

World of Calthera

I. Races and Cultures

Humans

Ethonians—Olive skin, variety of hair colors, tall and broad. Descendants of the Gardenian Empire. Dress in robes and tunics. Spread across Calthera, but mostly in the Northlands.

Vulgs—Bronze skin, black hair, short and stocky. A barbarian race that inhabited the Northlands before the rise of the Gardenian Empire. Some Vulgs have assimilated into Ethonian culture, while others retain their own communities. Traditional Vulgs wear loincloths or kilts, deerskin boots, and jewelry of feathers and teeth.

Ôcchai—Pale skin, almond eyes, black hair, short and thin. A civilized race with many nations east of the Mountains of the Immortals. Mostly independent from Ancient Gardenia, save for a few explorers and traders.

Muavins—Ebony skin, black hair, variety of builds. A race made up of many different cultures, tribes and nations. Inhabits the lands south of the Inner Sea.

Aasimar and Tieflings—Humans with a trace of celestial or fiendish blood. Most trace their origins to a time called the Age of Legends when deities, celestials and fiends walked the earth.

Illumians—Pale skin, blonde or red hair (usually bald), tall. Magically created by Tarmuid, the First Speaker, during the Age of Wisdom. Large communities exist in remote places, such as the northern shore of the Isle of Mists or deep in the Muavin Jungle. See *Races of Destiny*.

Dwarves

Hill Dwarves—Commonly found in human towns, usually working as tradesmen. In larger cities, they have their own independent communities. Most live in the Northlands or the Ôcchai Kingdoms. Very few live in Muavin lands. All dwarves typically worship the Dwarf Pantheon (*Races of Stone*).

Mountain Dwarves—The Halls of Axthordun is the largest stronghold of mountain dwarves. Their doors are usually closed to outsiders.

Dream Dwarves—Most dwell in Axthordun with the Mountain Dwarves. However, they can also be found in Hill Dwarf communities or in isolated communities of their own. See *Races of Stone*.

Duergar—Dwell deep in the Underdark, frequently serving as slaves of the mind flayers. A few occasionally find their way to the surface for trade or adventure. See *Expanded Psionic Handbook*.

Elves

High Elves—Found throughout the Northlands, the Isle of Mists, and the southern coast of the Inner Sea. They live in human lands but tend to build independent communities. Rarely found in the lands of the Ôcchai. They have their own kingdoms, called the Great Elf Kingdoms, far to the south. All elves typically worship the Elven Pantheon (*Races of the Wild*), the Dragon Pantheon (*Draconomicon*), and/or the Court of Stars. The eladrin are thought to be elves that ascended to the Upper Planes at the beginning of time.

Half-elves—Children born of combined human and elven blood are half-elves. Half-elves have always been exceedingly rare, and there are virtually none living in the Age of Ashes. The degree to which half-elves are accepted depends on the status of their parents and the nature of the community in which they live. No two half-elves in Calthera have the same experience.

Aquatic Elves—Live beneath the waters of the Inner Sea. A large community is known to exist somewhere among the Broken Islands.

Drow—Followers of the spider goddess Lolth. They have many realms throughout the Underdark but are usually too busy fighting with mind flayers to bother those on the surface.

Gray Elves—Live in isolated citadels among the Mountains of the Immortals and rarely interact with other races, except other elves.

Wild Elves—Found in wild lands, living among other nomadic peoples, such as the Volg Barbarians, the Muavin Tribes, or the Yuan-ti Nomads.

Wood Elves—Found in the Muavin Jungles and on the Isle of Mists.

Goblinoids

Goblins—

Forestkith Goblins—

Hobgoblins—

Bugbears—

Blues—

Varags—

Gnomes

Rock Gnomes—Mostly found in the Northlands near either human or dwarven settlements. The largest gnome villages lie north of Axthordun. All gnomes typically worship the Gnome Pantheon (*Races of Stone*).

Svirfneblin (Deep Gnomes)—Scattered throughout the Underdark. Their kingdoms are usually hidden, to avoid attacks from drow or mind flayers.

Forest Gnomes—A few of these are found on the Isle of Mists or living among the Great Elf Kingdoms.

Chaos Gnomes—Can be found in just about any gnome or human community, albeit usually in small numbers. They have no lands of their own. Their own folklore claims they came into existence during the Age of Legends, when a group of gnome sorcerers became involved with creatures from Limbo. See *Races of Stone*.

