

Trade and Economics in Vandlar

A Guide for Merchants and Buyers

Over the centuries the political climate of Vandlar has shifted from race to race and King to King. Mighty Cities have risen, prospered, then fallen to war or stagnation while some cultures preserve traditions and art which span the entirety of known history and into legend. One thing which has been constant and will never change is the constancy of Trade. New races, new inventions and new items are brought all the time to the continent both by the innovation of its inhabitants as well as the fickle Mists.

The history of Economics in Vandlar is fascinating. Notable times of progress include the Elven War, the Retreat of the Sarr, the Rise of the Barbarians, the Return of the Sarr and the Coming of the Hobblings—each of these major events completely rewrote how traders and merchants not only handled their wares and currencies but also which items they had to work with. No incident, however, has had as much impact on the current economic situation (or any prior it can be argued) than the Coming of Man and the establishment of the Human Kingdom which has, in the current time, come to control more of Vandlar than any other race has ever managed.

While Humans have established the current currency rates and governmental arrangements of trade two other races have had such a heavy hand that the prosperity of almost all merchants, caravans and traders traces its success back to the Harroo (Sarr of Vandlar) or the Hobblings.

With the return of the Harroo who, having centuries ago lost a war and retreated with their king to the great Southern Continent where they established a new thriving kingdom, exotic and unheard of goods began to flow into the market. Trade routes were built as the Harroo realized their dreams of a Trade Empire... the great Oathbound Trading Company with its red sailed ships. Today huge caravan routes provide not only quick access to merchants and traders but also the “main trails” of the kingdom itself—from simple dirt paths to well paved roads the great Trade Routes of the Harroo have become the veins carrying the lifeblood of Trade to all parts of the Kingdom.

The Hobblings however had a much greater impact on the Goods carried rather than the method they were moved. Hobblings arrived in Vandlar with great herds of Horses of such fine breeding that the Royals themselves to this day take their mounts from a few choice herds under Hobbling control. In addition their skill with agriculture and textiles have turned the city of Shadewood (their home city) into a veritable Bread Basket of the Continent- excess of grain, vegetables and cotton have allowed them to become the Heart of Trade pumping fine garments and preserved foods out through the Trade Routes in quantities never seen before. More than any other Age of Vandlar common folk have access to things such as sugar, fine clothing and armor/weaponry (thanks mostly to dwarven smiths it must be said) creating a time of prosperity and economic growth with few signs of decline in the visible future.

Royal Decrees

With the current refinement of Trade the King and Court have passed down several Decrees specifically designed to ensure that trade flourishes, the government prospers and the people reap the bounty of this economic growth on all fronts. Most of

these Decrees deal with definitions and quality—things such as grades for wheat and other cereal crops, husbandry and animal grading as well as Decrees which concern taxation, customs and importation to the Continent itself.

The most important governmental body concerned with Trade is the **College of Auditors**. The division, headed by King-appointed Royal Auditor Sheira Emilsin, is responsible not only for the enforcement of royal decrees concerning the Trade and Economic fields but also trains and assigns Auditors both to the Nobility as well as major trading towns.

The Highest of the Auditors (outside of the Royal Auditor herself) are the **Lord Auditors** who work with the Nobles- Barons, Dukes and even landed Knights- to assist them in Accounting and trade agreements through the areas under their command. The Lord Auditors also assist with Taxation- passing their records up the Noble chain of command to the College of Auditors themselves which verify the records of all Nobles and collect the taxes for the King.

The common merchant, however, will likely only encounter the **Kingdom Auditors**. Most settlements have one and most cities or trade hubs have several. Bearing the Seal of the College, Kingdom Auditors are charged not only with assessment of value on items but also with ensuring proper rates of taxation on items which require it and verification of weights and measures used by local merchants. As a Merchant License is required in Vandlar to sell wares, these can be bought from the Kingdom Auditors and come with the stern warning that if at any time they inspect the merchant and find that they are using incorrect measures or false tax rates the license may be revoked. Kingdom Auditors not only serve to police the merchants and traders of Vandlar but also see themselves as the protectors of the free market- they will not get involved if a merchant out haggles an ignorant patron but complaints brought to them of loaded weights or false claims will be investigated immediately and punished severely. As representatives of the King they are able to call upon the Royal Guardsmen who are stationed within their area and will never hesitate to do so.

Tax, Exchange and Quantity

Taxes on Vandlar are, to say the least, nominal. Most trade agreements do not require any taxation as they are considered “minor”. Indeed though they seem to be everywhere there are not enough Kingdom Auditors to be present at all trade agreements to ensure the proper percentage of goods and coin is passed to the coffers of the King. Taxes are assessed only under certain circumstances and documentation is provided of inspection for presentation to all future officials:

The Sea Tax- Ships sailing with cargo which have bought a Merchant License or operate under the direction of a merchant possessing a license are subject to inspection by an Auditor to ensure proper handling and storage of goods (a public safety concern) as well as to assess taxes should the quantity/type of goods dictate it necessary.

