



Naruto, Sasuke and Sakura become unlikely bodyguards in the series's first movie.

Naruto: The Movie - Ninja Clash in the Land of Snow

SNOW BUSINESS Naruto and friends head to the Land of Snow to restore a Princess to her throne

Studio Manga **Certificate** 15 **Price** £18 **Release** Out now

It's really been Naruto's year in 2007, with the second series hitting DVD, the release of the Rise of a Ninja computer game and now the young ninja starting in his own film. **Ninja Clash in the Land of Snow** sees Naruto, Sasuke and Sakura taking on a very different assignment which begins with them watching Yuki Fujikaze's latest movie, only for Kakashi to reveal that the gang will be acting as the actress's bodyguards.

But when are things ever that simple? The group's jobs become a lot more complicated when they learn that the diva Yuki is actually royalty! She might be nothing like the heroine she plays but is actually the Princess of the Land of Snow.

Her father murdered, she became an actress in order to hide from her uncle who is determined to find the country's

fabled treasure by stealing Yuki's crystal necklace.

Ninja Clash in the Land of Snow, the first in a series of Naruto movies, is actually an excellent film that expands the appeal of the anime perfectly and it doesn't really matter if you've not seen the series either. The story, with its focus on the mysterious Land of Snow, also gives it a new direction rather than reusing older plots and helps to expand Naruto's world even farther.

The animation is on a par with the anime and the return of both Japanese and English voice actors really makes this a sumptuous experience. Mixing comedy and to-the-death battles with the perils of love and destiny, it's a great movie that will introduce this excellent series to a new set of would-be fans.

RATING



Also look at...

Chiyo-chan's wacky adventures and The Seven Samurai with a distinctive futuristic twist



Azumanga Daioh: The Complete Series Box Set

Studio Manga Entertainment

Certificate 12

Price £60

Release date Out now

RATING

Miniscule genius Chiyo-chan is causing waves at her school. She's so smart that she has skipped five years of school to take lessons with a bunch of teenagers. Azumanga Daioh, which is a combination of the author's name and the magazine in which the manga originally ran, is part comedy, part slice of life and manages to mix cute but weird animation with the everyday adventures of its protagonists to create a very unique series.

Now collected together into a massive collector's edition, Azumanga Daioh is a bit bizarre and a lot of fun. Somehow managing to take both Japan and America by storm it's now the UK's turn so if you've not been exposed to the wacky adventures of Chiyo-chan, her friends and a cast of amusing animal companions including Chiyo's beloved Tadakichi-san, then Azumanga Daioh is definitely something to look out for.



Samurai 7: The Complete Series Box Set

Studio GONZO

Certificate 12

Price £60

Release date Out now

RATING

Samurai 7 is one of those series that puts a twist on a classic Japanese film; in this case Akira Kurosawa's seminal classic The Seven Samurai. Samurai 7 is not a direct adaptation and is given a futuristic twist. Each episode cost almost £137,000 to produce!

The future is a wasteland, decimated by war and humanity is clustered in villages where they must fight for survival against bandits. Except these bandits have giant mecha, making them much more dangerous than anything dreamed up by Kurosawa-san. One such village is Kanna, the home of Water Priestess Kirara. She decides the only way to keep the hamlet safe is by going to a city and employing samurai to protect them. So begins a haunting anime series filled with amazing animation, haunting music and a chillingly compelling story that will move everyone who watches it. ●

