



SAYASHTO

First-time visitors expect some parody of order—a precisely tuned machine world where the slightest disturbance sends the whole array into a death spiral. Make no mistake, those tourists could find what they're looking for in the clockwork matrices of Stelti-3 or the tireless Adamantine Crucible, but even the lawful purpose that drives these sites includes hundreds of safeguards and fail-safes. These visitors forget, though, that the Eternal City is exactly that: a city. And Sayashto's one of its most iconic districts. It's where the smell of clean canal water mingles with the grassy warmth of the yashtoma fields, cut through by the scents of perfectly pressed drinks from the nearby cafes. It's a home full of fresh faces, new ideas, and personal drive. It's also a home where, no matter where you've gone or for how long, everything's where you left it. Above all, it's a vibrant urban hub that embodies law's greatest gifts for all to enjoy.

—Trakt Imil, Councilor of Laws

Although casual scholars typically focus on Axis's centermost district, Aktun, thousands of metropolises, municipalities, and townships comprise the Eternal City. From a bird's-eye view, these districts appear to blend together, yet each has its own deftning identity, personality, architectural flair, and industries. In all of this beautifully coordinated patchwork of urban grace is Sayashto—the 32ND district of the Zdareen, the 131st department—located entirely within Axis's third quadrant.

Canals are among the most popular means of moving heavy loads through Axis, and three major canals converge in Sayashto's core: Anticlockwise 22, Hub-Standard 31 (locally known as the Pralvania Underflow), and Zdareen Course 3. These cut through the plane's fairly level topography and convene at a broad artificial island known as the Grand Rotunda, which serves as a versatile fairground, marketplace, casual theater, and more. Those traversing these waterways are treated to a dazzling view of the area's clean streets, bustling markets, high-peaked roofs with sweeping eaves, plaster plazas covered in drying seeds, and countless rows of ivy-green fields brimming with the ripening yastoma squash that is the district's namesake. This gourd's seeds are the basis for a hot beverage enjoyed throughout the district (see the Yasht sidebar on page 67).

Extraplanar visitors may find Sayashto simultaneously familiar and contrary to the stereotypes of Axis, which hold that the Eternal City is a perfectly sculpted urban landscape. By comparison, Sayashto's design seems disorderly, with entire neighborhoods composed of irregularly shaped buildings connected by asymmetrical alleys. Citizens are quick to point out that many districts have undergone thousands of years of intermittent renovations that redirect streets and reshape the urban landscape, particularly as new construction atop old foundations gradually raises the streets higher and higher. What's more, many of Zdareen's districts (and many more beyond) would rather celebrate civilization as an evolving enterprise than as some sterile, static representation of the ideal city. Indeed, Sayashto is a living, functioning, and vibrant municipality that experiments with and constantly improves on metropolitan ideals.

At least, that's the ideological explanation. The other source of Sayashto's relative disorganization is that it's a hot spot for planar expansion, much like a town sitting atop a fault line. Over the course of centuries or millennia, a petitioner can lose its sense of purpose and self, at last melding its quintessence with the plane. In sufficient quantities, these accretions cause the plane to expand, and thanks to its thriving mortuary industry, Sayashto grows by dozens of square feet each year.

SAYASHTO

LN metropolis

Corruption +2; Crime +2; Economy +7; Law +5; Lore +6; Society +3

Qualities pious, prosperous, rumormongering citizens, strategic location, tourist attraction, upstanding

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 34,075 (21,467 petitioners, 3,185 humans, 2,326 axiomites, 622 inevitables, 6,475 other)

NOTABLENPCS

Chacoom Vul Croafto, Councilor of Seeds (LN male advanced petitioner)

Hlati, Councilor of Canals (LN female azer cleric of Abadar 12)

Jolmulk, Councilor of Graves (LN agender petitioner⁸² alchemist^{APG} 5)

Trakt Imil, Councilor of Laws (LN male axiomite wizard 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 25,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 150,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

