

Blu-Ray Review: Kiefer Sutherland, '24' Continue to Set the Bar

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CHICAGO – The standard DVD season sets for “24” have long been setting the bar for what TV on DVD “should be”. Winning awards for their technical transfers and detailed, copious special features, the producers of “24”'s home releases took it a step further this year by changing the game yet again with the Blu-Ray release of “24: Season Seven”.



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

After a lackluster first season release (which they made up for with a “Special Edition” a few years later), the next five seasons of “24” were essentially perfect TV on DVD releases. They had informative, detailed special features, gorgeous video & audio, and fascinating commentary tracks. And it didn't hurt that they were for some of the most beloved programming of the '00s.

Season seven was clearly a chance for “24” to change the game again. The sixth season had been a clear winner for worst of the series to date by TV and DVD critics and instead of being allowed to get right back on that horse and reverse the shark-jumping ways, the Writer's Strike delayed season seven by a whole year.



24: Season Seven was released on Blu-Ray on May 19th, 2009.

Photo credit: Fox

The seventh horrible day in the life of Jack Bauer (Kiefer Sutherland) brought "24" back from the brink of ridicule, delivering a much more effective thrill ride than season six. In a clever move, the writers of "24" both recognized the time off - this day started four years after the last - and even blew up many of the conventions of their own show, including having CTU completely fall apart and bringing back the considered-dead Tony Almeida (Carlos Bernard) and having audiences guess all season is he was really good or bad.

And Fox wisely chose not to make people who watch the show on DVD wait any longer than they already had and made the amazing decision to release the seventh season of "24" the day after the season finale aired.

Think about the precedent. People could buy the entire season of "24" before most viewers who watch it on DVR even had a chance to watch the season finale. TV on DVD has undeniably changed the way people watch television, but there was always a window of time that often made viewers who waited for DVD feel a little behind the times. If the "24" day-after-finale release becomes a pattern, viewers who wait for DVD or Blu-Ray will be nearly up-to-date with those who watch a show in its original airing. Ratings are going to drop even further.

Not only did Fox change the release date pattern (previous seasons of "24" has been released on DVD near the holidays to prime audiences for the upcoming season to air on TV), but they released this technically accomplished show on Blu-Ray for the first time. And, of course, "24" looks and sounds amazing on Blu-Ray. The sound design on this show has long been some of the best on TV and the 5.1 DTS-HD Master Audio track is simply spectacular.

"24: Season Seven" on Blu-Ray includes two excellent featurettes - "The Making of Season 7" and "Hour 19: The Ambush". Deleted scenes and the cool "The Fimucite Festival Presents: The Music of 24" are also included.

Commentaries include:

Episode 1 - Executive Producer/Director Jon Cassar and Carlos Bernard

Episode 3 - Executive Producer Manny Coto, Co-Executive Producer Brannon Braga and Bernard

Episode 5 - Cassar and Annie Wersching

Episode 9 - Executive Producer David Fury and Hakeem Kae-Kazim

Episode 10 - Coto, Braga, and Wersching

Episode 12 - Co-Executive Producer/Director Brad Turner and Tony Todd

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Episode 13 - Turner, Composer Sean Callery, and James Morrison

Episode 14 - Executive Producer Juan Carlos Coto, Wersching, and Bob Gunton

Episode 18 - Executive Producer Howard Gordon, Bernard, and Jeffrey Nordling

Episode 22 - Executive Producer Evan Katz, Mary Lynn Rajs kub, and Glenn Morshower

Episode 23 - Executive Producer David Fury, Co-Executive Producer Alex Gansa, and Morshower

Episode 24 - Executive Producers Howard Gordon and Cassar

'24: Season Seven' was released by Fox Home Video and stars Kiefer Sutherland, Carlos Bernard, Cherry Jones, Colm Feore, Jeffrey Nordling, Rhys Coiro, Janeane Garofalo, Anne Wersching, and Mary Lynn Rajs kub. The show was released on May 19th, 2009. It is not rated.



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