

Blu-Ray Review: Mega-Hit 'The Hangover' Drunk on Comedy Success

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 17, 2009 - 12:54pm

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CHICAGO – “The Hangover” is arguably the most successful comedy of all time (only a few dollars below “Meet the Fockers” that would probably disappear if you adjust for inflation). The comedy that proved that star power and sequelitis don’t have to drive every Summer movie was wildly beloved by audiences and fans of the film have been given a Blu-Ray release drunk on the film’s success and loaded with special features, including an unrated version of the movie itself.



Blu-Ray Rating: **3.5/5.0**

The best thing about “The Hangover” is the undeniably clever set-up: three guys have such an out-of-control bachelor party in Las Vegas that they lose the groom. What happened the night before? The film opens with the revelation that groom Doug (Justin Bartha) is missing and then Todd Phillips’ comedy flashes back to the preparations in the city of sin. Doug’s buddies include a sleazy schoolteacher named Phil (Bradley Cooper), a weak-willed dentist named Stu (Ed Helms), and his new brother-in-law Alan (Zack Galifianakis).



The Hangover was released on Blu-Ray and DVD on December 15th, 2009.

Photo credit: Warner Bros. Home Video

After a toast on the roof of Caesar’s Palace, “The Hangover” flashes forward to the next morning and, well, there’s more than a little evidence to suggest a crazy ten to twelve hours have passed but none of the guys can remember exactly what went down. How did a tiger get in the bathroom? Why is Stu missing a tooth? Why has Doug been replaced by a baby? Phil, Stu, and Alan start with the valet receipt in their

possession and trace back the events of the night before, crossing paths with a hooker with a heart of gold (Heather Graham), a pair of moronic cops, an effeminate mobster (Ken Jeong), and even Mike Tyson as they put the pieces together and try to find Doug.



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Photo credit: Warner Bros. Home Video

When I first saw "The Hangover," I had a feeling it would be a sleeper hit, but I don't think anyone predicted the runaway success of this comedy juggernaut. Way before the hype, I thought the film was a bit of a disappointment with a great concept, decent cast, and a few memorable scenes, most of which were spoiled in the preview. Watching it for a second time on Blu-Ray, the film plays better at home and without the months of expectation around it. It still could have been smarter and in no way do I think it's the best comedy of the year, much less all time, but it's a fun rental and the copious special features on the Blu-Ray make it a reasonable purchase as well.

The film is presented in both its theatrical and barely-different unrated version. Commercials and the front of the case tout "100 New Photos" from the legendary camera found at the end of the film. Almost all are just alternate versions of shots that ran over the credits. So, if you're dying to see twenty-five stills of Ed Helms pretending to pull his own tooth, you'll be happy.

Much more interesting are the hours of actual, live-action special features including a picture-in-picture commentary track with Cooper, Galafianakis, Helms, and Phillips. The track is surprisingly dry and I'll never understand why people think we want to look at people while they watch a movie, but it's still cool to have all three stars and the film's director in one room.

Other bonus material includes a mash-up of all of the cursing in the film, a mash-up of all of the action in the film, a teaser of Tyson singing "In the Air Tonight," The Dan Band (the wedding band from the end) singing "Fame," "Map of Destruction," "The Madness of Ken Jeong," "Three Best Friends Song," and a very funny gag reel. The special features are a bit unfocused and only briefly entertaining, but the movie works sporadically too, so they seem to fit the ADD-esque nature of the film they support.

I'm coming around to the cult of "The Hangover" and although I may still think it a bit overrated, those of you that love this sleeper hit that turned into one of the biggest movies of the year will be satisfied with the Blu-Ray release. A few drinks before watching it wouldn't hurt either.

'The Hangover' is released by Warner Brothers Home Video and stars Ed Helms, Zach Galafianakis, Bradley Cooper, Heather Graham, Ken Jeong, Justin Bartha, and Jeffrey Tambor. It was written by Jon Lucas & Scott Moore and directed by Todd Phillips. It was released on Blu-Ray and DVD on December 15th, 2009.



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