Whistling Tower

Close to the easternmost tip of the Holy Isle of Mona, on the eastern shore's cliffs, is this stack-like headland, linked to the mainland (off-map) by a short, narrow isthmus. The cliffs here are approximately 900 feet tall (275 metres). Towards the stack's base, around 20 ft (6 m) above the typical high-tide line, the narrow, uneven **Exterior Cliff Path** follows a rock shelf leading to three cavern entrances (labelled A, B & C) on the seaward side. At one time, this path ran around the headland, but storms have damaged and eroded it on the southeastern side, meaning that section has become disused, rubble-strewn and overgrown. It is completely impassable at one point, having crumbled away entirely for roughly 20 ft. A hidden structure was built within the headland, often only lightly expanding some natural caves that already existed there. At some time long ago, it was used as a temple. Now, it is home to Talalessa Ocean-Rider and her companions. Some of these companions are semi-permanent residents here, others come and go all the time.

The notes for Whistling Tower here partly derive from the same sources as the separate Cape of Life map, where based on that map's notes. Some of the following material was additionally derived from, or inspired by, features and tables in *One Shot Wonders* and *Roll & Play: The Fantasy Character Kit*, both by Roll & Play Press, with some of the names determined using elements in tables from the *Nomicon* by Mythmere Games.

Inhabitants

Talalessa Ocean-Rider is a very powerful aquatic Archdruid. Some suspect she is at least part deity. Tall and slim, almost sea-creature streamlined, of more-or-less Human or Elvish appearance, and of indeterminate adult age, she wears a crown of living corals that thrive even when she, and they, are in air, waving as if underwater as she moves, with her long, dark hair that falls and moves like waves too. Her sea-grey eyes have irises that dance and swirl like whirlpools. Her command of water magics seems unparalleled, apparently unaffected by the general magic-dampening so commonly noticed by others on and near Mona. She has an obvious bond with all sea creatures, who clearly accord her respect, never fear. She habitually wears a long, shimmering aquamarine gown that seems to pool at her feet, and which moves like water when she does. No one seems sure if the gown is really an extension of herself, or an actual garment of some unknown kind. She sometimes also wears an item or two of, possibly magical, jewellery, such as a string of pearls or small seashells of different shapes, sizes and colours, a brooch in the perfect form of a small, always colourful, sea creature, or a ring that matches the colour and nature of the nearby sea in miniature. A fresh, salt breeze always accompanies her on land. Her face rarely betrays emotion, and her gaze often seems fixed on something beyond the ken of ordinary mortals. She is not always at the Tower, off traversing the oceans of the world, as she leads, or at least seems uncommonly familiar with, very many underwater and coastal druidic groups across Nibirum, usually travelling in the form of a great shark or whale, yet always one that reveals some of her characteristic features. Legends surround her. She is known to have calmed tsunamis to save coastal settlements on land, and near-coastal ones undersea, and to have broken droughts to restore river-flows. Somehow, she always seems to know where and when she will be needed like this.

The main semi-permanent residents at the Tower are collectively known as "**The Healers**", as they are all capable of providing care for wounds and illnesses. They wear practical, loose-fitting, pale green, short-sleeved tops and trousers, each embroidered with a marine motif on the left breast, with a belt pouch of bandages, basic herbs and a pot of healing salve. Other, more substantial, items are stored in cupboards in the Tower complex. There is never less than one of them here, and their total number is somewhere in the low tens - no one, except Talalessa, seems very precise about this. Their leader, **Devos**, is almost always at the Tower, calming things with his ever-serene presence at need. He is extremely capable, and can, perhaps magically, radiate calm in his vicinity when required. All are very familiar with the sea and its moods, with most possessing some watery-druidic abilities as well. Each also carries a pair of very sharp, curved-blade knives in protective sheaths that can be used as surgical tools or weapons, similar in size to a dagger.

Visiting residents often include one or two, sometimes more, **Monks of the Broken Circle** from Shortstone Island, around 35 miles (55 kilometres) northwest along Mona's east coast from the Tower. Their order is dedicated to providing aid following weather- and water-related disasters, such as floods, storms and shipwrecks. Another, though far less frequent, visitor, may be **Buru** of Buru's Lodge, his home about 7 miles (11 km) inland to the northwest. Buru is a middle-aged Human hermit, actually a Werebear able to control his condition, and who sometimes assists the Monks of Shortstone Island and Talalessa. More notes on the Monks and Buru can be found with the separate Cape of Life map in the Atlas.

Additional visitors may include various undersea humanoids, most of whom would be restricted to the Viewing Pool area and its surrounds, unless able to survive in air and move on land for a time, with rare folk from different parts of Nibirum, or even stranger creatures at times, most with aquatic connections.

Labelled Interior of the Map

Main Entrances A, B & C are each broad, largely natural, cave-mouths, between 12 and 15 ft high at most (3.5 to 4.5 m). They lead from the Exterior Cliff Path into irregular cave tunnels of generally similar, though variable, heights. Tunnels from Entrances A and B have rough-cut natural stone steps leading down immediately inside. These can be slippery in places, especially nearer their tops, although the steps are mostly quite broad. Entrance C opens into a level, open cave area, with a variable, generally 18 ft or so ceiling (5.5 m). A tunnel of similar height to the external entryway leads off northwest, and slightly downwards, to the top of another flight of natural-stone steps down, followed by a second descending flight after the exit from the initial Entrance B step-tunnel. Where these steps end, meeting the stair-passage from Entrance A, a fresh tunnel opens southwest into the base of the Tower Stairwell, beside the Viewing Pool.

