

Banjo-Tooie

Just when you thought that 3D platform games couldn't get any better...



NINFO

PLAYERS



EXPANSION PAK



RUMBLE PAK



Publisher	Nintendo
Developer	Rare
Game Type	Platform adventure
Origin	US
Release	Out now (import)
Price	£64.99

It's been two long years since the bear 'n' bird duo finally defeated the super-vain witch Gruntilda, and since her vanquishing, things have pretty much returned to normality for Banjo and his group of strange friends. That, however, is all about to change!

One dark and stormy night (for this sort of thing always happens on a dark and stormy night – it's an old law, or a tradition, or something) Banjo, Kazooie, Mumbo Jumbo and Bottles – the mole who trained our heroic pair in the first game – are all minding their own business, having a quiet game of cards round at Banjo's house. Suddenly, the house starts to shake, and when Mumbo goes outside to investigate he sees two new witches, Mingella and Blobbelda, magically raising the boulder which covers the late Grunty's resting place! Quick as a

flash, the old – supposedly dead – witch is out of her grave and flinging spells around with wild abandon. Before you can say 'run away!' Banjo's house is reduced to a smoking pile of rubble (or what an estate agent might call 'an ideal fixer-upper') and the witches are gone in Mingella and Blobbelda's strange tunnelling machine that looks suspiciously like the Mole from *Thunderbirds* (Gerry Anderson's lawyers, please take note!)

Once the dust has cleared, Banjo, Kazooie and Mumbo emerge from cover – having left

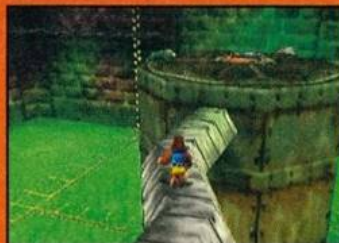


the house just before the magic spell hit. Bottles however, wasn't quite so fast and as the furry friends watch in horror, he proceeds to stagger from the wreckage of the house and snuff it! As Bottles' spirit leaves his body, Banjo looks at Kazooie, Kazooie looks at Banjo, they both look at Mumbo Jumbo, and Banjo mutters in a menacing tone, "that bitch is gonna



Everybody Split!

As you'll probably know by now, one of the biggest differences to this game over the first one is the ability to split up Banjo and Kazooie. This is one of the moves you learn early on, and it is achieved via the split pads that you can see here. Once separated, Banjo and Kazooie (seen here in fire-breathing dragon form – did we mention that she can turn into one of those?) can go their own way and accomplish tasks which they couldn't do together.



MEMORY OPTIONS

MEMORY:

Stores three different game saves and game settings

CONTROLLER PAK

Not used



"Banjo-Tooie is huge. It's a mammoth mutha of a game!"



pay!" He then straps an M60 and umpteen thousand rounds of ammo to his back and marches off in pursuit of the newly resurrected Gruntilda...

Bear-zarre!

Well, okay, so Banjo doesn't use those exact words, and he's not actually carrying a machinegun when he sets out – but the gist of what he does is pretty much the same (have you lot never heard of dramatic licence?) Of course, the point of this game isn't just revenge, oh no.

You see Grunty has a problem. During the two years that she's spent entombed in the ground on the 'worm and fungus' diet, she's lost rather a lot of weight – in fact she's now little more than a skeleton, albeit a rather rotund one. And she's more than a little peeved at this (ironic really, since her aim in the first game was to slim down, wasn't it?) Luckily for her, and unluckily for pretty much everyone else, Grunty's sisters Mingella and Blobbelda (the two mystery witches) just so happen to have a rather special machine locked up in their hideaway. This machine – looking rather like a huge old-fashioned sci-fi ray gun, much like you might expect Ming the

\$64,000 QUESTION

- + Far, far bigger than the first game
- + Loads of new moves/transformations for Banjo and Kazooie
- + Characters can split up
- + Much better puzzles than the first game
- + Marvellous music
- + Loads of cool multiplayer modes
- + It's got Banjo-Kazooie Doom!
- + Oodles of secrets
- + Incredibly humorous in-game dialogue
- + Improved camera
- Frame-rate can drop a little in places
- Because it's so big, you can get lost
- If you didn't like the first one... you probably won't like this!



YOU'VE FOUND ANOTHER WARP PAD!



PREP'ING HIT TO FIRE WITH

[Above] Warp pads are one of the ways that Banjo and Kazooie can travel around quickly inside the levels.

