

## Blu-Ray Review: Great Release For Enjoyable ‘Despicable Me’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 16, 2010 - 4:26pm

- [Blu-ray Review](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Despicable Me](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [How to Train Your Dragon](#) [6]
- [Jason Segel](#) [7]
- [Julie Andrews](#) [8]
- [Kristen Wiig](#) [9]
- [Russell Brand](#) [10]
- [Steve Carell](#) [11]
- [Toy Story 3](#) [12]
- [Universal](#) [13]
- [Will Arnett](#) [14]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [15]

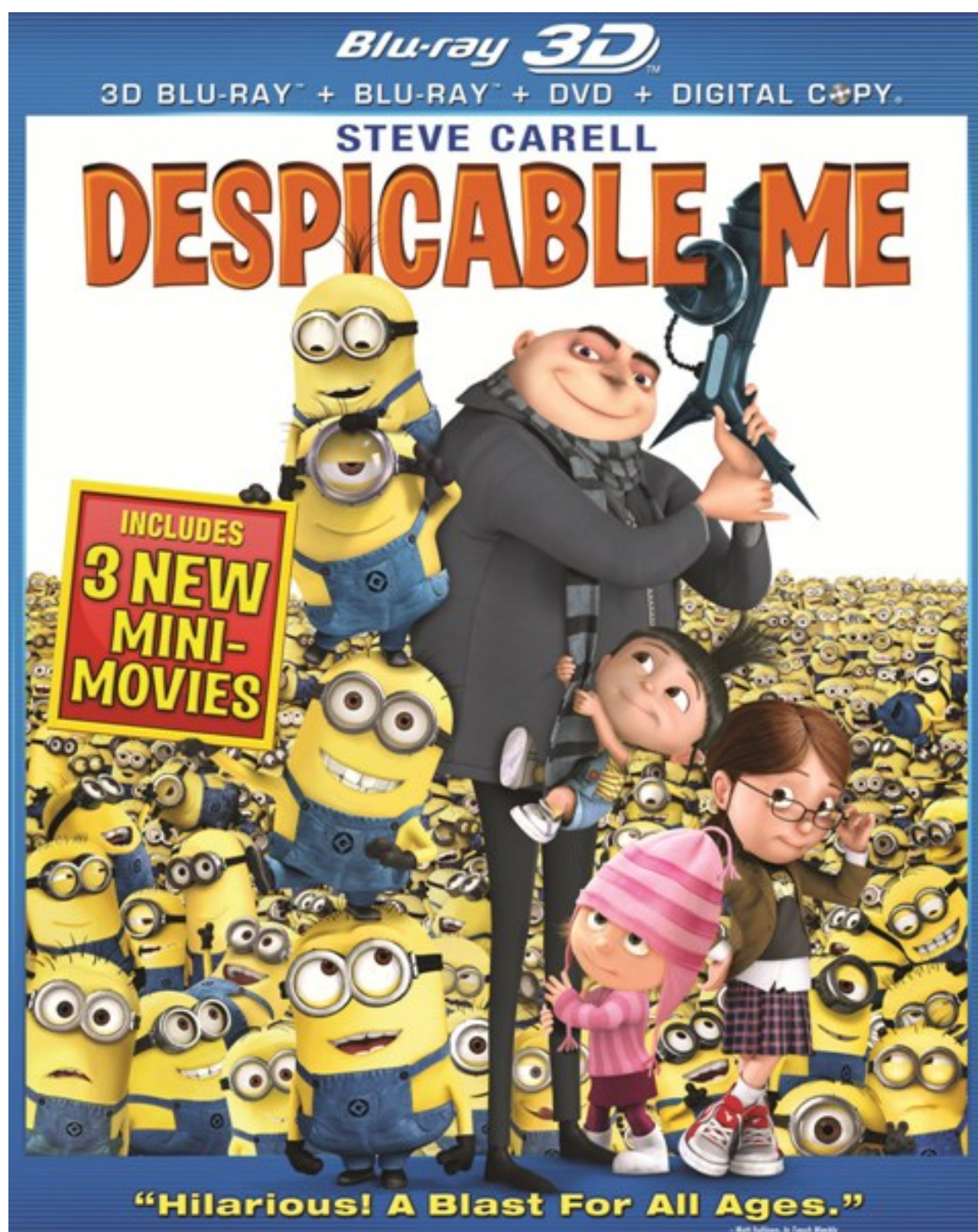
CHICAGO – Every critic has a few films in their resume that they were arguably too hard on. Coming on the heels of the beautiful “How to Train Your Dragon” and the masterful “Toy Story 3,” “Despicable Me” felt a bit too thin in theaters but it plays great at home, bolstered by a spectacular Blu-ray release from Universal.



