

ZELDA

A LINK TO THE PAST



STORY

Princess Zelda has a number of rather peculiar pastimes. Perhaps the strangest of them all is her bizarre ability to get herself kidnapped by the forces of darkness at a moment's notice. Every time this occurs, it's down to a young hero named Link to sort out the mess by rescuing the fair princess and decking the denizens of evil that abducted her.

He carries this out by running around the multi-directionally scrolling land of Hyrule, slashing evil minions with his chopper and infiltrating enemy complexes in search of his beloved princess. Luckily, the land is not completely infested by the disciples of darkness. There are also many humble peasants who help Link out by giving him clues, sending him on mini-quests and pointing him towards the locations of mystical objects.

However, Link has a long and arduous task ahead of him, for he receives word that Zelda has been removed from the very fabric of space and time. She languishes in the deepest dungeon of the Prince of Darkness, whose kingdom isn't even in this dimension!



A MAP TO END ALL MAPS

Getting your bearings in Zelda III couldn't be simpler. One button press brings up a map of Hyrule and you can either view this in its entirety or scroll around bits of it courtesy of the Super NES' spin 'n' scroll custom graphics chips. Either way, the location of your next quest always flashes on the map along with your current location to help you on your way.



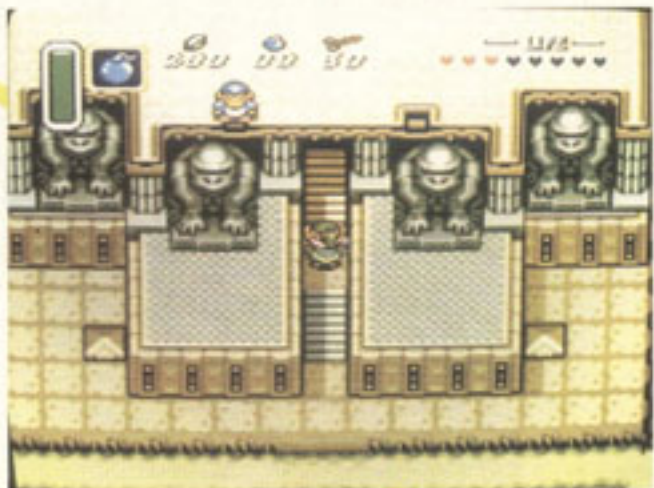
▼ Push back the swords behind the two cute pink thrones to reveal the hidden entrance to the church



▼ An evil dimension-type boss!



▼ This little monkey wants 10 jewels or he won't let you pass through the gorilla guarded gates!



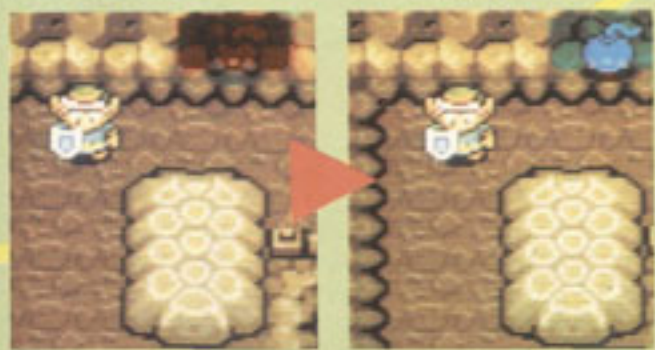
MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

Halfway through the game, Link faces up to a massive guardian in the dark castle. After this evil being is defeated, you are warped into the other dimension where the Prince of Darkness resides. One check of the map reveals that the geography of this evil dimension is much the same as your homeland, but the creatures that wander around are much more dangerous! Luckily, Link can warp back to his native dimension by making use of the mirror that he finds on his travels. Hurrah!



WHAT A BOMB-ER

Link is something of an expert when it comes to explosives, which comes in handy in this vast quest. There are many false walls or rock-falls found in the game that Link can open just by planting a bomb! With the obstruction blown away Link can progress, and may even find a secret item for his efforts. Bombs can also be dropped and thrown at enemy sprites!



▼ Link's magic warp mirror



COMMENT



RICH

I haven't actually played any of the 8-bit Link adventures to any great depth, but this 16-bit offering had me hooked after a few minutes' play. The game is incredibly easy to get into, with user-friendly controls and beginners' mini-quests to get you into the game. However, later on the game gets far more difficult, with mind-bending puzzles that should have you perplexed for ages. That isn't to say that *Zelda III* is lacking in the action department. The amount of enemy minions to slap about and the awesome line-up of bosses make for a game that requires all of your arcade skills as well as your puzzle-solving talents. *Zelda III* is the ultimate exploration game on a console and ranks as yet another essential Super NES purchase!



OBJECT-ION, YOUR HONOUR

There are hundred of objects in the land of Hyrule, just waiting for Link to collect. These are stored in Link's patented dimension-warping trouser pockets which enable him to carry as many items as he likes. The amount of objects available is quite incredible, ranging from bombs to boomerangs and mirrors to mushrooms! All of these play an important (or not-so important) part in the game.



SLASHING WITH YOUR WEAPON

The first major quest in *Zelda III* sees Link trying to pull a powerful sword from a stone in the forest. However, the only way he can get his hands on this powerful weapon is to track down three amulets and retrace his steps back to the sword. However, each amulet is coveted by a guardian of evil in its own evil domain and actually getting hold of one of these magical items is a mini-quest all of its own!



JULIAN

Although I usually hate games of this type, *Zelda III* offers a perfect mix of action, excitement and puzzling to make it one of the finest games I've played on the Super NES. The graphics and sound are hardly earth-shattering, but where this game excels is in the playability department. It's simply superb and is unbelievably addictive. The puzzles are tough but they're logical (the answers are usually staring at you in the face) and the feeling of satisfaction when you suddenly work out what you need to do and start to make headway again is what makes this game such fun to play. *Zelda III* is a massive game, has enormous depth, offers weeks of intensive, highly enjoyable play and should be put at the top of your shopping list.

COMMENT

THE MEAN MACHINES ARCHIVE

SUPER FAMICOM

ゼルダの伝説

© 1991 Nintendo

BY: NINTENDO

PRICE: TBA

RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

LIVES: 1

CONTINUES: INFINITE

SKILL LEVELS: 1

RESPONSIVENESS: MEGA



PRESENTATION 83%

The attract screens are unimpressive, but the ace controls and the occasional clues given more than make up for it.

GRAPHICS 82%

The sprites are small and the backdrops are quite simplistic, but the graphics do the job really well.

SOUND 81%

There are completely brilliant sound effects, although some of the music is repetitive.

PLAYABILITY 94%

Getting into the game is easy and the unusual style of play is very compelling.

LASTABILITY 95%

There's an absolutely vast quest here, full of thrills and excitement and it should keep you occupied for months.

OVERALL 95%

Zelda III is simply the greatest exploration/adventure game available for a console! Don't miss it.