

= Mario & Luigi : Superstar Saga =

Mario & Luigi : Superstar Saga , known in Japan as Mario & Luigi RPG (マリオ & ルイジ RPG , Mario ando Ru?ji Aru P? J?) , is a role @-@ playing video game developed by AlphaDream and published by Nintendo for the Game Boy Advance in 2003 . The first game in the Mario & Luigi RPG series , Superstar Saga was followed by four sequels : Mario & Luigi : Partners in Time and Mario & Luigi : Bowser 's Inside Story for the Nintendo DS , Mario & Luigi : Dream Team for the Nintendo 3DS and Mario & Luigi : Paper Jam also for the Nintendo 3DS . The game was later re @-@ released for the Wii U Virtual Console on the Nintendo eShop in 2014 .

The setting of the game begins in the Mushroom Kingdom , but progresses to the Beanbean Kingdom for the majority of the game . In the game , Mario and Luigi combat Cackletta , the primary antagonist . The quest begins when Cackletta , with the aid of her assistant Fawful , steals Princess Peach 's voice after adopting the guise of an ambassador from the Beanbean Kingdom .

A role @-@ playing game , it centers on a battle system different from that of traditional games of the genre , with emphasis on timing and more elaborate attacks . The game is whimsical in tone , with various in @-@ game jokes and comical references to the heritage of the Mario series . Superstar Saga was generally well received by critics , and IGN named it the twelfth best Game Boy Advance game of all time in their feature reflecting on the Game Boy Advance 's lifespan .

= = Gameplay = =

The gameplay of Mario & Luigi differs from most other role @-@ playing games due its focus on controlling Mario and Luigi simultaneously . During overworld sections , the direction pad controls Mario 's movement with Luigi following closely , while Mario and Luigi 's other actions are controlled individually with the A and B buttons respectively . The game begins with them being able to jump independently , though they will soon gain access to hammers and a variety of other techniques as the game progresses . For example , Luigi 's hammer can be used to squash Mario into a smaller size , allowing to access small gaps , while placing Mario on Luigi 's shoulders allows them to act like a propeller and hover across large gaps . Various enemies roam the overworld , and coming into contact with these enemies initiates a battle . Landing a hit on the enemy while on the overworld allows the player to deal pre @-@ emptive damage , while the opposite is also possible .

Battles in Superstar Saga are turn @-@ based . Mario and Luigi can attack normally either by jumping , which can deal multiple hits but when used against enemies covered in flames or with spikes , Mario or Luigi will get hurt , instead of the enemy . Another attack option is the hammer , which is powerful , but ineffective against flying enemies . Similar to previous Mario RPG titles , such as Super Mario RPG and the Paper Mario series , players can time button presses to make their attacks more effective , such as earning an extra jump attack or increasing the hammer 's power . Introduced in this series is the way in which Mario and Luigi can defend themselves during an enemy 's attack . When an enemy attacks , the brothers will be able to either jump or use their hammer which , when successfully timed , allows them to dodge their attacks and even deal counter damage (for example : if they jump on top of a charging Goomba) . Throughout the game , players can unlock Bros. Attacks , which use Bros. Points (BP) which requires players to cooperate between Mario and Luigi 's actions to perform powerful combination attacks . Players can also use items such as mushrooms for healing , peppers for boosting stats and 1UP mushrooms for reviving fallen bros . Defeating enemies earns experience points which help the bros level up and increase their stats , with players given the option to further increase the stats of one attribute every time they level up . Players can further improve their stats by equipping new gear to the Bros. , or making them wear badges that give them special attributes .

Like other Mario titles for the Game Boy Advance , Superstar Saga features the enhanced remake of the Mario Bros. arcade game . The game also supports rumble functionality when used with the Nintendo GameCube 's Game Boy Player accessory .

= = Plot = =

Unlike most games in the Mario series , this game is not set in the Mushroom Kingdom . Instead , Superstar Saga introduces the Beanbean Kingdom , a neighboring monarchy to the Mushroom Kingdom . Despite this , traditional enemies such as Goombas are present , as well as new enemies exclusive to the game . The predominant race are the " Beanish " , although there are other species such as the " Hoohooligans " and Yoshis . No locations featured in the Beanbean Kingdom , with the exception of Bowser 's Castle , existed in any earlier Mario series games .

== = Characters == =

The playable protagonists in the game are Mario and Luigi , whose quest is to rescue the voice of Princess Peach , the princess of the Mushroom Kingdom . The voice is stolen by the game 's antagonists Cackletta and Fawful . Throughout the game , Mario and Luigi must work with the Beanbean monarchy headed by Queen Bean . Both she and her son , Prince Peasley , offer Mario and Luigi assistance . The youthful Prince Peasley is a celebrity figure in his native Beanbean Kingdom .

