensive, Tenna's makes up for its price by offering the most amenities in Korvosa: scented baths, massages, manicures and pedicures, a valet, and three lavish meals, to name only a few. Tenna's can hold up to 11 guests in four rooms.

H11. Marbledome: This gleaming fixture is home to Korvosa's opera company. Owned by House Jeggare but managed by the tyrannical Touran Palastus (known more for his temper than his managerial talent), the opera company produces mediocre performances that bleed gold. House Jeggare considers a performance that breaks even a resounding success. Performers here receive poor pay and poorer treatment, and they quickly lose their love for the arts. Many leave the city for distant Magnimar or Sandpoint, seeking better treatment even at the cost of prestige.

Lately, Touran's near-sadistic bile-spewing outbursts and abuses have become milder and less frequent. Some wonder if he has possibly found love. Others more cynically assume an addiction to pesh.

H12. Kendall Amphitheater: Korvosa's proximity to the sea and its extensive and famous Vaults make sinkholes a relatively common phenomena in the city. For the most part, these sinkholes measure no more than a few

feet in diameter, leading the church of Abadar to send out crews of volunteers to patch up the streets or flooring. Occasionally, though, these sinkholes expand to as much as a dozen feet or more in diameter. The open-air sea cave under the Posh and Turtle (entry **N10**) resulted from one such collapse. In 4579, the largest recorded sinkhole in Korvosa's history opened up just north of the Pillar Wall. Engulfing an area nearly 300 feet in diameter, this immense hole fortunately swallowed only a few buildings (thanks to it occurring in a relatively unpopulated part of the city).

Unfortunately for the city, the sinkhole did not occur naturally, and for the first time the people of Korvosa came in contact with ankhegs that continue to infrequently plague the city. Completely unprepared for anything like ankhegs, the city fell into a panic. Desna's good luck shined on Korvosa, though, as the Scions of Puris—an adventuring band of some repute at the time—happened to be nearby. Without hesitation, the Scions of Puris delved into the sinkhole and, over the course of a few days, cleared it of ankheg threat. When they emerged the final time, though, they brought out their beloved leader, Mina Kendall, in a blood-stained bag.

In conjunction with the church of Abadar, dwarves from Janderhoff came down and stabilized the ground around the sinkhole. They built a series of supporting walls with narrow doorways that allowed access to the newly discovered Vault beyond, allowing additional construction near the hole. Three years later, the Scions of Puris returned to Korvosa to witness the grand opening of a massive open-air auditorium the city named after their beloved former leader.

Today, Kendall Amphitheater partially hangs suspended above the sinkhole's opening. A complicated series of arches and pillars holds it aloft, while two concealed sets of stairs allow descent into the large Vault beneath it. Most of the bowl that forms the seating area for Kendall Amphitheater consists of carefully smoothed

SEER OF PHARASMA

The first child conceived and born in Fort Korvosa, Alika Epakena (4408–4429) also bears distinction as the first person of Varisian blood to receive citizenship in the Empire of Chelixa (awarded posthumously). Blessed with the gift of Pharama and trained in Harrow reading, Alika became instrumental in guarding the fledgling community from surprise Shoanti raids. She foresaw the Great Fire, and, despite seeing her own death in it, she led the efforts of combating the flames and finding the Shoanti responsible for setting it. For her tireless and self-sacrificing efforts, the clerics of Aroden called upon their god to request she be sainted. Legends claim Aroden's herald appeared and granted her the titles of Saint Alika of Korvosa and Saint Alika the Martyr (although many skeptics believe it was merely the high priest), and in 4431 the Empire of Chelixa adopted her as a Chelish citizen.

Several places in Korvosa memorialize Saint Alika the Martyr, including the oyster-rich narrows dividing Endrin Isle from the mainland. Until the collapse of the empire, pearls from Korvosa claimed a much higher price in Chelish markets when called Alikan Pearls. To this day, many girls born in and around Korvosa receive the name of Alika.





basalt. The benches, stage, and partial roof are all built of Varisian spruce. Directly beneath the stage hangs a second floor made of red pine that houses various mechanical contraptions to lift platforms up to the stage.

While the amphitheater primarily hosts open-air performances (as well as performances done beneath the vast sloped roof covering most of the stage), it does occasionally present games and contests. Due to safety concerns (as ankheg seem drawn by the smell of blood), none of the games involve actual combat or bloodshed. Instead, feats of strength, races, obstacle courses, and other such contests prove quite popular with the patrons and amphitheater owners.

Kendall Vault, the large cave complex beneath the amphitheater, occasionally receives visitors in the forms of explorers seeking new passages, Korvosan Guards patrolling for new outbreaks of ankheg, and Janderhoff dwarves looking for subtle clues of further erosion. Even after more than a hundred years of stability, the dwarves staunchly insist on performing the inspection twice a decade. They remind their short-sighted human friends that a hundred years means as little to stone as a second does to them.

Plaza of Scions: Directly northwest of Kendall Amphitheater stand tall statues of the Scions of Puris: the beautiful Mina Kendall (in the center), irascible Nurin Dutirrinog (to the south), and ever-pious Xanen Ptal (to the north). These statues mark the divide between the covered stage of the amphitheater and the brick-paved Plaza of Scions.

H13. Crested Falcon: One of the most expensive (and easily the most over-priced) restaurants in Korvosa, the Crested Falcon caters to the whims of the city's elite. The menu changes each day and only relates what the kitchen has in stock. Patrons may request any meal made from the listed foods on hand, and only find out the cost of their meals during the check-out process. To ask for the price ahead of time is a serious social faux pas. Those who receive the bill and cannot pay in full are subjected to magic that compels them to serve the restaurant until they work off their debt. These unfortunates often begin their service washing dishes, but they quickly graduate to wearing sandwich-board advertisements for the Crested Falcon. Rugged and capable-looking clients receive more fitting tasks, such as hunting pheasants, fishing for jigsaw sharks, or trading for thileu bark with Varisians.

Clientele of the Crested Falcon go there to see and be seen, and the quality and expense of the food never truly concerns them. Nobles more interested in substance than style cross into North Point and dine at the Posh and Turtle.

H14. Temple of Sarenrae: The turreted temple of Sarenrae stands in a relatively sparse area atop Citadel Hill, where it can absorb the sun's warming, healing light unobstructed. Built of white marble brought to Korvosa at considerable expense, the temple remains the priciest building in the city per square foot (part of the

cost of which was footed by the city of Korvosa itself). As a temple dedicated to healing, though, it constantly attracts beneficent gifts from wealthy patrons and offerings from the endless crowds swarming around the building.

H15. The Overlook: Teetering on the edge of the Merciless Cliffs, the Overlook gets a little closer to falling into the raging surf below every year. This hint of danger carries over to the tavern's offerings: Asa Hemrich, the Overlook's owner and bartender, offers a drink he calls This-n-That. This-n-That has no recipe and no definite look or taste. Whenever a brave-hearted patron orders the concoction, Asa creates the drink with whatever he has on hand, including wine gone sour, dishwater, his own mucus, and—of course—copious amounts of alcohol. Anyone who can finish off a This-n-That earns Asa's respect and gets to drink for free the rest of the night. Asa makes a This-n-That several times every week, but he only has to give away free alcohol once or twice a month.

Midland

When most people think of Korvosa, they think of the cosmopolitan and friendly district of Midland. Situated on the leeward side of Citadel Hill, Midland stretches from the end of Enderin's Wall south to Gray District and the Pillar Wall. It rises from sea level to climb the eastern slope of Citadel Hill, where it ends just below the summit line. Midland encompasses the wards of High Bridge, Pillar Hill, Slope, and West Dock. As the home district of both the Korvosan Guard and Sable Company, Midland has the fewest gangs and gang battles in the city. Despite that, the thieves' guild does a brisk trade in the district thanks to the disproportionately high number of merchants, banks, and other commercial and financial concerns.

Citadel Volshyenek: The headquarters of the Korvosan Guard stands within Midland but belongs to no ward. See area **M5** for the full description of the citadel.

High Bridge: Despite its proximity to West Dock, not every longshoreman and fisherman lives in High Bridge—roughly half live in the cheaper tenements of lower Pillar Hill. High Bridge does have its fair share of these hard-working folk, as well as the families of Korvosan Guards and Sable Company marines stationed nearby. Like the rest of the district, though, the ward also houses a wide cross-section of different kinds of people.

Pillar Hill: The most demographically diverse ward in Midland—and indeed, the entire city—Pillar Hill houses both fabulously wealthy merchants in its northern corner, beneath the shadow of Castle Korvosa, and hard-working laborers and longshoremen along the Pillar Wall south of Pillar Hill Boulevard. In addition to its wide distribution of wealth, the ward also claims variety in the races and ethnicities of its residents. Every human ethnic group represented in Korvosa (which is far from all of them) can claim at least one member in Pillar Hill. In addition,





members of all seven civilized races and tieflings call Pillar Hill home, as do a few creatures normally considered “monsters” by humans, though these residents generally stay to themselves.

Slope: As its name implies, this ward exists on the eastern slope of Citadel Hill and overlooks West Dock and the Jeggare River. Despite its proximity to rough-and-tumble West Dock, Slope holds numerous libraries, museums, and other places of culture. Slope also houses the third-highest concentration of educated people in the city, behind only University ward and the Acadamae. The Losen engineers brought to the city to build the Great Tower settled in this ward and formed a small neighborhood with the few Gebbiters in the city. As a result, Korvosa has access to authentic and exotic (for Varisia) south-Garund foods and fashions.

West Dock: This rugged ward contains no residences. It does house an extensive number of warehouses, fish processing facilities, and the remains of a block dedicated solely to meatpacking. The prevailing winds push the meaty stink of the ward southeast, providing Citadel Volshyenek and much of High Bridge with unending waves of unpleasantness. Unwelcome but stubborn druids frequent the docks, proselytizing the evils of civilization and urging fishermen and crabbers to release their catches back into the river. These unwashed scofflaws frequently cause minor skirmishes when they attempt to enforce their ideals with more than just words.

M1. Bookmaker: Wizards, sages, and scholars flock to Korvosa’s largest bookstore. From mythic tales of lost Azlant¹³ to the most recent reports from distant Osirion,¹⁴ the Bookmaker’s massive selection covers a wide swath of topic and interests. All of the city’s universities, colleges, and schools (except the Acadamae) send their students to the Bookmaker, and many of the professors and masters from those establishments have written tomes for sale within it.

Through an oft-violated gentlemen’s agreement, the Bookmaker and Gilded Orrery carefully avoid an excess in overlap of titles carried. Where the Gilded Orrery focuses its attention on the arcane, the Bookmaker takes a generalist approach to knowledge.

Recently, the Bookmaker’s proprietor, Costa Serimus, began reporting strange sounds and events throughout his building. He fears a ghost has moved into his building and called upon the church of Pharamasma for aid. A cleric of Pharamasma detected no presence of undead, but further investigations by the Korvosan Guard uncovered a heretofore unknown entrance to the Vaults under his establishment. Rather than pay the exorbitant fee the Korvosan Guard charges for such services, Costa has put up flyers offering a reward to anyone who can cleanse his building of its haunt.

M2. Bailer’s Retreat: This rough tavern frequently serves recently released prisoners of Citadel Volshyenek’s jails. Because of that it also serves strong coffee to a high number of Korvosan Guards. Brawls between the two infrequently erupt but very quickly end. As the drunk (and usually

¹³ The lost continent that sank into the Arcadian Ocean some 10,000 years ago.
¹⁴ A nation in northeastern Garund famous for its many pyramids and long river.



MIDLAND

The following costs are averages that vary by size.

OWNERSHIP

House (Slope)	30,000 gp
Townhouse (Slope)	20,000 gp
Townhouse (High Bridge)	10,000 gp
Townhouse (Pillar Hill)	15,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Slope)	5,000–20,000 gp
Apartment Suite (High Bridge)	2,000–8,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Pillar Hill)	4,000–12,000 gp
Apartment Suite (West Dock)	2,000–6,000 gp

RENT PER MONTH

House (Slope)	100 gp
Apartment Suite (Slope)	15–60 gp
Apartment Suite (High Bridge)	7–26 gp
Apartment Suite (Pillar Hill)	15–35 gp
Apartment Suite (West Dock)	6–18 gp
Tenement Flat (High Bridge)	4–13
Tenement Flat (West Dock)	3–9
Studio (Slope)	5–20 gp
Studio (High Bridge)	3–8 gp
Studio (Pillar Hill)	5–12 gp
Studio (West Dock)	2–6 gp

unarmed) ex-prisoners can't compete with the still-sober guards, these scuffles typically end with a return to jail. Despite its law-enforcement customers, Bailer's Retreat is an excellent place to overhear rumors of illicit activities in Midland and East Shore.

M3. Gold Market: Korvosa's largest market serves as the main attraction in Midland. People from all over the city descend daily on the stands, stalls, and tents that form the backbone of the open-air market. Vendors hawk a variety of wares, mostly foodstuffs and minor crafts, in the wide semicircular plaza between Eodred's Circle and Eodred's Walk.

All manner of foods and handicraft from Korvosa's holdings and the rest of Varisia appear in the Gold Market. Several carts sell fresh-made meals and sugary snacks, from Varisian borsht to Oliphant Ears (fried on the backs of tower shields). The wide variety of foods available make this a popular market, and some city leaders speculate that at least half the city's residents visit the market at least once a month.

One small and irregularly appearing stall sells trinkets that the proprietor, Sagitar Tiguan, claims are minor magical items or elixirs and tonics created through alchemy. Although many locals wonder about the authenticity of his goods, whenever he appears in the market, the shining silk tent in which he holds forth is constantly surrounded by adventurer types.

M4. Eodred's Walk: Fourteen shops form the semicircular face of Eodred's Walk. They stand separated from Eodred's

Circle by a daily riot of color, activity, and scents that make up the Gold Market. These permanent establishments and the transient vendors of the market form a symbiotic relationship. The shops of the mall offer a variety of permanent goods and a number of services, while the market's many stalls and tent sellers tend to specialize more in food and minor crafts. Three-story, whitewashed wooden buildings with their upper floors overhanging the ground floor to form a continuous covered pavilion house the wedge-shaped shops.

The names of the shops and what they sell are as follows.

Aram's Crown: This cramped tavern profits by providing watered-down ale and weak wine to thirsty market-goers during the day. After sunset it breaks open bottles of potent spirits imported from distant Minkai, Osirion, and Vudra.¹⁵

Basha's: A small bookstore and map shop, Basha's sometimes has magical texts and scrolls for sale. Basha claims many of his maps lead to treasure all across the globe, but critics frequently accuse Basha of inventing these maps himself.

Doom and Gloom: The old Varisian woman who lives and works in this cluttered and stinking office sells Harrow readings for five copper pinch. Without fail, her predictions always foretell tragedy, hence the name of the shop.

Galloping Ghost: This large shop (relative to the other shops in the mall) sells tack and barding for a variety of riding animals, including hippogriffs. The Galloping Ghost's owner, a burly and cantankerous old leathersmith known as Patch, crafts all the equipment used on the city's Sable Company hippogriff mounts.

Gemshare Jewelers: Specializing in buying and selling gems of all kinds, this little shop also sells an extensive collection of jewelry. Owned by a couple of brothers who only recently entered the jewelry trade, the store nonetheless does brisk business with adventurers, nobles, and wealthy merchants. The shop swiftly gained a reputation as a place to get good deals when both buying and selling jewelry and gems.

Hedge Wizardry: After dropping out of Theumanexus College, Phaeton Skoda opened this small shop, which sells an extensive collection of supplies for the crafting of alchemical and magical goods. Some whisper that the shop's owner took with him more than just a few years' education: students of the Acadamae and Theumanexus College are strictly forbidden from entering or doing business with this establishment.

High Bridge Haberdashery: The clientele of this shop tend to represent Korvosa's growing middle class of merchants. Nothing here looks particularly fine, but neither are the wares poorly crafted. The haberdashery does sell rugged clothing suitable for adventurers.

Kep's: A simple fishmonger, Kep sells whatever his cousin's fishing boat catches in its wide nets. This allows Kep to frequently offer such unusual fare as jigsaw sharks, dolphins, and even the occasional reefclaw.¹⁶ In the back corner of his shop, Kep has set up the taxidermal remains of

¹⁵. A distant nation known as the home of rakshasas.



a sahuagin holding a trident. An unusual number of visitors have seen the sahuagin move.

Fair-Fished Baitshop: The androgynously attractive full-blooded Varisian proprietor of this shop sells fishing tackle and poles, crabbing traps, and clamming shovels, as well as nets, clothing, and gear specialized for catching fish and seafood. Alternating between plain but functional dresses and the rugged workman's clothes sold in the baitshop, the owner's true gender and name remain among the ward's most talked-about mysteries (aside from that personal secret, the owner also frequently knows the juiciest High Bridge gossip). The poorly kept secret of Eodred's Walk is the baitshop owner's abiding dread of large bodies of water but an insatiable love of seafood. The proprietor frequently buys or barter for freshly caught (i.e., still living) shellfish, crustaceans, and fish.

Pinking Shears: Despite its name, this is a barbershop. Ol' Hooktooth, the squint-eyed half-orc barber who operates this shop, always dresses stylishly but rarely talks, preferring to deftly and skillfully trim hair rather than engage in idle chatter. Many consider Ol' Hooktooth the most skilled barber in the city, and he only takes on new customers if they are introduced to him by a trusted patron.

Slicing Dicers: Swords, daggers, knives, and all manner of bladed weapons and tools fill the locked cases of this highly secure shop. The shop stocks all kinds of swords, common and exotic, mundane and magical. It stays afloat thanks to its brisk exchange of previously owned weapons.

Smoked Foods: As the name implies, this narrow and frequently crowded shop sells a wide variety of smoked foods, from the meats of dangerous magical beasts to Jeggare River salmon. The shop's biggest draw comes twice a year, when it sells heavily spiced smoked bulette strips brought in by Shoanti hunters. In order to prove the meat it sells comes from the bulette, the shop butchers, slices, and smokes the great beast out front, where everyone can see it.

Time Stop: Clocks and watches line the shelves of this small, brightly lit shop. The gnome proprietor, Goupie Capabopple, keeps every timepiece set to exactly the same time. This feat requires the assistance of his daughters Min and Sec, who visit him once a week to help wind and set the clocks while Goupie himself works the watches. (Goupie wanted to name his daughters Tik and Tok, but his wife told him that was too obvious.) Note that Goupie and his girls don't set the timepieces to the correct time, but rather, every week they set all the clocks and watches to some random time.

Trapper's Hole: Owned and operated by retired Sable Company marine Jope Chantsmo, this shop sells all manner of hunting equipment but specializes in archery supplies. Jope sells every kind of bow and arrow common to the continent, as well as a few exotic pieces from distant Tian Xia and Arcadia. Trapper's Hole also includes a full-service bowyer's shop, where Jope repairs and accessorizes bows for a nominal fee. For his most trusted clients, Jope also brings in a transmuter from the Acadamae once a month to magically enhance bows and arrows. Jope hates crossbows, so he carries none and kicks out anyone who inquires about them.

M5. Citadel Volshyenek: Named for the Eternal Lord, Lord Volshyenek Ornelos, who paid for most of its construction, this impressive citadel houses the headquarters and main garrison of the Korvosan Guard. This relatively normal citadel reputedly has an extensive system of Vaults beneath it that flood every spring with the rising waters of the Jeggare River.

M6. Creaky Hammock: Set up with a nautical theme, the Creaky Hammock tends to serve ships' crews in port for a few days. Its attached tavern makes for loud nights and boisterous days, which led to the saying, "The only way to sleep in the Creaky Hammock is to drink yourself asleep." The Creaky

NAVAL HERO

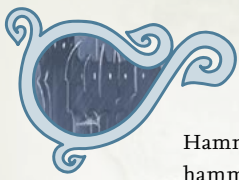
Also known as Keyra the Wave, Captain Keyra Palin (4385–4429) joined the crew of Admiral Kiameleu's *Tarrasque* when barely more than a child. Her adolescent spunk earned the admiral's begrudging respect, and her promotion to captain at the age of 19 brought about cries of outrage from the established brass. Kiameleu stood behind his decision (some claim he put her on another ship so he wouldn't need to listen to her incessant prattling anymore) even when she disobeyed him at the Siege of Endrin Isle. Palin first captained the frigate *Merciless* as part of Kiameleu's flotilla and remained its captain until her death and its destruction in the Great Fire of 4429. Palin remained behind when Kiameleu's flotilla abandoned the marines on Endrin Isle, using the *Merciless's* catapults and contingent of sorcerers to support them during the months-long siege. In 4415, she became commander of the marines garrisoned at Fort Korvosa, but chafed at being stuck on land. The next year, she moved her command aboard the *Merciless*. Her long relationship with Waydon Endrin resulted in the birth of their children, Lucien and Mina, in 4421.

As an accomplished and exceptional sailor and commander, Captain Palin is remembered in several ways around Korvosa. The Laughing Wave inn, in Mainshore, takes its name from her epithet, as does Wave Street in Bridgefront. Her name appears elsewhere in the town and beyond, most noticeably in the industrial holding of Palin's Cove, some 80 miles away.



KEYRA PALIN

16. See *Pathfinder* #7, page 88.



Hammock can easily house up to four dozen people in its 40 hammocks and four small rooms. Its number of “clients” frequently exceeds that amount though, as many sailors simply pass out on the floor. Destin Smish, the Creaky Hammock’s innkeeper, makes sure to turn such guests on their sides, so they don’t choke to death on their own vomit.

M7. Eodred’s Square: Forming a plaza just past the west end of High Bridge, the square makes a popular landmark that locals and visitors alike use to set up meetings or simply orient themselves within the ward.

M8. Pestico’s Dolls and Figurines: A doddering but gentle old man little more than a loud noise away from the grave, Vadid Pestico has lived and worked his entire life in Korvosa, crafting exquisite dolls for the city’s children. He and Kiristi, his sculptor wife (who provided the figurines in the store’s name), lamented their own lack of children. When she suddenly died 10 years ago, he embarked on an ambitious project only recently unveiled: a group of six lifelike ball-joint dolls he calls his Daughters. A secret dabbler in arcane magic, Pestico imbued his Daughters with a spark of life, and they serve now in his shop, bringing curious customers in numbers he has not seen for decades.

Recently, one of Pestico’s Daughters disappeared. Perhaps coincidentally, a string of unexplained murders began shortly thereafter near the doll shop. So far, the watch has kept the killings mostly hidden from the public, as all the victims have been Empties who no one apparently misses (drifters, beggars, gang members, and the like).

North Point

North Point, at the northwestern tip of mainland Korvosa, was the first section of the mainland settled by the descendants of the city’s Chelish founders. The district houses many of the city’s oldest non-noble families. North Point covers the entire northern end of the city and includes the wards Five Corners, Mainshore, Northgate, and Ridgefield. Korvosa’s seat of municipal power stands in North Point, as does the city’s courthouse and the Bank of Abadar.

Five Corners: This relatively crowded residential ward houses many of the city’s politicians and their underlings. The ward’s most distinguishing characteristic is Jeggare Circle, in the far northern corner. City historians frequently debate the origin of the ward’s name, with the two most popular schools of thought arguing that it relates to the number of other wards touching it or to the number of sides the ward has.

Mainshore: The first Chelish encampment on the mainland was in modern-day Mainshore. Three battles took place here between the Chelish settlers and Shoanti to establish control of the land. Following the third battle, the garrison erected a wood palisade, which a stone wall later replaced (sections of which still stand and mark the boundaries of the ward).

Mainshore remembers the blood spilled to establish and hold it, and dozens of plaques, statues, and memorials pepper the ward. The city’s truly old money still resides in Mainshore, although many buildings not belonging to these wealthy non-noble families show their age.

Northgate: Many visitors from the rest of Varisia first enter Korvosa in Northgate, as it is to this ward that the Longriver Bridge connects. Many of Korvosa’s non-noble elites and old-money families live in Northgate, although such moneyed folk slowly relocate onto the slopes and summit of Citadel Hill. As a result, the property values of Northgate are in a slow but steady decline.

Ridgefield: This ward once overlooked the Merciless Cliffs to the south, before the formation of Citadel Crest. Despite losing any connection to the ridge, the ward kept its name. Today, Ridgefield faces the poorest and most crowded ward in the city, and it too is plagued with poverty. Ridgefield serves as home to the Korvosan landmarks of the Avenue of Arms and the Posh and Turtle. Regardless of the poverty that hounds it from across the strait, Ridgefield enjoys frequent but stilted economic growth and areas close to Citadel Crest and University are among the nicest in North Point. Ridgefield is, by far, the most economically diverse ward in the city.

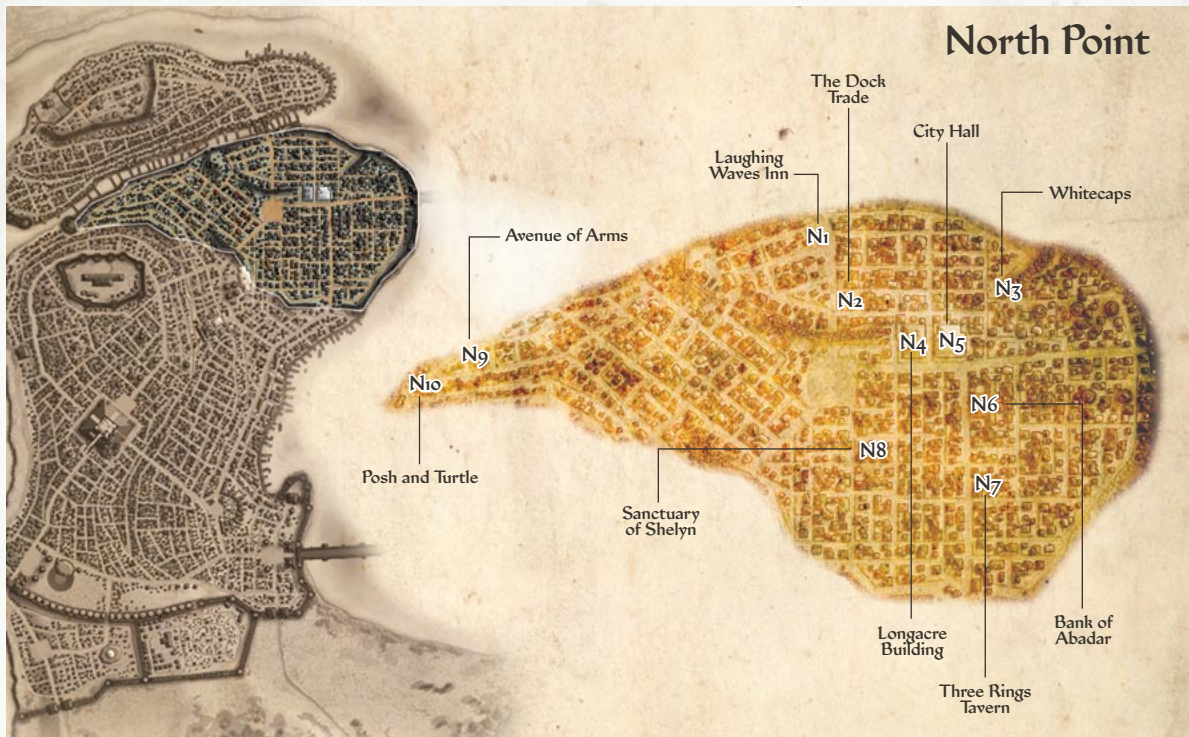
N1. Laughing Wave Inn: Bearing Keyra Palin’s nickname as its own, the Laughing Wave is the oldest surviving inn on the mainland, being the only structure not razed by the Shoanti when they drove back the Chelish settlers during the Second Battle of Mainshore, in 4439.

