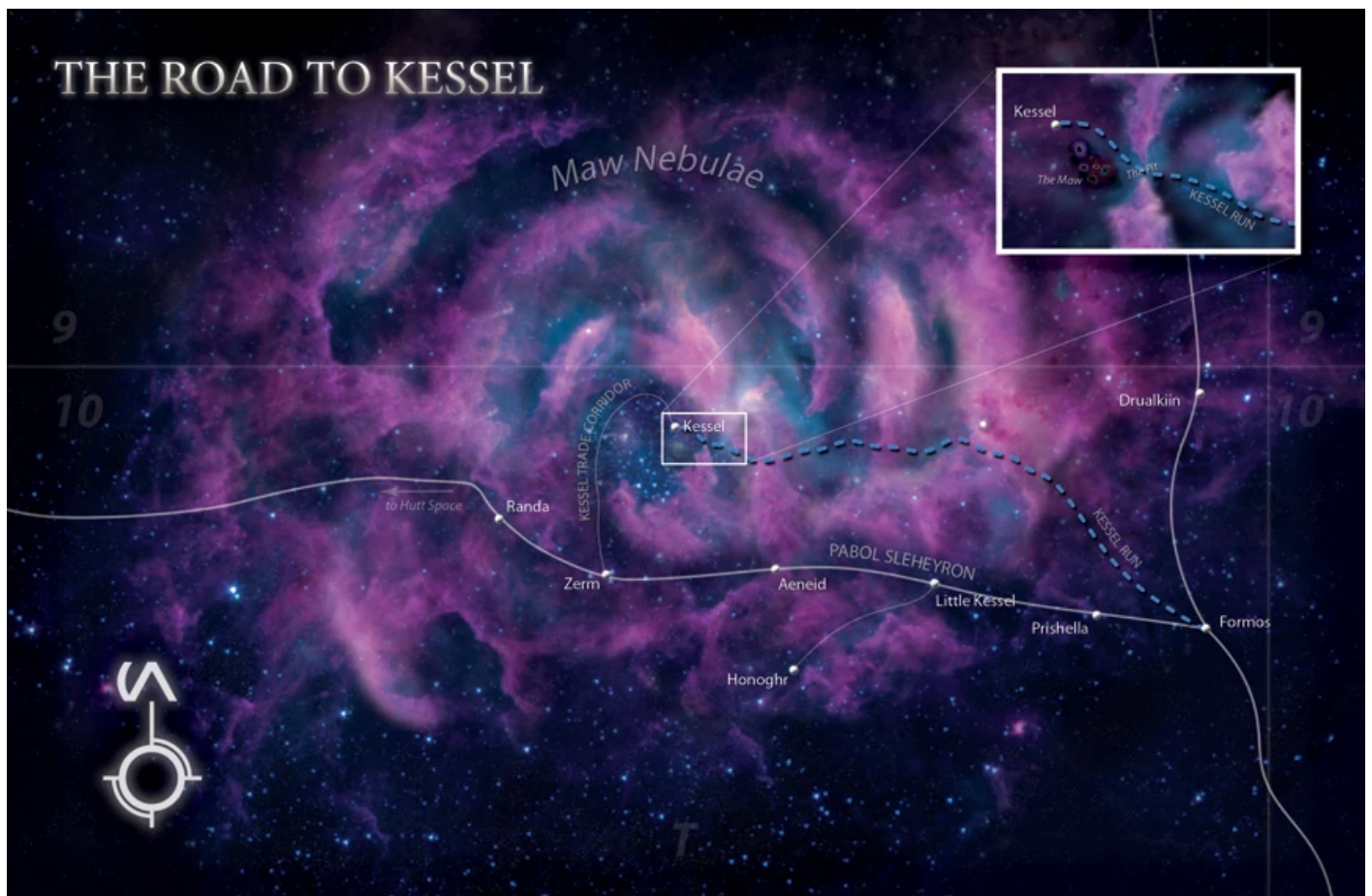


The System



The **Kessel** system, also known as the Kessa system, is a star system located in the Kessel sector of the galaxy's **Outer Rim Territories**. The system contains the planets Kessel, renowned for its spice mines, and **Oba Diah**, a major trafficking planet controlled by the **Spice Runners of Kijimi**.

The Kessel System is also renowned for the **Kessel Run**, a dangerous unofficial trade route that passes close to the **Maw**. The lesser known hyperspace route **Sanity Skip** links the planet Kessel with the outer-system world **Osean**—and acts as a junction for both the Kessel Run and **Pabol Sleheyron** trade routes.

SPICE

Spice refers to similar illicit substances with a variety of recreational and medicinal effects, in demand throughout the galaxy, long since mined on Kessel and distributed through Oba Diah through smuggling channels and trade routes. Other planets and systems have harvested their own versions of spice, but none compared to the potency of the stuff mined on Kessel.

A gang of space pirates that originated from Kijimi in the **New Republic Era** currently control Kessel's spice trade. **The Spice Runners of Kijimi** took power in the Kessel system during the chaos of instability that followed the fall of the **Galactic Empire** and **Pyke Syndicate**. Cutthroat and ambitious, the few settlements remaining in the system still largely prefer the Spice Runners of Kijimi to the brutal rule of the previous major Kessellian factions. In turn, the Spice Runners invest a little in local communities and allow them to largely manage themselves. Spice addiction has become increasingly prevalent as a result.

The human **Pirate Queen Belit San Horo** currently rules the pirates. She focuses efforts on trade, smuggling, and restoring the fortifications of **Pyke Palace** on Oba Diah to serve as a paradise fortress for her most loyal followers. A small bastion of the runners have also begun to rehabilitate the ruins of **Kessendria** on Kessel—previously a massive prison complex and military settlement for the Empire.

THE KESSEL RUN AND THE MAELSTROM

The Kessel Run was a 20-parsec (distance, not time) within the **Akkadese Maelstrom** used by smugglers and unscrupulous freighter captains to move spice from the spice mines of Kessel while avoiding safer and more well-patrolled routes. **Han Solo**, piloting the Millennium Falcon, made the infamous run in slightly over 12 parsecs, boasting about his ship's ability to endure shorter but more hazardous routes through hyperspace—to break the record, he flew his ship between two supermassive black holes at the edge of the **Maw Cluster**.

The Akkadese Maelstrom, also known simply as the Maelstrom, was a cluster of matter in the Kessel sector containing interstellar gas, carbonbergs, ice chunks, and other large debris that surrounded the planet Kessel. Another major threat of the Maelstrom were its spacefaring inhabitants—massive creatures with many eyes and electrified tentacles known as **summa-verminoth**.

The final and most dangerous threat, deeper within the Maelstrom, is the Maw Cluster. The region is a cluster of churning black holes that confounds navigational computers. The largest and worst of the black holes is **the Maw**. Glowing a faint amber, it swirls and sucks debris into its planet-sized gravity well, causing objects to be crushed inside. The Maw is home to the summa-verminoth and other unknowable creatures. Many scholars have theorized—none successfully—as to how so many black holes near one another remain stable. There is no record of anyone ever traveling directly through the Maw Cluster to learn what might beyond

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