Izuna 2 : The Unemployed Ninja Returns

Izuna 2 : The Unemployed Ninja Returns , released in Japan as G?ma Reifu Den Izuna Ni (???????? ?) , is a dungeon crawler video game developed by Ninja Studio and published in Japan by Success and in North America by Atlus for the Nintendo DS handheld game console . It is the sequel to Izuna : Legend of the Unemployed Ninja and was released in Japan on November 29 , 2007 and in North America on July 22 , 2008 .

Like the first game , Izuna 2 focuses on the adventures of Izuna and her friends . Shino , Izuna 's friend , disappears in the midst of a wedding , so Izuna goes on a quest to find her . Izuna finds her , only to discover that Shino was looking for her sister , Shizune , so Izuna and her group decide to help search for Shizune . But by looking for Shizune , Izuna angers a group of foreign gods , who attempt to prevent her from reuniting with Shizune .

Gameplay

Izuna 2 , like the original Izuna game , is a dungeon crawler . The player controls Izuna or various other characters and explores randomly generated dungeons . Each dungeon has multiple floors that need to be cleared , and many of these dungeons have bosses that must be defeated . The player manages a health bar ; if the health bar is depleted , the player dies and is forced to return to town . Dying , a common occurrence in the game , will cause the player to lose all money and items being carried , though the player will not lose experience or levels . The health bar refills continuously every turn . To prevent players from remaining in place to restore health excessively , an " SP bar " was added . It constantly depletes per turn and a depleted SP bar decreases the player 's attack power . The game is turn @-@ based ; the player can perform an action , such as moving , using an item , or attacking , and every other enemy in the dungeon will perform an action as well . The game includes many role @-@ playing video game elements , such as equippable items , stats , and experience points to level up .

Equipment , items , and talismans can be found in dungeons . Their location and effects are randomly generated . Equipment comes in several classes : melee equipment such as swords , claws , arms , dolls , and boots , or ranged weapons such as boomerangs and bows . Items come in several types including pills , shuriken , kunai knives , bombs , caltrops , and restorative items that heal health or SP . Talismans can " stick , " or be attached , to equipment to add abilities or stats . A weapon can only have a limited number of talismans stuck to it . Talismans can also be used to cast magic , which uses SP .

Izuna 2 also includes a " tag " system not found in the previous game . The player enters dungeons with two characters , allowing the player to continue exploring the dungeon even after the first character has died . The player can switch characters in game during a fight through this system . Additionally , the player can use the secondary character in conjunction with the primary character to launch a powerful dual attack .

Plot

Ichika , a fisherwoman from the previous game , has plans to get married . However , during the night before Ichika 's marriage , Shino , Izuna 's best friend , disappears . Izuna frantically tries to find her and quickly locates her . Shino reveals that she was searching for her sister , Shizune , so Izuna and her friends decide to help Shino find Shizune .

Izuna enlists the help of the gods of Katamari Village , whom she aided in the previous game . Lord Takushiki , one of the gods , reveals that both Shizune and Izuna are " portable shrines " , or people who allow the gods to leave their home villages . Because the existence of two portable shrines in one area would cause conflict among gods , Takushiki sent Shizune to another region as a child . The foreign gods and their creatures from that region , mononokes , followed Shizune into Izuna 's homeland .

After defeating several foreign gods , Izuna successfully reunites Shino and Shizune . However , by

defeating the foreign gods , Izuna angers the Dark Prince , the leader of these gods . Izuna is forced to defeat the Dark Prince . After doing so , she convinces him to return to his homeland , allowing peace to return to the region .

= = Development = =

According to the developer blog , the localization process for Izuna 2 was " surprisingly uncomplicated " and the original run through took less than a month . Success , the Japanese developer , provided Atlus , the North American developers , with well @-@ organized files , which helped make the translation and editing quick and easy . However , the quality assurance and debugging process was a " nightmare " due to the nature of the game and the randomized spawning of creatures . Additionally , the team looked closely at the bugs found by Japanese players and attempted to replicate every reported bug . This effort was marred by the lack of a debug menu , though debuggers were able to use both a one @-@ hit kill option and a floor @-@ skipping option . Unfortunately , the one @-@ hit kill option did not apply to the bosses , so debuggers still had to grind to gain enough levels to defeat the bosses . In total , six official testers found 104 system @-@ type bugs and 259 text bugs .

= = Release = =

On the Japanese release date of Izuna 2 , Success organized a series of fashion events at various stores in Akihabara . Cosplayers could compete for prizes by dressing up as either Izuna or Shino . Additionally , actors and members of the design staff attended to field questions and sign autographs . The game was also made available at Comiket 73 between December 21 and December 23 , 2007 .
In North America , Atlus initially announced plans to release an English version on April 17 , 2008 . Atlus released a trailer of the game in April 2008 , and in May 2008 , Izuna 2 appeared at the 2008 Run to the Sun convention in California . A competition was also held in the U.S. to help promote the release . Fans were asked to add text to a series of images involving interactions between different characters and could win a free copy of Izuna 2 and all of the posters given away as promotional items with the game .

= = = Merchandise = = =

Izuna 2 was released in several different containers . Sofmap , a Japanese retailer , released a collector 's box depicting Izuna and Shino bathing in an onsen , mirroring the design of many eroge games . Each American release contained one of two pinup @-@ styled mini @-@ posters of Izuna . Copies of the game purchased through either GameStop or Amazon each included an additional , retailer @-@ exclusive mini @-@ poster .

= = Reception = =

Izuna 2 received " mixed or average reviews " according to video game review aggregator Metacritic . Many critics pointed to the game 's " quintessential roguelike RPG " nature as a drawback because it required a great deal of grinding to progress in the game , though some critics enjoyed the difficulty of the game .
Reviewers were also split with their impressions of the " tag " system . GameShark found it to be a " nice twist " while RPGFan found it to be " irrelevant and not good . " Nintendo World Report called Izuna 2 " a respectable and fun dungeon @-@ crawler " marred mostly by its gameplay mechanics and disappointing graphics . They also pointed out that the game is targeted at " very specific gamer crowd " . Likewise , GamePro commented that the game " might prove too challenging to casual DS gamers who are just looking for a quick round of fun " and would most likely fit best for " DS owners looking for a hardcore dungeon crawling experience . " In spite of this , they found that the game

had several notable positive aspects , including a " solid " control scheme and " well done " Japanese voice acting and English subtitling . X @-@ Play pointed to the game 's " original visual style and a quirky sense of humor " as characteristics that distinguished the game from roguelikes . They greatly enjoyed the dialogue and voice acting and felt that the game " shouldn 't get lost " among other dungeon crawlers released to the DS . However , 1UP.com found that the " amusingly slapstick storyline " was the only point that stood out against dungeon crawlers , though the game was " a considerable improvement " over the original . In general , 1UP.com thought the game was " a challenge meant for hardcore RPG fanatics but amusing enough that newcomers might find it worthwhile , too . " Likewise , IGN commented that the game would take " a very specific gamer to cuddle up to this cute , comedic experience " and pointed out that the game was " most unlikely of sequels . " In contrast to 1UP.com , IGN found the game to be " undoubtedly more of the same , " leading to the same benefits and drawbacks .