



## The River Rat

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The River Rat is a Dungeon Architect supplement. When your players decide to travel down a path you did not expect, or they finish the main adventure with time left to play, you can use one of these maps to provide a reprieve while you create something more substantial for them to explore so that the fun does not end too soon.

Please keep in mind that a Dungeon Architect supplement provides a theme and a location but only suggestions for the types of creatures and rewards that may exist. You, the game master, must change these to suit the strength of your players' characters and adapt them to whichever fantasy role-playing system you are playing.

### **THE RIVER RAT**

The River Rat is a large three-story tavern built on the banks of the winding, lazy Dulthorn River. The tavern has a solid stone foundation, with a portion of the building extending over the river. Stone posts, entangled with netting and ropes, support the extension. The building has thatched, peaked rooftops, many shuttered windows, and sturdy double doors. A wooden sign hangs on a metal rod outside the doors. The sign shows a picture of a humanoid rat lounging on a boat while drinking a beer.

Pine trees surround the tavern on three sides. No roads connect the tavern to any town, village, or city. Instead, travelers and merchants use the river to come and go.

Devon Amerstall, a wealthy nobleman and merchant prince, owns the River Rat. He lives in the grand city of Tuldarin and never visits the remote tavern. He has his employees run the tavern's operations, and they send him the proceeds on guarded barges. The tavern hands grow

some food around the tavern and tend to animals for dairy products, eggs, and meat. Barge merchants supply liquor, oil, foodstuffs, and other supplies.

Aven Bullwin is the tavern keeper. Aven makes all the day-to-day decisions, maintains the books, handles the supply orders, and skims a little money off the books to reward himself for his hard work. He makes an annual trip to Tuldarin to discuss the tavern's affairs with Devon Amerstall. These trips are always short.

Fishing nets, wicker baskets, pieces of driftwood, and other décor, which symbolize life on the river, decorate the 3-story tavern. The tavern's first floor has a large common area for eating and merriment, two bathing rooms, several private meeting areas, a kitchen, several pantries, and a barracks for the tavern's mercenary guards. The second floor has cramped guestrooms for travelers. The third floor has larger rooms for merchants.

The River Rat (also known as The Rat) is one of the only stopping points that offers a bed, a bath, and a meal along the trade river. Barge merchants, travelers, and adventurers always stop by for a day or two.

Bar fights are commonplace. Gambling occurs regularly. Thievery is frequent. Over the years, the River Rat has gained a bawdy and rowdy reputation. A reputation that it relishes and deserves.

Because the tavern enjoys high traffic, Bullwin employs several workers. Three young boys sweep and clean the common room each morning. Four servers tend to the patrons. Three maids clean rooms and prepare bath water for travelers. Two cooks work long hours to prepare the tavern's meals. Most of the tavern's workers are happy with their work and their pay. There are a couple of workers who believe Bullwin pays inadequate wages.



Nine mercenaries protect the tavern. These men are well-armored and adequately skilled. They handle troublemakers. Their leader is strong, diligent, and focused.

### *Innkeeper*

Aven Bullwin handles the River Rat's business operations. He is a heavy-set man with fat cheeks, a round stomach, and brown, bushy sideburns. He is missing many teeth, and his hairline is receding, revealing his high forehead.

He wears respectable attire and wipes his forehead with a handkerchief from his vest pocket. Aven is nearly 50 years old. He has been the proprietor for 15 years and is a proficient tavern keeper.

Because of their clientele, Aven is suspicious of travelers. He requires immediate payment for rented rooms, drinks, and meals so patrons do not run out without paying their dues. Sometimes, he provides free food or shelter to destitute travelers or the clergy.

If combat should erupt, Aven is the first to leave the area. He relies on his mercenaries to handle any outbreaks or disturbances.

Aven is a friendly, good-hearted man. He enjoys hearing stories and telling gossip. He can read, write, and speak seven languages. He is also a skilled musician with the lyre, but he rarely plays in public. Sometimes, he plays the lyre in the shadows or on the dock on dark nights.

### *Sweepers*

Aven hires three young boys to sweep the common room, cleaning up the food, broken plates, and sometimes blood left behind by the rowdy patrons. The boys share a room at the inn, slightly bigger than a closet. They get paid on copper, food, and water. Despite their conditions, they are happy to work at the Rat because they hear great stories, learn of great adventures, and sometimes make extra money selling rumors to travelers.

### *Servers*

Four servers handle the patrons' needs. They serve delicious food and watery beer every night. Sometimes, the patrons can get a little rowdy, but the mercenaries are on hand to quiet things down. Although all four servers are proficient, funny, and charismatic, one stands out.

