



## KEY LOCATIONS

### BRONZE CITADEL

ONCE A CITADEL OF ELEGANT BRONZE DESIGN, THE Bronze Citadel now sprawls into a sprawling, brute of a city that covers vast expanses of Avernus, extending across dozens of square miles. Its ever-expanding walls consist of twelve concentric rings, each bristling with menacing war machines. The city teems with inhabitants, a mixture of petitioners, including the wretched lemures and soul shells, and countless lesser devils, all destined for the ceaseless Blood War.

This immense fortress, stands as the foremost defence against the relentless tide of demonic invasion that threatens to breach the infernal realm of Baator. Armies of low-ranking devils tirelessly labour on its formidable structure, tirelessly adding new walls and war machines to the already expansive complex. The Bronze Citadel's boundaries are marked by an astonishing fourteen concentric rings, each guarded by fearsome devils who keep a watchful eye on all who approach. Each ring boasts an array of deadly siege weaponry, including ballistae, catapults, and potent magical relics that jut menacingly from the fortress walls.

Stretching across an immense territory of 600 square miles, the Bronze Citadel extends its reach into the daunting Stigmaris Mountains, where its rearward structures are found. With Avernus as the most likely point of entry for large-scale demonic assaults, the citadel's fortifications are in a constant state of expansion. Work gangs consisting of soul shells, lemures, and imps tirelessly continue to enlarge the city, creating a sprawling network of structures. The construction is so pervasive that bone scaffolding often supports these ever-evolving walls, making the citadel a formidable and ever-growing stronghold in the heart of Avernus.

### WITHIN THE WALLS

#### BLOOD VAULT

At the heart of the citadel lies the Blood Vault, a vast chamber where new soul coins manifest. The walls are adorned with countless twisted screaming faces, each

capturing the essence of a tormented soul. Devils and other infernal beings frequently visit the vault to collect payment for their part in the blood war.

#### WAR COUNCIL CHAMBERS

These chambers serve as the strategic planning hub for devilish commanders. Here, diabolical plots and tactics for the Blood War are conceived and refined. A massive obsidian table dominates the room, with war maps and strategies laid out in intricate detail. Members of the Dark eight often visit these chambers to pass on new orders to the devilish commanders.

#### TRAINING GROUNDS

Surrounding the Bronze Citadel are extensive military encampments, where devils rigorously train and prepare for battles in Avernus and beyond. Chaotic creatures from other planes and are often captured and brought here to use as practice, creatures like the Slaad, wrymlings, demons and giants.

#### GATEHOUSE OF TORMENT

This formidable entrance is guarded by elite infernal soldiers known as the Ironclad Wardens. This is the first line of defence against any demons foolish enough to try and enter the citadel.

#### DREAD SPIRE

Rising high above the citadel is the Dread Spire, a tower of dark obsidian that is home to the citadel retinue of sorcerers and mages. Here they conduct magical ritual and infernal rites to strengthen the devils army,

#### THE PIT OF DESPAIR

A seemingly bottomless chasm beneath the citadel, the Pit of Despair is where the most notorious prisoners and captives of the Blood War are thrown. The pit is a place of eternal suffering, a truly awful enchantment has been placed on the pit preventing from any creature with to every perish, meaning those who a throw into the pit will suffer for eternity.

## THE PILLAR OF SKULLS

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The Pillar of Skulls serves as a macabre testament to the devils' prowess in the unending Blood War. This ghastly structure, stretching over a mile into the crimson skies of Avernus, is a towering monolith composed of an eclectic array of skulls. The skulls, varying greatly in size from minuscule to the size of entire houses, form a gruesome mosaic of death. The majority of these skulls, however, serve as grim trophies of the devils' victories, belonging to their vanquished foes, the demons.

Perched near the edge of Avernus, the Pillar overlooks the tumultuous realm below, where the Blood War rages on. It is positioned near a low point in the plane where access to the layer below, Dis. Close to the base of the Pillar of Skulls, a massive cave mouth looms, within which the dragon-goddess Tiamat makes her lair. Tiamat fiercely guards the passage between the layers, adding an additional layer of peril to this eerie site.

## THE BASALT TOWER

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The Basalt Tower, a colossal stone edifice in the heart of the infernal plane of Avernus, stands as a forbidding monument to the might of the Nine Hells. Connected to a desolate rocky outcropping by a damaged stone bridge, this accursed platform harbours a portal that reaches across the planes to the Prime Material, particularly the basement of Dragonspear Castle on Toril. The tower's pinnacle, a realm of dark mysteries, can be accessed through an iron-lattice elevator suspended by four immense chains, creating an eerie and harrowing ascent. For a time, the entrance to this foreboding structure was vigilantly guarded by Thrix the Profane, a devil of insidious reputation.

