

= The Legend of Zelda : The Minish Cap =

The Legend of Zelda : The Minish Cap ( / ?m?n?? / ) ( Japanese : ?????? ?????? , Hepburn : Zeruda no Densetsu : Fushigi no B?shi , lit . The Legend of Zelda : The Mysterious Cap ) is an action @-@ adventure game and the twelfth entry in the The Legend of Zelda series . Developed by Capcom , with Nintendo overseeing the development process , it was released for the Game Boy Advance handheld game console in Japan and Europe in 2004 and in North America and Australia the following year .

The Minish Cap is the third Zelda game that involves the legend of the Four Sword , expanding on the story of Four Swords and Four Swords Adventures . A magical talking cap named Ezlo can shrink series protagonist Link to the size of the Minish , a bug @-@ sized race that live in Hyrule . The game retains some common elements from previous Zelda installments , such as the presence of Gorons , while introducing Kinstones and other new gameplay features .

The Minish Cap was generally well received among critics . It was named the 20th best Game Boy Advance game in an IGN feature , and was selected as the 2005 Game Boy Advance Game of the Year by GameSpot .

= = Plot = =

The plot of The Minish Cap revolves around the backstory of Vaati and the birth of the Four Sword , which were important elements of Four Swords and Four Swords Adventures . The Minish , also referred to as the Picori by the Hyruleans , are a race of tiny creatures that bestowed a young boy with a green garment , a sword , and a shining golden light to drive back the darkness many years before the game is set . There are three types of Minish : Town , Forest , and Mountain .

The quest begins when Link is chosen by the king of Hyrule to seek the help of the Picori after Vaati had destroyed the Picori Blade and petrified Princess Zelda . With the blade shattered , evil monsters were released into Hyrule and Vaati was able to create chaos in his search for the Light Force . Link was chosen because only children can see the Picori . On the voyage he rescues Ezlo , a strange being resembling a green cap with a bird @-@ like head , who joins him and can make Link shrink to the size of the Minish . Although it is not revealed at first , he and Vaati are Minish ( Picori ) ? Ezlo a renowned sage and craftsman and Vaati his apprentice . Vaati became corrupted by the madness and hatred of men and took a magic hat Ezlo had made for the people in Hyrule . The hat grants any wish made by the bearer , and Vaati wished to become a powerful sorcerer . Vaati then turned his old master , who had tried to stop them , into a hat . With the help of Ezlo , Link retrieves the four elemental artifacts and uses them to restore the Picori Blade to the Four Sword , capable of defeating Vaati .

After Link restores the Four Sword , Vaati turns Hyrule Castle into Dark Hyrule Castle ? the final dungeon in the game . Link fights Vaati just before he can drain Zelda of all of the Light Force hidden within her . Link defeats Vaati after engaging in a fight that consists of Vaati changing forms . When Link and Zelda flee from the collapsing castle , they meet Vaati as he again changes form for the final battle of the game . After the battle , Ezlo returns to his original form . He finds the cap of wishes he created and gives it to Zelda , granting her a wish . The people cursed by Vaati are cured and the castle is turned back to normal . The hat overflows with the power of life and disappears . Ezlo gives Link a new hat and tells him that he enjoyed traveling with him , then leaves just as the door to the Minish world closes .

= = Gameplay = =

The Minish Cap retains the general gameplay features that were present in previous Zelda installments . The main protagonist , Link , must navigate several dungeons to obtain an item or enhancement at the end of each dungeon that is pivotal towards the quest . Each of the game 's " bosses " are defeated using the item acquired in the boss 's dungeon . The game also includes multiple " side quests " ? optional tasks that are not part of the main quest but rewards for

completion are beneficial to the gamer . Recurring characters in the Zelda series make appearances and some form part of side quests ; for example , Tingle and his brothers must all be contacted by the player to earn a reward .

The Minish Cap features a number of enhancements that benefit from the more powerful Game Boy Advance platform . The game 's camera angle is much closer to the ground , allowing more detail . In the overworld and in dungeons , the game replaces the traditional item interface of the handheld Zelda games with pictures associating items or actions with buttons , similar to the item interface in 3D titles like Ocarina of Time and The Wind Waker . Enemies include familiar creatures from the Zelda universe . Link can also perform special actions present in the 3D Zelda games , such as rolling while running . Along with returning items such as Bombs , Arrows and Pegasus Boots , The Minish Cap introduces three new items : the Mole Mitts , the Gust Jar , and the Cane of Pacci . The Mole Mitts allow Link to dig through dirt barriers to explore new areas , the Gust Jar can suck in nearby items and substances and can be used to suck up certain enemies and fire them as projectiles , and the Cane of Pacci can flip certain objects over and allow Link to launch himself out of holes in the ground . The game advances the combat system from previous handheld installments by allowing Link to learn new sword techniques throughout the game , some of which are techniques from previous games and some of which are new . As the game progresses , Link will collect Elements that fuse with his sword , allowing him make copies of himself using glowing floor panels , used to solve puzzles such as pushing large blocks or hitting multiple switches simultaneously .

= = = Kinstones = = =

Kinstones are special artifacts which Link can find throughout his quest . Kinstone pieces are fragments of a medallion that are found throughout the course of the game . If the player can find a character or object with a Kinstone piece ( indicated by a thought bubble above their heads ) , the player can try to fuse their Kinstone piece with one of their own to make a match . If a successful fusion is made , something will occur somewhere within the game 's world , including the placement of treasure chests , access to secret areas and certain events which occur among certain characters . Whilst many Kinstone fusions are optional , some fusions , such as those which use Golden Kinstones , are necessary to advance the story .