The Caravan Tax- Single wagons are usually not checked however Caravans containing more than 6 vehicles are assessed by the Auditors. Only Caravans registering as traders with the Auditors are so checked, however, or those moving under the marks of trading companies or prosperous merchants are always checked. Submitting to such record

keeping has its rewards- Royal buyers and Ambassadors treat only with traders of such good standing and records. Most merchants willingly submit as the tax assessed is nominal and there is little out of pocket expense. The future prospects in trade as well as the hassle-free travel a Write of Inspection will guarantee are worth the price most find.

Taxes are assessed at a variable rate dictated by the items in question as determined below:

Weaponry and Armor- 5% of the total assessed value of the items (100 items or greater)
Textiles, Clothing, Soft Goods- 3% of total assessed value (100 items or greater)
Gemstones and Jewelry, Items of Art- 7% of the total assessed value (all are taxed)
Raw Materials (paper, cloth, ores, minerals)- 2% of total assessed value (100lbs or more)
Food (grains, preserved meats)- 2% of total assessed value (500 lbs or greater)
Alcohols- 8% of total assessed value (all are taxed)
All other/Miscellaneous – 1% of the total assessed value of the items (all are taxed)

The Writ of Inspection and Taxation

After a Kingdom Auditor inspects the items or goods the merchant (or his recorded representative) is presented with a Writ of Inspection and Trade (often called simply a WRIT). A copy of this writ, with a full inventory of the goods inspected, is kept by the Auditors in the origination district.

A Writ allows the merchant who possesses it certain rights under the Laws of the King. Should goods be lost due to bandits or natural disaster (such as monster attacks, weather or poor road repair) the merchant bearing the Writ is allowed to appeal to the Kingdom Auditors seeking aid in the form of Royal Guardsmen and may be entitled to some form of compensation depending on the situation that arises. This is not to say that all claims are responded to as “emergencies” however the Auditors always investigate claims and take whatever steps they can to aid the merchants. This was enacted as situations which threaten a single merchant may escalate to threaten trade in an entire region which damages not only the economics of Vandlar but also potentially the population of a given area. In many cases sincere threats to the Kingdom have been discovered and destroyed by Auditors who investigated merchant claims.

In addition a Writ is a guarantee of easy passage- presenting it to an Auditor or Guard in a city gets the trader a cursory visual inspection (to ensure nothing has changed) but does not subject them to the scrutiny a non-Writ bearing merchant may encounter. Usually upon entering a city a non-Writ bearer will be directed directly toward the local Auditors for inspection and grading of his goods.

Finally a Writ is proof to the purchasing public of the state of merchants’ goods- their true origins and travel time, their handling and in most cases quality, weight and sometimes assessed value. Some buyers have come to rely on these Writs and will refuse to bargain with merchants who are unable to provide them.

Writs are NON TRANSFERABLE. They are documents drafted for specific individuals and granted as such. If a buyer wishes to have his goods inspected and notarized for resale or the quantity bought is great enough he is forced to a new writ is issued. The seller, however, often adds a small surcharge to his goods to compensate for the taxes already paid. During negotiations of large quantities where writs are routinely

viewed it is considered common courtesy to add the value of the tax onto the negotiated price to compensate the seller. In this way, eventually, it is the consumer who pays the tax for the goods they desire and merchants merely must track their funds to ensure they create a profit.

For all of these reasons many traders, even those with little more than a pack on their back or horse, will stop by the Auditors and receive a Writ.

The Standardized Coin and Weights

Auditors assess all values in the Kingdom based off of the Copper Piece. (This is done to keep it in line with the Production of Items in the Alliance Rules). Therefore when presented with a Writ or price not identified buyers and merchants realize it is presented in copper.

For example: A writ lists a gemstone valued at 1000. This is recognized by buyers and merchants to mean 1000 copper. If this stone was purchased it may be bought for 1000 copper, 100 Silver or 10 Gold.

For reference:

1 lb of Gold Coins = ~ 60-65 coins

1 lb of Silver Coins= ~95-100 coins

1 lb of Copper Coins = ~ 110-115 coins

Common symbols include:



Copper.



Silver



Gold

Weights and Measures are as follows:

Weight- the common unit of weight is a “Waystone” (W) which is defined as 1 LB. Thus a 500 W item would translate to weigh 500 pounds. For quantities of immense size Auditors may record them in “Ironstone” (I) which is defined at 2000 LBS or 1 Ton in English. “I” units are usually used for such things as grains, metal ores or wood shipments.

