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1 Navarr people



The Navarr were once part of a great nation that was lost to Orcs and failed magic centuries before the Empire began. Although they continue to wander through the wild places of the journey, they embrace the Empire as an opportunity to be a part of a great civilisation again. Their cities still exist, buried in the depths of the their forests and infested by the **Vallorn**, a monstrous presence from the past.

Today the people dwell in **Steadings**, great settlements cut into the heart of the woods, or travel in loose groups called **Stridings**. Individual Navarr move back and forth between the settled life of a steading and the mobile life of a striding as the mood takes them or circumstance dictates.

The Navarr love to travel. The journey can be a means to an end or an end in itself. Some of their journeys serve an arcane purpose, but wherever they are travelling they carry news, messages and people with them. The Navarr see moving people and items around the Empire, to the places where they can do the most good, as a method to solve many problems. The philosophy of the **Great Dance** teaches that everyone has a place where they can prosper, and helping other people find that place is a calling for many Navarr.

They value self-sufficiency, priding themselves on their ability to prosper in dangerous and inhospitable areas. They make a virtue of being prepared and ready. Many Navarr love the excitement of the hunt; stalking prey heightens their senses and tests their skills and the thrill of the chase gets their blood pumping, reminding them they are alive. Young Navarr, especially, like to test themselves against the world; they like to push themselves, whether it is conquering a mountain peak or blazing a trail to a new destination. They enjoy demonstrating their mastery over nature.

The Navarr are sophisticated enough to realise that self-sufficiency does not mean each individual stands alone. They are a gregarious folk who welcome strangers to their steadings and stridings. They like to cultivate friends and alliances, and relish the opportunity to work as go-betweens. Anyone in the Empire who needs to travel somewhere, or who is looking for a new start, knows that the Navarr are happy to embrace fellow travellers.

The Navarr keep a watch throughout the Empire. When they move through an area, they make an effort to look for problems and dangers, and warn their fellow Imperial citizens about them. A Navarr who discovers a ruined Marcher fortress is now a haven of orcs or bandits will seek out nearby Marcher lords and beaters, inform them of the problem, and offer whatever assistance they can to help them deal with the threat.

The Navarr are as fierce towards their enemies as they are welcoming to their allies. When they march to battle they don war-paint so their allies can see they have committed themselves to the fight and their enemies know to be afraid. The Navarr have little time for notions of honourable combat; ambush, traps, misdirection and poison are all weapons that the Navarr readily employ.

1.1 Names



1.1.1 First names

Navarr names are primarily Celtic, mainly drawing on Welsh names.

A child's name is given to a Navarr at birth by the parents, whereas an adult chooses the name they wish to be known by during the [Binding of Thorns](#).

1.1.2 Sample first names

- **Male:** Aedan, Arawn, Dradan, Breanainn, Cadaen, Caiside, Donndubhan, Drustan, Elisedd, Faelan, Hywel, Ifan, Lindir, Logan, Maddoc, Paul, Saeros, Tomas, Wyl
- **Female:** Angharad, Brianna, Bronwen, Cordelia, Enys, Gwynedd, Iona, Megan, Myfanwy, Niamh, Olwen, Raelyn, Siani, Rhiannon, Teleri

1.1.3 Naming resources

- [Celtic names](#)
- [Welsh male names](#)
- [Welsh female names](#)

1.1.4 Second names

A Navarr takes the name of their Steading or Striding as their second name.

Steadings and Stridings are named for the event that founded them but these are commonly abbreviated or inferred from a much longer descriptive. The oldest communities have names founded in the myths of the Nation while those more recently founded may seem more mundane by comparison.

1.1.5 Sample second names

- **Seventh Day** - Abbreviated from "On the seventh day of the Battle of Lower Mirsh, Pwyll slew the Warlord of the Scaled Host"
- **Black Blood** - Abbreviated from "... the rivers of Mitwold ran black with the blood of the traitors."
- **Long Stride** - Inferred from "... and we parted ways in 407 AE as Dylan and Lowri the Vate of our Striding could not keep pace with us."

Names are not static, when a Navarr moves between the steadings and the stridings they change their name accordingly.

2 Navarr culture and customs

2.1 The Great Dance

The central philosophy of the Navarr is the idea that life is a Great Dance in which all humankind is engaged. Some may lead, some may follow; but the Dance is better for everyone when the dancers have the right partners at the right time and place. Many Navarr try to help people find their place and their partners in the Great Dance. People who do not feel "right" where they are should be encouraged to travel to find a new place in the Great Dance, a chance to find a place they will belong, where their partners will be right for them.



Savages, you say! Sir, to not know what was lost with the fall of Mourne? I envy you.

Pasha Mootson, Varuskan Apostle of Courage

Reincarnation is central to this belief - to the Navarr the dead are simply resting for a while before they resume their place. People who find their perfect partner in the Dance are destined to find that partner again and again each time they are born. A partner may not always be a lover, it could be a sibling or simply a close friend.

2.2 Vows

The Navarr mark vows, oaths and promises with a physical sign of their intent and commitment, often through tattooing or scarification. The more enduring the commitment, the more permanent the marks. War-paint is applied before a battle, henna tattoos are used for commitments that last a few days or more and permanent pledges or those that will take years to complete are usually marked with tattoos. The Navarr mark the most significant vows with brands. These marks help hold a person to their pledge, but they also make it easier for others to identify those who have sworn themselves to a given role or cause (as discussed in [Hearth Magic](#)).

2.3 Celebrations

The Navarr have a long tradition of marking important moments in their lives with celebrations. Usually these take the form of a shared meal followed by dancing, drinking and gaming. Marking important times strengthens the links between members of a community - especially an extended community such as the Navarr possess. Three important celebrations observed by the majority of the Navarr are *Unburdening*, *The Binding of Thorns* and *Welcoming*.

2.3.1 Unburdening



Navarr **Stridings** and **Steadings** are not fixed ? they shift and change over time, as people die, retire or move from one to another, perhaps due to a love-match or to a desire to see other climes. When an individual decides to leave a Steading to join a Striding (or even just to travel to another Steading), the event is celebrated with a simple feast in which they ceremonially burn a list describing the belongings they are leaving behind. This symbolises an intent to give up ownership, and comes with a general assumption that these possessions can be claimed by or redistributed among the Navarr who remain behind. The Navarr are far too pragmatic to burn valuable goods, but the ceremony helps people to let go of the things they do not need.

