



PORT PERIL

If you yearn for the smell of the clean salt air and the sour stench of boiling tar, and desire the opportunity to fulfill sailors' every vice, then you need look no further than Port Peril. By the nine layers of Hell, I think they've invented some vices of their own, so best take caution—you can't trust anyone in that port, and any word given by the Free Captains only goes so far. Between the thieves of Pike Street, the perfumed doxies of Scrimshaw, and thirsty sailors looking for the nearest cask of rum, you can find yourself battered, shirtless, and broke before you've even left sight of the quay.

—Xavi Narcis, first mate of
the *Serpent's Curse* (retired)

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Just as likely to offer a hand out on a stormy sea as to stab you over a single gold piece, every rough-and-tumble resident of the Shackles lives life to the fullest. A stout heart, steady sea legs, keen eyes, a healthy respect for the sea—the freedom-loving denizens of the Shackles admire these traits even in their hated foes. A driven personality with a love of profit doesn't hurt either, and in the misfit collection of isles that make up the realm sandwiched between the Arcadian Ocean and the jungles of southern Garund, such behavior goes far. In Port Peril, the drive to amass wealth, admiration of the power of the wind and waves, and skill at commanding a sailing vessel all characterize those that call the Shackles their home.

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CN metropolis

Corruption +4; **Crime** +0; **Economy** +6; **Law** +7; **Lore** +6;
Society +3

Qualities holy site (Berth of the Sea Wraith), notorious, prosperous, rumormongering citizens, strategic location, superstitious

Danger +20

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 43,270 (27,636 humans; 3,891 half-elves; 3,496 half-orcs; 2,663 gnomes; 2,230 halflings; 1,798 elves; 1,357 dwarves; 199 other)

NOTABLE NPCS

Captain Kerdak Bonefist, the Hurricane King (NE male human fighter 8/Inner Sea pirate 10)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 29,744 gp; **Purchase Limit** 225,000 gp;

Spellcasting 8th

Minor Items all; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

PORT PERIL GAZETTEER

South of Jeopardy Bay, Port Peril sits on the mainland outside the frenzied grasp of the Eye of Abendego and west of the mountainous Terwa Uplands. The rocky escarpments and bluffs cup a deep harbor capable of handling heavily laden merchants' barques and galleys. Convenient access to the jungles of the Terwa Uplands and the Slithering Coast means prospecting teams can easily move inland in search of precious lumber, spices, and exotic fauna for trade in distant ports. Neutral merchants berth here before making the treacherous journey north, but the port's militia forces ships bearing the flags of Inner Sea nations away. Merchants looking to turn a fast profit have their pick of commandeered goods in the markets of Port Peril, though the wise ones do well to check the provenance before attempting to sell them in northern ports.

The following locations are among the most infamous and exciting spots in Port Peril.

Beggarbriar: Hard-luck cases, addicts, and those whom not even pirates can tolerate end up here, outside of the natural stone bluffs that form the protective wall for Crescent Harbor, Eastwind, and Merchant Marina. The stink of boiling tar permeates all of Beggarbriar, as does the reek of the tanneries. The creation and sale of ropes, sails, and supplies (neither the best nor freshest) employ the residents of Beggarbriar, and others operate the dry docks to repair and scrape ship hulls. Ironically, for all its poor reputation and lingering stench, Beggarbriar holds some of the finest shipwrights in the Shackles—every one of them irascible, ill-tempered, and prone to drink. The most well known of them, **Callindra Raines** (CN female human expert 9), once served as a shipwright in Augustana, lured to the Shackles by the promise of wealth. With the secrets of the Andoren navy ships in her head, she has a phenomenally large bounty in her homeland, but doesn't care—the Free Captains pay her five times what she received in Augustana.

Bekyar Headman's Lodge: Simple wooden shacks and huts form a wall against the jungle along the western half of Beggarbriar. Numerous members of Mwangi tribes live in this area, particularly of the Bonuwat and Bekyar peoples, who come to trade with the pirates of the port. The Bekyar of the area consider **Goat Tongue** (CE male human witch 6), a worshiper of Angazhan, their headman and leader while in the city and obey his ritual-inspired visions that so often demand sacrifice and slave-taking.

Berth of the Sea Wraith: This is one of the few holy sites dedicated to Besmara. Before the temple rise arching fingers of petrified wood that form the hull of an immense ship, twice as long as the Hurricane King's flagship, the *Filthy Lucre*. Many believe Besmara built this nameless vessel as a prototype for the *Sea Wraith* long before Port Peril existed, then sailed off into the eternal oceans of the Maelstrom.

Bloodpools: Pools filled with strange urchins partially fill a cave within the Knotworks. Supposedly, these pools provide passage to the sea east of the city, possibly explaining sightings of merfolk and strange creatures amid these waters.

