

Mithral Chef

A fast, furious festival of frenetic and fiery frying for 2-4 players by John du Bois

Introduction

The great dwarven king Gnorissonssonson has finally captured the dangerous and vile dragon Longandunpronounceable! And as everyone knows, the only proper thing to do after capturing a dangerous and vile dragon with a long and unpronounceable name is to have a feast! But King Gnorissonssonson has an idea for his feast – using the dragon’s flame as a cooking oven - that will make it a tale of the bards for ages! One way or another!

The finest chefs in the land have been summoned to attempt the ultimate test – cook a gourmet meal using a dragon’s flame! You and your rivals have answered this call, and only the most deft and clever cuisine artists will cook the finest meals!

Objective

The players are chefs cooking the greatest feast in the fantasy land of Generica! Using your right-hand assistant and left-hand assistant, they will compete to hunt, forage, cook, and plate the finest meal ever tasted, as judged by the points on the plates they serve.

Components

8 Sous-Chef Meeples	5 Stations
19 Recipe Cards	W Forest Cards
9 Game dice	X Pantry dice
1 Pantry bag	Y Plates
1-2 Serving Tongs	Z Burn Tokens
1 Dragon standee	

Component Overview

8 Sous-Chef Meeples

There are two of these for each player, separated by color. Each player will have one Sous-Chef that can be used by their left hand and one Sous-Chef that can be used by their right.

5 Stations

Each Station provides a place for players to send their Sous-Chefs and a description of how each Station works.

19 Recipe Cards

Most of the Recipe Cards describe a Recipe: the required game and pantry items, the recipe’s maximum Heat, and for which player counts the Recipe Card is used.

The other Recipe Card, The Dragon Escapes, ends the game when it is drawn.

W Forest Cards

The Forest Cards provide a lush and verdant hunting ground for the chefs to hunt fresh game for their meals. Each Forest Card shows either tracks, for a failed hunt, or a hunted animal – a Hart, Ram, Wolf, or the enigmatic Questing Beast, whose meat can be used in the place of any other animal’s. The cards also indicate which die the chefs use for their game when cooking.

9 Game Dice

One of these dice – a blue ten-sided die (d10), yellow eight-sided die (d8), or black six-sided die (d6) is acquired after a successful hunt in the Forest station, and is returned to the supply when a meal using that game has been served

X Pantry Dice

These six-sided dice represent the vegetables stocked in the highly disorganized dwarven pantry – white onions, purple eggplants, and orange peppers. Chefs will collect these ingredients while at the Pantry station and use them when cooking and plating meals.

1 Pantry Bag

This bag is used to store the uncollected Pantry Dice throughout the game and doubles as a super-fancy package for the game when it is not being played.

Y Plates

The Plates are used as a base for plating dishes at the Plating station and as a way to keep track of score at the end of the game.

1-2 Serving Tongs

Tongs are used to stack the Game and Pantry dice at the Plating station.

Z Burn Tokens

Where there is a dragon, there’s gonna be a flame, and where there is a flame, someone’s bound to get burned. You use the burn tokens to keep track of when you get burned after overcooking a meal at the Oven station. They’re worth negative points at the end of the game.

1 Dragon Standee

This is a menacing prop that stands at the Oven station and reminds you that the dangers of overcooking your food go beyond a mere bad review in the next day's broadsheets.

Setup

Line up the five Station cards in the middle of the play area in the following order: Forest, Pantry, Oven Plating, Order. Leave a little space between them unless you have a very small play area.

Shuffle the Forest cards together, then spread them out in a disorganized pile next to the Forest station. Place the 9 Game dice next to the Forest station as well.

Put the Pantry dice in the Pantry bag and shake it up really well. Put the Pantry bag next to the Pantry station.

Put the Dragon standee next to the Oven station, and put the Burn Tokens in a pile next to the Dragon.

Place the Plates near the Plating Station in a manner that allows all players to see the number of the face of every Plate.

Look through the Recipe Cards and remove all cards that have more chef's hats at the bottom than there are players (so remove all cards with four hats if there are only three players); these cards are not used during the game. Also remove The Dragon Escapes, but keep it handy. Shuffle the remaining cards together and place them face-down next to the Order station to form a deck. Then, take the top six cards of the deck without looking at them and shuffle The Dragon Escapes into those cards. Put these seven cards on the bottom of the deck.

Each player picks a color and takes the two Sous-Chefs of that color. Players take the Sous-Chef marked "L" in their left hand and the Sous-Chef marked "R" in their right hand.

Each player draws one card from the top of the Recipe deck and places it in front of them.

Play begins on a previously agreed upon signal once all players have their first Recipe card. This is usually "One, two, three, GO!" or something like that.

Playing the Game

Mithral Chef, by design, lacks the structure of many other board games. All players are playing simultaneously, and are generally trying to do the same thing. Most of the rules are station-specific, and will be address in "Cooking From Start To Finish" below. That said, there are some rules that apply generally to all stations:

Your sous-chef must be at a station to use it. You can't do something if you don't have a Sous-Chef in a space there, and you can't occupy a space that has a number higher than the number of players.