[Above] Sergeant Jamjar is an American Drill Sergeant who schools our heroes on the various special moves.

All Change!

The transformations that were so much a part of the original game make a welcome reappearance here, and they're weirder than ever!



It's the mystical Indian Squaw, Humba Wumba who controls the real magic in this game!



Give Humba her Glowbo, jump into her magic pool and amongst other things you can become...



...a short, stumpy stone bear who can talk to previously incomprehensible statues and is good at sport...



...a rather fearsome dinosaur who looks far more scary than the ones in the rather disappointing Disney movie *Dinosaur*...



...and even a washing machine! You may remember this as the hidden transformation from the first game.

Merciless to threaten Flash Gordon with – can apparently suck the life-force from any creature, and even from the very ground itself. Once enough life-force has been collected, the machine can then be used to give Grunty her body back, warts and all! So, as if revenge for the offing of Bottles wasn't motive enough, Banjo and Kazooie are now racing against the clock to prevent the land they know and love from being turned into a cold and lifeless wasteland, unfit for intelligent life: a place, in fact, even worse than Milton Keynes!

Bear-illiant!

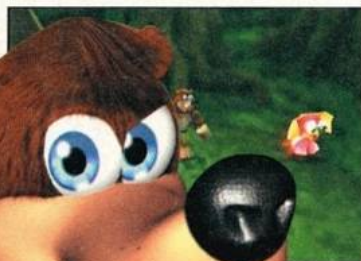
So that's the plot... what about the game? Well the first thing that you'll notice about *Banjo-Tooie* is that it looks very much like *Banjo-Kazooie*. Strange that. The game is obviously created on the same (or a very similar) engine, and as such the graphics are more or less identical and the game plays very much like the first one. However, as we commented in our review of *Zelda: Majora's Mask*, this is perfectly acceptable, because the first game was so gosh-darned gorgeous that you'd be hard pushed to make many – if any – major improvements to it. Don't get us wrong, there have been enhancements made since Banjo's first outing – the camera is a lot less annoying than it was in the first game for one thing. Plus, as you



play through, you notice lots of little graphical details that have been polished up – the water effects for one, are rather groovy.



Basically what Rare has done is take the original game and – rather than mucking about with the elements that already work – simply improved it. So... if you're expecting a fantastically evolved game, you're going to be disappointed. But what you are getting is pretty damn superb, so you're best off just shutting up and exploring the multitude of delights that this game has to offer... which is a quite a few, by the way.



Great Bears Of Fire!

Now then... are you one of those people who thought *Banjo-Kazooie* was great, but considered it maybe a little too easy to finish? Then this news should make you happy: *Banjo-Tooie* is huge. It's a mammoth mutha of a game, lavishly filled with more puzzles and mini-games than you can shake a broiled Breegull at.

It doesn't actually seem that way at first though. When you initially start the game, you begin in the area by Banjo's former house. From here you move on to the Isle O' Hags, which serves as the hubworld, and at first glance doesn't appear to be especially spacious. Even the first proper world, Mayaheem Temple, is actually fairly compact and won't take you all that long to explore. However, these initial stages of the game are very deceptive. Rare has planned the game extremely well, so that the first couple of levels – while not small by any means – are nevertheless of a fairly manageable size and the puzzles aren't too taxing (well, most of them, anyway). Reach Glitter Gulch Mine, however, and you start to realise just how big this game really is – and that particular world isn't the biggest, not by a long shot!



[Above] This Indian squaw is incredibly attractive... er, if you're sad enough to fancy polygonal characters, that is!

Banjo-Doom!

Rare have excelled themselves with some of the sub-games in *Banjo-Tooie*. One that seems almost too good to be true is a variation on *Doom* (which bears more than a passing resemblance to *Goldeneye* and *Perfect Dark* too) where the view switches to first-person and Banjo uses Kazooie as a gun! This mode is also one of the many multiplayer games on offer, and it's absolutely superb fun!



"This game is a-friggin'-mazing!"

[Below] As in *Banjo-Kazooie*, you must rescue all the Jinjos. This time there are also evil versions of them in the game, called Minjos.



[Above] Oops! Bottles has bitten the bullet! Well... he's actually bitten the rather unpleasant spell. Poor old mole!

