

Blu-Ray Review: 'Iron Man 2' Delivers Thrills With Great Package

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 1, 2010 - 12:55pm

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CHICAGO – Judging purely the film itself, “Iron Man 2” is a disappointment, a reasonably-entertaining slice of superhero escapism that still falls a bit short of its predecessor and fails to capitalize on what worked about that film. But this is not solely a film review and the Blu-ray is a stunner; a perfectly-transferred film with excellent special features. It’s a complete package even if the film may not be.



Blu-Ray Rating: **4.5/5.0**

The HD video and audio on “Iron Man 2” are among the best released this year. Not only has the picture been perfectly mixed for HD but the sound will blow you away. It’s the kind of audio mix that they use to sell stereos and “Iron Man 2” is the kind of film that simply works better when it pops off the screen and allows its excellent sound design to marvel.



Iron Man 2 was released on Blu-ray and DVD on September 28th, 2010

Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

As for the movie, “Iron Man 2” could best be described as an encore to the killer first set. It’s too-minor a variation on what worked about the hit 2008 film that also incorporates the missteps of the original. Rather than try and expand the universe of “Iron Man,” director Jon Favreau and writer Justin Theroux seem to be doing everything not to anger fans of the original mega-hit. So, while “Iron Man 2” works, no one can claim that it takes enough risks to truly distinguish itself. It’s the same bucket of popcorn entertainment, only now its a little staler and more covered in CGI butter.



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Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

"Iron Man 2" picks up immediately after the brilliant ending of the first film. Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) has revealed his alter ego to the world as we are introduced to Ivan Vanko (Mickey Rourke), a Russian inventor who happens to be watching the press conference while he works on technology similar to the one that saved Tony's life and made him a crimson superhero.

The film will get back to Vanko, but first our hero needs another crisis of conscience. He's sold to the world that his very existence is the greatest instrument of peace. No one is going to f**k with anyone with Iron Man on patrol. Of course, that's not going to last.

Both Vanko and rival weapons manufacturer Justin Hammer (an effective Sam Rockwell) are working on their own Iron Man technology. After a very impressive action sequence at the Grand Prix in Monaco in which Vanko unleashes his technical expertise on the world, Stark is forced to face the fact that just being Iron Man has not brought peace to a planet his father's company helped to arm.

It doesn't help Stark that the element that used to keep him alive is slowly poisoning his body. Stark is surrounded by an impressive support structure that once again includes Pepper Potts (Gwyneth Paltrow) and "Rhodey" (Don Cheadle, effectively replacing Terrence Howard), but he also has a new assistant in the lovely-and-deadly Natalie Rushman (Scarlet Johansson) and has been contacted by Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) of S.H.I.E.L.D. about joining the "Avenger Initiative".



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Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

"Iron Man 2" has an abundance of plot that keeps it from ever getting boring but it also feels scattered and unable to come together to form a cohesive whole. Each of the major players gets a crucial scene or two but none make a true impact. These aren't the kind of well-drawn, complete characters that make up truly satisfying superhero movies like "The Dark Knight" or "Spider-Man 2." Pepper, Natalie, Rhodey, Nick, Vanko, and Hammer all have ample screen time but none make much of an impact with even a memorable line much less actual character development.

After the success of "Iron Man," Favreau and Paramount could have taken a true creative risk and shot for something more inspired or they could merely have delivered more of the same and counted their money. They chose the latter option and ended up with a film that made a bit less than the first, not a commonality in high-budget sequels. Would a more creatively risky film have angered audiences or inspired them to make this a bigger hit? We'll never know.

What we do know is that the Blu-ray of "Iron Man 2" is practically a must-own, even if you aren't the biggest fan of the actual film. Not only can you use the HD video and audio to show off your system to friends and family but you can spend hours with the special features, including a commentary and detailed, well-organized behind-the-scenes featurettes.

The highlight of the special features is a 4-part HD documentary on the making of the film called "Ultimate Iron Man." It's accompanied by 6 Behind-the-Scenes featurettes, 8 deleted scenes (that total nearly 17 minutes and include some effective material, including an alternate opening), the aforementioned commentary by Favreau, and a "Data Vault" that plays on top of the film and offers inside information on the characters and how they will relate to "The Avengers."

Rarely has a Blu-ray more completely delivered exactly what fans want for their favorite film. The film is far from perfect but the Blu-ray is everything we could possibly ask for a movie like "Iron Man 2."

"Iron Man 2" stars Robert Downey Jr., Gwyneth Paltrow, Don Cheadle, Scarlett Johansson, Sam Rockwell, Mickey Rourke, Samuel L. Jackson, Clark Gregg, John Slattery, and Garry Shandling. It was written by Justin Theroux and directed by Jon Favreau. It was released on September 28th, 2010 and is rated PG-13.



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