Deviating from a tradition of the Mario franchise , Superstar Saga 's central antagonist is not Bowser , but the Beanish witch Cackletta . Bowser aids the protagonists during a period of the game , but Bowser 's body becomes possessed by the consciousness of Cackletta to form the creature Bowletta . Cackletta is aided by the assailant Fawful , who is often characterized by his comical use of language , as evidenced by his famous quote " I HAVE FURY ! " and who is also the antagonist in the sequel Mario & Luigi : Bowser 's Inside Story . Additionally , Mario and Luigi have recurring incidents with a thief named Popple and his sidekick Rookie (amnesiac Bowser) , who engages both protagonists in conflict at various times throughout the game . In one case , Popple fights alone . In another , he uses Birdo instead of Rookie .

== = Story == =

The game opens with the witch Cackletta and her assistant Fawful arriving to steal Princess Peach 's voice and replace it with explosives . After being summoned to the palace by Toad , Mario and Luigi confront and subdue Bowser , who coincidentally was attempting to kidnap Peach . However , Bowser soon decides against kidnapping her and teams up with the Mario Bros. to retrieve her true voice back from Cackletta , who has fled to the Beanbean Kingdom , with the intention of kidnapping her afterward when her voice would not destroy his castle .

Mario , Luigi , and Bowser fly to the Beanbean Kingdom via Bowser 's airship , the Koopa Cruiser . Mid @-@ flight , Fawful attacks the cruiser and blows it out of the sky . Bowser and the brothers become separated . On their journey , the brothers rescue Prince Peasley , who had been transformed into a dragon by Cackletta . The brothers reach Beanbean Castle Town and step into a trap laid by Cackletta that drops them into the sewers . The brothers learn that Cackletta 's goal is to steal the Beanstar , a mystical object inside the castle which once awoken with Peach 's voice will grant all of her wishes . Cackletta takes the Beanstar and attacks Mario and Luigi with a mutated form of the Queen Bean during her escape . After defeating the Queen , Mario and Luigi travel to Chucklehuck Woods to retrieve the Chuckola Reserve , a soda which will restore Queen Bean to her former state . They encounter Popple , a thief also after the Chuckola Reserve , with an amnesiac Bowser as his accomplice , named Rookie . The brothers manage to obtain the Reserve , return to Beanbean Castle Town , and cure Queen Bean .

Mario and Luigi then travel to Woohoo Hooniversity , where Cackletta plans to awaken the Beanstar . The Beanstar is exposed to Peach 's voice , which causes it to go berserk and flee . Mario and Luigi then battle Cackletta and defeat her . Cackletta is severely incapacitated from the battle , so Fawful sucks up her soul into his " vacuum helmet " to save her life . Cackletta then commands Fawful to attack , but he is stopped by Prince Peasley . The brothers locate the Beanstar but encounter Popple and Rookie again . After battling them , the Beanstar is again exposed to Peach 's voice . The four grab onto the Beanstar in an effort to keep it under control , but it shoots into the sky

. The Beanstar explodes into four pieces , which scatter across Beanbean Kingdom , and the brothers become separated from Popple and Bowser . Mario and Luigi backtrack and meet Peach as she arrives in Beanbean Kingdom , who inexplicably has her own voice . They discover that Prince Peasley had learned of Cackletta 's plot and warned the Princess beforehand and Birdo , disguised as Peach , had her voice stolen instead . Bowser 's arrival and presence at her castle had prevented Peach from revealing the plan to Mario and Luigi . Meanwhile , Fawful imbues a weak Bowser with Cackletta 's soul , resulting in the twisted Bowletta .

On a trip to Little Fungitown , Peach is kidnapped by Bowletta , who demands all the pieces of the Beanstar in exchange . After restoring the Beanstar , Mario and Luigi travel to Joke 's End to make the exchange . Bowletta refuses to hand over Peach , but Luigi , disguised in Peach 's spare dress , ends up being taken in Peach 's stead . He escapes from the repaired Koopa Cruiser , reclaiming the Beanstar in the process . The brothers return to Beanbean Castle Town , finding it under attack by Bowletta using Bowser 's flying castle . The brothers and Prince Peasley fly up to it to stop Cackletta once and for all . Mario and Luigi battle past the Koopalings and Fawful before confronting Bowletta . Feinting defeat , she tricks the brothers and swallows them both . After waking up in her belly , the brothers battle and defeat Cackletta 's soul , exorcising her from Bowser 's body . The two are regurgitated and Bowser returns to normal . Afterwards , the brothers escape the castle before it explodes from a bomb set by Peasley . The explosion sends the castle falling into the ocean . Exhausted from their vacation , Mario , Luigi , Peach and Toadsworth decide to head back to the Mushroom Kingdom . Before they can leave , Peasley brings a farewell gift for them to take home , which is Bowser , who regained memory . The gang then returns home .