Weight is derived from simple mathematic equations. Auditors weight a small amount of a given object then extrapolate the total volume and weight from there and assign the value.

Volume- Liquid Volumes are recorded in “Meer” (M) which is defined as approx 1 Gallon in English. Appropriately 1M of liquid water also weights 8 W (as in the real world 1 Gallon of water weighs approximately 8 LBS).

Gemstones

Gems (both cut and uncut) are handled in a different manner.

Cut Gemstones- those which are faceted or cabochon and deemed ready for use in jewelry, are weighed by the "*Shadepound*" (*S*) named, it is believed, after Shadewood where the Hobblings make a great trade in such fine, decadent objects. Some merchants refer to this measure, however, as "*Shades*" or "*Shunds*". Whatever the terminology 1 S is approximately equal to 1/100th W (or 1/100th lb).

Far more common for a cut gemstone is a rating in *Points*. Points represent not only Size but also Carat weight. 1 P (point) is equal to 1MM in English/real world measurements. Thus a gemstone which is 6P is approximately equal in size to a pencil eraser.

Uncut gemstones are usually weighed in W but can be rated in P as well. All gems, regardless of their cut/uncut state are also graded by Color and Cut as well which is recorded on their Writ:

Color (least to finest): Opaque, Clouded, Flawed, Clear, Perfect

Cut (least to finest): Raw (uncut), General, Fine, Superb

Methods of Trade

There are several ways to get goods from one manufacturer to another. Most simple merchants travel with a single horse, perhaps a wagon or simply their backpack. Traveling from city to city on foot or horse they are by far the most common site in Vandlar. However on the Trade Routes immense caravans, sometimes hundreds of wagons long travel near continuous circuits of Vandlar bringing food and raw materials to distant artisans while immense fleets sail from the great ports doing much the same to cities and towns further removed from the heart of the continent.

Some of the wealthiest merchants, dealing in fine art, jewelry and gemstones or possibly rare spices, herbs and magic contract Magical Traders and use Ritual magic to move their goods out of this world for a time only to reappear in another circle near their target buyers. While this method does remove mundane obstacles such as weather and bandits it presents several of its own concerns, notably the difficulty in procuring Formal Scrolls useful in such a trade (most commonly used is Spirit Walk or Item Recall) as well as magical issues which may occur. It is every the nightmare of every merchant who uses this method with any frequency for a magical backlash which may summon monsters to their businesses or destroy all the goods they had been trying to move. Mercantile empires can be made or fall by a single missed shipment...

The emergence of Caravans and Fleets has created a huge job market for those who would sign on as guards as well as those who would prey on them as bandits or pirates. As said before Trade is the Economic lifeblood of Vandlar driving not only political ideals but touching all residents of the continent in some way.

Major Players of the Market

All races trade to some degree. In some cases, such as the Dark Elves, this trade is accomplished through Imperial Representatives working directly with the Lord Auditors to establish trade agreements with the Kingdom itself. Dark Elves send few goods to the surface for small time merchants to be interested in.

Other races, however, are not so withdrawn. The Harroo (Sarr) are the most prominent traders in Vandlar with most if not all you encounter having some connection to the Trade Routes or ocean shipments either as a guard, merchant or owner. The Hobblings are legendary producers of the finest cloth and clothing as well as prodigious agricultural crops, cheeses, preserved foods, and many small decorative items such as jewelry, gem cuttings, or decorative inlaid boxes.

Finally the Dwarves are well known for their craftsmen skills. Arms, armor, metal goods and ales all flow from the Dwarven lands though in true dwarf fashion they prefer to remain with their forges allowing merchants and traders to come to them seeking goods and bringing new items and sometimes raw materials in turn.

Other races are not so involved. While mystic wood elves are well known craftsmen and artists their lack of a centralized work ethic and production center means that individual craftsmen must be sought out by traders. Most tribal societies are able to supply things such as dried mushrooms, dyes, pelts and game meats but not to the quantities most traders would cross the continent for (unless they could fetch an amazing price for the rarity of such items).

Below is a list of Trade Companies and Cities, the races which dwell there as well as the goods, goods and production they supply to the major trade markets.

The Harroo-

The Sarr of the Southern Continent are ruled by their King Ipera II who dwells in the Port of Clouds. This city lies in a huge calm bay near the Cloudless Sea just a few hundred miles south of the city of Thardum where Ambassador Evian works with the Duck of Corthwick to broker treaties and arrangements with the kingdom and surrounding cities. Almost all Harroo shipments arrive first in Thardum before either traveling around the continent to one of many ports or being unloaded to caravans or transporting into the continent itself.