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

Items 3d4

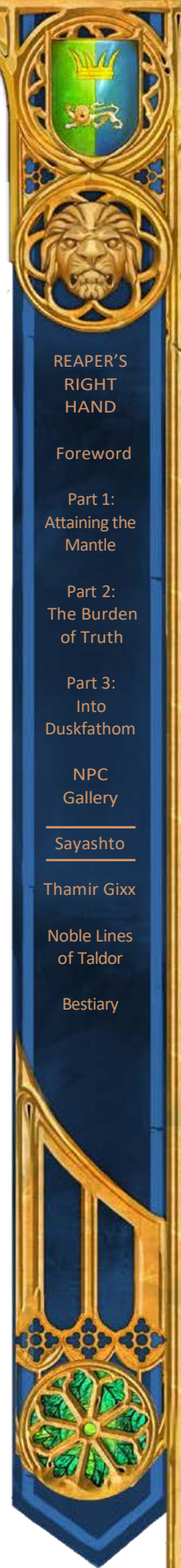
SETTLEMENT QUALITIES

Upstanding This settlement's inhabitants are largely law abiding, honest, and adapted to living alongside one another. (*Corruption -2, Crime -2, Danger -10*)

Still, Sayashto is an extension of Axis and its cosmic order. Laws cover nearly every aspect of city living; even recklessly walking against the flow of traffic can result in a fine. Its traffic is remarkably regimented and smooth. The streets are kept clean by a combination of communal responsibility and highly effective maintenance workers. Yet all of this is within the greater context of efficiency and pleasant living conditions. All told, Sayashto is a vibrant community that embodies the many virtues—and to a lesser extent the shortcomings—of urban life.

GOVERNMENT

As part of Axis, Sayashto recognizes all of the Eternal City's laws as well as all regulations passed by Zdareen's Axiomite Assembly. Most of these laws cover a combination of property ordinances, zoning, and a host of personal protections (e.g., the criminalization of theft, fraud, assault, and the like). Although inevitables are authorized to suppress many of these protections in pursuit of justice, the outsiders' comprehensive training and intensely lawful nature ensure this occurs infrequently—and rarely without proper documentation.



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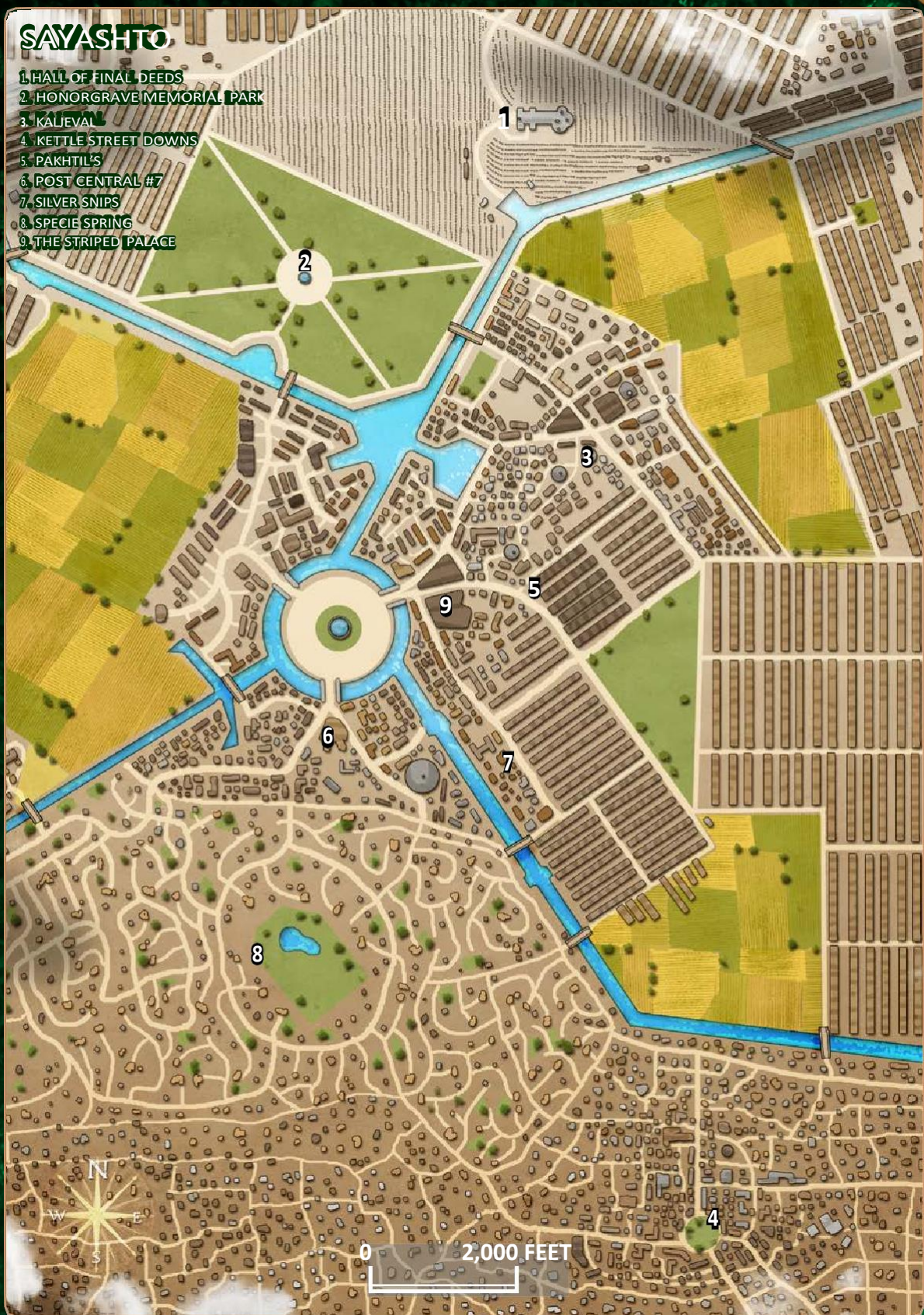
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SAYASHTO

