

Capt. America: 1st Avenger

This superhero adventure continues the recent trend in comic book screen adaptations in which the protagonist comes to play a critical role in the outcome of a significant historical event. Here, we have Marvel's Captain America (Chris Evans) called upon to save the day during World War II when a cosmic cube called the Tesseract, said to be a source of limitless power, falls into the hands of Hitler henchman Johann Schmidt (Hugo Weaving).

That nefarious Nazi also happens to have been left horribly-disfigured but with superhuman strength as a result of testing a top secret serum designed to create a master race of super soldiers on behalf of the Fuhrer. However, Schmidt goes rogue after gaining possession of the Tesseract, morphing into an even eviler alter ego, the Red Skull.

The monomaniacal madman proceeds to hatch a diabolical plan for world domination with the help of a horde of renegade German soldiers armed with futuristic death ray guns. We know they have shifted their allegiance from Adolf to the Red Skull because they now chant "Hail Hydra!" instead of "Heil Hitler!"

Meanwhile, clear across the



DVD
REVIEW

by Kam
Williams

Atlantic Ocean, we find frail Steve Rogers (also Chris Evans), a proverbial 98-pound weakling, desperate to enlist in the military despite suffering from asthma and a host of other assorted ailments. When he's rejected at a New York City recruitment center for the umpteenth time, the frustrated patriot's self-pity party is overheard by Dr. Abraham Erskine (Stanley Tucci), a Nazi defector who had created the concoction that had mutated Schmidt.

Now putting his talents to work for the forces of good, Dr. Erskine offers Steve a chance to train in the Strategic Scientific Reserve, an experimental outfit being run by hard-boiled Colonel Chester Phillips (Tommy Lee Jones) and a two-fisted British Officer Peggy Carter (Hayley Atwell). Of course, the kid jumps at the opportunity to become the first to test the new

and improved super soldier solution.

The injection transforms Steve into quite a physical specimen with a physique more muscular than his best friend, Sergeant Bucky Barnes (Sebastian Stan). This development isn't lost on pretty Peggy who can barely keep her hands off his rock-hard abs.

More importantly, Steve dons a form-fitting red, white and blue costume and an impenetrable shield made of vibranium, the rarest metal on Earth. And accompanied by a crack team of commandos comprised of his pal Bucky, plus Dum Dum Dugan (Neal McDonough), Gabe Jones (Derek Luke), Jacques Dernier (Bruno Ricci), Jim Morita (Kenneth Choi) and James Montgomery Falsworth (J.J. Field), he sets out on a search and destroy mission in quest of the Red Skull and his minions.

Directed by Joe Johnston (Jumanji), Captain America proves to be a riveting roller coaster ride from beginning to end, basically because it relies on a winning recipe featuring all the fixins needed to hold your undivided attention, from a compelling plot which ratchets up the tension all the way to the final showdown,



to eye-popping action and special effects, to a sweet romance between likable leads exhibiting screen chemistry, to lots of unexpected moments of levity (with much of the hilarious comic relief

arriving courtesy of Tommy Lee Jones).

Just don't forget to watch the closing credits for a sneak peek at the sequel, The Avengers, set to be released in the spring.

Excellent ☆☆☆☆

Rated PG-13 for intense sci-fi violence.

Running time: 123 minutes

Distributor: Paramount Home Entertainment

2-Disc Blu-ray/DVD Combo Pack Extras: Blu-ray, DVD and digital copies of the film, feature film with commentary by the director, the cinematographer and editor, deleted scenes, trailers, 7 featurettes, and "Marvel One-Shot: A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Thor's Hammer."

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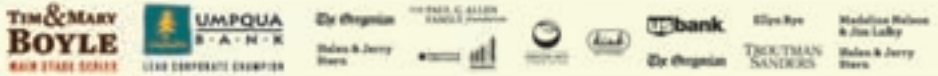


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