Within the center of the continent, near where the Vargrith Mountains end and the Delthor begin the trade routes of the Harroo intersect at an immense walled city known as **Caravan Rest** which is ruled by Prince Royal Vicerg Amislis. All goods traveling over the continent to the north via the Trade Routes end up going through Caravan Rest. Here are numerous trade organizations—some as buyers who travel north to resell goods while others specialize in supply caravan guards or even insurance to other merchants. It is said by some that all the coin of Vandlar has flowed through this semi-permanent walled city.

The OathBound Trading Company

Owned by the Royal Family of the Harroo but with each ship leased by individual captains the OathBound Trading company is immediately recognizable by their large fleets and bright red sails. Crates and boxes stamped with the Gold Triangle symbol

(either alone or on a red field) are a common site throughout the continent and on other ships as well. The OathBound most commonly deals with immense quantities of raw materials—wood, ore, dried seafood, and other goods of the tropical Port of Clouds.

The Hobblings-

The city of Shadewood is known as one of the greatest producers on the continent. Producers of what? EVERYTHING. Immense farms, herds of fine horses and specialty crops dot the landscape. Within the city jewelers, cartographers, weavers, tailors, ceramicists, potters, carvers, sculptors, dyers, tanners, smiths, horse traders, glass blowers and bankers ply their trades.

There are several people of note within this throng of would-be merchant lords.

Mikhail Whitewind- Current Ruler of Shadewood Mikhail has his hands in many types of trade and goods. His family is well known as the keepers of the Whitewind Herd- a breed of horse so fine that they supply mounts to members of the royal family themselves. Mikhail and his family are difficult to establish trade with- their contracts often go only to Nobles and Royalty as their family shares history with these notable people. To possess a true Whitewind Steed is a treasure that most residents in Vandlar will never know.

Petr Greenshin sits on the ruling council of Shadewood and represents those workers who deal with textiles and clothing. Appropriately he is also a prodigious merchant of such goods, often acting as broker for smaller producers and shipping their goods out to all parts of the known world.

Hyr Raindance is the patriarch of the Raindance family and official owner of the Raindance herd which, he proudly boasts, are second only to the Whitewind herd but without the cost. Indeed their mounts are fantastic and much more widely seen- they supply them to those who contract as guards for their caravans. Hyr is the owner of the Raindance Caravan company which works with merchants in Shadewood, Porthaven and other regions to ship their goods. Such goods are marked with the Raindance mark- three rain drops of blue on a Grey circle radiating out all encircled by a black band.

The Dwarves-

Unlike the previous two races the Dwarves do not have particular persons that deal with outside traders. To walk into a dwarven city or town seeking to buy is much more costly in time than with the Harroo or Hobblings who often have representatives paid to represent many producers. To a dwarf an act of craft is an act of love- it takes time and they put much care into it. Appropriately they make some of the greatest goods in Vandlar.

Within the Dwarven cities there many fine weapon smiths and armorers of course- the dwarven affinity for metal is well known throughout Vandlar. There are two major settlements of Dwarves—those who dwell in and near Ironton and those who live under the rule of the Marble City high in the Delthor Mountains. Both produce much the same in the way of goods and indeed this act of tradition is a mark of pride.

Most Merchants who trade with dwarves proudly mention the makers Clan when describing the weaponry—often these families pass down distinct clan designs or decoration which allows other knowledgeable people to identify their work on sight.

Of all the dwarven crafts, however, the most far traded is the Dwarven Alcohols which arise from many regions. Some, such as Green Earth, are brewed by many distilleries in a certain geographic region from local fare. Others, such as Pure Spirits represents a recipe known only to a handful of dwarves or a small collection of families which hold the recipes as hereditary secrets.

Trade Goods

Below is a semi-conclusive list of common large trade goods of Vandlar. Following each entry is a more detailed break down of what can be purchased, where and other pertinent information.

Alcohols

Alcohols are not quality rated in Vandlar. They are also not Proofed—to an inexperienced drinker one drink will appear as any other. Only by experience do you learn which drinks are stronger or will affect you more headily. Almost 100% of the alcohols commonly served throughout Vandlar are Dwarven made and a list follows including a brief description of appearance and flavor as well as region of origin. These are the major trading Alcohols though almost all towns have a local brewer turning home grown crops into beers and meads for small sale. Some traders have discovered fantastic vintages and made a tiny profit from these local sellers though most remain with the larger breweries for consistency of quantity and quality.

White Wall- a thick dark brown alcohol commonly called “dwarven bread” for its thick yeasty taste. White Wall is made by several breweries throughout Naime-dor, a dwarven settlement on the north coast a few hundred miles east of Porthaven. It is named for the city of Naime-dor which has immense white walls to protect its citizenry.

