

G.U.E.

ON NINE ZORKMIDS A DAY



A Traveller's Guide
to the
Great Underground Empire
by Lester Foozilbarmumboz



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ANTHARIA



Shown at Flathead Stadium is a citizen trying to get a leg up on the competition during an exciting shark wrestling match.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Antharia is ruled by a council of four "Elders"—one from the Shipbuilding Guild, one from the Granola Miners Guild, one from the Marble Cutters Guild, and one from a popular waterfront pub called "Emu's."



TRANSPORTATION: Getting to and from Antharia is limited to travel by ship. (An Enchanter familiar with teleportation spells can be hired, but are expensive and sometimes unreliable.) Normal third-class fare for this two-day journey can cost as much as 17 zorkmids during the month before the Marble Pageant.



WEATHER: Except for an occasional hurricane in late summer, Antharian weather is picture-perfect. Leave your umbrella home, but don't forget to pack your swim suit and scuba gear!



LODGING: The world-famous Zilton Hotel in downtown Anthar features plush accommodations and easy access to most of the island's sights. Prices range from 6 to 24 zorkmids per night. More economical lodgings can be found at the bucolic Pterodactyl Inn. Every room features a stunning

view of the cliffs overlooking the lovely north shore of the island, and rates range from 2 to 8 zorkmids per night.



DINING: An absolute must is The Rusty Knife in West Anthar. Expect to wait at least an hour; the house specialty is flame-broiled sea serpent filet for a mere Zm1.25. Other fine seafood restaurants include the Finhouse (Zm0.50 to Zm1.50) and Zilbar's (Zm0.35 to Zm1.50).



THINGS TO SEE: The shipbuilding factories of South Anthar are an amazing sight; plan to spend at least half a day. Tours for 1 zorkmid are available every hour from dawn until dusk. The burgeoning marble industry offers many exciting sights: the gaping mines in the Peltoid Valley, the cutting and polishing guilds at work, the 20-bloit conveyor belt at the port of Marba. Despite the reduced output since the Granola Riots, the granola mines in the north make an interesting visit if you can stand the smell. No trip to the island would be complete without a cruise on the island's only glass-bottom boat, the Bella Quease. The cruise leaves an hour before noon, and costs Zm2.25 (children under 12, Zm1.50).



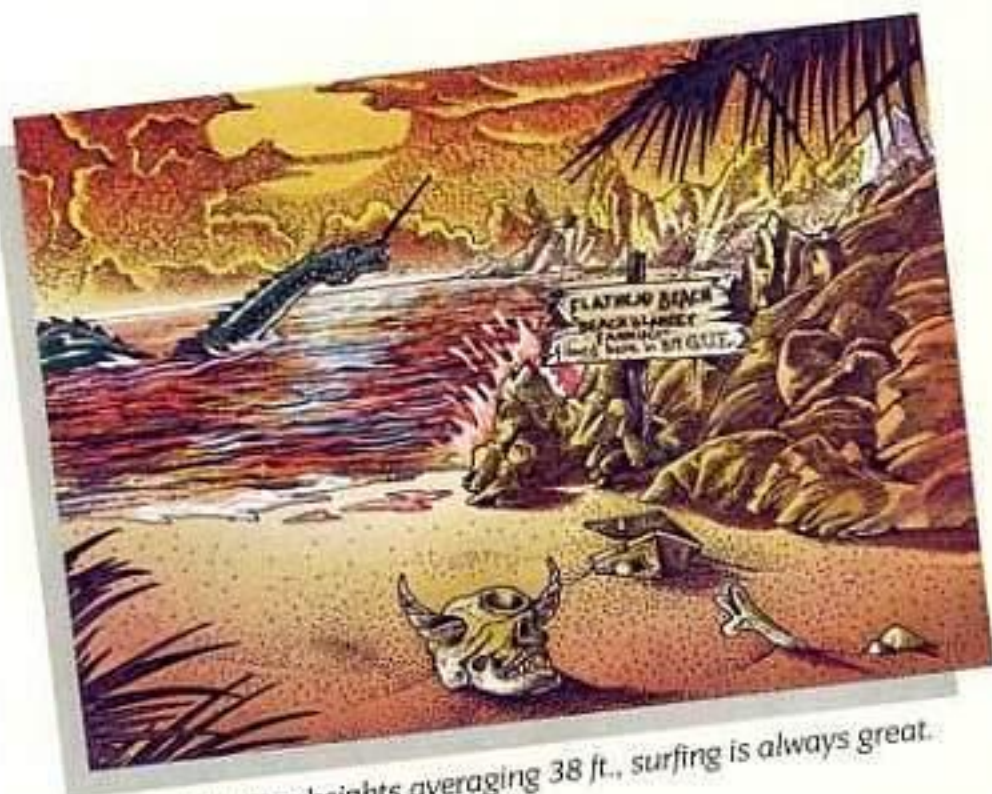
SEASONAL EVENTS: The Marble Pageant, held annually in mid-spring, is highly recommended. However, during the month of the Pageant, hotel space becomes scarce, and many prices are inflated. Shark-wrestling, held every weekend during the summer at Anthar's Flathead Stadium, is an exciting experience if you can stomach the gore. Admission is Zm0.75.