- 1. HALL OF FINAL DEEDS
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For everything else, Sayashto has been free to establish its own policies. The district manages its own tax collection and uses a significant portion of those contributions for a host of projects and programs. Unlike several neighboring districts, which are led by an individual leader such as a mayor or duke, Sayashto maintains a five-member council. One councilor is appointed to represent Axis as a whole, whereas each of the other four serves a 2,000-DAY term with staggered elections every 500 days so that the council changes gradually. Together, the councilors determine new policies and enact emergency measures. Each council seat comes with unique responsibilities and special criteria for office, the details of which appear below.

Councilor of Canals: Responsible for coordinating Sayashto's roads, bridges, and canals, this councilor also informally represents the interests of neighboring districts. A candidate must have lived at least 10 years in Sayashto and at least 10 years elsewhere in Axis to better understand interdistrict considerations and operations.

Councilor of Gates: Although sometimes viewed as a junior member, this councilor performs a key role in overseeing Sayashto's visitor policies, immigration, publicity, and deal making with centers of trade in distant districts and even other planes. Strangely, the only requirement is that a candidate have lived in Sayashto for less than 20 years, so even candidates who just recently arrived in the district are eligible to campaign for this position.

Councilor of Graves: This councilor oversees legislation for the local mortuary industry, serves as a symbolic representative for the district's long-term residents, and presides over major holidays. Only those who have lived in the district for at least 200 years qualify for this office.

Councilor of Laws: Unlike the four elected councilors, the Councilor of Laws is appointed by authorities in Aktun to represent Axis as a whole. Almost always an axiomite, this councilor fills a more advisory role and is the only member able to veto a measure entirely.

Councilor of Seeds: As representative of Sayashto's iconic yashtoma industry, this councilor deals with affairs of agriculture, parks, and pest control. To qualify, a candidate must have lived in Sayashto for at least 20 years and participated in at least 10 harvests.

RELATIONS

Sayashto maintains peaceful relations and good-natured rivalries with the four districts that border it: Blue Cobble, Halgrimard, Ilkiston, and Silver Hill. Blue Cobble is famous for its mills and bakeries. Halgrimard has a large dwarven population that specializes in clockwork and jewelry, and its civilian miners manage much of the department's sewers. Ilkiston's textiles

are famous across Axis, and the long, elaborate sashes worn by Sayashto's officials all come from here. Silver Hill attracts a disproportionate number of poets. This district is famous for the two-humped tleroga camels whose argent wool feeds Ilkiston's looms. Tleroga dung is spread over Sayashto's fields, and the beasts' appetite for yashtoma pulp is bottomless.

Thanks to its canals and portals, Sayashto maintains close connections with several other districts in Axis. The Hub-Standard 31 canal eventually makes its way through Pralvania, an elevated district that arches high above the surrounding territory and caters to flying residents. Through the southern canal portal lies Clangfallow, a far smokier district whose foundries smelt the sundry metals used to create new inevitables, which invariably travel through Sayashto on their way to the Adamantine Crucible. Through the northern canal tunnel is Gate 43, a hilly district that surrounds one of the 1,000-foot-wide tunnels that gently descend to Axis's sanctioned subterranean districts. Countless other warrens beneath the surface constitute Duskfathom, where Norgorber's faithful plot their next heist, murder, or coup.