Bird In The Hand

As in *Banjo-Kazooie*, each of the levels in the game has a multitude of characters, puzzles and secrets, and also like the first game, you can't initially complete all the puzzles and uncover all the secrets when you first enter a world. This isn't because the puzzles are necessarily too difficult – the trick is that many of the objectives in a level require you to have acquired a skill or an item from a later level before you can tackle them. The idea, of course, being that as you gain these new skills or objects on the later levels you then have to go back and complete tasks that you have left undone on the earlier ones.

Now, this could be extremely annoying. In general, games that require you to retrace your steps a great deal usually end up being tedious, drawn-out affairs where much of your playing time is wasted trekking from place to place and back again. *Turok 2* is a perfect example of this, and the general consensus in the office is that even *Donkey Kong 64* suffered from this problem to a

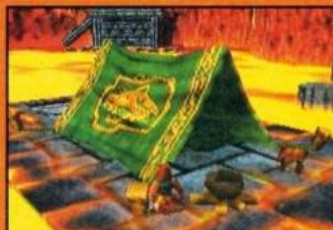
vaguely irritating degree. In *Banjo-Tooie* however, the backtracking isn't a problem. The levels – while large – are not, as a rule, too labyrinthine (well, most of them, anyway) and the layout of each of them is nicely structured, with well-placed shortcuts in the form of portals that zip you wherever you want to go, once you've

A Blast From The Past...

On the Hailfire Peaks level, there's someone very special waiting for Banjo and Kazooie. Frozen in a block of ice is a strange old man in a safari outfit. Using Mumbo's magical powers, it's possible to unfreeze this fellow who turns out to be none other than Sabreman, the central character from classic game *Sabre Wulf*, which was one of the very first titles Ultimate (the

company that was to become Rare) produced, on the Spectrum 48k and the Commodore 64! Sabreman thanks you for freeing him from the ice and tells you he has been stuck there since 1984 – the year *Sabre Wulf* came out! The poor chap is rather cold, having been frozen for the best part of 17 years, so he asks Banjo to take him back to his tent. Do this, and the old guy settles down

for a nap, muttering: "perhaps I'll ride on a Dolphin". Dolphin, as everyone knows, is the project name for the Gamecube – so is this a veiled clue to a forthcoming *Sabre Wulf* game on Nintendo's next-generation console? We asked Rare, and the response was a guarded "Hmm... well, people are just going to have to wait and see!" As far as we're concerned: that's a yes!



Getting' Jiggy Wid It...

Once you've got enough Jiggies, you can visit Master Jiggwiggy's temple...



GREETINGS, O CHOSEN ONE.

Inside the temple you meet the mysterious and much-revered... er, 'man' himself.



He bids you to approach the great wall and prepare for his challenge.



USE THE CONTROL STICK TO GUIDE YOUR HAND.

Within a limited time, you must put the all of the pieces in the correct places to form a picture.



Do this correctly and Jiggwiggy uses the power of the Crystal Jiggy to unlock a new level!



located the all-important warp pads. The result is that not only is it not a chore having to go back to levels already tackled, but it actually ends up being a pleasure, because more often than not you know that when you go back you're going to uncover something really cool!

Bear With Us

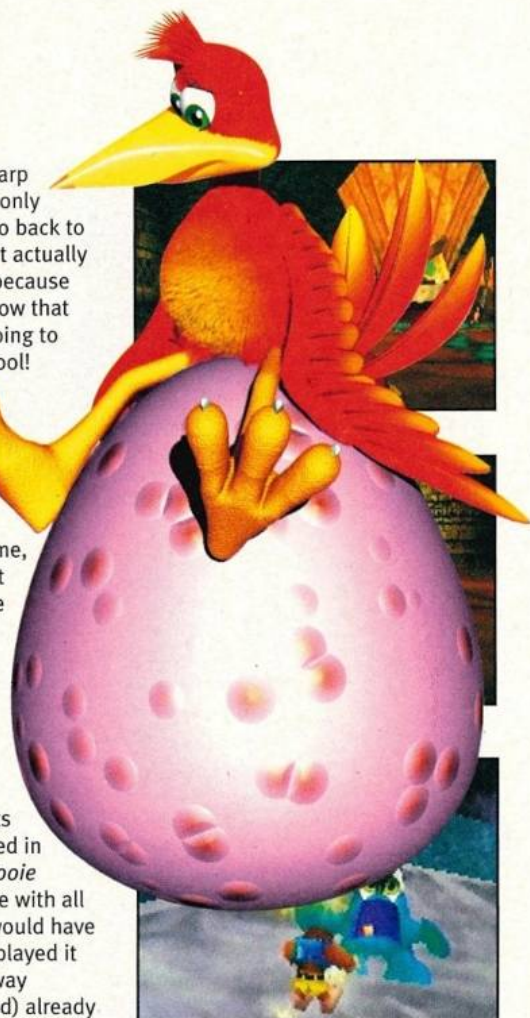
Everything about *Banjo-Tooie* gives the impression that, more than anything else, it's a continuation of the first game, rather than a totally distinct game in its own right. While this might sound a little obvious, it's not always the case with sequels. In *Majora's Mask*, for example, while the story follows on from the first game, you nevertheless begin without all the objects and skills that you'd acquired in *Ocarina of Time*. In *Banjo-Tooie* however, you start the game with all the moves you gained (or would have gained, assuming you played it and played all the way through to the end) already available. What this means, of course, is that you can do everything you could in the first game, and quite a bit more besides. There are a gob-smacking 20 all-new moves for Banjo and Kazooie to learn in *Banjo-Tooie*, and that's in addition to a whole variety of different eggs, objects and special pads. Oh... and did we mention that Banjo and his feathered friend can now split up and play independently? Or that you can now take control of Mumbo Jumbo and go off for a wander? It's a fact: this game is a-friggin'-mazing!