2.3.2 The Binding of Thorns

When a child passes their test of adulthood they undergo the Binding of Thorns. This important ceremony marks them as a true Navarr. The participants swear the same oath their ancestors swore centuries earlier when their cities were destroyed by the Vallorn and they began their endless migrations. Once the oath is taken, the new Navarr mingle their blood with all other Navarr who have attended the ceremony, and receive the traditional Navarr tattoo. All Navarr who have undergone the Binding of Thorns bear this tattoo, one of endless variations on the motif of briars of intertwined thorns. This ceremony is also used when an adult from outside the Navarr wishes to become one of them.

The Binding reminds the new Navarr that wherever they go they are part of the Navarr, and that regaining the remnants of their former civilisation from the Vallorn is their ancient purpose.

2.3.3 Welcoming

Conscious of the passage of the seasons, the Navarr Stridings congregate at festival times, either together or at the Steadings. The Navarr celebrate the turning of all the seasons but the birth of a new spring and the end of the harsh winter that makes travelling difficult is their major festival. This grand celebration is a time for revelry, feasting, raucous music and wild dancing. It is also traditionally a time for making a new start, abandoning grudges and putting aside past failures to concentrate on the possibilities of a new year.

Welcoming begins with a ceremonial hunt. The traditional quarry of the Welcoming are the **Vates**, who often adopt fanciful costumes or headdresses that represent game animals, such as stag, hares and pigeons. Details of the hunt vary from year to year; a glorified game of hide-and-seek one year may be followed by a mock hunt through light woodland the next, or a chase across open ground. The hunt is good natured, but some Vates relish the opportunity to employ their magic to make the hunt more exciting.

2.4 Funerals

Come, come, why the tears my sweet? Death is just another step in the Great Dance. We all take it.

Nana Bronwyn Wordless

In death, what remains are the memories of your deeds in the minds of your partners in the Great Dance. The Steadings use a traditional corpse-glade where the bodies are laid out in the forest. Such glades are rarely troubled by scavengers or carrion-eaters, and the bodies are simply left undisturbed to moulder.

The Stridings usually commit bodies to simple cairn but a Striding may decide to transport a corpse to a Steading before performing a funeral. There is also a custom where the friends of the deceased make a pilgrimage to a corpse-glade to hang a reminder or memento of their fallen comrade among the branches.

3 Navarr look and feel

3.1 Overview



The Navarr look draws heavily on the forests for its inspiration. The colours are primarily greens and browns with occasional splashes of dark autumnal red or yellow. Materials are practical, primarily those that come from hunting - leather and fur. Facepaint, tattoos and brands are common, especially on the face and around the eyes. Navarr mark oaths and other important commitments with brands, tattoos or scars. Most warriors only apply war paint before they go into battle, but some Navarr choose to wear it every day, a symbol of their constant readiness.

Rather than rich materials or unusual colours the Navarr personalize their appearance by adorning their costume with beads, feathers, fetishes, and other accessories. It is common to weave such items into the hair.

Also see [Navarr Costumes](#) and [Navarr Icons and Artistry](#).

3.2 Feel

Wild, unsettling, otherworldly, alert, pragmatic, tattooed, fierce, primal, blood

3.3 Breakdown

3.3.1 Influences

Wood elves, The Rangers from Lord of the Rings.

3.3.2 Materials

Primarily leather and fur. Materials like linen, wool, velvet or silk are less common.



3.3.3 Colours

The palette is the colours of spring: soft greens and browns, gentle misty greys, and perhaps the dark blood red of birthing.

3.3.4 Clothing

Navarr clothing is layered, serviceable and well-worn. Even for civilians, it often features pieces of leather armour, though this is to protect against the environment as much as enemy weapons. Clothes are suitable for people who live their lives in the wild forests. Not just a robust construction but practical designs, for instance hooded cloaks that give protection against the weather, but can also serve as bedding. Belts and straps feature quite heavily ? both to secure clothing so it doesn't snag, and to hold a variety of gear securely while moving through woodland. Boots are long and close-fitting to protect the lower legs while walking.

3.3.5 Jewelry

Navarr favour jewelry that represents the twisting journeys of the Great Dance. Knotted metalwork in either base or precious metals; rings, bracelets, armbands, torcs and brooches are the most common types found.

3.3.6 Armour

Thick hardened leather is the most common form of armour for the Navarr, occasionally supplemented with light chain or scale. Navarr armour often features an asymmetric pattern, with lines and closures that run diagonally across the body rather than vertically but a single breastplate is just as common.





3.3.7 Shields

Shields are narrow and fluted, barely wider than the wielder. They are often heavily decorated with the thorn motif.

3.3.8 Weapons

The iconic Navarr weapon is a spear, often with a barbed shaft and decorated with thorn motifs. This echoes the spear of their legendary hero, Navarr. Otherwise weapons are, light, practical and good for skirmishing rather than heavy combat.





Bows are another favoured Navarr weapon. Like the spear they are an effective tool for hunting as well as a weapon of war.





3.4 Costume

Navarr style of dress varies, depending on how much contact the striding or steading has with the other nations. More isolated Navarr may adopt a rougher, more practical or primitive look; more integrated Navarr have access to a greater range of materials. However, most Navarr will fall somewhere in between these two extremes.

3.5 Isolated Navarr

More isolated Navarr adopt a look primarily comprised of leather, furs and natural materials, suitable for hunting people who are used to sleeping rough.







3.6 Integrated Navarr

Those Navarr who trade with their neighbours are more likely to have access to wool and similar materials so their costume reflects their closer contact with fellow members of the Empire.





3.7 Tattoos

The Navarr mark sworn oaths with tattoos, brands and scars, as a visible sign of the commitment they have made. Thorn motifs are the most common design. They use less permanent warpaint on their face or hair when preparing for conflict. Donning the paint helps them prepare themselves and commits them to their course. Many Navarr warriors wear warpaint every day as a sign of their readiness to fight.





3.8 Hair

Braids and dreadlocks are common, as are beads and other decorations woven into the hair.





3.9 Children

Navarr children are taught the value of being prepared and ready at all times. They are encouraged to learn to fight with sword, spear and bow from an early age.





