

Saltmarsh Player's Primer



Story Themes



- **Home:** Love it or hate it, Saltmarsh is the party's home and you won't let it be destroyed, even if sometimes you wish it would be. You know this place and you know the people... or at least you think you do.
- **Secrets:** Saltmarsh is a town full of secrets. Some people aren't what they seem and some people are. Sometimes there are secrets even the townsfolk don't know about.
- **Change:** Saltmarsh is dealing with the sudden attentions of the king and the desires of both newcomers and its native population. The party could be a deciding factor in the kind of place the town becomes.
- **Horror:** Whether it's the mundane dangers of bigotry, pirates, and slavers or supernatural peril from the surrounding countryside and the ocean depths, Saltmarsh is a place where darkness looms constantly.
- **Consequences:** Choices matter. The world is reactive and living. Characters will react to the party's decisions and treatment.

Gameplay

The gameplay will focus around:

- **Time in town:** You'll have time to get to hang around town, get to know people and become involved in the local community. Though you'll visit other cities, you'll always return to Saltmarsh and your relationships in town will matter
- **Adventures:** This campaign will feature some classic premade adventures, which will drive the story forward. This is still Dungeons and Dragons, so most problems are solved through direct action.
- **Peril:** Saltmarsh is a dangerous campaign, so adventurers should be cautious.
- **Ships and Swashbuckling:** We'll be spending time onboard ships and may visit isolated islands and coves.
 - Captain
 - First Mate.
 - Bosun.
 - Quartermaster
 - Surgeon.
 - Cook

Saltmarsh's History

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SALTMARSH IS A FISHING VILLAGE on the southern coast of Keoland. It was once a formidable military power, pushing to the north, west and east.

The neglect of the south allowed piracy, banditry, and smuggling to flourish. Saltmarsh and similar towns kept to fishing, maintaining a low profile.

Decades ago, the pirates grew strong enough to create their own realm, a loose confederacy known as the Hold of the Sea Princes.

With the Sea Princes came raids on Saltmarsh and its neighbors. The Sea Princes' ships pillaged the coast for more slaves to support their growing realm. Saltmarsh suffered. The memories of those times loom heavily, and the locals' hatred runs deep.

Eventually Keoland's expansion was pushed back and King Kimbertos Skotti was forced to look to the south. The crown struck peace treaties with its former foes, raised a navy, and dealt a sharp blow to the ambitions of the Sea Princes- but the conflict is by no means over.

King Skotti has decreed that the pirates must be put down, the sea lanes secured, and trade cultivated. If Keoland cannot prosper as a military force, it must grow as a center of trade.

Remote Saltmarsh is entering a new phase of life. The crown wants to expand the village's port and make it a prime location for trade. Dwarves bearing a royal decree have begun mining for silver in the seaside cliffs near town. The mine could become a major factor in the village's and local region's prosperity.

Not all of Saltmarsh's residents feel the same way. While many loyalists look forward to the region's increased prosperity and prestige, many locals don't want to lose their independence to a king they see as indifferent. A conflict is brewing between the loyalists and the traditionalists. All the while, internal and external dangers loom, threatening the continued existence of Saltmarsh.

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Demographics

Saltmarsh has a population of around 5000 people. It is predominantly human, with the 200 dwarven mine workers being the largest non-human community. Halflings and wood elves from the local area are a common enough sight. Due to Keoland's trade agreements with Luz, tieflings that mostly pass as human are tolerated, but most other unusual races are shunned and often not allowed within the town.

Saltmarsh's human population is mostly made up of mixed Suloise and Oeridian heritage, with a Flannish minority. There is also a scattering of Olmans and Touvans, runaway slaves from the Hold of the Sea Princess. The Flannae were the oldest human culture in the region, typically bronze to dark brown skinned, with curly dark hair. The Oeridians were the next to arrive, olive skinned and brown or auburn haired. Lastly the pale Suel arrived, fleeing the twin cataclysms. Many pay no mind to their heritage, but some cling to it proudly.

There are also other rumors. A few local half elves had sea elf parents and some locals' families are said to have unusually close ties to the sea. Few believe the stories, but sometimes events hint at the possibility of a truth.

Important Townsfolk and Institutions

The Council

- **Eda Oweland:** The senior council member, minor fishing magnate, and traditionalist.
- **Gellan Primewater:** A trade magnate, wealthy social butterfly, and traditionalist.
- **Elliander Fireborn:** The head of the guard, royal army veteran, and loyalist.
- **Mannistrad Copperlocks:** A dwarven community leader, head of mining operations, and loyalist
- **Anders Solmer:** A well liked young fishing magnate with trade interests, who stands against

Interesting Outsiders

- **Ingo the Drover:** Ingo the Drover is the man in town who can get you muscle.
- **Keleddek the Unspoken:** A tall and mysterious foreign wizard with a dark reputation.

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Creating your character

Character creation will be part of session zero, so the entire group can get a feel for how their characters interact and so the DM can discuss choices with them.

Backstory

- Your character has lived in town for at least 3 years.
- Your character is tied, somehow, to one of the town council members. They could be an employer, patron, friend, or even relative.
- Your character spends time at one of Saltmarsh's three taverns. What does that suggest about their character?

Your role onboard ship

Your character will be spending time on a ship. As you create your character, see if they can fill one of the ship roles, but don't worry, as you'll have a chance to pick up some proficiencies during the game. The roles are:

Race Options

Saltmarsh's demographics should give you an idea of the options available to player characters. More unusual race choices should be checked with the DM for approval, as not every option may be suitable.

Class Options

Subclasses tied to the sea fit particularly well into this campaign, such as the fathomless warlock, or the storm sorcerer, but don't feel you have to restrict yourself.

Map / Regions

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Temples

Temple of Procan: Run by Wellgar Brinehanded, the one legged former whaler. Krag the local gravedigger and loremaster
Temple of Obad-Hai: The shrine is tended by Ferrin Kastillar and his geese, the training ground. It is frequented by much of Saltmarsh's Flannish population.

Taverns

- **Empty Net:** A shady tavern on stilts over the bay, owned by Kreg Shenker
- **Wicker Goat:** Frequented by guards and dwarven migrants and owned by Lankus Kurrid
- **Snapping Line:** Frequented by sailors and fishers and owned by Hanna Rist

Public Institutions

- **Carpenter's Guildhall:** The gnomish Jilar Kanklesten, the head of guild, has an interest in exotic woods
- **Fishmongers' Plants:** The workers here process most of Saltmarsh's catch
- **Mariner's Guildhall:** The guildhall provides bed and board to members from all along the coast. An excellent place to look for crew, news, or navigation advice

Local Businesses

- **Dwarven Anvil:** Owned by Mafera, a Flannish woman, who's son Jasker is her best journeyman
- **Faithful Quartermasters of luz:** Run by the tiefling Captain Xendros, this tradepost deals in magic items of all sorts
- **Winston's Store:** Winston, a marsh halfling, provides honest goods at solid prices.

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