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of Tropicco 4
on PC or
Xbox 360

TROPICO 4

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE
FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF PCGZINE AND 360ZINE



EXCLUSIVE PLAYTEST! 

We get exclusive access
to this leader sim before
anyone else!



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW! 

We speak to Haemimont
Games about their satire-
riddled sequel



"This series' trademark satire is well and truly accounted for"

WELCOME

It's been nearly two years since prospective rulers have been able to guide the small fertile isle of Tropicco from a tiny principality to a world superpower – the kind which could rival capitalist America or Communist Russia in greatness and supremacy. Now Haemimont are asking players to take the helm all over again, for the good of the people and your own personal Swiss bank account.

Needless to say, Tropicco 4 isn't your typical god game and the latest offering boasts a plethora of new features, including new territories to please, corrupt ministers to employ and natural disasters to avert.

This series' trademark satire is well and truly accounted for, and it's an absolute pleasure for us to introduce the overdue sequel in the sort of detail which would make any budding Dictator ring his hands with glee – it's a dirty job, but somebody has to do it. We have an in-depth playtest, an exclusive interview with the developer and an address from El Presidente himself.

So without further ado, let's turn up the Samba music and get this political party started!

Andy Griffiths, Editor



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We've got 10 copies to give away!



THE HISTORY OF TROPICO

Tropico

Released: 2001 | Developer: Poptop Software

At the beginning of the last decade, God games were all the rage, with SimCity 3000, Caesar III and Peter Molyneux's Black and White all strutting their stuff. However there was only one game that had the political cahunas to allow players to rule their way, and that was Tropico.

The engine was sprite-based and the camera stuck rigidly to an isometric plane, but the heart of this series was very much encapsulated in the first game. The character creator and edicts were by far the most innovative aspect of this debut franchise, and many were won over by its Caribbean charm and joyful soundtrack. However, we're sure nobody could have predicted that the next effort in the series would take such a different turn...



Tropico 2: Pirate Cove

Released: 2003 | Developer: Frogcity Software

Everyone loves pirates, right? No? Well this release probably wasn't for you then. Part-developed by Poptop before being picked up by Frogcity, this endeavour mixed up the established Dictator setting and instead placed gamers in charge of a pirate hideout where inhabitants cared more about how much loot had been plundered over the previous year than good healthcare. Executions, prostitution and slavery were just some of the shocking ruling tactics implemented.

Change is good, but deviating from the original's winning formula confused some, and its dark nature was considered a step too far down a shocking and immoral road. We blame Pirates of the Caribbean – 2003 has a lot to answer for!



Tropico 3

Released: 2009 | Developer: Haemimont Games

Eight years after the original, fans finally got the game they deserved, a Tropico experience with all the sun-drenched trimmings including a joyous South American soundtrack and the introduction of radio stations to communicate exactly what was going on in your particular slice of paradise and if any factions were unhappy with your rule. As you would've expected for a modern release, the political sequel included a glorious new 3D engine, vastly improved visuals and contemporary edicts such as same sex marriage and nuclear testing – thankfully without any pirates in sight.

Haemimont Games continued the franchise brilliantly. PCGZine awarded it 90%, praising its refreshing satirical style and stinging emulation of politics during the Cold War era, something which few games (if any) can boast. ●



FIGURE OF FUN

We chat with Bisser Dyankov, Designer and Political Liaison of El Presidente at Haemimont Games

Tropico 4 is one of those games which is all about satire and poking fun at real-world politics, but players can employ some pretty controversial practices to keep control of the people. How do you ensure the game doesn't go too far?

We are fascinated by Tropico because even with all of its controversies, the game is all about genuine amusement and fun. Tropico is both a deep political simulation and a game that is not taking itself too seriously. No matter what we are

designing – a serious mission with stern objectives or a weird scenario where El Presidente receives messages from the future, we do our best to stay true to this overall atmosphere, where the game itself is ‘telling’ the player to relax, it’s time to have some fun; this is not that serious, it’s simply hilarious.

So, to answer your question in short, we try to show that Tropico is more about absurd comic relief, than mentoring political correctness to the player.

How important is the Samba soundtrack when crafting the Tropico experience?

The soundtrack is vital for the experience because it allows the player to relax and take with a smile (and a pinch of salt) even the weirdest concept which the game throws at him or her.

Oh, and it’s not only Samba, but also Merengue, Salsa and Mambo styles.

Can you talk about how the new buildings effect what’s going on with a player’s island?

There are certain new buildings which add a new dimension to certain game logic – such as the Horticulture Station which boosts crops or help re-grow tropical forests. The new Luxury Liner is a unique attraction placed in water instead of on land.