In many ways, the Laughing Wave shows its age, from its rounded steps to its sagging balconies. It remains a favorite destination of visitors, however, thanks to its long history and the legends surrounding the Barbarian Princess, the ghost of a Shoanti woman said to appear three nights a year: on the solstices and on the night of the Riverwind Festival (see the Ten Festivals and Holidays sidebar).

N2. The Dock Trade: This market of questionable legality operates in New Dock. Many of the goods sold within it appear freshly delivered, although most have some amount of minor damage to them. The Hellknights have for years attempted to link the wares sold in the Dock Trade with cargo reported missing from ship manifests. Their constant vigil has prevented the Dock Trade from growing much, and it remains the smallest of Korvosa’s open markets.

In addition to the vigilant Hellknights, another group occasionally disrupts business in the market. A family of tame pseudodragons lives in the rafters of one of the Dock Trade’s converted warehouses. For the most part, the pseudodragons ignore the activity that occurs below them, hunting rats and other small but hated vermin. Every so often, though, a particularly succulent smell or shiny object attracts the interest of one or more of





the small dragons. Once one notices, it inevitably draws the attention of its comrades, and the entire colony swoops down into the teeming human masses. While the pseudodragons never mean harm, their sudden appearance disrupts transactions and sometimes sends people into a panic. When this occurs, the Dock Trade's guards arrive and drive off the diminutive dragons, who sullenly leave for several weeks (usually until the Dock Trade's rat problem becomes so great its owners find the pseudodragons and beg them to return).

N3. Whitecaps: One of the oldest surviving inns on the mainland, Whitecaps is more than a century past its prime. It looks old, it smells old, and it even feels old once inside it. Despite its age and wear, though, Whitecaps remains a popular destination for visitors to the city. Whitecaps's popularity comes not from any quality or service it provides, but rather for its reputation for being both clean and cheap. And secure. Thanks to high quality locks and thick doors, patrons of Whitecaps have reported only seven burglaries in its two-and-a-half centuries of existence.

Unfortunately, two of those reports have occurred in the past three months. The owners worry that the inn's sparkling reputation for safety has attracted the attention of someone intent on disproving it. They have asked the Korvosan Guard to increase patrols near their establishment and have even hired a retired but half-deaf marine to act as an on-site security guard at night.

N4. Longacre Building: The last stop for the city's most violent criminals, the imposing Longacre Building, also known as Arbiter's Hall, houses the feared arbiters of

Korvosa. Despite their frightful reputation, the arbiters only have the worst criminals executed. Violent crimes and crimes against the city of Korvosa or the state of Chelias alone warrant the death penalty (see the Ten Crimes and Punishments sidebar for examples of criminal punishments).

Criminals sentenced to death are executed within the Longacre Building or in the Deathhead Vault beneath it. Executions within the building are carried out by hanging (always the humane neck-snapping method, never through slow strangulation) while messier beheadings (by razor-sharp axe) occur in the Vault below. Clerics of Abadar and Pharsma regularly patrol the building, as those executed here do not always remain completely dead. Next to the necropolis of Gray District, more undead come from Longacre Building than anywhere in the city.

Rumors persist that prisoners occasionally turn up missing from their cells under the building. While many people insist those who go missing simply escape, more ominous voices (particularly among those who work in the building) insist that something comes up from below to drag off the criminals. Stranger still, on rare occasions those who had disappeared just as suddenly reappear, usually years later and with only vague and nightmarish memories of the intervening time.

N5. City Hall: This large building, once the seat of governmental power in the city (prior to the creation of the monarchy), still houses the various ministries and the myriad offices of the growing bureaucracy. Built in the New White style of architecture (characterized by thick pillars,

**NORTH POINT**

The following costs are averages that vary by size.

OWNERSHIP

House (Mainshore)	35,000 gp
House (Northgate)	20,000 gp
Townhouse (Five Corners)	12,000 gp
Townhouse (Mainshore)	20,000 gp
Townhouse (Northgate)	15,000 gp
Townhouse (Ridgefield)	8,000–15,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Five Corners)	5,000–10,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Mainshore)	10,000–18,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Northgate)	6,000–15,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Ridgefield)	2,000–15,000 gp

RENT PER MONTH

House (Mainshore)	100 gp
House (Northgate)	60 gp
Apartment Suite (Five Corners)	15–30 gp
Apartment Suite (Mainshore)	30–50 gp
Apartment Suite (Northgate)	16–45 gp
Apartment Suite (Ridgefield)	6–45 gp
Tenement Flat (Mainshore)	15–25
Tenement Flat (Ridgefield)	3–23
Studio (Five Corners)	5–10 gp
Studio (Mainshore)	10–18 gp
Studio (Northgate)	6–15 gp
Studio (Ridgefield)	2–15 gp

whitewashed facades, and rectangular windows), city hall shines as a beacon of pre-infernal Chelaxian tastes quite contrary to structures built since.

Within the great foyer, across from the main entry doors, hangs a massive 8-foot-by-13-foot painting. This painting, by famed artist Endrik Archerus,¹⁷ shows Field Marshal Korvosa meeting Sergeant Endrin atop the ruined earthworks of Fort Korvosa (and is rife with historical inaccuracies). Known as *Breaking the Siege*, it is by far the most famous painting in or of Korvosa.

N6. Bank of Abadar: More than just a temple to the god of cities, the Bank of Abadar also serves as the city's main bank. The temple serves every banking need, such as security boxes (said to be the safest in Varisia), saving and investment accounts, loans, and even writs of credit.

Beneath the temple, in well-guarded lead-lined chambers, the rumored Golden Vaults of Abadar house the Korvosan Mint. The mint creates all the coins issued by the city, of course, but it also helps to regulate the city's economy by buying back or releasing gold in an effort to counter inflation or recession.

Archbanker Darb Tuttle and the clerics of Abadar work closely with the ministers of City Hall, the arbiters of the Longacre Building, and the Field Marshal of the Korvosan

Guard. They love their city and work from every legal angle to protect it and support its continued growth.

N7. Three Rings Tavern: This quiet tavern belongs to retired adventurer and former Pathfinder Theandra Darklight (originally Theandra Mulnsk). Theandra earned enough coin as an adventurer to buy a decrepit tavern in Five Corners and fix up. A lithe beauty in her adventurous youth and starving childhood, Theandra took to the settled life with great gusto, and today she appears somewhere closer to matronly. Despite her indulgences, Theandra remains a good-natured and friendly person, ready to help a friend in need and always hungering for a tale of high adventure and daring-do. A few years ago, Theandra lost a few fingers when a bar brawl turned ugly, which led her to hire the half-Shoanti barbarian Tauk Par as a bouncer.

Theandra likes to keep her bar low-keyed and quiet, serving as much coffee and tea as mead and wine. Tauk Par watches over the place like a hawk, eyeing regulars and newcomers alike with the same barely concealed dislike. In addition to its extensive variety of beverages—alcoholic and not—Three Rings also gathers a regular breakfast clientele with its Varisian sweetbreads and Gebbite cream-filled pastries.

N8. Sanctuary of Shelyn: The smallest of the independent temples in the city, the sanctuary of Shelyn ranks among Korvosa's most beautiful buildings. This square building engulfs a small interior courtyard decorated with statuary, murals, and beautiful flowering plants. Although crowded with artwork and plants of natural beauty, the sanctuary looks full but never cluttered.

N9. Avenue of Arms: This bizarre landmark of the city extends from just east of the Great Tower along the riverfront to Burnt Bridge Boulevard. All along the wide thoroughfare rise silent and unsettling sentinels that predate the Chelish settlers who came here three centuries ago.

These sentinels, exactly 127 human-looking stone arms, reach up from the rocky soil along the road at an even distance. No two arms look the same—some stick up straight, while others bend at the elbow; roughly a third of them hold a variety of rusting weapons, while almost another third hold stone representations of weapons; about a quarter of them look feminine, with the rest appearing masculine; and together they comprise more than a dozen kinds of stone. Despite variations, all of them have a few things in common: they face the same direction, with their elbows bending away from shore to point toward the road; they all look like the arms of human adults; none of them are damaged or look weathered at all; and they are evenly spaced at exactly 2 feet, 3-1/2 inches apart.

N10. Posh and Turtle: Situated at the west end of the famed but mysterious Avenue of Arms, the Posh and Turtle remains—as it has for more than a century—the finest inn and tavern in all of Korvosa. Upon entering the establishment, it is difficult not to notice the glass flooring overlooking a wide but shallow sea cave. Within the cave lives a 20-foot-long sea

¹⁷ See GameMastery Module U1: *Gallery of Evil*, page 26.



turtle named Old Tom, who grew too large to escape through the narrow opening back out to the ocean. Narrow grates between the 5-foot-square floor panes act as frames and allow patrons and the waitstaff to drop food to Old Tom. Thick iron bars form a latticework of protection a couple feet beneath the glass, preventing Old Tom from smashing his way through the floor. Three times per day, Thaviun Rigulus, the inn's wizardly owner, magically cleans both Old Tom and the area of his sea cave directly below the inn to reduce the smell.

While Old Tom explains the Turtle part of the establishment's name (and indeed, up until a decade ago it was simply known as the Turtle Inn), the Posh appellation is not nearly as obvious. Most guess it refers to the inn's high-quality furnishings and appointments, from its gold-leaf flatware to the emerald-studded wine glasses reserved only for the very best wines. The name predates these fine accoutrements, however, and comes from a time when the Turtle Inn housed pesh dealers, giving rise to the phrase "the pesh in Turtle." Over time, natural evolution from slur-mouthed pesh-addicts corrupted the saying to "the posh and Turtle." When Thaviun bought the inn and infused it with gold earned while adventuring, he decided to adopt the local slang and change the inn's name, hoping to upgrade its reputation and clientele. Over the past decade, he has succeed beyond even his wildest hopes.

Thaviun claims Posh and Turtle is the best inn north of Cheliox, an assertion that has created an unfriendly rivalry with the Goldlager in Magnimar. Rumors abound that the Goldlager's owner, Brewmaster Rogehres Tarlo, has recently contacted the belligerent druids who prowl Korvosa's docks. Indeed, the generally vocal but lazy druids have recently begun protesting in front of the Posh and Turtle, agitating for Old Tom's release. On multiple occasions, the Korvosan Guard has had to forcefully remove the druids, who promise retribution against Thaviun.

BELOVED FOUNDER

The sixth son of a wealthy but minor noble family, Jakthion Peltherianon (4339–4410)—later Jakthion Korvosa—entered the service of the Imperial Army at the age of 13. His sharp mind and excellent skill with a sword allowed the lad to quickly rise through the ranks, taking command of his own company three weeks before his twentieth birthday. Despite his successes, he remained on the outs with his family, who considered military service beneath them. After he returned home to watch his mother die of a wasting disease, Jakthion's family disowned him and he in turn adopted the given name of his first commander (Korvosa Regus) as his family name. His mother's death changed him for the worse, though, and he became known for his alcohol-fueled tirades and abuses. One particularly gruesome display led then-General Korvosa into early retirement, from which he emerged 12 years later after finally giving up the drink. Rising to new levels of success after returning to service, Korvosa shortly thereafter became a Field Marshal and was charged with founding a colony in an untamed region known as Varisia.

Despite his death only a few years after its inception, the entire town of Korvosa acts as a memorial for its founder and first lord magistrate. Three statues of the Field Marshal stand within Korvosa, two streets bear his rank (Field Marshal Way and Field Marshal Avenue), and establishments all over the city use his name, rank, or likeness in their own names or in the wares they sell.

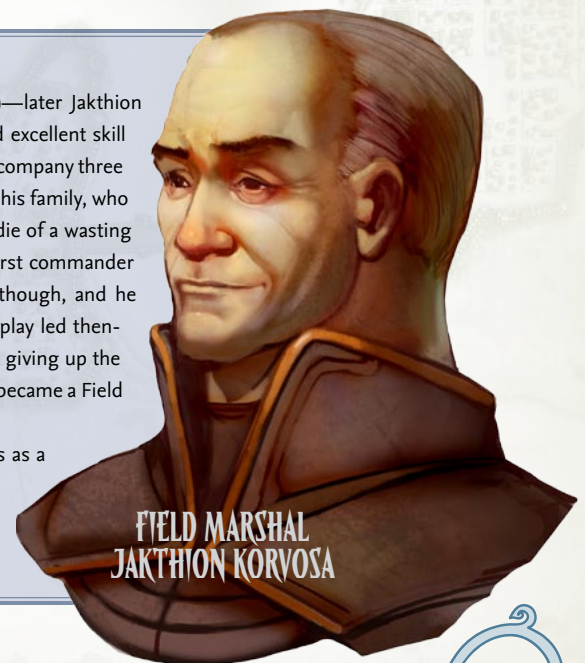
Old Korvosa

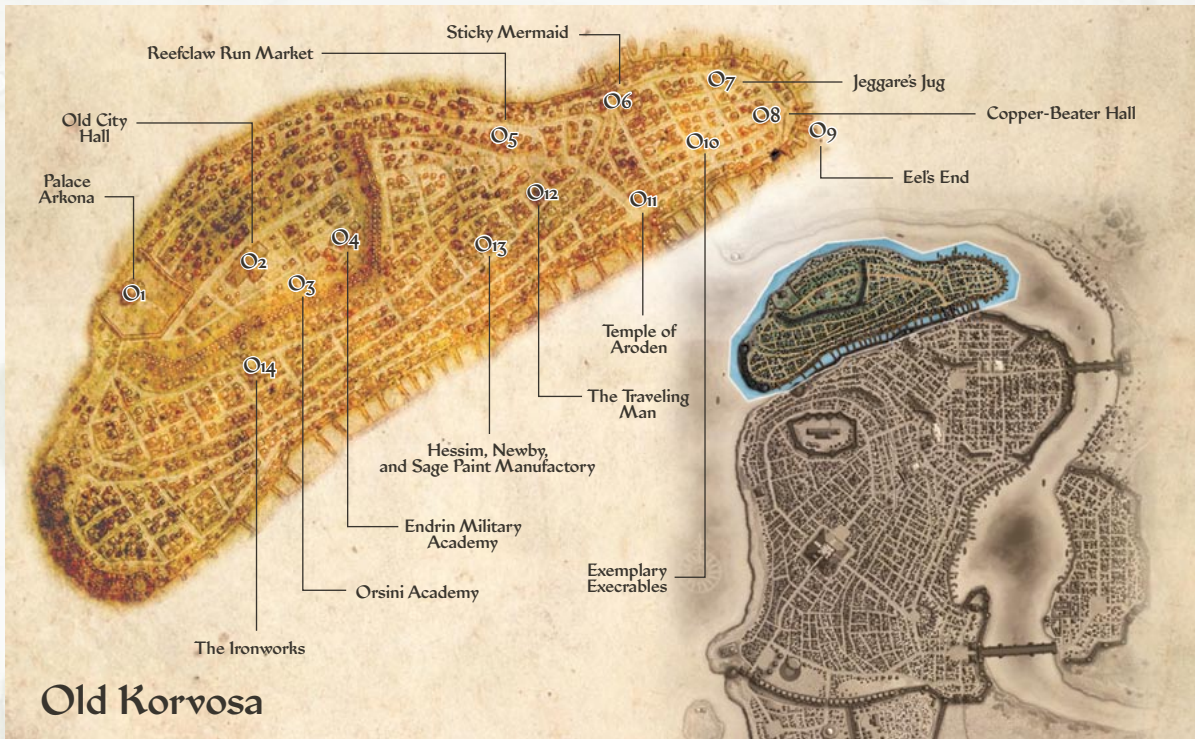
As its name implies, Old Korvosa is old. It covers all of Endrin Isle, which rises from sea level along the southern shore on the Narrows of Saint Alika to a 200-foot-high escarpment on the seaward north side. At the foot of Garrison Hill, as this steep incline is called, sits the beehive-like hovel of Bridgefront. Old Dock stands on the relatively flat eastern protrusion of the island. Atop Garrison Hill stands the stone wall of Fort Korvosa, completed in 4438. The imposing black-marble Palace Arkona dominates Old Korvosa, while the remains of the original wooden palisade slowly rot near the gate into the ward.

Bridgefront: When the people of Bridgefront ran out of room to erect more buildings, they started adding makeshift floors to extant structures. Over time, these makeshift floors gained their own rooftop lean-tos. Spaces between buildings became fair game as well, with ladders and long poles crossing gaps over increasingly narrow roads. Bridgefront occupies a narrow spit of land at the base of Garrison Hill, reaching only three blocks inland from the strait. In those three blocks, though, live more than a tenth of the city's population, including almost eight-tenths of its poor and destitute.

Fort Korvosa: Less a ward than a moldering citadel, the second incarnation of Fort Korvosa stands atop Garrison Hill and overlooks both Old Korvosa and Conqueror's Bay. The high granite walls around the fort have received no maintenance since their completion, and have begun to crumble as a result. Thanks to an arrangement made between House Arkona and the city, Palace Arkona, along with its many side buildings, provides the home to the ward's only permanent residents (the noble family and its servants). On the opposite side of the ward stands the whitewashed buildings of the Endrin Military Academy.

Garrison Hill: Crammed in the narrow confine between the towering walls of Fort Korvosa





Old Korvosa

and the towering humanity of Bridgefront, Garrison Hill rises up on the eastern slope of its eponymous hill. The streets here widen out from the cramped alleys of Bridgefront, although it is more accurate to say they retain their original widths and have not been encroached upon by the spreading mass of shanties. Residents of Garrison Hill struggle against the oozing spread of destitution in the nearby wards.

Old Dock: If not for the festering poverty and unwholesome growth that is Bridgefront, Old Dock would be considered the city's most run-down and least-desirable ward. In many ways, though, it actually does bear those dubious distinctions. Whereas the people of Bridgefront mostly lead honest if poverty-stricken lives, those of Old Dock rarely burden themselves with such trifles as legality, morality, or compassion. Indeed, rough-and-tumble Old Dock accounts for more than half the city's violent crimes, despite frequent, heavy patrols by the Korvosan Guard.

O1. Palace Arkona: Palace Arkona is as black a place as its exterior of Janderhoff black marble. Treble-headed elephants, peacocks with sabers, and tigers with carven eyes gaze from the walls of the palace and over the gardens beyond. This massive manor houses Old Korvosa's de facto ruling family, the inscrutable but feared House Arkona. The bizarre architectural embellishments and decorations of the palace come from distant Vudra, whose imports made House Arkona the power it is today.

A massive black-marble and wrought-iron wall surrounds the property, and guards both human and otherwise patrol the yards and ruthlessly eject trespassers.

O2. Old City Hall: This dark-brick building, sometimes affectionately called the Charcoal Palace, was the tallest building in Varisia for more than 50 years. The Arvensoar in Magnimar stole away that distinction for more than a decade (an honor Korvosa reclaimed with the completion of the North Tower of Castle Korvosa). Charcoal Palace served as city hall for 60 years. It was the first building completed after the Great Fire (it was already half-completed at the time) and it remained the city's seat of power until Remsev Ornelos moved his government to the current city hall in 4489.

O3. Orsini Academy: This famed sword school stands in the heart of the city's ancient center. Its grand archway and balcony shade a pair of wide and ornate oak doors, the knockers carved in the shape of an imp and pseudodragon locked in mortal combat.

The sound of steel on steel and the soft whisper of leather soles issue forth at all hours of daylight and sometimes deep into the night. Men and women, mostly young scions of noble houses, dressed in white from head to toe and wearing meshed-wire masks practice the many elegant skills of fencing. Vencarlo Orisini himself rarely bothers to instruct these days, allowing one of his senior students, Dengaro, to lead the class in exercises.

O4: Endrin Military Academy: These whitewashed buildings act as barracks for Fort Korvosa's small garrison of Korvosan Guards and Sable Company trainees, as well as classrooms and sparring rings. Within these storied buildings, foul-mouthed drill sergeants have taught new recruits how to be Sable Company marines for decades.

The academy serves a secondary purpose, as it also trains junior officers of the Korvosan Guard to act as liaisons between the two groups, allowing for joint operations and continued mutual support. These liaisons have proven vital in preventing jurisdictional conflicts between the company and the guard for more than two centuries.

In addition to its function as a training facility, Endrin Military Academy is also charged with maintaining a vigilant watch over Conqueror's Bay, remaining ever alert for the possibility of attack from the water.

05. Reefclaw Run Market: Fresh seafood remains the order of the day at this market, as it has for almost three centuries. Everything from Alikan oysters (their pink pearls since removed) to jigsaw sharks shows up here over the course of a week. Additionally, many fishing boat captains sell off other wares they uncover in the course of their work, as their wide fishing nets and bottom-scraping crab cages occasionally drag up something of exquisite value or unique rarity. As such, ancient artifacts, giant squids, curious deep-sea growths, and other assorted and sometimes dangerous jetsam occasionally makes it way into the market's stalls.

06. Sticky Mermaid: A fixture of Old Dock for more than two centuries, the Sticky Mermaid has seen more than its share of bar fights and death. This unwholesome tavern serves an unruly clientele made all the rougher by fishjack, a particularly potent spirit served only here and garnished with fermented eggs of Jeggare River salmon. Every few months or so, the Korvosan Guard grows tired of breaking up fights in the Sticky Mermaid and shuts it down for a week or two. After the tavern's owner appeals to the church of Abadar and pays a hefty fee, it reopens. These reopenings usually result in free rounds of the tavern's special spirit for its returning customers.

07: Jeggare's Jug: One of the many small pubs that fill Old Dock and the first drinking establishment built in Korvosa, Jegg's Jug (as it's frequently called) survived the Great Fire relatively unscathed. In the aftermath of that terrible event, the pub served temporarily as a medical bivouac and triage center.

This jaunty place claims to have served its namesake the week before he died. Regardless of the truth of this claim, history can confirm that Montlarion stopped by this pub once or twice a month to purchase bottles of Chelaxian pepper whiskey, from which he drank a single shot before distributing the rest to the other patrons. When Montlarion died, the owner of the time decided to honor him by giving the pub its current name.

08. Copper-Beater Hall: Copper bars from Janderhoff and Baslwief get dropped off in one of the large indoor bins of this wide building. Inside, dozens of ear-plugged smiths spend their days at wide anvils beating the copper bars into sheets, rods, plates, and other simple forms used in construction or later further refined by

OLD KORVOSA

The following costs are averages that vary by size.

OWNERSHIP

Townhouse (Garrison Hill)	8,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Bridgefront)	300–500 gp
Apartment Suite (Garrison Hill)	3,000–5,000 gp
Apartment Suite (Old Dock)	1,000–3,000 gp

RENT PER MONTH

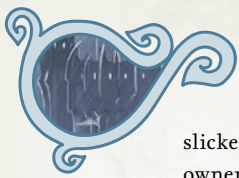
Apartment Suite (Bridgefront)	1–3 gp
Apartment Suite (Garrison Hill)	8–16 gp
Apartment Suite (Old Dock)	2–9 gp
Tenement Flat (Bridgefront)	5 sp–1 gp, 5 sp
Tenement Flat (Garrison Hill)	4–8 gp
Tenement Flat (Old Dock)	1–4 gp
Studio (Bridgefront)	4 sp–1 gp
Studio (Garrison Hill)	2–4 gp
Studio (Old Dock)	1 gp, 5 sp–3 gp

craftsmen into tools and decorations. The hammering din outside the building is nearly deafening, to say nothing of the tremendous thunder of pounding within the structure.

09. Eel's End: Eel's End is a clot of ships at the eastern end of the Narrows on Old Korvosa, a tangle of five ships permanently moored to one of the longer piers there. With only a 20-foot gap between these ships and the wall to the south, Eel's End effectively restricts entry into the Narrows from the east to all but the smallest vessels. Although Eel's End consists of five decommissioned ships of varying sizes, the entire area is referred to as one location by Korvosans—a location under the rule of a man named Devargo Barvasi, known to many as the King of Spiders for his strange empathy with the long-legged creatures.

The four smaller ships that comprise Eel's End are the *Goldenhawk* (now a flophouse for drunkards and derelicts to sleep it off), the *Twin Tigers* (a raucous gambling hall), the *House of Clouds* (a brothel), and the *Dragon's Breath* (a drug den). The proprietors of these establishments pay significant rent to Devargo. The largest of the five is *Eel's End* itself, a decommissioned warship that serves as Devargo's headquarters and the base of operations for his various underground pursuits. Devargo maintains just enough legality to keep the Korvosan Guard from interfering with all of the businesses in Eel's End, but at the same time his regulations of what goes on here are far more strict (and his punishments far more severe) than anything the Guard themselves would enforce.

010. Exemplary Execrables: Refurnished with gaudy gold-colored paint and massive glass “gems,” this former temple of Aroden has found a new life as the home of a perverse and detestable theater of all things foul, gore-



slicked, and unnaturally pornographic. The theater's owner, a repugnant sore-covered human named Pilts Swastel, employs the city's "best and brightest" performers of unmentionable acts.

Numerous acts rotate through the theater, with any particular performer putting on a show four or five nights a week. The theater's acts include gore-filled plays with faux tortures, false murders, fake rapes, and other fabrications meant to horrify and sicken the audience. By far the most popular act, though, is the so-called "death play," in which a masked performer gruesomely "murders" a volunteer from the audience for all the rest to enjoy.

Some spectators and officials wonder how many of the acts use stage effects and chicanery and how many might actually perform what they purport to only represent. Volunteers sometimes turn up missing after a performance, and the theater has a high turnover rate for young and pretty assistants (Swastel claims the latter is due to admittedly low wages and the squeamishness of "the delicate sex"). Due to these and other complaints, the Sable Company has attempted on multiple occasions to infiltrate and investigate the theater, and the Korvosan Guard has called upon Hellknights to prematurely end shows more than once.

