

Video Game Reviews: Animation, maneuvers make 'Ratatouille' fun

by Jeb_Haught

Game: "Ratatouille"

Publisher: THQ

System: Nintendo Wii

Cost: \$50

ESRB rating: E

Review rating: 2 1/2 stars

'RATATOUILLE' - 'Ratatouille' features some of the funniest animation found in any game. CNS Photo courtesy of THQ. FEAR OF RATS - Remy relives the movie's most thrilling and hilarious moments while attempting to fulfill his dream of becoming a top chef. CNS Photo courtesy of THQ. 'COOKIE AND CREAM' - It's up to 'Cookie and Cream' to locate the missing moon, so their Rabbit Clan can commence with the sacred Moon Festival. CNS Photo courtesy of Agetec

RABBIT CLAN - As soon as the game is fired up, 'Cookie and Cream' players will discover that they can simultaneously control two characters at once. CNS Photo courtesy of Agetec. Rats. They're everywhere. But forget the ones in sewers, alleys and anywhere else they can find a meal, because THQ has teamed up with Disney to eliminate your fear of rats with the movie-based video game "Ratatouille."

Guide the main character, Remy, as he relives the movie's most thrilling and hilarious moments while attempting to fulfill his dream of becoming a top chef.

Rather than competing against other chefs, Remy must survive their wrath as well as that of several other dangerous creatures.

Everything in this game is downright cute, from the contorted faces of human chefs to the antics of Remy's uncoordinated, rotund brother Emile. In addition, "Ratatouille" features some of the funniest animation found in any game. I laughed out loud when I saw Remy running, slipping on ice, paddling down a river and sliding down gutter chutes while lying on his back in the "coffin" position.

Older gamers may find beating the game to be a piece of cake, but it's designed for children. That said, Remy has a wealth of moves to keep things interesting, such as balancing on wires, climbing fences and whacking enemies with makeshift weapons such as spoons. My favorite has to be his ability to use cardboard boxes to hide and move, just like Solid Snake.

I'm not crazy about the fact that this version hardly uses the Wii motion sensor, but the game still controls well. If you don't own a Nintendo Wii, don't worry. "Ratatouille" has been ported to nearly every console known to man.

Game: "Cookie and Cream"

Publisher: Agetec

System: Nintendo DS

Cost: \$30

ESRB rating: E

Review rating: 2 stars

After the popularity of "The Adventures of Cookie and Cream" on PlayStation 2, the series was scooped up by Agetec, which shortened the name to "Cookie and Cream" and ported it to the Nintendo DS.

Although this title blends mechanics found in both adventure and puzzle games, it may be too cute and cuddly for some gamers to digest.

It's up to Cookie and Cream to locate the missing moon, so their Rabbit Clan can commence with the sacred

Moon Festival. In order to traverse the island that holds the key to the mystery, Cream travels to the main control tower to handle traps and bosses while Cookie hops his way through each level.

As soon as the game is fired up, players will discover that they can simultaneously control two characters at once. Instead of switching between the adventure screen and puzzle screen as in other versions, players can use the D-pad to guide Cookie on the top screen while using the stylus to dictate Cream's actions on the bottom.

Further adding to the tension is the short time limit for each level, which is a problem because the mini-games are so vague. Sure, you can get hints for each puzzle, but there's no indication of progression. Sometimes it's hard to tell if the mini-game was completed correctly.

Then there are the sketchy controls. It's bad enough that Cookie has to traverse minuscule platforms and such, but it seems like he always falls off if he jumps and lands close to an edge. Lastly, it only takes 10 seconds to grow tired of the incredibly irritating sound effects.

Who knew that one of my favorite desserts could be hard on the ears?

Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

E: Everyone

T: Teen (13 and older)

E10-plus: (Everyone 10 and older)

M: Mature (17 and older) **RATING KEY**

4 stars - Must have

3 stars - Pretty good

2 stars - So-so

1 star - Don't waste your time

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