4 Navarr history

Centuries before the Empire was formed, humans already lived in the fertile plains around the Bay of Catazar. They built cities, organized themselves into loose kingdoms, and formed alliances with one another. Even then the humans were threatened by the orcs. At the heart of these kingdoms was the flowering of civilisation that served as the forerunner of the Navarr. Navarr stories call this nation Teruniel and record that its cultured cities were run by its magicians.



In the ongoing war against the orcs, Teruniel increasingly relied on magic. Over time the stresses of constant magic use took their toll, and without warning the rituals around Teruniel unwound catastrophically, creating or summoning the **Vallorn** into the heart of their kingdom. The cities were consumed by spreading forest, their people attacked by monstrous insects and deadly plants, and though they tried everything to fight it, in the end they had no choice but to abandon their homes.

The Navarr are descended from those who followed the eponymous heroine Navarr and her lover Thorn who swore an oath to restore the civilisation of Teruniel. Bound and branded by their oath to regain the cities, they fought desperately to destroy the Vallorn. When it became clear that their enemy could not be defeated by force of arms alone, a magical solution was sought. Navarr and Thorn gave their lives to set in motion a powerful Ritual that would eventually allow the Navarr to defeat the Vallorn.

The Ritual required the Navarr to walk paths of magical power, called **Trods**. These migrations drew off the life-energies of the Vallorn, weakening it. The further the Navarr travelled, the stronger the effect. Once the Vallorn was sufficiently weakened in an area, then the Navarr were able to attack, reducing the spread of the Vallorn.

The arrival of humans from across the sea drove the orcs from the fertile lowlands. Initially the Navarr viewed the newcomers with suspicion, but they soon realised that these people were potential allies. They made contact, seeking to ensure the safe passage of their stridings, and encouraging the new humans to focus their attention on the orcs rather than engage in costly squabbles with each other.

During this time, Navarr traders introduced the Highborn to the drug liao. Initially used medicinally and recreationally, the Highguard experimented with the liao, discovering its ability to unlock visions of previous lives.

4.1 Joining the Empire

A Navarr Striding were among the first people to hear the Empress' message of unity. Its leader, Myfanwy, was one of her earliest companions, protecting and guiding her through human lands. After the historic encounter, the Navarr carried her message to anyone who was prepared to listen. They helped arrange the initial meeting at which the foundations of the Empire were laid. The goals and philosophies of the Empress struck a resonant chord deep in their hearts. The Navarr Stridings became the standard-bearers for the Empire, carrying its message to the divided human nations.

Most Navarr could see that the Empire represented a great opportunity for them; a chance to drive back the barbarian orcs meant that their stridings could travel further than ever. The more perceptive saw something deeper, that the proposed Empire was not just a tool to help them regain their cities, it was the first glimmer of the civilisation their ancestors had once enjoyed.

5 Navarr leadership

Throughout their history the Navarr have always adapted and followed the most suitable people required to meet the challenges of the time. It is expected that their leaders will be Brands. The Navarr see leadership as an important but onerous responsibility, with the leaders viewed as servants of the community. Although not all Brands are leaders, Navarr who persistently try to offer leadership to others who haven't become Brands are regarded with suspicion. The purpose of leadership is to give direction to the community, it should be for the benefit of everyone in the Striding or Steading - in the Navarr eyes you can't be a fit and proper leader unless you have become a Brand first.



Rather than formally appoint their leaders, the Navarr follow those Brands whose leadership seems wisest and most effective. The Navarr have no need of mechanisms to remove their leaders; since their leaders have no formal authority their importance comes from the people who elect to follow them and do what they say. If a leader makes unwise decisions, if people have become so unhappy with the current leadership, then they are expected to find themselves a new leader.

In theory the leadership of a Striding or Steading is totally fluid - in practice the Navarr are not gadflies. They understand that leadership is difficult and arduous and that leaders must often make unpopular decisions. Most Navarr strive to give their leaders as much support as they can and it is relatively rare for them to leave a Steading or Striding simply to follow a new leader. The fact that they can do this at any time, however, underpins their social system; the Navarr feel it ensures their leaders stay focussed on serving their community but also helps to prevent grumbling or whining about decisions that have been made. Individuals are expected to either support their Brand's leadership or move to follow a different Brand.

It is common for a larger community of Navarr to have more than one Brand providing leadership, each with an area of responsibility or specialism. Such communities operate either through the informal co-operation of the Brands, or employ a system where the Brand whose responsibilities apply most appropriately to the current crisis takes the lead. When Navarr groups meet, the Brands usually cooperate or choose to follow one of their number who seems to offer effective overall leadership if that is required.

5.1 Leading a territory

The Navarr appoint the Senator for a territory by communal agreement. Those who would speak for the territory step forward. Once the candidates are clear, the Navarr present choose who to stand behind. The process is very fluid, it is common for individuals and groups to move to coalesce support where it appears to be most effective. Once it is clear that everyone has made a choice, the individual with the most support becomes senator for the territory.

Only Navarr who are members of a Steading or Striding that is associated with the territory may take part in the process. Although Stridings travel around the Empire, most return to the same territory at least once a year. Any individual or group who has recently taken part in choosing a Senator who then moves territory is forbidden from taking part again until a year has passed.

Senator Jonquil. You would interdict the passage of Ivawr's Striding through Dawn because of what? Some nascent ill-founded fear that our journeys beyond the borders of our glorious Empire will bring a barbarian horde in its wake?

Your Imperial Majesty, it was Riordan who risked all to bring news of the Scaled Host's march on the Brass Coast. It was the bravery of Pwyll of Therun that lured the Black Byter into the embrace of the Vallorn and it was the Thornborn of Mourn ? the like of whom we shall never see again ? who defied the Swarm of Vasseir to see your Lord Husband safe to this assembly.

We have walked the Trods of these lands since the Sun and the Moon began their heavenly dance, we have witnessed the deep places and we have guarded your hearth. We leave behind the light so you can rest behind stone-walls. We have earned our place in this magnificent endeavor and we shall claim our birthright. Come, walk with us, noble Jonquil. We have no fear ? let us banish yours. Transcript, Senate Meeting
Navarr Senators have a reputation for tactical voting. They accrue political capital with Senators of other nations which they use on key votes, either for the good of Navarr as a nation or for the Empire as a whole.