FACTS:

Land Area: 959 square bloits
Capital: Anthar
Nickname: The Island Province
Flower: The Spenseweed
Motto: "Hieya wizka" ("Hello sailor")



GREATER BORPHEE



With wave heights averaging 38 ft., surfing is always great.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Greater Borphee is administered by a staff of part-time volunteer managers, whose decisions are ratified at least three times per year, but not more than every other week, by a series of local forums.



TRANSPORTATION: Borphee is probably the single most accessible vacation spot in the Empire. From anywhere in the Borphee River valley, travel by ferry is easy and inexpensive. If you wish to travel by sea, Borphee has an excellent, busy harbor. By land, the Coast Road connects Borphee with the ancient cities to the north as well as the populous southlands.



WEATHER: Thanks to the nearby ocean, Borphee has a very moderate climate. The rainy season lasts most of the winter, and summers tend to be humid.



LODGING: Motel Spell is a highly commercialized tourist trap with overdone touches such as the issuing of self-casting REZROV spells instead of keys. Rooms start at 5 zorkmids. Be forewarned, patrons who miss check-out time will have their families turned into newts and their luggage turned into bat guano. The Borphee Inn, run by the Frobozz Magic Hotel Company, is comfortable and surprisingly affordable. While penthouse suites can run upwards of 33 zorkmids per day, basement rooms are available for as little as 3 zorkmids (but make your reservations well in advance).



DINING: The Potion Palace, at the Borphee Inn, features a delightful menu of enchanted dishes. Waiters are a thing of the past at the Palace, as your mind is probed to discover the perfect meal for your taste, which then poofs into existence right at your table. A nightly floor show features dancing nymphs; expect to spend at least Zm4. Also highly recommended is the Smokestack, where even the heartiest of meals costs under a zorkmid.



THINGS TO SEE: Borphee is the Kingdom's fastest-growing industrial city, with the magic scroll and potion factories leading the way. Both Spellbound and United Thaumaturgy offer free tours of their facilities. (Spellbound's deluxe tour costs Zm3, but it includes casting a time travel spell that gives you three extra hours in your schedule.) G.U.E. Tech, the newest of the Moss-League Colleges, produces the young Enchanters of tomorrow.

Many graduates have gone on to start their own magic companies, and have become an identifiable subculture known as “Yuppies,” or “Young Underground Professionals.”

Just a short trip south of the city are some of the most beautiful stretches of beach anywhere on the Flathead Ocean, including the very dunes where “Beach Blanket Fanucci” was filmed. Borphee nightlife is renowned throughout the Empire; Studio Frob on the wharf features an excellent Phlog and Tonic for Zm0.25. Warning: the Borphee Observation Tower is a complete waste of money. Admittance is Zm7, and the air in downtown Borphee never provides visibility of more than a fraction of a bloit.

