Final Fantasy Mystic Quest

Final Fantasy Mystic Quest , released as Mystic Quest Legend in PAL regions and as Final Fantasy USA : Mystic Quest (???????????USA ?????????? , Fainaru Fantaj? Y? Esu ? Misutikku Kuesuto) in Japan , is a role @-@ playing video game for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System . The game was released as a spin @-@ off to Square 's popular Final Fantasy series of video games . Final Fantasy Mystic Quest was first released in North America in 1992 and marketed as a " simplified role @-@ playing game ... designed for the entry @-@ level player " in an attempt to broaden the genre 's appeal . The game 's presentation and battle system is broadly similar to that of the main series , but it differed in its inclusion of action @-@ adventure game elements . Final Fantasy Mystic Quest was the first Final Fantasy game to be released in Europe .

In the game , the player controls a youth named Benjamin in his quest to save the world . His goal is to reclaim a set of stolen crystals that determine the state of the world 's four elemental powers . The gameplay takes a departure from the main series in a variety of ways . Many series staples are eliminated , such as random battles , save points , manual equipment , and the party system . The game received middling reviews and sales in North America and Japan , citing its simplified gameplay and lack of depth in the game 's story . Over time , the game has kept the reputation for being a " beginner 's Final Fantasy " and has been praised for its music .

Gameplay

Exploration

Like previous games in the series , Final Fantasy Mystic Quest is presented in a top @-@ down perspective (or bird 's eye view) , with players directly navigating the main character around the world to interact with objects and people . The game features a unique way of traveling the world map . Unlike past Final Fantasy games , players cannot freely roam the world map . Instead , they travel along set paths from one " icon " (pictorial image on the world map) to the next . Some routes are blocked off (restriction is indicated by a gray arrow) , but become accessible when the player succeeds in a specific task , such as completing a dungeon . Once its path is open , the player can enter an icon ; the game 's plot and action takes place within these icons , which include towns , dungeons , and battlefields . The game is characterized by featuring action @-@ adventure game elements ; besides jumping , players can use weapons outside of battle , which play an active role in exploration . Players can chop down trees with an axe , detonate bombs to open sealed doorways , or use a grappling hook to clear wide gaps . The game also has more puzzles than earlier Final Fantasy games . In the Falls Basin , for example , players must move pillars of ice across the ground level in such a fashion that they can be used as platforms to jump across on the second level . Final Fantasy Mystic Quest also does away with save points ; players can save their progress at any time during exploration .

Battle system

Final Fantasy Mystic Quest eliminates the system of random enemy encounters , a trademark of the main series . Instead , battles are represented in dungeons as stationary enemy sprites , and the player is given the option of approaching the enemy and engaging a battle . Once engaged in battle , the player is thrust into the battle screen , which presents a window @-@ based menu with three commands to choose from : battle , run , or control . Running from battle transports the player back to the field screen , while choosing " control " toggles between the ally 's battle mode , where the player can manually control the main character 's ally or opt for a computer @-@ controlled ally . If players choose to battle , they are presented with a submenu of four more options : physically attack the enemy , cast a spell , use a curative item (such as a Cure potion) , or defend . The game 's battle system relies on conditional turn @-@ based combat , where the characters and enemies

cycle through " rounds " in battling each other , with the most turns awarded to the fastest character . Character health is represented by an incremental life bar , although the player may choose to have it displayed in numerical fractions as in most role @-@ playing games . If all character life bars reach zero , the game is over , but the player is given the option of continuing and restarting the battle . If the player chooses this option , however , the main character 's attack power may suffer temporarily as a penalty . A character 's performance in battle is determined by numerical figures (called statistics) for vitality , attacking power , defensive capabilities , speed , magical prowess , accuracy , and evasion . Character statistics are driven by experience points (EXP) gained from winning battles , which accumulate until players achieve milestones known as " experience levels . " Besides awarding experience points , battling enemies also earns the player Gold Pieces (GP) , which can be used to buy weapons , armor , and curative items . In the absence of random enemy encounters , battlefields are scattered across the world map . Players are immediately thrust into a battle when entering a battlefield , and must win ten enemy battles to " clean out " the battlefield . Once a battlefield is cleaned out , players are awarded either a large amount of experience , a large amount of GP , a piece of armor , or a magic spell .