And there are also new buildings which introduce completely new mechanics – like the Ministry (which can operate as a People’s committee or as a Junta) and is the designated workplace of the Tropic government; or the Stock Exchange, which will invite foreign investors to Tropico who are willing to set up private industries; or the Customs office which can affect the entire economy and can put aside a dollar or two – all under the watchful eye of El Presidente, obviously.





> Interview continued

What is the difference between playing Tropicó 4 on the Xbox 360 as opposed to the PC?

The most notable difference is the user interface, which is mouse-friendly on PC and controller-friendly on Xbox. Some interface components, like the Build menu, have a unique look on both platforms. Otherwise, the game experience is pretty much the same since our goal was to transfer the unique Tropicó experience to the Xbox 360.

Why did you decide to go for a story-driven campaign?

One of the things that we missed back when we worked on Tropicó 3 was a coherent story, revolving around El Presidente. We started to walk this way back then, introducing several minor characters – most notably Penultimo and the radio

lead, Juanito. With Tropicó 4, we created a world full of distinctive characters, not just El Presidente, but also his adversaries and even faction representatives. The story-driven campaign is the stage on which all those characters act – bribing, blackmailing and backstabbing each other. And a minor spoiler: Penultimo is still there, the most trustworthy, if not the most clever, aide to El Presidente.

Tropicó wasn't originally a Haemimont Games franchise when it started. What's it like working on such a well-recognised historical property?

Fun. Responsibility. More fun. Minor headache followed by some more headache prior-release. The most amazing part for me was getting in touch with the dedicated fans, who welcomed our interpretation of their

beloved game. Did I mention the amazing Tropicó fans?

Are there any features which allow players to build their own scenarios in-game?

Tropicó 4 features a mission editor on PC, which gives the players the means not only to create their own scenarios with complex logic, but also to add deposits or make landscape changes.

Players now have the option to play a scenario from 1950 to the year 2000. How does the game manage the decade-to-decade transitions?


We have several missions which are focused on specific historical events, such as Perestroika or the near-hot Cold War in the early 1960s. Aside from that, the game does not handle the decade-to-decade transition in any specific way besides some game mechanics that are hard-coded to evolve depending on the game year.

Putting real-world despots and dictators into the game must be a tricky process. What hoops do you need to jump through to get the

likes of Augusto Pinochet in there?

We did extensive research on the prominent tropical Dictators from the period. All of them, from Augusto Pinochet to Voodoo Pizzaman are indeed quite controversial. However, Tropicó is not such a serious game and we believe that every player, who tries Tropicó in good faith will not feel offended in any way – either by the presence of Pinochet or the notorious Voodoo Pizzaman.

Tropicó 3 had its own expansion, are you considering a similar tactic for the fourth game?

El Presidente explicitly informed us that we can neither confirm, nor dismiss the future release of a Tropicó 4 expansion. Nevertheless, if such an expansion exists or will exist at an unspecified future point in time, it would, of course, be awesome. 



PLAYTEST



Format: PC, Xbox 360

Publisher: Kalypso Media

Developer:

Haemimont Games

Heritage: The First Templar,
Tropico 3

Link: www.worldoftropico.com

ETA: 26th August

For a management sim which has you directly controlling the fate of hundreds of different people with international powers bearing down on you, Tropico 4 is an oddly serene experience. The picturesque visuals mixed with the energetic soundtrack are a successful antidote to the stress of keeping foreign and domestic pressures satisfied. Yet when players actually take a step back and realises what they've been doing over the various decades of their reign, they'll very soon realise that this is a challenging and complicated experience.

In modern gaming, complicated has become a dirty word but thanks to an intuitive UI and a simple tutorial, Dictators will find their feet

“Even the most forgetful of gamers shouldn't get confused”

in no time. The construction system requires buildings to only be dragged and dropped into the appropriate area and then your teamsters will hurry along and erect the construction. Obviously certain structures require specific criteria to

CREATE YOUR OWN



Seeing as your avatar can walk around the island, hurry building construction along and even defend his or her helm against filthy rebels, it's only fitting that players can meld their own creation. There are a plethora of options – in addition to a range of real-life leaders – to choose

from. However, it pays to create your own as you can choose your leader's background and traits which can culminate in bonuses and weaknesses. You can make a leader before any scenario so it pays to tailor him or her to your needs.

be met, but it's all laid out in the menu, so even the most forgetful of gamers shouldn't get confused. The overlays are a godsend, successfully transforming the map so that you can identify where the crime and pollution hotspots are, in addition to other valuable information relating to crops and mineral deposits. This information is enhanced by the Almanac, which provides all of the facts and figures necessary to prolong rule, with detailed info on faction needs, spreadsheets and foreign support ratings.