Captain's Crawl: Said to be the pit where half-orc Captain Jolb Manyfingers hid a career's worth of plunder, this reeking pit descends deep beneath the Knotworks' caves—some say even into the Darklands themselves. None can truly say how far, though, as old Jolb himself disappeared down the pit more than 20 years ago.

The Cup and Rudder: Few realize that **Kennewik Masi's** (CG male human cleric 4) popular and sizable tavern is also Port Peril's unofficial temple to Cayden Cailean. Most take the building's size and the holy symbol on the building's tarnished bronze dome to be an elaborate theme.

Crescent Harbor: When visitors think of Port Peril's confusing streets, bloody alleys, and smoky taverns, they're really thinking of its bow-shaped harbor island. Crescent



Harbor's docks are filled with rowdy sailors and swindlers ready to separate any visitor from his coin with drink, gambling, whores, and cons. By standing order of the Hurricane King, all ships must dock at Crescent Harbor first, where their cargo is examined by dockworkers and quarantined for at least a week before crossing over to the main docks, an order that the **Harbormaster Tsojmin Kreidoros** (LE male dwarf wizard 7) adheres to with gravitas and efficiency.

Dead Man's Dance Hall: Carved by wind and wave over the centuries, this natural stone arch serves as a gruesome landmark. Spinning in the breezes off Jeopardy Bay, iron cages hang from chains, and scavengers pick away at the corpses within as they rot in the humid tropical air. Local assassins use this place to display their kills, as does the Hurricane King.

Eastwind: This district is split into two distinct wards, High and Low, and citizens of both quickly get used to the sound of wind and rain. Built on tidal silt, Low Eastwind loses bits and pieces of land to the sea yearly, and the tops of old houses that slipped into the sea along with portions of the bluff remain visible during the calm waters of summer. The threat of waking up several inches lower than yesterday gives many Low Eastwinders a dour, pragmatic outlook on life. High Eastwind sits a hundred feet above Low Eastwind, its stone houses safe and secure on their promontory. Merchants build manors here, fat on the gold they make shipping Sargavan treasures north or Chelish luxuries south for colonists and explorers. The spectacular views, easy access to the entertainments and docks of Merchant Marina, and the distance from rowdy Crescent Harbor put High Eastwind second only to the Lucrehold in terms of wealth.

F & M's Exotic Meats: A shop located in Low Eastwind, this building houses an unusual pair of shopkeepers. **Festerscale** (CN male kobold rogue 3) and **Mizrah** (N female half-elf cleric of Brigh 3) seek to purvey fresh meat to the many races of Port Peril. With their magically fashioned storerooms that keep their wares from rotting, they do a brisk business. Here, one can acquire the best-trimmed beef roast for Oathday dinner, a day-to-day sausage, or fare rare and exotic. For an extra bit of coin, these butchers will also quietly dispose of bodies, generally by making them someone else's lunch.

Freedom Hole: Few know that a tunnel cuts into the rock behind **Goli Mor's** (N male human ranger 5) Brinery, a cave that leads to a cracked wall separating the captives of the Saltfish Camp from freedom. The cracks in the wall are big enough to slip coins, a message, or anything else about the size of a coconut through, providing those in the slave camp with a tantalizing taste of freedom. Once a week Mor comes to the hole, and reliably takes and delivers messages from those in the camp, but only for a price in silver or desperate secrets.

Harborhorn: The squat tower of Harbormaster Kreidoros rises from a spit of land jutting from Crescent Harbor. Little passes within sight of the tower that the stern dwarf and his toughs are not aware of.

The Knotworks: Beneath the bluffs of Port Peril lie a series of labyrinthine tunnels packed with merchants who dream of leaving the caverns for a shop in High Eastwind. Most people here have little more than one lean-to or carved niche of rock to live in and sell their handiworks from, but merchants from the Viridian Cartel stake out whole caverns within the bluffs, protected by a small army of the cartel's guards. The constant temperature and humidity of the Knotworks make such caverns excellent warehouses. Despite the seclusion from wind and rain, many people seek to avoid living here, as horrifying stories tell of creatures emerging from some of these tunnels, ravenous for the taste of blood.

Latchmin's Folly: This squat sea fort was constructed by pirate lord Lukain Latchmin, who over a hundred years ago sought to take the title of Hurricane King by force—and failed miserably, as the fort's fire scars still attest. The fortress is now owned by **Zeru Faizel** (LN female human aristocrat 3/expert 4), a Katapeshi merchant who made her fortune in the Shackles, and has converted much of the keep to a stylish manor surrounded by gardens at the top of the incline from High Eastwind. Her alliance of merchants, the Viridian Cartel, deals directly with the Hurricane King, negotiating tax rates on cargo and safe escorts around the Eye. Faizel aims to make money for herself and her business partners, and often uses methods illegal in the Inner Sea—perfect for any seeking to invest in the cutthroat world of the Port Peril mercantile business.

