

# Adventurer's Almanac

by Michael Curtis



An entire year's worth of adventure awaits you inside this book, complete with magical items, interesting personalities, strange festivals, and dangerous sites to explore. System neutral for any fantasy campaign.



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# THE ADVENTURER'S ALMANAC

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## Preface

*Salutations and approbations, honored member!*

*I gratefully extend my figurative hand to you for your continued participation in and support of our esteemed brotherhood (and now sisterhood as I'm so regularly reminded by our fairer members) the **Order of Adventurers, Explorers, and Treasure Seekers**. Your annual fees and regular tithing of rumors, maps, and lore make it possible for the Order to support all our brave members in their pursuits of wealth, adventure, and glory no matter where they may roam. These generous donations also assist the Order in caring for the less fortunate of our organization or those they leave behind.*

*The chapbook you now hold in your hands is another result of your annual contributions. As a member in good standing, your payment of this year's dues entitles you to this complimentary copy of the first-ever Adventurer's Almanac, a new endeavor by the Order of Adventurers, Explorers, and Treasure Seekers. Here, between these covers, you will find a complete calendar of the year to come annotated with important events, feasts, festivals, and holidays. All too often has one of our members perished due to a dearth of knowledge concerning important annual events—the fate of Hogg's Band after deciding to plumb the Lich's Lick during Dead Feast springs to mind—and this calendar hopes to prevent such tragedies in the coming year.*

*In addition to being a compendium of events both celestial and terrestrial, the Adventurer's Almanac collects an array of current rumors, known adventuring sites, recently unearthed treasures, and other information pertinent to our occupations, all of which have been supplied by members of the Order just like you. Each kernel of knowledge has been checked for authenticity to the best of our ability, but we hope you'll remember that some of our brethren are wont to engage in exaggeration or hyperbole, so always keep your wits about you and never assume such lore to be truthful until verified by your own eyes. If this almanac is successful, the Order will be looking to repeat its publication next year, so please keep your ears open for new rumors, recently discovered ruins, and any other useful lore you encounter on your expeditions.*

*Good roads to you all and may Chance favor your endeavors.*

*Vester X. Reodotyl, Grandmaster of the Order of Adventurers, Explorers, and Treasure Seekers.*



## Introduction

In their rush to create an interesting campaign world for their players to explore, many game masters expend their energies drawing maps, building encounters, and crafting carefully balanced NPCs to challenge the characters. In all the excitement to get to the meat of the encounter—typically combat—it is easy to forget that it is often the little nuances that bring a fantasy world to life and not the pitched battles that play out during the course of a gaming session.

Another problem that plagues many a roleplaying campaign is game master burnout, a phenomenon that usually occurs because the game master has exhausted his creativity in coming up with interesting adventures and new creatures, treasures, and magic to thrill his players. It happens to the best of referees and is one of the hazards of taking responsibility for entertaining your friends around the gaming table on a regular basis.

The *Adventurer's Almanac* is intended to address both of these issues by providing the game master with a bevy of material to add to his campaign, draw inspiration from, and use as adventure seeds to build his own exciting scenarios. In addition, the Almanac introduces a generic yet interesting fantasy calendar with which to organize his campaign world and help breathe life into the setting. It literally gives the game master an entire year's worth of material for his campaign.

The *Adventurer's Almanac* differs from most commercially produced role-playing game supplements. Within these pages you won't find many hard game mechanics or creature attributes. Instead, this book provides the reader with adventure seeds, campaign color, suggestions for new treasures and systems, and other content commonly called "fluff" by role-playing aficionados. Like the author's previous book, *The Dungeon Alphabet*, this almanac is intended to serve as a springboard for your own creativity rather than a hard and fast "this is how you do it" instruction manual.

The material provided in this book is intended to be used with any fantasy role-playing system. To help assist the game master in incorporating it into his own campaign world and rule set, the author has presented the information herein in a system neutral format. Suggestions for how to apply one's preferred rules are provided and mechanical modifiers are given in a two-fold manner that can be used whether your systems employs a d20 or percentile dice to determine success. As in all things in the game master's world, he has the final say on how to include the material in the *Adventurer's Almanac* in his own campaign. There is no right or wrong way to utilize the material of this book, so long as you and your players have fun. This material is yours to do with as you wish. Let your imagination run riot.

Although the author is aware that fantasy role-playing games are played throughout the world and that campaign worlds run the gamut from the pseudo-historical to the totally outlandish, some concessions had to be made with the *Adventurer's Almanac* to make the most of the limited space available for new material. This book assumes the game master's campaign takes place in a temperate region in the northern hemisphere of a round world with a revolution similar to that of Earth. The seasons, month descriptions, and many adventure seeds are based on this assumption. Some modifications may be necessary if your game occurs in a significantly different location. Also, the various animals attributed to each day are derived from a wide range of real creatures from various climates and continents around the world. Game masters are free to remove the names of any animal not typically known amongst the denizens of their campaign worlds and replace them with more appropriate mundane and mythological creatures. The Grand Course of Days works best when modified to reflect the world it inhabits.

