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Meet The Fockers (DVD) Review

By Britt Gillette

Arguably the best comedy of 2004, Meet The Fockers is a hilarious, humor-filled marathon.

Screenwriters Greg Glienna and Mary Ruth Clarke (who should have received Oscars for their flawless penmanship of Meet The Parents) turn in another blockbuster manuscript. But, as with its predecessor, Meet The Fockers wouldn't be the comedy masterpiece it is without the onscreen chemistry of Ben Stiller and Robert De Niro. Stiller, son of comedian Jerry Stiller (Seinfeld & King Of Queens), is a comic genius in his own right and has recently dominated the Hollywood box office with a string of smash spoof comedies such as There's Something About Mary (1998), Meet The Parents (2000), Zoolander (2001), Along Came Polly (2004), and Dodgeball (2004). De Niro, on the other hand, moves from the less serious roles of his early career into the comedy genre with an ease fully indicative of his enormous talent. Earlier comic roles in Wag The Dog (1997), Analyze This (1999), and Meet The Parents (2000) prepared movie-goers for the veteran actor's zinging one-liners. Throw Dustin Hoffman (who's also surprisingly funny) into the mix, and Meet The Fockers becomes one of those rare comedies that movie aficionados will want to see over and over again...

Meet The Fockers follows the continuing hardship of Gaylord "Greg" Focker (Ben Stiller), a male nurse whose future father-in-law, Jack Byrnes (Robert De Niro), is a never-ending source of torment. A retired CIA operative, Jack is paranoid and controlling, and Greg's previous attempts to win over Jack's affections have always come up short. Now, Greg's life problems are multiplied by the imminent first meeting between his in-laws-to-be and his "birth parents".

Traveling by RV, Greg, his fiancée Pam (Teri Polo) and the rest of Byrnes family arrive in Florida where Bernie (Dustin Hoffman) and Roz Fockers' (Barbra Streisand) free-love, hippie lifestyle stands in stark contrast to Jack's serious façade. Throughout the visit, Greg works overtime to avoid having Jack learn of his mother's thriving sex therapy business, his own youthful indiscretion with the family maid, and his inability to supervise Jack Jr. for even a single afternoon. When Jack gets the idea that Greg fathered a child back in high school, he administers truth serum to Greg, sparking a series of events that is sure to make even the most ardent critic of ridiculous and juvenile movies (and this is one of them) burst forth in laughter...

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Meet The Fockers is a rarity in that it's a sequel to a fairly successful film that manages to live up to the reputation of the original. Although Meet The Parents is probably the better film, Meet The Fockers is a truly hilarious comedy in its own right. Directed by Jay Roach (director of the Austin Powers franchise), Meet The Fockers is a highly entertaining comedy, deploying all the tricks of the trade – slap–stick, bathroom humor, zinging one–liners, classic "fish–out–of–water" sequences, and situation humor. By no means is it a cinema classic worthy of artistic awards and praise from sophisticated critics. But it delivers on its promise. It promises to make you laugh, and it performs that task with relative ease...

Britt Gillette is author of The DVD Report (

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), a blog where you can find

more reviews like this one.

Recordable DVD formats explained

By Kenny Hemphill

Recordable DVD formats explained by Kenny Hemphill

Picking your way through the ton of information available on recordable DVD formats can be a nightmare. To help you out, we've done our best to distill it into this summary.

There are five recordable versions of DVD; DVD–R for General, DVD–R for Authoring, DVD–RAM, DVD–RW, and DVD+RW. None of the formats is fully compatible with the other although there are drives which will read, and in some cases write to more than one format.

DVD–R for General and DVD–R for Authoring are essentially DVD versions of CD–R. And DVD–RW is a DVD version of CD–RW. All three formats can be read in standard DVD–ROM drives and in most DVD video players. The difference between DVD–R for General and DVD–R for Authoring is that DVD–R for General is a format intended for widespread consumer use and doesn't support 'professional' features such as piracy protection or duplication in mass duplicators. The Pioneer DVD–RW drive which is the most popular PC device for writing to DVD uses the DVD for General format. And as the case with CD, DVD–RW is essentially the same as DVD–R except that it can be erased and written to again and again.

DVD–RAM is slightly different as it is a sector based disc which mounts on the desktop of a PC when inserted into a drive. Files can then be copied to it in the same way as any other mounted media. Some single–sided DVD–RAM discs can be removed from their caddy and inserted in a DVD–ROM drive which will then be able to read the content of the disc.

There are DVD video recorders which use the DVD–RAM format. This enables them to pull off clever tricks like timeshifting - where you can watch the beginning of a programme you have recorded while

you are still recording the end on the same disc.

DVD+RW is the newest format and not supported by the DVD Forum, the body which sets the standards for DVD. However, it is supported by some of the biggest electronics and computer manufacturers, and is therefore likely to stick around.

It is also the format used by Philips in its DVD video recorders. Despite not being authorised by the DVD Forum, DVD+RW is claimed by its supporter to be compatible with more DVD video players than DVD-R and DVD+RW writers are found in PCs from quite a few manufacturers.

Kenny Hemphill is the editor and publisher of

The HDTV Tuner



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