Whisper Gnomes—Like chaos gnomes, whisper gnomes can be found in any gnome or human community. They sometimes also travel with halfling caravans. In addition to the Gnome Pantheon, they sometimes venerate Kharash the Stalker.

Halflings

Lightfoot Halflings—While most commonly found living among humans, the single largest halfling community lies north of Axthordun, surrounded by gnome villages. All halflings typically worship the Halfling Pantheon (*Races of the Wild*).

Tallfellow Halflings—Found living among elves in the Great Elf Kingdoms.

Deep Halflings—Small groups dwell inside Axthordun and the surrounding mountains.

Orcs

Orcs—Created during the Age of Legends by Gruumsh, who wanted soldiers in his own image to fight his hated enemies, the elves. The most common type of orcs are also called green orcs.

Half-Orcs—More commonly known as high orcs. During the Age of Wisdom, evil wizards bred green orcs with human stock to create stronger and more effective soldiers. In the current Age, high orcs are their own subrace that breeds true. Most high orcs come from orcish parents, and unions between humans and orcs are extremely rare.

Sharakim—The ancestors of the sharakim were early humans living in a great elf city during the Age of Legends. When Gruumsh's orcs attacked and laid siege to the city, the humans opened the gates late one night and let the orcs inside. As punishment, they were cursed by Corellon Larethian to resemble the orcs they presumably loved so well. Today there are many sharakim villages near the southern end of the Mountains of the Immortals, a small community in Zessant, and individuals scattered throughout the Northlands. See *Races of Destiny*.

Others

Catfolk—Large tribes of catfolk can be found in the grasslands of the Volg Barbarians and the Muavin Tribes.

Centaur—Found anywhere in Calthera where there is natural wilderness.

Doppelgangers

Feral Garguns

Gnolls

Goliaths—Inhabit the mountains surrounding Axthordun.

Killoren

Ogres and Half-Ogres

Mongrelfolk

Raptorans

Sea Kin

Skulks

Stonechildren

Underfolk

II. Regions

The Northlands

Axthordun

Isle of Mists

Zessant

Great Elf Kingdoms

Ôchhai Kingdoms

III. Religion

Ethonian Pantheon—Commonly known as “the Old Gods.” Their worship was widespread during the height of the Gardenian Empire. There are still many of their temples all over the world, particularly around the Inner Sea. They lost much of their power after the Fall of Gardenia as many of their worshippers lost faith and turned to new religions.

Exalted Lords: **Aran**, Goddess of Honor and Sacrifice; LG; Good, Law, Sun, War; halberd • **Bagnus**, Goddess of Feast and Good Fortune; NG; Good, Healing, Luck; sickle • **Belilah**, Goddess of Agriculture; NG; Good, Healing, Plant, Weather; morningstar • **Lanore**, Goddess of Community and Hearth; LG; Community, Good, Law, Protection; spear • **Ordon**, God of Artifice and the Forge; NG; Craft, Fire, Good; warhammer • **Ulros**, God of Strength of Arms; CG; Chaos, Good, Strength, War; longsword

Vile Host: **Barcosa**, God of Criminals and Treachery; NE; Destruction, Evil, Trickery, War; kama • **Helba**, Goddess of Evil Magic; CE; Chaos, Evil, Darkness, Magic; quarterstaff • **Kantok**, God of Death and Decay; NE; Death, Evil, Pestilence; scythe • **Tiburón**, God of Storms; NE; Destruction, Evil, Water, Weather; trident • **Zennithir**, Goddess of Madness and Nightmares; NE; Evil, Dream, Madness; rapier

Others: **Giddeon**, God of Trade and Wealth; N; Charm, Greed, Luck, Travel; mace • **The Prophet**, God of Nothing and Everything; CN; Chaos, Madness, Travel; quarterstaff; **Territh**, God of Law and Knowledge; LN;

Knowledge, Law, Magic; quarterstaff • **Vartan**, God of Beasts and the Hunt; N; Air, Animal, Earth; battleaxe

Vulg Pantheon—Worshipped mostly by the Vulg barbarians and some civilized Vulgs. Also worshipped by druids around the world, although regional sects may have different names for them.

Amistrassah, Goddess of the Sun; NG; Good, Fire, Healing, Sun; mace • **Ondricus**, God the Sky; LN; Air, Knowledge, Law, Travel, Weather; quarterstaff • **Théorah**, Goddess of the Earth; CN; Animal, Earth, Chaos, Plant, Oracle; spear • **Wôvitan**, God of the Moon; NE; Evil, Magic, Moon, Trickery, Water; dagger

New Religions—Since the Fall of Gardenia, many people have abandoned the worship of deities. New religions have emerged, based on the teachings of wise and powerful planar lords. More so than other religions, these are “cults of personality.” The faithful of these new religions view their extraplanar patrons as teachers and exemplars, but not the objects of worship.

