



THE SIMS 2 LIVE WITH FRIENDS

If you thought (as many of us did!) that *Free Time* would have been the last EP for *The Sims 2*,

well you were wrong! Between the end of August and the beginning of September, in fact, an eighth expansion pack will be released: it's called

Apartment Life

and it will be just about living in a flat in the town center! Finally our Sims will be able to leave the quiet countryside life and live the groovy life of the city, with all the pros and cons.

Within a month circa, then, we'll enter a new world, that has been wished by many players and that will shake a little the lives of your characters, even in prospect of the releasing of *The Sims 3* in the second trimester of 2009. But let's see in details how this EP will be, thanks to the news available on TheSims2.ea.com and the several reportages done in the last weeks (not least the Edenstyle.it one).

The new 'hood and the apartments

Apartment Life will introduce a new neighborhood, called *Belladonna Cove*, where we can find apartments and new families, that can be also used in our pre-existing hoods. To live in an apartment, every family should rent a flat, as we have to do for the hotels in *Bon Voyage* and the dorms in *University*,

for a maximum amount of four families per condo.

Sims will have to pay the rent every week or they will be evicted, and try to get along with noisy and boring neighbors, building a positive reputation.

Flatmates and butlers

Sims can even choose to share their flat with other mates, that won't be playable, to afford the costs of the apartment; on the other hand, if the Sim is very wealthy, he/she can even hire a butler and live in prosperity. Remember, anyway, that once we rent the house we cannot make major changes to it, nor buy it and make it our own.

NPCs and the new creature

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Written by CriCri

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Walking around in the downtown we'll find several NPCs, such as the mime, the break-dancer and Sims belonging to different social classes, that will be recognizable by their clothes.

The new creatures introduced by *Apartment Life* will be...witches and wizards!

We're sure that

The Sims 1 players will love

this feature, that much recalls

Makin' Magic

, one of the most popular EPs of the first version of the game.

Witches can be good,

bad and neutral and will be able to create many many spells.

New interactions

Among the other features of *Apartment Life*, we'll find new interactions with toddlers and newborns (finally!), and new topics to study to improve the everyday life of our Sims (preventing fires and other stuff).

The Buy and Build mode

Other new features will be introduced in the catalogues of the Buy and the Build mode, among which: spiral staircases, ceilings, huge TVs, heart-shaped vibrating bed (that recalls the one from *Hot Date* for *The Sims 1*), and the possibility to place paintings and objects in many more different slots. There will also be new hairdos and clothes.

This should really be a rich and interesting expansion pack, so much to make us think that it will really be the final chapter of *The Sims 2* era.



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Apartment Life chat by Paperpin!

As it usually happens everytime a new EP is released, The Sims 2 producers meet players on the official website's chatline, and for about two hours they answer every question the users ask.

This time hasn't been the exception, and in fact on Thursday August 7th this little "press conference" about Apartment Life took place, and many details about the very last EP for The Sims 2 (yes, it is the last one for real!) have been revealed.

Let's see what we have found out...

Buy & Build Mode

There are many new things in these areas: first of all, producers said they're proud of the introduction of ceilings, that finally will be visible in every lot of the 'hood, both residential and community ones. To enable the visualization of ceilings you will have to select the related option in the UI, but as for the walls, in every game mode we could choose to show ceilings or not.

It should be also possible to create custom ceiling texture in Home Crafter.

Spiral stairs will be 2x2 tiles big, and available in several varieties, such as glass or marble.

The maximum amount of stories will be the same of "traditional" homes, and can be changed

thru the apposite and already existing cheat, while the wall unit limit will still be of 2000 (as for this, there will be a new tool showing how many wall tiles we have in our houses).

Condos can be built in any neighborhood of the game and also in the Nightlife downtown and in the commercial zone of

Open for Business

; it will not be possible to place condos in universities and holiday destinations.

We can build and modify each apartment as it already happens for traditional homes, that is, enter the apartment lot from the neighborhood view and put or take off furniture and stuff. Remember that roommates cannot enter the Buy mode, so you'll have to provide furnishing for them.

About roommates..it has also been stated that in every apartment we can move up to 8 playable Sims and 2 pets. Well yes, we can have a total amount of 32 playable Sims and 8 pets!

However, don't worry: a condo can be made of as many apartment as you like in any form and shape: single houses, penthouse etc.; plus we can also build more than 4 apartments, and the other empty ones will be used by NPCs. Every apartment will be identified by a specific door with mat, as it already happens for dorms in University and hotels in World Adventure

, and it will have only one entrance; moreover, it will not be possible to connect two different apartments nor thru doors or stairs.

Another interesting new object is the bookcase/trap-door: it looks like an ordinary bookcase but if we choose a specific book, it will turn and open a passage; thus, we can create some kind of secret room or enter other parts of our house in a ..."different" way!