You can only use one specific hand at a station. Those little letters on the sous-chefs matter. If your "R" sous-chef is at a station, you can do that station's action with your right hand and only your right hand. You can probably guess what the "L" on the other sous-chef means.

You can trade stuff from the Pantry and nothing else. Pantry dice can be traded with other players. Recipes, Game and Plates cannot.

You don't have to be nice, but you do have to play with these people again later. It's often hard for two players to use the same station at the same time, and you aren't strictly required to be nice or share. But this is a fun, casual game, and if you're going to be all cutthroat in the kitchen, there may be some consequence for you in the real world.

Cooking From Start to Finish

In Mithral Chef, all players play simultaneously to get as many recipes done as they can before the dragon escapes – and the dragon WILL escape.

You can put your sous-chefs on any spaces you want and perform the actions in any order you choose as long as you have the required ingredients for Cooking and Plating. In these rules, the stations will be discussed in the order they're placed on the table.

FOREST: In the Forest, your sous-chef is hunting the game necessary to complete a masterpiece dish. Using that sous-chef's hand, flip over a card:

- If that card is a set of tracks, you've failed to find game. Flip it back over, mix it back into the cards, and try again.
- If that card is a Hart, Ram, or Wolf, you may choose to either ignore it or take it. If you ignore it, flip is back over, mix it back into the cards, and try again. If you take it, remove the card, take the die displayed on the card, and remove your sous-chef from the Forest.
- If that card is a Questing Beast, you must take it. Remove the card, take the die displayed on the card, and remove your sous-chef from the Forest.

PANTRY: In the Pantry, your sous-chef is gathering vegetables, and these dwarves have no recognizable sorting system.

Using the sous-chef's assigned hand and without looking in the Pantry bag, draw a die from the bag. You may choose to keep that die or return it to the bag. If you keep the die, you can trade or give it to another player at any time.

You can draw three dice from the bag before you have to remove your sous-chef. This limit applies regardless of how many of those dice you keep.

OVEN: In the Oven, your sous-chef attempts to cook the meal listed on one of your Recipes by rolling dice and not rolling higher than the Recipe's maximum Heat number.

You may not place a sous-chef in the Oven unless you have all of the following:

1. A Recipe card
2. Either the Game shown on that Recipe card or a Questing Beast
3. The Pantry dice shown on that Recipe card

Before using the Oven, choose which Recipe you are cooking and which dice you will use to cook your Recipe. You don't have much choice with the Pantry dice, but the Game dice come in different sizes, and you can substitute a Questing Beast for any one Game listed on the Recipe.

To use the Oven, use your sous-chef's hand to roll your chosen dice onto the Oven card. You must reroll all dice that don't land on the card until they do.

If the sum of all your dice is less than or equal to the Heat value listed at the top of your Recipe, you may:

1. Reroll any or all of your dice. You may continue rerolling until you choose to stop or until the sum of all your dice exceeds the Recipe's Heat value.
2. Stop rolling, take a Plate that is equal to or less than your result, and remove your sous-chef from the Oven.

If at any time, the sum of all your dice is more than the Heat value listed at the top of your Recipe, you have gotten burned. Take a Burn Token and remove your sous-chef from the Oven.

PLATING: At the Plating station, your sous-chef must make a pretty presentation for serving.

You may not place a sous-chef in the Plating station unless you have an unused Plate.

At this station, using tongs in that sous-chef's hand, stack the Game dice and Pantry dice from a Recipe onto the Plate gained for that Recipe from the Oven.

Your Plate must be at the bottom of the stack, but the dice may be stacked in any order that you wish.

If the stack falls, take your Plate and dice back and remove your sous-chef from the Plating station.

If the stack does not fall:

1. Return any used Game dice to their supply.
2. Return any used Pantry dice to the Pantry bag.
3. Remove the used Forest and Recipe cards from play.
4. Set the Plate aside to use for scoring.
5. Remove your sous-chef from the Plating station.

ORDER: At the Order station, your sous-chef takes a new order.

Draw a card from the Recipe deck using that sous-chef's hand. If it is a Recipe, put it into play in front of you and remove your sous-chef from the station. If it is "The Dragon Escapes", the game immediately ends.

Ending the Game

When a player draws "The Dragon Escapes" from the Recipe deck, the game immediately ends and players add up their scores as follows:

Plates: Add points equal to the Plates' values.

Burn Tokens: -1 point per token (maximum -5).

Incomplete Recipes:

# of Incomplete Recipes	Score
1	-1
2	-3
3+	-6

The player with the most points wins the game.

If there is a tie, the player with fewer Burn Tokens wins. If there is still a tie, the tied players should play again in a sudden-death "first complete Recipe wins" showdown. Or they can graciously accept the tie and just start a new game. (But seriously, sudden-death showdown. It's like a hockey shootout, but with cooking and dragon fire.)