 **SEASONAL EVENTS:** Borphee is the site of the annual Double Fanucci Championships. During the first week in autumn, the entire province fills up with every Double Fanucci fanatic in the kingdom. Tickets to each game in the finals cost 3 zorkmids, but usually sell out within hours. Scalpers command as much as 20 zorkmids for a good seat. In late spring, G.U.E. Tech holds their annual Spelling Bee, which is free and open to the public. The highlight of last year's competition was Magic O'Leary's stunning mastery of clairvoyance spells which allowed him to win the Bee before the first word was even issued.

Every winter, the hills of Borphee come alive with the sound(s) of the most dreadful singers in the Kingdom. This event, aptly named The From Bad to Worst Songfest, allows those truly terrible singers to gain recognition while vying for the much-coveted prize of a pair of 18k gold ear-plugs. Because most hillside residents schedule

out-of-town court appearances or surgery during this two-week period, you may be able to rent an apartment or house for as little as Zm2 or Zm3.5, respectively.

On the official first day of summer, thousands gather at the Borphee Harbor for the G.U.E. Festival of Small Ships. Throughout the day, hundreds of these floating antiques drop their mini-anchors in the water and send off rockets, flairs and fireworks to herald their safe arrival. Only those spectators 4 feet 5 inches and under will be allowed to board the ships. Admission is free so come early to beat the crowds.

FACTS:

Population: 1,107,810

Land Area: 754 square bloits

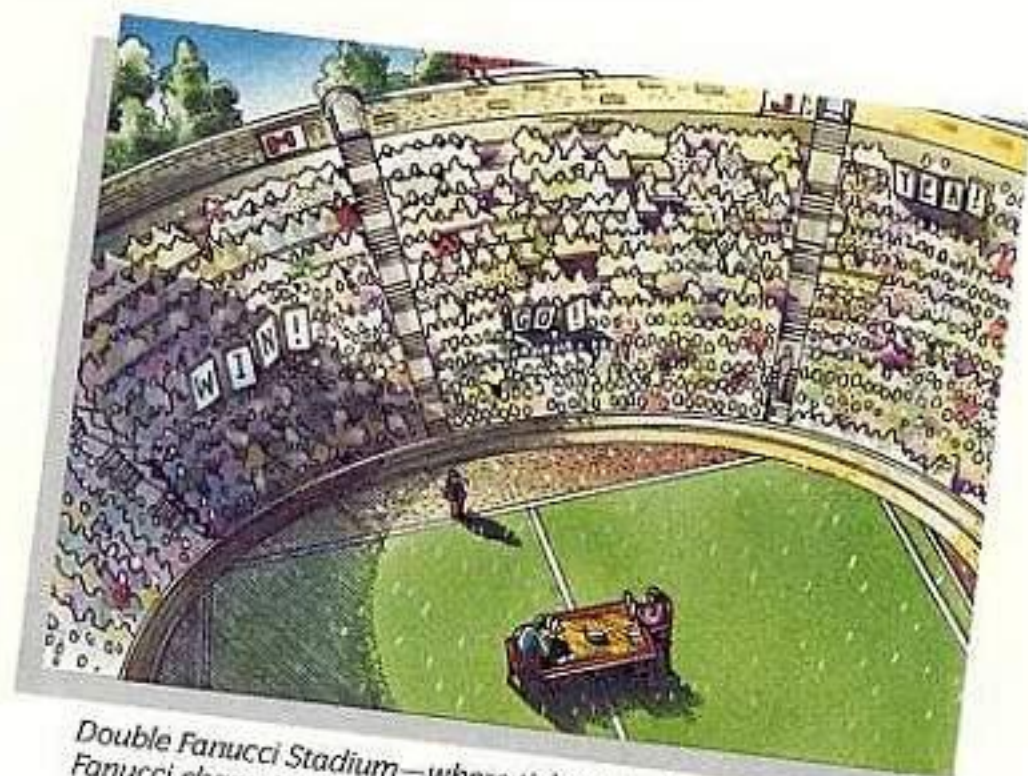
Capital: Borphee

Nickname: The Industrial Province

Flower: The Compass Rose

Motto: “Borphee—fixum rixa poo nastik”

(“Borphee—better than you think”)



Double Fanucci Stadium—where tickets for the annual Double Fanucci championships often go as high as 20 zorkmids each.

