



2005 Sore Thumbs Awards – Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas awarded Game of the Year

Summary of the 2005 Sore Thumbs Awards to street January 1, 2005

Louisville, KY ([PRWEB](#)) December 29, 2004 -- Take2's Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas has been awarded Game of the Year in the 2005 Sore Thumbs Awards: – The promise of virtual reality fulfilled. Never before has a player been given such a variety of things to do or such a large game world in which to do them. San Andreas is the third and final part of the GTA III trilogy and it dwarfs its predecessors in scale and scope.

There are so many enhancements I can't possibly list them all here, but I'll squeeze in as many as I can: improved targeting controls for gunfights, a broader move list for hand-to-hand combat, the ability to form and lead gangs, broader selection of vehicles, car customization, dynamic weight system that changes your body type, over an hour of NPC dialog, hundreds of clothing options, more side quests and mini-games, two-player modes, and vastly improved artificial intelligence. The last bit is key. I walked out of a casino after winning three million dollars in craps and found myself in a shootout between the police and a carload of Elvis impersonators. People were screaming and running for cover; one of the Elvises escaped on foot and stole a taxi, leading the police on a high speed chase down the Strip. When they were gone I realized I hadn't touched the controller in minutes. San Andreas is more fun to watch than most games are to play.

Perhaps my favorite thing about San Andreas is that it lets the player progress at his own pace. While missions must be completed to advance the story and open new areas of the map, there is no pressure to race through the game. Early on, for example, the map of Los Santos (Los Angeles) becomes a Risk-style game board of gang territories. It is not necessary to take over the entire city but it is certainly fun to do so. You don't have to woo women in each town, but once you start down the dating road they become needy, calling your cell during missions and demanding attention. There are side quests throughout the game that can easily overshadow the main storyline and there's no penalty for following them through. The plot is always waiting when you decide to return to it.

On the day I got the game, my friend Aaron came by to see it and I let him play it first. He had heard the game allows you to hijack jets, so he drove straight to the airport and found he could not enter it because he didn't have a pilot's license. So he parked a car outside the guard shack, climbed onto the roof, and jumped the fence. He ran to the runway and stole a jet and set his course for Los Venturas (Las Vegas), an area inaccessible at the outset of the game. He almost landed successfully before the Air Force blew him out of the sky. That's just awesome. –

About Sore Thumbs

Now its ninth year of publication, Sore Thumbs appears monthly in News4U, a monthly entertainment magazine published and distributed in Evansville, IN. Chad Thomas also writes videogame reviews for Velocity, a Gannett newsweekly published and distributed in Louisville, KY. Combined, the publications circulate 250,000 copies each month. Hard copies or scans of the original article are available upon request.

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