Thunder Sea- created by the dwarves of the Telvenor region (located north of Ironton along the coast) Thunder Sea is a red wine enjoyed by many “refined pallets” for its smooth taste. It is also popular as “Red Sea” which is used during the winter months for mulling. This vintage is created by the Redsun Clan of dwarves and carried in their ships to many ports for sale to merchants and buyers alike. Appropriately Redsun ships have large white sails with prominent red sun symbols on them.

Ember Gin- Created by several families near Ironton in rather small quantities Ember Gin is a pale pink in color and very fruity. In fact the alcoholic taste is very mild—but the powerful effect it has is most certainly not.

Green Earth- this thin green lager is created by Bel-Danor breweries (a region south of Ironton near the city of Aryxia) and owes its slightly bitter flavor to the green apples used in its creation. Most serious drinkers consider it to be the finest of lagers, however, as it requires a serious palate to truly appreciate its robust alcoholic kick.

Pure Spirits- down at the base of the Vargrith Mountains a small dwarven town of Brokenax stands as the only creators of Pure Spirits- a water-like alcohol whose secrets are known only to the Ironnail Clan of Dwarves. So potent that abusers quickly

sicken and waste away Pure Spirits if rarely drank alone and instead is used as an additive to other drinks to raise the alcohol content or create new flavors from non-alcoholic drinks.

Armor and Weaponry

There are three major sources of arms and armor in Vandlar.

Ironton- the Dwarves of Ironton represent the trading edge of the dwarven lands of Telvenor and Bel-Danor. Ruled by a mutual King most clans have a representative near Iron to sell their wares to traders and merchants who come through this strategic and historically important town. Ironton Dwarf arms and armor are characterized by very simple lines and designs.

Marble City- High in the Delthor Mountains near the center of the range stands the ancient dwarven settlement of Marble City, capital of the Dekranator Kingdom of Dwarves. Here immense white pillars, arches, sculptures and robe wearing dwarves mingle with traders selling weapons often decorated with bronze and copper designs over solid steel created by recipes, it is said, recovered from ancient dwarven cities deep within the mountains. Dekranator steel is often decorated lavishly (in contrast to that created by the dwarves of Ironton).

Jagged Knife Orcs- on the edge of the White Swamp near the southern city of Farston one tribe of Orcs have settled and adapted their lives around forging some of the greatest weaponry on the continent. Characterized by a strong angular style (often referred to as “pointy” or “jagged” hence the name) and a near total lack of extra decoration Jagged Knife steel is beautiful for its simplicity. It rivals that of Dwarves for durability and keenness, much to the chagrin of many dwarven craftsmen (who, regardless of pride, nevertheless appreciate the quality of the work).

Ceramics

Ceramics are usually created in two cities:

Shadewood- the Hobblings of Shadewood are renowned for their pure white ceramic plates, vessels and objects. Often they decorate their work with complicated “hex designs” common to their culture- knot-like patterns styled around animals, runes or pictures. Most often these designs are created in a single bold color such as blue or red though many craftsmen also turn out a measure of goods in full color.

Cuamdor- the human city of Cuamdor also has immense deposits of fine clay which they have used to secure their place in the trade routes of many merchants. Unlike the Shadewood Ceramics, however, the goods produced in Cuamdor are of exceptionally fine and delicate quality. Cost for shipping and handling such goods often skyrocket so most common folk of Vandlar will not be able to afford such finery though Nobility and Royalty routinely dine on plates fine enough to see through, cups so delicate they almost appear as glass and possess many other items created by the exceptionally skilled potters, sculptors and designers of Cuamdor.

Gemstones

Most cut gemstones usually come from two sources: the Hobblings of Shadewood and the Dwarves of Ironton. Raw gems from many other regions, even as far away as the Southern Continent, often travel to these areas for “processing” by craftsmen who have spent generations honing their materials and crafts.

That said raw gems can be found all over Vandlar and the Southern Continent. A brief list follows of gems, their descriptions and locations they can be found. In parenthesis is the normal cut for a stone. Faceted means flat planes are ground onto the stone to promote sparkle. Cabochon stones are tumbled smooth with no “windows”. Some stones are available in either form. ***Gems are also Common (C), Special (S) or Rare (R) denoting how frequently they are discovered by miners and searchers. Appropriately Common gems are much less precious than Rare gems would be.***

Amethyst (S)- a clear purple quartz (facet)- the jungles of the Southern Continent

Aquamarine (R)- a clear blue stone (facet) Found in Southern Continent mines with Emeralds

Aventurine (S)- an opaque green stone (cabochon)- found in rivers of the Southern Continent

Beryl (C) (cats eyes)- an opaque yellow/brown stone with a sparkle or white line effect (cabochon)- usually found on the surface and areas surrounding rivers which flow through areas producing Aquamarine and Emeralds.