6 Navarr military concerns



War is not a game, it is a life-and-death conflict. Most Navarr warriors have little interest in forming battle lines and engaging their enemies in honourable battle. They are pragmatic, and favour war through ambush, skirmish and guile. They disdain heroic charges and single combat with enemy leaders - better to fade back and draw the enemy into a trap than face them in one-on-one combat.

Donning warpaint ? often embellished with a stylised thorn motif ? is an important pre-battle ritual and warrior bands work together to paint each other. By donning warpaint, the Navarr warriors display their commitment to the coming fight. Members of a Steading or Striding will often use similar themes, colours or designs to give themselves a clear battlefield identity as a unit, in the same way that other nations use livery or heraldry.

Leather and chain mail are favoured along with the ubiquitous barbed spear, which honours the original spears wielded by the Navarr forebears. Shields, when used, are narrow and fluted, barely wider than the wielder and often heavily decorated with the thorn motif.

Those Navarr who devote themselves to war are called **Thorns**.

?You can?t betray your enemies.?

The warriors of the Navarr have two primary areas of interest. They are concerned with the defence of the Steadings and Stridings against bandits and barbarians. They also take responsibility for fighting the forces of the **Vallorn**. The Vallorn represents a hostile environment, replete with dangerous plants and monstrous insects. These creatures make infrequent incursions into Imperial territory, and the Navarr are at the forefront of driving them back. They also prepare for the day when they will be able to assault their enemy directly, both by scouting the areas of Vallorn influence, and by locating areas that might serve as bases of operation, or recruiting allies to help in the inevitable challenge of defeating the Vallorn's progeny.

7 Navarr economic interests

A common Navarr philosophy is that wealth is measured in the number of allies you have, not the coins in your pocket. Few Navarr have much interest in personal wealth. Trade is a means of making allies and ensuring that people have the things they need rather than a way for merchants to enrich themselves. The Navarr are well aware of the value of money and don't avoid its acquisition, it's just that most of them count allies as considerably more valuable than possessions.



Although the Navarr stridings are small, they play an important role in the Imperial economy. They specialise in moving valuable items, people and messages around the Empire. The Navarr may be the only people that some isolated communities see for months on end. From the earliest days of the Empire they acted as couriers, carrying important messages to far-flung places. They also act as guides, escorting individuals on difficult treks between nations.

Some Navarr choose to create a **Wayhouse** on the edge of civilized areas. Built along the Trods outside the Navarr heartland, the wayhouses are generally small - often no more than a single farmstead - and are maintained as places for travellers to rest and recuperate before continuing on their journeys.

Like the Freeborn, the Navarr sometimes travel beyond the Empire's borders bringing back rare goods not found within its lands. The trade of dyes and pigments, spices and rare herbs is the what the Navarr are most commonly known for, but they also bring to the Empire unique flora from the deep forests that are especially prized by physicians and mages alike. However, for those rich enough, a ship or house built of Navarr hewn timber from the great trees of the heartwoods is a prize beyond reckoning. Across the Empire, Navarr-carved lintels and door frames are widely known for their properties of warding and defence. From dinner plates to spear-hafts, where timber is concerned the Navarr trade in the best.

A ship of Navarr timber, that is a ship to trust.

Brass Coast proverb

The Navarr expect everyone to work in the best interest of their Steading or Striding.

7.1 Brokers

Navarr who are interested in money often become Brokers. A Broker serves as an intermediary between a buyer and a seller, usually claiming some sort of payment from the deal. The Navarr are in a good position to prosper as Brokers; as travellers they often come into contact with people with needs or a surplus they want to sell. Clever Brokers spend a lot of time getting to know merchants and traders from other nations, working out where they can make the best introductions to either ensure profit or to achieve some goal of their own.

You should've seen their faces! That Navarr Thorn outbid the University of Hundstag for a first folio print of *The Crimes of Indulgence*!

Harald Nornesborn at the Great Auction of Flowberg, Wintermark

Brokers do not just concentrate on physical goods; a Broker might know of someone with a valuable skill and put them in touch with a patron, for example, or put a band of mercenaries in contact with a marcher lord who needs additional troops and is prepared to pay for them. Sensible traders use the Brokers to perform legwork for them, and pay them a premium wage based on the results they deliver.

Many Brokers are motivated by their belief in the **Great Dance** rather than monetary gain. They have a free choice of who to put in touch with who, and how they arrange the meeting, and some use this to discreetly ensure that a struggling business gets the work it needs to stay afloat, or that a greedy **Earl** is put in touch with an equally greedy blacksmith who will charge top rates for their work.

8 Navarr religious beliefs



Navarr priests are called Guides, partly because of the guidance they try to give the Navarr, but more for the practice of trying to guide people to their rightful place in the [Great Dance](#). Although all Navarr see life in terms of the Great Dance, what makes the Guides unique is their concern for the virtue of the people they help. Guides understand that virtue is not inherent in an individual, that it is a product of the person and their circumstances. By helping a person change their circumstances, by guiding them to a place more suited to their temperament, they can help that person become more virtuous.

Guides also work to bring partners together, finding people whose spirits or virtues compliment each other, or who were partners in a previous life. The Guides seek to ensure that the people they encounter are given the best opportunity to flourish and in turn add to the Empire and the Great Dance. This might involve recruiting an individual to join the striding and Navarr; or it might be aiding the individual to leave a life of farm-work in the [Marches](#) to become a [Scrivener](#) on the [Brass Coast](#).

Lock your door, child dear,
Bolt it fast, choke back your fear.
The Forest walks and the Vallorn sigh,
The Stridings tread to feed the Thorn.
Sleep tight, my dear, ?till break of dawn.

Varushkan Nursery Rhyme

This has led to friction ? in some places *running away to join the Navarr* is seen as irresponsibly betraying one?s own life and family. In other circles it?s seen as a desirable goal and a path to high adventure. The idea of joining the Navarr is a common daydream in the Empire for people who feel underappreciated or "stuck in a rut." The truth is a little more prosaic. Few outsiders stay with the Stridings for long, but the Navarr provide these individuals with a home, guiding them towards a place where their skills are needed and they will be welcomed. In this way, the work of the guides helps communities as well as leaving a network of friends of the Navarr across the Empire.

