

Crabwell Delve

Half-hidden beneath the rubble in ruined building B2 of Castle Peris (detailed by a separate Atlas map) is the trapdoor leading down into the **Entrance** room of this small subterranean complex. A ladder is attached to its east wall, providing easy access from above. The chamber is about 9 feet high (2.7 metres; this is the height of most other places in the complex, where not mentioned), and has a well-concealed secret door into the rest of the Delve on its west wall. The room itself is empty, and, like much of the complex, has a scent of aged dust, with hints of dampness. Ideas for the contents in the rest of the Delve were generated using cards and procedures in the Loremaster's Deck and Loremastery Expansion decks produced by The Story Engine.

The **Chamber of the Platinum Basilisk** is the largest room in the complex, circular in plan, with doors in its west and south walls. It has a 10 ft ceiling (3 m). On a low, rectangular stone plinth in the northeastern part of the Chamber is the statue of a Basilisk. This is stunningly realistic, and made of solid platinum. The statue can speak, and is connected with The Twisted Torchbearer, the goddess whose loose home is this isle of Selenos where the Delve lies (see the separate Atlas map notes for Selenos for details on her). The statue was somehow created or transported here during one of her past rebirths.

South of this Chamber is the smaller, square, **Room of the Glass Bayonets**. On its east wall is a wooden weapon rack that runs almost the length of the wall, and which is about 4 ft tall (1.2 m). It holds 30 chipped, glass bayonets. These are useless as weapons, and of unknown origin, although the glass could be recycled at least. In the southern corner of the bottom shelf of the rack is a pile of quartz tusks, which have a curiously sensual, tactile form, and are naturally produced by the Horny Shellfish, a type of cone shell found in the isle's surrounding tropical waters. These objects are considered taboo, and are banned for use or appearance by several mainland groups, so could only be sold as black-market goods there.

Over in the northwest corner of the complex is the **Damp Flint Room**, another smaller, square chamber, which has a well-hidden secret door on its east wall. In its southeast corner is a pile of pieces of damp flint. Striking these to ignite flammable materials creates flames of the specific colour desired by the striker. The flint is more translucent than normal, being almost diaphanous, with misty, swirling, pale colours visible inside each piece. Some places consider ownership of such flint a status symbol. At the foot of the west wall is a filthy-looking, pliable staff, crafted from the skin of a Sea Drake (wingless, lithe, dragons of the sea that nest on the northern shores of the isle in Sea Drake Bay). This has magical abilities. It can be shaken-out to become a waterproof cape, or returned to its staff form, as required, and can be used to command any bodies of water nearby, as if by an elemental creature.

Through the secret door east of the Damp Flint Room is the short-corridor-like **Haunted Trap Room**. This has a 10 ft deep (3 m) floor pit in its middle, although the trap is no longer functional, for all it was once self-operating, set to open under weights placed on its top surface, and then swing back to lock in place after dropping whatever was on it into the pit below. There is a false door on the east wall that has a tall, ornate, magical rune inscribed on it, which has mind-controlling powers, influencing the dreams of those viewing it afterwards, and which has the immediate effect of persuading those seeing it that there is nothing of interest here or beyond the door. The pit-trap is haunted by the ghost of a sea-going pirate. A weird space-distortion effect operates to keep the ghost fixed here, which effect may have been part of the trap originally.

South of the Haunted Trap Room, a doorway opens onto a stairwell which is made of different, much older, stonework than the rest of the complex. The stairs descend steeply and awkwardly (as each step is about a foot, 30 cm, high) around 8 ft (2.4 m) into **The Great Crowned Crab Well Chamber**. This is a barrel-vaulted room, whose highest, central, north-south, line is some 13 ft from the floor (4 m). The Chamber is dominated by an epically-built stone well-head. This has the form of a gigantic, long-limbed, lobster-like, Crowned Crab from the tropical seas nearby (although far, far larger than the natural animal). Its body forms a top-cover for the Well, below and from which a bucket and rope can be wound down and up to reach a supply of excellent-quality fresh water. The Crab's foreclaws reach the floor to the left and right of the Well, and have been shaped to act as a pair of basins there, each with a spout in the claw's linking angle, and a drain-hole with a stone plug. The left claw dispenses alcohol, the right one blood, when its spout is activated using the simple hand-control on each. The fluids all appear to come from the same Well. The Crab's segmented lobster-like tail forms a larger, similarly-appointed basin behind the Well, whose spigot pours out naturally-heated water when turned on. When any of the three spigot controls, or the bucket winch, are in use, the Crab's whole form lights up with a soft, magical, radiance that fills the Chamber, an interesting connection with the real-world Crowned Crabs, which are bioluminous animals. By the front of the well on the floor is a ceramic drinking bowl, whose decoration shows a range of scenes from Selenos. This is a curious vessel, as it alters its form depending on the liquid inside it. For cold, fresh water from the Well, it is normal and solid. For any other liquid though, it becomes porous, rapidly leaking its contents. Hanging from the east wall alongside the Well is a cracked sword decorated with pieces of horn. It could be used for one final good blow, one that automatically strikes and causes double the expected amount of damage, after which it falls to pieces. This reveals a magical arrow inside the blade, which always returns to its shooter to be reused, whether it strikes its target or not.