The book also assumes that there is some large central body of government in your campaign world. For demonstration's sake, the *Adventurer's Almanac* uses the fictional Aeternal Empire, a Rome-like imperial realm that has stood for centuries. Despite its size, most events and adventure seeds situated in the Aeternal Empire can easily be relocated to any (mostly) civilized land with a stable government.



## The Grand Course of Days

The *Adventurer's Almanac* is intended to give the game master a calendar that is fantastical enough to allow the players to lose themselves in the game setting without completely losing their grasp on the structure of weeks, months, and years. This calendar, known as **The Grand Course of Days**, is based on our earthly calendar but with enough tweaks and additions to make it seem at home in a game rife with dragons, elves, and magic. Although this calendar makes basic earthlike assumptions about the passage of time (365.25 days to the year) and lunar phenomenon (one moon with a revolution of about 27.4 days), it can be modified by the game master to accommodate more days or multiple satellites by simply adding them to the 13-month calendar.

The Grand Course of Days, was created by the chronologer Phutataes in the year now known as -6 GCY (Grand Course Years). Phutataes based his calendar on a much earlier one whose origins lie with the Ineffable Ancients of the southern jungles. Phutataes combined this calendar with the horoscopy of Ekkim the Strange, an astrologer best known for attributing each day of the year to an animal spirit that influences the events of that day. The result was both simple enough to be understood by common laborers and tradesmen, yet still adequately grandiose-sounding to be used by nobility to record important events. In only a few years after the unveiling of Phutataes' calendar, it was formally adopted by the Aeternal Empire and is now in use in many other lands.

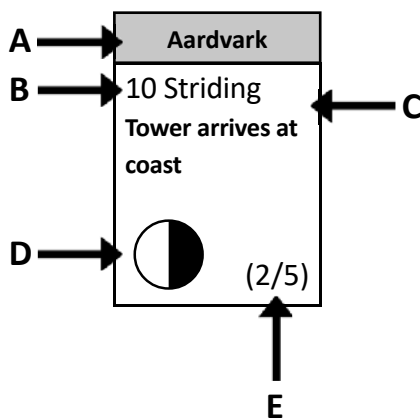
The Grand Course of Days is a lunar calendar, dividing the year into thirteen months with one day (and sometimes two) which falls between the years. A month is comprised of twenty-eight days, of which each is named after a particular animal as well as having a numerical designation. However, in daily usage, due to the sheer number of animal names, days are only called by the numerical designation followed by the month's name, such as "the 11th of Drawblade." Amongst sages, wizards, and hierarchs, as well as in legal and royal documents, days are always given in a day name/number/monthly fashion, such as "Day of the Owlbear, 17th day of The Shroud." Weeks are not formally acknowledged in the Grand Course of Days, but are sometimes used by the general populace. When so used, they are called "faces," which either refers to the changing appearance of the moon or is a corruption of "phases." An example of such usage would be: "I'll have payment to you by the second face of Starfall."

Each year is separated by one or two days that occurs, for all intents and purposes, outside of the annual course of time and is not considered part of any particular year. This period always contains one of these days, called "The Day of the Phoenix" or "The Day without a Year," which is used to plan for the year to come as well as having legal implications. Every four years, a second day is added to keep the Grand Course of Days calibrated to the passage of time, much like a leap year does to our own calendar.

The Grand Course of Days is also associated with the alignment of the heavens and most cultures who utilize the calendar also use it for astrological determination, with dwarves being the sole exception due to their predominantly subterranean existence. This astrological system, along with a system for game masters looking to introduce it to their campaign, is presented in greater detail below.

### Calendar Format

Each month of the Grand Course of Days is given its own chapter in the Almanac. At the start of each chapter a monthly calendar is presented to give the game master an overview of that month's events, much like the average wall calendar. Each day on this calendar contains up to five useful pieces of information for the game master. Not every day contains this data, but the format in which it is presented remains unchanged throughout the calendar. The information includes:



- A) The day's name, which is always prefaced with "The Day of the..." when spoken.
- B) The numerical date of the day.
- C) Any holiday or event occurring on that date.
- D) The phase of the moon (if applicable).
- E) That day's equivalent in the Gregorian Calendar presented in a month/day format. This is useful if the game master needs to make an off-the-cuff estimation of weather, temperature, or other seasonal-based determinations.

Following the monthly calendar is a short description of each month that gives a broad picture of what life is like at that time of year and the activities that typically occur during this time. This description is followed by an astrological précis covering the sign that governs that month (more on this below).

# Adventurer's Almanac



**Set a date for adventure with The Adventurer's Almanac!**

**An entire year's worth of adventure awaits you inside its pages, complete with magical items, interesting personalities, strange festivals, and dangerous sites to explore, all presented in a system-neutral format suitable for any fantasy campaign.**

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