The tavern's most popular server is a woman named Jordana. Jordana has auburn hair and sparkling green eyes. She enjoys gossiping with customers but keeps her flirtations short. Only 20 years old, the young beauty is often the center of attention, but one of the mercenaries (Arnos) is courting her. He keeps a close eye on her. Jordana loves to sing. She will burst into a lovely song when anyone plays a lute or lyre. On dark nights, she will sing sad melodies with the accompaniment of Aven's lyre.

### *Maids*

The tavern employs three maids to clean the guest rooms and prepare baths for the patrons. The maids keep to themselves. Like the sweepers, they share a small room and earn very little.

One of the maids, an elf named Onara, is a novice thief who uses her access to room keys and knowledge of patrons' whereabouts to steal money. On rare occasions, she will steal money while a patron is bathing or pick someone's pocket in the bustling common room.

### *Cooks*

The tavern keeper employs two gnomes in the kitchen. Both gnomes are proficient cooks who prepare the most delicious meat platters. They rarely leave the kitchen.

Dorgul, one of the gnomes, was a novice thief in his youth, participating in a few adventures before hanging up his thief tools. Most people are unaware of his past, and he prefers to keep it that way. If he overhears the characters talking about locks, traps, or adventures, he will buy them a few rounds of ales to hear their stories.

### *Mercenaries*

Devon Amerstall demands his tavern be protected. Nine mercenaries defend the River Rat against troublemakers. The mercenaries are garrisoned in the first-floor barracks and work in 8-hour shifts, three per shift. The men monitor the common room, as well as the upstairs corridors. They seldom leave the tavern to patrol the area around the River Rat.

Eight mercenaries are novice warriors who wear chain mail, carry shields, and employ long swords. Their contracts demand they fight to the death; however, a few will flee combat if reduced to only a few hit points.



One of the men, a half-elf named Arnos, is courting Jordana, one of the servers. He always works at night, when she is working, and immediately interposes himself if anyone bothers her. He is both brave and strong. He will never run from combat and will not allow Jordana to be harmed.

The leader of the mercenaries is a berserker named Haiden. Haiden is a tall and domineering warrior. Battle scars and tattoos cover his body. He wears a heavy leather eye patch because he lost an eye in combat. He stands nearly 7 feet tall and weighs more than three hundred pounds. His immense strength enables him to inflict additional damage with melee weapons, and his two-handed melee training allows him to use both his sword and his dagger during each combat minute. Haiden takes his role of tavern defender seriously and will immediately terminate any disturbance that erupts in the River Rat. He is wary of strangers.

### ***Baths***

The River Rat has two small washrooms. Each room contains an iron tub, a fireplace, a small cabinet filled with firewood, and a shelf laden with towels. Patrons who wish to bathe must pay 5 silver coins. They retrieve water from the river via a trapdoor in the floorboards. The water is heated in the fireplace, poured into the tub, and emptied after the bath. The maids handle all the work. Some patrons leave tips. Some do not.

### ***Meals & Drinks***

The River Rat's cooks prepare food in the tavern's kitchen all day and night. Breakfast meals cost 8 silver coins per plate and typically consist of lizard eggs (a delicacy among river goers), porridge, and brumberry juice. The juice is a tart, syrupy liquid. It comes from berries that are grown along the river. Lunch and dinner meals, fish or ham with vegetables, bread, and soup, cost 15 silver coins.

There are several types of alcoholic drinks available in the River Rat. The main brew is a bitter-tasting but intoxicating ale that sells for 3 silver coins per flagon. The tavern also sells two kinds of mead for 5 silver coins per mug. Each type of mead is made from its own unique blend but watered down.

### ***Rooms***

The tavern has two types of rooms for rent. Maids clean the rooms regularly and stock them with fresh linens, a clay pot, and a small decanter of crude oil for illumination. The cheapest rooms called the commoner rooms, cost 20 silver coins per night. Each room has a lock, a bed, a footlocker, and some have windows. Keys require a security deposit of 5 silver coins, or the door remains unlocked.

The second type of available room is called the merchant suite. These rooms are nearly four times larger than the commoner rooms. They have bigger beds, a lock, a window, a footlocker, and a lantern secured to the wallboards. Some have desks and others have bookcases or shelves. The maids fill the lanterns daily. The merchant suites rent for 3 gold coins per night. There is no key deposit required.

### ***Entertainment***

Interested in keeping his patrons happy, Aven Bullwin hires entertainers to perform at the River Rat. These entertainers are usually travelers or employees with specific talents or skills. Characters proficient in an entertainment skill (singing, juggling, sleight of hand, etc.) may register with the innkeeper and perform for the River Rat's patrons. Characters receive cheers from the guests and silver coins; the amount of silver depends on the entertainment quality they provide. In addition, entertainers receive 2 drinks (watered-down mead) from the innkeeper for their performances.

A character's performance (and how many silver coins they earned) is determined by rolling 2d6 and consulting the following table. Add a +2 modifier to the score for any character with an above-average charisma.

