SaGa Frontier 2

SaGa Frontier 2 (?? ?????? 2 , Saga Furontia Ts?) is a role @-@ playing video game developed by Square for the PlayStation . It is the eighth original game in their SaGa series . Initially released in Japan in April 1999 , an English version was made available in North America in January 2000 by Square Electronic Arts and in PAL regions the following March by Square . Development for the title was headed by series creator Akitoshi Kawazu , with music by Masashi Hamauzu . The game features an art style unique to the series at the time it was released , utilizing hand @-@ painted watercolor backdrops and characters to give the game a storybook feel . Like other SaGa games , gameplay is largely non @-@ linear , giving the player multiple paths to follow in order to complete the game .

Set in the fictional world of Sandail , the game 's plot , as well as location and character names , draw heavily from medieval Germanic and Anglo @-@ Saxon influence . The game 's plot is divided into two separate stories , with the player given the option to control either Gustave XIII , an exiled would @-@ be heir on a quest to reclaim his throne , or William Knights , a young man investigating the death of his parents , with both scenarios eventually intertwining in a larger plot involving the fate of the world . SaGa Frontier 2 was met with generally positive reviews , with the Japanese version receiving three re @-@ issues in June 2000 , March 2002 , and July 2006 respectively .

Gameplay

SaGa Frontier 2 is a role @-@ playing video game featuring two @-@ dimensional character sprites on hand @-@ drawn backgrounds . Players advance through the game by completing story @-@ based missions and interacting with non @-@ player characters to move the plot forward . At the start of the game , the player is given the option of assuming the role of one of two heroes , each with their own individual stories and objectives . Like previous titles in the SaGa series , the game 's plot progresses in a mostly non @-@ linear fashion , with a heavier emphasis on exploration and battling than adhering strictly to the narrative . While the player is restricted by the basic flow of the story , they are free to travel to many parts of the game world whenever they choose , and must traverse harsh dungeon environments and defeat enemies to affect their current place in the story .

Battles in SaGa Frontier 2 utilize a turn @-@ based approach where the player must input specific commands for each character at the beginning of each combat round , with each action taking place in accordance with a character 's speed rating . In any given round , player may choose to attack an enemy with an equipped weapon , as well as use magic spells to cause harm to their opponent or aid their allies . By continually attacking an enemy with weapons , characters randomly learn special weapon skills that can deal more damage , as well as combine with other party member 's attack to form combo attacks . Combat scenarios are divided into three separate types , which are either selectable by the player or dictated automatically by the plot - Duel , which allows one @-@ on @-@ one combat ; Team , where up to four characters may take part against an entire enemy group ; or Strategic , which can contain a large number of characters in a strategy @-@ like scenario . Each character may equip up to two different kinds of weapons , and may become more specialized in a particular field of combat by assigning them " roles " , which increase their proficiency with certain weapon and spell combinations as well as give them additional abilities . By winning battles , characters may increase their statistics based on their actions in combat , thus becoming more powerful .

Plot

SaGa Frontier 2 has two separate storylines : one is the history of Gustave XIII of the country of Finney , and the other concerns a character named Wil Knights . The game takes place in the land of Sandail , with the games timeline spanning several decades .

Gustave XIII is the former prince of Thermes , the capital of Finney , and was intended to be the heir to the throne of his father , Gustave XII . The son is disinherited and exiled by his father when ,

at the age of 7 , he fails to manifest any magical abilities , known as Anima , during a ritual known as the Firebrand Ceremony . His mother , Queen Sophie , unsuccessfully tries to prevent Gustave XIII 's banishment . She and Gustave XIII are banished from the castle by Gustave XII and are forced to live in the slums of Thermes . Master Cielmer , a magician as well as teacher and councilor to Gustave XIII assists both mother and son in escaping Thermes and seeking asylum in the city Gruegel in the kingdom of Na . Despite being granted a mansion to live in my the king of Na , Gustave is still resentful of his rejection and lack of magical powers .

At age seventeen he apprentices as a blacksmith and learns to fight , and it is during his period his mother dies . He then moved to the city @-@ state of Wide where he insinuates himself with the ruler and overthrows him . Five years later , Gustaves father dies , and at the behest of his best friend Kelvin decides to claim the throne . A war then breaks out between Gustave XIII and his half @-@ brother in which Gustave conquers Finney and becomes the ruler of all the surrounding kingdoms except Na . This one holdout is controlled by Phillip , Gustaves brother , who blames Gustave for their mothers death . During the subsequent conflict , Gustave admits he lacks magical powers , and abdicates in favor of Phillip . Gustave then build a city of his own called Hahn Nova , but it is overrun by monsters and burned to the ground . The fate of Gustave and his friends is left a mystery .