During the varied campaign, players develop 10 completely different islands during 20 different missions, all of which require different goals to be



“God games can feel a little stale sometimes, but Tropico 4 is absolutely the antithesis of that”

WRATH OF NATURE

Strap everything down boys, this is going to get rough...



Tornadoes

Drought

Tsunami

Tornadoes

Just went everything starts to go well, mother nature bursts in and wrecks the place. Typical. Tornadoes can arrive on their own or in groups and their path of destruction leaves plenty of wreckage left to clean or fix up.

> PLAYTEST continued

met and tactics to be utilised. The way it shakes down is that there are primary goals for each mission – for instance exporting a lofty number of rare goods, establishing a popular tourist area or gaining international fame. All the while other optional objectives will pop-up, care of some witty dialogue delivered by some carefully caricatured historical and fictional figures – we particularly enjoyed Nick ‘I am not a crook’ Richards and the stern but powerful red-haired Brunhilde Van Hoof. Making these guys happy will result in an array of benefits including new technology, personal bribes, increased state income and free buildings.

God games can feel a little stale at times, but Tropico 4 is absolutely the antithesis of that with radio stations which notify players of events via a typically satirical manner and dramatic disaster events such as tornadoes, oil spills and tsunamis to mix-up play. As the campaign progresses there are constant call backs to other islands players have previously set straight which creates a real feeling of achievement.

If story mode isn't your thing then the sandbox mode also returns, and this time God mode can be easily accessed from the main menu, so if you just want to create the most extravagant principality under the sun you can. Other toggles include political stability, game length – lasting from 1950-2000 this time – and the frequency of random events to keep you on your feet. As if this mode wasn't enough, Haemimont Games will also be



> PLAYTEST continued

adding new challenges post-release to keep even the most talented of rulers busy. Speaking of which, there's also achievements, leaderboards and the ability to post pictures of your island on Facebook and Twitter, so there's no shortage of places to boast of your political skill.

Tropico 4 builds on the successes of its predecessor in every conceivable way to create an even more enjoyable and compelling leader experience.

Haemimont's latest offering is intelligent, funny and incredibly addictive. We happily toiled away for hours neglecting family, friends and loved ones

"We happily toiled away for hours, neglecting family, friends and loved ones for the greater good of our sovereign Caribbean nation"

for the greater good of our sovereign Caribbean nation – switching out members of our back cabinet, implementing new edicts, praising foreign powers and creating the most happening Dictator to ever rig an election care of the character creator. There's no shortage of new activities the game throws at you and as a result time just melts away.

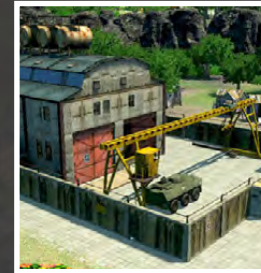
This is one of those rare strategic experiences that makes the minutiae of forming a good economy and support structure absolutely fascinating, and it's sure to keep strategic minds busy and entertained for a long time to come. ●

OUR FAVOURITE CONTRACTS AND THEIR EFFECTS



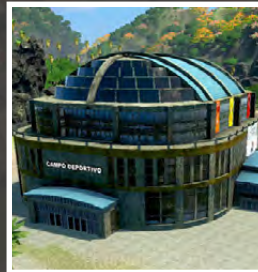
ROLLERCOASTER

There are plenty of tourist attractions in Tropico, but for us this deathtrap steals it. It looks great in motion and can be switched from normal to extreme mode!



WEAPONS FACTORY

Okay, so this isn't the most glamorous of inclusions, but it does win you favour with USA and it'll make you ridiculous amounts of cash on exports very quickly.



SPORTS STADIUM

This amazing venue is the perfect entertainment for the public. Crowds will love watching their local Chupacabras perform, and best of all it keeps them out of trouble.



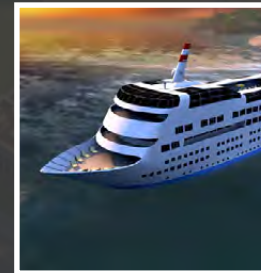
NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

Say what you want about Iran, but at least they're ambitious. This missile silo will make any foreign superpower think twice before invading your innocent little island.