Celestial Hebdomad: **Barachiel**, the Messenger; LG; Good, Healing, Knowledge, Law; longsword • **Domiel**, the Mercy-bringer; LG; Good, Law, Liberation, Protection; greatsword • **Erathaol**, the Seer; LG; Good, Law, Magic, Oracle; quarterstaff • **Pistis Sophia**, the Ascetic; LG; Celerity, Good, Law, Strength; unarmed strike • **Raziel**, the Crusader; LG; Fire, Good, Law, War; longsword • **Sealtiel**, the Defender; LG; Good, Law, Protection, War • **Zaphkiel**, the Watcher; LG; Celestia, Good, Healing, Law, Mysticism, Purification; touch attack

Taslid and the Five Companions: **Bharrai**, the Great Bear; NG; Family, Good, Protection, Strength; club • **Kharash**, the Stalker; NG; Celerity, Good, Travel, Trickery; longsword • **Manath**, the Horned Duke; NG; Celerity, Good, Strength; **Sathia**, the Sky Duchess; NG; Air, Craft, Good, Knowledge; heavy mace • **Taslid**, the Celestial Lion; NG; Animal, Courage, Good, Elysium, Sun; claw • **Vhara**, Duchess of the Fields; NG; Earth, Family, Good, Plant, Water; spear

Court of Stars: **Faerinaal**, the Queen’s Consort; CG; Chaos, Good, Knowledge, Magic, Oracle; longsword • **Gwynharwyf**, the Whirling Fury; CG; Celerity, Chaos, Good, Strength, War; scimitar • **Morwel**, Queen of Stars; CG; Arborea, Chaos, Good, Magic, Moon; rapier

Fiend Cults—Hidden throughout the world. Demons and devils may be worshipped by solitary madmen, political leaders, or secret societies.

IV. Ancient History

Age of Darkness—The time before history. The gods created the world and fought each other for control of it. Monsters were created, magic was wrought, and dungeons were built, but no intelligent humanoids walked the land.

Age of Legends—10,000 to 5,000 years ago. The first intelligent races appeared, beginning with the dragons. Elves and dwarves built great kingdoms and warred with goblins and orcs. Humans appeared and began to learn from the older races. Celestials and fiends walked the land and intermingled with humanoids. This was the age of the earliest heroes and adventurers, an the earliest villains.

Age of Wisdom—5,000 to 1,000 years ago. Humans began to build great kingdoms, while the power of other races waned. The mightiest human empire was Gardenia. Humans wizards achieved great triumphs and built great artifacts, most of which are now lost. Wars were fought, but there were also long periods of peace. This age came to an end with the Fall of Gardenia in 4692 AW.

The Fall of Gardenia—At its height, the Empire of Gardenia ruled the Northlands and all lands surrounding the Inner Sea. They traded with the distant nations of the Ôcchai. For the most part, they worshipped the Exalted Lords and feared the Vile Host. As the Empire grew more decadent, its rulers grew corrupt. This corruption was spread and encouraged by a secret faction of yuan-ti that wanted to see the Empire fall. To combat this corruption, the Exalted Lords chose a common man from the Isle of Mists and made him their Prophet. He was given powers as a favored soul and charged with spreading the message of the Exalted Lords: renounce Evil and embrace Good. However, the yuan-ti got to the Prophet and poisoned his mind, driving him insane. The Prophet continued to gather followers and denounce the corrupt Emperor, but his message of peace and hope turned into violent rants. He called for the Emperor's head and claimed that he and he alone was the voice of the Exalted Lords. Any who opposed him were heretics. Eventually, this lead to a long, bloody civil war, destroying the Empire from within. In the end, a violent magical catastrophe destroyed Gardenia and reshaped much of the area around the Inner Sea. The Prophet vanished, and no one knows what became of him. Most of his followers were killed or rejected him in disgust after catastrophe. However, there is still a small cult that worships him, claiming that he wanders the Outer Planes and that he will one day return.

Age of Ashes—1,000 years ago to present. The former Gardenian Empire has split into many smaller nations. Much of the ancient learning was lost. Many people have lost faith in the old gods and have adopted new faiths. The current year is 992 AA.