

GM's Cookbook

Inns & Taverns #1

There probably isn't a cliché in fantasy gaming any more well worn than the inn or tavern. Despite this it is often a cliché to be embraced rather than avoided. They are useful and interesting places to serve as bookends between adventures. Many players often like to stop at an inn after a day of travel, or have an ale or similar libation at a tavern while they're exploring a new city. It provides a chance for their character to experience some local color, hear some gossip, or simply make it known that a destined-to-be-famous adventurer has hit town.

Due to players' propensity for heading for the local inn or tavern when the action flags GMs are sometimes left scrambling for a new name or some clever detail to distinguish this alehouse from the last three the characters visited. This pdf should provide ample ideas for the next time your adventurers crash at an inn or order up another ale.

In this installment of the GM's Cookbook we provide details on a number of inns and taverns that can be dropped into your game as required. We also offer a table of twenty inn and tavern names to use in a pinch.

THE RUSTY SHIELD

This tavern is housed in a squat, stone building



with protruding wooden rafters. From one of these rafters hangs the tavern's only sign – a battered and rusty shield. The main room is filled with stout wooden chairs and round tables. The large rafters make it necessary for some patrons to duck in places as they cross the room. The tavern's fare – passable grub consisting of potatoes, fresh vegetables, and mutton – is overshadowed by the better than average ale and wines.

Egrin, a retired adventurer and a member of the Red Moon Company hung his shield up above the tavern fifty years ago. The Red Moon Company was a storied group of adventurers who had survived encounters with dragons, orcs, and all manner of other beast and monster. All save Egrin were killed when a cave the company was exploring collapsed. His lust for adventure lost, Egrin settled down, married and opened the Rusty Shield. He died of old age several years ago and his son and daughter, Garwyn and Lysette, operate the tavern now.

Egrin was a fastidious and orderly man. He was in charge of stocking up the provision for his adventuring company and logging treasures and researching any maps, clues, or tomes they discovered. He kept detailed notes of the company's journeys and discoveries and those copious volumes fell to his son after his death. A few adventurers in the know come to the Rusty Shield to consult Egrin's journals (which Garwyn collects a fee for) to follow up on some the tombs, ruins, and dungeons that the Red Moon Company discovered during their lengthy adventuring career.

THE HOOK AND NET

A no-nonsense tavern near the docks, The Hook and Net has for its sign an actual gaffing hook and fishing net. The hook's rusty and the net's rotted, but they still serve as a unique landmark for sailors looking for their first drink on dry land. The interior of the tavern is spare and clean with varnished wooden floorboards salvaged from a beached sailing ship. The bar is similarly salvaged, bashed together from spare wood and the frame

from a dinghy. It's not pretty but it does the job.

The tavern's proprietor, one Billy Bloodeye, was a sailor for most of his life who nearly fell victim to a tentacled monstrosity that pulled his ship and shipmates down into the depths. Billy escaped aboard a dinghy, the same dinghy he used to make his bar, and made it to dry land where he swore off the sailing life for good. Billy's surname is attributed to the scars left by the sea monster's attack. He has three reddish sucker marks along the side of his face and one eye was left permanently reddened and cloudy.

The Hook and Net is a tavern for hard drinkers and offers little in the way of food. The tavern sells passable ale, wine and homebrew potato wine. Billy will occasionally add honey and spices to the cheap wine to help it go down a little easier.

THE COZY COFFIN

This roadside inn sits in a large walled courtyard along with a stable. The inn itself was once a noble's manor house and is a two-story affair made of brick and stone with various cherubic children and wildlife carved into the pillars and balconies. The interior of the inn has had several walls taken out on the ground floor to create an expansive common room. New wooden rafters and pillars support the ceiling and new stairs have been built that lead up to the rooms on the second floor.

The inn gets its name from its unusual décor. Once the home of a hemophiliac, the interior walls and ceilings are all cushioned with satin and velvets. The floors are covered in thick carpeting that's laid over similar padding. Any sharp edges, at the doorways for example, are rounded off and even padded with quilted fabrics in places. The noble eventually died of old age; he left no heir and had exhausted his fortune during his lifetime. The building was given to Yerynn Quillfeather, a merchant who had helped the local baron during an orc incursion by using his merchant company's men, horses, and wagons to supply the militias

defending the barony's borders. Yerynn, quickly approaching old age, sold off his company and has retired to the life of an innkeeper with his family at the Cozy Coffin.

The new additions to the house clash badly with the existing décor and there are places where the expensive fabrics have been damaged and covered over with bad art or cheap woven rugs. The rooms upstairs are similarly appointed and contain all of the original furniture, all modified to be as harmless as possible to the fragile and paranoid noble that called this place home.

The menu is good but inconsistent as the innkeeper depends on deliveries from local hunters, trappers, and farmers that occasionally fail to make the journey to the inn. The noble left behind a well-stocked wine cellar that the canny innkeeper has made good use of, offering the rare and expensive stock to passing nobles and well-to-do merchants.

INNS

- 1 Broken Bough Inn
- 2 Wayfarer's Inn
- 3 Copper Cauldron Inn
- 4 The Soldier's Return
- 5 Inn Of The Spinning Compass
- 6 Barrel Inn
- 7 Inn of the Lost Pilgrim
- 8 The King's Arms
- 9 The Weeping Willow Inn
- 10 Dead Branch Inn
- 11 Midwife's Rest
- 12 Griffon's Roost
- 13 Red Hill House
- 14 Inn of the Empty Nest
- 15 The Green Hearth Inn
- 16 Lost Coppers Inn
- 17 The Twelve Cups
- 18 The Sleeping Hound
- 19 Inn of the Feathered Nest
- 20 Harvest House

TAVERNS

- 1 The Wandering Prince
- 2 The Cup and Bell
- 3 The Black Ram
- 4 The Golden Swan
- 5 Blacktooth Tavern
- 6 The Empty Scabbard
- 7 The Gray Mare
- 8 The Mossy Rock
- 9 The Lonely Widow
- 10 The Drunken Shepherd
- 11 Knight And Horse
- 12 The Scattered Coins Tavern
- 13 The Scented Veil
- 14 Oak Tree Alehouse
- 15 The Crooked Door Tavern
- 16 Lady Wildflower's Tavern
- 17 Black Standard Tavern
- 18 The Leather Flask
- 19 The Everfull Tankard
- 20 The Rat's Nest

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