= = = Figurines = = =

The Minish Cap also features a figurine @-@ based sidequest , similar to that in The Legend of Zelda : The Wind Waker . The player can collect " Mysterious Shells " like those found in hidden areas in Link 's Awakening , which sometimes appear when defeating enemies and can also be found or bought in different locations throughout the world . These can then be used in a gashapon @-@ like machine in Hyrule Town to obtain figurines of characters , enemies or locations that Link has encountered in the course of the main quest . New figurines only become available once Link has met or killed the subject of that figurine . Each figurine has a short description revealing information about the game , that particular enemy 's weaknesses , or the series in general . Collecting every figurine unlocks a house in Hyrule Town that contains treasure , a Piece of Heart , and the Sound Test .

= = Development and promotion = =

After Capcom and its scenario writing subsidiary Flagship had finished developing Oracle of Seasons and Oracle of Ages for the Game Boy Color , they began work on a new Zelda game for the Game Boy Advance . Work on the title was suspended to allow the teams to focus on Four Swords , but in February 2003 Shigeru Miyamoto and Eiji Aonuma announced that development of what would later be called The Minish Cap was " well underway " . Nintendo launched a Minish Cap website in September 2004 , showing concepts of Link 's shrinking ability . The game had a

cartoonish art style similar to *The Wind Waker* , as it has a fairy tale setting similar to said game , within " the world of tiny fairies , a universal fairytale story " .

A first in the *Zelda* series , the game was released in European territories before North America . The main cited reason for this was the Nintendo DS : with the European DS Launch scheduled for Spring 2005 , Nintendo of Europe pushed to make *Minish Cap* its handheld Christmas " killer app " . Conversely , Nintendo of America held back on its release so not to " cannibalize " the DS market . The game is included in the list of Game Boy Advance games that is now available for download for the Nintendo 3DS 's Virtual Console by Nintendo 3DS Ambassadors .

= = = Legend of Zelda Triforce Game Boy Advance SP = = =

In Europe , the game was available either as a standalone packaged game , or as part of a special pack , which included one of only 25 @,@ 000 limited edition , *Zelda @-@* themed Game Boy Advance SP . The Triforce SP is matte gold in color , with a Triforce logo stamped on the lid , and the Hyrule royal family crest printed on the lower right face . As a launch promotion , Nintendo Europe also produced seven 24 @-@ carat gold plated Game Boy Advance SP consoles , with six given away to people who found a golden ticket inside their Triforce SP package , and a seventh as a magazine promotion . Thirty were autographed by Miyamoto himself at the opening of the Nintendo World Store in New York .

= = Reception and awards = =

The *Minish Cap* was the best @-@ selling game in its debut week in Japan , selling 97 @,@ 000 copies . It became the 62nd best @-@ selling game of 2004 with 196 @,@ 477 copies , and had a total of 350 @,@ 000 copies overall in the country . In North America , The *Minish Cap* sold 217 @,@ 000 copies in its debut month of January 2005 , being the fourth best @-@ selling game of the month . It remained among the five best @-@ selling games in February and March . The *Minish Cap* closed the year as the seventh best @-@ selling game of 2005 . By March 2005 , the game already had sold 1 million units worldwide .

In general , the game received highly positive reviews from acclaimed sites and publications . IGN praised the game for continuing the legacy of the successful series , while GameSpot also praised the game for this aspect , saying " Classic *Zelda* gameplay and flavor will please fans " . The graphical style especially ? which continues the whimsical style of *Wind Waker* ? was welcomed by most reviewers . The music of the game was commended by most sites ; GameSpy stated that " Even the music is outstanding , featuring some of the highest quality tunes to ever come out of the GBA 's little speakers " . Despite the criticism of the dungeon lengths , 1UP.com praised the dungeon design , proclaiming it as superior to that of other *Zelda* games .

The main criticism of the game among reviewers is the length of the game . Eurogamer says that " It 's too short " , while RPGamer state that " The typical player can fly through the game 's six relatively short dungeons in about ten hours " . There are also various other complaints from reviewers : IGN claims that the kinstone system is overly repetitive ; Nintendo World Report criticises the game 's visuals on a Game Boy Player , and RPGamer details the game 's low difficulty level as a disadvantage . Despite this , IGN 's Craig Harris liked the way that the ability to become tiny had been incorporated to create fresh puzzles in the *Zelda* series . He continued to comment that " It 's an idea that 's so well @-@ conceived that I 'd love to see worked in the series ' 3D designs somewhere down the line " .

The *Minish Cap* won the ' Best Game Boy Advance of 2005 ' by GameSpot over such finalists as *Fire Emblem : The Sacred Stones* and *WarioWare : Twisted !* ; GameSpot labelled it as " the Game Boy Advance game we remember the most " . In March 2007 , the game was ranked as the 20th best Game Boy Advance game by IGN . In the acknowledgement , IGN commented that " The inclusion of the ability to shrink and grow was explored to some really good results . " The game was ranked 47th in Official Nintendo Magazine 's " 100 Greatest Nintendo Games " feature . *Minish Cap* received an average score of 90 percent from GameRankings , a site that compiles media ratings

from several publishers to give an average score .