

# On Blu-Ray: Spirited Away (Hayao Miyazaki, 2014)



When observing every colourful sketch and stroke upon the screen, it is almost unbelievable that Ghibli's famed masterpiece is older than its protagonist. In fact, Spirited Away becomes a teenager on the year of its high definition release; without any of the tired, moody mannerisms, and under the often scathing eye of HD, there is no sign of aging in Miyazaki's characters and illustrations that emerge from the screen; proud and majestic.

A wrong turn when moving house leaves a ten year old girl robbed of her parents; stolen by a world of witches, spirits and mythical creatures that she must find her way out of.

As Disney veer almost entirely towards a computer generated output, Studio Ghibli remain strong to their hand drawn roots even to this day, with an output strong in charisma, character and beauty. Looking back at the studio's films over the past fifteen years, Spirited Away remains the studio's modern masterpiece. Laden with stunning, metaphoric imagery and a vast, complex storyline, the effort of its creation runs through it; always charming and never weighty.

Age is most certainly kind to it. In its 1080p crisp presentation, high definition is a gift to anyone who has adored the film before. Whilst the upscale makes Disney's work of the same era somewhat colouring book and blocky, the fine details of the animator's hand is appreciated. Teal blue waves and spattering rain come to life; as close to reality as animation gets.

Thirteen years on, Spirited Away remains a benchmark for modern cinema, and one of the greatest animated films of all time. Endlessly imaginative and thoughtful, this is truly vital viewing.



### **Special Features:**

As with all of Studio Canal's Ghibli releases, there is only one disc containing both the feature and extras. Included here are a selection of the film's meticulous storyboards and some of the standard Japanese trailers from the film's original release. For those looking for a little more insight, a half hour 'Making of' taken from Japanese TV at the time of release looks into the film's production – showing the effort that the studio went through to make its official release date. It may be a little dated, but if you haven't seen it before it's an interesting watch.



**Spirited Away is released by Studio Canal on Blu-Ray November 24th**