

Traditions

Keep it Simple, Keep it Fun

"If ye want to make a fortune pouring drinks for folks, ye're goin' to need to do more than give 'em a stool and a bar. Give 'em games and nonsense to go wit' the drinks and ye're halfway up the mountain."

-Warthorn Redbeard

Founder of The Red Dragon Inn

Adventurers prefer to keep things simple... and they like to have a good time. If you're going to run a successful Inn, you need to keep this in mind. Below are some suggestions for keeping things simple and fun for your patrons.

Keeping it Simple

Adventurers are not usually very interested in towns. They prefer the wilderness or, better yet, the depths of some ancient dungeon.

When they visit a town, all most of 'em want is to repair their gear and get supplies. They'll typically waste days running all over town just to find the shops and craftsmen with the supplies and skills they need. If you make things simple for them – by providing needed services under your roof – then they're more likely to spend more time (and more coin) at your Inn!

Offering a Basic Provision Shoppe

In larger towns, it's a good idea to operate a shoppe right in your establishment. Supplies like rations, torches, lamp oil, sacks and packs, parchment, quills and ink, and other dry goods are standard and fairly simple to keep in stock. The enterprising innkeeper does more, though: consider lockpicks and other "special" tools, weapons, armor, and even potions.

You don't need to run the whole business yourself and you probably don't even want to! Work with other local merchants to supply the shop and possibly even run it. Sure, it's possible to make a fair bit of coin from a shoppe like this but don't let it distract you too much; its real purpose is to save adventurers time so that they spend more time (and more coin) at your Inn.

Repair Services

Armor gets dented or torn. Swords and axes get dull. Arrange to have weaponsmiths and armorers willing to come to your Inn to pick up adventurer's equipment and bring it back once it's repaired. This is good business for them and will make happy customers for you.

Merchant Contacts

Adventurers can have some esoteric and eclectic needs, or perhaps your Inn is just too small to house a provision shoppe. Make it a point to know the merchants and craftsmen in town. Should an adventurer have a problem which you cannot directly solve, you'll be ready to recommend a solution.

Details about who has the best prices and who does the best work are important. If you can provide good advice constantly, you will become indispensable to your patrons!

Have a Vault

Adventurers are known for having amazing magical items, not to mention bulging sacks of coin. With a vault where your patrons can keep their treasures safe, they'll be able to focus on drinking, without the distraction of keeping one eye on their valuables all night.

Charge a small fee for space in the vault; just enough to discourage patrons from putting every little thing in there.

The catch, of course, is that you'd better be able to keep any items you are watching safe!

Keeping it Fun

Adventurers come into your Inn looking to take a break. They want to kick back, have a good meal, drain a few mugs, and relax. If you're able to make their time in your Inn more fun, they'll want to spend more time (and, don't forget, more coin) at your Inn!

An Adventurer's Guild without the Dues

The Red Dragon Inn serves the function of an Adventurer's Guild, but without all of the memberships and other paperwork that comes along with it. If you think of your Inn as a kind of guild that everyone's invited to, then you've pretty much got it. You should make a place for an announcement board, so that adventurers can advertise their availability, connect with other parties, and other interested folk can post jobs for them.

Make it part of your responsibility to get to know the adventurers who frequent your Inn. You'll often be called upon by nobles and merchants alike who are looking to hire a band of heroes or fortune-hunters. Be prepared to make recommendations to these potential employers.

For many of your adventurer customers, coming to the Red Dragon Inn can be the way that they meet their closest friends and allies in the trade. It can be the means by which they learn of a new and profitable quest. This is a valuable service you are providing. The only dues that the people coming through your door need to pay for this service should be drinks or a room. If you're doing your job right, they'll consider it a bargain and you'll get rich doing it.

Good Food

Warthorn was known to say: *"There ain't nothing bett'r than a proper meal t'make one feel content and set the world right. When folks come looking for food at the Red Dragon Inn, it's our responsibility that we get it right!"*

Seek out only the best quality ingredients. Buy from local farms, fishers, and hunters – not only will you be helping other local merchants, but the ingredients you buy will be fresher and cheaper too!