Now you might be wondering exactly how you go about learning all your new moves, considering that your old Mr Miyagi-style mentor Bottles has just popped his clogs. Well fortunately, Bottles may be dead but he's still not totally uncommunicative. On the initial stage at least, if you



STUPID BEAR AND BIRD

[Above] As well as a bunch of new characters, you can expect to meet old favourites from the first game.



approach one of his mole hills his ethereal spirit appears to give you advice and – if you need it – refresher training on all of the moves from the previous game. If you examine Bottles' body too, his spirit makes some very disturbing observations like 'look at me, I'm decaying' or words to that effect... er, but that's not actually really all that helpful.

Feather-tastic

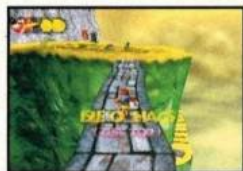
Bottles' spirit does however seem to be restricted to the area in the immediate vicinity of Banjo's house, so who takes on the burden of training the bear and the bird now? Well, luckily, Bottles has family, and thus Banjo and Kazooie find some much-needed help in the form of the late mole's brother, Sergeant Jamjars. Jamjars is the epitome of an American army drill sergeant, and



[Above] Suddenly a nasty chill sets in. Fortunately Banjo remembered to bring his patented thermal 'Wonderbear' underwear.

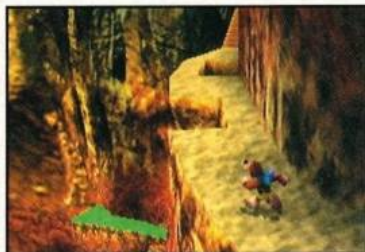
Ice Ice Baby!

If you've played *Banjo-Kazooie* then you're more than likely aware of the controversy surrounding the missing Ice Key. Rare announced that the key could only be found by playing through the (at the time) upcoming *Banjo-Tooie*. We've been playing for a while now and haven't at time of writing managed to unlock the secrets that lead back to the first game, but we have found a few clues. For instance, we found this little guy, who is identified as an N64 cartridge – a *Banjo-Kazooie* cartridge no less! Catch him and smash him open, and a key appears, a key which is revealed as the Ice Key! Is this what we use to unlock the secrets in the first game? Watch this space for the answers...



Marvelous Multiplayer!

After the debacle that was the multiplayer mode in *Banjo-Kazooie* (sorry guys – it was pants though) we weren't really expecting all that much in this department from the sequel. As it turns out though, Rare has more than made up for that part of the last game! *Banjo-Tooie* contains no less than 11 distinct multiplayer mini-games, each of which is tremendously good fun! These comprise a dodgems game, a tomato-shooting game, a trash collecting game, a hoop-jumping game, a first-person balloon-target-shooting game, a minisub deathmatch, a multiplayer *Doom*-style game (with a few different levels), a strange 'packing' game, the Mayan Kickball game (of which there are two variations), an aerial dogfight between bees, and a quiz much like the one at the end of *Banjo-Kazooie*. Talk about value for money!



