



TREASURE ISLAND WITH A TWIST OF COMEDY – MANGA STYLE!

ONE PIECE

1: ROMANCE DAWN

2: BUGGY THE CLOWN



• NOW • VIZ • TEEN •
• US IMPORT • £5.50 •
• EIICHIRO ODA •

MONKEY D. LUFFY ('ANCHOR' TO HIS FRIENDS) HAS one dream in life: to become a pirate and find the mystical treasure known as 'One Piece' that was hidden by the legendary King of the Pirates, Gold Roger. No one knows what it does, where it is or what it looks like, but Luffy is certain he's going to find it. The problem? Well, Luffy isn't called 'Anchor' for nothing. As a child he ate the cursed fruit of the Gum-Gum Tree and gained the ability to stretch like rubber. The downside is he sinks like lead in water. Despite this slight set-back, Luffy is taken under the wing of jolly pirate Red Haired Shanks and eventually sets off into the unknown, determined to find his own crew, the 'Straw Hat Pirates', and become king of them all.

Previously published in *Shonen Jump*, Viz has presented the *One Piece* manga in original Japanese style right-to-left format, and littered through the volumes are sketches, fun facts, drawing tips and things to make. The first volume ends with a short biography of the creator Eiichiro Oda and alternate panels in Japanese explaining the origins of our straw-hat-wearing hero.

The artwork is crisp, although it is clear that some of the title panels were originally in colour but Viz chose to reproduce them in black and white. The sound effects have all been altered for an English-speaking audience, as well as some of the background art. For example, throughout the manga, Luffy refers to the navy but the navy bases all have 'marine' etched over them. The style of the artwork is much more rounded than typical manga and this makes Luffy seem to have a rather hyperactive personality more suited to advertising Red Bull. This also gives the manga a much more light-hearted feel, but some characters such as Captain Buggy, a pirate who dresses like a clown, still looks genuinely fearsome.

Despite some wackiness, the storyline is fast paced, addictive, and transports the reader to a strange world full of cursed fruit that bestows superhuman powers and pirates who drink fruit juice. *One Piece* is bound to appeal to anyone who loves escapism, light-hearted comedy and pirates in equal measure.

LESLEY SMITH

★★★★



JAPAN'S MOST POPULAR SERIES?

One Piece began running in the Japanese manga anthology *Weekly Shonen Jump* in 1997 and is still being serialised today. Nearly 40 graphic novels have been published and the manga also inspired an anime series that is still running over 250 episodes later. There have also been six theatrical movies and numerous computer games - the latest of which is *One Piece: Grand Battle*.