

Leisure Suit Larry 3: Passionate Patti In Pursuit Of The Pulsating Pectorals

Studio: **Sierra On-Line**

Designer(s): **Al Lowe**

Part of series: **Leisure Suit Larry**

Release: April 8, 1989

Main credits: Programming: **Al Lowe, Juan Carlos Escobar**

Development System: **Pablo Ghenis, Stuart Goldstein, Robert Heitman, Jeff Stephenson**

Graphics: **Roger Hardy Jr., William D. Skirvin**

Music: **Mike Dana**

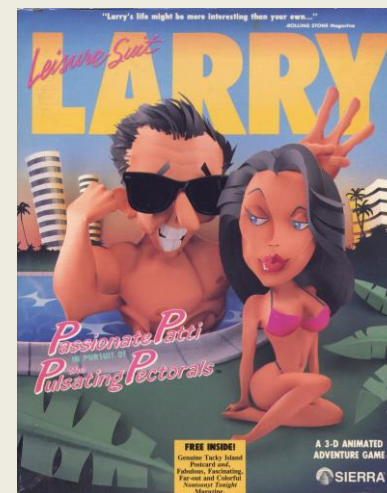
Useful links: Playthrough: [Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

[Part 3](#)

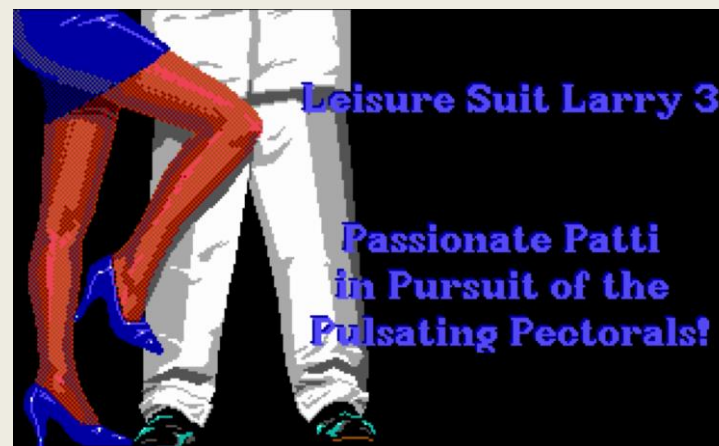
[Part 4](#)

[Part 5](#)



Basic Overview

Damned if you do, damned if you don't: allegedly, after having to endure right-wing criticism for the depravity of the original **Leisure Suit Larry**, Al received quite a few letters from disappointed fans complaining about the *lack* of depravity in the follow-up game — humor and satire and KGB guys in trench coats notwithstanding, what, after all, was the point of playing a Leisure Suit Larry game if you totally weren't going to (not) get laid? I personally remember very well the pangs of sorrowful disappointment in Moscow academic circles, which were somehow influencing even the totally underage 13-year old me in the year 1989, when even the Berlin Wall came down, yet the poor Larry Laffer still got no action.



It was clear enough that the people had to be given what they wanted, and to hell with the PMRC. Yet at the same time Al already had some clear ideas about where he wanted to go next — at the very end of **Larry 2**, you were introduced to an odd minor character who played piano for the evil Dr. Nonookee, called herself «Polyester Patti» (sic!), and promised Larry that she would be playing an important part in his future. I have a sneaky suspicion that Al's decision to share Larry's screen time

with a female playable character may have been driven by two concerns — (a) being jealous of Roberta Williams' success with Princess Rosella and (b) deciding that an active, «strong» female character in a Larry game might take a bit of feminist criticism off his back. Neither of these goals was really achieved: *Passionate Patti* never made anybody's «Top 10 (100) List of Strong Female Characters In Video Games», and the way she was portrayed in the game could only placate the kind of feminist who thinks it's totally okay for strong women to give doormen blowjobs in order to gain entrance to a male strip club (!), in other words, *no one*. And even so, *Passionate Patti* became a unique and intriguing element in the hitherto rather plastic feminine area of Larry Laffer's world — and a perfectly symmetric female character to outbalance the male perspective.

As such, **Leisure Suit Larry 3** became a synthesis of the old and the new: the first part of the game naturally brought back to mind Larry's inauspicious girl adventures in *Lost Wages*, while the second one suddenly transformed it into an Indiana Jones-style jungle crossing, while still somehow managing to retain a mildly lewd flavor. Largely dispensing with the «plot» device of the previous game, it concentrated on the double punch of Al's trademark satirical humor and digital titillation, but with the addition of Patti as a playable character and with a few extra twists (such as the thoroughly unpredictable finale), still managed to avoid crashing down into totally predictable formula, as would be the fate of all the subsequent Larry games after the franchise's revival in 1991.