THE FRIGID RIVER VALLEY



Flathead Mountains—inaccessible backwater of the Great Underground Empire.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT: None to speak of.



TRANSPORTATION: Unless you travel via flying carpet, you'll find this region to be virtually cut off from the rest of the Empire. You can hack your way east through the coastal forests with a machete, or try to cross the Flathead Mountains from the east, or you can try to travel up the Frigid River, bucking the most severe currents and dangerous rapids known to man. We suggest air travel.



WEATHER: Very unpredictable, but you'll probably be spending most of your time underground.



LODGING: The Tunnels of Love are a favorite of the Kingdom's honeymooners, located a stone's throw from Aragain Falls. The Tunnels are well-known for their vast honeycomb of passageways, and couples have been known to raise entire families just trying to find their rooms. Rates range from Zm2

for a room to Zm10 for a Honeymoon Suite. The Cliffhouse, near White Cliffs Beach, is inexpensive (all rooms are Zm2) and convenient to the big tourist spots.



DINING: The Roundup, just off the Round Room, specializes in dragon dishes. Entrees range from Zm0.30 to Zm0.80. The Aqueduct offers reasonably good cuisine and a breathtaking view of one of the Empire's primary water channels. Slightly overpriced at Zm1.20 to Zm2.20.



THINGS TO SEE: Flood Control Dam Number Three is a staggering engineering feat that must be seen to be believed. Nearby is Aragain Falls, the so-called Honeymoon Capital of the Great Underground Empire. Slightly farther away is the Royal Museum, although the three-week security clearance procedure discourages many visitors. If mountain climbing turns you on, the Flathead Mountains offer one of the best challenges anywhere.



SEASONAL EVENTS: On the first day of summer, crowds line the banks of the Frigid River for a spectacular sight: the annual opening of the floodgates of FCD Number Three, which lower the water level of the reservoir behind. Frequently, the king himself will be on hand to open the floodgates personally.

FACTS:

Population: 98,330

Land Area: 15,232 square bloits

Capital: Aragain

Nickname: The Deepest Province

Flower: The Budding Fern

Motto: "Blippi burz fliggin"
("Dig we must")



GURTH AND MITHICUS

FACTS:

Population: 2,883,190
Land Area: 21,545 square bloits
Capital: Gurth City
Nickname: The Vacation Province
Flower: The Morgia
Motto: "Utribiz oomum flaxil zobs"
("Don't eat moldy bread")



LOCAL GOVERNMENT: An informal board of 13 thousand citizens meets three times each day to settle disputes and ratify the provincial budget.



TRANSPORTATION: Take the Coast Road south from Borphee, or sail to the port of Miznia. Travel from any of the westlands should cost no more than 5 zorkmids.



WEATHER: Absolutely wonderful for most of the year, but it can sometimes get unbearably hot during the peak summer months; bring mosquito netting.



LODGING: In Gurth, try the King Zilbo Hotel, an elegant old building with rooms for as little as Zm2.50. Your best bet in Mithicus is the new No-Frill Inn. Rooms are only Zm0.75 per night, but almost everything is extra. (For example, beds are an additional Zm0.50 per night, pillows Zm0.20.)



DINING: The Broken Lantern in the village of Grubbo-By-The-Sea serves a fine parrot stew, as well as other local delicacies in an intimate setting. The desserts are world-famous; the morgia root pie is a must. Most meals will be around Zm1.50; desserts are extra.