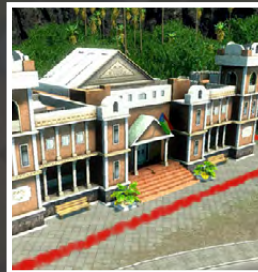
GARAGE

Cars are the key to quickly ferrying goods around the island. Having lots of garages around is crucial when establishing a good export-heavy economy. It isn't exciting but it's true.



LUXURY SHIP

Nothing says all-aboard like a cruise ship. This beauty will be docked just off your coastline and will attract the richest of tourists to spend their copious amounts of cash.



MINISTRY

This building allows players to hire ministers to help with the running of the island. Choose carefully, as if they're good they can put your island on the right track.



SATELLITE DISH

This device allows players to search for extra-terrestrials – oddly pleasing intellectuals – or for spying. Secrets can then be sold on to the highest bidder!

EL PRESIDENTE'S ADDRESS

Hola!

Forget what you've read my friend, politics is tough. Guiding the nicest island this side of Havana to prosperity may look like all fun and games, but between the protester beatings, electoral fraud and generous tax breaks to the world's richest tycoons, there's very little time for us to sit back and reflect on our reign as the head of Tropicó and its adoring inhabitants.

That said, you've downloaded this grandiose mini-magazine, so perhaps I should part some knowledge inside that eager leader noggin of yours. Prick up your ears young one, I have a country to run and I'm only going to write this once...

Nurturing an island to growth is no easy task and you'll need to ensure that all the important political factions – Capitalists, Communists, Intellectuals, Religious, Militant, Environmentalist, Nationalist and Loyalist – are satisfied. Doing that ensures that support for your rule remains strong and that the sinister elements refrain from rebelling, or even worse attempting to oust you from your throne – that is if you have one.

Prospective leaders have the freedom to form a state which follows democracy, communism or hard-line militarism, with your own hand-picked ministers to help fulfil your duties. A good El Presidente is only as good as the men, or indeed women, he chooses, so pick your puppets (sorry) support staff carefully.

In actuality, these statesmen won't really do much, but occasionally you will have to stand by them during the inevitable PR faux-pas or congratulate them for good service – I'm still waiting for that particular honour. You might want to grab a pen and paper for this next piece of advice as it's very important...

The key to a stable principality is ensuring your population is well fed by building plenty of farms and that the state bank is never found wanting by exporting your goods overseas. If that fails, make sure you keep on top of any additional objectives set by famous outsiders. You see, everyone wants a piece of a growing pie and seeing as you're a leader, it would be wise to heed their calls. Everyone will have their own agenda,





be it growing your island's tourist trade by making the most of your pristine beaches or exporting natural resources at a reduced rate whilst lining your Swiss bank account

If all that sounds a little bit complicated, don't worry as the handy Almanac will ensure all of the necessary information is communicated in an easy to understand manner, such as your island's income and expenses as well as how you're viewed by each respective faction.

The other great tool in your ruling arsenal are Edicts. These laws and policies are designed to help out with specific eventualities during the course of your 50-year term (1950-2000).

With almost 40 to choose from ranging over six different areas, they include declaring martial law, conducting nuclear tests, organising a Papal visit, producing your own chat show via the nationalist TV network or praising the world's eternally insecure superpowers.

Did you get that pen and paper that I demanded of you? Well, you should have because this is really important: don't annoy Russia or America! The Communist/Capitalist swine will invade any principality which neglects servitude to the almighty dollar/socialism and they have some impressive gunboats to backup their aggressive diplomacy. Of course, you could sacrifice favouritism from one of the powers by getting into bed with the other and having a foreign base on your fertile soil, but doing so will attract the wrath of your island's nationalists.

If that wasn't enough of a headache there's also the Chinese, Middle East and European factions to contend with as well. The former granting massive trade bonuses and the latter offering up occasional gifts or additional tourists.

Let's see, is there anything else? Well my newly educated friend, some matters you're just going to have to learn on your own and don't mind the protesters on your way out, they're in the process of being dealt with.

Good luck!

El Presidente





A large, empty white rectangular area intended for a competition entry form.

COMPETITION!

10 COPIES OF TROPICO 4 TO BE WON!

So now you know almost everything there is to know about running your own tropical paradise, you're going to run out to the store or your nearest digital retailer to pick up a copy, right? Wrong! We've got 10 copies of Tropico 4 to giveaway – five copies on PC and five copies on Xbox 360 – and you, lucky reader, could win the one of them with an assortment of related goodies courtesy of Kalypso Media. All you need to do to get the game on a format of your choice is complete the flashy form on the right-hand side of this page. Good luck!

For full competition terms and conditions, please see www.gamerzines.com