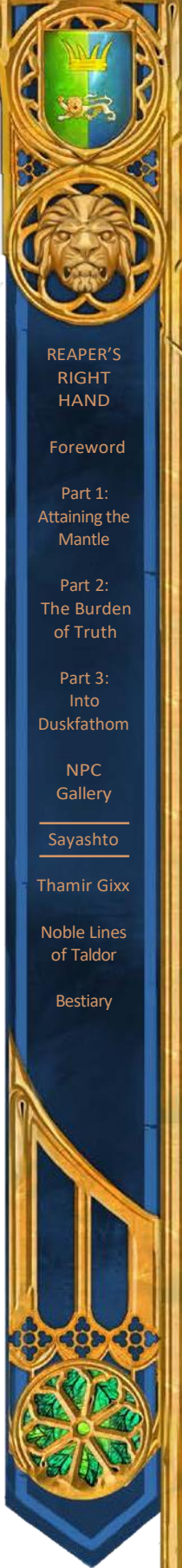
In addition to its booming local economy, Sayashto maintains trade relations with at least 60 other worlds, including Golarion's neighbor, Castrovel. The lashuntas of Qabarat are a recent contact, becoming an increasingly significant market for yasht and Halgrimard's more esoteric devices.

NOTABLE SITES

Much of Sayashto's land is devoted to growing and preparing yashtoma. Enormous, orderly fields dedicated to growing the crop or to drying its seeds cover much of the district. Further, Sayashto's vast neighborhoods of row houses occupy a large portion of its land. These two-story residences house much of the district's population, with each building standing only a few feet from its neighbor. Although the houses have many structural similarities, residents personalize their abodes with bright colors and patterns. Wealthier citizens—or those desiring a bit more space than row houses provide—live in tidy but sprawling suburbs.

Information on key locations found throughout Sayashto follows, although many other sites of interest exist in the district.

1. Hall of Final Deeds: Outsiders don't die of old age, at least not in the same way mortals do. Instead, an outsider that grows weary or loses focus eventually melds into its home plane, lending its quintessence to that realm. Sayashto's famous mortuary industry provides these clients with a host of counseling services to help inspire the casually listless to find purpose and to help the truly languid set their affairs in order.



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Surrounded by an expansive cemetery, the immense cathedral known as the Hall of Final Deeds celebrates its many visitors' accomplishments in the afterlife.

Deep within the hall lie meeting rooms and scores of isolated mediation chambers. Each meditation chamber contains a comfortable chair, a desk, and ample supplies for writing, drawing, and weaving, providing the occupant an opportunity to create a final testament before fading into the ground. These creations are displayed in several galleries in the building before being delivered to friends or sold to support the caretakers, as dictated by the creator's final wishes. Each room also contains a bell for the occupant to ring gently once a day, letting attendants know which chambers are still occupied. For all its grim connotations, the Hall of Final Deeds has a warm reputation for providing meaning and structure to what could otherwise be a confusing and fearful process.

2. Honorgrove Memorial Park: While most of Axis engages in peaceful trades, there's no question that the Eternal City is ready to make war to defend creation itself. This park—as marked by a 50-foot-tall bronze-and-marble statue of axiomites and demodands locked in combat, known as Daniava's Folly—commemorates the wars between the gods and titans, when Axis stood ready to repel the divine giants and end their coup. For all its somber message, the park attracts those looking to picnic, busk, or exercise. The statue attracts not only perching birds but also puckish gargoyles that harass passersby or commit worse crimes.

3. Kaljeval: Abadar's favored animal varies by planet, yet for those worlds that have them, monkeys best embody the god's ingenuity and love of hierarchy. Sayashto hosts a large colony of flameruff tamarins—monkeys with the resolute simple template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 293)—THAT scamper across roofs and chatter to one another. Yet despite the occasional acts of mischief, these monkeys play an important role by delivering messages and performing other minor errands for those who ask nicely and supply a coin. Most of these tamarins nest in the nine-

tiered tower known as the Kaljeval, named for and built in honor of a stoic prosimian hero who warned a mortal city of approaching raiders and aided in its defense, even though those actions cost her her life. Sayashto's council appoints a leading tamarin to rule as lord squire and to see to Kaljeval's maintenance. Lord Squire **Saip** (LN awakened resolute^{B2} tamarin cleric of Abadar 3) has reigned for 4 prosperous years, and from here he directs his massive troop to patrol the yashtoma fields to scare off avian thieves. He also holds audiences with visitors and offers his blessings to those who provide a token donation. The lord squire acts as the district's chief almoner, tasked with coordinating the distribution of alms to the area's poorer residents.

