

Dracula Resurrection – Windows

Developed by: Canal+ Multimedia

Published by: Dreamcatcher Interactive (<http://www.dreamcatchergames.com>)

Reviewed by: Tim Maxwell

Official Site: <http://www.dreamcatchergames.com/products/dracula.htm>

Genre: Adventure

System Requirements:

Windows 98/95

- Pentium 166 (200 recommended)
- 32MB RAM (64 recommended with Windows 98)
- 16bit video card
- 16bit Soundcard
- 4X CD ROM drive (8X recommended)

Supports: N/A

ESRB: Mature

Overall Rating: 7

Graphics: 9/10

Sound: 8/10

Documentation: 6/10

Getting Started: 6/10

Gameplay: 7/10

Value: 6/10

The Good Press: Tremendous graphics and cut scenes; chilling atmosphere; simplistic, yet effective interface.

The Bad Press: Tedious point-and-click gameplay; defeating Dracula isn't a particularly long or challenging adventure.

Overview: Although *Dracula Resurrection* is relatively short-lived and often monotonous, the terrific graphics and unmistakable atmosphere will keep you coming back.

Tips:

Be sure to talk to everyone you come across—especially when you find mysterious items.

When you first begin the game, don't proceed immediately to the inn. There are some items you need to find before you can do anything there.

Of all the notorious villains and ghastly ghouls we've been faced with in the history of gaming, vampires are seemingly the most difficult to vanquish (with those pesky zombies coming in at a close second). Take our favorite fanged friend, Dracula for example. We've repeatedly beat him into submission with whips and impaled him with as many oak stakes as we could find in the Castlevania games among others, yet he always seems to reawaken and continue his legacy of torment and bloodlust.

As you probably guessed by the name, Dreamcatcher's *Dracula Resurrection* is yet another in a long list of Transylvanian adventures. The year is 1904. Seven years earlier, a brave adventurer named Jonathan Harker thought he had permanently destroyed Dracula. However late one evening, Jonathan's wife Mina is suddenly overcome by an irresistible urge to return to Dracula's castle alone. Once again, it's up to Jonathan to not only defeat Dracula, but more importantly, save his wife.

After being treated to a chilling cinematic sequence, you'll quickly notice that *Dracula Resurrection* is a point-and-click graphical adventure along the same lines as *Myst* or *Riven*. Since this is the case, the interface couldn't possibly be any easier. Moving your character around, manipulating the environment, and managing your inventory is all handled with a few mouse clicks. As a matter of fact, a keyboard isn't even necessary and once you get the different situational icons down, you'll have no trouble traversing the dingy dungeons and rustic structures that make up the area in and around Transylvania. Another nifty interface nuance allows you to observe your surroundings in full panoramic 3D with a mere twist of your wrist. While not necessarily groundbreaking, this feature adds a little more interactivity to a genre where monotony is commonplace.

Another great use of the new 3D viewing mechanism is the ability to check out the absolutely gorgeous graphics in *Dracula Resurrection*. Each of the locales you'll visit offers unmatched levels of detail, and seamless transitions to animations and cut scenes really keep the intriguing plot going. As in any game of this type, the jumpy movement

and static backgrounds can become repetitive, but kudos to Dreamcatcher for working overtime on the smooth animation work and excellent in-game cinematics. Oh, and lets not forget about the cast of non-player characters that are so hideously ugly that even Dracula would keep his distance. With many of the cut scenes, you're given the "privilege" of getting up-close and personal with some of these people. It's not a pretty sight to be sure, but these characters round out an outstanding visual display that suits the mood of the game perfectly.

In terms of audio, *Dracula Resurrection* is also first-rate. The environmental sound effects will send tingles down your spine from the very beginning. Even in the friendly confines of the old inn, wolves can be heard howling and crickets chirping as the floor beneath your feet creaks eerily. The voice acting is also pretty well done, although the main character is a bit whiney and you'll sometimes chuckle at the decided B-movie nature of the conversations. Still, much like the graphics, the audio in the game is very appropriate for the atmosphere and the task at hand.

Despite a splendid aesthetic performance, *Dracula Resurrection* has a few gameplay pitfalls that keep it from achieving true elite status. For one, the game is quite short and not overly challenging, and once you complete it once, there really isn't any reason to start again. This is what really separates the game from games like *Myst* and *Amerzone*. There aren't any mind-numbing puzzles to stump you with--most of your time will be spent searching for various items that, when taken and used in other areas, allow you to proceed. In fairness, the lack of overly complex and frustrating puzzles keeps the story moving along nicely, but *Myst* junkies will scoff at the ease involved in this adventure. One of the game's other primary caveats is the same beef I have with every other game in this genre: it gets boring clicking through screen after screen hoping that your mouse pointer happens to hover over the one or two pixels where a vital item can be found. In all honesty, this truly is a matter of personal preference, but I'd much rather spend my time fighting demons or infiltrating a castle than searching high and low for that doggone slingshot.

Although the trip through Transylvania is a relatively short one in *Dracula Resurrection*, there is still plenty to be seen and a fascinating story to be told. Diehard point-and-clickers may be turned off at the lack of any real brain-busting puzzle action, but an engaging plot combined with terrific graphics and sound should make up for these shortcomings. This game certainly isn't for everyone, but Dreamcatcher has struck a nice balance that should appeal to adventurers and puzzlers alike.