



CAMPAIGN NOTES

OVERVIEW

The land of Petan lies within Kara-Tur (in the Forgotten Realms), bordered by Tabot and Shou Lung to the North and T'u Lung and Malatra to the East. It is a mountainous region filled with verdant forests, snow-capped peaks, and dense jungle. It has some trade contact with Kozakura and Wa thanks to ocean ports, but this is limited in scope.

The people are generally pleasant and welcoming to guests. The land is dotted with temples and monasteries, most dedicated to one or more of the Eight Million Immortals. Dragons are revered as powerful (and sometimes destructive) spirits and forces of nature. Architecture often incorporates draconic semblance as a sign of respect and power.

The bulk of the population consists of humans and spirit folk, with a number of hengeyokai and korobokuru living among them. Vanara are fairly common in the forested lands but less so in the jungles. The litorians of Petan are striped and resemble tigers more than lions. Nezumi are tolerated in most areas but often face prejudice. The volodni are common in the jungle areas but not seen too often in human civilizations.

Monks and shamans are respected, and the warrior class currently holds power. Samurai are treated with respect but are not held in as high esteem as in areas such as Wa. Martial arts (called *budo*) are a favorite pastime and form of defense, with even the lowliest peasant likely to know an art form.

The mountains yield a valuable blue-green crystal which is mined and used in the manufacture of quality weapons. Crystal-laced and crystalline weapons are prized as symbols of status and wealth. In addition, Petan is home to some of the finest clans of weaponsmiths in Kara-Tur, each with their own unique specialties.

Despite several significant human cities, most of Petan is wilderness and inhabited by dangerous beings. Bakemono thrive in the woodlands and often maraud under the banner of a powerful oni. Dragons lurk in the deepest wilds, and ravenous gaki are known to appear from time to time.

Legends speak of lost civilizations swallowed up in the wilderness. Treasure hunters disappear each year looking for lost valuables of these bygone people. Some truth lies behind the rumors, because slain bakemono are often found with ancient coins.

CULTURAL AND FANTASY CONSIDERATIONS

The mythical land of Petan is a melting pot of real-world Asian cultures. It is heavily influenced by the concept of Chinese and Tibetan monasteries training numerous warrior monks who then go out into the world. Added to this are Japanese-style samurai nobles. They do not have absolute control as in a more Japanese land would have, but they are feared and respected members of society. Indian and Indonesian influences also spill in, flavoring the mix with some exotic additions such as the thuggee or muni.



Missing from the staple fantasy genre is the armored knight on horseback or gray-bearded wizard. The Fighter class concept is gone, replaced with numerous variations on martial arts showing the emphasis in this land on *budo* training. Likewise, organized religious bodies are not churches but isolated temples and monasteries revering one or more spirit entities among the Eight Million Immortals.

Of course, no Orient-flavored fantasy game would be complete without the Ninja. In Petan, they are rumors and myths to the general populace, with many a charlatan claiming to be a “true” ninja. However, the real Ninja hide their identities and pretend to be something else entirely; rather easy to do in a land where anyone could be a *budo* master. Some Ninja work as spies and infiltrators, others are little more than assassins. Regardless, serious claims that ninja exist are often met with mocking and scorn.

RACES

There are several intelligent races in the civilized lands of Petan. The most numerous are described below.

Hengeyokai: These natural shapeshifters are similar to lycanthropes in other lands, but they are not cursed and do not spread a curse with their bite. Humans are sometimes distrustful of hengeyokai who wear their hybrid form in public but often do not know when they meet a humanoid hengeyokai.

Human: The most numerous race in Petan, humans are the ultimate in diversity, with some honorable and others not. With a human, you never know what you will get. Natives of Petan tend to have a medium complexion, black hair, brown eyes, and average no more than 5 foot 10 inches in height for males.

Korobokuru: The reclusive dwarf-like korobokuru tend to live in more wilderness settings than within cities. A few choose to live among humans and often take up a craft of some sort. Several have become renowned weaponsmiths. Korobokuru are a bit wild but tend to naturally behave honorably. As with all things, there are exceptions.

Litorian: The Petan litorians are a strong, powerful race of tiger-like bipeds. They are large and very muscular. Litorian mercenaries are known for their great proficiency in the arts of war and for their loyalty. Honor has much meaning to a litorian.