Citrine (S)- a clear yellow quartz (facet)- found in the Delthor mountain mines.

Emerald (R)- a semi-clear green stone often cracked or flawed (facet or cabochon)- found in deep mines in the mountains of the Southern Continent which also produce Aquamarines.

Flourite (S)- a clear green/purple stone (facet or cabochon)- found in shallow mines in the mountainous hills north of the city of Craelant. Other deposits have been found throughout the Delthor Mountains but no vein has produced much quality material before being exhausted.

Hematite (C)- a shiny mirror-like black stone (cabochon)- Hematite is found in mines which produce Iron Ore. Most of the finest Hematite is worn by Biata though they never seem to trade it to others. Hematite of varying qualities is found in all mountainous regions both in mines as well as in rivers or loose rocks on the surface.

Howlite (C)- an opaque smooth white stone (cabochon)- common in Vargrith Mountain mines. This stone is often located near gold deposits and may be mixed with gold flecks to create more precious **Goldstones (S)**.

Jasper (C)- an opaque red stone with black and white veins (cabochon)- Jasper is frequently found with Iron deposits in small quantities. Most of the finest Jasper is imported by the Biata from their mysterious homeland.

Jet (S)- an opaque black stone that appears wet when polished (cabochon)- found in two locations- scattered on the beach near the southern city of Corston or a much larger and finer example which is imported by Biata traders.

Lapis (S)- an opaque blue stone with coppery flecks often found near Malachite in Copper mines (cabochon). Copper is pulled from both the Delthor and Vargrith mountains in varying quantities.

Malachite (S)- an opaque green stone with bands of alternating light and dark green (cabochon)- Found near copper deposits often with bands of Lapis these two gems can

sometimes be mixed. Malachite has a fine crystal structure and carves exceptionally well.

Peridot (pair-ih-doh) (R)- a clear light green stone with yellow flashes (facet)-found in the Southern Continent in mines located, it is said, in the mountains which stretch into the desert regions of the continent.

Quartz (C)- a clear or white crystal (facet)- Quartz is the most common “gemstone” in Vandlar and the Southern Continent often found in rivers, mines, rock fields or simply by farmers plowing their farmsteads. It is so common that few people actively seek it though large specimens properly cut are very expensive items. It is often used for carvings as well.

Ruby and Sapphire (R)- a clear red stone (ruby) or clear stone of any other color commonly blue or purple (sapphire) (facet)- Ruby and Sapphire are found in the same mines and are believed to be the same stone (which, chemically, they are). Rubies and Sapphires are differentiated from other stones which share their colors by their extreme brilliance and hardness- they have a tendency to sparkle when cut in even the dimmest light and possess a depth of color that less expensive stones rarely can match. Ruby and Sapphires are both imported from Southern Continent mines (the largest producers) and are found in small quantities in the Vargrith Mountains in the deepest mines of the far Southwest.

Glass

Glass is commonly made in most cities. The finest glass, however, requires the correct atmospheric conditions as well as the perfect materials to create. The southern continent is too humid and warm to create good glass- the majority of the glass created for trade and carted off to cities in Vandlar (both the raw materials to be blown locally and fully fabricated objects) are created in the city of Elosin on the northern coast which experiences a cool, semi-humid climate which results in glass of superior clarity and resilience.

Instruments

Most cultures have their own chosen instruments and creators of such. Due to the relatively specialist demand of this item few merchants make a habit of trading in musical instruments.

Jewelry

The Hobbling and Dwarven craftsmen of Shadewood are well known creators of fine jewelry incorporating superior gems from their local cutters with fine metals culled from the Vargrith Mines near Ironton. Most large settlements have jewelers who work on a local level as well producing items of metal, glass, wood or bone (to name a few). Jewelry is high trade- it is extremely easy to find a buyer for “exotic” jewelry. Exotic in this case means Elves who prize Sarr creations, Sarr who adore rustic Orc jewelry and so forth.

Leather, Pelts, and Hides

Most Harroo traders from the southern continent send pelts from their hunters north allowing tailors and craftsmen access to such exotic pelts as anaconda, crocodile,

large hunting cats and other creatures. Most tribal societies, such as Barbarians and Orcs will gladly trade the skins of their kills for goods they need. Often a profit is determined less by the quality of these items but more by the salesmanship of the trader looking to unload them.

Livestock and Beasts

Livestock is rarely moved overland for any great distances. Several merchants, however, make a good living transporting beasts brought to the coastal cities via ship to new ports for trade.