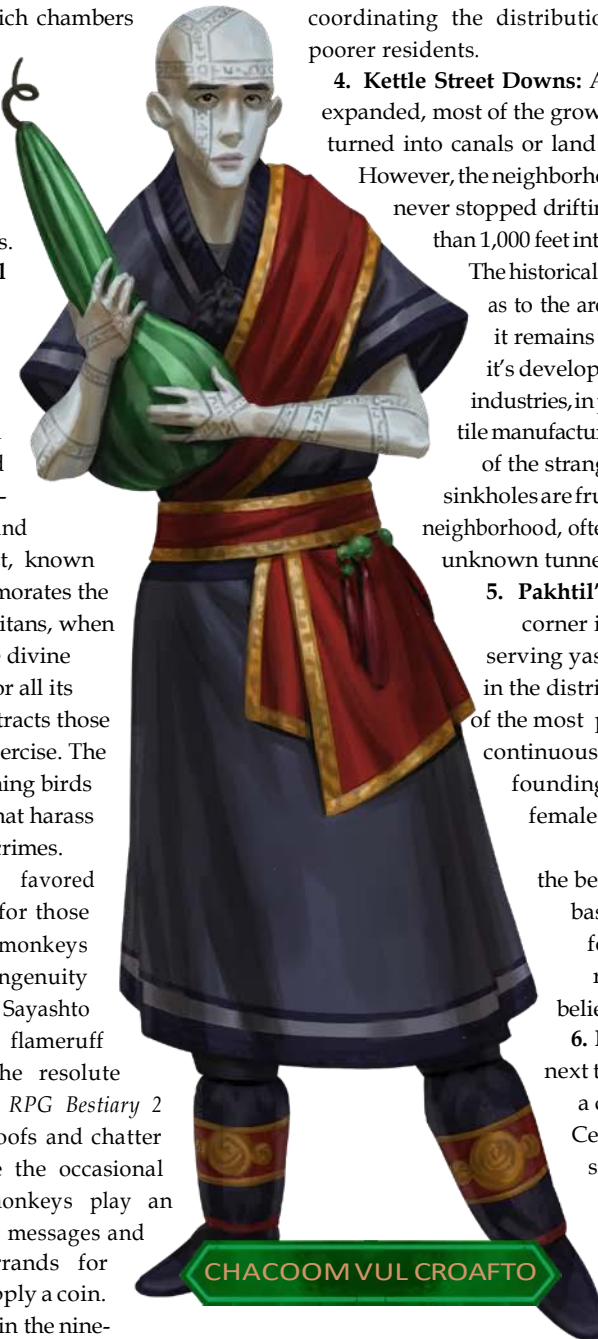
4. Kettle Street Downs: As Axis has stretched and expanded, most of the growth left clean avenues that turned into canals or land for further development.

However, the neighborhood of Kettle Street Downs never stopped drifting and now extends more than 1,000 feet into neighboring Halgrimard.

The historical buildings leave no question as to the area's identity, and politically it remains part of Sayashto. Even so, it's developed its own subculture and industries, in particular tinsmithing and tile manufacturing. One of the side effects of the strange planar tectonics is that sinkholes are frustratingly common in this neighborhood, often opening into completely unknown tunnels of the undercity.

5. Pakhtil's: Although every street corner in Sayashto has someone serving yasht, the oldest yasht shop in the district, Pakhtil's, remains one of the most popular, having operated continuously for over 800 years. Its founding proprietor, **Pakhtil** (LN female azer expert 17), smugly insists that she sells the best yasht in existence, and based on the long lines that form during the morning rush, there are many who believe the same.

6. Post Central #7: Towering next to the Grand Rotunda like a cathedral stands the Post Central #7, which receives, sorts, and distributes mail to all of Zdareen. The massive post office stands 6 stories high, each floor brimming with offices, service



desks, archives, sorting rooms, and warehouses. The post office has hundreds of staff, including numerous couriers of dozens of species, most notably eight vortex dragons (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 74). Although deliveries are almost always timely, the office reports 17 percent more lost parcels than offices in other departments. For more than 5 years, Chief Postal Inspector **OmaIn** (LN female mercane rogue 4) has revised quality-control procedures with little effect, and she's increasingly ready to hire freelance investigators to find who's been profiting off the postal service.