When you are designing your menu, consider local flavors and dishes. It's easier than trying to import spices and chefs. Local patrons will not be looking for anything too exotic – so this will serve them well. For patrons from far off lands, it will keep their visit to your Inn interesting and unique.

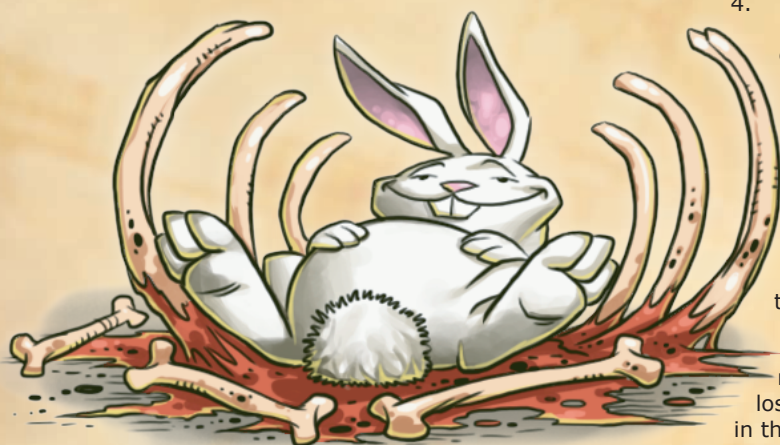
Make sure you also have a few simple items on your menu for those with simple tastes.

Lastly, always provide meatless alternatives – you never know who might show up at your Inn, and you want to make sure everyone feels welcome.

Exotic Creatures on the Menu

Some creatures commonly found in the wilds or deep dark places can be quite delicious, if prepared correctly. If adventurers bring you a fresh kill in good condition, consider buying it from them or trading for services at the Inn.

Having exotic creatures on the menu can be very profitable as patrons will often be willing to spend good coin to experience something new. It is advisable to avoid intelligent creatures though – as Warthorn once said *“If it could order from the menu, it probably shouldn’t be on it!”*



Great Drinks

The Red Dragon Inn is probably best known for its Drink Menu. Warthorn Redbeard himself created the original list of drinks – spending an enormous amount of time and coin making the right contacts to ensure that his Inn was always supplied with each of them.

It is vital that your Inn is well-stocked in all of its drinks, too. And if it isn’t, you might consider hiring those adventurers – who are sitting around not drinking – to figure out why it isn’t. See page XX for information about the drinks and their effects.

Local drinks should not be excluded, though. If your area is well known for raspberry wine, barley spirits, or who knows what, there is no reason not to offer that in your Inn as well.

Establishing Traditions

The best way to make sure your patrons know you’re the best Inn in town is to make sure they already knowing what’s going on when they step through the door. That means establishing traditions and drinking games that your patrons will come to know and love. The traditions below were established by old Warthorn himself, and they make any adventurer feel at home.

Drinking From “The Board”

Customers at your Inn may order their drinks directly from the drink menu. But for parties looking to have some fun, there is drinking from The Board. The Board, in actuality, is a section of the bar which the bartenders keep stocked with random, fresh drinks for patrons drinking from The Board.

The rules are simple:

1. All members of a party (anywhere from 2 to a whole room!) must agree that they wish to get their drinks from The Board.
2. Everyone in the party pays 15 gp to the Inn.
3. Whatever drink gets served must be drunk! The patron need not drink it all in one gulp, but they can’t lolligap behind the rest of the party.
4. When the wench sees that everyone in a party has finished their drinks, she’ll bring more until everyone has had 5 drinks.

Once everyone’s had 5 drinks, the wench should clear the table and ask if the party would like to continue drinking from The Board. If they all agree, she collects another 15 gold from each patron and the drinks keep flowing.