<b>2d6</b>	<b>Roll Payment</b>
2-3	2d10 silver coins
4-9	3d10 silver coins
10-11	5d10 silver coins
12+	10d10 silver coins

If the characters score a 10+, the patrons cheer, shout, and demand an encore. The character can roll again on the table and calculate more earnings. There is no limit to the number of encores a character can receive.



## ***Barges***

The arrival of barges at the River Rat is a daily occurrence. Barges carrying between five and eight passengers stop every night. The travelers eat a hot meal, spend the night in a warm bed, and then depart with the barge the following morning. Although thrifty travelers can find deals, most barges require 1 gold coin for passage up or down the river. Barges move along the river at a rate of 12 miles per day. At night, the barges anchor themselves to avoid collisions in the darkness.

## ***Random Encounters at the River Rat***

Several random encounters can happen while the characters are in the River Rat. The game master should roll a 1d8 each day and consult the following chart to determine the nature of the encounter. The game masters should change the encounter to fit the needs of their campaign.

### **d8      Event**

**1      Adventurers** - A group of adventurers enters the tavern. The men and women spread some gossip, entertain the tavern patrons with tales of exploration, and spend some money buying drinks and meals. If the characters want to initiate a conversation, the adventurers can provide news or information concerning the surrounding area, which may cost money depending on its value.

**2      Barge** - A barge arrives at the River Rat. The barge crew offloads some minor supplies and then spends the night drinking in the tavern. The characters can purchase passage on the barge. The barge departs the tavern the following morning.

**3      Drunken Brawl** - Several rowdy patrons start a fight over a gambling event, woman, or other topic. The brawl quickly escalates and draws the attention of the tavern's mercenary guards. Unless the characters are in a private area or exit the common room immediately, there is a 50% chance that a drunken patron attacks one of the characters with a chair, club, or fist. Any character who responds to the fight will attract an opponent of their own.

The drunken patrons are equal to orcs or gnolls in health and damage. They get a -1d4 to their combat rolls because they are impaired.

The mercenary guards will end the brawl in 3d4 minutes. Anyone involved in the fight will be fined 1d4 gold for the incident unless they can prove their innocence. If they refuse to pay, the character must leave the River Rat tavern and not return.

**4      Huckster** - A trader selling trinkets (elixirs, pendants, wooden toys, etc.) arrives on a barge, enters the tavern, and solicits the patrons. The huckster has limited items that he sells for standard prices. He claims his elixirs can heal wounds, cure diseases, or offer other benefits; the elixirs may or may not be fake. After selling his wares, the huckster leaves the tavern on a barge the next day.

**5      Invitation** - Some of the local patrons invite one of the characters to entertain the crowd. This invitation starts an impromptu entertainment roll (see Entertainment), providing the character knows an entertaining skill.

**6      Merchants** - A group of merchants arrives on a river barge. The merchants and their bodyguards spend 1d2 days in the tavern and then depart for places unknown. The merchants carry a wide selection of goods they will sell to tavern patrons for 10% higher than standard market prices.

**7      Pickpocket** - One of the River Rat patrons attempts to steal from the characters. The thief has a 65% chance of successfully stealing a pouch or sack. If the thief fails, they will attempt to escape, but the tavern's mercenary guards will apprehend him. The guards will return the character's item, and the thief will receive punishment. If the thief is successful, the character will lose something of value.

**8      Travelers** - Several travelers arrive (either on a barge or on foot) and spend 1d2 days in the tavern. The travelers may have rumors to share with the tavern's patrons.

## ***Rumors***

There are always rumors and stories churning through the gossip mill. The following chart reflects only a sample of the tavern's available gossip. The game master should insert their own rumors as they see fit.

Not all rumors are true. Some have truthful facts, and some are outright lies. The character must decide which stories to believe and which ones to dismiss.



## **d20 Event**

- 1** River thieves have been hijacking barges on the Dulthorn River. The thieves must have a secret hideout along the waterway to stash their loot.
- 2** An adventurer has been selling maps to ancient ruins for 25 gold apiece. The maps look authentic, and several adventuring groups have purchased copies over the last few months.
- 3** A few weeks ago, a traveler was killed in the River Rat for stealing. The man's body was left in the pine forest outside the tavern.
- 4** Recently, a female gypsy visited the tavern to predict fortunes in exchange for silver coins. The fortuneteller has been fairly accurate with her readings.
- 5** River merchants who supply the tavern with alcohol are threatening to raise their prices. If the price increases are approved, the tavern patrons will pay more for their drinks.
- 6** Several commoner rooms were burglarized. The thief stole packs and coins and eluded capture. Aven Bullwin is insisting that patrons lock their doors.
- 7** Jordana, one of the servers, is an excellent singer. Although every man in the tavern longs for her, one of the tavern's mercenary guards is courting her.
- 8** Several months ago, a patron was murdered in his room during the night. The mercenary guards investigated but could not uncover the murderer. The guards are watching the tavern's rooms and corridors.
- 9** Aven Bullwin travels to Tuldarin annually to conduct business with the tavern's owner. Some people believe that Mister Bullwin also conducts his own business, of a shadier sort, while he's away.
- 10** Fewer soldiers have been patrolling the river over the last six months. The regional governor has urged barge captains to hire mercenaries to protect themselves against thieves and monsters.
- 11** Travelers should be wary when wandering through the pine forest around the tavern. Tavern patrons have heard strange howls and noises on dark nights.
- 12** There have been a lot of travelers coming through the tavern as of late. The patrons are getting wary of strange faces.