Nearly as controversial as the theater, Exemplary Execrables also offers an attached museum (with a separate admission fee, of course). The museum offers exhibits such as "Two-Dozen-and-Three Severed Heads," "Unwanted Fetuses," and "Instruments of Torture and Murder." This last exhibit, the most popular of them all, features a working guillotine from Galt, complete with an attached chalkboard counting the number of fingers lost to over-curious patrons (the current count stands at 37). All other instruments and devices in the exhibit have been disabled or blunted to hinder inquisitive fools from maiming themselves or others.

O11. Temple of Aroden: Old and crumbling, the temple of Aroden has lost almost all of its former splendor. A pitiful trio of clerics attempts to maintain the building as best they can, holding services every Sunday for a constantly shrinking number of curious observers and older holders-on. Twice the city has threatened to raze the building and raise a new temple to a different god, but each time the trio was able to muster enough support from citizens to spare the building.

O12. The Travelling Man: This small tavern's main claim to fame is its proximity to one of the otyugh plugs used by the city to feed its otyugh allies. People flock to the Travelling Man every Oathday, when a small contingent of Korvosan Guards winch open the plug and throw in relatively fresh meat and produce. The attraction isn't the feeding, it's the chance that a otyugh decides to rampage and burst out of the plug, which happens once or twice a year. As a result, the front wall of the Travelling Man is exceedingly thick, as are its barred windows.

O13. Hessim, Newby, and Sage Paint Manufactory: This curious place is a twisted and sagging shopfront that displays hundreds of tiny jars and pots, brushes, canvases, and easels. Even from the street, the building smells of turpentine, linseed, and oil.

For the past 108 years, the manufactory of Hessim, Newby, and Sage has made the rich pigments of Old Korvosa into paint, a fact the trio of smiling, ingratiating elderly owners is proud of. The three men are incredibly short and wear thick optics to see. Although soft-spoken, the old men are both nervy and strangely defiant. From the simplest flake white at 1 sp a pot to the most dazzling Newby Violet at 40 gp a jar, the pigments of Hessim, Newby, and Sage are unsurpassed for brilliance, realism, and permanence.

O14. The Ironworks: One of the largest buildings in Old Korvosa, and indeed the city, the Ironworks takes in pig iron from Janderhoff and recycled slag bought for almost nothing and, in turn, spits out wrought iron works in a wide range of quality. More a factory and less a smithy, the Ironworks focuses on simple and functional wrought-iron goods, emphasizing quantity over quality. This allows the city's few blacksmiths to remain in business, as they can focus on high-quality goods or customized jobs.

South Shore

The newest district officially added to the city, South Shore became a part of Korvosa in 4684, when Queen Domina set the first foundation stone for the Pantheon of Many. South Shore's population consists mainly of the city's *nouveau riche* hoping to escape the cramped conditions elsewhere in the city. No wards divide South Shore. A small enclave built specifically as an embassy for Mierani elves stands in the ward.

S1. Orkatto's Feathers and Fur: Collectors and wealthy nobles of South Gate acquire exotic pets or oddities to add to their menageries from Orkatto's. It is filled with caged wonders, from rainbow-plumed songbirds and snowdust badgers to emerald-back nightbelly boas and even the odd dream spider (for Orkatto's more shady clientele). The elderly halfling served a lord in Magnimar as his master of the hunt in younger days, but the country squire saved his coppers well and retired to Korvosa to set up his shop.

S2. Green Market: This small, fully enclosed market specializes in food, clothing, and commodities the residents of the city need to survive, but it also provides jewelry and other luxuries for the nobles of the city. Merchants here are expressly forbidden from selling weapons, armor, or magic.

The Green Market closed its doors nearly a decade ago when the previous owner died unexpectedly at a relatively young age. Four years ago, a young woman named Zeeva Foxglove¹⁸ bought and refurbished the building, reopening the market three years ago to thunderous applause. Since its reopening, Green Market has proven profitable and popular beyond many observers' expectations (including, rumor holds, Zeeva's).





S3. Bard's End: Standing just a block from Kendall Amphitheater, Korvosa's largest inn provides a place to stay for those who have traveled long and far. Visiting actors of varying fame frequent the Bard's End, as do musicians, performers, and actual bards. A relatively small stage dominates the inn's common room, and a night never goes by without some kind of performance being held. Traveling bards hoping to make a gold sail or two often pass through Bard's End on their way into or out of Varisia. The inn can comfortably house three-dozen people in its 14 rooms, although it frequently holds more than twice that number.

S4. Jade Circle: This green-painted, domed building glitters like a giant emerald in the sun. Banners of Korvosa's oldest noble houses wave on poles jutting from the second floor open-air balcony. Behind its lacquered latticework doors is a cacophony of scents and delicate delights, from the teahouse's famed porcelains to its exotic fare. The Jade Circle is the swankiest site in South Shore. By day, young noblewomen accompany their mothers here for a spot of the most exotic fragrant teas from Osirion and even the distant sandalwood shores of Tian Xia. By night, young bravos bolster their spirits with mulled wines as they share a rousing tale of the silver market's ups and downs, or discuss the merits of various fighting styles (rapier and dagger is currently *en vogue*).

S5. Pantheon of Many: Completed in 4706 and built in anticipation of Korvosa's tercentennial, the Pantheon of Many holds within its massive octagonal white-marbled walls shrines to 17 different deities. Of the twenty main deities of Golarion, only Gorum, Lamasthu, and Rovagug do not have shrines within the pantheon. Up until only days after it opened, neither did Cayden Cailean or

SOUTH SHORE

The following costs are averages that vary by size.

OWNERSHIP

House	20,000 gp
Townhouse	15,000 gp

RENT PER MONTH

House	60 gp
Apartment Suite	10–40 gp

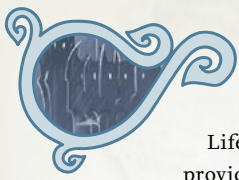
Desna, but their followers gathered such a large crowd of protest that clerics of the pantheon could not leave the building.

The pantheon respects all of the deities it serves—even the evil and chaos-loving ones—so all 17 spaces are equally sized. Clerics of the represented deities tend to their shrines, performing rites (those that do not violate Korvosan law, anyway) under the watch of a pair of impartial observers. No sacrifices of creatures, intelligent or not, is allowed within the pantheon.

Orphanages

It is an unfortunate truism that, in a region as fraught with peril and war as Korvosa, people frequently die long before their time. When those who pass on leave behind children, their wards suddenly need some place to live and grow. Korvosa answers that unfortunate need with five relatively small state-run orphanages that receive frequent inspections from the churches of Abadar and Sarenrae. These orphanages also house children taken from abusive parents or parents convicted of violent crimes.

¹⁸ See *Pathfinder* #2, page 30.



Life in these orphanages is strict and highly regimented, providing early training for those interested in joining the Korvosan Guard, Sable Company, or even the local Hellknights. Many of those who turn 18 and leave the orphanages do indeed join the military organizations, and most of those who do not take up the wandering life of adventurers.

The three middle-sized orphanages stand in Midland (with one apiece in High Bridge, Pillar Hill, and Slope), with the largest in North Point's Mainshore ward and the smallest in East Shore. All together, the five orphanages can house up to 450 children, although they frequently only hold about 150.

The Shingles

The Shingles came into being only a few decades ago, when urban renewal projects on Endrin Isle pushed Old Korvosa's poorest people into Bridgefront. As people flooded into the area, they quickly ran out of room. Taking a cue from Kaer Maga, they built upward, with lean-tos and shacks creating impromptu third stories on many of the ward's buildings. These temporary third stories gave way to more permanent additions, which in turn received tents and shacks atop them. Over time, this progression of haphazard permanency gave rise to a ramshackle wall of residences reaching as high as five floors in some places.

These cramped and irregular rooflines gave homes to some of the city's poorest and most desperate people. The children of these impoverished people grew up on the roofs of Bridgefront and thought little of traversing the ward by moving above it. Over time, they learned that other sections of the city with equally dense rooflines could also provide hidden and convenient paths. At first, these young daredevils only used the roofs as highways and called running along the rooftops "shingle dashing." As the practice became more common and different underworld elements saw potential in its use, permanent and semi-permanent waypoints, structures, and safehouses appeared on roofs throughout the most crowded parts of the city. Eventually, these rooftop communities became known collectively as the Shingles.

No accurate map of the Shingles exists, as almost by definition the neighborhood is in a constant state of flux. Generalizations, of course, can provide a basic overview of the Shingles' features within a ward, but exact directions to a particular residence or shop defy description. The Shingles do not exist as a continuous layer that blankets the roofs of the city. Rather, large swaths of Korvosa remain free of the phenomenon, with areas under the Shingles being large islands surrounded by clear roofs.

Humans don't live alone on the roofs of their fair city. Instead, an assortment of nasty surprises await unwary fools traversing the Shingles. Everything from imps and

stirges to shingle spiders (Medium monstrous spiders) and chokers hunt above the city, ready at any moment to snatch inattentive prey. Parents in the parts of the city under Shingles frequently threaten unruly children with visits "from the chokers that live on the roof." Much truth exists in this threat, however, as chokers sometimes snatch up their prey from top-floor balconies or by reaching down into chimneys.

Bridgefront: As the origination point of the Shingles, the rooftop communities in this ward are the oldest, least transient, and most dangerous. Bridgefront's Shingles hides the city's highest concentration of chokers and stirges, but it also holds a small clutch-family of pseudodragons. The rickety structures that comprise the Shingles are built upon one or more layers of other unstable assemblages. As a result, the layout of the place constantly changes, as one area collapses or shifts, stealing away some routes while creating new ones.

Cliffside and Pillar Hill: Despite the relative affluence of these wards, sections of them contain continuous rows of buildings pushed up against one another. With no space between the walls of these buildings, adventurous youths of these wards used their rooftops to move about unseen. This innocent emulation of Old Korvosa's Shingles eventually gave rise to the adoption of the roofs by the same kinds of people who use them elsewhere in the city. Thus, over time, the Shingles spread into more affluent neighborhoods, where private security guards and even Korvosan Guard sentries remain semi-vigilant against unwanted rooftop excursions.

Garrison Hill: The Shingles of Garrison Hill connect with those of Bridgefront, but, because of the decreased building density and relatively steep slope, the Shingles of this ward are far less extensive. As a result of the hill's grade, though, the Shingles here have a unique vertical quality missing from other wards. Many of the highways across Garrison Hill's rooftops involve ramps, ladders, and stairs.

High Bridge and West Dock: This section of Shingles has a nautical look to it. Gangplanks, massive nets, canvas covers, and toppled ships' masts act as connectors, highways, roofs, and floors of the jury-rigged amalgamation. These jumbled and swaying constructions provide hundreds of hiding spaces for various creeping things. In addition to the normal chokers and stirges a high number of shingle spiders live above the roofs of West Dock.

Old Dock: Almost an extension of the Shingles from Bridgefront, the rooftop byways and shanties of Old Dock drop off quickly near the warehouses along the waterfront. Nearer the center of the island, though, the Shingles of Old Dock are almost as congested as those of Bridgefront. The first deaths attributed to chokers occurred in the Shingles of Old Dock, although in the



decades since most of the choker population has migrated down to Bridgefront.

Sequestered among the detritus that makes up Old Dock's Shingles, a collection of imps who escaped the control of the Acadamae occasionally causes mayhem in and around the ward. These independent imps constantly seek out a powerful devil to serve, but they refuse to ever again work with mortals.

Twitcher's: High above the streets of Korvosa, most patrons and would-be patrons alike consider Twitcher's a part of the Shingles. In fact, it is likely the only permanent location in the transient rooftop world. The bartender, a red-haired man named Ramthos, mixes the karale much stronger than most of his competitors. Some dark whispers suggest that Ramthos works in league with the predators of the Shingles, intoxicating his guests to make them easier prey.

The Vaults

Most cities have sewers. Some can even claim dungeons and deep caverns beneath them. No city, though, has a complex system of subterranean tunnels quite like the Vaults of Korvosa. Modern Korvosa stands atop the remains of at least two other civilizations and integrates both of them in its design. As a result, the origins of the Vaults of Korvosa can be divided into several categories.

Burial Mounds: The Shoanti who lived in Korvosa prior to its Chelaxian colonization dug squared ditches into the earth to bury their kings, warriors, and other elites. Over these trenches they placed stone slabs found near the shale cliffs along the bayfront. They then covered these slabs with low mounds of earth, leaving only the narrowest of openings to allow for the later internment of additional people of importance. Dozens of these mound trenches cover Garrison Hill and scores more cover Citadel Hill and the lowlands surrounding Korvosa.

When the Chelish colonists began exploring the area on which they founded their city, they quickly discovered the hollow nature of these burial mounds. As the settlers expanded their city, they slowly connected many of these trenches, paying their dwarven allies to dig tunnels between them all. Without any regard to the dead Shoanti buried there, the Korvosans then made these tunnels into sewers. Today, the sewers under much of mainland Korvosa make little sense, making random turns and possessing numerous festering dead ends, thanks to the haphazard layout of the Shoanti burial mounds.

Natural Caves: Most of the Vaults of Korvosa are formed from natural geological forces of erosion or volcanic activity. These irregular caverns and caves delve deep beneath the surface of the earth, sometimes well beneath the water table. Other tunnels seem to connect to larger subterranean complexes, from which horrible creatures occasionally emerge.

TEN KORVOSAN DELICACIES

The people of Korvosa mostly eat relatively bland foods and don't vary their meals all that often. Many point to the city's strong military character for this particular quirk. Despite this, Korvosans do enjoy the rare treat, and, when in the mood for something different, they tend to indulge in one of the following.

1. **Alikan Oyster:** Nothing more than a soft-boiled oyster harvested from the Narrows of Saint Alika. Six oysters sell for 2 gp.
2. **Hillcake:** Essentially heavily spiced hardtack. Popular with Sable Company marines. Two pounds of hillcake sell for 1 gp.
3. **Jigsaw Fin Mahktasha:** The deep-fried dorsal fin of a jigsaw shark, typically doused in a mixture of Vudran spices. One fin sells for 7 sp.
4. **Lem:** A thin hummus cut with goat's milk and heavily spiced. Usually served with strips of deep-fried clam meat called "lemchum." A jar sells for 8 sp.
5. **Maxmax:** A Shoanti treat made from pickled moose fat dipped in powdered sugar. One maxmax sells for 1 sp.
6. **Oliphant Ear:** Butter-rich flat-bread pastries fried on the backs of tower shields. Can easily feed three full-grown men. One ear sells for 5 sp.
7. **Pullers:** Tiny, chewy sweets made of sugar, honey, and maple syrup held together with caramel and wheat flour. A dozen pullers sell for 4 gp.
8. **Reed Crackers:** River reeds and duck eggs made into bitter and mildly hallucinogenic crackers. One pound sells for 4 gp.
9. **Reefclaw Pasty:** A deep-fried ball of mashed reefclaw claw meat best eaten with a thileu-bark dipping sauce. Four pasties costs 1 sp, with the proper amount of sauce costing 6 sp.
10. **Thileu Bark:** The most popular spice in Korvosa. It tastes like a cross of cinnamon, nutmeg, and mint. Only Varisians know how to harvest the bark. They sell it for 100 gp per pound.

Thanks to the proximity to Conqueror's Bay, many of the natural tunnels under Korvosa are sea caves, some of which occasionally collapse in on themselves to form sinkholes. Along the Merciless Cliffs and the western cliffs of Garrison Hill, these sea caves sometime bring down whole sections of the hill, forming deep but narrow cysts in the side of the stone. The most famous of these cysts drops beneath Palace Arkona.

Worked Tunnels: A few worked tunnels of unknown craftsmanship have been discovered at the extreme south end of Korvosa. Of these, two simply go on for several hundred feet before they suddenly end at collapsed roofs or ancient sinkholes. One opens into a small collection of chambers under the modern Pantheon of Many.



CHAPTER THREE: PEOPLE

For the most part, Korvosans are a friendly and helpful lot. And meticulous. They follow the rules, walk the line, and fill out the forms exactly as instructed. Even their most powerful criminals obey certain regulations laid out for them, going so far as to pay taxes on some of their ill-gotten goods! This citywide desire to regulate and obey probably comes from Korvosa's deep military history and long militaristic traditions. If you have no love of the military it's best to keep your mouth shut here.

—Mercer Cucuteni, Magistrate of Tourism

Buildings, infrastructure, and politics make a city livable (or intolerable, in the case of politics), but the people who live in a place truly make it a city.

GOVERNMENT

Barely more powerful than the lord magistrates who preceded them, the monarchs of Korvosa must share power with the strict governmental entities extant at the founding of the monarchy. The following descriptions provide an overview of the city's most powerful governmental forces:

Arbiters: More than judges, the arbiters also have legislative oversight. Any declaration the king makes must first face review from the arbiters, who vote on its legality both in regards to the Korvosa City Charter and the latest known laws of Cheliox. By charter amendment, seven arbiters must examine a monarchial decree and five of them must accept it in order for it to become law. If the arbiters review and reject a decree, one of those who voted against it must advise the king on what he can do to make the decree more acceptable to Korvosan and Chelaxian law.



The main task of arbiters, however, is to try criminal cases and settle civil disputes. Depending on the gravity of the crime, as many as nine arbiters might try a single case (they always try cases in odd-numbered groups to eliminate stalemates). For most crimes and for all civil disputes, though, a single arbiter oversees the proceedings. His judgment carries the authority of the city's leader, although a convicted criminal may appeal the punishment handed down (but not the verdict) to the king. Most people don't know they have this right, and thus it is rarely invoked. At most, the king must review a half-dozen cases a month.

Commandant of the Sable Company: Whenever a new monarch ascends to the Crimson Throne, tradition dictates that the commandant of the Sable Company reaffirm the company's loyalty to the crown and the person who wears it. The commandant typically makes this pledge of fealty within the first month of the new monarch's reign, although he does have the option of delaying or even refusing the ceremony. A newly appointed commandant is also expected to make this pledge.

Despite the pledge of fealty, the commandant of the Sable Company does not answer to the city's leader, but rather to Castle Korvosa's seneschal. This arrangement gives the company's commandant freedom to act on behalf of the city against a tyrannical ruler, but it potentially puts him at odds with the powerful field marshal of the Korvosan Guard.

By charter amendment, in order to maintain this balance of power, the commandant must be at least three generations removed from a common ancestor of the city's leader. The current leader of the Sable Company, Commandant Marcus Thalassinus Endrin, is first in line to become the new seneschal of Castle Korvosa, should Seneschal Neolandus Kaleopolis retire or die.

Field Marshal of the Korvosan Guard: In honor of the city's founder and namesake, the Korvosan Guard calls its leader the field marshal. The city's ruler selects the field marshal from among the senior officers in the guard, who then reports directly to the monarch. Because the Korvosan Guard has a tie with the church of Abadar, though, the ruler cannot remove the field marshal without agreement from the high priest. Frequently, the high priest has additional input into the appointment of the field marshal, making recommendations for or against candidates.

The field marshal of the Korvosan guard wields considerable influence in the city, as she both commands

the largest military force in Varisia and—by custom and charter amendment—can reject an order handed down by the ruler. She may only do so if the order violates the laws of Korvosa or Cheliox or needlessly endangers the city's civilians or its military forces. In this case, the field marshal must report her decision and reasoning to the high priest of Abadar within 1 day, who then decides on her fate. When such a process might interfere with the defense of the city, however, the field marshal has up to a month to report to the high priest.

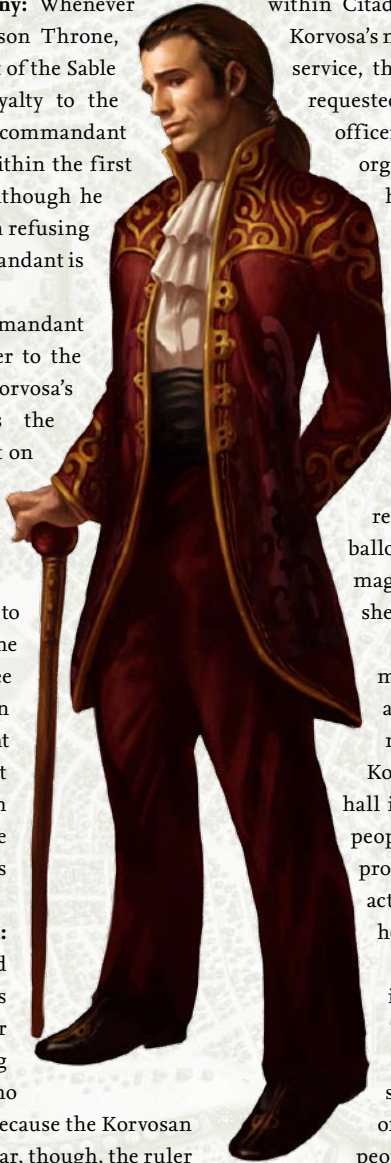
Lictor of the Order of the Nail: Lictor Severs DiVri lives within Citadel Vraid south of the city and answers to Korvosa's money. After agreeing to a price for the order's service, the lictor sends out as many Hellknights as requested. The leader of the group sent works with officers and liaisons of the Korvosan Guards to organize their efforts. Occasionally, the lictor himself deigns to march into Korvosa, where he works directly with the Korvosan Guard's field marshal.

Magistrates: With the creation of the monarchy, the magistrates and their bureaucratic underlings struggled to justify their existences to the city's first king, the beloved Eodred I. Fortunately for them, Eodred I believed strongly in delegating responsibilities, and during his reign the number of magistrates and their staffs ballooned. Queen Domina halved the number of magistrates, but, since her death, many of those she cut have returned.

Today, city hall houses no fewer than 23 magistrates, with a combined staff of nearly a hundred. No one exactly knows what the magistrates or their staffs do, but most Korvosans suspect the entire purpose of city hall is to waste the time and money of the city's people. Brief descriptions of Korvosa's most prominent three magistrates (those who seem to actually do something constructive, no matter how hated) follow.

Magistrate of Commerce: The most hated man in Korvosa, Magistrate of Commerce Garrick Tann oversees the collection of taxes in the city. Contrary to popular belief, he does not set the tax rate; he only enforces it. Regardless of the truth, the people of Korvosa—as do people of all civilizations—hate the tax man.

In addition to his primary duty of tax collection, the magistrate of commerce has two other onerous tasks that win him no friends: he is charged with breaking unions and regulating city fees. As the union breaker, the magistrate of commerce must work closely with the city's military organizations to crack down on attempts to form guilds.





TEN FESTIVAL AND HOLIDAYS

While a relatively strict and taciturn people, Korvosans do occasionally enjoy chances to loosen up and celebrate something important. In chronological order through the year, Korvosa's 10 most popular celebrations are:

1. **King Eodred II's Birthday, 16 Calistril:** By royal dictate, the city marks the aging king's birthday with scantily clad girls and women dancing and serving free wine to celebrants.
2. **Sable Company Founding Day, 6 Pharast:** A formal celebration marked by a parade and displays of martial prowess, this somber holiday is one of few that precludes alcohol.
3. **Breaching Festival, last Sunday of Desnus:** See the Breaching Festival sidebar.
4. **Day of Destiny Festival, 3 Sarenith:** Held to be the day Emperor Halleck IV signed the charter that eventually became Korvosa, celebrants of this holiday toast the city's health with cheap but abundant liquor.
5. **Riverwind Festival, 22 Sarenith:** At the start of summer, the prevailing winds shift for a few weeks, bringing a cool breeze down from the Mindspin Mountains. This break from the heat is celebrated in the traditional way (i.e., drinking to excess).
6. **Founding Festival, 14 Erastus:** The wildest parties and festivities occur on the anniversary of the city's founding. Alcohol, fireworks, and extravagant displays of magical prowess light the city into the wee hours of the following morning.
7. **Saint Alika's Birthday, 31 Arodus:** More a time of reflection than an excuse to party, this small festival is celebrated with red and white flowers and platefuls of raw Alikan oysters.
8. **Crabfest, first Wealdy of Rova:** As winter approaches, crabs that had migrated to the cooler waters of the Jeggare River return to the bay. Many end up as dinner at feasts.
9. **Great Fire Remembrance, 13 Neth:** Somber and quiet, this holiday shuts down the city. Most people stay at home and, by tradition, no one lights a fire from dawn on the 13th until sunrise on the 14th.
10. **Pseudodragon Festival, 7 Kuthona:** The last wild (alcohol-fueled) celebration of the year occurs to mark the migration of wild pseudodragons from their warm-weather homes in the Mindspin Mountains to their wintering habitats along the bay. The city's tame and domesticated pseudodragons take to the sky and greet their cousins, often spending most of the day frolicking above the city.

Magistrate of Expenditures: One of the best-loved men in Korvosa, Magistrate of Expenditures Syl Gar spends the money collected by the magistrate of commerce. This spending includes maintenance of the city's public buildings (including Seawatch Tower of Castle Korvosa) and the payment of its employees (including both the Korvosan Guard and the Sable Order). Merchants and smiths welcome the magistrate of expenditures wherever he goes, as his arrival portends the spending of money or the establishment of contracts.

Magistrate of Regulation: Frequently a priest of Abadar, the magistrate of regulation is charged with maintaining fixed weights and measurements, so everyone within the city may operate on level playing fields. Magistrate Lolia Perenne and her underlings scour the city looking for faulty scales, shaved coins, and other attempts by merchants and customers to cheat one another.

Monarch: At the top of the political power dynamic sits the city's monarch, currently King Eodred II, son of Queen Domina the Great. King Eodred enjoys expanded monarchial power wrested from the nobles and ministers by his powerful and popular mother. He controls Korvosa more fully than any previous monarch, but he still only barely retains power. Unlike the slave girls in his harem who serve him without complaint, the city of Korvosa is a fickle and demanding mistress.

King Eodred's declarations from atop the Crimson Throne become law almost by default, although the arbiters retain the ability to counter any foolish whim of his that violates

the city's charter (and its 247 amendments) or Chelaxian law. By convention, the commandant of the Sable Company offered his group's loyalty to the rightful ruler of the city when Eodred took the throne. Unlike the field marshal of the Korvosan Guard, however, Commandant Marcus Endrin does not report directly to King Eodred, but rather to the seneschal of Castle Korvosa, Neolandus Kalepopolis. King Eodred did place Korvosan Guard's leader, Field Marshal Cressida Kroft, in power, as the city's charter dictates he must, and he expects (and receives) full cooperation from Field Marshal Kroft in return. In times of need, the king can trust the Lictor of the Order of the Nail to send troops into the city—just so long as the city has gold with which to pay.

Other groups within the city cannot openly defy the king, although, when their individual members unite, they can cause the monarchy headaches. One member of each of the five Great Houses sits on the Peerage Review, an advisory council the monarch cannot dismiss but need not heed. Politics and wisdom dictate, however, that King Eodred II at least listen to the arguments presented by the review, as its members do have the power to contradict a ruler's orders to the Korvosan Guard. Because the king cannot regulate every aspect of the city, nor would he want to, a set of magistrates (to whom the title of lord magistrate once belonged) divides responsibilities within the city.