7. Silver Snips: Though slightly off the beaten path, the barbershop Silver Snips is never wanting for customers. The nine halflings who work here are famously nimble and work in pairs to groom clients in a coordinated dance of flashing shears and keen razors—even performing classic barber-surgeon feats like setting bones or cleaning teeth as needed. Just as popular are the three corked columns that stand inside the shop, where anyone is free to post announcements, advertisements, and work opportunities. The result is a jovial fxture of the community where many visit as much to gossip as get a trim. That's exactly how the owner, **Higgins Kuerel** (NE male halfling inquisitor of Thamir Gixx 10), likes it, for his entire staff is a cult of Thamir Gixx (see page 68) that gathers intelligence to sell to the thieves of Duskfathom, Norgorber's realm. Even the bulletin columns are subject to his ministrations, and he regularly curates the fliers and adds a few false leads of his own, many of which lead well-intentioned adventurers into ambushes.

8. Specie Spring: Sayashto's southernmost contiguous neighborhood is the vast suburb of Specie Spring, named for the natural spring that pools near the area's center. Popular legend claims that drinking from the pool while the sun gives the surface a silvery sheen grants the imbibers a vision of his future wealth. The water does contain a significant mineral concentration that tends to leave the drinker light-headed, so in practice any visions tend to involve the magnificent homes visible in every direction (much to the local realtors' delight). However, **Jihtin** (LN male royal naga^{B3}), the head of the homeowners' association, recently took a sip and has since insisted that his neighbors adopt a curious aesthetic for their houses, as if to re-create the realm from his dreams. Were someone to decipher Jihtin's delirious vision, perhaps it could lead to fabulous wealth—or uncover the spring's supernatural influence once and for all.

9. The Striped Palace: Its exterior painted to resemble the district's chief crop, the Striped Palace is a museum dedicated to the history, cultivation, and processing of the yashtoma plant. The building includes classrooms, a functioning yashtoma garden,

YASHT

Sayashto takes its name from its chief export, the long-necked yashtoma gourd. When the yashtoma is dried, its husk can be used for storing liquid or cereals. The stringy flesh of fresh yashtoma serves as a nutritious supplement in animal feed. However, its greatest value is its seeds, which when properly dried, ground, and brewed create the popular beverage yasht. This hot drink's taste varies slightly by region and preparation, generally producing a somewhat sour flavor with crisp, sweet tones that enthusiasts compare to biting into a delicate pickle or sipping tangy fruit juice. Although the gourd is grown on numerous planes, connoisseurs generally agree that Sayashto's harvest produces the richest flavor—one that seems to noticeably pop with notes of salt, beets, and aged wine.

Preparing yasht is as simple as tossing a small handful of ground seeds into simmering water. Even so, yasht enthusiasts have developed elaborate preparation and consumption techniques, including a host of complex machines to better control the heat, pressure, and timing. Yasht consumption brings with it numerous traditions and games, many of which involve interpreting the gritty precipitate to tell fortunes, inspire discussions, or just bet on who's buying the next round. The drink carries with it connotations of intimacy in many cultures throughout Sayashto, so it's uncouth to serve yasht to a stranger as a sign of hospitality, whereas it's entirely appropriate to drink it with friends, family, or prospective business partners to mark a warming relationship.

A cup of yasht costs 2 cp. A pound of ground yashtoma seeds (enough to brew 50 cups) costs 5 sp, though high-quality varieties can easily cost 10 times as much. For 4 hours after drinking a cup of yasht, the imbibers reduce the result of any d% dice rolled to determine her actions when confused by 1d4. If she drinks yasht with one or more allies, she also takes a -1 penalty on attack rolls against those creatures while she is confused.

and a restaurant that serves a variety of dishes made from the plant. According to the museum, the gourd originated on the Material Plane planet Shaltrua, though it has evolved considerably after millennia of selective breeding. Somewhat disturbingly, Shaltrua is home to several varieties of carnivorous plants, including some that bear an uncanny resemblance to domesticated yashtoma. Unfortunately, the museum's collections have several significant gaps, and the head curator, **Zjali** (LN female petitioner^{B2} druid 6), has a generous budget with which to commission adventurers to retrieve high-quality artifacts from other worlds.



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