

Sir Reginald's Fabulous Country Estate

2-4 Players

Duration: 45 Minutes to 1 Hour (4 players)

Components:

100 Wood Cubes. There are 7 different types of Cubes based on the graphics shown on their sides. These types are: Blank, Single Window, Double Window, Doorway, Ornamental, Staircase, and Chimney.

32 Desire Cards.

4 Plots of Land, one for each player.

1 Stock Board.

What is it?

Sir Reginald Fabulous Country Estate is a light-hearted game about building houses on a large piece of property to suit the needs of a wealthy eccentric English man-about-the-world. He has many ideas about the features that he would like to see when deciding on the final design of his estate; but reveals them slowly as he starts to see the designs of the players evolve.

The structure of the game is designed to be played easily and quickly. The game centers around letting a player choose cubes from a set of cubes, and then placing their cubes on the plot of land to build houses. The score at the end of the game is based on the quality of the houses built, as determined by the desires of Sir Reginald (as shown on the Desire cards). It is a very simple concept to grasp for people, which gets them into the game quickly.

Because the main structure of the game revolves around building things with various cubes, the game is very tactile in nature, and lets the player creatively explore building simple Manors, Guest Houses, and Servant's Quarters with few restrictions. The restrictions that exist are easily remembered as they make common sense in the way someone would actually build a house. In fact, simply building houses itself is very fun to do on its own; during playtesting, some players have decided to avoid playing "to win" and just to have fun building their dream mansion.

Aside from being clever with the various decisions regarding building, the other main part of the strategy involves the Desire cards, which are played from a player's hand when they place a Blank cube on their Plot of Land. Desire cards are placed next to the Stock Board and award points to players meeting the criteria shown on the cards. Points can be awarded in combinations of two possible ways to score. All players can score points for meeting the requirements shown on the card. Additionally, depending on where a Desire card is played, it can also score bonus points to a single player who meets and exceeds the requirements the most.

This can leave a player with some tough decisions. While playing a Desire card means that a player has more control over what features score points at the end of the game, it requires playing a Blank cube; which does not help in your final score, and in fact, can cause the player to deduct points from his final score at the end of the game. Additionally, a player may want to wait to play a Desire that will score a high one-person bonus until he is convinced that no one else will challenge him for those points. However, if he waits too long, another player may take the high bonus point spot for himself.

The combination of the fun of building little houses and the subtle strategy regarding card play makes for a unique experience at the game table. It is an enjoyable family game where everyone can understand it, play it, and enjoy it. Players typically do not play this game competitively, and a lot of table talk occurs during cube placement. While it is by no means a deep and contemplative game with hard tactics, it is by not an exercise in randomness either. The game requires player to plan if they wish to win. And have a nice little 3-D estate to look at and enjoy at the end of the game, to boot!