Perfumes, Scents, Dyes

One of the most highly sought after “decadent” items yet amongst the rarest these creations come from two sources.

The Harroo- many settlements around the Port of Clouds make their livelihood from scavenging ingredients from the jungles near their home. They, in turn, turn these into powdered dye cakes and fragrant oils which are shipped via the Sarr trading ships to Vandlar and sent to local craftsmen who turn them into local varieties for sale. Once created or bloomed perfumes and dyes do not survive long so any traders seeking to move a unique body fragrance usually would turn to magic if they can afford to.

The Tribes- Barbarian, Orc and Ogre tribes live with the earth much as their distant ancestors once did. Most Shaman, Sages and Leaders of these tribes know not only where to hunt the most luxurious pelts but also which fungi, plants and animals can be rendered into dyes and fragrances. As with leather and pelt goods most of these tribes are more than happy to trade gathered ingredients for goods they cannot make themselves (or coin in the case of semi-settled tribes).

Raw Materials: Culinary

Most of the surplus food stuffs- such as grains, cereals, preserved meats and otherwise including raw sugar are created in the farmlands surrounding and often owned by Shadewood. Rarely do farms outside of their region produce enough surpluses to send beyond their region. This area south of Porthaven is sometimes referred to as the “Breadbasket of Vandlar” and owing to the weather and rich soil has not had a drought or poor crop in nearly 300 years.

For their part the Harroo also import much grain though the humid jungle-nature of their Kingdom prohibits them from growing much in the way of field grains and common crops. Instead they are responsible for the importation of most Fruits and Nuts which they harvest from the wild lands around their settlements. These grow in such prodigious amounts it is almost as if the entire coast is an orchard of sorts.

Raw Materials: Ores and Minerals

All mountain and hill regions of Vandlar and the Southern Continent produce some form of ore which can be refined for use. Common ores include Iron, Tin, and Lead which are also traded by the Dwarves and Harroo smiths as alloys of Bronze, Brass and Steel. See below to Precious Metal Ore as well:

Raw Materials: Precious Metal Ore

As with common ores all mountainous and hilly regions of Vandlar produce quantities of Copper, Gold, Silver and Platinum.

Gold and Copper are especially common in the Southern Continent and the Harroo kingdom though they are notoriously poor in Iron and Tin which are required for the construction of Steel and Bronze (respectively).

Most mines in the Vargrith Mountains are rich in Copper and Iron though rarely have Gold and Silver veins been discovered.

Mines in the Delthor Mountains are by far the richest which explains why the earliest dwarves settled in this land- Gold, Silver and Platinum are routinely pulled from the deepest bones of the Earth as well as large quantities of Tin and Iron.

Raw Materials: Wood and Paper

As to be expected due to their jungle homes the Harroo are importers of not only large quantities of raw wood for construction but also smaller quantities of “specialty” woods used to construct instruments and for decorative inlays and carvings. Ebony, Balsam and the like are usually cut and brought to Vandlar after quick Kiln drying in the Port of Clouds and its surrounding suburbs though most craftsmen find that these goods need to be stored for several months in a sealed warehouse to further cure lest the moisture left within them ruin the shipment and the profits of the traders.

Paper is created by many small town merchants who ship their wares to larger cities for sale to colleges, sages and spell casters. One town, however, has made a name for itself for the numerous Paper Mongers it supports as well as adding over the years scribes for copying documents (meaning vast book stores are available for sale here) as well as setting up colleges for many sage disciplines- from Local History to Undead Lore. Speakers and researchers often make trips to Embrook (near the southern edge of the great Finduilas Forest) for the fine goods, books and knowledge they can find.

Spices

Spices are routinely available throughout the lands of Vandlar as the first Harroo traders brought seeds which quickly were dispersed to various farmers. Shadewood produces much the same spices as the dried specimens brought from the Port of Clouds. Salt, however, is usually mined by the dwarves of the Vargrith Mountains where large deposits (often accompanied by fossils of fish-like creatures) have been found. Most coastal cities, too, have small local salt trades garnering and evaporating sea water to create exceptionally white and delicious salt.

Textiles and Clothing

When looking to buy both clothing and cloth there is no real choice for the true merchant- the Hobblings of Shadewood are renowned master Weavers and Tailors.

The Harroo produce many fine linens, however, which they import into the continent for various reasons. Thick layers of this linen can form canvas-like tarps which have many uses both on ships and land for traders.

Both the Biata and Elves, however, have sources of Silk at their disposal both weaving the cloth from the strands of insects. Though the insect species most likely differs (producers of the cloth are very reticent to allow others access to their creation

process) the end result is nearly indistinguishable from each other barring specific racial colors and designs.

