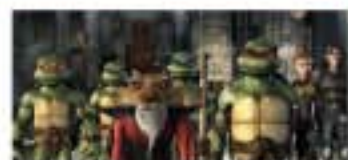


NINJA CULTURE

From 18th Century Feudal Japan into the 21st Century

Movies



Set to release **March 23**, which is just a few weeks away fan boys, is **TMNT** a new and edgier version of the cult classic **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles**. Even though they dropped the title down to an acronym, the movie is sure not to be short on some raucous ninja action. **Leonardo, Donatello, Michelangelo, and Raphael** team up for their first feature film since 1993. Of course in response to the movie are all the expected toys, video games, and other merchandising possibilities. All are available for kids and fans of the past to drop an absurd amount of money on. We just can't help it, who doesn't want to get an "orange mask" and play Ninja Turtle with their lady.

Internet

One of the funniest sites to pop up on the net of recent time is **www.askaninja.com**. Started by a couple of LA comedians, Ask a Ninja has taken off like wildfire is featured on YouTube, Wikipedia, and even iTunes. Ask a Ninja is one of the most popular podcasts included in the directory of iTunes but if you want a good hearty ninja laugh you can check it out on any of the sites mentioned, except Wikipeda.



The Ninja's Arsenal: Gadgets Any Guy Would Drool For

Guys love toys and a ninja goes no where without his bag of tricks. Guys don't like singular solutions, no one tool to meet every occasion. Nope, we like toolboxes, auto kits, and entertainment cabinets. We want to use the hacksaw for the outer cut and a band saw for the inside line. A ninja doesn't mow down his enemies with a big gun, he flings himself over walls with a grappling line, blinds his enemies with a flash bomb, and dispatches with a single well thrown shuriken.

The Ninja, virtually a historical mystery but now one of the most well known action icons. Whether groups of ninja assailing a lone samurai or a single ninja boldly facing down a shadowy fortress, everyone can recognize a ninja and every guy would kill to be one. What makes a ninja so different from other action icons? Barbarians might ponder the riddle of steel and Wolverine might rely on his claws, but a ninja has a tool for every occasion. Before there was Bond there was a ninja flinging caltrops behind him and disappearing in a cloud of smoke.



Explosives are a handy thing to have in the ninja bag. Whether it be a simple diversion making smoke bomb or a massive incendiary, ninjas can do it all.



The **Sai** is not a traditional ninja weapon but is a commonly used as one in games and movies. More often used historically by feudal policemen, we can imagine what a ninja could do with it.



The **Shuriken** is a hallmark ninja weapon made famous by movies and stories. The Shuriken was a simple flat piece of metal with sharpened points that was thrown at the enemy. Always a useful diversionary tactic when being pursued by samurai.



One of the things that made ninjas so feared were their use of **poisons**. Not only can poisons be slipped into food or drinks, but ninjas had a devious tactic of dipping the points of their shurikens in poison.



The **sword** is the signature weapon of the ninja. When the tricks fail your bags hangs empty and the enemy still pursues there is always the sword. Turning to confront your enemies their swords swing out wide catching in door frames and ceilings, but your sword is shorter and straighter. They never had a chance.



The **Ashiko** were cat-like spiked claws attached to the feet. This gave the Ninja their superhuman ability to climb and were a nasty surprise for anyone at the end of a Ninja kick.



Kama are usually used in pairs and swung in various sweeping arcs. This is illustrative of the flashy "slice and dice" ninja style. Kamas can be attached to a chains an effective defensive weapon.

Video Games



For **PS3** owners the reason for owning the console is coming out this June with Tecmo's release **Ninja Gaiden Sigma**. The graphics are breathtaking in this is a port of the popular **Xbox** title **Ninja Gaiden Black**. This is an obvious purchase for those that missed the fantastic Xbox version but there are enough new additions to please owners of **Black**. **Ninja Gaiden** has come a long way from the regular NES version released back in March, 1989. Everyone may not remember the story behind skilled ninja **Ryu**, but we are sure remember his kick ass moves.



TV



No one is safe from ninjas, not even **South Park** creators **Trey Parker** and **Matt Stone**. A Ninja took over their studio and forced them to do an entire episode of the **South Park** boys as Ninjas (at least that's what we heard). This episode originally aired in March 2005 during the eighth season of **South Park** and is entitled "Good Times with Weapons." Remember children ninja weapons are just as dangerous as guns.