Blu-Ray Rating: **4.0/5.0**

“Despicable Me” isn’t nearly as ambitious as “HTTYD” or “TS3” but that seems like an unfair comparison. Movies should be judged by their intentions and this light, breezy, sometimes-clever comedy works on its own terms. It’s an impossible movie to fully adore and you won’t see it on any best of the year lists but it’s also a tough movie to hate. There’s room in the animation genre for films that aren’t as deep or rich as “Toy Story 3” or “The Illusionist” and “Despicable Me” gets the job done.

Steve Carell (who had one of the busiest years ever with “Date Night,” “Dinner For Schmucks,” and “The Office”) voices the super-evil Gru, a bad guy who seems to be losing the race for world’s greatest villain with upstart Vector (Jason Segel). Vector is off stealing pyramids while Gru is just using his freeze ray to cut the line at Starbucks. Even with his hundreds of minions (adorable creatures surely designed for sale as stuffed animals that look vaguely like Twinkies with eyes and feet), Gru is becoming irrelevant. So Gru hatches a plan to steal the moon. Yes, THAT moon. He’ll take a shrink ray into outer space, zap the moon, and carry it home in his astronaut suit.



Despicable Me was released on Blu-ray and DVD on December 14th, 2010

Photo credit: Universal

The problems start when Gru learns that Vector has the shrink ray and Gru's plan for universal domination requires it. Gru decides to exploit the gawky mad man's love for the cookies sold door to door by orphan little girls and adopts three awfully cute sisters – Margo (Miranda Cosgrove), Agnes (Elsie Fisher), and Edith (Dana Gaier) – and tries to use them as he does his minions with, of course, Grinch-esque heart-melting results. Gru bonds with the girls and realizes that the people in his life – a pressuring coconspirator named Dr. Nefario (Russell Brand) and a truly evil mother (Julie Andrews) – haven't exactly been supporting him the way a super-villain should be supported.

Some of the design aesthetic of "Despicable Me" reminds me of modern French animation (I wish there was more) and the best physical bits reminds one of Mad Magazine's Spy vs. Spy. The film is forced to go through some pretty cliched machinations as it reveals that the super-villain is really a good guy at heart and it does lose focus a few times, but Blu-ray (and non-3D) plays up the visual strengths of the film. It was made for HD.

And it was made for the home market. The cost of taking a family to the theaters to see a 3D movie with parking and food can easily break three figures. It's insane. But downloading or buying this mild diversion on a winter afternoon creates a different set of standards. Overall, "Despicable Me" is missing that X factor that takes a light comedy like this one and makes it into something more (although I wouldn't be surprised if a sequel kicked on more cylinders) but the Blu-ray is stunning.

What's so great about it? Universal has long been a leader in the world of live-action HD but their limited animated catalog hasn't given them a chance to show what they can do with a colorful CGI flick like "Despicable Me." It's beautiful. And it sounds just as good.

Not only are the tech specs above average but so are the special features. DVD-exclusive shorts have long been mere filler to get more kids to demand their parents buy them the new release but the three mini-movies on "Despicable Me" are actually pretty clever. And the film is LOADED with special features, including the great Gru-Control (a play on the company's U-Control), which features what are essentially shorts of the minions, Gru, and others interrupting the movie along with behind-the-scenes featurettes. The special features are lengthy, informative, and fun.

**Special Features:**

- o 3 All New Mini-Movies: Orientation Day, Home Makeover, Banana
- o The World of Despicable Me
- o Despicable Beats
- o Gru’s Rocket Builder
- o Miss Hattie’s Top Secret Cookie Recipes
- o Commentary with the Director & the Minions
- o The Voices of Despicable Me
- o Super Silly Fun Land
- o DVD Feature Film and Bonus Digital Copy of the Film
- o Gru-Control
- o Pocket Blu

*“Despicable Me” stars Steve Carell, Jason Segel, Russell Brand, Julie Andrews, Will Arnett, Kristen Wiig, Miranda Cosgrove, Dana Gaier, and Elsie Fisher. It was written by Ken Daurio and directed by Pierre Coffin & Chris Renaud. It was released by Universal on December 14th, 2010. It is rated PG and runs 95 minutes.*



[16]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [17]  
Content Director  
HollywoodChicago.com  
[brian@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com) [16]

**Source URL (retrieved on Apr 20 2024 - 7:30am):**

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/12845/blu-ray-review-great-release-for-enjoyable-despicable-me>

**Links:**

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/blu-ray-review>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/despicable-me>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/how-to-train-your-dragon>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jason-segel>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/julie-andrews>
- [9] [http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/kristen\\_wiig.html](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/kristen_wiig.html)
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/russell-brand>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/steve-carell>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/toy-story-3>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/universal>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/will-arnett>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
- [16] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>