= = = Customization = = =

 Unlike all other Final Fantasy games , players cannot manually equip characters with armor . Instead , newly acquired armor replaces the main character 's current equipment , or upgrades a current version of a weapon , e.g. obtaining the knight sword will replace the steel sword . Using the L and R buttons allows the user to cycle through the weapons that have been collected so far . Benjamin uses four types of weapons : swords , axes , bombs , and claws . Although the weapons share a similar function in battle , all have different purposes when exploring the field map . The Dragon Claw , for example , doubles as a grappling hook . The weapon arsenal in Final Fantasy Mystic Quest is considerably smaller than most role @-@ playing games .
 Magic in Final Fantasy Mystic Quest is not learned by designated spellcasters through experience . Instead , the main character acquires magic spells through treasure chests or as a reward for clearing out battlefields . The system of spellcasting is similar to that of the original Final Fantasy ; rather than using magic points to draw upon for supplying magic , spells are used according to a set number for their type , i.e. , white magic , black magic , or wizard magic . The allotted number for each type increases as a character levels up . A spell 's effectiveness is also proportional to a character 's experience level . The higher the character 's level , the more powerful the Cure spell , for example . The spell catalog in Final Fantasy Mystic Quest is limited compared to most other Final Fantasy games . Items in the game are analogous to the spells : their potency increases as the character levels up . In addition , the Heal potion acts as a cure @-@ all for status ailments , eliminating the need for status recovery items .

= = Plot = =

= = = Setting = = =

 The fictional events of Final Fantasy Mystic Quest take place on a single continent of an unnamed world , which is divided into four distinct regions : Foresta , Aquaria , Fireburg , and Windia . The welfare of each region is determined by the state of one of four shining crystals : earth , water , fire , and wind , respectively . For centuries the Focus Tower had stood at the heart of the world . It had been a center for trade and knowledge , and the world 's people met there to peacefully settle their differences . But on one warm summer day , powerful monsters stormed the Tower , stole the four crystals , and then took off with the magical coins that kept the Tower 's doors unlocked . The monsters began consuming the power of the crystals ; they grew in strength while the world began to decay . An old prophecy tells that at the time the " vile four " steal the power and divide the world behind four doors , a knight will appear to vanquish the darkness .

= = = Story = = =

The game opens with an adventurous youth named Benjamin climbing the Hill of Destiny . While exploring , his village is destroyed in an earthquake . As Benjamin is climbing the Hill , he meets a mysterious old man who charges Benjamin with fulfilling the knight 's prophecy . Although initially in disbelief , Benjamin accepts the role and the Old Man shows him the Focus Tower (supposedly the center of the World) . After defeating a monster at the top of the hill , Benjamin follows the Old Man to the Level Forest , where he is tasked with recovering the Crystal of Earth . Proceeding to Foresta , he meets with an axe @-@ wielding girl named Kaeli , who agrees to help Benjamin if he can help her rid the Level Forest of monsters . Kaeli is ambushed and poisoned in the process , and her mother informs Benjamin of the Elixir and where it can be found . Benjamin 's search for Elixir to heal Kaeli brings him to Bone Dungeon , where he 's aided by a treasure hunter named Tristam in succeeding dual purposes : not only does Benjamin get Elixir from Tristam to heal Kaeli , but he defeats one of the four Vile Evils , Flamerous Rex , to free the Crystal of Earth and in turn restore life to the dying village of Foresta . Tristam leaves and Benjamin heals Kaeli .

Benjamin is then told that Aquaria is in danger , and is in need of help . He is told (by the Old Man and various others) that he should see Spencer . He is also told that a girl named Phoebe can help him as well . After proceeding through the first stage of the Focus Tower , and arriving in the province of Aquaria , Benjamin locates Phoebe , and learns that Spencer is trapped underground by thick ice floes . Phoebe needs the " wakewater , " which is said to be able to help free Aquaria . Benjamin and Phoebe head to the (aptly named) Wintry Cave and defeat a monster to obtain the Libra Crest . Using this crest to enter the Libra Temple , they find that the source of the " wakewater " has dried up . Finding the Old Man in the back of the Libra Temple , they find that he holds the only bag (water skin , actually) of wakewater , and to use it on the plant in the center of town . Back in Aquaria , they find that the wakewater doesn 't work , and reviving the crystal is the only thing that will save the town and Spencer . They head off for the Ice Pyramid and defeat the second of the Vile Evils , the Ice Golem . The Ice Crystal is saved , and Benjamin and Phoebe head back to Aquaria . They find the town is now like Foresta (after the crystal is revived there) and Spencer is back and digging his tunnel to save Captain Mac (Kaeli 's Father) . Upon leaving , Spencer hands the Venus Key to Benjamin , and tells him to head for Fireburg .