It was by invitation of the seneschal that Korvosa's first monarch, King Eodred I, took up residence in the castle, and up until Queen Domina's reign the seneschal retained



the right to evict the monarch from the castle. The beloved queen, however, influenced the passage of one of the last charter amendments, granting the monarch permanent residence within the castle as long as he bears the family name of Arabasti. A clause in the amendment allows for a monarch's eviction (which only removes him from the castle, not from power), but doing so requires a unanimous vote from all five representatives of the Great Houses, the seneschal, and one arbiter chosen at random.

Sitting upon the Crimson Throne does bring with it a considerable drawback. The Curse of the Crimson Throne manifests itself in two forms. First, no monarch of the city has died of natural causes—all perished at the hands of another, whether subtly or quite overtly. Second, no monarch has yet produced an heir while ruling. Queen Domina is the only parent among the city's monarchs, and she brought her adult son with her from Cheliox when she came to Korvosa.

Seneschal of Castle Korvosa: Before it became the home of Korvosa's monarchs, Castle Korvosa provided a home for the city's garrison. An early charter amendment gave the castle's seneschal complete control over the entirety of the pyramid "and all structures built on it and all tunnels discovered or dug within it." Later, when the headquarters of the Sable Company moved into the castle, a new amendment made the seneschal the liaison between the city's leader and the company's commandant. The seneschal can veto the nomination of any applicant to the post of Sable Company commandant.

People in Korvosa consider the castle's seneschal as the second most powerful individual in the city, behind only the monarch. Although he no longer possesses the power to evict the monarch, he can make the city's leader a prisoner within the castle by sealing it and calling for Sable Company marines to man and guard it. To date, no seneschal has had any reason to use such draconian measures, but he retains the power nonetheless.

When a seneschal dies or retires, the field marshal of the Korvosan Guard chooses his replacement from among the leadership of the Sable Company. Typically, the company's commandant becomes the new seneschal, although a promising junior officer occasionally leapfrogs into the limited but powerful position.

Those close to him expect the current seneschal, Neolandus Kalepopolis, to step down in 3 years, on the 50th anniversary of his appointment to the post. Many see his very close and mentor-like relationship with Commandant Marcus Thalassinus Endrin as the most obvious sign of this.

Peerage Review: These leaders of the five Great Houses form an advisory board for the monarch, but they possess

almost no actual power over city policy whatsoever. A unanimous vote by the peerage can, however, contradict a monarch's direct order to the Korvosan Guard, forcing the guard to return to Citadel Volshyenek. Although this power exists within an amendment to the city charter, it has never been invoked. For the most part, the monarchs have worked closely with the Peerage Review members.

MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS

Three military groups police and protect Korvosa. Each one focuses its efforts in different areas and interacts with the city's leader in its own unique way.

Korvosan Guard: The Korvosan Guard serves the city of Korvosa first, the city's leader second, and the church of Abadar third. It works closely with the monarch and high priest of Abadar to maintain order in the city, acting most often as a police force, but turning into a military operation whenever the city is threatened by external forces.

Descended from the regular army troops brought to Endrin Isle by Field Marshal Korvosa, the Korvosan Guard possesses a long and proud history of serving the city and its leaders.

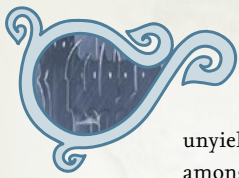
Supported and augmented by the church of Abadar, the Guard counts among its officers paladins and priests of the city god. The Guard works closely with both the Order of the Nail and Sable Company, coordinating efforts among all three and relying on the Hellknights to muster Acadamae wizards when necessary in order to protect the city from every imaginable threat.

Field Marshal Cressida Kroft leads the nearly 700 soldiers of the Korvosan Guard, almost all of whom are human of Chelaxian descent. All other civilized races have representatives in the guard, as do Shoanti and Varisians. Despite an ever-increasing integration of non-Chelaxians into its ranks, the Korvosan Guard remains steadfastly tied to its Chelaxian traditions. Only full-blooded Chelaxian humans can become generals or the field marshal, while only those with at least half-Chelaxian blood (including half-elves) can achieve a rank higher than captain.

Order of the Nail: Some 15 miles south of Korvosa stands Citadel Vraid, the black-iron fortress of the Hellknight Order of the Nail. From its grim fastness, this autonomous legion of law-bringers seeks to enforce its own harsh vision of order upon Varisia, meting out law with blade and iron-shod boot. Unconcerned with the petty trivialities of morality, Hellknights are fanatics of law, adhering only to their harsh, Cheliox-born vision of order and their own



Pictured: Korvosan Guard



unyielding vision of honor. To this end—as is common among Hellknight orders—the black-robed signifiers of the nail often call upon the aid of extraplanar embodiments of law, particularly the fierce, cold will of Hell’s legions that best embodies their philosophy. Like most Hellknights, those of the Order of the Nail believe themselves to be above morality, caring only for the establishment of righteous order at all costs.

One of the original seven orders of Hellknights, the Order of the Nail is among the farthest removed from their home in Cheliox, having been coaxed to Varisia in 4682 by Korvosa’s Queen Domina. Strong martial traditions, strength, force, and intimidation are the primary virtues of the order, well represented by their distinctive horned helms and demon-maw breastplates (each member of the Order of the Nail’s armor being unique, but bearing these features). The order is currently commanded by Lictor Severs “Boneclaw” DiVri, with Mistress of Blades Maidrayne Vox presiding over its martial forces and Paravicar Acillmar directing the order’s signifiers.

Members of the Order of the Nail are found in greater numbers in Korvosa than in any other settlement in Varisia. The Korvosan Guard bristles at the occasional unrequested aid of the harsh-minded knights, but it begrudgingly accepts their results and acknowledges their effectiveness. The city’s government has little interaction with the knights except for occasionally employing contingents on a case-by-case military basis, much like common mercenaries, and welcomes their contributions in subjugating the wilds surrounding the city’s holdings. The city’s monarchy, however, holds a decades-old

grudge, dating back to the order’s refusal to obey the Korvosan crown upon relocating to the region. This sentiment is shared by the people, who fear, despise, and misunderstand the knights—often referred to as “Domina’s Devils”—but none dare speak openly against them, fearing the *carte blanche* with which they enforce the laws of Cheliox.

Sable Company: First by tradition, and later by an addendum to the city’s charter, the Sable Company does not answer to the leader of Korvosa, regardless of the leader’s title. Instead, the commandant of the Sable Company reports directly to the Seneschal of Castle Korvosa who, as also decreed by charter amendment, cannot have less than three generations of separation between common ancestors with the city’s leader. With each new leader, the commandant pledges the company’s loyalty—usually within a few days, but in the past this has taken up to a year and, once, it did not happen at all.

Waydon Endrin formed the Sable Company from the remnants of the marines who fought to hold the land now known as Endrin Isle. After Field Marshal Korvosa commissioned him and gave him a command, Endrin worked to integrate his elite and well-trained marines with the dedicated but under-trained regular soldiers. The Sable Company works closely with the Korvosan Guard and relies on its ties with that group to coordinate efforts with the Hellknights and Acadamae (neither of which the Sable Company gets along with).

Commandant Marcus Thalassinus Endrin leads his hippogriff-mounted marines in defense of the skies and waters of Korvosa. Shipboard raids and airborne threats

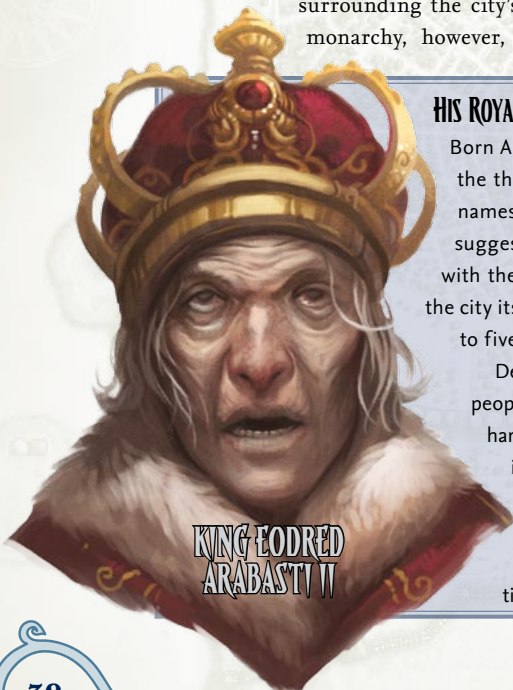


HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

Born Arkapallus Arabasti, King Eodred II adopted the name of Korvosa’s first king when he took the throne, in the hope of achieving the same level of popularity and success as his adopted namesake. Eodred loves the soft touch of females, regardless of race, ethnicity, or (rumors suggest) age. He also enjoys lavishly spending the city’s gold, spoiling himself and his harem with the finest foods and clothes from across the world. On occasion, he even spends gold on the city itself, and under his watch Korvosa built four small orphanages (bringing the city’s total up to five) and the Pantheon of Many.

Despite the foul rumors surrounding him, King Eodred II retains a modicum of love from his people thanks to his good works in the city. Most of his subjects consider him a benign and mostly harmless monarch, more interested in wallowing in his own crapulence than affecting the city in any meaningful way.

A statue of King Eodred II already stands in the center of Eodred Circle, in Midland. As he grows older and the fear of being forgotten grips his heart, Eodred has diverted more of the city’s gold toward public works and monumental structures and more of his personal time toward trying to produce an heir.



Pictured: Korvosan Guard Insignia

fall under the jurisdiction of the black-clad Sable Company, and its members offer aerial and amphibious support to Korvosan Guard operations. The Sable Company is a little more integrated than the Korvosan Guard, allowing any human member to rise as high as general of the company and any other member to gain the rank of major. To date, all leaders have been pureblood Chelaxians from noble families, but in theory any general can receive the promotion to Commandant.

PROMINENT FAMILIES

The elites of Korvosa—nobles, royals, and wealthy merchants alike—live in decadent comfort. They control vast amounts of wealth, wield disproportionately large amounts of power, or both. Even the wealthiest merchants cannot hope to possess as much political clout as the poorest noble families. On the other hand, the Korvosan peerage constantly shrinks, as families who displease Cheliox's monarch lose their titles and privileges—if not their holdings or their lives.

Since the death of Aroden and the reduction of trade with Cheliox, Korvosa has existed in a constant state of precariously balanced power. Thanks to their internal flux, the noble houses cannot remain united long enough to displace the royal family (if they even wanted to) and the royal family cannot summon enough resources to destroy the power of the nobles. Each side ebbs and flows in power, always courting the wealthy merchants and other city elites, but never gaining enough strength to bring down the other.

Korvosa still considers itself an imperial colony of Cheliox, and so does not itself grant or rescind noble titles. The nobles within Korvosa are usually only a



single branch of a much larger family, albeit a branch most families scarcely remember exist. Some families, though, such as House Arkona and House Endrin, exist as a noble family solely within Korvosa. Much to the chagrin of the Arabastis, who have ruled Korvosa for nearly a century, the Chelaxian monarchy continues to ignore the family's request for a noble title. During the most heated debates between the two groups, nobles frequently refer to Korvosa's monarch as the "commoner king" or "commoner queen."

The following descriptions detail many of the city's movers and shakers. Note that nobles bear the epithet of House before their names, making it easy to distinguish them from untitled families. The following list is presented alphabetically, ignoring the title of House

Arabasti: Arbust Arabasti won the cutthroat competition against his hated competitor Chadris Porphyria to claim the leadership of Korvosa. Arbust had come to Cheliox during the Apostate Rebellion, where he hoped to increase the coffers (and thus the chances of victory) of House Thrune. Himself related to Abrogail I via marriage, Arbust counted on his loyalty and cunning to finally win a noble title for his family. Unfortunately for Arbust, Cheliox's chaos created several dilemmas in Korvosa, and the large profit he hoped to make there collapsed around him. Desperate to recoup some of his losses, Arbust remained in Korvosa and quickly insinuated himself into its politics.

Arbust's beloved son, Eodred I, so impressed the people and nobility that, when an anonymous plant in a city gathering first called him king, the crowd quickly followed suit. After much discussion, the noble houses finally agreed that

THE HANGING JUDGE

Cold and stern to those who deserve her ire, "Zena" (as her many friends call her) Zenderholm has a justifiably fearsome reputation for inflicting upon criminals some of the harshest (critics say unreasonable) sentences among all the city's arbiters. Criminals with access to wealth expend small fortunes on lawyers who can avoid having Zenobia try their cases. Even the most callous and hardened criminals quaver in fear when they face her, because they know they have lost their freedom (if not lives).

Zenobia has a softer side, however, and is not without compassion. She doles out relatively light penalties to those who commit crimes from desperation (such as stealing bread to feed a starving family). Despite this infrequent sympathy, Zenobia saves her true compassion for victims of crimes, volunteering her time to help ease the suffering of those she can.

In addition to her role as a senior arbiter, Zenobia also serves as a middle-ranking cleric of Abadar. Both of her roles frequently overlap, such that she uses divination magic to help her discern the truth in cases even as she provides priceless legal advice (for free) to clerics and devout worshipers of the god of cities. When she has time, she volunteers her legal services to the city's orphanages, as well as aiding them in finding suitable parents for their charges.





granting a royal title to the leader of Korvosa would make the monarch (and thus the city) seem more impressive in the eyes of Cheliox and House Thrune. The city's charter very carefully spells out that its own monarch is subservient to the ruler of Cheliox, and that Korvosa merely tends to the lands of Varisia on behalf of Cheliox. To date, the Thrice Damned House of Thrune has never once acknowledged the monarch of Korvosa as anyone other than the mayor of a small colony in the wilderness.

King Eodred's spoiled and hated adolescent nephew, Cardraith, adopted the throne from his uncle (the first monarch and thus first sufferer of the Crimson Throne's curse) in 4657. His short reign, marked by bizarre proclamations that punished everyone from accomplished soldiers to beautiful women, ended in 4661, when young Cardraith died of a mysterious fit. With his death, it seemed, the Arabasti dynasty in Korvosa came to an end.

Korvosa's first and only Porphyrian monarch's rule was cut short, however, by the unexpected arrival of an heir to the Arabasti line: Domina Arabasti. A distant relative of the family's Chelioxian line who had learned of her "royal" lineage and a worshipper of the devil Malacoda, Domina sailed into Conqueror's Bay at the head of a small fleet of black-sailed Chelioxian frigates.

Queen Domina's rule saw improved relations with Cheliox, as the brutally efficient queen had lived much of her life in the devil-worshipping empire. Trade increased several hundred fold as her family's connections led numerous Egorian-based companies to establish colonial branches in Korvosa. She used this influx of wealth to fund a massive building spree throughout the city, giving rise to the Great Tower, the refurbished temple of Asmodeus, Citadel Vraid, Domina's Wall, and the foundation of the Pantheon of Many. Korvosa looks back on her reign as a golden age and considers her its most successful monarch.

Like his mother before him, King Eodred II enjoys spending the city's wealth, but he tends to use its treasury to fund his personal decadent lifestyle rather than build anything lasting. Eodred II adopted

a city with drained coffers but spectacular architectural projects. In his first three years as king, Eodred slowed the completion of several projects and halted others, allowing the city's finances to recover and provide for his bizarre and frequently unwholesome indulgences.

King Eodred surrounds himself with girls and women of every race, but never expressed a desire to marry and—despite frequent trysts within his sizeable harem—never fathered a child. As he grew old, he became suddenly desperate for an heir and visited his enslaved beauties with ever greater frequency. Still, his harem bore him no heir. Into this climate of despair and fear came cruel but seductive Ileosa, who convinced the king to put aside his harem (temporarily) and take her as his wife.

In the last year, as he has watched his beautiful young wife drain the city's treasury at an alarming rate, King Eodred II chartered Sir Gyrad Tolgrith to open a land-bound trade route into neighboring Nirmathas. The king hopes to eventually extend the route all the way to Cheliox, giving merchants an alternative to paying the excessive docking fees of the harbors and delivering gold directly into Korvosa's depleting treasury.

House Arkona: Although an old family that predates even the founding of the empire, by 4458

House Arkona had sunk into poverty and faced the very real threat of extinction. In desperation, Lord Garath Arkona of Korvosa took out a loan from House Jeggare and purchased a lightly armed caravel he named *Reprieve*. Garath hired the smallest crew he could and, in the late spring, the *Reprieve* set sail for distant and exotic Vudra. After many trials and setbacks, the *Reprieve* finally docked in the Vudra port city of Sihadrیمان in late summer, 4460. Lord Arkona, with his sociable brother and advisor Jenkson, explored Sihadrیمان for several weeks, trying desperately to fill the ship's hold with spices, silks, and other Vudran luxuries. At long last, Garath found a seller and negotiated enough wares to fill the holds. The *Reprieve* set sail shortly thereafter and returned to Korvosa in half the time it took to get to Vudra.



Pictured: Order of the Nail Hellknight



Historians suspect Garath and Jenkson encountered some kind of monumental event on their voyage, for they seemed much changed upon their return to Korvosa. The shipment they brought back nearly sank the *Reprive*, but it more than returned House Arkona to a place of prominence in the nobility. Overnight, the much-derided house went from among the poorest noble families to second only to House Jeggare in wealth.

Lord Garath and Jenkson Arkona indulged in nearly every vice available, from drugs to cruelty to pleasures of the flesh. Rather than bankrupt the family again, they used their influence to acquire control over the trades in which they showed the most enjoyment. Over the course of the next 20 years, they took control of almost every tavern and brothel on Endrin Isle and allegedly founded at least two drug dens.

In 4483, both Garath and Jenkson disappeared without warning, only to be replaced by a previously unknown son and daughter, respectively. The new Lord Arkona and his female cousin picked up where their fathers left off, and, under their reign, the family gained increased influence in Korvosa's small and much-suppressed underworld. As Korvosa grew and spread, so too did the number of vices and the number of people engaging in them. At the conclusion of the Cousins' War, of all the noble families, House Arkona alone remained on Endrin Isle.

For the past two centuries, House Arkona has only increased its wealth and influence in the city. Apparently based on the tradition long ago established by Lord Garath and his brother, the house always answers to two leaders: The Lord Arkona (never a Lady Arkona) continues in some capacity to maintain the reputation for cruelty and coldness earned by Garath so long ago, while a close relative of the current lord acts as his right-hand man (or woman) and is the face of the family at gatherings of nobles.

Nothing occurs in the back alleys or stinking vaults of Old Korvosa without House Arkona knowing about it. It is a poorly kept secret that the family controls or has influence over every major (and most minor) criminal enterprise in the city, from watered-down mead to murder.

The current lord of the house, Glorio Arkona, attempts at every opportunity to lift up the poor and provide them with enough sustenance to survive. To that end, he has leveled several buildings the family owns, including a tavern and a brothel, to make room for massive low-rent tenement apartments. These actions have made Glorio the most popular nobleman among the city's many poor and destitute and has caused no end of anxiousness and worry from his family members.



House Bromathan: Lord Valdur Bromathan IV loyally serves the temple of Sarenrae as a minor priest. He breaks the chain of House Bromathan lords serving in the Korvosan Guard, a tradition going back to before his family joined the nobility in 4457. This split with tradition has put him at odds with the rest of the house, many of whom serve in the guard or the Sable Company. Valdur, however, received the blessing of his father when he declared his intent to enter the clergy as a youth.

As it always has, House Bromathan remains a relatively minor noble family. Its fortunes tend to stay relatively stable, neither rising nor falling any great amount. The house remains ever loyal to House Endrin, just as its first lord, Nivek Bromathan, was loyal beyond measure to Waydon Endrin.¹

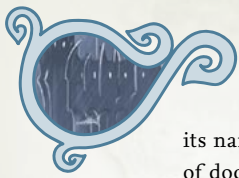
House Endrin: It took more than a quarter century for the empire to recognize the great accomplishments and service of Waydon Endrin. The emperor granted the family a noble title in 4456, making his son Lucien the first Lord Endrin. Like his father before him, Lucien sacrificed himself in defense of the city he loved in 4462. Unlike his father, though, Lucien left no heir, and, as his twin sister Brianna had already married into the Jeggare family, House Endrin appeared destined to die out after only one lord.

Brianna sent a letter to her cousin Ponchus in Cheliox, convincing him to move his family to Korvosa to take up the lordship. Ponchus had to complete his tour of duty in the Imperial Army before he could move north and claim the title, which he finally did in 4471. As an officer in the Korvosan Guard, Ponchus went to the grave in the same way as his cousin and uncle before him, firmly establishing a tradition of service and sacrifice the family continues to this day. House Endrin has produced more Commandants of the Sable Guard (12 of 30) and Field Marshals of the Korvosan Guard (8 of 18) than any other house. Since the founding of Korvosa, it has also gone through the most lords and ladies, all of whom served in the military and more than half of whom died in combat or from injuries sustained therein.

To this day, thanks to Brianna Endrin's marriage to Montlarion Jeggare's grandnephew, the two families remain close. Despite its small size and relatively recent entitlement, House Endrin controls considerable influence in the city due to its strong alliances with other founding and military houses.

House Jeggare: Descended from a nephew of the famous philanthropist whose name appears in many places around Korvosa, this branch of the Jeggare family attempts to carry on the generous reputation attached to

1. Nivek Bromathan sacrificed his life to protect Waydon Endrin from a Shoanti assassin, gaining his family the honor of nobility as a reward. Pictured: Coat of arms of House Arkona.



its name. House Jeggare controls the second-largest share of dock space in Korvosa, allowing the family to bring in ridiculous amounts of gold in its brisk trade. The church of Abadar estimates that nearly a quarter of the city's privately held assets are controlled by the Jeggare family, making it a powerful and influential noble house, as well as the wealthiest.

Although almost every other major noble house has opposed House Jeggare at one point or another in the last two centuries, they also all rely on it for loans and support when aiming their machinations at other targets. House Jeggare survives the sometimes cutthroat politics of Korvosa by keeping a line of credit open for the monarch and other noble families, and by acting as the chief financial backer of both the Korvosan Guard and the Sable Company.

House Leroung: Even before Jessa Leroung founded the University of Korvosa, the ancient and esteemed House Leroung served Cheliox as teachers, instructors, professors, scholars, and sages. To this day, House Leroung maintains extensive libraries in the three largest cities of Cheliox and controls both the University of Egorian² in Cheliox and Almas University³ in Andoran (where the family's noble standing is no longer recognized but its contributions to academia are).

The family's fortunes and powers have fluctuated little since its founding, and, although many of the younger nobles of the family gladly wade into the dirty politics of court life, the lord or lady of House Leroung rarely bothers with such things. Indeed, lovely Lady Eliasia Leroung, current headmistress of the University of Korvosa, is considered an ally by most other noble houses, including those at odds with one another.

House Ornelos: Not just one of the most politically powerful noble houses in Korvosa, House Ornelos also controls the Acadamae. More lord magistrates came from this family than from all other houses combined, and to this day the family keeps at least two advisors at the ear of the monarch. The influence this family exerts does not end at the throne, however, as Ornelos scions are scattered among all the city's most powerful institutions.

In Korvosa, it took little time for Lord Volshyenek Ornelos to establish himself as a major power player. He bought a magnificent manor house on the mainland (long since demolished) and was instrumental in the defense of the

mainland holdings during the Third Battle of Mainshore. Lord Ornelos led a contingent of Korvosan Guard spellcasters during the final assault that broke through the Shoanti defenses to conclude the Siege of the Grand Mastaba. Shortly thereafter, he founded the Acadamae on Citadel Hill.

After the founding of the Acadamae, House Ornelos gained even greater control over the affairs of the city, placing the first (of many) scions in the office of lord magistrate. The brutal slaughter of Remsev Ornelos, orchestrated by House Viamio in 4491, considerably weakened the family's influence, although it did gain the house a great deal of sympathy among other nobles. When the Cousins' War broke out, Lord Volshyenek personally led attacks against House Viamio, slaughtering with merciless abandon those who served that family. With the conclusion of the war and

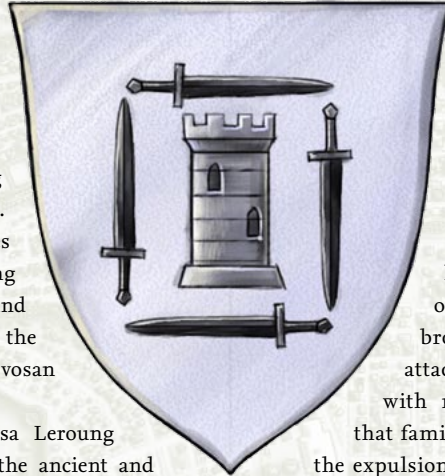
the expulsion of traitorous separatists, the power of House Ornelos swiftly surpassed even the level it enjoyed prior to Remsev's murder.

House Ornelos has resisted converting to devil worship, the Acadamae's infernal shift notwithstanding, but it remains loyal to both Korvosa and Cheliox. Today, the house's influence comes not just from its control over the Acadamae, but also from the many advisors it has placed at the ears of the monarch, other noble families, and important institutions throughout the city.

Porphyrria: Chadris Porphyria lost his bid to become Korvosa's provisional lord when he died suddenly at a rally in his support. Like Arbust Arabasti, Chadris had familial connections with Cheliox's new dynasty and, like Arbust, Chadris saw Korvosa as the key to gaining a noble title. Unlike Arbust, though, Chadris's scheme almost paid off when his cousins in House Thrune promised his family a noble title if he could defeat Arabasti. When Chadris died, his family's best chance at aristocracy died with him.

More than 50 years later, the Porphyria family finally got its revenge when the unpopular Arabasti king, Cardraith, died unexpectedly. Chadris III, grandson of Arbust's competitor, took Korvosa's throne. His unpopular reign only lasted six years, and when Domina Arabasti re-established her family's dynasty she also put an end to the Porphyria family in Korvosa.

Although the family no longer exists within Korvosa and its name is shunned, Porphyria continues to serve



2. In Cheliox's capital, Egorian.

3. In Andoran's capital, Almas.

Pictured: Coats of Arms of House Jeggare (top) and House Leroung (bottom).



the Chelaxian monarchy as a loyal and wealthy merchant family. In Cheliox, the Porphyria and Arabasti families jointly established a mercantile company that even has a branch in Korvosa (although the company knows better than to send any Porphyria employees there, even on a temporary basis).

House Zenderholm: Lord Lacertus Zenderholm brought his family to Korvosa at the tail-end of the great influx of Chelish immigrants. He took advantage of the generous offers put forth by House Viamio, despite his long-standing hatred of Lord Amycus Viamio. When the Cousins' War broke out, Lord Zenderholm was among the first to declare his loyalty to Cheliox. He personally headed his own private army in support of the Korvosan Guard, which led to his death in the last weeks of the conflict.

