= The Secret of Monkey Island =

 The Secret of Monkey Island is a 1990 point @-@ and @-@ click graphic adventure game developed and published by Lucasfilm Games . It takes place in a fantastic version of the Caribbean during the age of piracy . The player assumes the role of Guybrush Threepwood , a young man who dreams of becoming a pirate and explores fictional islands while solving puzzles .
 The game was conceived in 1988 by Lucasfilm employee Ron Gilbert , who designed it with Tim Schafer and Dave Grossman . Gilbert 's frustrations with contemporary adventure titles led him to make the player character 's death almost impossible , which meant that gameplay focused the game on exploration . The atmosphere was based on that of the Pirates of the Caribbean theme park ride . The Secret of Monkey Island was the fifth game built with the SCUMM engine , which was heavily modified to include a more user @-@ friendly interface .
 Critics praised The Secret of Monkey Island for its humor , audiovisuals , and gameplay . The game spawned a number of sequels , collectively known as the Monkey Island series . Gilbert , Schafer and Grossman also led the development of the sequel Monkey Island 2 : LeChuck 's Revenge . LucasArts released a remake of the original in 2009 , which was also well received by the gaming press .

= = Gameplay = =

 The Secret of Monkey Island is a 2D adventure game played from a third @-@ person perspective . Via a point @-@ and @-@ click interface , the player guides protagonist Guybrush Threepwood through the game 's world and interacts with the environment by selecting from twelve verb commands (nine in newer versions) such as " talk to " for communicating with characters and " pick up " for collecting items between commands and the world 's objects in order to successfully solve puzzles and thus progress in the game . While conversing with other characters , the player may choose between topics for discussion that are listed in a dialog tree ; the game is one of the first to incorporate such a system . The in @-@ game action is frequently interrupted by cutscenes . Like other LucasArts adventure games , The Secret of Monkey Island features a design philosophy that makes the player character 's death nearly impossible (Guybrush does drown if he stays underwater for more than ten minutes) .

= = Plot = =

 A youth named Guybrush Threepwood arrives on the fictional Mêlée IslandTM , with the desire to become a pirate . He seeks out the island 's pirate leaders , who set him three trials that must be completed to become a pirate : winning a sword duel against Carla , the island 's resident swordmaster , finding a buried treasure , and stealing a valuable idol from the governor 's mansion . These quests take Guybrush throughout the island , where he hears of stories of the Ghost Pirate LeChuck , who apparently died in an expedition to the mysterious Monkey IslandTM , an act that was meant to win the love of the governor Elaine Marley . Guybrush meets several characters of interest , including a local voodoo priestess , Stan the Used Boat Salesman , Carla the Sword Master , a prisoner named Otis , and Meathook , whose hands have been replaced by hooks .
 Guybrush also encounters the governor and is instantly smitten , and she soon reciprocates . However , as he completes the tasks set for him , the island is raided by LeChuck and his undead crew , who abduct Elaine and then retreat to their secret hideout on Monkey IslandTM . Guybrush takes it upon himself to rescue her , buying a ship and hiring Carla , Otis , and Meathook as crew before setting sail for the fabled island . When Guybrush reaches Monkey Island , he discovers a village of cannibals in a dispute with Herman Toothrot , a ragged castaway marooned there . He settles their quarrel , and then recovers a magical " voodoo root " from LeChuck 's ship for the cannibals , who provide him with a seltzer bottle of " voodoo root elixir " that can destroy ghosts .
 When Guybrush returns to LeChuck 's ship with the elixir , he learns that LeChuck has returned to Mêlée IslandTM to marry Elaine at the church . He promptly returns to Mêlée IslandTM and

gatecrashes the wedding , only to ruin Elaine 's own plan for escape ; in the process he loses the elixir . Now confronted with a furious LeChuck , Guybrush is savagely beaten by the ghost pirate in a fight ranging across the island . The fight eventually arrives at the island 's ship emporium , where Guybrush finds a bottle of root beer . Substituting the beverage for the lost elixir , he sprays LeChuck , destroying the ghost pirate . With LeChuck defeated , Guybrush and Elaine enjoy a romantic moment , watching fireworks caused by LeChuck exploding .

