Assassin’s Creed: anything but deadly

Despite fantastic graphics, Creed won’t leave a lasting mark with every gamer

game review

Assassin’s Creed
Developed by Ubisoft
Available Now

RAMIN MOORE
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Few games released this year have been as polarizing as Assassin’s Creed. Who would have figured that a game about a Persian assassin—or Maharajah, for you brassy buff—during the Third Crusade would stir up heated debate? Some have called it tedious and shallow, while others think it’s one of the few truly next-gen games. Both sides are have their points, really, it all depends on how you want to look at it.

There are a few things, however, that everyone can agree on. Assassin’s Creed is probably the best-looking game this side of Jesus. Work both visually and audibly, the game is stunning.

The game’s four cities—Masyaf, Damascus, Jerusalem, and Alexandria—were all created with historical accuracy in mind, and kudos: the cities are huge,immersing structures, and inhabitants are quite the same—and you can’t help but feel the effort that went into designing them.

The sound design also creates a living, breathing atmosphere for these cities. You hear vendors peddling their wares from their shops, conversations about in-game affairs, and plenty of ambient rumbling to make you feel immersed in the setting.

But despite the fantastical world Ubisoft’s created, deus ex machina is the name of the game, reaching the same heights of quality. As a member of the Hashashin, your job is to—yes, you guessed it—assassinate people. As Al Mualim, you use your parlour-like skills to hop, skip, and jump. What’s significant about the first several targets—I guess David Bell learned to lumber travel. But before you can do that, you need to learn more about your victims where they hide out and what they’re up to.

The methods you employ to do this are three-fold: pickpocketing, eavesdropping, and asking information. The line is thin, with nine targets in total, doing the same thing three times in varying orders can get very tedious. You also don’t have to do all of the information missions for each target, so you can often skip by with the minimum amount of work needed to whack a guy. It really comes down to a question of patience—and maybe a little perspective.

If you view each target as just that, then you’ll really have no desire to reach for every pocket or beat up every infiltrator. You want to complete your mission, and you’ll do it as quickly as possible.

The payoff to doing every mission, however, is gaining an understanding of just who your target is and why your guild would want him dead, even though it’s not really necessary. In fact, the game’s story, while being surprisingly solid, provides a pretty amusing metaphor for this: you blindly follow orders, as is your duty, or do you question the task that’s been asked of you? Both styles of play are right, but these in the latter camp will probably enjoy the game a lot more. If you have the patience for it and, like me, you’re not shuddering to view games as artistic representation, then you’ll enjoy just how much detail went into the setting and story—despite a cliffhanger ending.

If you’re not that patient, you’ll still enjoy Assassin’s Creed for what it is, but what depth it offers may not be the kind you’re looking for.

cultura obscura

Urban Explorers

VICTOR VARGAS
Online Coordinator

Among the many duties a security guard has is to ensure that unauthorized persons aren’t given access to restricted areas. This comes into conflict with the main objective of a “secret society” of people known as the “Urban Explorers’ Society,” whose hobby is to get into places that aren’t supposed to be.

You see, while they’re extremely harmless, their ability to walk into a building and get into highly sensitive areas without ever being challenged and then brag about it has proven to everyone that no matter how much security you have, there’s always a way to bypass it.

Understanding that urban exploration is illegal to participate in it involves the crime of trespassing and possibly breaking and entering. At the same time, urban explorers do have their own ethical code. The majority of explorers don’t try and vandalize places—or at least leave any permanent damage. They try to stay away from actively trying to defraud people or trick security systems, instead trying to find simple and ingenious methods in order to beat them. And also urban explorers don’t only enjoy security guards—the targets can often abandoned or deserted places like toxic sewers, smelly drains, haunted houses, abandoned schools, and the all-time-famous condemned hospitals. Urban exploration is not just about breaking the law or travelling through a place where the or is in— it’s about breaking rules. Explorers often post their exploits on numerous websites and wikis and explain the methods that encourage others to try to explore the feet. In fact, frequent targets of urban exploration often have a “guest book” where you can record that you, too, have toured through the objects of year your friends have gone.

But most importantly, it’s all about the rush of being able to go somewhere that you aren’t allowed. After all, you, the urban explorer, managed to defeat the locks on the severs grate and the security guard, and you reached a place where the eyes of the police have never seen. After all, a charge for trespassing surely must be worth the bragging rights of travelling through a place that only a few have seen.