Before the Navarr joined the Empire, their priests served as judges as well as guides. It was the Navarr who insisted that the Synod members have the right to offer sanctuary and to plead for clemency on behalf of those who admitted their guilt. The Navarr do not believe in allowing actions to go unpunished, they believe that actions have consequences and people should make amends for what they have done ? no matter the reasons for their actions. A Guide who is asked for clemency will often take personal responsibility for the criminal, asking that they be remanded into their custody, and then use all their skills to help that criminal improve their life and their virtue. Guides believe in practical experience and positive deeds as a way to improve karma, rather than lectures or merciless punishment.

You think there's no wilderness in your city, but more people lose their ways in the cities than in the woods

Alim, the Guide

All Guides are taught to beware of the dangers inherent in what they are doing. It is a small step to move from helping people to be virtuous, helping them find the best place for them in the Great Dance, to manipulating people and moving them in such a way that best serves the Guide's own interests. To be accused of manipulating people is a serious accusation and one that brings a degree of public shame to a Brand or a Guide. If any Navarr individual knowingly sets out to manipulate others to achieve their own desires they keep it to themselves.

9 Navarr magical traditions

When the cities of Navarr were consumed by the **Vallorn**, much of the Navarr magical lore was preserved by distributing it between the **Steadings** and **Stridings**. Most still have a few ancient tomes from this time, either the originals meticulously cared for, or copies that have been painstakingly written out. By themselves these books do not offer sufficient knowledge for a young Navarr to learn what is required, but they are enough that those children who become fascinated with magic can begin to learn. To ensure that they can retain a mastery of magic through the generations, the Navarr periodically trade books whenever they meet.

As a result of this approach, magic is seen as the legacy of the nation as a whole, rather than any individual Striding or Steading. Those who devote themselves to the study of magic are expected to acknowledge the gift they have been given and to seek out ways to employ their magic in the service of the Navarr. Not all choose to do this of course; there are selfish individuals in the Navarr as in any nation, but those that do are called Vates.

9.1 Vates

Vates are expected to make themselves known to all. Like **Brands** and **Thorns**, they usually mark their oath with a brand or tattoo. Because of the similarities with the oaths that Brands and Thorns swear, Vates who enjoy battle often become Thorns and the wisest amongst them sometimes become Brands. The work of a Vate is difficult, they are expected to use their magic carefully but to ensure that the spells they cast serve their community without charge. In return many Navarr try to ensure that they give what support they can spare to the Vates.

Guides make a habit of knowing who the Vates are, so that they can bring individuals to them who need magical help, and the Vates are often called on by the Senators to perform rituals that benefit territories, the Navarr nation or the Empire as a whole. This life of service to the Nation can be arduous and difficult, but most Vates shoulder it willingly. Their reward is the acknowledgement and respect they receive from other Navarr and the opportunity to practice their magic often.

Vates are the only Navarr who are trusted to meet with the Eternals or their Heralds. There is a belief that the oaths of the Vate help them resist the influence of the other Realms, and that they will use their influence with the Eternals only in support of the nation and the Empire. Other magicians - including those of other nations - who have regular contact with the Eternals are often viewed with a little suspicion, especially if they are not prepared to talk about their experiences.

For the Navarr, magic is in the blood. The Vates use blood-letting to draw on their power, to focus their rituals and incantations. The practice preserves the memory of the sacrifice made by Star and Thorn, the first Vates, who gave their life to protect the people from the threat of the Vallorn. Blood is a common motif in Navarr rituals.

The Vates only ever use their own blood and the blood of willing participants when performing magic. Blood drawn from an unwilling or dead victim is useless to Navarr magic; it holds no power. Because of their use of blood-letting, it is rare to find a Vate who does not have some ability with the healing arts, either mastery of the powers of Spring or else surgery. Many Vates are skilled with both, able to use magic and skill alike to heal wounds and knit bones.

10 Navarr hearth magic

10.1 Tracing patterns

The creation and tracing of complex designs has a magical resonance for the Navarr. At its most basic, it is found in the concept of map-making - of creating designs that mirror the world - and in journeys along paths and roads. A complex design represents a journey, but it can also represent the idea of permanence. Following a path, repeating the actions of someone who has gone before, gives extra weight to the journey and if that journey already has a magical meaning, the repeated tread of many feet recreates and reinforces that magic. The Trods are the most obvious example of the use of designs - tracing out a great complex design, which is then reinforced over and over not only by the Navarr stridings but by every other pair of feet that walks on or near the path.

The marks that accompany the swearing of oaths are often abstract designs, and tracing that design relives the moment when the oath was made.



10.1.1 Tattoos and brands

Tattoos and brands are a powerful example of the use of designs. They add great weight and power to **sworn oaths** and rituals of loyalty and binding. Marking oneself permanently helps to grant tenacity and durability to oaths, but can also be used to try and extend the duration of some magic. Many Navarr choose to cement vows and solemn undertakings with a tattoo or a brand hoping to draw on the power of the mark to keep them true to their pledge. A prominent mark that can be clearly seen is more powerful than a similar mark hidden on the body.

10.1.2 Blood

Blood is not a hearth magic - there is no known inherent magical effect in blood.

11 Navarr lineage and species attitudes

The Striding of the Clouded Eye exclusively travels the Trods of Therunin and boasts a purity of Merrow blood rarely found elsewhere.

?Of Trod and Travels? A Guide to the Stridings of the Navarr



The Navarr are generally accepting of those with lineage. Most communities have at least one or two individuals with the trace of lineage. Because of the common bond that humans with the same lineage often feel and the way individuals move between [Stridings](#) and [Steadings](#), it is not uncommon for them to end up composed largely or solely of Navarr with a single lineage. There are rarely hard and fast rules however; such things are anathema to the adaptable Navarr.

However, one lineage is distasteful to the Navarr. They mostly shun the [Briars](#), whom they can't help but see as an outward manifestation of the overabundant growth of the [Vallorn](#) and as a reminder of what was lost. While intellectually they may understand that a Briar has their place in the Dance like everyone else, Navarr are rarely comfortable in the presence of such a being, and they are rarely welcome amongst the Navarr. Navarr Briars often make efforts to conceal their lineage as much as possible.

12 Navarr territories

The Navarr territories are scattered throughout the Empire. Most of the land they claim is heavily forested, surrounding the ruins of one of more ancient Navarr settlements.