Benjamin arrives in the Focus Tower to find the Old Man again , who tells him to find Reuben , and disappears . Benjamin then heads for Fireburg , and finds Reuben . Reuben joins when Benjamin promises to help free Reuben 's dad , Arion . Upon finding Tristam in the Inn (who gives Benjamin the Multi @-@ Key) , they find the coward who left Arion in the mine in a locked house . He teaches Benjamin how to throw the bombs and says that it will free Arion . Benjamin and Reuben then proceed to the Mine and free Arion . Arion tells some tales of how the Fire Crystal has gone berserk , and Reuben goes off with Benjamin to the Volcano to stop the Vile Evil from stealing the crystal 's power . After defeating the Dualhead Hydra , Benjamin and Reuben find the Fire Crystal returning to power . They decide to head to Windia , and Reuben is ambushed by monsters and falls off the rope bridge . Tristam comes along and helps Benjamin cross the bridge , but they are stymied by a tree who won 't talk to them . Tristam says that there is a gal in Foresta who can talk to tree spirits , and the two drop in on Aquaria where Kaeli was trying to find Spencer . Benjamin and Tristam go down into the tunnel and find Spencer , who tells Tristam of a great treasure . They leave , and Phoebe plants a bomb that collapses a tunnel Spencer was building . She leaves to tell Spencer what happened , and Benjamin takes Kaeli to the Alive Forest to talk to the dormant tree spirit . He tells them that he will take them to Windia if they kill the monsters dwelling within him . They do , and he takes them to Windia .

Upon arriving in Windia , Benjamin and Kaeli find Otto , whose daughter was caught in Pazuzu 's Tower when the winds from nearby Mount Gale knocked out his Rainbow Road . The only way the road works is when there is no wind , so Benjamin and Kaeli proceed to Mount Gale and stop the wind by defeating a powerful monster at the top . After returning to Windia , Otto powers up the Rainbow Road and the two adventurers proceed to Pazuzu 's Tower . After giving chase , they

corner Pazuzu and defeat the fourth Vile Evil and restore the Wind Crystal . Norma is reunited with Otto , and Kaeli stays to take care of her . Reuben shows up and after a series of long events Captain Mac is rescued . Reuben falls down because of the injury sustained on the Rope Bridge , and Phoebe joins Benjamin instead .

The Old Man tells Benjamin an ominous addendum to the prophecy : " the one behind the four is darker than the night , and rises midst the land . " It becomes known that the Dark King is the true source of evil . Benjamin thus sails to Doom Castle to confront the Dark King , who threatens to enslave Benjamin along with the rest of mankind . The Dark King claims that he wrote and spread the prophecy Benjamin had followed throughout his quest . Once the Dark King is defeated , the old man congratulates Benjamin and reveals that he is the Fifth Crystal , The Crystal of Light in the guise of a human . At the end of the game , Benjamin is seen still craving adventure , and he borrows the ship from Captain Mac as his friends gather to wish him off . While sailing , Tristam makes a surprise appearance .

= = Development = =

Although designed by one of Square 's development teams in Japan , Final Fantasy Mystic Quest was specifically geared for the U.S. market . At the time , console role @-@ playing games were not a major genre in North America ; Square thus attempted to broaden the genre 's appeal through Final Fantasy Mystic Quest . Square had already released several Final Fantasy spinoffs in North America , including the first three titles in the SaGa series as Final Fantasy Legend , and the first Mana series game as Final Fantasy Adventure , and wished to further break into the popular American consciousness . Square 's executives cited the alleged difficulty of RPGs as the reason Americans shied away from them , and eased the difficulty level by tweaking various aspects of the main series ' gameplay . The American release of Final Fantasy IV was altered to make the game simpler , for example . Mystic Quest was to take this one step further , and the Japanese developers worked with the American offices to make sure the game was accessible to children .