The Locker: Law and order exist in Port Peril, though in a curious and misshapen form. More often than not, mob rule holds true, but some crimes, such as attempted mutiny, earn a front-row seat at the Locker. A low, two-story stone edifice covered with lichen, seabird nests, and shellfish, and built over the water's edge, this jail faces the Dead Man's Dance Hall. A single watchtower sits by the perpetually open front gates, and also serves as a signal tower. Narrow slit windows allow in light and fresh air, but the Locker's reputation has nothing to do with its amenities. Large holding cells on the upper level collect minor criminals who end up as laborers or slaves, but the lower level's Tidal Cells prey upon every sailor's worst nightmares. These cells sit below the high tide line, and water all but fills these 5-foot-square rooms when the tide comes in. Waste from the upper levels flows down, making these damp and cold cells even more unpleasant. Secured to the ceiling with thick iron chains, prisoners have to balance on iron crossbeams or risk falling into the water below. The head gaoler, a grizzled half-orc by the name of **Xue Bonebleeder** (NE female half-orc fighter 5), takes a perverse delight in putting unruly citizens or

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mutineers in the Tidal Cells, then chumming the waters with bait to lure in the black-tipped jigsaw sharks that inhabit Port Peril's harbor.

Lubber's Lurk: The only way to enter Port Peril by land is through these twisting, poorly lit, and even more poorly marked sea caves. Rumors of growls in the dark, stealthy brigands, and cave fishers make catching a barge from Beggarbriar into the city far preferable to most folks.

Lucrehold: The island hold of the Hurricane King, this island serves as the seat of Port Peril's limited government. Upon the sea cliffs rises Fort Hazard—the home of the Hurricane King, Captain Kerdak Bonefist—and the tower lighthouse called Besmara's Beacon. The light of Fort Hazard has long symbolized safety for sailors coming home after a long voyage, but also the opposite. Tales tell of how the Hurricane King, watchful for those who have gained his ire, snuffs the light of the Beacon and watches as the ships impale themselves upon the shoals. Pirate captains within sight of Lucrehold often tally up their actions before approaching, checking to make sure they have not crossed the Hurricane King.

Marg's Emporium: Situated within a narrow gap between two caverns in the Knotworks—forcing traffic through the long shack—the shop of “**Mangey**” **Marg Martols** (N female human bard 2) has a reputation as a place where a sailor can sell nearly anything. Marg's collection of junk from around the Inner Sea is second to none, and has become something of an attraction for both visitors and seekers of the bizarre—as has Marg herself, with her penchant for fast-talking and impromptu storytelling.

Merchant Marina: Everybody who sells something in Port Peril has business in Merchant Marina. At this assortment of docks on the eastern shores of mainland-side Port Peril, dock hands offload merchants' cargo—commonly fabric, lumber, spices, or wines—for sale and transport elsewhere. Captains pay their fees, fines, and taxes to Merchant Master **Pherias Jakar** (LE male elf wizard 7), earning the marina the epithets Miser's Wharf and Pennypincher Pier. A friendly rivalry between Master Jakar and Master Kreidoros has existed for decades, and each has been known to arrange for a bit of excitement to break up the tedium.

Mermaid's Bucket: Numerous mermaid statues, fish masks, and other paraphernalia with a nautical theme festoon the taproom of this rowdy tavern, barely 10 strides from the main docks of Crescent Harbor. A mermaid mosaic with scales of a red resinous substance covers the wall over the main bar, and is clearly visible from outside. The lanky proprietor, **Nefti Unwasha** (CN female human expert 3), supplies rum to every drinkhouse and brothel in the city, buying out smaller crafters with unusually marked silver coins, or encouraging them to take their business to other cities.

Mystic's Redoubt: The only public arcane library in Port Peril, this six-winged circular tower stands in Crescent Harbor and charges steep fees for its use. Visitors must pay a yearly fee of 1,000 gold pieces or donate an unusual arcane item worth at least 500 gp—a scroll, potion, other magical item, or text on magic or planar theory—to enter the Redoubt. High entrance fees mean the tower does not get many newcomers, but a small number of apprentice hopefuls arrive each year, along with academicians wishing to study the relics in the Redoubt's antiquities hall. Rare natural components are grown in the well-tended grove next to the Redoubt, available for sale to any spellcasters stopping in Port Peril.

New Eleder: The tunnels leading into this cavern of Sargavan expatriates inexplicably collapsed more than a year ago. As no one cared enough about the occupants to dig them out, the cavern remains blocked—though some claim scrambling and scratching can still be heard within.