Nezumi: This race of biped ratlings is often maligned by humans, despite their general good nature. Abuse and mistrust from other races often relegates nezumi to the slums and other poor areas of cities. They are suspected as thieves and miscreants; although this is a stereotype, many nezumi embrace it to the fullest. Nezumi mercenaries are known to be cheap, effective, and easily bribed.

Spirit Folk: The spirit folk live among humans and utilize their gifts for the betterment of their communities. Few are violent and warlike, preferring the ways of peace and contemplation. Some learn the harshness of the world early on or find themselves filled with wanderlust. These individuals are the exception, however.

Vanara: The intelligent monkey-men of Petan are renowned shamans and martial artists. They sometimes face prejudice for their appearance but are generally well-tolerated. Vanara rarely congregate in large groups, preferring to live among other races. Like humans, they vary greatly in personality and ethics.



Volodni: The mysterious volodni are plant-like people from the depths of Petan's woodlands. They are honorable but fierce warriors willing to die to save their lands from invaders. Volodni traders get along well with humans, but the two races are very different emotionally and physiologically.

CLASSES

Akashic: These introspective mystics tap into the power of the collective memory of all who have ever lived. They learn tricks and talents of a diverse nature by communing with the ancestral memory.

Budoka: These warrior monks are practitioners of a *budo* (martial art) and hone their bodies into living weapons. They are strict disciplinarians who can achieve superhuman feats. Renamed from Yin Monk.

Crusader: These religious warriors master martial combat and channel power from their chosen divine purpose.

Dang-Ki: These holy men are an offshoot of the Budoka, combining martial mastery with religious conviction. They are experts in inspiring and blessing others with their divine power. Renamed from Holy Monk.

Dragon Shaman: Dragons are the ultimate living power, spiritual entities embodied in physical might. The Dragon Shaman emulates the power of the dragon and grows closer to these creatures as they progress.

Martial Warrior: These soldiers focus on purely war aspects of the *budo* (martial arts), becoming brutally efficient fighters with their hands and exotic weaponry.

Muni: These monks meditate on the physical, not spiritual. Their understanding of the humanoid form is unparalleled, and they have learned to manipulate their bodies to enhance their martial training.

Ninja: These trained spies and assassins officially do not exist; they are mere boogymen and tales to frighten children. At least, that's what the ninja want you to believe. Their art is deception and masquerade, appearing as something they are not.

Ritual Warrior: These powerful combatants master kata and ritual until the movements are second nature. When combat comes, they do not act but react, with devastating effect.

Samurai: The top echelon of noble warriors, the samurai strive for honor and perfection in all they do. Their mastery of the katana is unparalleled.

Shaman: These nature priests revere some of the Eight Million Immortals and draw their powers from the spirit world. They serve as religious leaders, healers, and councilors.

Shikari: These individuals prefer the company of animals and nature to men. They are the undisputed masters of the wilderness. Renamed from Ranger.

Shugenja: These holy men revere spirits and the elements and are the most common spellcasters in Petan.



Sohei: Trained from a young age, these warriors are the guardians of the temples and holy places of Petan. They receive the best in combat training and are renowned as elite soldiers.

Swordsage: These masters of martial stances and maneuvers are extraordinarily versatile in combat. They have no one specialty but can fill a variety of roles. Most learn their art from another renowned swordsage who often requires years of service in exchange for training. Afterward, the apprentice is free to set his own course, and many become mercenaries or adventurers.

Thuggee: One part rogue, one part religious fanatic, the thuggee is the enforcer of temples and divine will. Their paths often take them outside the realms of honor, and some are little more than zealot murders. Others are staunch defenders of justice and righteousness, depending on their particular religious upbringing.

Tong Shu: Wherever there are things worth stealing, there are those who master the skills necessary to do so. The Tong Shu are many and varied in talents, but all possess some aspects of stealth and deception. Most Tong Shu are without honor.

Tsukai: Rare and mysterious, the tsukai channel the power of magic through force of will. They have staggering ability but are often seen as dangerous and unpredictable. Renamed from Sorcerer.

Warblade: The warblade is the embodiment of a body honed to physical perfection through hours of endless training. They are not known as masters of any particular weapon but flexible enough to quickly master any weapon. The warblade lives to test his skills in honorable battle.

Wu Jen: These mystics are not natural spellcasters; instead they trade esoteric knowledge in exchange for strange oaths to spirit entities. They are truly powerful arcanists with strange habits and taboos. Most courts employ honorable wu jen advisors, and dishonorable wu jen are individuals truly feared.