The southern extension of the cave inside Entrance C is the **Main Store**, which contains a large table, two benches, and a ring of tall cupboards around the walls. Equipment available for use in rescues and providing aid is packed into the cupboards, items that are often large or bulky, and sometimes unexpected (such as a rowing boat that seems larger than any cupboard could accommodate), allowing them to be quickly deployed outside at need. It is common in times of emergencies for this area and the rest of the Entrance C cave to be pressed into service as a rescue station to triage injuries, provide food, drink and shelter, and to prepare specialised items, for instance. The fact the cave lies well above the sea, and there is no means of harbouring vessels at the Tower promontory, never seems to be a problem for Talalessa.

The **Tower Stairwell** is a huge, funnel-like, natural cavern, with a roof around 60 ft (18 m) above its lowest floor, where the entrance tunnels lead into. A spiralling stone-ledge ramp, cut into steps up much of its rise, ascends around the sides of this broadening funnel, for a total of roughly 35 ft (10 m). In the lower centre of the cavern is the irregularly-shaped **Viewing Pool**. This links directly to the sea, so is tidal, although its mean higher level is about 10 ft (3 m) below the lowest rock shelf at the base of the Stairwell. The highest tides see the water rising to cover the lower parts of the stairs. Creatures and marine visitors can use this Pool to access the Tower, and the Pool can be used by those with the ability to view events happening elsewhere in Nibirum, connected with water. Such viewing can take place at any of the landings along the Stairwell, or from the floor surrounding its top, albeit less of the Pool can be seen from this uppermost platform. That generally flat-floored ring area around the Stairwell funnel's top, while usually empty, can be pressed into service as an extra dormitory, hospital, dining or rest area, or whatever else may be required at times.

A very broad, natural arch, some 20 ft high in its centre (6 m), opens directly between the top area around the Tower Stairwell and the **Elden Temple**. This is the surviving part of the original Temple here, and while not used for specific religious purposes any longer, it is still appointed with a cloth-covered huge altar carved from the cavern floor's rock, always lit by four large candles, with four benches, a couple of large, padded seats, and a marine-humanoid, deity-like statue behind the altar. Nobody seems sure exactly which deity the statue may be of, and its features seem oddly indistinct too (as if captured in motion), beyond some more obvious general sea-creature fins and scales. The area is frequently used as a common-room for residents and guests, and for planning discussions with more people than the separate Planning Chamber can host. The ceiling above this area rises in a loose, natural dome to about 25 ft (7.5 m) over the altar. Three cave tunnels lead out from here to the north (10 ft high, 3 m), northwest (12 ft high, 3.5 m), and the broadest to the southwest (15 ft high, 4.5 m). Lamps and lanterns are commonly used in the inhabited parts of the complex beyond this point.

The lowest, northern tunnel archway from the Temple area winds off to **Archdruid** Talalessa's quarters, a loosely 10 ft high (3 m) natural, dead-end cave, appointed with a bed, table, chair, chest and cupboard, containing a variety of items, maps, scrolls, books and personal effects. Talalessa herself may be here if she is at the Tower, although she may be just as often elsewhere inside or out at the complex.

Along the northwestern exit from the Temple zone is a storage cupboard with simple cutlery, drinking vessels, bowls and flatware for use in the **Dining Room** area a little further along, with its pair of round tables and sets of chairs. Anyone in residence may be eating here at meal times, although the limited space means they may be eating elsewhere instead, or in time-staggered groups. The 10 ft high (3 m) alcove cave just north of the Dining Area holds the **Kitchen Stores**, with its mix of fresh and dried foods, barrels of water and wine. Heating of food and drink is done using magically-warmed stones, or sometimes by warming the eating and drinking vessels themselves. Most of the semi-permanent residents are able to do this when required.

Just west of the Dining Room is the smaller of the two **Guest Quarters**, a 12 ft high (3.5 m), rounded, dead-end cave, with a bed, chest and storage cupboard. The chest and cupboard are typically empty unless there is a guest staying here. To the south is the long, broad, loosely 18 ft high (5.5 m), passage-like **Dormitory**, which has accommodation for ten sleepers in its bunk beds. Semi-permanent residents usually occupy some of these, with the nearby chests and cupboards containing their spare clothing and gear. A short, wide, 12 ft tall passageway south from the Dormitory opens into the 18 ft high, larger **Guest Quarters** chamber. Apart from a bed, chest and cupboard, this area also has a a round table and padded-seat chair. A further 15 ft high (4.5 m) tunnel leads east from the south end of the Dormitory back to the Elden Temple.

Just southwest of the Temple area, off the southeastern side of the broad tunnel there, is the entrance to the **Planning Chamber**. This is by a set of descending steps in a 10 ft (3 m) high tunnel. These flatten into a narrow, spiralling tunnel east of similar height that curves around north, then west, into a rising set of steps to the Chamber itself, a roughly 12 ft high cave (3.5 m), elongated approximately west-east, with a large table, a number of stools, and a large map cupboard. Here, plans for difficult or distant rescues can be prepared, especially where coordination of activities with those from outside the Tower is needed. In the southeast ceiling, a narrow vertical chute rises up into a high, rocky, turret-like outcrop on the upper surface of the promontory, which acts as a lookout point for the Tower. A wooden **Surface Access Ladder** leads up to this turret, which has only viewing slits between the rocks to the outside, no physical doorway. The chute is apparently around 40 ft long (12 m), despite the fact the turret lies more than 850 ft (260 m) above the Planning Chamber, thanks to a magical distance-warp on either the chute or the ladder for those using it.