**13** Highwaymen are attacking merchants both on the river and the roads. Travelers must take precautions when traveling across the country.

**14** An adventurer passed through the Rat a few months ago while searching for an underground temple located along the riverbank. He never returned.

**15** Some river-folk believe that Haiden, the mercenary captain, was a cold-blooded murderer before he came to the Rat. Most people avoid him when possible.

**16** Swindlers are dispensing fraudulent gold and silver coins to unwary merchants. Although the coins look official, they are of slightly less than normal weight and not as valuable.

**17** Some of the River Rat's mercenaries are overzealous when stopping bar fights and disturbances. It is best not to get in their way when they're handling any disruption.

**18** Large packs of wild dogs have been seen roaming the nearby grasslands.

**19** Instances of River Justice, people taking the law into their own hands, have become more prevalent along the Dulthorn River as patrols have become less frequent.

**20** The Blood Marshes, located south of the Rat, are filled with wild animals and monsters. Adventurers have been exploring the fetid moors. Some have returned with unique plants that they've sold for substantial sums.

### ***Special Rumors***

Some of the patrons may, if the game master desires, share some rumors about patrons looking for heroes to undertake adventures. The following is a list of rumors and the adventures they lead to.

**Escorting Sara Cobblemere** - Some barge travelers tell the characters that a wealthy noble is looking for experienced adventurers to serve as guards for a valuable shipment across dangerous terrain.

**The Alchemist's Quest** - The characters meet a novice elf wizard named Glimdale the mysterious. The mage talks about an alchemist named Annava, who lives in a tower near the swamp. She is hiring adventures to search the fetid moors. He went to take the job, but she turned him away because it was far too dangerous for him. He is thankful since he has learned the swamps contain nasty, hungry monsters.



**The Ghost Mines** - The characters meet a retired soldier named Renalt. He tells them about the entrance to some old haunted mining tunnels in the hills that supposedly contain a fortune in gold. He heard that wild animals sometimes live there.

### *Random Events*

The game master can use the following random events to generate a short adventure at the River Rat if they desire.

**Adventurer** - A lone adventurer claims to have found the ruins of a structure in the wilderness area west of the tavern. He will hire the characters to go with him into the wild and explore the ruins for a share of the treasure. The game master should determine the adventurer's skills and abilities. They should also create the structure that the characters will explore.

**Barge Merchant** - A barge merchant will stop at the River Rat with some unique cargo to sell. The authentic items are 10% more expensive than standard market prices. The merchant will depart the tavern the following morning.

**Crone** - An old woman enters the Rat and announces to the patrons that she has some items to sell. She immediately places a backpack on a tabletop for everyone to view and removes several items from the old leather pack. The items are adventuring gear. When asked where she got the items, she will say she found them on the corpse of a man in the woods. The items are good quality and are fairly new. She will sell the items for 40% less than the market price as she is eager to make a quick sale. There may or may not be interesting items, such as maps, thieves' tools, or magical items, in the pack.

**Merchant** - A lone merchant arrives at the River Rat. The man is seriously injured and in need of healing. He immediately tells Aven Bullwin (in front of witnesses) that thieves in the grasslands attacked his caravan. He asks the innkeeper to send his mercenaries to help, but Aven refuses. If the characters agree to help the merchant, he'll give them directions to the ambush site and information on the thieves. He will reward the characters if they can capture (or kill) the thieves and return his cargo to him. The thieves may or may not have taken prisoners.

**Soldiers** - A band of 2d4 soldiers clad in leather armor, small shields, and wielding short swords arrive at the River Rat and stay for 1d3 days. While the soldiers are in the tavern, there are no drunken brawls or pickpocket attempts. The patrons' moods will be more reserved while the soldiers are around.

**Ol' Pappy** - A giant crocodile, whom the locals call Ol' Pappy, is attacking barges on the river. Merchants are scared to navigate the water, and Aven Bullwin wants the threat neutralized so that his business is not interrupted. If the characters kill Ol' Pappy, Aven Bullwin will give them 50 gold and a week's worth of free rooms and meals (commoner rooms and porridge).