

Blu-Ray Review: 'Beauty and the Beast' Dazzles in HD Release

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 11, 2010 - 3:07pm

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CHICAGO – If you still know anyone who doubts the quality difference between Blu-ray and standard DVD, show them the stunning transfer of Disney's Best Picture-nominated "Beauty and the Beast," one of the rare animated films that actually plays even better two decades after its release than it did when it began its cultural domination. With one of the best animated HD transfers yet produced, this is a must-own.



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

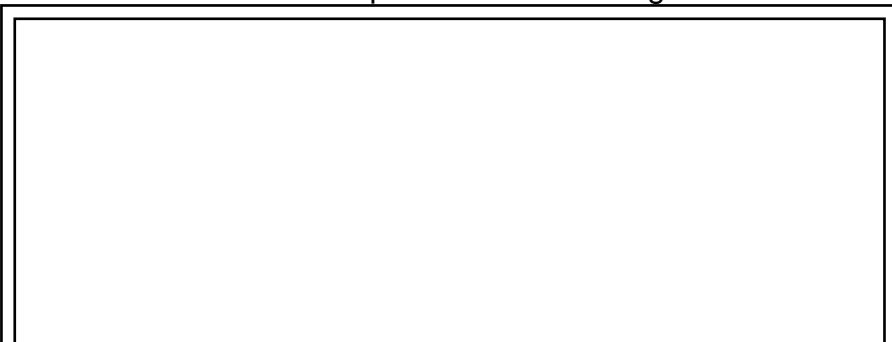
The quality of the image in Disney's Blu-ray version of "Beauty and the Beast" is hard to capture in words. The colors don't just pop off the screen. They're not just "bright." They're perfect. Every line detail, every background, every movement — being one of the favorite movies of a major Disney fan, I've seen "Beauty and the Beast" several times but the quality of this transfer made it feel new again. It's that remarkable. It's so noteworthy that if the release included nothing but the theatrical edition of the film and absolutely no bonus features, it would still be worth a purchase just for the timeless film itself.



Beauty and the Beast: Diamond Edition was released on Blu-ray/DVD on October 5th, 2010

Photo credit: Disney

Of course, Disney doesn't release their catalog films in bare-bones sets and call them "Diamond Editions," so "Beauty and the Beast" includes several notable special features along with different versions of the actual movie.





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Photo credit: Disney

First, the flick itself. When Best Picture moved to ten nominees and “Up” was nominated last year, several people brought out the statistic that it was the first animated film nominated for the big prize since 1991’s “Beauty and the Beast.” Yes and no. “Beauty” did it when there were only five, something that “Up” probably wouldn’t have done. (Although “Toy Story 3” is beloved enough that it might have broken in with just five and certainly will with ten.) In other words, “Beauty and the Beast” will have the upper hand as long as there are ten nominees. It shattered the animated ceiling when it was a lot harder to do so.

Watching it again makes it so incredibly easy to see why. “Beauty and the Beast” merges the best of the classic Disney aesthetic with both a Broadway feel (which is what made it such a hit on-stage) and a ’90s feminist approach. Belle is no mere damsel-in-distress. Like Ariel in the previous film in the Disney canon (“The Little Mermaid”) Belle was redefining the modern animated heroine. With striking visuals, beautiful music, and classic storytelling, “Beauty and the Beast” is one of the few films that can be truly called timeless.

The Diamond Edition of “Beauty and the Beast” includes two Blu-ray discs and a DVD version of the film. The Blu-ray and DVD include three versions of the film: a theatrical edition, an extended edition, and an edition that includes the storyreel picture-in-picture that allows fans a look at the process. The special features primarily consist of material that’s been available before but it’s still a breathtaking collection of extras that includes pieces for the young ones along with behind-the-scenes featurettes and making-of details for the older fans. Check it out...



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Photo credit: Disney

Special Features:

- o Three Versions of the Film

- o Beyond Beauty: The Untold Stories Behind Making Beauty and the Beast – journey back through time as we look at the personal stories from the creators of this award-winning animated film
- o Broadway Beginnings: Up-close and personal celebrity interviews with Nick Jonas, Donny Osmond, Jamie Lynn Sigler, Deborah Gibson and others who have starred in the Broadway production
- o Composing A Classic: A Musical Conversation with Alan Menken, Don Hahn & Richard Kraft where they reminisce, sing songs and share personal stories of the times during production of Beauty and the Beast
- o Deleted Scenes: Alternate Opening and Ending, Belle In The Library – never before seen moment where Belle meets four new characters in the Library
- o New Jordin Sparks “Beauty and the Beast” Music Video
- o Sing-Along – when you select this option, the words to the song appear on the screen so you can sing along to your favorites.
- o Audio Commentary – by Don Hahn (Producer), Kirk Wise (Director), Gary Trousdale (Director) and Alan Menken (Composer)
- o Chip’s Musical Challenge
- o Mrs. Pott’s Personality Profile Game
- o Beyond Beauty: The Untold Stories Behind Making Beauty and the Beast This interactive experience allows fans to expand areas of the documentary to uncover even more about each topic making have up to 3 hours of additional content. Areas include the story of Beauty and the Beast, Walt’s fascination with fairy tales, the Purdum Reel and Kurt Wise/Gary Trousdale short, tribute to Howard Ashman and much, much more...
- o Beauty and the Beast Music Video Performed By Celine Dion and Peabo Bryson
- o Alternate Version of “Be Our Guest”
- o Alternate Score of “The Transformation”
- o Introduction To Deleted Songs By Don Hahn: “Human Again”
- o Introductions To Deleted Song By Alan Menken: “Human Again”
- o Deleted Song: “Human Again”
- o Bonjour, Who Is This? A Disney TelePlay Game powered by BD-Live. Using any phone, guess the identity of the other players before they guess yours. Available in the US and English speaking Canada only. Requires BD-Live enables Blu-ray player and internet connection.
- o Enchanted Musical Challenge: A DisneyQuest Game

Disney continues to set the bar for animated Blu-ray releases in a way not so other studios can match it but so high that no one will get anywhere close. Every single “vault” Disney Blu-ray is worth a purchase and the Diamond Edition of “Beauty and the Beast” is one of the best.

“Beauty and the Beast” features voice work by Paige O’Hara, Robby Benson, Angela Lansbury, Jerry Orbach, and David Ogden-Stiers. It was released on Blu-ray/DVD combo on October 5th, 2010 and is rated G. It is rated 92 minutes.



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