Stardew Valley Review

Well, I must say, I just love Harvest moon games. I love their bubbly graphics and taking care of a farm and cute animals. Those were not the reasons I started playing Stardew valley though. First, I don’t like the graphics. I’m not the type to like 8 bits game, and this game is like that (blocky and pixelated). For example, Minecraft is blocky, but it is smooth… I don’t want to have to put my face in the screen to see or recognize something. And… what? What? Oh, yeah, I like a lot of PS1 games that the graphics sucks, but that’s not the same ok? The image is clear.

Soooooooo, why did I try this game? For the gameplay. I heard it was a more adult-like game and that there was a lot of possibilities in it. The main reason I was attracted to this game was the announcement of Multiplayer. Never before I could farm with someone and that really got me excited.

Before Starting, lets tweak

So, I’ve installed the game 5 days before an upcoming patch which added a lot of things so I decided to try the game without getting a 100% invested in this save file (which could be corrupted). One thing you need to know about me: I love modding. But not the game breaking or god-like items; mods that would help the realism, the fun.

So, I tweaked the game the things I didn’t like, for example the fences that breaks after about a month… -Seriously? Did you never see a movie where the farm is like 30 years old and the gates are there? Torn, but still working-

Found a mod who made the music loop more often, less silent moment where you are wondering what is going on. Another mod was about the time: In harvest moon time would stop inside to let you talk and wander a little bit. That was something I really liked so I found a mod that did that.

A mod called Loved label that was really simple: showed which animal you had love today by bringing the cursor on top of it. Sometime it’s easy to get side track by something you really want to do in the day, so it’s a nice way to quickly check if you’ve given love to every little critter that lives on your farm.

The fishing was for me AWFUL. I install a mods that made it easier so I could get used to the ‘’press the button so you can reel in the fish ‘’

You see what kind of mods I like now? So, after installing the mods, I started playing.

Gameplay

The main screen is really cute. So you begin by creating your character and I must say, there is a lot of choices for the customization. But, the horror in the graphics hit me there. The creation menu, while giving you a lot of leverage to choose your color and stuff had an awful cursor/control precision. I explain: it’s awesome how you can make the eyes, skin, hair the color you want. It’s really hard to get correctly on the first try the right color. I found the creation menu too small for the cursor and the array of colors it offers. Maybe if it was a little bit bigger or would control differently I would like it more but oh well.

Made myself a cute little blond girl, and the game starts. I will given a lot of points for the beginning of the story, it’s really well written and really touching. I got emotional and ‘’understood’’ my character a little better.

Without spoiling anything you now start on your grand-fathers farm -like harvest moon basically- but you do whatever you want with it. Yes they give you seeds to start and the beginning of the game is more of a slow paced, showing you a day at a time what you can do and how the villagers have their own schedule.

For the sake of it, I’ll talk about the game after the patch but don’t worry there’s not a lot that has change from the before and the after.

Your farm, depending on the type you chose at the beginning has a lot of space. You will need to free some space by cutting trees and cutting the grass to be able to buy from the carpenter the buildings you would need on your farm. At the beginning, you have only your house on your farm, a destoyed greenhouse – that you can’t take down or build back up for the moment – and two ponds – if you chose the normal map one -. So you’ll need to hire Robin, the carpenter, to build yourself a silo, coop, barn, etc and you will need money, and resources. The main resources are wood and rock. But for some other buildings you’ll need more resources like clay – that you dig up everywhere - and other things you find in the mines like earth crystal.

There’s a crafting menu too. You can craft your own machines and ingredients once you get the level in that particular skill. I will talk about skills later but for now: more level in farming, for example, will allow you to make machines or crafting like fertilizer, bee house, mayonnaise machine. And every skill unlock different crafting recipe, which all need different resources.

The Tools

So like harvest moon you collect rocks and wood to build you farm’s building. The farm is overrun with debris and weed so you’ll have no trouble gathering resources from the start and leveling your skills. You have different skills that give you different bonuses. Foraging is for cutting wood and for finding wild plants and berries. Farming is for crops and animals and is harder than it looks to level. Mining is when you use the pickaxe on rocks and stones. Combat, that is paired with mining is for fighting monsters in the mine – because yes, you are not alone in those mines- and there will be little quests to slay, lets say green slimes. Lastly there is fishing where you get better at it the more you do it.

While you have skills and level, your tools don’t need a certain level or skill to upgrade. You only need to pass by the ore before it and have the money to make it: Copper, iron, gold and the ‘’goddess-like’’ one. The tools you are used to if you already played a harvest moon: Scythe, watering can, axe, pickaxe, hoe. The scythe is not upgradable because you already able to do a moon motion in front of you. Then you have your hoe, that is useful for once. You’ll never leave it home because in the game there is some worms that pops out of the ground everywhere and there’s artifacts and other stuff under them so you need your hoe. There is also in the mines, you can dig the soft earth spot to try and get cave carrots that helps with your stamina and health. The other tools are like usual, upgrade them to have a better efficiency.

You have limited space in your backpack so you need to choose what you bring wisely. There is, at the general store, two upgrades for your backpack. You start with 12 places, then you get the 24 places upgrade and 12 space more for the second for a total of 36 places in your bag. They are costly but are worth it, trust me.

The characters

Unlike what I thought there is a lot of marriable candidates and they are all different and like different things. All characters have different taste and you can know it by the response each has about an item: love, like, neutral, dislike and hate. Something they love will grant you more points towards them that something they like and if you give them something they dislike or hate they will like you less. There a site that helps you with all of that stuff so you don’t get too mixed up.

You have 6 girls and 6 boys to choose from. For the boys type you get : the sport-like, the musician, a more emo-type, the doctor -who’s mustache is REALLY creepy and I got him a beard with a mod instead-, the artist and finally the drunkard. For the girls you have : the blond b\*tch, the emo-type girl, the science type, a more quiet and reserved type, the artsy and finally you get the barmaid who’s always happy. Like I said earlier, every one has their own agenda and every day is not the same so you’ll need to get accustom to chasing them if you want to talk to them or just giving them a gift.

For the non-marriable candidate you can give them gift – for everyone two a week is the max you can give them – and talk to them every day to make them like you more and unlock events. Events are nice and can give you really cool item or recipes!

Last thought

So, I’ve talked about a lot of the aspects of the game. Surely I got accustomed to the graphics while playing and the mods helps me a lot for the fun. There is a lot more things to talk about in the game but I think I shouldn’t spoil you too much about them. Farming is nice and rewarding, mining is like an adventure, fishing tends to be really lucrative and taking care of animals is really cute and fun and doesn’t take a lot of time. These are all things you should try by yourself and all of them are fun. Try different playthrough by focusing more on one of them and see what type you like more. Or be like me and do everything, in the end if you are having fun you are doing it right. With the patch you can choose from 5 or six maps for your farm, try them! Get wild! Try the game, it’s not that pricy for the amount of time you will put in it, if it’s your type of game.

Review : Positive – with Mods -