= = Development = =

= = = Origin and writing = = =

  Ron Gilbert conceived the idea of a pirate adventure game in 1988 , after completing Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders . He first wrote story ideas about pirates while spending the weekend at a friend 's house . Gilbert experimented with introductory paragraphs to find a satisfactory idea . His initial story featured unnamed villains that would eventually become LeChuck and Elaine ; Guybrush was absent at this point . He pitched it to Lucasfilm Games 's staff as a series of short stories . Gilbert 's idea was warmly received , but production was postponed because Lucasfilm Games assigned its designers , including Gilbert , to Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade : The Graphic Adventure . Development of The Last Crusade was finished in 1989 , which allowed Gilbert to begin production of The Secret of Monkey Island , then known internally under the working title Mutiny on Monkey Island .
  Gilbert soon realised that it would be difficult to design the game by himself ; he decided to join forces with Tim Schafer and Dave Grossman , both of whom he hired for Lucasfilm . The game 's insult sword fighting mechanics were influenced by swashbuckling movies starring Errol Flynn , which Gilbert , Schafer and Grossman often watched for inspiration . They noticed that pirates in those films often taunted their opponents instead of attacking them , which gave the designers the idea to base the game 's duels on insults rather than combat . Writer Orson Scott Card helped them write the insults during a visit to Lucasfilm 's headquarters at Skywalker Ranch . Many of Gilbert 's original gameplay ideas were abandoned during the production process , although he stated that " most of that stuff was left out for a reason " .
  The game 's plot , as described by Dave Grossman : ? It ? s a story about this young man who comes to an island in search of his life ? s dream . He ? s pursuing his career goals and he discovers love in the process and winds up thinking that was actually more important than what he was doing to begin with . You ? re laughing , but there ? s actually something deeper going on as well . ? When work on the plot began , Gilbert discovered that Schafer 's and Grossman 's writing styles were too different to form a cohesive whole : Grossman 's was " very kind of a dry , sarcastic humor " and Schafer 's was " just a little more in your face " . In reaction , Gilbert assigned them to different characters and story moments depending on what type of comedy was required . Grossman believed that this benefited the game 's writing , as he and Schafer " were all funny in slightly different ways , and it worked well together " . Schafer and Grossman wrote most of the dialogue while they were programming the game ; as a result , much of it was improvised . Some of the dialogue was based on the designers ' personal experiences , such as Guybrush 's line " I had a feeling in hell there would be mushrooms " , which came from Schafer 's own hatred of fungi .
  The game 's world and characters were designed primarily by Gilbert . After having read Tim Powers ' historical fantasy novel On Stranger Tides , he decided to add paranormal themes to the game 's plot . He also cited Powers ' book as an influence on the characters , particularly those of Guybrush and LeChuck . Inspiration for the game 's ambiance came from Gilbert 's favorite childhood amusement park ride , Pirates of the Caribbean . Grossman said that Gilbert always wanted " to step off the ride " and " talk to the people who lived in that world " . Near the final stages of the design work , Gilbert introduced several characters who were not directly related to the game 's story . He considered this to be an important decision , as the player would need those seemingly minor characters in later parts of the game and would receive a chance to " really interact with them

" .

Creative and technical design

Gilbert , Schafer and Grossman 's primary goal was to create a simpler and more accessible gameplay model than those presented in previous Lucasfilm titles . Gilbert had conceived the main designs and puzzles before production began , which resulted in the bulk of the designers ' work to flesh out his ideas . He was frustrated by the adventure games that Sierra On @-@ Line was releasing at the time , and later said that " you died any time you did anything wrong " . Gilbert considered such gameplay as " a cheap way out for the designer " . He had previously applied his design ideas to the 1987 graphic adventure title Maniac Mansion , but committed a number of mistakes during development , such as dead @-@ end situations that prevented the player from completing the game and poorly implemented triggers for cutscenes . Gilbert aimed to avoid such errors in The Secret of Monkey Island . The team decided to make it impossible for the player character to die , which focused gameplay primarily on world exploration . The Sierra game @-@ over screen was parodied , when Guybrush falls off a cliff only to be bounced back up by a " rubber tree " .

The Secret of Monkey Island was the fifth Lucasfilm Games project powered by the SCUMM engine , originally developed for Maniac Mansion . The company had gradually modified the engine since its creation . For Maniac Mansion , the developers hard coded verb commands in the SCUMM scripting language . These commands become more abstract in subsequent versions of the engine . The developers carried over the practice of referring to individual segments of the gameworld as " rooms " , even though the areas in Monkey Island were outdoors . The game uses the same version of the engine used in Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade , with minor changes . A dialog tree was added , which facilitated conversation options and the sword @-@ fighting puzzles . The developers removed the " What is " option (an input command that describes an on @-@ screen object to the player) in favor of allowing the player to simply highlight the object with the mouse cursor . The game 's improved interface became the standard for the company 's later titles . The game also introduced logical verb shortcuts , which could be performed with the mouse ; for example , clicking on a character defaults to the " talk " action , the most obvious action in the situation . SCUMM 's visuals were updated for the game ? the original EGA version had a 320x200 pixel resolution rendered in 16 colors . According to artist Steve Purcell , that became a major limitation for the art team ; due to a low number of " ghastly " colors , they often chose bizarre tones for backgrounds . They chose black and white for Guybrush 's outfit for the same reason . The VGA version of the game later corrected these issues by implementing 256 color support , which allowed for more advanced background and character art . The VGA (and other platform releases) removed the infamous " stump joke " from the game , which was a joke in the EGA version in which the player would examine a tree stump in the forest . Guybrush would exclaim that there is an opening to a system of catacombs and attempt to enter , but this would result in a message stating the player needed to insert disc 22 , then 36 , then 114 in order to continue . The joke resulted in numerous calls to the LucasArts hotline asking about missing discs . As a result , the joke was removed from later editions and is a mentioned as a conversation option for the LucasArts Hint Hotline in the sequel .