Vessels: Ships and Boats

Every Merchant seeking to expand their business to the high seas looks for the greatest vessel combining not only excellent cargo capacities but speed and durability. Much of the oceans surrounding the Vandlar continent are rough- warm currents create areas of storm rising from the South when the deep cold currents in the north hit into them.

Most modern vessels are created in the Southern Continent by the Harroo in small specialized villages which harvest the wood and create the ships before moving them to the Port of Clouds for sale. Harroo ships are single mast light and fast with deep cargo capacities- but this is easy for these small vessels as the Cloudless Sea which separates the Southern Continent from Vandlar is amongst the clearest and most passive waters for sailing. When shipping north of the continent however most Harroo ships carry much lighter loads to move higher in the water and hug the coast to avoid the treacherous and stormy deep water.

In the north many vessels constructed of hardier fare are available for sale in the great capital of Porthaven. Northern ships, usually constructed by dwarven or human craftsmen, are much heavier than those of the Harroo and often possess two or even three masts to the Harroo single mast arrangement. These great behemoths require deep water to sail- fortunately the ports of Elosin and Zuelin are deep water allowing traders nearly full access to the continent and easy access to the Trade Routes which pass near these cities. By sailing farther from land the Northern Vessels are able to circumnavigate much of the continent and the Cloudless Sea easily so heavy Northern vessels are not unknown in the calm harbors of the Port of Clouds as well.

Vessels: Wagons and Caravan Supplies

The final word in wagons, supplies and guards is, of course, Caravan's Rest- the trade Hub of Vandlar.

Economic Tracking

Below is a non-conclusive list containing many of the common trade goods available on the market. Trade goods are highly variable in price, much more so than finished products would be. Crop yields, mine quotas, weather and all manner of other obstacles affect the final "average price" of a particular good over the course of 12 moons. The prices below are averages gleaned over 10 years of Auditor records and are, of course, recorded in copper units.

<u>Trade Good</u>	<u>Unit Size</u>	<u>Average Sale Price</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>
Brass (ingot)	1W	150	175	140
Bronze (ingot)	1W	120	135	100
Clay/Refined Clay	1I	10000	11500	8000
Cloth: common undyed	100 ft	3300	5000	3000
Cloth: common dyed	100 ft	6500	7500	6000
Cloth: fine (velvets, silks)	10ft	3000	4500	2800
Copper (ingot)	1W	110	115	105
Copper (ore)	1W	80	90	70
Dye (cake format)	1W	1000	1800	300
Food: Alcohol	1M	*	*	*
Food: Grains	100W	500	560	470
Food: Livestock (large)	1 animal	400	420	350
Food: Livestock (small)	1 animal	200	300	115
Food: Preserved Meat	20W	500	700	350
Food: Preserved Fruit	1W	50	100	30
Food: Spice/Sugar	1/2W	100	150	75
Fragrance/Oil	1/2M	500	1000	450
Gem: common cut	1P	10	18	13
Gem: common uncut	1S	8	10	7
Gem: special cut	1P	150	250	100
Gem: special uncut	1S	100	150	50
Gem: rare cut	1P	1000	2000	750
Gem: rare uncut	1S	750	1500	700
Glass: raw materials	1W	1000	2000	800
Gold (ingot)	1W	6300	6800	5800
Gold (ore)	1W	6000	6500	5500
Iron (ingot)	1W	15	17	12
Iron (ore)	1W	6	8	5
Lead (ingot)	1W	50	60	45
Paper (common unbleach)	50 sheet	50	55	45
Silver (ingot)	1W	980	10300	9300
Silver (ore)	1W	850	900	800
Stone (common)	1I	30000	50000	27000
Stone (fine) (ex:marble)	1I	100000	175000	87000
Tin (ingot)	1W	10	17	8
Tin (ore)	1W	3	4	3
Wood (common)	10 Sq Ft	300	550	225
Wood (precious/rare)	10 Sq Ft	1000	1700	950

Woods- due to the highly varied nature of cuts this is of course an approximation for wood cut to standard 2X4X8 size. Uncut wood will of course be cheaper but a contractor would be needed to prepare it for use. Wood intended for fires or in its raw state can come up to 1/2 the above averages.

*= Alcohols are one of the most varied items. Every vintage, style and culture values them differently. Taxes for them are, as with all other objects, calculated off the buyers' price. Below is an approximate value for one bottle (approx 1M) of the vintages given above:

White Wall- (common ale)-	1G per bottle
Thunder Sea- (common wine)-	1G per bottle
Ember Gin- (rare wine)-	10G per bottle
Green Earth- (rare ale)-	5G per bottle
Pure Spirits- (rare liquor)-	10G per bottle