His daughter, Lady Mulsanne Zenderholm, then took control of the house and leveraged her father's loyalty and bravery into political power within the town. Only 30 years after its arrival within Korvosa, House Zenderholm displaced House Fordyce as a Great House, making it the first of that title to not also be a Dock Family. Today, House Zenderholm members serve the city as arbiters, magistrates, lawyers, and diplomats.

RACES IN KORVOSA

Every civilized humanoid race in Golarion has at least one representative somewhere in Korvosa, usually within Midland District. Make no mistake, though: despite its cosmopolitan leanings, Korvosa is definitely a human city.

Humans: Look at any cross-section of the city's population and you will find that for every 10 inhabitants you see, 9 are human. This homogeneity exists even among the humans of the city, as an equally large percentage of the population descends, at least partially, from Cheliox.

The largest ethnic minority in the city, pure-blooded Varisians, barely represents 1 human in 10, although more than half of the city's population possesses some Varisian blood. Varisian mothers in the city are more than twice as likely to birth half-Chelaxian offspring as pure-blooded Varisian offspring. Ethnic Chelaxians consider pure-blood Varisians little more than brightly dressed thieves and murderers, and prejudice against the group sometimes flares into ugly lynchings or quasi-legal evictions from homes. Varisians find themselves in an unenviable

cycle: the Chelaxian majority alienates them and forces them into the city's crime-ridden impoverished wards, where they frequently must steal to survive, which only serves to fuel the alienation and prejudice leveled at them. In a misguided effort to halt this spiral of degeneration,

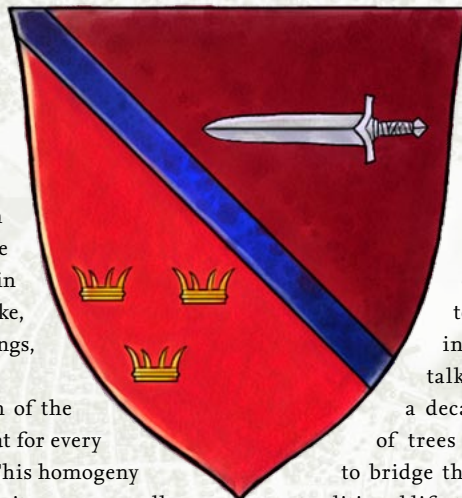
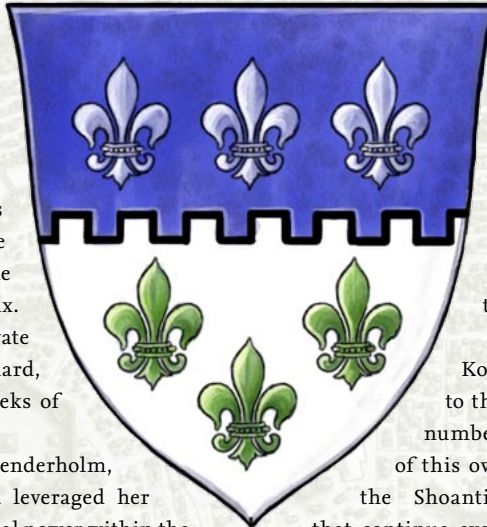
bureaucrats acting under the orders of the monarchy have recently begun a program that removes half-Chelaxian children from their Varisian mothers. They place these children in one of the five orphanages throughout the city, with the hope of making them into respectable, upstanding citizens of the city.

Despite their proximity to Korvosa and the area's importance to their folklore, a surprisingly small number of Shoanti live in the city. Part of this owes to the constant wars between the Shoanti and the ethnic Chelaxians that continue even to this day and that color the perceptions and prejudices of both peoples. Another reason derives from Shoanti cultural tradition: as a semi-nomadic people, they have no need for permanent settlements.

Whenever Shoanti raiders strike at the city, the ethnic Shoanti of the city become defensive and withdrawn, as history has shown an increase in "unexplained" murders of Shoanti following such incidents. Despite all these terrible difficulties, some Shoanti continue to negotiate with the city's leadership in a seemingly endless series of peace talks that have lasted for more than a decade. Others live nearby, in a copse of trees known as Skaldwood, attempting to bridge the gap between urban life and their traditional lifestyle. As Skaldwood is a sacred place to the Shoanti, a century-old treaty with the city allows the Shoanti to live within the wood, so long as the residents of that encampment do not harbor raiders or fugitives (Shoanti or not).

Golarion's other human ethnic groups can claim only a handful of representatives at best. Several, though, simply do not exist within the city.

Dwarves: The dwarves of Janderhoff frequently send massive convoys of wagons loaded with large slabs of black marble. Behind these marble wagons come carts filled with dwarven worked goods: metal and stone weapons, metal armors, tools of all kinds, and statuary.



Pictured: Coats of Arms of House Ornelos (top) and House Zenderholm (bottom).



DOCK FAMILIES

Those noble families that lived in Korvosa prior to the Cousins' War (and who remained within the city after its conclusion) became the Dock Families. As the settlement teetered on the edge of bankruptcy, it leased the maintenance of its docks to the noble houses. These houses divided among themselves the piers and wharfs of the settlement. Each family was assigned at least one pier or wharf, and that family became responsible for maintenance, applying Korvosa's docking fee to any ship that berthed there, unloading and loading the cargo of ships, and providing reasonable amounts of protection to both the structure and the ships tied to it.

Initially, this arrangement nearly broke several noble houses, until they followed the lead of House Jeggare and applied a berthing fee in addition to the settlement's own tax. Within a month, the piers of the city had a wide range of berthing costs, which changed at the whims of the controlling family. Trade dropped off sharply, but the nobles quickly realized their folly and set up a specific fee structure based on the size of the pier and the docking ship.

Today, the captain of a ship berthing in Korvosa for the first time can gain a rough estimate of berthing fees by asking any other ship he passes on his approach. A neutral captain likely gives these new bloods a relatively straight answer, while a captain employed by or belonging to one of the houses does his best to convince the newcomer to berth at one of his house's piers. This practice is known as "pier piling."

Because of their contracts with the city and the noble houses, the dwarves always have buyers lined up for their black marble. Once their contracted buyers choose the stone pieces they want, the dwarves sell the rest (if any remains) in Gold Market. The remainder of their goods, particularly their magical weapons and armors, they sell in the Dock Trade. Dwarven brokers exist in all of the city's major markets. These brokers gladly relay requests back to Janderhoff for interested buyers, and once the desired goods come in the brokers contact the buyers to let them know.

Elves: Almost as rare as druids in Korvosa, the handful of elves here all hail from the Mierani Forest. The leader among these elves, Perishial Kalissreavil, serves as the Mierani ambassador. Because of the distance between the two groups and lack of overlapping—and thus conflicting—agendas, Korvosa and the Mierani Forest elves successfully struck a peace accord almost a full century ago. Ever since, an ambassador and a handful of his aides or family members have lived peacefully within the city. A small enclave specifically built for the elves exists in South Shore.

Gnomes: These small descendants of the fey possess magic abilities far exceeding their size. This natural inclination toward magic attracts the attention of the power-hungry and reputation-minded Acadamae. Almost every gnome in Korvosa comes to the city to attend the Acadamae. Those who

come for other reasons receive frequent invitations to join, either as students or faculty, regardless of the number of times they decline or their lack of magical ability. Gnome students of the Acadamae study all branches of magic, including the college's school of focus, conjuration, but they seem to excel as illusionists. All four of the illusion instructors in the school are gnomes. Outside of the Acadamae, gnomes live as gnomes do, clumsily attempting to emulate the larger races and acting as menaces not to be ignored.

Half-Elves: Bored young women of the human noble families occasionally approach the Mierani enclave looking for an adventurous rendezvous with someone exotic and beautiful. Rather lustful himself, Perishial welcomes these trysts with bemused pleasure and claims each one strengthens the bonds between Korvosa and the Mierani elves. In his years as a diplomat, Perishial has fathered countless half-elf offspring in this way, while the male members of his entourage have collectively contributed to dozens more. Male human nobles looking for a similar exploit with one of the beautiful female elves are universally mocked, belittled, and rejected.

Half-Orcs: Many Shoanti live in close proximity to the orcs of Belkzen, resulting in an almost constant state of battle between the two groups. These battles sometimes grow exceedingly personal, resulting in the occasional half-orc. Few of these half-orcs survive to adulthood, and fewer still live among their human cousins. Despite that, a handful of half-orcs make their homes in Korvosa. Except for a bouncer at the Posh and Turtle, a bodyguard for Eliasia Leroung, and a few other notables, most half-orcs live in Old Korvosa.

Halflings: In order to maximize its profits gained from ship-borne cargo, House Leroung began the practice of hiring halfling sailors (the house also experimented with gnome sailors, but that ended poorly). Halflings require half as much space and food, so House Leroung reasoned it could use that extra space for additional cargo. At first, the human-sized sailors laughed and mocked their smaller comrades, but over time the experiment paid off, as the dexterous halflings performed beyond expectations. Eventually, House Leroung entered a partnership with House Jeggare to build cargo ships with controls and amenities sized solely for halflings, allowing for all-halfling crews.

The other houses (with the pointed exception of House Arkona) bought these halfling-sized ships from Leroung and filled their crews with halfling sailors. Over the years, the halflings have retained this niche the humans carved for them, expanding as necessary as the city grew. Today, nearly half the ships that belong to the city's elite are sized for and crewed by halflings.

Tieflings: A surprisingly large number of tieflings live in Korvosa. Nearly every one lives at and works for the Acadamae, where they serve as the college's own private militia. The arrival of tieflings in the Acadamae followed almost two decades after it embraced the infernal influences coming from Cheliah. While



they command respect (and fear) within the dark grounds of the Acadamae, beyond the black walls of the college tieflings are rarely welcome, accepted, or tolerated.

RELIGION

While Korvosans are not a terribly religious bunch, the city does support a number of temples and shrines. The most popular religions in the city belong to the deities Abadar, Asmodeus, Pharasma, and Sarenrae, although the Sanctuary of Shelyn and the Pantheon of Many provide places of worship for the faithful of nearly every major god in Golarion. Generally, the different religions keep to themselves, working together when and where need dictates. That said, a number of evil deities receive official support in the city, and this makes for a sometimes volatile situation.

As a general rule, Korvosans love their city, attempt at every opportunity to acquire as much wealth as possible, and believe strongly in a strict and lawful society. The church of Abadar frequently (but nonviolently) clashes with that of Asmodeus, as the faiths share many of the same interests but differ both in the execution and intensity of those beliefs—where Abadar promotes law for the sake of maintaining order, for example, Asmodeus sees law as the best way to control the greatest number of people. The church of Abadar assists the church of Pharasma in the latter's duty of presiding over the Gray District (either indirectly with troop support from the Korvosan guard or directly with clerics of Abadar). When the church of Sarenrae focuses its attentions on healing the sick of the city, it and the church of Abadar get along quite well; when clerics of Sarenrae call for the rehabilitation (rather than punishment) of criminals, the two faiths launch into heated debates. Abadarites and Shelyniters rarely interact outside of their combined attempts to beautify the city. Of the rest of the religions represented in the city (mostly within the Pantheon of Many), the church of Abadar tends to work the most with Gozreh (in order to calm the sea and weather in general), Irori (in support of the city's places of learning), and Torag (both in regards to the creation of public works and the defense of the city).

While the leadership of Korvosa reluctantly accepted the infernal influences of Cheliah (and the Acadamae warmly embraced it), the rest of the city did not. The church of Asmodeus remains what many consider a necessary evil in the city, as its inclusion improves the chance of Cheliah eventually reclaiming Korvosa. Asmodeus's faithful tend to keep to themselves and work with clerics (or even layfolk) of other deities only when necessary. In addition to its frequent clashes with the church of Abadar, Asmodeus's religion interacts most frequently with the faithful of Shelyn, as the god of pride demands only the very best and most beautiful works to adorn his temple (which the artisans of the goddess of beauty can most easily provide).

Pharasma's faithful patrol and (mostly) control the Gray District, and for that the government of Korvosa and many of its wealthiest families generously donate to the goddess's religion. Because of this guardianship aspect, the church of Pharasma works closely with those of Abadar and Torag in maintaining order within the necropolis. In Pharasma's role as goddess of birth, those clerics less inclined toward battle frequently become midwives who then work closely with clerics of Erastil (who focus on family), as well as healers of Sarenrae.

Commoners in the city love Sarenrae, for she represents the Korvosan quality of honesty (corruption in the government and military is nearly unheard of in Korvosa), to say nothing of her role as the great healer. The temple of Sarenrae doubles as a hospital and clerics of the goddess frequently find themselves mobbed by those seeking health. Sarenrae's faithful frequently work with worshipers of Erastil and Gozreh to influence the weather around Korvosa to remain temperate.

Although the church of Shelyn has a small (but beautiful) temple within the city, she and her faith have little influence over Korvosa.

The Pantheon of Many in South Shore represents 17 deities, including all of those mentioned above. All of these 17 gods and goddesses

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

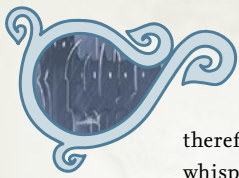
A bitter, cruel woman, Queen Ileosa only came to Korvosa from Cheliah to seduce and marry King Eodred II, in order to gain the lofty royal title she now holds. As the two of them have produced no children, should the king die, Ileosa gains the Crimson Throne. Ileosa has mixed feelings about this arrangement: she would be a queen, yes, but of a city she openly despises, calling Korvosa a "backwater colonial village."

The queen has made no friends among the nobles and elites of Korvosa, and, much to her constant impotent fury and chagrin, some of the city's most respected institutions (such as the Sable Company and the Acadamae) pay her only minimal respect and otherwise ignore her. While many of the noble houses continue to publicly support her, the queen knows through her spies that none of them truly want her in power.

Unless she finds a way to endear herself to an unruly city, the queen can expect to receive no lasting memorials.



QUEEN ILEOSA
ARABASTI



therefore have some representation in the city (and rumors whisper that even those not included in the pantheon have followers) and work with or against one another as their faiths dictate.

THE UNDERGROUND

Numerous non-governmental, non-mercantile factions exist throughout Korvosa. Most of these practice illegal and extralegal activities, and many battle for dominance throughout the town in constant and bloody turf wars.

Thieves' Guild

By charter amendment, Korvosa does not allow merchants, laborers, or tradesmen to form guilds, but it does allow for a thieves' guild. This causes legitimate workers no end of frustration and anger.

Many of the poorer noble houses bristle at the blatant extortion engineered by the Cerulean Society, Korvosa's only thieves' guild. The Cerulean Society runs a fairly typical protection racket with excruciatingly smug satisfaction, as Guildmaster Boule provides his Cerulean Society with actual blue uniforms to wear when they come to collect, giving the guild the look of authority. The price a "client" pays for the Cerulean Society's "service" varies, depending not on wealth but on a complicated formula known only to the guildmaster. Indeed, the wealthy House Jeggare pays less than a gold sail per year for its protection, while impoverished House Peltherianon cannot hope to afford to pay the hundred sails the Cerulean Society demands each month. The Cerulean Society offers its protective service to every noble house, as well as to wealthy merchants, the temple of Abadar, and others who cross it.

When a potential client fails to pay, it goes on a list provided to the gangs of cat burglars and second-story men legitimized by the guild, who then have the go-ahead to act on that information as they see fit. Those who cannot or do not pay open themselves to theft and muggings. Failure to pay does not automatically guarantee thefts, however, as doing so would make it too easy for the Korvosan Guard to capture the guild's allies. The guild works together with legitimate gangs to ensure they don't overwork an area or cause too much suffering to any particular non-client (including beleaguered House Peltherianon). The threat of theft and robbery at knifepoint is enough to make most potential clients pay up, so the guild is careful to not always extend the offer of this service to every potential target.

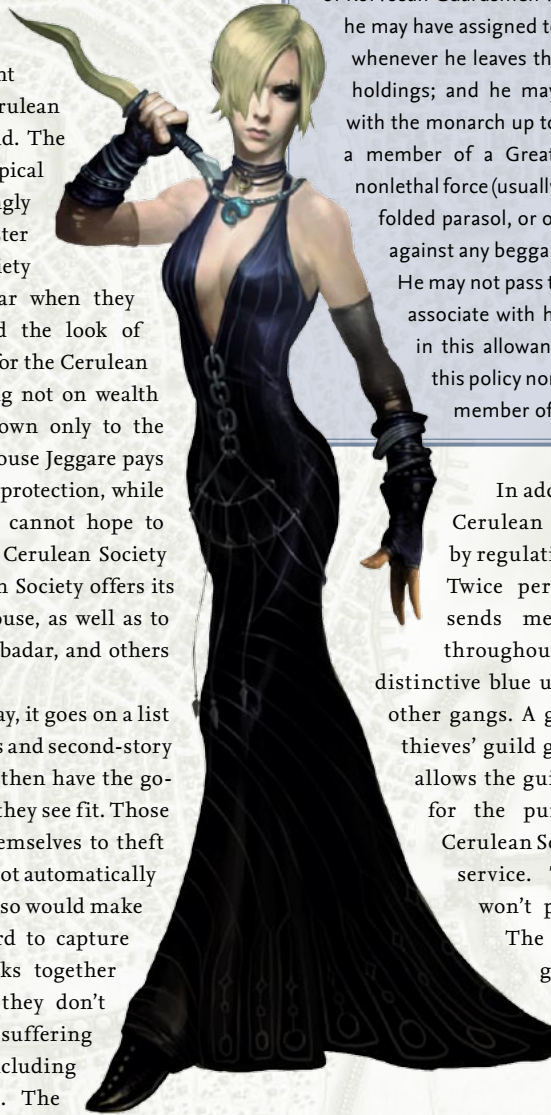
GREAT HOUSES

More than just a title every house strives for, the five Great Houses serve important roles within the city. Before the schism in Chelixa and the rise of the Arabastis, every lord magistrate had to be elected from one of the Great Houses as described by amendment to the city's charter. In 4611, with cooperation from then-Lord Arbust, the Great Houses formed the Peerage Review, a gathering of representatives from the five houses who act as the monarch's advisors.

In addition to the Peerage Review, time and tradition have granted the Great Houses various benefits and advantages above even those of normal noble houses. The lord of a Great House may gain the protection of a squad of Korvosan Guardsmen when he travels within the city; he may have assigned to him a Sable Company ranger whenever he leaves the city to visit one of Korvosa's holdings; and he may demand a private audience with the monarch up to once per month. In addition, a member of a Great House may personally use nonlethal force (usually a boot, but sometimes a cane, folded parasol, or other light wooden implement) against any beggar, vagrant, or transient he sees. He may not pass this privilege to a bodyguard or associate with him. While few nobles indulge in this allowance, the itinerants targeted by this policy nonetheless scatter whenever any member of a Great House approaches.

In addition to blatant extortion, the Cerulean Society also generates income by regulating the other gangs in the city. Twice per year, the Cerulean Society sends members and trusted agents throughout the city, again wearing its distinctive blue uniform, collecting dues from other gangs. A gang that pays its dues to the thieves' guild gains a level of legitimacy that allows the guild to tap the gang's members for the purpose of showing why the Cerulean Society's protection is a valuable service. Those gangs that can't or won't pay the dues don't last long. The swift eradication of such gangs by the thieves' guild strikes fear in all who witness or hear about such events, further ensuring that gangs pay up.

Cerulean Society members do actually perform illicit acts of their own, although for the most part they leave thieving to the other gangs. The thieves' guild operates several secret gambling dens within the city, whose whereabouts



Pictured: Cleric of Pharasma.



remain carefully concealed and change at random times. These gambling dens pop up suddenly and disappear even more quickly, so the Cerulean Society must use a large stable of information dealers and rumormongers to swiftly spread the word of their locations before they move on.

The Cerulean Society maintains a monopoly on smuggling into and out of the city, which ties in well with its extensive drug empire. In addition to drugs, the society also oversees the importation of weapons, necromantic and demonic goods, and unusual creatures. It exports homegrown pesh, slaves, and infernal goods. Of course, because it so tightly controls the smuggling trade, anything illicit that comes into or goes out of the city passes through one of its warehouses, barges, or ships. Those who try to bypass the Cerulean Society in a smuggling operation can expect to go jigsaw shark fishing—as the bait.

For reasons unclear to outsiders, the thieves' guild only operates on the mainland and in East Shore. It never seeks out protection clients in Old Korvosa and only sends members there to collect dues from gangs in the district.

Rumors abound that House Arkona supports the Cerulean Society in some way, but no investigation has ever found a connection. Any link between the two remains a carefully guarded secret.

THE GANGS OF KORVOSA

A number of recognized gangs prowl the sewers, streets, and rooftops of Korvosa, and undoubtedly other groups exist that remain uncatalogued and unseen. Most of these groups, registered and not, incorporate or answer to the Varisian Sczarni (the regional crime family).

Catsdew Lofties: This all-female cat burglar gang specializes in traveling across the Shingles of Korvosa, slipping into homes through chimneys, third-story balconies, and attic windows. The Lofties have perhaps the most cosmopolitan of all memberships, accepting into the ranks any female of any race able to prove herself in a test of acrobatics, coordination, and loyalty. The Lofties take pride in their stealth and only carry weapons

to protect themselves from the predators who lurk in the Shingles. To date, not a single job performed by the Catsdew Lofties—successful or botched—has required a Lofty to attack anyone.

Dusters: Taking its name from the distinctive overcoats worn by its members, the Dusters gang specializes in armed robbery, kidnappings, and harassing innocents. A spineless and dimwitted Shoanti bully named Kynndors Thok acts as the leader of this ham-fisted gang. The entire underworld community—with the exclusion of Kynndors himself—knows that the Dusters' true leadership lies with Kynndors' Varisian girlfriend, who goes by the singular name of Marlessa. Rumors whisper that Marlessa has ties to the Sczarni and uses the Dusters as goons whenever one of the dons requires.

Rat's Teat Boys: As much a shadowy rumor as a truly known gang, the Rat's Teat Boys supposedly consists exclusively of wererats. This group apparently works its trade under the streets of Old Korvosa, although circumstantial evidence of its handiworks occasionally appears on the mainland. Every so often, the rumors say, the boys go on a "recruitment drive." During these frightening times people suddenly disappear throughout the district, thought to be claimed by the Rat Teat's Boys and made into foul lycanthropes. That people frequently disappear in the district even during the best of times doesn't quell the near-panic these rumored enlistment periods engender.

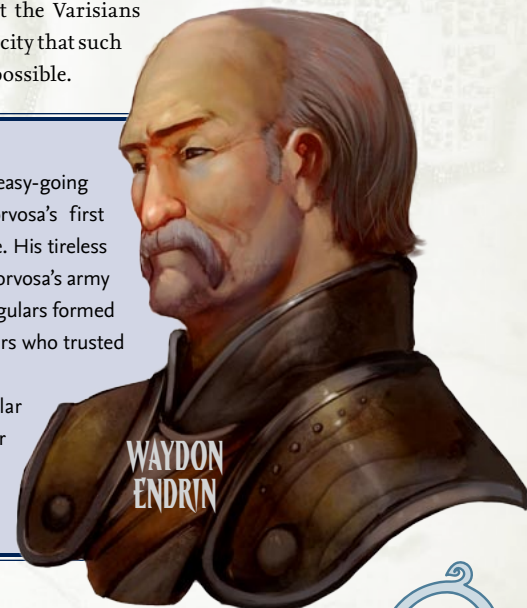
Sczarni: Organized Sczarni gangs frequently prowl the streets and sewers of Korvosa. They form, fight briefly against the Cerulean Society, and then melt again into the Varisian population. The Cerulean Society and other gangs in the city struggle against these Sczarni uprisings, but they cannot afford genocidal sweeps of Varisians (or even known Sczarni) among them, as so many of their own members (and leaders) hail from that large and influential family.

Rumors state that the Sczarnis want to take down House Arkona, but the Varisians hold so little power in the city that such an occurrence seems impossible.

BELOVED HERO

The ranking marine within Fort Korvosa upon the Field Marshal's siege-breaking arrival was an easy-going middle-aged sergeant-at-arms named Waydon Endrin (4363–4429). Endrin became Fort Korvosa's first commanding officer when Field Marshal Korvosa commissioned him the day after the siege broke. His tireless work ethic and exceptional discipline helped ease inter-branch tensions between his marines and Korvosa's army regulars. Under his guidance, the fort's marines became the elite Sable Company and Korvosa's regulars formed the Korvosan Guard. Universally loved by both the marines who served under him and the pioneers who trusted him for their safety, Endrin remains one of the most popular figures of Korvosan history.

Including the island and military academy that bear his name, memorials to the popular sergeant-cum-commander are scattered throughout the town. A statue of the fort commander stands in New Dock, members of the Sable Company and Korvosan Guard still occasionally name their sons Waydon, and a popular nursery rhyme sung to children all across Korvosa speaks to his bravery.





CHAPTER FOUR: HISTORY

Despite its relatively recent settlement, much has happened in Korvosa since its glorious founding. Some consider the time before the arrival of Chelax's explorers just as exciting as the three centuries since, but those doddering old dreamers sit in dusty libraries reading through tomes thicker than their heads. The true history of Korvosa begins in 4404, when the field marshal received the charter to form a city in Varisia. Three centuries of glorious battle, hard-won victories, and selfless sacrifice have made Korvosa the jewel it is today!

—Mercer Cucuteni, Magistrate of Tourism

Conflict, misery, and division define the history of Korvosa. Three distinct periods define the history of Korvosa from its blood-splattered founding to its current turmoil.

PRE-CHELIAX INVASION

Long before the first Chelaxian stepped foot in Varisia, the native Shoanti lived in relative peace throughout the southeastern area of the region. They centered their lives around the Grand Mastaba (which they call Mashka-saht-

puyuhoke) near the mouth of the sacred Jeggare River (which they call Mashkapikki). Their oral history spoke of a thing of great power somewhere beneath the sacred pyramid—something they could never again allow to see the light of day. Thus, the Shoanti consider the Grand Mastaba on Citadel Hill one of the most important sites below the Storval Rise.

The Sklar-Quah tribe inhabited the floodplains along the Jeggare River for centuries, defending the hill from infrequent goblin, marsh giant, or ogre raids and the rare infiltration of adventurers from distant lands. Ruthless



in their defense of the area, the Sklar-Quah maintained a small garrison of warriors and hunters on Citadel Hill and a supporting fishing village on Endrin Isle (which they call Suwa-saht-kaum). For generations, the Shoanti held the area, never encountering a single challenge that truly threatened their warriors. That all changed in 4407.