12.1 Miaren

In the south is Miaren, a forest of golden trees and fair winds, that lies on the border between the Catazarria, heartland of the League, and the Brass Coast. In the early years of the Empire the Vallorn at Miaren was completely destroyed and at the heart of the forest the ruins of the city Seren reclaimed, to be slowly rebuilt. It is now considered the heartland of the Navarr nation, and a symbol of what can be achieved.

12.2 Hercynia

Ice-bound northern Hercynia is a forest territory entirely contained in the Nation of Wintermark. It is an inhospitable place but where the Trods flow so the Navarr travel. The Navarr have made slow but steady inroads here, reclaiming much of the forest from the particularly malicious Vallorn that dwells within it. The territory is quite harsh, and the Navarr steadings there are often under threat from barbarians.

12.3 Therunin

In Highguard, the water-logged bayou of Therunin provides a unique challenge to the stridings that travel here. As the Navarr have recovered territory from the Vallorn, the forest here has grown still more malicious. Monstrous insects are a common threat here, even outside of areas where the Vallorn still holds sway.

12.4 Liathaven (Lost)

In the west a series of dense forests once formed Liathaven. Control of Liathaven was lost at the same time that the Mourn fell and though the Navarr migrations still include this land they must travel secretly for the barbarians that control the Mourn harass any striding which attempts to follow the trods around the ancient wood.

12.5 Brocéliande (Lost; Never conquered)

In the east, lush Brocéliande, on the border between Dawn and Urizen, is considered by the Navarr as ancestral homeland and is the single largest forested expanse in the Empire. This is where Star and Thorn first danced. The Navarr have been unable to make any significant gains in this territory.

13 Navarr children



Choosing to bring another life into the Great Dance is something to be celebrated. In the making, in the bringing into the world, in the life, the learning and ultimately even in death. Parents are considered much like Guides, individuals with a great responsibility for helping their offspring find their place in the dance.

Navarr children are encouraged to take the Imperial tests of citizenship as early as possible, and once they pass they become true members of a **Striding** or **Steading**. At that point anyone can offer the youngster help, giving them what guidance they can.

Many Navarr believe that though children are precious they need to be exposed to risk, if not danger. They should be tested often, to challenge and stretch them, but with care so that they gain confidence with each test. Questions are an opportunity to teach and should be answered with thought and care. The children of other nations are an Imperial resource that the Navarr think are often under-valued. Orphans are a particular concern and in the Brass Coast and other lands they often offer a home in the Stridings to children who have lost their homes and their parents to war with the Barbarians. In Varushka naughty children are even warned that unless they behave they will be sent away with the Navarr.

13.1 Things every child should know

- **Find your place in the Great Dance.** Try to experience as many different aspects of life as possible, so that you can see which one suits you best.
- **The world is dangerous, learn to outsmart it.** The Navarr try to be the smartest and most cunning warriors in the world - learn to outsmart any problems you encounter rather than using brute force.
- **Help build the Empire.** You are the child of a great Empire, make it stronger by helping people where you can.
- **Carry their words to the winds.** The Navarr often carry important information for the Empire, always make yourself available to run messages for people if you can.
- **Tread carefully in the wild places.** Be careful and alert at all times. Be vigilant and look for danger wherever you go.

14 Navarr music

14.1 The Music of Navarr

14.1.1 Style summary

Navarr music reflects a dichotomy of wistful remembrance for their old culture and the practicalities of survival in the wild. Recent music has a practicality underlying it. Loud and high calling noises appear throughout the music in order to develop vocal chords for the relay of messages, cries of warning and the roar of a fear educing charge from hiding. Drumming is widely used for similar reasons. The sounds, in contrast to the melodic music of old culture, are often harsh which reflects the Navarr attitude towards nature - not one of harmony but of dominance. Much of the music of their lost cities has changed over time to include primal sounds, for example, fast fiddle and pipes or soft unison singing is joined by loud calling and percussion. Lyrics reflect the dichotomy of the memory of lost cities and the practicalities of life in the wild. References to nature are common but are dark and evocative rather than romantic. Work songs and cautionary tales are common as are the themes of travelling, fate, forests, and blood. Songs of the old culture; lost cities and sacrifice concentrate on remembrance rather than lamentation.

To achieve this sound look at music that fuses Celtic folk styles with African and South American tribal sounds. Music can draw on Scottish, Irish, Greek, Galician, and Basque/French folk tunes as well Tolkienesque fantasy for lyrics, with added African-style percussion, Amazonian and Amazigh music, to fuse with the sounds of the old culture.

14.1.2 Commonly known songs

- [Ten Thousand Miles](#) - song of love/travelling, medium.
- [By Chance It Was](#) - A love song
- [Navarr](#) - A song about reclaiming the old cities - traditionally used at the start of dances.

14.1.2.1 A musical tradition

Music has a practical use in Navarr society. Music plays a prominent part to create social harmony and to invoke the powers from beyond. It is used for work songs and for teaching.

Social rituals are often performed to music, such as courtship rituals where a male lead, supported by a male chorus, makes his case, and the female lead, supported by a female chorus, questions him.

Blood Rituals often rely on percussion support to evoke the feel of the pumping hear and helps focus the arts of the Vates.

14.1.2.2 One for the kids

- [All the Pretty Ponies](#) - lullaby remembering extinct horses, very easy.

14.1.3 Further examples

14.1.3.1 Songs

- [I Come and Stand at Every Door](#) - sad song about the fall of Navarr cities, easy.
- [All the Pretty Ponies](#) - lullaby remembering extinct horses, very easy.
- [Ten Thousand Miles](#) - song of love/travelling, medium.
- [Navarr](#) - A song about reclaiming the old cities - traditionally used at the start of dances.
- [By Chance It Was](#) - A love song

14.1.3.2 Instrumentation and tunes

Strings, whistles, chanters, djembes, bodhráns and voices. Pretty much any instrument works well in Navarr.

14.1.3.3 Other performance traditions

- Storytelling is discussed in [Navarr Culture and Customs](#)
- Dance
- Poetry e.g. [Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening](#) by Robert Frost.