The secondary playable storyline in the game is that of Wil Knights , who is a member of a rich family of " diggers " ; after the death of his parents , Wil relocated to the kingdom of Westia . At the age of fifteen Wil sets out to become a famous digger : after hearing about a legendary object known as " The Egg " , Wil sets out to find it . After adventures in the Arctic region of Weissland , Wil becomes known as " Tycoon Wil " , though he continues to search for the Egg . Wil then has a son named Rich who goes in search of the Egg and finds a young woman named Misty in possession of it . And even though his wife announces their baby girl Ginny has been born , he becomes obsessed with the woman and the Egg , and never returns from his quest .

The final part of the story involves Ginny Knights following the path of her father and grandfather in searching for the legendary object . Upon hearing of the evil powers of the Egg , and its role in leading her father to his death , Ginny decides to find and destroy the object . She eventually discovers the Egg is now possessed by " Fake Gustave " , a pretender to the throne of Finney trying to take power in the wake of Gustave XII 's death . After Ginny defeats him , she then battles the powerful demonic object , and upon its defeat is revealed to be controlled by the demon Vadagara and The Devil King . Their defeat by Ginny ends the objects evil influence and attempts to insidiously control the kingdoms of Sandail .

= = Development = =

SaGa Frontier 2 was first announced in a September 1998 issue of Japanese The PlayStation magazine , where Square claimed the game would be taking a stylistic departure from the original SaGa Frontier released one year earlier , as well as confirming the title 's release for spring 1999 . A representative from the company stated that they would be abandoning the CG full @-@ motion videos and computer @-@ style graphics of the previous title to focus on a more traditional , hand @-@ drawn look . The game 's art style was achieved by using hand @-@ drawn and painted artwork produced on a canvas that would be scanned and digitized to produce the game 's backgrounds and character sprites . Many of the game 's towns , locations , and characters draw heavily from medieval Germanic influence , with much of the story taking place within a fictional time @-@ frame similar to the 13th century . New features not seen in the previous SaGa Frontier title include compatibility with the PlayStation 's DualShock analog controller and PocketStation peripheral device for accessing additional content .

The North American version was announced at the 1999 Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles by Square . In January 2000 , the game was released in that region by Square Electronic Arts , and was made available in PAL regions the following March . A promotional movie for SaGa Frontier 2 was included on the SquareSoft 2000 Collector 's CD Vol . 3 , which was packaged with the initial North American release of Vagrant Story .

= = = Music = = =

While Kenji Ito served as composer for most of the previous SaGa games , the music for SaGa Frontier 2 was written by series newcomer Masashi Hamauzu , who had previously provided the soundtrack for Square 's Chocobo no Fushigina Dungeon two years earlier . SaGa Frontier 2 's music was recorded at Sunrise Studio in Tokyo , and on April 21 , 1999 , Square released the three @-@ disc SaGa Frontier II Original Soundtrack in Japan courtesy of publisher DigiCube . The soundtrack features German track names to keep with the game 's eastern European theme , and was popular enough to be re @-@ issued on the Square Enix Music label in February 2006 . In July 1999 , an album called Piano Pieces " SF2 " was released featuring piano renditions of music from the game , featuring arrangements from Hamauzu himself along with Naoko Endo , Daisuke Hara , Mikiko Saiki , Daisuke Karasuda , and Michiko Minakata .

= = Reception = =

SaGa Frontier 2 was a bestseller in Japan . The game has sold over 675 @,@ 000 copies in Japan as of December 2004 . Like SaGa Frontier , the game has been re @-@ released several times over the years , once in 2000 as part of the Square Millennium Collection , again in 2002 as part of the PSone Books best @-@ seller range , and again in 2004 as a part of the Square Enix Ultimate Hits line .

The game maintains a 74 % average score from aggregate review website GameRankings based on 26 reviews , and received generally positive reviews from western publications . GameSpot praised the game 's art design in a time when three @-@ dimensional computer graphics were becoming more prominent , stating " [t] he title 's relaxed and flowing tones are a pleasant breeze of creativity when compared with most titles ' CG , polygons , and pixel @-@ perfect graphics . The unique presentation is SaGa Frontier 2s greatest strength , triumphantly stating : There is still a place for two @-@ dimensional graphics . " However , the website felt that the game may alienate fans of the original SaGa Frontier for taking too many liberties with gameplay and style , and that while players were still free to explore scenarios at their own pace , the game 's story itself was more linear than the average SaGa title . SaGa Frontier 2 's graphics were also praised by IGN who called the game " beautiful " with a " romantic soundtrack that is of the utmost quality . But it isn 't too memorable . " IGN 's biggest problem with the title was its low replay value and weak presentation , which the website felt didn 't take full advantage of the PlayStation 's CD format by including an opening movie or character voices , ultimately calling it a " slightly above average game " . GamePro magazine called attention to the game 's " well organized " menu system and responsive control which took advantage of the PlayStation 's DualShock analog control sticks , as well as " a solid story that is sure to please role @-@ players and strategy fans alike . "