Saltfish Camp: In Port Peril, fortune sometimes runs out, and slavery is often the end result of poor decisions or sheer bad luck. Out of sight of most of Port Peril's citizens, this rickety collection of shacks barely keeps the rain out, and the slaves within must huddle together for warmth on cooler nights. Captains and foremen looking for cheap labor come to **Firoj** (CE male human expert 4), whose keen eye picks out just what they're looking for, and at bargain rates. Firoj keeps a firm hand on his property, aided by the whispers of **Talsetus** (CN male human commoner 5). Talsetus acts like a friend to the other slaves, showing new slaves how to take care of blisters and lashes, which





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guards to stay on the good side of, and how to stay dry in the rainy season. Careful layers of lies and deception allow him to keep up the facade even as he feeds Firoj information about escape plans and mutinies. He knows that he has as good a life as a slave gets, as Firoj rewards him quite well for his duplicity, and if others must pay for his privileges with their suffering, so be it.

Scrimshaw: Compared to the refined pleasure-houses of High Eastwind, the low-rent brothels and bars of these whitewashed tenements have little more than their decorations to separate them from the other ramshackle buildings in this district. The carved ivory sculptures that adorn many of the buildings contain code and symbols, a hidden language indicating the availability of certain vices—three gulls for flayleaf, a shark for an assassin, or a whale for a fence of stolen items. Many sculptors have homes in Scrimshaw, making use of the ivory imported from the Mwangi Expanse and whalebones from the North Tack.

Sea Wrack Chapel: Most seaports hold a small shrine to Gozreh, master of the winds and waves, who holds dominion over the livelihood of every sailor that dares to roam the open seas. Not much different from that of any fishing village, Port Peril's hall has walls made of driftwood and netting to serve as a place of refuge for those seeking Gozreh's guidance. **Father Ignalus** (N male venerable halfling adept 5) tends this hall and welcomes those who follow his god, no matter the form it may take, including veneration of the dual form of Shimye-Migalla often worshiped in the Mwangi Expanse. A studious record-keeper since he arrived in Port Peril, Ignalus has kept an accurate, though morbid, account of all the shipwrecks around the pirate haven.

Sminsilver House: Constructed by retired captain Lucio Sminsilver over 40 years ago, this richly decorated manor overlooks Scrimshaw and stands as the most desirable address in mainland Port Peril. Few of the mansion's more than a dozen owners have managed to hold it for longer than 3 years, though, and the house has been gambled away, taken by rivals, or abandoned numerous times.

Siren's Lash: The denizens of Port Peril love the pleasures of the flesh, and plentiful adherents to the goddess of lust, Calistria, live here to attend to their every need. Regularly requested by the Hurricane King when he entertains in Lucrehold, the attractive and attentive courtesans of the temple serve as excellent informants for a bit of extra coin. Once a temple to Shelyn, Siren's Lash still bears marks of that goddess's influence in its furnishings. Exotic birds roost in intricate gardens, topiary sculptures intertwine with fragrant orchids, and bright silken curtains catch even the slightest breeze. **Mistress Livdana Giedrence** (CN female half-elf cleric of Calistria 6), a curvaceous, dark-skinned woman with deep purple eyes, loves goods imported from Kyonin, and such gifts all but ensure an audience with this leader of the Savored Sting's faithful.

PORT PERIL LOCATIONS

1. Crescent Harbor
2. Mermaid's Bucket
3. Harborhorn
4. Mystic's Redoubt
5. Lucrehold
6. Latchmin's Folly
7. F & M's Exotic Meats
8. Merchant Marina
9. Sea Wrack Chapel
10. Siren's Lash
11. Eastwind
12. The Bloodpools
13. Sminsilver House
14. Dead Man's Dance Hall
15. The Locker
16. The Cup and Rudder
17. Scrimshaw
18. Marg's Emporium
19. The Knotworks
20. Bekyar Headman's Lodge
21. Beggarbriar
22. Berth of the Sea Wraith
23. Sunken Plaza
24. Captain's Crawl
25. Lubber's Lurk
26. Saltfish Camp
27. Freedom Hole
28. New Eleder

Sunken Plaza: A confusing maze of ladders, rickety stairs, multicolored lanterns, and the occasional flicker of eldritch lights, this multilevel market holds the most diverse and affordable shops in Port Peril. While the rich make most of their purchases in Merchant Marina, citizens looking for the uncommon, very cheap, or very specific come here. Poisons from Nidal, Mwangi juju fetishes, questionable artifacts with unknown provenance, magic items of every caliber, exotic beasts, and countless petty criminals with sharp blades and light fingers can all be found here. The plaza is built upon the crumbled layers of a collapsed mausoleum, and residents constantly find bits and pieces of frescoes, urns, and tiled floor mosaics. To the delight of the sages of Mystic's Redoubt, entire ancient homes remain intact, their belongings and furnishings untouched by time. The Pathfinder Society has yet to delve into Port Peril's ruins, a fact not lost on the Hurricane King, and he waits for an offer from the Decemvirate or a representative to whom he can sell exclusive access.