14.1.4 How to adapt your repertoire

- Western Folk tradition - Stick to folk songs from the folk traditions mentioned as sources or that have a primal sound. Dirty them up by simplifying arrangements and then add tribal sounds. This will lend the sense that the old culture has been a little forgotten over time and will give added poignancy to the occasional song performed with a pure 'Celtic' sound. Maybe keep one or two songs unchanged and perform them unaccompanied as a powerful reminder of the old culture.
- Non-western traditions - Move songs into English. Try to lean melodies towards a more 'Celtic' sound.
- Try to avoid frenzied drumming circles - the Navarr are an urban culture turned traveller, but wants to return to city life ? and try to avoid the ceilidh vibe. Jigs and waltzes don't match the [feel](#) of primal otherworldliness.

14.1.5 Our sources

- Modern Gaelic artists; Modern Welsh Language Artists such as Fern Hill; World Fusion such as Afrocelt Sound System (although less electronic) and Baka Beyond; Scottish-influenced Canadian songs and tunes e.g. Ashley MacIsaac, Great Big Sea (although less poppy), the instrumental stuff by Shooglenifty e.g. Arms Dealer's Daughter (CD), Michael McGoldrick (e.g. Wired), Irish folk, Greek folk tunes and dances. modern pipers e.g. Finlay MacDonald,
- Travel-themed songs and poems by Tolkien could provide inspiration e.g. http://allpoetry.com/poem/8500011-I_Sit_And_Think-by-J_R_R_Tolkien and the [Misty Mountain song](#) is spot on for the Navarr sound.

Here is a [youtube playlist](#) of appropriate or inspiring music.

15 Navarr costumes

This is a placeholder page for content that PD are actively working on.

Note: The tone and style of this page may need editing. All costume advice pages should be written in third person voice, using verbs that make clear that this page is advice, not direction.

15.1 Overview

The Navarr are a practical people and their clothes reflect this. They prefer hard wearing clothes that will survive heavy use in the woods, and colours that withstand the mud and rain. Patched and mended fabrics will be seen in many clothes, as worn and ripped clothes are mended 'on the go'. Layered clothes are common, so that outfits be easily changed no matter the weather. Large cloaks that can be used as blankets are common. Belts are also used by most Navarr, both for keeping their clothes pulled back away from branches and brambles, and for carrying their kit.

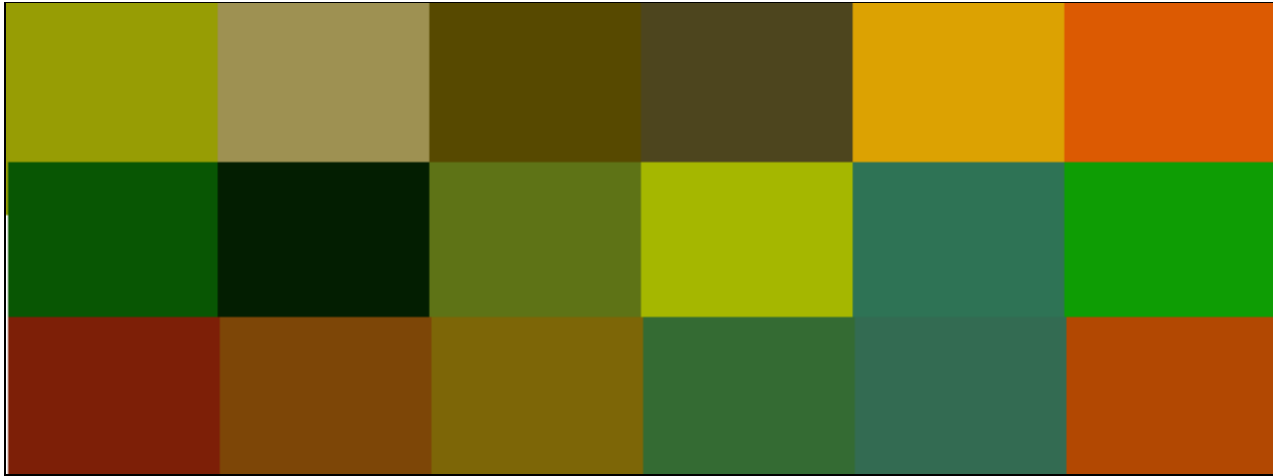
15.1.1 Materials

Materials are practical, primarily those that come from hunting - leather, suede and fur. Materials like linen, wool, velvet or silk are less common.

When it comes to decoration, natural materials are drawn from heavily. Feathers and fur may trim clothes, and beads made from seeds, wood and stones will adorn many of their garments. Patterns may also be painted onto clothes, again using natural colours like ochre red, black and white.

15.1.2 Colours

The palette is the colours of a spring: soft greens and browns, gentle misty greys, and perhaps the dark blood red of birthing or dark autumnal yellow.



15.2 Inspiration

Wild/wood elves, The Rangers from Lord of the Rings.

15.3 Similar nations

15.3.1 Wintermark

Navarr tend to wear light leather armour and simple, earth tone clothes, much like the Steinr. Navarr decorations are more likely to come from nature, in the form of paints, feathers and beads, rather than the woven trims popular with the Steinr.

Kallavesi mystics may also be occasionally mistaken for Navarr Vates; however, the Navarr do not wear animal headresses and do not believe in evoking animal spirits.

15.3.1.1 The Marches

There are also overlaps between the Marches beaters and the Navarr. The beaters tend towards later medieval period clothing, like jacks rather than the tunics and vests popular with the Navarr. The Navarr also tend to use large amounts of furs, pieces of leather and paints that the Marchers would avoid.

15.4 Costumes

Navarr clothing is layered, serviceable and well-worn. Even for civilians, it'll often features pieces of leather armour, though this is to protect against the environment as much as enemy weapons. Clothes are suitable for people who live their lives in the wild forests. Not just a robust construction but practical designs, for instance hooded cloaks that give protection against the weather, but can also serve as bedding. Belts and straps feature quite heavily ? both to secure clothing so it doesn't snag, and to hold a variety of gear securely while moving through woodland. Boots are long and close fitting to protect the lower legs while walking.

Navarr style of dress varies, depending on how much contact the Striding or Steading has with the other nations. More isolated Navarr may adopt a rougher, more practical or primitive look, primarily comprised of leather, furs and natural materials, suitable for hunting people who are used to sleeping rough. Those Navarr who trade with their neighbours are more likely to have access to wool and similar materials so their costume reflects their closer contact with fellow members of the Empire. However, most Navarr will fall somewhere in between these two extremes.

