

Background: Kingdom of Equitaine



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History

In the days before [Sunna](#), the empire of the Rat [King](#) held [Vetia](#) under paw. Only one nation held firm against the Vermin: Equitaine. Such domains are founded on the strength of mighty leaders, and [King](#) Gilles de Raux numbered among the greatest. Yet dark whispers accompanied his reign and its endurance beyond the span of mortal life.

Then came Uther, the once and future [King](#), who lifted a shadow from the land and turned it back to the forgotten Lady. His companions founded the [knightly orders](#) - to leave, to serve and to hold vigil against evil's return. Since that day, knights of Equitaine have quested across the world, seeking glory and honour.

Geography and Culture

Since my arrival in Equitaine, I feel as though the sun has turned back in the sky and an Age long past come again. A land of mists and mystery, the way of life here is almost unchanged in a thousand years. Ancient forests, filled with wondrous creatures, parting before the castles of [nobility](#) and farmland of peasantry.

This division of classes informs every part of life here, from law and politics, to commerce and religion. Only in one place at both sides united: the fervour of the Crusades. There ardent believers spread the belief of the Lady and seek her glory across the world - tutoring those who believe them mere relics, that mastery of [horse](#) and [lance](#) is a deadly weapon.

Knights Orders

[Knights of the Realm](#) - the foundations upon which this noble Kingdom is built. Sworn to [King](#) and honour, each serves at the pleasure of a [Duke](#), enforcing his commands upon enemy and peasant alike.

[Knights of the Quest](#) - the most pious of knights are blessed with visions from the Lady, causing them to forego [lance](#) and wealth and embark on quests of hardship and danger. Foremost is the search for the Grail, a fabled relic sought by all who serve Her.

[Knights of the Grail](#) - those few who earn the attentions of the Lady transcend all others. Rumoured to have [drunk](#) from the Grail itself, their hand is moved by divine purpose and they are as avatars of the Lady, enforcing her will and sitting in judgement, even over [nobility](#).

Paladins - unerring servants of the [King](#), [chosen](#) from among his most trusted knights. Tasked with vital duties by our sovereign, Paladins may be found leading the search for heretics and fiends within the borders of the kingdom, or commanding Equitan armies.

[Knights Forlorn](#) - most of this strange collection hail from the traditional lands of Brezan. Shamed by past failure, the knights of Brezan took their new name, eschewing [horse](#) and [lance](#) until their honour is restored. Their numbers are bolstered by disgraced knights from across the realm, seeking to remove stains upon their character.

Politics and Economy

Upon my arrival in Guênac, I was granted audience with [King](#) Henry. The youth of his moniker is apparent, yet there is a fire within him which was absent from his father. Where Dukes once laughed behind Louis' back, their sons now attend upon their [King's](#) command. All await to see if he might attain the heights of his grandfather's [renown](#), perhaps by sealing the burgeoning alliance with Volskaya.

Granted promise of patronage for my maps of Equitaine, I walked the docks in search of a vessel to take me to the sea. There I heard the merchants concluding bargains for the sale of grain, timber and cloth, most often to Sonnstahl. The coin generated in revenues will no doubt fund Equitaine's crusades in the name of the Lady.

Religion & Magic

The lands of Equitaine contain mystery and magic at every turn. Sacred locations, mythical sites – every castle, hill, ancient tree, stone bridge; they all have legends and stories attached to them. This connection with the land, and the Lady who symbolises it, permeates every part of Equitan culture, including their magic. Enacted only by the purest hearts, due to fables of magic misused and the disastrous consequences; magic calls upon the purity of others, and brings their intentions to bear upon the world, shaping it into a more noble version of itself.

In the years that followed Uther's reign, the ways of the Lady were embraced by our nobles. Those who follow Her embark upon a personal and spiritual journey, dedicating much of their life to Her service. The peasantry are told legends of her grace, yet some choose the embrace of other gods. Such follies are tolerated, though malcontents who would foment discord against Her servants are sternly dealt with.

Women blessed by the Lady's touch are marked with mystic talents, drawing strength from the wild land, calling forth Her sheltering hand, evening shaping the heavens above. Men who would follow the path of Gilles de Raux and his kind are banished, to find home in other lands. Rumours abound of a [wizard](#) walking the land, preaching of the Lady's [blessings](#) to all who ask and stirring rebellion among the peasantry, yet such rumours have persisted for centuries.

Sources

Equitaine is a nation built on personal heroics and individual honour, dating back to the days of their founding king, Uther. Knights are most esteemed here, and a mastery of mounted combat makes the [lance](#) the weapon of choice, and armour the [height](#) of fashion. Women are venerated in Equitaine for their connection with the fabled Lady, who serves as both deity and mysterious power preserving the land. To many, the Equitan feudal armies of knight and peasant seems antiquated, yet they continue to exert great military power, and their Crusades to seek the lost Grail have brought much of northern Taphria under their sway. In the Crusades, as in all things, the [nobility](#) are expected to lead from the fore, and success or failure

oft turns upon their might. These are lessons for the young Equitan king to learn, and learn well, if his dynasty is to endure amidst other strong Houses.