The game 's " pirate reggae " music was composed by Lucasfilm Games ' in @-@ house musician Michael Land in MIDI format . It was his first project at the company . The game was originally released for floppy disk in 1990 , but a CD @-@ ROM version with a high @-@ quality CD soundtrack followed in 1992 . The music has remained popular , and has been remixed by the musicians of OverClocked ReMix and by the game 's fans .

Special edition

LucasArts released a remake with updated audiovisuals titled The Secret of Monkey Island : Special Edition in July 2009 for iPhone , Microsoft Windows , and Xbox 360 exclusively via digital

distribution . PlayStation 3 , Mac OS and iPad versions followed early in 2010 for download on their respective services . LucasArts confirmed the game 's development on June 1 , 2009 ; rumors appeared several days earlier when the Xbox 360 version of the game received an USK rating . The game was first displayed to the public at the 2009 E3 in June . The remake features hand @-@ drawn visuals with more detail , a remastered musical score , voice work for characters , and a hint system . The developers included the function to switch between 2009 and original audiovisuals at will . The voice actors included Dominic Armato as Guybrush Threepwood and Earl Boen as LeChuck ; most had provided voice work in sequels to The Secret of Monkey Island .

LucasArts 's game producer Craig Derrick and his team conceived the idea of the remake in 2008 . After researching the Monkey Island series ' history , they decided to make " something fresh and new while staying true to the original " , which resulted in the idea of The Secret of Monkey Island 's remake . The developers tried to leave much of the original design unchanged . Any changes were intended to achieve the level of immersion desired for the original . To that end , they added details like a pirate ship or pirates talking in the background of scenes . While the team considered the SCUMM interface revolutionary at the time , LucasArts community manager Brooks Brown noted that it is incompatible with an analog stick , which most consoles use . The designers made the cursor contextual to the game objects as the primary interface . Brown had considered updating the reference to advertise Star Wars : The Force Unleashed because Loom was not on the market at the time , but concluded that the game would not be the same if such changes were implemented . Prior to the Special Edition release , however , LucasArts announced that Loom , along with other games from its back catalog , would be made available on Steam . Brown stated that the decision to distribute the game online was because " digital downloads have finally gotten going " .

= = Reception = =

The Secret of Monkey Island sold well and received positive reviews from critics . Hartley , Patricia , and Kirk Lesser of Dragon praised the designers ' attention to detail , and cited the game 's humor as a high point . Although they believed that the game was too expensive , they summarized it as " a highly enjoyable graphic adventure replete with interesting puzzles , a fantastic Roland soundtrack , superb VGA graphics , smooth @-@ scrolling animation , and some of the funniest lines ever seen on your computer screen . " Duncan MacDonald of Zero praised the graphics and found the game " quite amusing " . His favorite aspect was the fine @-@ tuned difficulty level , which he believed was " just right " . He ended his review , " At last an adventure game that 's enjoyable rather than frustrating . " Paul Glancey of Computer and Video Games consider the game superior to Lucasfilm 's earlier adventure titles , and wrote that , " Usually the entertainment you get from an adventure is derived solely from solving puzzles , but the hilarious characters and situations , and the movie @-@ like presentation ... make playing this more like taking part in a comedy film , so it 's much more enjoyable . " He considered the puzzles to be " brilliantly conceived " and found the game 's controls accessible . He summarized it as " utterly enthralling " .