[Above] There's lots of running around to be done in *Banjo-Tooie*, but fortunately the camera is better than in the first game.

he can be found in various places on each level, summoned by way of metal hatches. For clarity, these hatches have a red light on them to signify that Jamjars has a skill which you haven't yet learned or a green light if you've already got that ability. Sergeant Jamjars also runs a system of underground silos, which allow you to instantaneously travel to places in the 'hub' sections of the game – once you've initially found them the 'hard way' (ie: on foot).

Jamjars isn't the only new character you encounter in the game. Besides him and the additional witches Mingella and Blobbelda, there are a few other characters of note. King Jingaling is the king of the Jinjos – remember them? The little bird-like creatures you had to rescue in *Banjo-Kazooie*? He's the guy you initially go



[Above] Become an adventurer! Travel to strange lands! Meet interesting creatures! Er... pelt them with eggs!



[Above] This trail looks a bit precarious. Kazooie's keeping his head down, because apparently he's scared of heights!

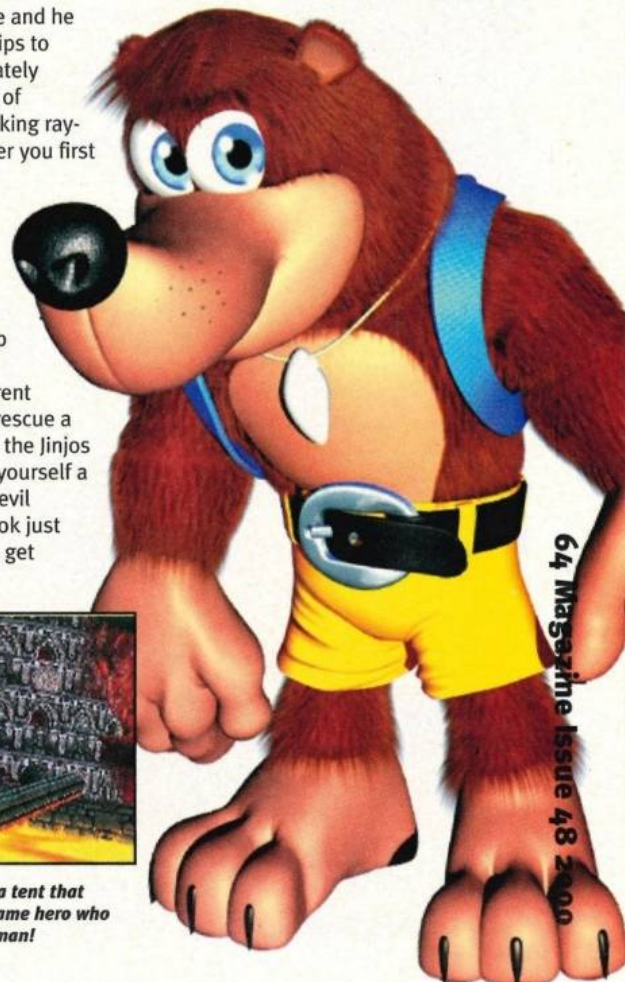
to for help and guidance and he gives you some handy tips to start you off... unfortunately he's also the first victim of Grunty's sisters' life-sucking ray-gun and pretty soon after you first meet him he ends up a zombie! On the subject of the Jinjos – the little birds have managed to get themselves in trouble once again and – you guessed it – it's up to you to rescue them. They come in nine different colours, and when you rescue a complete family – ie: all the Jinjos of one colour – you get yourself a Jiggy. Watch out for the evil Minjos though... they look just like Jinjos but when you get close they attack you!



[Above] This level contains a tent that belongs to a classic videogame hero who goes by the name of Sabremen!



[Above] Ding, ding! All aboard! The delayed four-thirty express to Bournemouth will be leaving in just over five hours...



Tackling Targitzan!

Enter the Mayahem Temple and eventually you come face to face with the Mayan God Targitzan. This huge level boss consists of a rotating tower of stone and he fires poisonous darts at you from various orifices. To take him down you need to destroy his body, level by level from the ground up by hitting the targets that the fool has painted all over him! Easier than it sounds, once you've worked out a technique...



[Above] Each of the levels in the game looks markedly different. This one for instance looks rather futuristic...

Mumbo Magic!

Which brings us to Master Jiggwiggy. As in the first title, you must collect the golden jigsaw pieces – the Jiggies – to unlock the various worlds. However, this time around, instead of just finding them and taking them to the appropriate place, you also have to pass a test set by Master Jiggwiggy, a mysterious figure who resides in a secluded temple near the Jinjo village. Once you have collected the requisite number of Jiggies you must go to him and pass his puzzle test. This is the animated puzzle-assembly challenge like the one Bottles made you do in *Banjo-Kazooie* to earn the various game cheats which could be entered in the Sandcastle. The catch is that if you're no good at this, you won't be able to unlock the levels, so you're well advised to start practicing on the puzzles in the first game now!