For formal functions, some Navarr will prefer to draw from their roots, wearing highly decorated leathers and impressive furs, and donning their most intricate facepaints. More integrated Navarr will prefer to reflect what is fashionable in other nations, in wool, linen and silk clothes. These will usually be given a Navarr slant though, with fur trims, decoration in natural materials and a natural colour palette.

15.4.1 Shoes

Shoes can take many forms, as long as they are practical. For this reason, leather boots are most common, often coming to or even past the knee. Ankle boots in soft suede and canvas would also be perfectly suitable, however, as would the addition of boot tops, puttees and wraps in cloth and leather.

15.4.2 Making Navarr costumes

Navarr costumes, being mostly leather and fur, require some care and specialist knowledge to create at home. For those people who are unfamiliar with leather work, there are plenty of resources available on the internet.

- [Alley Cat Scratch](#)
- [eHow](#)
- [Do it Yourself](#)

The garments will be simple, and can be based around t-tunics, with a fabric tunic as a base layer and a leather tunic with or without sleeves on top. Light, soft garment suede can generally be sewn on a regular sewing machine providing a stronger (leather specific) needle is used. These are generally available from most sewing and hobby retailers. In this way many of the instructions for making simple fabric items can be duplicated with lightweight leather, though remember leather does not fray like fabric so edges can be left 'as cut' so check any allowances on patterns for hems and seams.

The easiest way to machine sew light leather is to apply a thin line of general purpose glue along the intended stitch line of each piece, this holds them securely in place whilst running each section through your machine. It is recommended to test a small sample with your machine first. Depending on the size of the hide used, for a rougher, more natural edge to a shirt or tunic the leather can be left uncut along the base or round the cuffs.



- [Making a T-Tunic](#)

Leather or suede trousers are a staple of Navarr costumes and if care is taken to hide or remove modern belt loops, pockets and zips, leather 'jeans' will be perfectly suitable. Trousers in suede, and brown or green would be preferable to shiny black leather if possible. Leather and fur coats can also be adapted by removing collars, sleeves and buttons to make a robe or waistcoat style coat. Skirts and loin cloths can be made by lacing or sewing a piece (or lots of small pieces) of leather, suede or fur to a belt which can then be buckled around the waist.

Similarly old or damaged parts of existing soft leather costumes can be used to good effect by cutting away excess for a skirt or loin cloths, combining different items in a patchwork of repair to make a single servicable item or simply shredding them to provide cosmetic effect of repaired patches to existing kit.



Decorations will take the form of natural objects like feathers, gemstones, bones, and beads made from wood, stones, clay and shells, which are all readily available through craft shops and online. Leather lacing and decorative stitching using leather thonging can be used in place of embroidery. Acrylic paint is excellent for decorating fabric and leather and is cheap and easy to use. Colours should reflect natural pigments where possible. As the Navarr are not based on Native Americans, large quantities of turquoise beading, and leather tassels are best avoided. Similarly, Celtic style knot-work isn't suitable as decorative patterns.



Overall, costumes for the Navarr should appear well used, comfortable and practical. Pieces of old costume can be gathered from friends and past characters, or found second hand in charity or vintage shops for a worn and pieced together look.

15.4.3 Children's costumes

Navarr children will wear simplified versions of adult clothing - garments that are practical for play but also easy to keep clean. For toddlers and babies, smocks, or simple t-tunics and drawstring trousers are simple and easy to pull-on garments, that can be made in linen or cotton for easy washing! These types of clothes also have plenty of flexibility in terms of size, meaning you'll get more than one year's use out of them. Small coifs, made as described above are great for keeping the sun off a baby's head and simple straw hats can also be used to stop children burning. Older children can either have their own costumes, or be given adult clothes which are then rolled up and belted to fit - the practical Navarr are unlikely to waste any clothing and hand me downs are a cheap (in and out of character!) way to clothe your children!

When making costumes for smaller children, remember to avoid anything tight around the neck - strings, cloaks, hats on cords etc and in addition, all tabards should secure under the arms. Make sleeves and armholes wider than needed; they're the bits that get tight as they grow. Neck holes also need to be bigger than for adults or should fasten at the back.

- [Information on clothes and swaddling for babies](#)
- [Patterns for Medieval children's clothes](#)
- [Revival Clothing's Premade items for children](#)
- [Gambeson's Premade items for children](#)

15.5 Armour

Thick hardened leather is the most common form of armour for the Navarr, occasionally supplemented with light chain or scale. Navarr armour often features an asymmetric pattern, with lines and closures that run diagonally across the body rather than vertically. Leather is the most common material used for armour by the Navarr, but they occasionally augment the armour with sections of chain or scale. A popular style is asymmetric with diagonal lines that overlap over the body, but a single breastplate is just as common.

Existing suede jacks or lighter armour can be augmented with additional rigid leather plates either riveted or laced into place. Card templates may be overlaid to ensure sufficient clearance is left for existing buckles, lacing etc and are easily adjusted to provide a wide variety of patterns and combinations. Such templates can also ensure the most effective use of potentially expensive materials, minimising wastage and even enabling creative use of cheaper offcuts.

Over a single breastplate a simple sleeveless waistcoat may be worn. Extending down to protect the thighs and split at the sides it can be left open at the front, held to the body with a simple belt. Whilst revealing the tougher armour underneath and maintaining flexibility around the waist, additional heavy leather plates or sections of chain can be riveted or laced in place to give further protection to the upper legs.

15.6 Shields

Shields are narrow and fluted, barely wider than the wielder. They are often heavily decorated with the thorn motif.

15.7 Weapons

The iconic weapon of the Navarr is a great barbed spear. Otherwise weapons are, light, practical and good for skirmishing rather than heavy combat. Bows are often short, for ease of use in woodland.

15.8 Bibliography and resources

15.8.1 Armour

- [Totally Leathered](#) [Totally Leathered](#) provides custom tooled leatherwork & bespoke armour.
- [Idiom Productions](#) Costume and Props Workshop creates custom hand-tooled leather armour, clothing and LRP weapons

15.8.2 Leather Suppliers

- [Lyon's Leathers](#) Wide range of leathers, suedes and buckles.
- [Tandy Leather Factory](#) Leather and leatherworking supplies.