FORT KORVOSA (4407–4503)

In 4406, as the Everwar slowly wound down, Field Marshal Jakhthion Korvosa led a small army with an even smaller group of brave and hardy pioneers trailing behind from the Empire of Cheliox, through the Bloodsworn Vale, and into the southeastern reaches of untamed Varisia. Savage barbarians known as Shoanti fought the Chelish troops for nearly every foot beyond the vale. As winter approached, the Shoanti suddenly relented and disappeared into the plains.

With the help of the civilians who accompanied it, Field Marshal Korvosa's army just barely survived the harsh winter, albeit at a much-reduced capacity. Spring came late and brought with it no succor. Not until the rains of Desnus faded and the warmth of fair Sarenith hardened the mud could Korvosa's beleaguered men move from their encampment and follow the foothills of the Mindspin Mountains north. Once again, Shoanti harried them relentlessly. After another month of nearly endless battle, the army reached a fast-running river racing out of the mountains. Korvosa deemed the spot worthy and his men set about constructing a palisade.

Meanwhile, in the early spring, the flotilla Admiral Kiameleu begged from the emperor set sail for Varisia and ended up in Conqueror's Bay. This ill-fated expedition consisted mostly of wealthy nobles, with only two companies of elite Chelish marines for protection. Kiameleu's major financial backer, Montlarion Jeggare, insisted on taking a small party up the mouth of the nearby river even as Kiameleu landed one company of marines on the large island in the bay. The marines were immediately attacked by Shoanti on the island and found themselves quickly outnumbered. When the battle turned against the marines and the Shoanti launched attacks against his flotilla in small fishing boats, Kiameleu lost his nerve and ordered a retreat. Only the frigate *Merciless* remained behind to offer support to the beleaguered marines still on the island.

Founding the Colony

Montlarion Jeggare led his famed (and many say, blessed) expedition up the river that bears his name to its source, deep within the Mindspin Mountains. Upon his return downriver, Jeggare met Korvosa's army and, with little effort, convinced the Field Marshal to follow him. The eccentric gentleman explorer led Korvosa and his army to the mouth of the river, fending off Shoanti attacks along the way. They fought their way past the Grand Mastaba and came at last to the shores of Conqueror's Bay, where they spotted the besieged marines on Endrin Isle.

With great haste, Korvosa's men launched a pounding and brutal attack against the Shoanti, capturing most of the natives' boats and crossing the narrow but deep strait separating the island from the mainland. A bitter battle ensued, and in the end the Chelish army regulars linked up with the exhausted marine comrades-in-arms, finally breaking the siege. The dozen surviving marines welcomed the return of Jeggare and the arrival of Field Marshal Korvosa's army and provided what cover they could for the landing boats. This initial victory signaled the end of massed Shoanti aggression on the island. Field Marshal Korvosa commissioned sergeant-at-arms Waydon Endrin, the ranking marine survivor, and placed him in command of the island's defenses.

For the next 22 years, Fort Korvosa acted as the center of a network of trappers, hunters, fishermen, and adventurers who came from Cheliox to exploit the resources of the untamed lands of Varisia. It also struggled constantly against the Shoanti stronghold on Citadel Hill, less than a mile away. Thanks to Captain Palin's *Merciless* and the capture or destruction of all the local Shoanti boats, the Chelaxian settlers controlled the Narrows of Saint Alika and all of Conqueror's Bay within sight of the river mouth.

The Great Fire

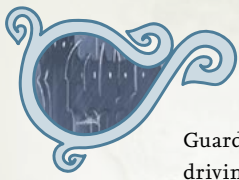
On 13 Neth, 4429, disaster struck. Shoanti brought pitch-covered and pitch-filled canoes down the Jeggare River and snuck onto Endrin Isle. Although the first group to land consisted of only a handful of brave and suicidal warriors, with the element of surprise they managed to light their canoes and set ablaze the wooden palisade of the fort.

The Great Fire razed the palisade and all the buildings of the fort, as well as half the civilian buildings on the island and some of the docks and ships in port (including the *Merciless*). Many of the settlement's most beloved residents perished, as did roughly one-quarter of the entire population and all but a company's worth of soldiers. Only two members of the Sable Company survived, but those who died inflicted heavy casualties on the Shoanti.

Alika Epakena had seen the fire in a vision some time before, though, and warned Waydon Endrin. Endrin contacted Cheliox about her vision and the emperor responded by sending a flotilla of warships and an entire regiment of soldiers, which arrived only a week later. This influx of Chelish soldiers prevented the Shoanti from capitalizing on the settlement's weakened state, but it signaled a subtle shift in power.

Reconstruction

Shortly after the fire, the Sable Company recruited the newly arrived marines and shifted its focus to defense of the village, even as the newly formed Korvosan Guard launched a major and concentrated offensive on the mainland. With the aid of Sable Company scouts and rangers, the Korvosan



Guard struck at the Shoanti south of the Jeggare River, driving them away from the shore.

Headway gained on the mainland disappeared when the Shoanti struck back in 4439, driving the soldiers and settlers there back across the Narrows of Saint Alika. The Chelish soldiers reversed this loss a year later, however, and began construction of a wall around their mainland holdings. Shortly after they completed this wall, the Shoanti assaulted it but could not breach the defenses. Using that small enclave as a base of operation, the Korvosan Guard began a systematic assault on Shoanti holdings south of the river, driving them to the foot of the Grand Mastaba. After a nearly 4-year siege, in 4449 the Korvosan Guard finally breached the defenses of the pyramid, breaking organized Shoanti resistance for more than a decade.

Over the next 10 years, Fort Korvosa grew into a sizable village and trading post. With control of the pyramid, the Korvosan Guard expanded its influence all across the mainland. The northern and eastern shores, however, remained a dangerous wilderness controlled by Shoanti hunting parties, goblins, and other dangers the guard could scarcely afford to suppress.

The Last Shoanti War

In 4462, the great chieftain Galstak Sevendeaths (who was resurrected six times) brought together the Sklar-Quah and Skoan-Quah to form a small army. This army crossed the Jeggare several miles upriver from Korvosa. Riding massive dire animals, the Shoanti crashed through the forest and burst onto the farmlands southeast of the city.

The Shoanti raid, coupled with their subsequent week-long siege of Palin's Cove and the Chelish mainland enclave in Korvosa, reignited anti-native feelings among the settlement's leaders. The entire regiment of Korvosan Guards stationed on Endrin Isle marched straight into the heart of the Shoanti encampment, driving the savages back across the river. Over the next 26 years, a state of general war existed between the Shoanti and the Korvosans.

Finally, in 4488, the Korvosan Guard once again killed Galstak Sevendeaths, but this time they managed to capture his body and prevent his eighth return to life. With Galstak's final demise, the alliance he formed crumbled, and the tribes quickly fell to in-fighting, even as they fled north and east at sword-point. The Chelish soldiers firmly established their dominance of the area around the mouth of the Jeggare River.

ASCENDING KORVOSA (4489–4606)

With the defeat of the Shoanti in the area, Fort Korvosa's leading families felt safe enough to lay claim to lands on the mainland. Only the military houses of Bromathan, Endrin, and Kroft claimed lands east of the river.

Lord Magistrate Remsev Ornelos, confident in the security provided by the soldiers stationed at the newly

named Castle Korvosa, moved the town's seat of power onto the mainland in 4489. Most civilians feared further Shoanti attacks on the relatively undefended mainland, leading to a general protest that resulted in the destruction of many of the mainland docks. Those responsible for the destructive fire were executed, to a man, creating for the first time a tension between the town's elite and its commoners.

This tension increased over the next 2 years, as the noble families fled the cramped conditions on Endrin Isle to set up manor houses on the mainland, leaving behind the soldiers and the working class. Two noble houses, Arkona and Viamio, remained on the island. Finally, in 4491, fed by the honeyed words and subtle assistance of House Viamio, a group of disgruntled longshoremen invaded Remsev Ornelos's home and slaughtered him and his family.

With popular backing and promises of reconciliation between the classes, Amycus Viamio became the next lord magistrate. Amycus sent representatives back to the homeland to recruit settlers for Fort Korvosa, and over the next decade he brought in from Cheliox shiploads of discontents and noble families allied to his own.

The newcomers brought with them wealth and—for the most part—a certain level of lawlessness and rebelliousness. Over the next 12 years, the population of Fort Korvosa nearly doubled, bringing it to almost 8,000 citizens, and for the first time the military and its support infrastructure found itself outnumbered. Clashes between the established noble houses and the unwelcome newcomers began in 4492 and steadily increased as the population grew and safe land became scarce. This unstable political powder keg needed only a spark to ignite a full-blown war.

The Cousins' War

Inadvertently, House Jeggare provided the tinder in early 4502, when it approved a large loan to House Viamio, which Amycus used to fan the flames of discontent and to quietly hire a private army of mercenaries, Shoanti, and goblins. Several months later, Amycus lit the tinder when he orchestrated a debate among the noble houses. His allies called for the holdings east of the river to be abandoned to allow for an easier defense of Citadel Hill. When House Endrin refused (its representative laughing bemusedly), Amycus declared the noble families that had settled beyond the river traitors to Fort Korvosa and the crown of Cheliox. The wrath his declaration created shocked him and gave him a glimpse into his destiny.

It is a testament to the draw of wealth that House Viamio and its allies lasted as long as they did. Word spread quickly of the lord magistrate's declaration, and throughout town fires sprang up as mobs of purchased Viamio supporters set ablaze the holdings of the house's enemies. The private army of mercenaries Amycus hired swept into the eastern holdings, intent on proving his point. Unfortunately for the mercenaries, Lord Endrin predicted this move and had



brought half out the garrison of Castle Korvosa to counter it. In less than an hour, Viamio no longer had a private army.

The streets of Fort Korvosa degenerated into a war zone, and the back rooms and parlors of nobles' manors became battlefields in their own right. When negotiations broke down between the loyalists and separatists, assassinations soon followed. In the spring of 4503, no noble house remained on the fence, and House Viamio realized its doom approached. Only four other houses had aligned with it, while more than 20 stood against it. Amycus attempted to flee the town with the spring thaw, but a Sable Company patrol caught him and brought him to the company's headquarters on Endrin Isle. No one ever saw him again.

With the desertion of Amycus, House Viamio collapsed. The emperor declared the entire family traitors and moved quickly to confiscate Viamio holdings throughout the empire. Those members of Viamio who survived the war in Korvosa disappeared into the dark dungeons under Endrin Isle, never again to see the light of day. Houses that sided with Viamio, even if they later renounced that decision and joined the loyalists, suffered a range of fates from a loss of noble title to an equitable declaration of treachery and utter destruction.

Reconciliation and Peace

With the end of the Cousins' War, healing and reconstruction began in Korvosa. The noble families pledged their allegiance to the Chelaxian crown and worked together to establish a greater degree of unity among those of their class. The holdings of the traitorous families reverted back to the crown and then became public lands in the blossoming town. In order to put its past tragedies behind it, the town officially dropped the word "fort" from its name, becoming simply Korvosa.

With the emperor's attention now drawn to it, Korvosa found itself flooded with immigrants loyal to the crown. These new arrivals hoped to fill the holes left by the traitors and brought a dozen more noble families, including the first members of House Zenderholm. Chelaxian ships arrived in Korvosa's port almost weekly, bringing with them necessities and luxuries the damaged industries of Korvosa could not supply. Those ships returned to Cheliox laden with the riches of Varisia, from fine textiles and thileu bark to gold and Thassilonian relics.

A century of relative peace, broken only by infrequent and increasingly desperate Shoanti raids, and unprecedented prosperity followed. Korvosa's population ballooned to more than 20,000 and it found itself on the brink of becoming one of the most important cities outside of Cheliox.

In that heady climate of wealth, peace, and cooperation came the most horrible news imaginable. A cataclysmic event that rocked not only Korvosa and its beloved empire, but the entire world. Aroden, Cheliox's patron god, had died.

INDEPENDENT KORVOSA (4606–PRESENT)

Aroden's inexplicable death crippled Cheliox, paving the way for a disastrous series of civil wars. Korvosa knew nothing of the conflict and only suspected trouble in the empire when the weekly shipments from Cheliox stopped arriving. The storms resulting from Aroden's death affected Korvosa, of course, but no one suspected the empire was on the verge of collapse.

Lord Magistrate Skara Leroung convened a meeting of the noble houses after the second week to discuss ways of preventing a panic. Rioters already marched through the streets and the Korvosan Guard seemed understandably reluctant to use force against them. The nobles could not reach an agreement over what needed to be done. Some preached patience, praying for Aroden's swift return. Others sought to embrace the rebellion and swear fealty to whomever stood strongest when the chaotic haze lifted. The most radical, though, saw the opportunity for their own revolt, a chance to create their own nation and keep the bounty of their toil for themselves.

As the nobles argued, the common folk and soldiers clashed. Any hesitance the Korvosan Guard felt toward attacking its own people disappeared when supporters of the neo-separatists turned violent. When the first soldier died, speared in the back by a supporter of an independent Korvosa, the town very nearly shook itself apart.

In the end, two factions remained: a majority of royalists loyal to the crown, regardless of who wore it, and a faction of traditionalists (who rejected Cheliox's new, infernal ways), who swore to the old ways of the empire but who were unwilling to openly revolt. With neither side able to convince the other of its wisdom, the traditionalists finally conceded the debate and peacefully departed the city to found Magnimar.

The Rise of Royalty

When stability returned to Cheliox, Korvosa sent its first ship in several months. In addition to the treasures of Varisia, the ship carried envoys to express the colony's undying loyalty to the empire. When neither that nor the next several ships returned, Sable Company scouts took the long land route to Cheliox. The town waited.

Months later, some of the envoys returned bearing dark news. Cheliox had no interest in its Varisian colony, although it might some day require the services of the town's loyal subjects. When the people of Korvosa learned of the severing of their imperial ties rebellion almost erupted in the city for a second time.

Lord Arbust Arabasti paved the way for the ascension of his son, Eodred, who took over leadership of the town upon Arbust's death in 4624. A fine and popular ruler, Lord Eodred reclaimed abandoned parts of Korvosa, strengthened its rural holdings, and improved relations with Cheliox. In 4633, the people voted to change their lord's title—to king.



CHAPTER FIVE: SECRETS

If you wish to uncover the many hidden tales of Korvosa through adventures and exploration, read no further! But if you come to Korvosa seeking to add your own stories to the city's long history, pray continue.

—Mercer Cucuteni, Magistrate of Tourism

Korvosa is filled with whispered half-truths and hinted-at happenings. It possesses enough unsolved mysteries and untold exploits to fill this volume twice over. This chapter, then, presents only the most important secrets of Korvosa, or at least those most interesting to the masters of games held therein.

PLACES

Most of Korvosa's secrets exist in specific places, and many of these mysteries involve the locations in which they occur.

The Acadamae

Long before it turned into a haven for devil-binders and, the Acadamae housed its fair share of secrets.

Administration: In order to become the headmaster (when the previous holder of that title dies), a head of a

school must summon and bind a powerful devil of some kind (at least a cornugon). Once appointed, a headmaster serves for life, although he does retain the right to abdicate the position.

The headmaster of the Acadamae holds absolute control over the college and how it is run. Some past headmasters delegated their responsibilities, granting a great deal of power and oversight to the heads of each school. Toff Ornelos, the current headmaster, hoards his power, retaining in his position an unprecedented amount of authority and giving the heads of schools only minimal oversight of their students.

Some observers within the college question the authenticity of Toff's test for headmastery. In almost silent whispers under the most scrupulous magical protections they debate whether his summoning and binding were



somehow rigged. These critics do not realize how correct they are. Toff Ornelos did not rightfully summon and bind a devil during his test. Instead, he had the help of the infernal duke Lorthact (see page 60), who appeared before Toff as a pit fiend and acted out his part of a summoned and bound devil.

Studies: Every student of the Acadamae must learn spells and rituals of conjuration. Graduating from the school requires the ability to conjure a creature or thing, with conjurers required to summon forth something more impressive than students of other schools.

Students who pass the relatively simple application test sign away their old lives, sometimes even taking on new names if the headmaster deems their old ones unfavorable. Once an applicant becomes an apprentice, she disappears behind the walls of the Acadamae for at least a decade—if not permanently. Roughly three students in 10 die instead of graduate, and the Acadamae makes no effort at all to contact the loved ones of those who perish. Those who survive the rigors of the college gain access to impressive magical secrets (see the Appendix).

For the first 3 years, an apprentice performs unpleasant and dangerous work for the school. These apprentices have few rights and learn nothing useful during 3 years of slave labor. It is during these three years that most people accepted into the Acadamae die. Those who survive the rigors of apprenticeship become students.

Students spend 7 long, hard years learning the ways of arcane magic. As a student's first act, she must choose a school of study in which to focus and two in which she learns nothing (she may not ignore conjuration or divination). Almost half of all students become conjurers, with evokers and necromancers tying for the second most-common specializations. Only about one student in 20 becomes a diviner. Once a student chooses her specialization, she may not change it.

Regardless of specialization, all students learn how to summon and bind devils. Those who learn enough to summon an erinyes receive a special mark of prestige that gives them numerous privileges on campus. Naturally, about three-quarters of those who earn this special mark of prestige are conjurers. Acadamae students are encouraged (some say required) to command and control evil. They view themselves as superior to evil, thanks to their ability to dominate it, even as those outside the school see them as evil themselves.

Campus Life: Tieflings frequently patrol the campus, looking for trouble (such as informal duels). Most of these

tieflings have magical abilities themselves, although theirs usually come naturally and not from years of study. Students typically hate the malicious tiefling guards, and the two groups frequently clash. These clashes are among the leading cause of death for Acadamae students and tiefling guards alike.

Failing to graduate and dropping out are not options. Those who attempt such foolishness frequently become subjects in foul necromantic experiments. The lucky ones among them are dead when they enter the Hall of Whispers.

Enchanters: Seemingly without reason, the Acadamae produces a disproportionately high number of exceedingly powerful enchanters. Rather than an inexplicable and random occurrence, though, the proliferation of powerful enchanters comes from the area's ties to ancient Thassilonian magic. Korvosa stands atop the ruins of the Runelord of Lust's capital and primary residence, and Sorshen's ancient magics have not completely faded. These magical relics (physical and otherwise) of a bygone era seep their powerful enchantments into the ground around them. The founding of a wizarding school and the subsequent concentration of arcane energies drew out the ancient magic, infusing the college with enchantment energies far in excess of any other school. Roughly twice a decade, these energies randomly

imbue a young trainee of enchantment, granting the apprentice power far beyond what her capabilities would otherwise suggest possible.



Pictured: Acadamae Student



THE DRUGS OF KORVOSA

Despite (or maybe because of) its strong militaristic and highly regimented leanings, Korvosa has a drug problem. Most popular among the wealthy young and the poor of any age (presumably in both cases to escape their lives, if only for a time), Korvosa's drug trade reaches into most of the city's wards. The Magistrate of Health estimates one Korvosan in 10 is addicted to one or more of the substances. Those found in possession or under the effects of any of these drugs face up to half a year in jail before they even get a trial (in order to let them overcome their addiction).

Cable-Weed: This strong sedative frequently puts its users to sleep, sometimes permanently. Cable-weed plants grow in damp soil, and the people of Abken founded their commune next to a natural patch of the plants growing on the shores of the Yondabakari River. Users mash cable-weed into a pulp and stir it in boiling water to make a bitter tea.

Shiver: Imported from the jungles of the Mwangi Expanse, dream spiders are the primary source for one of Korvosa's more exotic drugs—shiver. Often purchased in tiny glass vials, a single gulp of shiver is enough to drop the user into a deep sleep haunted by particularly vivid dreams. In extreme cases, addicts have even been known to bait dream spiders into biting them, a foolish practice at best, and a life-threatening one at worst.

Flayleaf: A weaker but more addictive cousin of cable-weed, flayleaf is imbibed by smoking its leaves. Flayleaf smoke acts as a hallucinogenic and sedative, and creates an effect similar to drunkenness. Flayleaf users tend to be open to suggestions and other mental manipulations.

Pesh: This strong stimulant also has mild hallucinogenic properties, which together make its users easily agitated and randomly aggressive. Originally imported from Katapesh, pesh first became popular a century ago and remains one of the top drugs in Korvosa. A pesh addict is identifiable by his blood-shot eyes and frequent nosebleeds, as the fine powder is taken by snorting.

Qat: This mild stimulant causes euphoria in those who chew the leaves. Members of the military groups in Korvosa discovered the drug a few decades ago, using it before battle to make themselves fearless (but unruly) warriors. Once military leaders discovered qat, they moved to eradicate its use among the soldiers and marines. Today it is one of the least-used drugs in Korvosa, although many thieves' guild members are heavily addicted to it.

Thileu Bark: Korvosa exports no more than 50 pounds of this strong and expensive spice a year. The bored youths of Cheliox took to snorting the hot powder up their noses. They claim it causes a hallucinogenic reaction, but their equally bored Korvosan cousins found it only to cause incredible pain and instead use the spice on food.

Avenue of Arms

The 127 arms that form this bizarre landmark are all unique and face the same direction. Attempts to uncover the mysteries of the avenue have thus far met with resounding failure. Magical divinations have discovered that the arms protrude from a single, solid block of basalt, despite the variety of stones forming the arms. Attempts to physically unearth the arms cause terrible unearthly screams of pain and terror, as well as the welling up of brackish black water where the wound in the stone occurs. Over time, damage to the stone (or any of the arms) repairs itself, as if a living thing.

Old Korvosa

The older a place becomes, the more secrets it accumulates, and a particularly historic location might hide more than it reveals. Such is the case with Old Korvosa, although most of the secrets there scarcely warrant mention. Those that are noteworthy, though, more than make up for their lack of quantity with an abundance of horror.

Palace Arkona: The Palace stands over a huge cyst stretching from hilltop to sea and bears many Vudran influences thanks to House Arkona's importation of art from that nation (to say nothing of its importation of rakshasas into the family). Within is a dizzying mass of balconies and terraces, sheer walls and tumbling water

that descends into the ocean below, where a shallow cove exits to the sea. Nearby, a second cyst exists: the Gizzard, a vile cavern of pain and misery, mirroring the first for beauty. A sheer wall known as the Rake descends to the water, its path littered with blades and hooks and spikes onto which prisoners are tossed for amusement. A dizzying bridge crosses the cavern and gives access to the Vivified Labyrinth below. Prison cells and torture chambers fill most of this dungeon, with only a few places here and there designated as ossuaries for past victims.

These torture chambers take the idea of inflicting pain to whole new levels. Sadistic and cruel devices of inhuman design fill each one, with each diabolical machine more heinous than the last. The worst of these rooms serve as both prison and torture chamber, allowing the victims free reign to explore a miniature dungeon within the main complex. Magical scrying allows the rakshasas of House Arkona to watch their victims "escape" their bonds and regain hope, only to have it completely dashed when they realize their actual predicament. As a part of the exercise, the rakshasas provide weapons and other instruments of death that they themselves are immune to, but that can easily kill humans and other mortal races. Many times, these unfortunate prisoners end up killing themselves or each other, providing the rakshasas with hours of lazy entertainment.



Grand Mastaba

Hidden under a thin layer of overlaid red marble flooring on the first floor of Shorewatch Tower is a secret trap door into the heart of the pyramid itself. This trap door drops into the first level of a vast and forgotten series of chambers that form Vaults within the pyramid itself.

Old Shoanti folk tales spoke of the pyramid's interior with hushed fear. "Some great evil," the old shamans used to whisper, "lives still within the heart of the pyramid, and beyond that... beyond lie dangers even greater."

The Vaults

Korvosa's Vaults contain many mysteries, but only two are important enough to warrant mention here.

Thassilonian Complexes: In addition to the commonly known origins of Korvosa's widespread Vaults, another genesis exists: the deep delves of Sorshen, the Runelord of Lust. Deep beneath the city, below even some of the natural caverns, down where the water table floods natural caves and the constructions of lesser civilizations, spread massive Thassilonian complexes. The tunnels and chambers of these complexes, always perfectly level and dug with absolute geometric precision, put to shame even dwarven mines.

Some of these Thassilonian complexes delve deep enough to have attracted the attention of creatures best left unbothered. These deathless, ageless beings prowl the deepest levels of the complexes, ruling their silent, lonely lairs absolutely. Any wanderers who dare intrude on these foul lairs face only death and destruction—if they are lucky.

Within these Thassilonian Vaults beneath Castle Korvosa waits a tomb. Runelord Sorshen, whose pyramidal fortress now serves as the base for a modern castle of proportions even she would appreciate, lies in the same untouched crypt to which she fled 10,000 years ago. Unfortunately for her plans to reawaken (shaped some hundred centuries ago), hundreds of feet of rock and numerous dangerous dungeon levels stand between her resting place and curious adventurers above.

Derro: Most native Korvosans know about the wererats, otyughs, and goblins who haunt the worst parts of the Vaults, but few have heard about (or of) the pervasive derro. These small, three-fingered, blue-skinned menaces operate in several semi-independent groups beneath the city. The largest of these groups live under or near Gray District, the Longacre Building, and Thief Camp.

Derro are sometimes responsible for mysterious disappearances (to say nothing of confused reappearances), as well as cattle and pet mutilations. When those kidnapped by derro suddenly and inexplicably return to Korvosa, they frequently have only vague and horrifying memories of the time they were missing. They speak of bizarre experiments, painful tortures, and an ever-present pale blue light.

PEOPLE

Places do not form secrets of their own; the people who live in those places do. Herein are some of Korvosa's darkest secrets (as well as a few less sinister but equally unknown).

Cultists

Rumors in the city persist that cultists live and lurk in and under Korvosa's streets. Most reports attribute these cultists to Urgathoa, but this is only a partial truth. Two active groups of cultists terrorize the city, each hiding in a different layer of the city.

Death Cultists: A small cell of death cultists lives in the Shingles above West Dock. These cultists worship Zon-Kuthon and carry out infrequent murders in his name. For the most part, these death cultists perform their horrific death rituals within the Shingles above Bridgefront or Old Dock, well away from their base of operations. Unbeknownst to many of the members, the leader of the cell has begun a recruitment drive, keeping these neophyte Zon-

Kuthon worshipers a secret even from many of his current followers. There are even rumors of an elite group of Zon-Kuthon worshipers known as the Brotherhood of Bones coming to the city.

Urgathoa Clerics: One of the impartial caretakers in the Pantheon of Many is actually a member of the Urgathoa cult operating out of South Shore. His role in the cult is to maintain the shrine to Urgathoa (prayed at by others in order to ward off disease) and to perform the occasional secret sacrifice to her (usually of a plump farm bird or other small creature fattened up by the rest of the cult). The remaining cult members travel at night to Gray, where they attempt to undo the work of the church of Pharamasma. Several of these cult members are themselves undead, and they remain within Gray during the day, hidden deep in the crypt-filled Vaults beneath the district.