## DARKSPINE


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The abandoned city of Darkspine, a tragic relic of its former existence on the Material Plane, fell victim to the insidious grasp of the devils. This former gate town underwent cosmic realignment, when its alignment became to closely aligned with that of the Nine Hells and it was cruelly pulled into the depths of Avernus. Now a desolate labyrinth of decaying structures and eerie alleyways, Darkspine has been forsaken by most, though a stubborn few still eke out an existence amidst its ruins. Bearded and barbed devils, ever vigilant, continue to scour the debris in search of runaway slaves, unauthorized interlopers, or valuable treasures left undiscovered in the wake of the city's fall.

## STIGMARIS MOUNTAINS

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The Stigmaris Mountains, a jagged and foreboding range in the infernal realm of Avernus, rise ominously from the desolate landscape.



Their rocky slopes are unforgiving, and the very air seems to smoulder with malevolence. Among their treacherous crags and fiery chasms dwell Gathra Beasts, monstrous creatures driven by primal fury and a thirst for violence. Dark silhouettes of Netherbirds soar through the fiery skies above, their chilling cries echoing through the tortured peaks, adding an eerie layer of dread to these accursed heights.

## THE MAGGOT PIT

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A grotesque and vital site within the infernal realm of Avernus, spans a colossal 1,000-foot diameter and serves as a sinister mechanism for the conversion of souls into wretched lemures. Filled with noxious ooze and teeming white worms, this nightmarish pit is a place of unspeakable torment. Devils cruelly usher the damned into its vile depths, where they eventually drown, only to be devoured and transformed by the writhing maggots. The unholy excrement of this horrific process takes the form of gelatinous lemures, loathsome souls trapped in a pitiable existence. This nightmarish operation is overseen by Arraka, a formidable red Abishai.

## HARUMAN'S HILL

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Haruman's Hill, a desolate promontory nestled between Bel's Forge and the malevolent River Styx, once bore witness to the agonizing torment of dozens of souls. Their crucifixion on metal trees, the tortured remnants of Hellriders who fled the Battle of Avernus and became the revered heroes of Elturel, was a harrowing spectacle. Stirges, cruel parasites of the Nine Hells, would feed on their blood and transport it to the hill's summit. Haruman, burdened by his role in this nightmarish display, oversaw the gruesome affair with reluctance and disdain. Now, this once-infamous site serves no infernal purpose, transformed into a solemn, deserted overlook along the grim expanse of the River Styx.

## THE BLEEDING CITADEL

The Bleeding Citadel, a hallowed sanctuary nestled within the nightmarish realm of Avernus in the Nine Hells, stood as a bastion of purity amid the infernal chaos. Perched atop the grotesque mound known as the Scab, it was bound to the living mass by great chains of infernal iron. This alabaster temple, although partially obscured by the vile Scab, displayed its resilient domed roof. Its walls bore stained-glass windows, adorned with depictions of angelic figures, capable of bestowing vitality upon any benevolent being that touched them.

Within the temple, a path of stone pillars led to a celestial-inscribed dais, which cradled the Sword of Zariel, the citadel's most sacred charge. An enigmatic light, radiating restorative properties, filtered through the temple's windows, cleansing possessions and renewing those within.

The purpose of the Bleeding Citadel was singular and noble: to safeguard the Sword of Zariel, preventing its vile corruption by the forces of evil. This solemn duty came into being after Zariel, the once-heroic leader of the Hellriders of Eturel, met her fateful transformation into an archdevil and pledged herself to Asmodeus following the events of *The Ride*. Yael, Zariel's unwavering loyalist, and Lulu, her golden mastodon mount, made the ultimate sacrifices to create this sanctuary for the sword's preservation. Yael gave her life, while Lulu forfeited her memories and magical abilities.

The citadel's sole inhabitant was the ghostly presence of Yael, who had faithfully served Zariel in life. Legends whispered of a cataclysmic event should a worthy individual attune to the Sword of Zariel and remove it from its celestial dais—an explosion of radiant light that would obliterate the entire citadel, leaving only a memory of its noble purpose.

## BEL'S FORGE

This serves as Bel's seat of power and industry. It is here that Bel, the cunning and malevolent archduke, crafts an array of diabolical tools, machines, weapons, and other instruments intended for use in the relentless Blood War. Notable creations such as *The Companion*, *The Shield of the Hidden Lord*, and the ominous *Dock of Fallen Cities* have all been brought to life in the searing depths of this infernal forge.

Amidst the roaring inferno and molten rivers of lava that define this hellish landscape, Bel commands an army of fire giant blacksmiths, forging weapons and waging his unending vendetta against the archduchess Zariel.