Another new character is Honey B. She's a friendly individual who you come across inside a giant beehive on the Isle O' Hags and she gives you energy in return for honeycombs.

The last new character worth mentioning is Humba Wumba. Whereas in the first game if you went to see Mumbo Jumbo he'd transform you into something, in this game popping in on the skull-

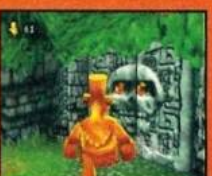


[Above] And guest starring this week on 'Treasure Hunt' we have... Banjo! Okay, so his butt isn't quite as nice as the former presenter's, but he does have very good stamina.



Hey Mumbo!

In addition to controlling both Banjo and Kazooie, you can also take direct control of that strange character from the first game, Mumbo Jumbo. He has a magical staff with which he can zap enemies (kind of like a mystical tazer) and his magic can be used to good effect in the various worlds. On the Mayahem Temple level, for example, Mumbo's magic can be used to summon a giant golden statue from the ground, which you then get control of and can use to stomp around the level, kicking open huge doors and generally scaring hell out of the comparatively ant-like enemies that you encounter.



Can I Kick It?

Once you've managed to persuade Humba-Wumba to turn you into a stone bear, you can enter the Mayan Kickball Tournament. This strange sport involves chasing and kicking yellow rocks into your goal, while trying to kick red ones into the goals of your opponents. Not as easy as it sounds, and the matches get tougher as you approach the final.



headed witchdoctor instead gives you control of him. So, to get your transformations done, you need to go and see the mystical Indian, Humba Wumba. In exchange for a Glowbo – a rare magical creature – Miss Wumba changes you into a variety of different forms, and if you thought the transformations in the last game were weird, then wait 'til you get a load of these!

Bird On A Wire

As we've said already, *Banjo-Tooie* is an absolutely huge game and one which is destined to keep gamers

"An awful lot of work has obviously been put into Banjo-Tooie"

hooked for absolutely ages. This time around Rare has also sorted out the multiplayer options, which in the first game were – quite frankly – a joke, so there's going to be plenty of replay value, even when you've finished everything in the one-player game. That said, there are so many secrets in here that, even when you do finish it, there are still likely to be plenty of hidden things to uncover, and a whole mess of puzzles to solve. Plus, there's the whole mystery of the Ice Key and its related secrets that still

remain to be unlocked in *Banjo-Kazooie*... The emphasis in this game is on gameplay and on fun. The humour throughout is fantastic, both in the dialogue between the many characters and even in the names. Take Bottles' family for instance – we've never seen so many different

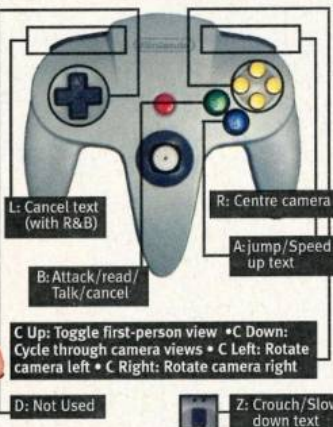
slang terms for spectacles in our lives! A lot of thought, a great deal of care and an awful lot of work has obviously been put into *Banjo-Tooie* to make it a fabulously playable title, just like its predecessor. It makes the delay in the release of the UK version all the more frustrating, but does mean that we've all got something very, very special to look forward to in 2001. *Banjo-Tooie* is an absolute gem of a game, and one which no-one should miss. Pre-order your copy today! ■



[Above] Banjo gets a little tired of adventuring and decides to bed down for the night in this luxurious tent.

64 BOTTOM LINE

CONTROLS



ALTERNATIVES

Banjo-Kazooie: Nintendo Reviewed: Issue 16, 90%
Super Mario 64: Nintendo Reviewed: Issue 1, 92%

RATING

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Challenge



OVERALL SCORE

95%

Soundbite:
More of the same – only better!

2nd Opinion

Rating



→ There aren't many games that make us want to bunk off work and stay at home all day playing it, but *Banjo-Tooie* does. It's the thought that if you play it for five more minutes, you might get a bit further that keeps you going... games like this will ruin your life I tell you!

→ Martin Mathers