

DVD Review: More Mature, Darker 'Robin Hood' Returns to Sherwood Forest

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on January 22, 2010 - 2:50pm

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CHICAGO – It's an old-fashioned phrase for an old-fashioned show but the one I keep thinking of regarding BBC's incredibly enjoyable "Robin Hood," the third season of which is now on DVD, is "rollicking entertainment". Whatever that means to you, "Robin Hood" is it. This show is an entertaining blast, made even more so by a dark streak in the excellent third season.



DVD Rating: **4.0/5.0**

Continuing to find new ways to update the legend of "Robin Hood" for a new generation, the writers of this BBC America manage to keep the spirit of what we all know and love about the legend of Sherwood Forest intact while also making it feel fresh and new at the same time. It's one of those pieces of entertainment that's harder to pull off than it looks. They make it look easy. It's not.

The third season of "Robin Hood" opened on a much darker note than the first two, following up on the devastating ending of the second season. At the end of that year, Robin's (Jonas Armstrong) wife and ultimate love Marian was murdered by Guy of Gisborne (Richard Armitage). In the first episode, Robin returns from the Holy Land set on revenge at any cost. His sense of righteousness that made him a hero to the people has been replaced by a fueling vengeance.



Robin Hood: Season Three was released on DVD on January 12th, 2010.

Photo credit: BBC Home Video

Coming into the life of Robin Hood to help show him how to still be a hero is a legendary-but-reimagined character, a traveling monk named Tuck (David Harewood). The good Friar shows Robin how to survive in a world without his one true love and helps him become more than just a hero, but a leader. As Tuck says in episode two, "He's more than just a person now. He's an idea - something people can believe in."

This year's Robin is much darker and mature, as is the overall show. Armstrong is significantly better with more emotional depth to chew on and Armitage continues to rock but the show often still belongs to Keith Allen as the Sheriff of Nottingham, truly one of the best villain performances on TV right now.

I loved the escapism of "Robin Hood" but the political and dark undertones of season three turned the show into something more consequential. Having said that, it still can feel a bit goofy with awkward dialogue given to Hood's merry men and a sometimes-disappointing look. Some of the castle sets and costumes still look a bit too much like actors playing dress-up at a theme park. The performances and the writing often seem on a level higher than the production values.

Having said that, this is still one of the most entertaining current programs that you could buy on DVD. It's the best season of "Robin Hood" yet and with "Hood" fever about to pick up with the upcoming Russell Crowe film, it's a great way to get back into one of our most timeless legends.

The third season DVD set of "Robin Hood" includes three featurettes - "A Legend Reborn," "A New Look," and "Trebuchet: Creating Chaos" - along with Character Profiles and Video Diaries. The episodes are presented in 16:9 enhanced widescreen and accompanied by a 5.1 Surround Sound track. Spread out over five discs, the episodes themselves look remarkably good for standard-def.

'Robin Hood: Season Three' is released by BBC Video and stars Jonas Armstrong, Richard Armitage, David Harewood, Keith Allen, Joanne Froggatt, Toby Stephens, Gordon Kennedy, Sam Troughton, Joe Armstrong, and Lara Pulver. The show was released on DVD on January 12th, 2010. It is not rated. It runs roughly 571 minutes.

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