As for the other objects, many of you will love the new closets, where Sims can enter and WooHoo! Or the ownable helicopter or again the vibrating bed, that fills up the Entertainment bar. Players who own Nightlife will like the possibility to build garages and use their cars, while it will be possible for everyone to create gardens in the backyard.

New objects included are: vending machines for snacks and drinks, hotdog food stand, medicine cabinets that will allow Sims to wash their teeth, the playground for children, a new elevator, the Murphy bed (there won't be bunk beds tough), and much more!

We can also characterize more the various parts of the 'hood, for example with the neighborhoods decorations that will differentiate high-class places from slumps.

Once the apartment is rented, it will not be possible to modify the structure of the house, nor to add or take off doors: the only things your Sims will be able to customize are wallpapers, floors, ceilings and furnishing; notice that objects can be placed freely on the wall!

In apartment lots, however, it will not be possible to create shops and commercial activities.

Roommates

Some details of the apartment life: Sims can share their apartments with a roommate (one for each family), that will be like a pet, that is, we can see his/her needs and features but we cannot control him/her (unless we use the same cheat we use to make pets selectable!); obviously, we can decide to make him/her part of our family by marrying him/her. The roommate will pay his part of the rent according to how many people are there in the apartment (if there are only two Sims, s/he will pay a half, and so on), and basically s/he will be a quiet and helpful one. In some cases we may have noisy and chaotic mates, but we can kick them out whenever we want to. Obviously, roommates cannot kick us out.

Living in the apartment

Every apartment is owned by a NPC-Landlord, who arrives in the lot in the morning and leaves in the evening, spending his/her time taking care of the garden, of the trashcans and stuff. Since it is an NPC, we can marry him/her, kill him/her and so on, but the game will re-create another one. It will not be possible to own a condo, however, bestfriending with the landlord will allow us to have little discounts on the rent.

As for the bills, to pay the rent we need to use the mailbox, keeping in mind that we'll have to check it weekly: if Sims forget to pay they will be visited by the repo.

The total amount of the rent will depend on the size of the apartment, and the other expenses will be related to the structure of the condo: for example you can create independent apartments as well as tiny separated places with common kitchen, as in the University dorms.

Neighbors, instead of roommates, can be a trouble for you (and you can be for them!): if your apartment is next to the one of noisy and messy characters, you may need to scream and shout to sleep, or knock on the wall or again enter your neighbors' home and tell them to quit the noise. However, you won't need to call the police!

With Apartment Life you can also visit other people's apartments, as it happens in dorms,

by knocking on neighbor's doors and making friends. In this way you can also see their house furniture and structure.

Sims can also earn some benefits building their own positive reputation and being welcomed by everybody. Instead, if Sims are rude and noisy they will be hated by the world!

Children and teens

Finally, little ones will have new activities to do: babies will have a new toy to play with, while toddlers and children can enjoy the new playground. Parents will also be able to read their children to sleep and swing them around by the arms.

A new feature for teens: if they miss the bus they will be able to walk to school, without sulking at home the whole day!

Pets

Players who own Pets can take with them up to 2 pets, but also those who do not have this EP can have a four-legged friend: there will be lap dogs with their own pens, that can be cuddled as we like.

Butlers and NPCs

As already stated, Sims can hire a butler that works for them 24/7 and takes care of the house, repairs broken things, looks after children, cooks and opens the door when someone knocks.

Other NPCs you will find are Sims belonging to several social categories, that we'll be able to recognize from the way they are dressed and greet; it is important to notice that according to the kind of condo or area of the 'hood, there will be a different social group. We won't find high-class Sims in slumps or suburbs.

Witches and wizards

And here we are to the most expected feature of this EP: witches! Witches are a new category of Sims, and as stated previously, can be of three kinds: evil, good and neutral (this

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worth also for wizards). In every neighborhood we'll find two rival High Witches, the one of the light and the one of the dark, and by bestfriending with them we can become one of them.

Every Sim from teen to elder can become a witch, and it will be possible to mix different kinds of Sims: we can have vampire witches if we have Nightlife, as well as Simplant witches if we have Seasons and so on, and even Servo-witches!

These creatures can both wear "particular" clothes and normal clothes, because their abilities do not require specific costumes, and witches can also go to the college.

Witches and wizards obviously create filters and potions, and ingredients can be bought or made, and if you own EP like Nightlife or Seasons, witches can also create potions to cure vampirism or plantsimism, and so forth.

These creatures, obviously, fly on the broom and can fly to community lots as well as to school, as if it was a car!

Spells (there is a LOT of them) have backfires if done by unexperienced Sims, and they can concern many topics: from freezing time to love potions and so on. If we don't want to be a witch anymore, we can use an opposite potion and be normal Sims again.

Players who own Pets can also summon spectral cats for their witches, that will act like normal cats.

We only have to wait until August 29th, which should be the European release date of the game!

To read the entire chat transcription:

http://thesims2.ea.com/community/chat.php?pid=Community_chat .