= = Development and marketing = =

Superstar Saga , developed by AlphaDream , is said to take its inspiration from the Nintendo 64 game Paper Mario ; the two games have similar graphics and gameplay . The producers of the game were Shigeru Miyamoto , the creator of the Mario franchise , Tetsuo Mizuno , and Satoru Iwata , the president of Nintendo . The voice acting for Mario and Luigi in the game is provided by Charles Martinet , well known for providing the characters ' voice in Nintendo 's Mario franchise . The game 's music was composed by Yoko Shimomura , who also composed the score for Super Mario RPG .

Superstar Saga was first revealed at Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) 2003 , where a playable demo of the game was available . In August and September 2003 , a playable demonstration was also available at the European Computer Trade Show , the Games Convention , and Nintendo Gamers ' Summit . To link in with the game 's comic themes , Nintendo organized an official competition between October and November 2003 in which contestants would try to submit the best knock @-@ knock joke to win a Game Boy Advance SP and a copy of the game . Nintendo employed comedian Kathy Griffin to choose the winner .

= = Reception = =

Superstar Saga received universal critical acclaim . The game 's comical dialog and themes in particular were lauded by critics . Eurogamer 's Tom Bramwell commented that " each line of dialogue and identifiable cameo is handled with a loving sense of humour . " Despite this , RPGamer 's Andrew Long labelled the plot as repetitive , and the game 's characters as " a tad shallow " . While also appreciating references to the heritage of the Mario series , critics praised the game for avoiding clichés common in previous games of the Mario series .

The gameplay attained a mixed reception . Critics enjoyed the game 's battle system , which deviated from role @-@ playing game tradition . IGN 's Craig Harris commented that " unlike most Japanese RPGs Mario & Luigi 's turn @-@ based battle involves the player at all times " . Despite this novel approach to combat situations , some reviewers thought that the overall gameplay lacked innovation . GameSpy in particular criticized the game for an apparent lack of originality , commenting that " in terms of gameplay , there isn 't much there that we haven 't seen in the NES

and SNES Mario and Zelda titles . " Furthermore , some reviewers were disappointed by a perceived lack of difficulty in the gameplay as a result of targeting a younger audience . However , Cubed3 welcomed this approach , citing that " any gamer , be them veterans to the genre or complete amateurs , will find the title to be perfectly accessible . " Edge and other gaming publications have criticized the controls for being occasionally confusing when considering the usage of jumping , hammers , and other combinations between the two characters .

A common concern among reviewers is the overhead perspective , which critics have bemoaned for preventing them from judging pathway routes and an object 's location in relation to its background . Besides this , the actual visuals were generally well received , as well as the setting and animations . The audio was commended for combining both originality and nostalgia , even though it looped frequently .

In 2006 , Superstar Saga was rated the 37th best game made on a Nintendo System in Nintendo Power 's Top 200 Games list . In the same year , the game became part of the Player 's Choice label . In 2007 , the game was named the twelfth best Game Boy Advance game of all time in IGN 's feature reflecting on the Game Boy Advance 's long lifespan . As of 2007 , Superstar Saga has sold over 441 @, @ 000 units in Japan and 1 @. @ 46 million in the US .

= = Sequels = =

Nintendo released Partners in Time , the prequel / sequel to Superstar Saga , on November 28 , 2005 for the Nintendo DS system . The plot and setting is relatively disconnected to that of Superstar Saga , as Cackletta has been replaced by the Shroobs as the primary antagonists . Although the game is set outside the Beanbean Kingdom , there are references to Superstar Saga in Partners in Time , such as the inclusion of Fawful in the sewers of Princess Peach 's Castle in the game . The Bros. Moves have been retained in Partners in Time , although they involve an item system as opposed to the Bros. Points system that Superstar Saga has . A second sequel , Bowser 's Inside Story , was released in 2009 for the Nintendo DS , with Fawful reprising his role as a key villain . A third sequel , Dream Team , was released in 2013 for the Nintendo 3DS . A fourth sequel , Paper Jam , a crossover with the Paper Mario series , was released for the Nintendo 3DS in 2015 .