

Pirate Fort by Tom Cartos

Background

This small tropical island appears unassuming on the map, showing up as barely a speck, but its location along a key shipping route combined with its large, protected bay has made it incredibly valuable.

In a matter of only a few years a thriving town has appeared, as well as several large estates, farmland and perhaps most importantly of all, the Fort that overlooks the bay entrance, protecting it from rival political factions and pirates. Whoever controls the island controls all the trade that passes through, and the commission that comes with it.

However, a few weeks ago the fort was taken in a sudden unexpected skirmish by a well-trained group of pirates. They are currently holed up inside, firing at any who approach by land or sea. They have sent their demands, effectively holding the bay to ransom. Unless all current and future trade fees are handed over to them, they will sink any ships attempting to enter the bay. Negotiations are at a stalemate, with neither side willing to give ground and trade ships are waiting out of range until a peace is made, unable to offload their cargo.

The trade council are desperately seeking aid from outsiders. Their own military force was greatly reduced during the initial raid on the fort, while the trade ships are unwilling to risk their own soldiers and happy to wait out the situation to deal with the victors. There is also a growing fear that sending in a large-scale attack would cause the pirates to start firing on the town itself.

Grid Information

GRID SIZE – 44x34 (300DPI)

VTT SIZE – 6160x4760 (140DPI)

RECOMMENDED PRINT SIZE – A0/ANSI E

Design Notes

Courtyard

- **01 – Approach** – The path leading to the fort slopes up steeply from the beach. It is overlooked in its entirety by the guns on the wall, meaning any attempt to attack directly would end in a massacre.
- **02 – Pirate Camp** – The pirates are so confident in their elevated position that some of the group are camped outside the fort walls, close enough to the gates to enter quickly in case of an attack. This allows them to continue to hunt and bring in fresh water from the deeper jungle, so the fort will not run out of supplies.

- **03 – Main Gate** – Large heavy wooden doors, reinforced by steel bands. Nothing short of a ram or cannon fire would open them.
- **04 – Courtyard** – The fort is not designed as a living space, as the usual guard live in the nearby town when not on shift. The pirates are therefore sleeping and eating out in the courtyard, although for many this still feels like an upgrade from life on a ship.
- **05 – Storage Room** – A variety of building materials, dried food, drink and general supplies. Enough to keep the fort self-sufficient for several months with additional food and water coming in from the hunting parties.
- **06 – Captain's Quarters** – Usually the fort commanders' quarters, this room has been taken over the pirate captain.
- **07 – Officers Bunks** – This small dorm has spare beds for any of the fort guard who need it. It has been commandeered by the more senior members of the crew, although the beds change hand quickly as they are currently the most valuable commodity to gamble with.
- **08 – Armoury** – Simple weapons and armour used by the fort guard when under attack. The weapons are well maintained.
- **09 – Shot Room** – Spare cannonballs are stored here. There is also a hatch leading to a narrow underground escape tunnel, but the pirate captain is aware of the tunnel and has locked and sealed the hatch, holding onto it in case they need a quick getaway.
- **10 – Side Gate** – This narrow side entrance is too small to attack directly. The single ballista is more than enough to cover the steep path up to it, and the narrow passageway it leads to would be a kill chamber for any who tried to enter.
- **11 – Jail** – These rarely used holding cells currently have two occupants, a member of the trade council and his daughter. They are being held as hostages until the trade deal is settled and are another reason the rest of the council are hesitant to attack the fort.

Ramparts

- **12 – Ramparts** – These protected battlements give an unobstructed view of the surrounding island and water.
- **13 – Bastions** – These triangular protruding structures allow the cannon emplacements to cover one another more effectively, reducing 'dead spots' especially closer to the walls where the cannon and other artillery can cover one another.
- **14 – Crane** – Used to raise and lower cannon and other heavier items.
- **15 – Shot Garlands** – Quick access to cannonballs.
- **16 – Hatch** – Used to attack any forces that make it to the side gate from above, or for a quick exit if needed.
- **17 – Lookout** – The highest point of the fort, and the best defended with cannon covering every angle.
- **18 – Outpost** – This extended tower provides cover along the cliffs and coastline below the fort, the only area that is not visible to those on the walls.