



• In multiplayer, you really need to make use of cover and scan all elevations for bad guy activity.



• Rappelling down a building and smashing through a window is always fun.



• Directing your team is simple: Just point to where you want them to go and select what you want them to do when they get there. It's all done from the first-person view.



# RAINBOW SIX VEGAS

Bright lights, big city

PUBLISHER: **Ubisoft** DEVELOPER: **Ubisoft Montreal** GENRE: **Tactical Shooter** AVAILABILITY: **Retail** ESRB RATING: **Mature**  
 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: **3GHz CPU, 1GB RAM, 7GB hard drive space, 128MB videocard** MULTIPLAYER: **2-16 players** VERSION REVIEWED: **Gold Master**

## REVIEW

For many, details of the single-player campaign in *Rainbow Six Vegas* are unnecessary. The existence of a robust, well-executed, four-player co-op mode potentially negates the need to ever dip into the single-player experience...and to ignore it is to deny yourself what is arguably *Vegas*' biggest contribution to the franchise. Whereas previous *Rainbows* were little more than well-designed skirmishes loosely hooked together in sequence, the new game centers around a story arc. While it's certainly not the most imaginative narrative, it brings the game a far greater sense of purpose and even takes a stab at some character development—albeit clumsily—by introducing a completely new Rainbow team and hinting at tensions between squadmates.

Surprisingly, the game starts in the deserted streets of Mexico City rather than amid the neon glow of the titular Vegas. Essentially serving as a prolonged tutorial, this first level is an unexpected way to kick things off, doubtlessly disappointing many players. Because of the presentation, the initial series of firefights feels more like a dumbed-down version of *Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter* than the more intimate battles we expect from *Rainbow Six*; thankfully, things evolve quickly, and by the time the action moves to Vegas, it's indicated that you're actually hunting a "bad guy"—and with that knowledge comes a singular sense of purpose. You'll also be sufficiently adapted to the new control scheme, which is, frankly, brilliant. Holding the right mouse button pulls the camera out to a third-person view, while your character hugs up against the nearest piece of scenery. From here, you can pop out and fire while still somewhat concealed...or you can blind-fire with limited accuracy.

*Vegas* itself serves as a suitable setting for *Rainbow Six*'s tactical nature, as Sin City's ritzy casinos steal the show (despite city officials' annoyance at the game's use of them). While you make linear progress through the story, the individual firefights

utilize the decadent architecture in spectacular fashion. Terrorists burst in through glass ceilings and attack you from all sides, from all elevations. This is a truly three-dimensional experience that takes full advantage of the environment to build dramatic tension. While sneaking through the casino floor, the slightest movement can prompt you to open fire, and it's as likely to be the blinking of a slot machine that sets you off as it is a terrorist diving for cover.

### HOUSE OF MULTIPLAYER BLUES

Franchise fans will no doubt spend the bulk of their time enjoying *Vegas* online. We had a few problems getting the game to connect, and the unpatched retail version suffers from a bug that causes the game to crash if you search for a multiplayer game using the default settings (unbelievable, when you think about it). As this issue of *GFW* goes to press, Ubisoft assures us that the problem is being addressed in a patch, which should already be available when you read this (the score here, however, does not assume this). Hopefully, the patch will also address some of the other small errors that the game randomly throws out there, too—like onscreen instructions never going away and some occasionally heinous clipping issues.

That said, the aforementioned co-op's certainly the online mode of choice, but *Vegas* also features plenty of team-based battles to engage in. It's not going to win any awards, but alongside the de rigueur, the game exhibits some flashes of brilliance. Of particular note: the new "attack and defend" mode, which—while simple in principal—rewards teamwork above all else. If you find yourself playing online with a group that works well together (often easier said than done), it's incredibly satisfying.

Long-term fans should (happily) note that Ubisoft Montreal is back on the *Rainbow Six* series. After producing the definitive experience with *Rainbow Six 3* (and missing last year's lackluster *Rainbow Six Lockdown* completely), the team's direction with *Vegas* is admirable. While it doesn't elevate *Rainbow Six* back to the genre-defining franchise it once was, it's still a solid, fun game...plus, thanks to Unreal Engine 3, it looks great. Here's hoping some of the more egregious bugs get ironed out soon.

• John Davison

### VERDICT

Great single-player campaign and multiplayer variety; Unreal Engine 3 equals dazzling graphics.

Bugs that should've been fixed before release.

7.5/10

GOOD

Games for Windows  
THE OFFICIAL CHOICE



• Fremont Street looks very Fremont Street-like...although it could maybe use some more people.



• Holding the right mouse button lets you hug up against the wall and watch for bad guys.

WHILE YOU PROGRESS THROUGH THE STORY, THE FIRE-FIGHTS USE THE DECADENT ARCHITECTURE IN SPECTACULAR FASHION.

GUILD WARS \ LEFT 4 DEAD \ BLACKSITE: AREA 51

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