Mystic Quest was developed in a graphic and gameplay style similar to Final Fantasy Legend III (part of the aforementioned SaGa series) . The gameplay shares numerous similarities with that title , featuring a very similar battle system , graphical interface , and dungeon system . Even the " jump " feature from Final Fantasy Legend III has been reproduced , and almost all of the icons - from caves to the enemy sprites - are a color @-@ upgraded version of Final Fantasy Legend III 's character set . Besides allowing for computer @-@ controlled allies , the game did away with random battles , complicated storylines , and text @-@ based menus . To appeal to the perceived tastes of North American audiences , which gravitated towards fast @-@ paced games , Square included action @-@ adventure game elements ; players could now brandish weapons outside of battle , jump , use a grappling hook , and set bombs to open new paths . North American translator Ted Woolsey explained that " The action / adventure players ... are larger in numbers and the demographic is different . They tend to be younger and like the idea of jumping straight into the action with a sword in their hands ; it 's an empowerment issue - you get to go out there , start whacking things and it feels good ! With the more traditional RPGs , it takes a good 15 or 20 hours of playing before you 're finally hooked . " Woolsey stated that Mystic Quest was one of the easiest games he had to translate , due to the game 's small size . Because the game was marketed towards a younger demographic , the game sold for US $ 39 @.@ 99 . Mystic Quest also came with an Official Strategy Guide that helped inexperienced and new RPG players complete it .

= = = Release = = =

After its U.S. debut , Final Fantasy Mystic Quest was released in Japan under the title Final Fantasy USA : Mystic Quest . The European release of the game was released in English , German and French , and had the title changed to Mystic Quest Legend to avoid confusion with Final Fantasy Adventure , which had been released in Europe as Mystic Quest . Final Fantasy Mystic Quest was first unveiled in June at the 1992 Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago , where it was a

popular venue , and the game was later presented in more detail in the Fall 1992 issue of the Ogopogo Examiner .

= = = Audio = = =

Final Fantasy Mystic Quest 's soundtrack was composed by Ryuji Sasai and Yasuhiro Kawakami . It was one of the first games in the Final Fantasy series not to be composed by regular series composer Nobuo Uematsu , after Final Fantasy Adventure (known in Japan as Final Fantasy Gaiden) and the Final Fantasy Legend games (only called Final Fantasy games in North America) . The album was first released on one Compact Disc by NTT Publishing on September 10 , 1993 . ROM capacity limits and hardware limitations made the composition process difficult . After the game was completed , Sasai recorded two remixes on his days off for the game 's album , and personally played the guitar parts . ? Mountain Range of Whirlwinds ? was built off of Sasai 's liking of the sound of the french horn , and its ability to go the length of the song and convey a sense of mountains . The track " Last Castle " was written in a short time , and was used to create imagery of a field , but its length left very little space for the " Battle 3 " song.'

= = Reception = =

According to Square 's publicity department , Final Fantasy Mystic Quest sold a total of 800 @,@ 000 units , with roughly half of these sold in Japan .
On its original North American release , it scored a 3 @.@ 725 / 5 in the November 1992 issue of Nintendo Power , a 29 / 40 in Electronic Gaming Monthly , and 86 % in Electronic Games . The game did not generate much excitement in either America or Japan , although it is thought to have appealed to younger fans . The game ultimately failed in its bid to bring mainstream North American popularity to console RPGs (a feat that wouldn 't be accomplished until Final Fantasy VII five years later) , and simultaneously alienated fans of the series anticipating another epic following Final Fantasy IV . It has also been described as " Final Fantasy with an identity crisis " due to the inherent flaw of creating a game that didn 't appeal to the masses or the hard @-@ core gaming audience .
Years later , reviewers have not looked favorably on Mystic Quest , including Kotaku calling it the " worst Final Fantasy " , and Games Radar calling it a " franchise embarrassment for its enemies that stand still and wait for players to attack . IGN rated the Wii Virtual Console release a 6 @.@ 0 , or " Okay " , citing an extremely repetitive and simple battle system , and very little character development . 1UP.com rated the game a " Not Worth It ! " , calling " handholding " and " insubstantial " .
It was , however , praised for its music , including 1UP.com praising its " sweet sampled metal guitar licks " , and listed the final boss battle music as one of the must download songs for the Final Fantasy music game Theatrhythm Final Fantasy . It was also praised by Games Radar for its music , mentioning the boss battle in their " Game Music of the Day " column , and also mentioning the rest of the game music as smooth and easy listening . On April 1 , 2006 , GameSpot included Mystic Quest in an April 's Fools list entitled " Top 10 Final Fantasy Games " , which mostly consisted of spin @-@ offs from the main series and unrelated games . Mystic Quest was " praised " for being easy and having simplistic graphics and plot . In October 2010 , the game was released on Nintendo 's Virtual Console . Famitsu has also reported that Square was preparing the game for release on the Android mobile platform in 2012 .
The main character Benjamin and two songs appear in the rhythm game Theatrhythm Final Fantasy : Curtain Call .