If someone passes out or is feeling too sick to continue, the Inn claims the right to search them. Any coin (but not other valuables!) found on their person is split with the Inn and anyone else still at the table. One should not bring more coin to the table than they are willing to lose! In exchange, the Inn will carry them to a bed in the common room where they can spend the night. If the amount collected is more than a few coins, they should be treated to a better room if available (fitting the amount collected).

If someone passes out and they have already booked a room, of course that’s where you should let them sleep it off. In these cases it is customary for the wench to take a reasonable tip and return the rest of the coin to the passed-out patron.



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Drinking from The Board

~ It costs 15 Gold for 5 drinks from The Board.

~ No one can force you to drink from The Board, but once you agree you can't stop till you've had 5 drinks!

~ You must drink whatever you're served. No stalling! You best be done by the time the wench comes with more!

~ If you pass out, we're gonna search you for coin and split what we find with the rest of your party. We keep half! If you don't want to lose it, you shouldn't have brought it!

Make sure the rules for drinking from The Board are displayed clearly in your tavern!

Keep an eye out to make sure that your guests are not being taken advantage of too much. In addition, it is wise to check that a patron is not too upset the next morning if they lost a large sum. An angry patron is never worth the trouble.

Drinking Contests

Drinking contests should be a regular feature of your Inn. Guests like them because, if they're lucky, they'll get some good drinks and win some coin – and you know they wouldn't be adventurers if they didn't think they were lucky!

When a drinking contest is announced, anyone in the Inn who wishes may get involved. Each contestant throws 5 gold in a bowl and receives a drink card.

Drink cards ought to be the same on one side and have the name of a drink and a number related to the strength of that drink on the other. The drinks shown on the cards are served and drunk. The person with the highest number gets 3 gold for each person in the contest. The remaining gold goes to the Inn.

If there is a tie for the highest-value drink, new cards are dealt to the contestants with the high value and the contest continues until there's a clear victor!

If a contestant should have the misfortune of passing out after they drink, they can't win. You can't claim your prize if you're out cold, after all!

Gambler's Grog

Years ago, at the first Red Dragon Inn, there was a sly serving wench who figured out a trick for making a little extra coin. When serving patrons who were drinking from The Board, she would discreetly allow a patron to turn down a drink for a suitable tip. She'd then bring them a different beverage and serve the original drink to another patron drinking from The Board.

When she was discovered, Warthorn was none too pleased! But it gave him an idea. He created Gambler's Grog to keep the tradition going... Of course, he made sure that the Inn started getting a cut of the coin.

Gambler's Grog is almost only ever served to parties drinking from The Board. It is rarely ordered since most find it unpleasant due to its very bitter taste and very strong effect.

When brought to a patron drinking from The Board, the frothy brew is served in an unassuming cup on a plain-looking tray with one gold.

The patron who receives Gambler's Grog may either drink it, or, if they are willing to double the amount of gold on the tray, they may choose to have the wench serve it to any other patron in the Inn also drinking from The Board.

Eventually, someone in the tavern will prize their coin over their sobriety and the Grog will be imbibed, usually to a cheer from the rest of your Inn.

Once Gamblers Grog has been drunk, the wench collects "her tip", half the gold from the tray. The rest is kept by the patron who drank the Grog. If there are an odd number of coins, in this rare case, we let the patron keep the extra... and we tell our guards to keep an eye out for pickpockets.

Be sure to remember to collect the gold from the wench and to give her a good cut if she was able to keep it going for a while.

Chasers and Chaser Tokens

Chaser tokens are good for free drinks. Every now and then, your bartenders should drop one of these pewter tokens into a drink. When a patron finds one of these tokens, they may trade it in for any drink of equal or lesser value.

For patrons drinking from The Board, a chaser token means another random drink.

If a chaser token comes up in a drinking contest, then the patron draws another drink card, drinks that drink, and their score is the sum of the two cards.

Most Importantly...

...keep it simple and keep it fun! Remember that it's your Inn. You don't need to follow this advice if you don't want to. In fact, making up your own traditions is even better! What's important is that you have happy customers who can't wait till the next time they get to visit your tavern.



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