TEN ROOFTOP MENACES

1. Bad footing (leads to falls)
2. Chokers
3. Dream spiders (*Pathfinder* #7)
4. Humans
5. Imps
6. Pigtail (monstrous) centipedes
7. Poor construction
8. Shingle (monstrous) spiders
9. Shrew flies (locust swarm)
10. Stirges

TEN UNDERGROUND MENACES

1. Blackboil gators (alligators)
2. Collapsing ceilings
3. Devilfish (*Pathfinder* #7)
4. Dire rats
5. Goblins
6. Oozes
7. Otyughs
8. Violet fungus
9. Wererats
10. Will-'o-wisps



Darklight Sisterhood

Cheliox considers the Pathfinder Society a hated rival, always competing for the same ancient relics and resources. The country's ruthless antiquarians stop at nothing to acquire what they seek, but while Pathfinders tend to push the boundaries of law and decency in their pursuits, Chelaxians willfully cross these boundaries. Unfortunately for Cheliox, this makes its many agents hated across the globe. It cannot hope to compete with the Pathfinder Society in tapping the goodwill of locals.

Enter the Darklight Sisterhood. This small and secretive group of adventurous women fans out across Cheliox, its former imperial holdings, and beyond. The sisterhood acts as a government-funded but private spying and adventuring network loyal to Cheliox and serving many of the same roles as the Pathfinder Society (but reporting to Cheliox rather than chapter houses). Darklight sisters contend with and even recruit Pathfinders and retired Pathfinders, although the sisterhood lacks the size, coordination, and resources of its competitor. So one-sided is the competition between the two that most Pathfinders don't even know the sisterhood exists.

Upon officially becoming a member, a sister drops her family name and takes up the name of Darklight. This symbolic marriage to the sisterhood does not preclude the sister from actual matrimony, just so long as she retains the Darklight name. A Darklight sister has no other requirements or identifying marks; she is known as a Darklight by her name alone.

What reputation the sisterhood possesses varies greatly depending upon who is asked. Some see Darklight sisters as cruel witches working for immoral Cheliox, harnessing infernal energies to cloud the minds of women and seduce foolish men. The Pathfinders of Magnimar hold this unflattering view. On the other hand, those in Korvosa who know of the Darklights see them as loyal Chelaxians merely performing necessary services for the crown. Most people in Cheliox also hold this view. The truth of the sisterhood lies somewhere in between, with members almost universally possessing law-abiding personalities but differing significantly in their moral outlooks. The Darklight Sisterhood welcomes paladins and blackguards, healers and necromancers, and any others who meet their requirements and willfully perform their duties.

As a colony of Cheliox and gateway to an untamed wilderness, Korvosa houses a relatively large branch of the sisterhood. More than 40 members are attached to the city, only half of whom, on average, are in the city at any one time (the rest are out exploring Varisia). Several exploratory expeditions into the Vaults contained Darklights, and one of Queen Ileosa's ladies in waiting belongs to the group as well. Members of the sisterhood in Korvosa frequently sell their lesser discoveries to the Jeggare Museum, in the Heights.

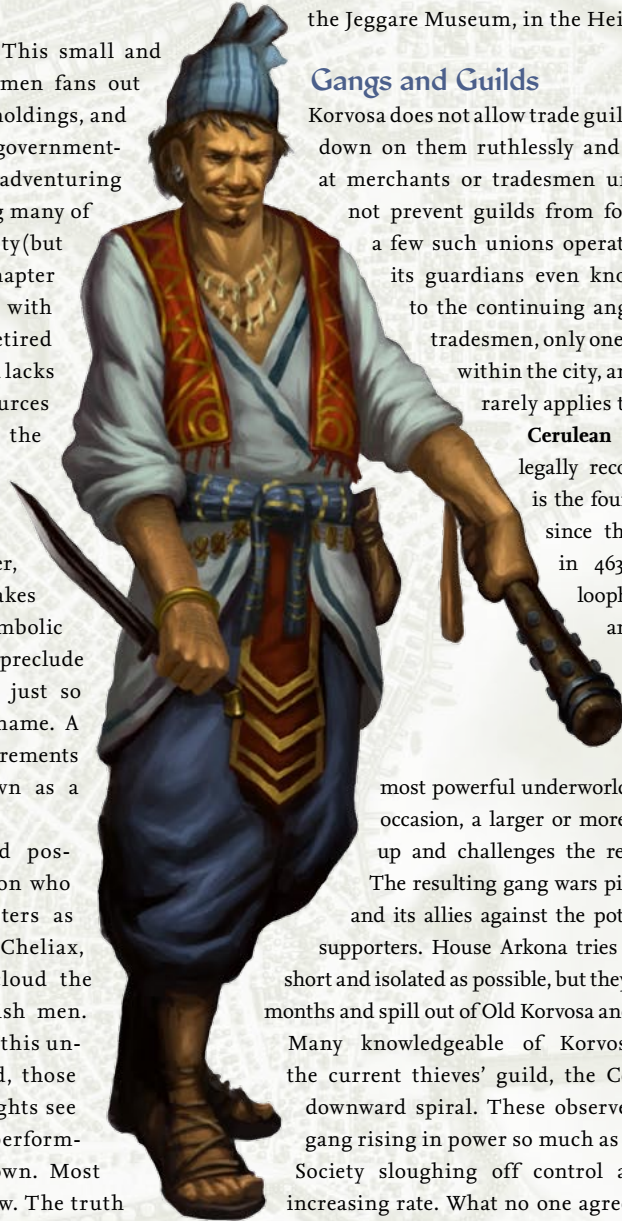
Gangs and Guilds

Korvosa does not allow trade guilds or unions. It cracks down on them ruthlessly and breaks any attempts at merchants or tradesmen unionizing. This does not prevent guilds from forming, however, and a few such unions operate without the city or its guardians even knowing. In fact, much to the continuing anger of merchants and tradesmen, only one guild legally operates within the city, and that guild's legality rarely applies to its activities.

Cerulean Society: The city's legally recognized thieves' guild is the fourth such guild to exist since the signing of the law in 4639. Despite the legal loophole in which it exists and the secret backing the guild receives from House Arkona, the thieves' guild is not always the most powerful underworld group in the city. On occasion, a larger or more powerful group rises up and challenges the reigning thieves' guild. The resulting gang wars pit the entrenched guild and its allies against the potential usurper and its supporters. House Arkona tries to keep these wars as short and isolated as possible, but they frequently drag on for months and spill out of Old Korvosa and onto the mainland.

Many knowledgeable of Korvosa's underworld see the current thieves' guild, the Cerulean Society, in a downward spiral. These observers don't see any one gang rising in power so much as they see the Cerulean Society sloughing off control and influence at an increasing rate. What no one agrees on, though, is how much longer Guildmaster Boule has before his guild collapses from within or is ripped apart from without. For now, though, the Cerulean Society retains tentative control of the underworld in Korvosa, at least in areas not directly controlled by House Arkona.

As established by Mapras before his demise, the Lord Arkona controls the thieves' guild from even deeper within



Pictured: Sczarni Thug



the shadows, such that only Guildmaster Boule and a few other higher ups know they work for House Arkona. Most members do not. Bahor continues this tradition, although he gives the guild more control over its affairs than did his father (many believe this is why the guild is failing).

While much of what the guild does is somewhat public, a few particulars of its affairs remain closely guarded secrets.

Protection: The price of protection has nothing to do with a house's wealth and is set by Lord Arkona based on his family's history with the targeted house and his own whims. Thanks to its low-interest loan so long ago, for example, House Jeggare receives the best deal of any noble family in Korvosa, paying only a pittance each month.

Selling Names: Boule sells the names of all legitimate gangs (those that pay the semiannual dues) to both the Korvosan Guard and the dean of abjuration in the Acadamae. The dean of abjuration uses this list to send out invitations to the heads of gangs to participate in his annual Breaching Festival (see the Breaching Festival sidebar).

Hellknight Raids: Once a year or so, House Arkona lets slip to the Korvosan Guard or the Sable Company the location of a secret gambling den or other place of vice run by the Cerulean Society. These tips always result in Hellknight raids and a handful of arrests, but the thieves' guild members operating the dens never stay in jail for long. The choice of venue to be raided is left to Boule to decide, but he does not alert the members of that establishment beforehand: they react more naturally when they don't know a raid is coming. Boule generally selects the worst-performing vice den, which gives the managers of these establishments an incentive to work hard and never rest on their laurels.

Ironsoots: The oldest, largest, and wildest of the city's secret guilds has existed in one form or another for more than a century. Many of the workers who belong to this guild work for the Ironworks. The Ironsoots have become more active of

late, recruiting in the dark taverns near the Ironworks and in the Shingles of Old Docks. Currently, the Ironsoots are led by Baris Trenchlow, a soft-hearted and thick-handed (some say thick-headed) master smith who apprenticed in more liberal Magnimar, where he learned the values of solidarity.

Because the city charter prevents its legal recognition, the union plans on launching a riot at the first opportunity to make the people of Korvosa pay attention. Baris Trenchlow believes that shutting down the Ironworks and rioting in the streets is the right push Korvosa needs to amend the charter again.

Rat's Teat Boys: The rumors of wererats in the city don't even begin to approach the truth of the matter. Yet another group under retainer with House Arkona, the Rat's Teat Boys extensively patrol the sewers and Middle Vaults under Old Korvosa. On occasion, a small group of Rat's Teat Boys—usually a strike force or assassin cell—crosses onto the mainland, always under the cover of darkness and usually utilizing a gondola across the strait.

As much a family as a gang, the Rat's Teat Boys take care of their own and generally try to stay out of one another's business. Lately, new members of the gang have continued their old lives, only traveling to the vaults of Old Korvosa a few nights a month to partake in the group's moon-driven crime sprees. For the rest of the month, these merchants, teachers, and laborers live their normal lives, usually with hidden protection watching over them.

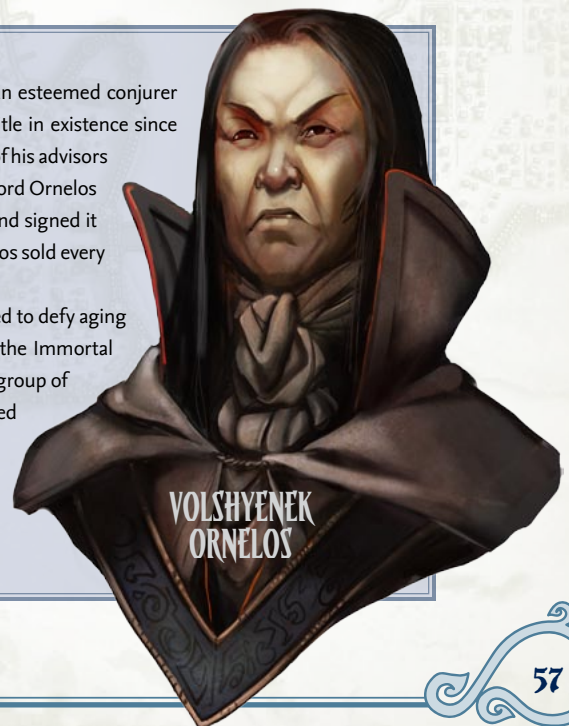
While the rest of the city—and indeed, the rest of the world—considers lycanthropy a filthy disease or nigh-incurable curse, the Rat's Teat Boys revel in their dual existence. The group sees itself as the voice for wererats in the city, and those who find themselves suddenly blessed with the gift can expect a visit from a member of the gang in short order. Once the boys hear about a newly created wererat (usually from the indiscretions of one their

THE IMMORTAL LORD

Lord Volshyenek Ornelos (4398–4607) possessed impressive personal power, both as an esteemed conjurer and as a friend of Emperor Halleck IV, in addition to his family's wealth and a noble title in existence since before the empire formed. When the emperor died, his son, Fane II, replaced every one of his advisors (including Ornelos) with sycophants and yes-men. After 4 years of this travesty, in 4441 Lord Ornelos moved his family's holdings to Varisia. The young emperor barely noticed the request and signed it with the blood of a pretty young courtesan. Further incensed by this bizarre slight, Ornelos sold every one of the family's estates within the Chelaxian homeland.

Already a middle-aged man when he brought his family to the city, Volshyenek seemed to defy aging and remained healthy and vigorous for almost two centuries, gaining the epithet of "the Immortal Lord." Only in 4607, when he stood alone upon the great Hall of Summoning against a group of powerful devils, did the Immortal Lord finally fall. Up until that point, rumors speculated that Volshyenek was some kind of undead or had perhaps even made a deal with a devil. To this day, the truth remains unknown.

Besides the Acadamae, his famed legacy, the city pays additional homage to the greatest lord of a great family. Citadel Volshyenek—home to the Korvosan Guard—bears his given name, as do several streets.





members), they send a small delegation to greet their new brother. This new wererat has a choice: join the Rat's Teat Boys and live life under the gang's rules or die. Most join the gang. To this day, only one wererat has escaped making this choice: a pathetic and lonely wererat named Samp.

Samp: An accidental bite while a group of Rat's Teat Boys robbed the small shop he owned made Samp into a wererat. A few nights later, the same wererat who had bit him returned and made the typical Rat's Teat Boys's offer: join or die. Scared and bewildered, Samp grabbed up a silver candelabra—despite it burning his hand as he did so—and crushed the other wererat's skull. Grabbing up as many supplies as he could, Samp disappeared into the sewers under Old Korvosa.

To this day, his right hand remains curled in on itself and unusable. Samp typically keeps this useless appendage close to his chest, where he licks it on occasion when he gets nervous or speaks to someone. Samp lives alone and afraid in the sewers, constantly dogged by and frequently just evading the Rat's Teat Boys. Except for nights of the full moon, when Samp hides in the deepest recesses of Old Korvosa's Vaults, he acts as a guide to those lost or in a hurry.

Unbeknownst to Samp or anyone else, he has actually snuck into one of the old Thassilonian complexes deep beneath the city. He frequently calls this complex home on nights of the full moon, where he runs unmolested through the perfectly round tunnels and exactly angled rooms. If anyone thought to ask, he would gladly lead a patron into those bizarre tunnels.

House Arkona

The sinister and wealthy House Arkona possesses perhaps more secrets than all other noble houses combined.

The Birth of Evil: When Lord Garath and Jenkson Arkona sailed to distant and exotic Vudra, they did indeed encounter along their way something that changed them. Death.

While seeking a seller who could speak directly with them,

they became despondent enough to explore the options of fair Sihadriman's black markets. Their clumsy attempts at contacting the city's much-suppressed underworld caught the attention of Mapras and his mate, Dandra, two loathsome rakshasas with desperations of their own. Mapras and Dandra lured the Arkona brothers into a recently abandoned storefront (its previous owners then digesting within their unholy stomachs). There, the Arkonas met their ends and Mapras and Dandra gained both a much-needed means of escape and new lives as decadent noblemen.

The next day, Mapras and Dandra—disguised as Lord Garath and Jenkson, respectively—loaded the *Reprieve* with the finest Vudran goods they could steal and put the ship to sail before the setting of the sun. They encountered no difficulties, for their subtle use of magic and their own native power kept most hazards at bay, and in less than a year they arrived at the port of Korvosa. Compared to the splendors of Sihadriman, the backwater colony of Korvosa looked like an unwashed outhouse. Indeed, to the sensitive noses of the rakshasas, it even smelled like one. It was all Dandra could do—in her disguise as Jenkson—to prevent Mapras from entering a rage and destroying much of the town.

When Mapras saw the amount of gold the Korvosans paid for even the smallest trinket he brought from Vudra, he realized suddenly that he might enjoy the rest of his life there on the outskirts of civilization. He reasoned that as long as he and Dandra could maintain the secrecy of their true identities, they might want for nothing. The history of House Arkona speaks to the success of their secrecy.

Succession: Two decades after Mapras and Dandra took over the noble house, a fellow nobleman of advancing age quipped one day to Dandra how neither Lord Garath nor Jenkson appeared even a day older than when they returned. For a brief moment, Dandra panicked, but the old nobleman continued on, asking about the secret of their longevity. Seeing a chance, Dandra led the inquisitive noble into a side chamber and silenced him permanently. She then returned to Mapras's side and reported to him the encounter. The



BLACKJACK

HERO OF THE DOWNTRODDEN

As much a legend and rumor as a known man, the black-clad Blackjack has remained a fixture of Korvosan lore for more than two centuries. The figure known as Blackjack serves the poor and downtrodden of the city, fighting against the injustices of cold-hearted nobles and dark-souled merchants. Although he has not appeared in more than a decade, people have no doubt he still lives somewhere in the city, waiting for the next great travesty of justice for a chance to come forward and render aid.

Because he has existed for more than 200 years, nobody in the city believes him to be a single person. The most popular rumor surrounding Blackjack places him as a series of human men, with one training the next down through history. Another popular rumor claims he is an elf, ghaele eladrin, or some other member of a long-lived or immortal race who exists in secret among the short-lived humans of the city.



next day, the pair decided to take on new disguises as the children of Garath and Jenkson.

The transition was clumsy and created many questions within the family and among the other noble houses. By that time, Dandra had actually birthed several rakshasa offspring, but the actual human Arkonas outnumbered their depraved imitators by more than five to one. To suddenly have new members of the family appear and claim control of the title caused a schism in the family. Mapras responded by slaughtering all potential usurpers, their supporters, and any human unfortunate enough to witness the attacks. Dandra covered up the bloodbath and had her children take the bodies out on the *Reprieve* and disposed of them in Conqueror's Bay. Later transitions of power went more smoothly, with Mapras and Dandra forcing their children to occasionally take on guises they themselves would later adopt.

Lord Glorio Arkona: The long and terrible reign of Mapras and Dandra ended in 4704, when their son Bahor and daughter Vimanda murdered them and usurped their positions. Bahor continued in his guise as Glorio Arkona, while Vimanda created a new persona: cousin Melyia from Cheliox.

Much of how Bahor acts as Glorio reflects his own personality. He desperately loves his sister Vimanda, who returns his affections with much less vigor. She takes great care, however, to not antagonize her brother excessively. For, while Glorio freely gives out silvers to starving mothers and has recently taken on the mantle of philanthropist, Bahor possesses a temper that occasionally struck fear into even his father (and continues to frighten Vimanda).

Bahor believes from the bottom of his heart that caring for the needy and downtrodden is the right thing to do (for House Arkona). His public and increasingly grand acts of benevolent philanthropy make his family nervous—both rakshasa and human alike. They need not worry, though. Bahor has not gone soft. By giving back to the poor, he creates more paying customers for his vice dens, sin peddlers, and drug pushers. The tavern and brothel he tore down were

losing money anyway, and their workers paid for that sin in the dungeon beneath Palace Arkona.

Two Families in One: When Mapras and Dandra arrived, they found themselves alone in a human family. Over time, as Dandra and her daughters gave birth, the ratio of rakshasas and humans equalized and then, recently, reversed. Today, less than a quarter of the Korvosan branch of House Arkona remains human. Thanks to immigration and further breeding, rakshasas live in every House Arkona palace, subtly manipulating the ancient and noble house from within.

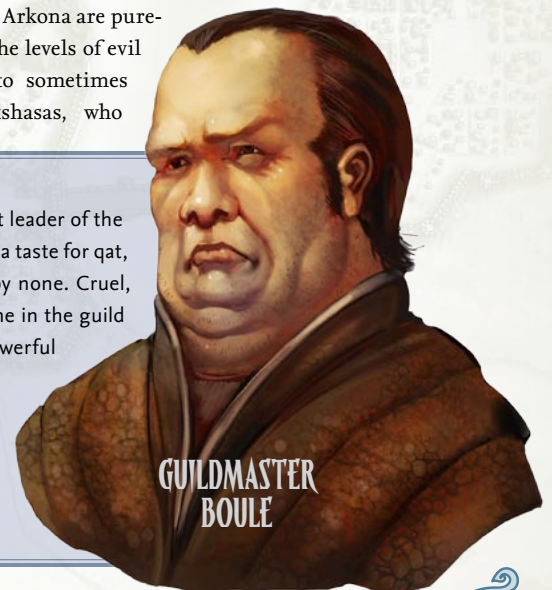
In addition to the descendants of Mapras and Dandra, some of the rakshasas who live in Korvosa came more recently from Vudra. Because they made their fortune importing rare goods from Vudra, House Arkona continues to send ships back to the rakshasas' homeland, where they pick up not only trade goods but also "cousins." Where House Arkona has a slightly sinister reputation in Korvosa, the descendants of Mapras and Dandra have a reputation in Sihadriman as a wildly successful and enviable family. As such, rakshasas in Vudra frequently petition Arkonan ships in Sihadriman's port, looking for passage to Korvosa and a relatively easy life. House Arkona gladly brings one rakshasa back per ship—for a price. This price (a declaration of eternal subservience and the forfeiture of all material wealth) is nearly impossible for most rakshasas to pay (as they would rather die than serve another), and so fewer than half the ships return with new blood aboard.

Two centuries of the rakshasas' infernal influence have slowly eroded the humanity from the mortal members of House Arkona. Spiraling into ever greater decadence and evil, the sadists who unknowingly (or willingly) live among these embodiments of evil themselves rarely blink at the depravities of their kin. Some of the cruelest—and all of the pettiest—murderers and vice peddlers to emerge from Palace Arkona are pure-blooded humans. The levels of evil their "kin" stoop to sometimes impresses the rakshasas, who

THIEVES' GUILD LEADER

Guildmaster Boule (BOO-ell) possesses two qualities Glorio Arkona seeks in the puppet leader of the thieves' guild: a penchant for bullying and a weak mind. Boule is an angry drunkard with a taste for qat, hated and feared by most people (including his own guild members), and respected by none. Cruel, sadistic, and just plain mean, Boule escapes the assassin's poison only because everyone in the guild knows (because Boule has said so on multiple drunken occasions) someone more powerful pulls his strings—they just don't know who.

A few brave and foolish young thieves-cum-assassins have dared the wrath of Boule's master, though, and he has survived these ill-conceived direct attacks by dint of his own personal physical prowess. Despite his girth and alcohol-addled mind (to say nothing of the drugs he ingests), Boule is no slouch in a fight. He can crush a man's skull merely by squeezing it with one hand.





enjoy the inventiveness and vigor with which the humans commit their sins.

Family Businesses: House Arkona places one rakshasa in charge of each family business, and that individual has the responsibility to make his business as successful as possible. If a business loses money for more than a couple of months, the rakshasa in charge of it does not keep his position (or life) for long. The rakshasas consider the “care” of prisoners in the Vault beneath Palace Korvosa one of the family’s most important enterprises. Thus, Vaultmaster Bahasaran works hard to maintain the dungeon, maximizing the terror he inflicts on prisoners and ever inventing new methods of sadism and torture. The Arkonas consider the dungeon so important, in fact, that they even accept payment to kidnap victims and hold them (alive and in one piece, unless otherwise instructed) for as long as the client pays.

House Ornelos

An influential house that produced more lord magistrates than all other families combined, House Ornelos’s greatest secrets relate to its ageless patriarch.

Lord Volshyenek Ornelos: Born in 4398, Volshyenek lived a noble’s normal life within the emperor’s court until the death of Emperor Halleck IV, in 4437. He left Cheliox proper 4 years later and moved his family to the backwater colony of Korvosa, where he lived an impossibly long life—never aging a day—until his death in 4607. What few people know, however, is that the true Lord Volshyenek Ornelos died of old age in 4493.

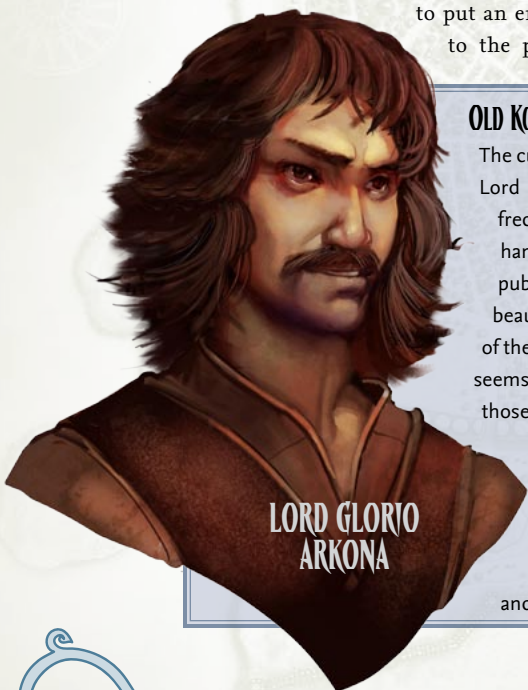
Prior to leaving his beloved Egorian, Volshyenek saw in his mirror a man past the prime of his life, with graying hair and wrinkling flesh. He tried various magical and alchemical rituals and balms to halt or slow his inevitable decline, but he found no success. Desperate to put an end to aging, he turned to the powerful but shunned

Infernal House of Thrune, who even then treated with devils and explored the forbidden magics of Hell. The cold-hearted Lady Thrune refused to aid the troubled man, and he bitterly returned to his manor house.

A month passed before a man arrived at Ornelos Manor, claiming he knew of Volshyenek’s inquiries with the Lady Thrune. Lord Ornelos spoke with the man, who offered his own ability to summon forth a devil. After lengthy negotiations, the man revealed his true identity as the devil Lorthact.

Thus it came to be that Volshyenek made a pact with the infernal being Lorthact, who agreed to cease the ravages of time for the desperate nobleman. In exchange, the devil asked only to take control of House Ornelos if and when Volshyenek died. Thinking himself immortal, and happy to retain his soul, Volshyenek readily agreed. Lorthact’s return to Volshyenek’s study in 4493 surprised the man, who learned only then that he had been tricked: Lorthact did indeed stop Lord Ornelos from aging another day, but he did nothing to extend the mortal’s lifespan. Lorthact took on Volshyenek’s appearance and life. The lord’s children and closest advisors, of course, noticed a change in the man, but Lorthact played his role well and successfully fooled everyone else.

Lorthact: The real Volshyenek loved Cheliox and came to love Korvosa as an extension of the empire. He strove constantly to see the colony succeed, pushing for its expansion onto the mainland and for a constant strengthening of its military. His founding of the Acadamae came as much from this civic pride as it did from his own unquenchable ego. Although never friendly, Volshyenek was a fair man who rewarded those who pleased him and punished those who angered him. As he aged, he softened. He watched his first wife die to a wasting disease and bore witness to the deaths of eight of his 13 children, to say nothing of dozens of his friends. Near the end of his life, he even buried several grandchildren.