ACE 's Steve Cooke also found the controls convenient , and he praised the game 's atmosphere . He wrote that , " in graphics and sound terms ... Monkey Island , along with King 's Quest V , is currently at the head of the pack . " However , he disliked the designers ' running joke of placing " TM " after character and place names , which he thought detracted from the atmosphere . He singled out the game 's writing , characters and plot structure as its best elements . Amiga Power 's Mark Ramshaw wrote , " With The Secret of Monkey Island , the mouse @-@ controlled , graphic @-@ adventure comes of age . " He lauded its comedic elements , which he believed were the highlight of the game . The reviewer also praised the control scheme , noting that it allows the player to " more or less forget about the specifics of what [they are] physically doing ... and lose [themselves] in the adventure instead . " He noted that the game 's plot and visual and aural presentation fit together to create a thick atmosphere , and finished , " Forget all those other milestone adventures (Zork , The Hobbit , Lord of the Rings et al) ? for sheer enjoyment and general all @-@ round perfection , The Secret of Monkey Island creams ' em all in style . " The game , along with its sequel , was ranked the 19th best game of all time by Amiga Power .

Writing for The One , Paul Presley stated that " Lucasfilm appears to have taken all of the elements that worked in its previous releases and , not only incorporated them into this tale of scurvy swashbuckling , but even improved on them in the process ! " Like the other reviewers , he praised its controls . He also lauded its " hilarious storyline , strong characters and ... intriguing setting " , but complained about graphical slowdowns . Nick Clarkson of Amiga Computing cited the game 's graphics as " flawless " , noting that " the characters are superbly animated and the backdrops simply ooze atmosphere . " He highly praised its sound effects and music , and believed that its controls " couldn 't be simpler " . The staff of Amiga Action wrote that the " attention to detail and the finely tuned gameplay cannot be faulted . " They called the graphics " stunning throughout " , and believed that , when they were combined with the " excellent Caribbean tunes " , the result is a game filled with " character and atmosphere . " They ended by stating that " there is absolutely no excuse for not owning this game . "

The Secret of Monkey Island has featured regularly in lists of " top " games , such as Computer Gaming World 's Hall of Fame and IGN 's Video Game Hall of Fame . In 1996 , Computer Gaming World ranked it as the 19th best game of all time , " writing " Who could ever forget the insult @-@ driven duel system or the identity of the mysterious Swordmaster ? " . In 2004 , readers of Retro Gamer voted it as the 33rd top retro game . In 2010 , IGN ranked the Xbox Live Arcade version as the 20th best title of all time for that platform . In 2009 , IGN named The Secret of Monkey Island one of the ten best LucasArts adventure games .

= = = Special edition = = =

Like the original release , The Secret of Monkey Island : Special Edition received positive reviews from critics . Sean Ely of GamePro praised its updated audio , and said that the new graphics " blow the old clunker visuals ... out of the water " . He cited its script , humor , plot , puzzles and balanced difficulty level as high points , and finished , " The Secret of Monkey Island : Special Edition is impressive , hilarious and downright worth your money . " Daemon Hatfield of IGN wrote , " Almost 20 years after its release , [The Secret of Monkey Island] remains a blast to play . " He called the new graphics " slick , if a little generic " , and noted that the " original graphics have a certain charm to them that the fancy pants new visuals just don 't . " However , he enjoyed the redone music , the new hint function , and the added sound effects and voice acting . He summarized it as " one of the best times you 'll ever have pointing and clicking " , and noted that " few games are this funny . " Justin Calvert of GameSpot noted that " the Special Edition looks much better and is the only way to play if you want to hear ... what characters are saying , whereas the original game 's interface is less clunky . " However , he wrote that " the voice work is such a great addition to the game that it 's difficult to go back to the original edition . " He praised its humor , writing , puzzles and characters , and he believed that it had aged well . Eurogamer 's Dan Whitehead wrote , " Purists like me will almost certainly find something to grumble about over the span of the game , but the overall impact of the redesign is undeniably for the better . " However , he preferred the original game 's Guybrush design , and believed that the new control system was " rather less intuitive " than the old one . He finished by stating that " few games can stand the test of time with such confidence " .

= = Legacy = =

The Secret of Monkey Island spawned four sequels . The first , Monkey Island 2 : LeChuck 's Revenge , was released in 1991 and focuses on LeChuck 's return . Six years later , LucasArts released The Curse of Monkey Island , which features a new visual design . In 2000 , the company released Escape from Monkey Island , which uses the GrimE engine of Grim Fandango to produce 3D graphics . The next title , Tales of Monkey Island released in 2009 , is a series of five episodic chapters .

Elements of the game have appeared elsewhere in popular culture . The original version was selected as one of five for the exhibition The Art of Video Games in the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 2011 . A fictive drink recipe in the game for grog was mistakenly reported as real in 2009

by Argentinian news channel C5N , which urged adolescents against consuming the dangerous " Grog XD " drink . In Tales of Monkey Island , Guybrush refers to this news story while pushing the Grog XD button on a Grog machine .