THINGS TO SEE: The southlands are known for their many fine artisans. You can make arrangements at the various guildhalls to see carpenters, woodcarvers, rock cutters, potmakers, and basket weavers at work. The region is also prime vacationland, with many activities to choose from: sky diving, bull-fighting, surfing, skin diving and glurking. Rates vary seasonally, but a day's worth of any of these activities will cost you no more than 2 or 3 zorkmids. Consider exploring the jungles of Miznia, but stay away from the well-marked bloodworm spawning grounds unless you have a trained guide. Trained guides usually start at Zm8 per day.



SEASONAL EVENTS: The gigantic Gurth City Crafts Fair is held every weekend during the spring. The finest products of over 80 different guilds are displayed and sold. In early autumn, the annual Harvest Festival gets underway for a colorful two-week celebration featuring local foods, drinks, song and dance.



Over 80 different guilds and 120 different local delicacies are represented at the Gurth City Crafts Fair.

THE GRAY MOUNTAINS



LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Local matters are settled entirely by a tyrannical governor who is chosen once a month by a lottery.



TRANSPORTATION: Travel to this remote area has recently been made much simpler by the completion of the Great Underground Highway's eastern branch. Tolls will run as high as Zm3 depending on your point of departure.



WEATHER: Thanks to active hot springs, the temperature of the underground caverns in this region stays at a uniform ideal temperature. However, up on the surface, the temperature is nearly always below freezing, with frequent blizzards.



LODGING: The brochures for Grayslopes recommend a place called the Ski Pole, but avoid this fleabag at all costs, unless you like bedbugs, rusty water, and rude help. (Apparently, the owners of Grayslopes also own a piece of the Ski Pole.) Instead, stay at the intimate Come-On Inn, which cost only Zm1.30. The Come-On also offers discounts on all equipment rental.



DINING: The Glacier Room is a colorful dive which is a favorite hangout for the locals. In addition to generous helpings of good food, the Glacier Room also provides cast rests for diners. From Zm0.60. Warning: ignore recommendations by natives to dine at the Rotgut. Although the locals love to eat there, recommending it to visitors is a practical joke the natives love to play. After all, they've been brought up on this sort of food, plus they know all the best bromide cures.



The snow-making equipment at the Gray Mountains always provides optimal snowburrowing conditions.

FACTS:

Population: 18,370

Land Area: 13,441 square bloits

Capital: Frostham

Nickname: The Fire and Ice Province

Flower: Probizzan Moss

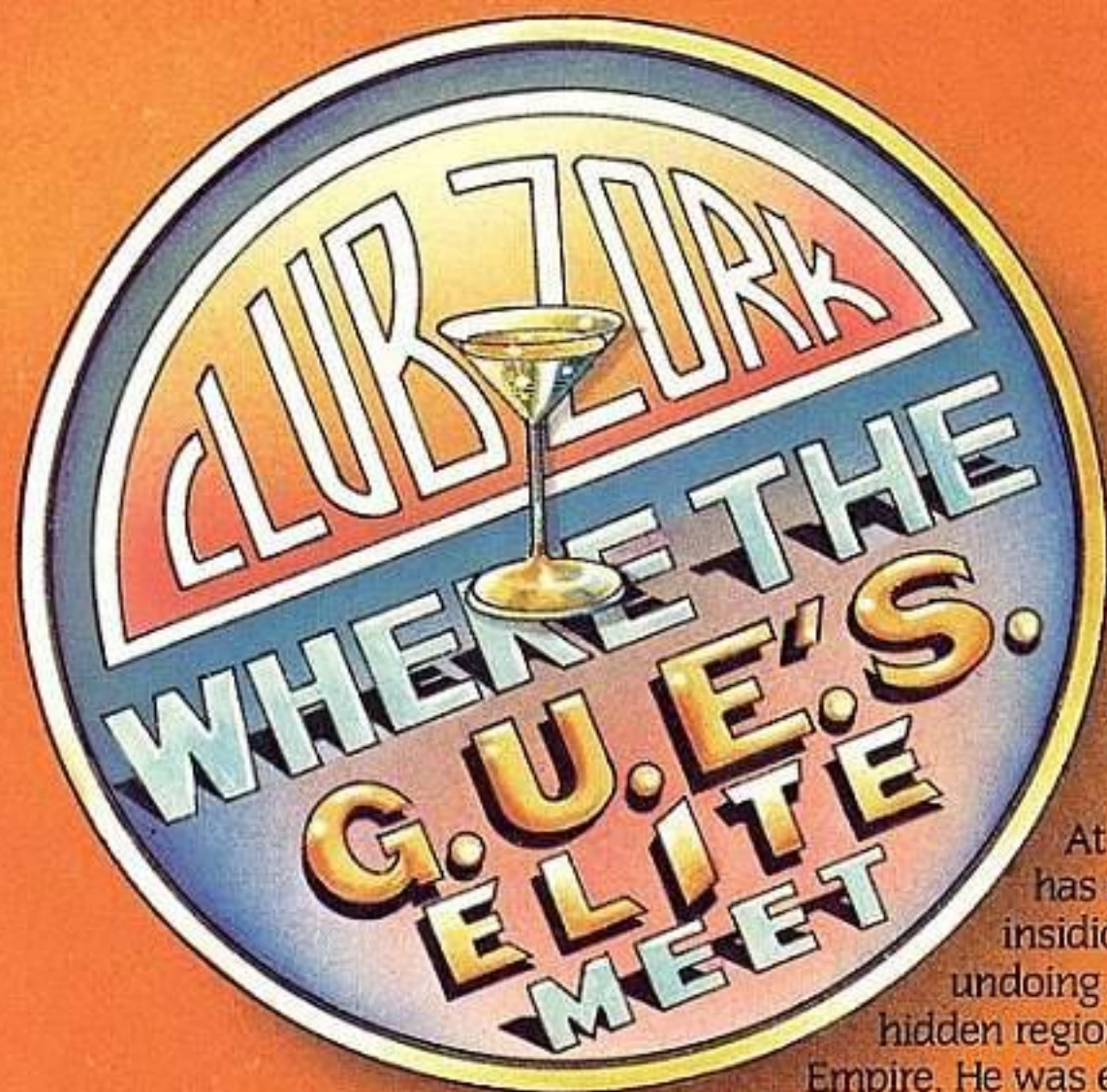
Motto: "Mekie zimbuz"
("Maybe tomorrow")



THINGS TO SEE: The hot springs are somewhat overrated as a tourist spot. As far as we're concerned, a trip to the Gray Mountains means one thing: snow sports. A lift ticket at Grayslopes costs Zm3 for a day. Skating on the slanted frozen surface of Lake Dingy is an exhilarating experience. Snowburrowers rent for around 6 zorkmids per week, but be sure to spend an extra Zm1.50 for a service contract.



SEASONAL EVENTS: None. There are no seasons in the Gray Mountains.



**You may never see the
light of day again!**

At least not if the Wizard of Frobozz has anything to say about it. This insidious gent intends to be your undoing as you explore a huge and long-hidden region of the Great Underground

Empire. He was exiled here in days gone by, and though his powers have diminished and he has acquired a bat or two in the belfry over the years, he is still capable of putting his sorcery to evil use against a mere human intruder such as yourself.

Your only hope is to outsmart the ancient necromancer at his trickery, solve a barrage of diabolical puzzles and, ultimately, bring the Wizard's powers under your control. Unless you succeed in this test of brains and bravery, you may be doomed to an eternity of wandering the endless catacombs of the vast subterranean realm.

Good luck, hearty soul, as you venture forth—and downwards. We wish we could shout stronger words of encouragement after you as you go, but there's nothing except darkness at the end of the tunnel as far as we can see. That must be the Wizard down there, waiting for you.

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