OLD KORVOSA’S FIRST CITIZEN

The current Lord Arkona breaks somewhat from the tradition of his forebears. Unlike every previous Lord Arkona, Glorio leaves the dark walls of Arkona Hall to attend various social functions. He frequently walks through Old Korvosa (surrounded by bodyguards both seen and unseen, of course), handing out candies to the dirty children and silver pieces to their despondent parents. Glorio publicly demonstrates affection for his cousin and second-in-command, Melyia, whose unearthly beauty counters her lord’s rather average appearance. Scandalous rumors abound as to the nature of their relationship, but rather than crush such rumors and make their whisperers disappear, Glorio seems to revel in the attention they create. Wherever he and Melyia go, eyes follow—even when those eyes belong to the equally beautiful and jealous queen of Korvosa herself.

Lord Glorio Arkona’s surprising arrival on the political scene in 4704 heralded a new and unexpected direction for the family. Long tolerated in the higher circles, House Arkona has become suddenly a force to be reckoned with not only on, under, and above the streets, but also in the royal court and posh sitting rooms of the nobility. Regardless of Glorio’s future successes, House Arkona shall not soon forget the legitimacy he has brought to his secretive and sinister family.



When Lorthact became Volshyenek, he returned the man to his earlier, prideful ways. The legend of Lord Volshyenek Ornelos, by then called the Immortal Lord, only grew after 4493. From that year until his apparent death in 4607, he pushed for the further expansion of the city, leading attack after ruthless attack against the Shoanti on or near Citadel Hill. He put first his grandchildren and then his great-grandchildren into places of power throughout the city, all of whom, of course, answered to him. With the death of Volshyenek's last child in 4534 (long after all his advisors at the time had passed away), everyone knew Lord Ornelos only in the virile and powerful way in which Lorthact portrayed him.

With the Cousins' War, Lorthact saw at last a way to punish the Viamio murderers who had orchestrated the gruesome deaths of Volshyenek's son Remsev Ornelos and his family. Although the true Lord Ornelos still lived at the time, Lorthact saw Remsev's expansionist ideologies as aligned with his own. Lorthact liked Remsev and—more importantly—he liked how Remsev handled the power he possessed. With Remsev's murder in 4491, Lorthact began to consider the best way to eliminate House Viamio. The war gave his pogrom of vengeance a legitimizing spark, and during the course of the conflict House Ornelos turned its impressive power against House Viamio.

After securing Volshyenek's inclusion in the histories of the world, Lorthact began to ponder what further powers he might acquire in the guise of an undying human. In 4607, however, his musings came to an end. With the death of Aroden, the subsequent splintering of the Empire of Cheliox, and the rise to power of House Thrune, the influences of Hell increased dramatically in the world. This sudden influx of infernal power worried Lorthact, himself a hunted fugitive from Hell. His worries proved founded when a Murder Squad of pit fiends and cornugons caught up with him. In his final public act as Volshyenek, Lorthact single-handedly destroyed the devils aligned against him, taking their battle to the top of the Hall of Summoning. With the use of magic, Lorthact made it appear that the Immortal Lord finally met his match, and even as he killed the last of the devils his complicated illusion showed instead Volshyenek's final end.

Lorthact fled back to Ornelos Manor, where he revealed himself (still disguised as Volshyenek) to the next in line,

Volshyenek's grandson Ornalf. Publicly, House Ornelos mourned the loss of its ageless patriarch, but privately it celebrated Volshyenek's continued existence. Since that day, Lorthact has remained in the shadows, secretly advising the current lord or lady in power at any time. Those who disobey him tend to have short tenures.

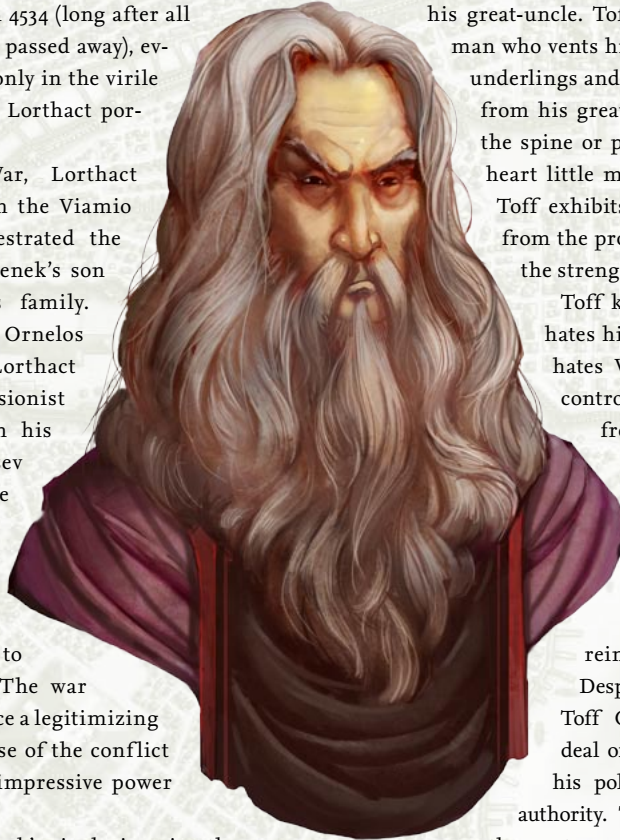
Headmaster Toff Ornelos: Hand-chosen by Volshyenek Ornelos to lead the Acadamae when his predecessor passed away, Toff Ornelos has long lived under the control of his great-uncle. Toff is a cold-hearted and cruel man who vents his frustrations and fury on his underlings and students. He longs for release from his great-uncle's control, but he lacks the spine or power to act on that desire. At heart little more than a bully and coward, Toff exhibits an air of confidence borne from the protection of his great-uncle and the strength of his family.

Toff knows he is a coward, and he hates himself for it. More, though, he hates Volshyenek, who continues to control him (and thus the Acadamae) from behind the scenes. On the other hand, Toff enjoys the prestige and political clout he gained from becoming the Acadamae's headmaster, so he continues to live under the close scrutiny and tight rein of his great-uncle.

Despite his weak will and cowardice, Toff Ornelos does possess a great deal of personal power in addition to his political influence and academic authority. Toff personally rivals some of the most powerful wizards in Varisia in sheer magical control and can more than hold his own against Cheliox's famed conjurers. He has defeated 17 wizards in secret mages' duels; murdered four others in cold blood (two who beat him in a fair duel); and maimed or crippled more than two score apprentices, sorcerers, adventurers, and civilians.

The Red Mantis

This international group of murderers and assassins operates a relatively large cell within Korvosa. The Red Mantis works alone and apart from other criminal groups, refusing to play by House Arkona's rules. When it first moved into the city, the Red Mantis went so far as to locate and exterminate the city's previous large assassin gang, run by House Arkona. As a result, House Arkona (through its underworld middlemen, the Cerulean Society) has declared a war of sorts against the Red Mantis. Unfortunately for House Arkona's efforts, though, the Red Mantis remains ever elusive.



Pictured: Toff Ornelos



APPENDIX

This section of the book contains the only game rules and out-of-character information. Obviously, this section is mostly meant for GMs, but players might make use of the feat or the NPCs (as cohorts) herein.

The following list only covers the important NPCs still alive at the time of publication, in order of appearance. NPCs not on this list are, for the most part, commoners, experts, and warriors of no more than 2nd level.

Magistrate Mercer Cucuteni	(LN male human aristocrat 1), magistrate of tourism.
King Eodred Arabasti II	(LN male human aristocrat 6), leader of Korvosa.
Queen Ileosa Arabasti	(LE female human aristocrat 2/bard 4), wife of King Eodred II.
Seneschal Neolandus Kalepopolis	(LG male human aristocrat 3/ranger 3), caretaker of Castle Korvosa.
Field Marshal Cressida Kroft	(LN female human aristocrat 1/fighter 9), leader of Korvosan Guard.
Commandant Marcus Thalassinus Endrin	(LG male human aristocrat 1/ranger 13), leader of Sable Company.
Lictor Severs DiVri	(LE male human aristocrat 2/fighter 13), leader of Order of the Nail.
Lord Glorio Arkona	(LE male rakshasa rogue 10), leader of House Arkona.
Toff Ornelos	(LN male human aristocrat 1/wizard 16), headmaster of the Acadamae.
Goupie Capabopple	(CN male gnome bard 1/expert 4), royal clocktender and owner of Time Stop.
Tepest Geezebottle	(LN male gnome wizard 11), Theumanexus professor.
Portenus Gaskelinni	(LN male human expert 2/fighter 2), owner of Leftover's.
Bishop Keppira d'Bear	(N female human cleric of Pharamasma 13), high priest of Pharamasma.
Gasta Weagra	(LN female human expert 5), proprietor of the Golden Orrery.
Touran Palastus	(NE male human bard 3/expert 1), manager of the Marbledome.
Ornher Reebes	(LE male human cleric of Asmodeus 11), high priest of Asmodeus.
Mercival Jeggare	(LG male human aristocrat 1/bard 1/expert 4), curator of Jeggare Museum.
Costa Serimus	(N male half-elf expert 4/rogue 2), proprietor of the Bookmaker.
Basha	(N male human bard 1/rogue 1), cartographer and owner of Basha's.
Jope Chantsmo	(LG male human expert 1/ranger 7), owner of Trapper's Hole.
Vadid Pestico	(LG male human expert 3/wizard 9), proprietor of Pestico's Dolls and Figurines.
Old Tom	(N male giant turtle), tourist attraction at Posh and Turtle.
Thaviun Rigulus	(LN male human wizard 6), owner of Posh and Turtle.
Archbanker Darb Tuttle	(LN male half-elf cleric of Abadar 13), high priest of Abadar.
Theandra Darklight	(N female human fighter 3/rogue 4), owner of Three Rings Tavern.
Tauk Par	(CG male human barbarian 6), Theandra's bodyguard.
Vencarlo Orisini	(CG male human rogue 2/fighter 5/duelist 2), owner of Orisini Academy.
Mistress of Blades Maidrayne Vox	(LE female human fighter 12), field commander of Order of the Nail.
Paravicar Acillmar	(LE male human cleric of Asmodeus 3/mystic theurge 2/wizard 3), Order of the Nail's director of signifiers.
Sir Gyrad Tolgrith	(NG male human fighter 4/ranger 2), leader of Fort Thorn.
Lord Valdur Bromathan IV	(NG male human aristocrat 2/cleric of Sarenrae 2), head of House Bromathan.
Lady Elasia Leroung	(LG female human aristocrat 3), head of House Leroung, headmistress of University of Korvosa.
Perishial Kalissreavil	(CG male half-elf aristocrat 5/wizard 3), Mierani ambassador to Korvosa.
Guildmaster Boule	(NE male human rogue 4), leader of the Cerulean Society.
Kyndors Thok	(CE male human barbarian 1/rogue 1), puppet leader of the Dusters gang.
Marlessa	(LE female human rogue 4), de facto leader of the Dusters gang.
Zenobia Zenderholm	(LG female human aristocrat 1/expert 9), arbiter, member of Zenderholm.
Lorthact	(LE male infernal duke), true identity of Volshyenek Ornelos.
Samp	(NE male wererat rogue 2), guide to the Vaults and Old Korvosa.
Melyia (Vimanda) Arkona	(LE female rakshasa monk 6), Bahor's sister and Lord Glorio's lover.
Vaultmaster Bahasaran	(CE male rakshasa sorcerer 4), dungeon keeper of House Arkona.
Pilts Swastel	(CE male human bard 10), deviant and owner of Exemplary Execrables.
Sabina Merrin	(LN female human fighter 10), Queen Ileosa's bodyguard
Gaedren Lamm	(NE male human expert 4/rogue 2), petty crimelord, leader of Lamm's Lambs



HELPFUL NPCS

Probably the most iconic resident of Korvosa is the city's Sable Company marine. Even those marines who have not yet risen high enough in rank to bond with a hippogriff inspire awe in the city's citizenry. The following statblocks show the most elite of these city protectors, as well as the creatures with whom they bond. See page 63 for the special feat that allows a marine to bond with a hippogriff.

SABLE COMPANY ELITE MARINE

CR 6

Male human ranger 6

LG Medium humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +10**DEFENSE****AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14

(+4 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 36 (6d8+6)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3**OFFENSE****Spd** 30 ft.**Melee** mwk longsword +9/+4 (1d8+2)**Ranged** +1 composite shortbow +11/+6

(1d6+3) or

Ranged +1 composite shortbow +9/+9/+4

(1d6+3) or

Ranged +1 composite shortbow +4 (2d8+6)**Special Attacks** favored enemy (humanoid [goblinoid]) +4, favored enemy (humanoid [human]) +2**Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd)1st—*magic fang*, *speak with animals***TACTICS**

Before Combat If able, a hippogriff-mounted marine casts *magic fang* on his mount before engaging in combat.

During Combat A Sable Company elite marine fights from atop his mount when possible, combining his hippogriff attacks with his own shortbow attacks. He focuses on favored enemies first, unless an obviously greater threat presents itself.

Morale When protecting innocents or defending a fallen comrade, a Sable Company marine fights to the death. Otherwise, he withdraws if reduced to less than half his hit points. If a fellow marine goes down, he attempts to pull that marine to safety as soon as possible, as long as other comrades are still up.

STATISTICS**Str** 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +6/+1; **Grp** +8

Feats Endurance^B, Manyshot, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Rapid Shot, Sable Company Marine, Trac k^B, Weapon Focus (shortbow)

Skills Climb +11, Handle Animal +9, Profession (sailor) +10, Ride +14, Spot +10, Swim +11

Language Common

SABLE COMPANY MARINE

You graduated from the elite hippogriff-riding school of the Endrin Military Academy. Not only can you ride a hippogriff with great skill, but you may also bond with one.

Prerequisite: Ride 6 ranks, ranger level 4th.

Benefit: You gain a hippogriff as your animal companion. You gain a +2 bonus on Ride checks made while riding your hippogriff animal companion. Whenever you are within 20 feet of your hippogriff, it gains a +2 bonus on saving throws made against fear effects.



SQ animal companion (hippogriff), wild empathy +8

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (4); **Other Gear** +1 composite shortbow (Str +2), 40 arrows, mwk longsword, +1 studded leather armor

SABLE COMPANY

CR 3

RIDING HIPPOGRIFF

N Large magical beast (augmented)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Listen +4, Spot +8**DEFENSE****AC** 18, touch 12, flat-footed 15

(+3 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

hp 42 (5d10+15)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2**OFFENSE****Spd** 50 ft., fly 100 ft. (average)**Melee** 2 claws +8 (1d4+4) and

bite +3 (1d8+2)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.**TACTICS**

During Combat The riding hippogriff makes swooping attacks, always trying to stay out of reach of ground-based targets.

Morale A riding hippogriff flees if its rider is incapacitated or killed while mounted. If the riding hippogriff has no rider, it fights to defend itself but flees back to Korvosa's aerie on the Great Tower as soon as possible.

STATISTICS**Str** 19, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +5; **Grp** +13**Feats** Dodge, Wingover**Skills** Listen +4, Spot +10**SQ** evasion, link, share spells**SPECIAL ABILITIES**

Skills Hippogriffs gain a +4 racial bonus on Spot checks.

Tricks A riding hippogriff knows the tricks attack, come, defend, down, guard, heel, seek, and stay.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The following charts give a rough idea of what sort of random encounters a party might encounter in various parts of Korvosa and its surroundings.

City Streets¹

d%	Encounter	Avg EL
01–02	Important person (noble or royal)	—
03–05	Important person (arbiter or magistrate)	—
06–10	Peasants blocking path	—
11–20	Pushy vendor	—
21–30	Pickpocket (rog 1; Sleight of Hand +7)	1
31–40	Bar brawl spreads to street (2d6 commoner 1)	4
41–50	1d3 thugs	4
51–60	1d3 Hellknights (ftr 4)	6
61–80	2d4 Korvosan Guards	7
81–00	1d3 Sable Company elite marines	7

1 All areas except slums (see Slums chart), Acadamae, Castle Korvosa, Citadel Crest ward, and Gray District; 10% chance of encounter 1/day.

Slums¹

d%	Encounter	Avg EL
01–09	Beggar	—
10–25	Peasants blocking path	—
26–30	Robbery in progress (1d4 thugs)	— or 5
31–40	Pickpocket (rog 1; Sleight of Hand +7)	1
41–50	1d3 stirges	1
51–60	1 rat swarm	2
61–70	2d4 shingle spiders (Small monstrous spiders)	3
71–90	1d4 thugs	5
91–99	2d4 Korvosan Guards	7
00	1d4 Hellknights (ftr 4)	7

1 Bridgefront, Garrison Hill, Old Dock, West Dock; 30% chance of encounter 3/day.

Sewers¹

d%	Encounter	Avg EL
01–03	Dead body	—
04–10	Interesting flotsam ²	—
11–25	1d4 wererats	Varies
26–35	1d3 violet fungi	2
36–50	2d6 goblins	3
51–55	1d3 will-'o'-wisps	6
56–70	1d3 otyughs	6
71–78	2d4 Korvosan Guards	7
79–80	1d3 Sable Company elite marines	7
81–00	2d4 thugs	8

1 Sewers under Old Korvosa, West Dock, and East Shore; 30% chance of encounter 3/day.
2 Raunchy flipbook, porcelain teacup (intact), child's doll, shoe with golden trinket attached, or the like.

Shingles¹

d%	Encounter	Avg EL
01–05	Dead body	—
06–15	1d4+1 pseudodragons	— or 3
16–25	1d4 stirges	1
26–35	1 choker	2
36–55	Weak construction ⁵	2
56–60	Shrew flies ⁴	3
61–70	1d3 imps	4
71–80	2d4 pigtail centipedes ²	4
81–90	2d4 shingle spiders ³	5
81–00	2d4 thugs	8

1 All locations of Shingles; 30% chance of encounter 3/day.
2 Small monstrous centipedes.
3 Medium monstrous spiders.
4 Locust swarm.
5 Treat as 20-foot spiked pit trap (DC 20 Reflex avoids; 2d6 falling dmg and +10 melee [2d4+2]; Search DC 18; Disable Device DC 15).

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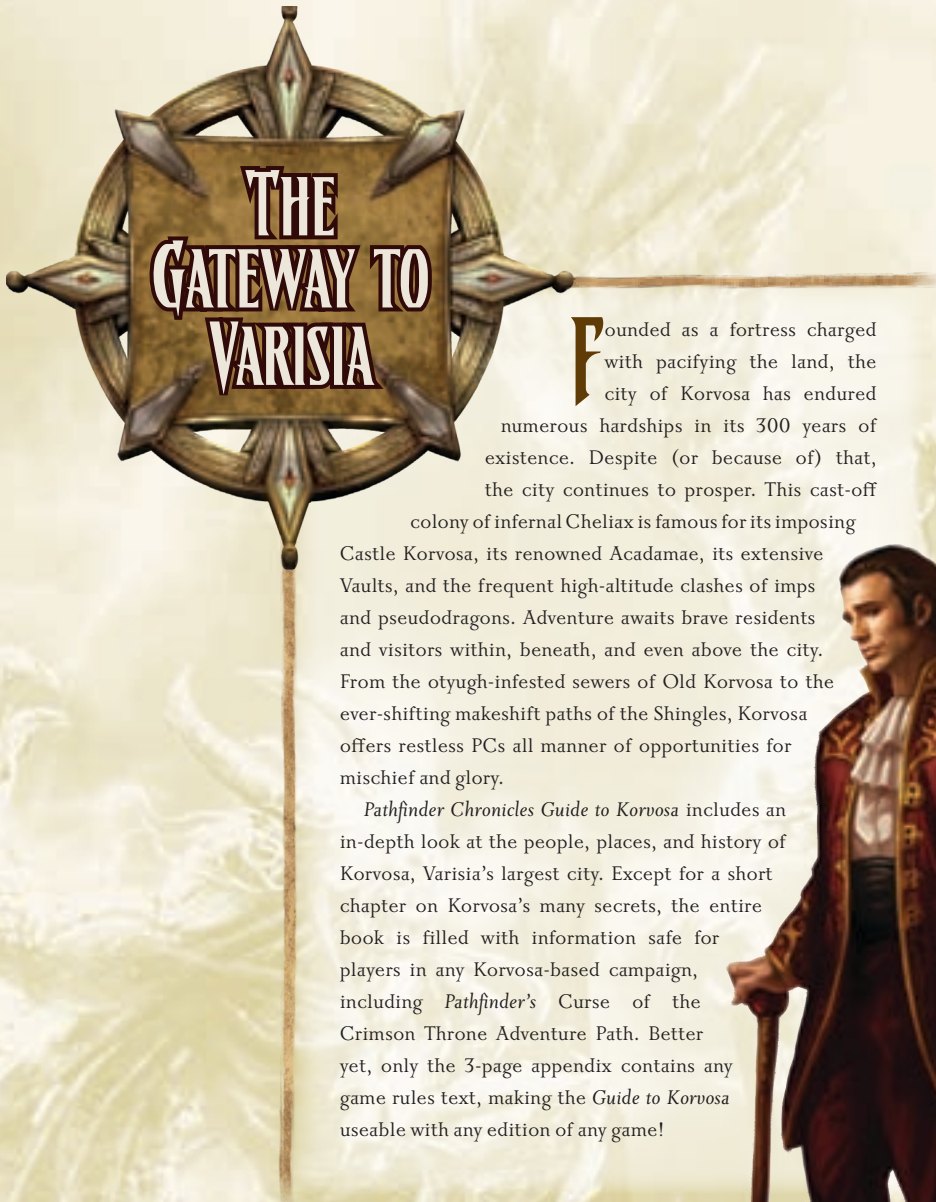
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- 4473:** Lord Volshyenek Ornelos founds the Acadamae.
- 4485:** Naval garrison known as Palin's Cove becomes official settlement.
- 4488:** Shoanti driven from Citadel Hill. Lady Jessa Leroung founds the University of Korvosa.
- 4489:** Lord Magistrate Remsev Ornelos moves Korvosa seat of power onto mainland. Mainland docks burned in protest.
- 4491–4503:** Influx of Chelish immigrants. In-fighting among new and established noble houses.
- 4502–4503:** Cousins' War. First appearance of Blackjack.
- 4504:** "Fort" dropped from town name.
- 4505:** Great Storm of '05 levels three buildings, sinks a dozen ships and boats, and knocks down five docks.
- 4507:** Korvosa celebrates its centennial.
- 4511:** Exploration of areas beyond coast begin in earnest.
- 4514:** Lady-Magistrate Dess Leroung imports otyughs from Cheliox. Installation of first otyugh plug in Old Korvosa.
- 4516:** Schwed Harse follows Sarwin River to its source and names it after his daughter.
- 4532:** Korvosan merchants establish trade relations with dwarves of Janderhoff. Shipments of black marble begin.
- 4536:** Sarwin Harse founds village of Harse.
- 4537:** First otyugh rampage in Old Korvosa. Three otyughs and nine humans killed.
- 4541:** Major wind storm knocks trees into the city's buildings. Ordinance to remove all trees in city approved.
- 4563:** Jayden Baslwief founds village of Baslwief. Korvosa's last public torture (of a serial rapist whose name was later expunged from the record). Public executions continue.
- 4569:** Jorsh Melfesh founds village of Melfesh. Red dragon Glarataxus terrorizes Baslwief for several months before suddenly disappearing.
- 4571:** Glarataxus returns to torment Palin's Cove for almost half a year before leaving.
- 4574:** Jhenni Biston clears out tunnels and founds village of Biston. Troglodytes native to the tunnels appear in Melfesh several months later and cause havoc until a band of adventurers eradicates them.
- 4592:** Jeggare River floods and causes damage among lowland buildings. No reported injuries or deaths.
- 4606:** Aroden dies. Lord Arbust's rule begins.
- 4607:** Bicentennial celebrations in Korvosa cancelled. Several powerful devils appear in city and kill Lord Volshyenek Ornelos.
- 4608:** Thousands leave Korvosa for Magnimar.
- 4611:** Major earthquake causes widespread damage, hundreds of injuries, and dozens of deaths in Janderhoff. Engineers and clerics from Korvosa and its holdings flock to the dwarven stronghold to render aid.
- 4617:** Village of Sirathu claimed by Korvosa.
- 4620:** Largest-ever otyugh rampage. More than a dozen otyughs escape Old Korvosa's Vaults and kill 23 residents before Korvosan Guard can kill them.
- 4624:** Arbust Arabasti dies. Lord Eodred's rule begins.
- 4644:** Lord Eodred crowned King Eodred of Korvosa. Blood Summer, as reefclaw population explodes and eight of the city's residents fall victim to the pests.
- 4657:** Death of King Eodred. King Cardraith's reign begins.
- 4658:** Village of Biston attempts to break free of Korvosan rule. Separatists killed. Martial law established.
- 4661:** Death of King Cardraith. King Chadris's reign begins. The return of the red dragon Glarataxus to Palin's Cove and Baslwief. King Chadris hires adventurers to end the threat. All groups fail in their task.
- 4663:** Ill-advised siege of Kaer Maga results in 117 Korvosan Guard deaths. King Chadris blamed.
- 4667:** Death of King Chadris. Queen Domina's reign begins. Queen reverses anti-tree ordinance and orders fast-growing trees planted.
- 4668:** Dissatisfied citizens found Abken commune.
- 4674:** Glarataxus makes most recent appearance, attacking Palin's Cove, Veldraine, and Korvosa over a period of three weeks before again disappearing over Conqueror's Bay.
- 4680:** Moderate earthquake cracks walls and buildings, but causes only a few injuries and no deaths.
- 4686:** Death of Queen Domina. King Eodred II's reign begins.
- 4690:** Martial law in Biston lifted. Key-Lock Killer, the city's newest serial killer, murders first three victims.
- 4697:** Key-Lock Killer's most productive year: nine victims attributed to him.
- 4707:** Korvosa celebrates 300 years.
- 4708:** Current year.

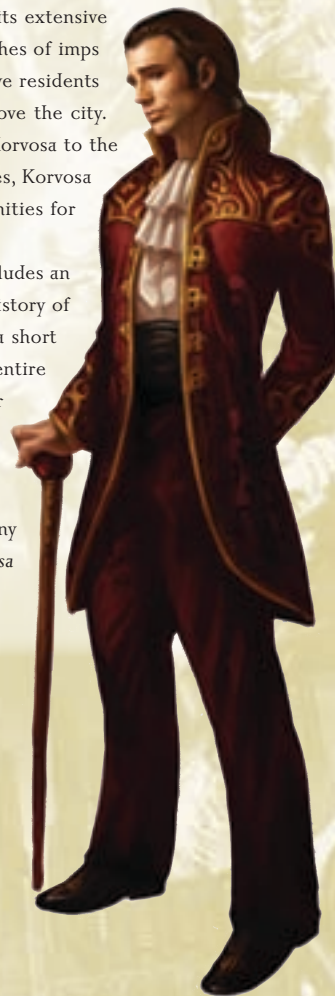


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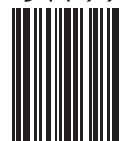
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