Speaking of revivals, it is important to remember that in 1989, **Larry 3** was indeed meant to be the final chapter in the saga of Larry Laffer: after two unsuccessful attempts to find love and happiness with a permanent partner (Eve and Kalalau), Larry finally discovers an ideal lover in *Passionate Patti*, settles down for good and even begins to immortalize his biography in a series of video games. It was a wise decision at the time: the game did synthesize elements of the previous two, but it was clear that Al had already started repeating himself in a lot of ways, and it made perfect sense to retire our balding (and finally somewhat satisfied) hero before he began turning into a complete parody of his old self. Alas, cruel and unflinching laws of the market would soon overturn that decision — but at least the original game trilogy turned out to be well-rounded, satisfactory, and self-sufficient. Whether you want to buy into the whole «Larry 2.0» image that began two years later or not is irrelevant to the autonomous quality of **Larry 3** as the logical finale to the *Leisure Suit Larry* story arc.

Content evaluation

Plotline

Although the storyline of **Larry 3** does pick up from exactly where we left our guy at the end of **Larry 2** — that is, on the

imaginary Polynesian island of Nontoonyt, enjoying a seemingly carefree life with his beloved wife Kalalau and even donning a brand new Hawaiian shirt instead of his trademark leisure suit — it very quickly becomes obvious that the thriller-type story of **Larry 2** will no longer detract the protagonist from pursuing his primary goal in life. Instead, our girl Kalalau quickly and unceremoniously dumps Larry for an «Amazonian Harley-riding former-cannibal lesbian slot-machine repairwoman» (right!), shattering his faith in marital fidelity and setting him back on the tried and true path of screwing everything that moves — or, rather, of failing to screw everything that moves in a variety of unpredictable ways. Yes, your biggest thrill for the majority of this game will be trying to guess the exact manner in which Larry's coitus will be interruptus, over and over again... and sometimes, you *will* guess wrong, because Al Lowe's sick, twisted mind is a challenger not to be taken lightly.



That said, Al wouldn't be Al, and **Larry 3** wouldn't be a true Larry game, if all the humor always centered around dick jokes (though, hey, some of the dick jokes are actually funny — you can type "show dick" in front of some of the girls and at least one will react with something like "war injury, Larry?"... ahem, never mind). A major plot device in the game is the wild and intense commercialization in Nontoonyt, which Larry, by getting rid of Dr. Nonookee, has inadvertently opened up to corporate gluttony — which the native population is only too happy to embrace, as souvenir sellers keep roaming the island advertising "special souvenir seashells", "no longer contaminated with that crude oil/sewage mixture we call ocean water". Larry himself is both a victim of this process, losing his job after falling out with Kalalau, and a beneficiary — when it comes to exploiting the mercantile weaknesses of the isle's population to his own advantage.

All of the girls encountered by our hero are slightly more advanced (compared to the first game) stereotypes, including the ditzily bimbo shopaholic (Tawni), the introverted romantic showgirl (Cherri), the permanently busy kinky lawyer lady (Suzi), and the not-too-brainy, but hyper-energetic aerobics instructor (Bambi). They are there largely for the laughs, and their behavior and dialog peculiarities are very much tied to the late Eighties, but then again, the late Eighties did happen, and they did give us some ditzily bimbos and energetic aerobics instructors — in some ways, these girls still behave more realistically than *Seinfeld* characters. The only woman who emerges out of this sea of parody as a wholesome persona is, of course,

Passionate Patti herself... and once you finally manage to conquer her heart, you are treated to the biggest surprise of them all: after an unfortunate misunderstanding, a frustrated Larry wanders off into the jungle, and now you play as Passionate Patti, determined to find and bring back her man at *any* cost... even if it means losing all her money *and* most of her clothing in the process.

The Passionate Patti Part of the Plot is, admittedly, a bit confusing, as Al keeps jumping between the playgirl, if not downright escort-like, nature of Patti and her romantic-faithful girlfriend qualities — one minute, you are supposed to be wooing a handsome male stripper at the local club, the next minute you bravely head out to the jungle in order to risk your possessions, sanity, and very life to bring back the man of your dreams. Still, Patti's trek through the jungle makes for a nice change of pace and scenery, echoing Larry's own journey through the jungle in the previous game, and Al has to be commended on how subtly he combines adventure with striptease, never forgetting that a Larry game always has to be sexy while not always having to be about sex (a principle that would, unfortunately, be all but abandoned for the next few games).

Finally, the plot-ending twist, while certainly giving us a deus-ex-machina vibe, fulfills the important function of fitting Leisure Suit Larry inside the Sierra On-Line universe, the same way **Space Quest III** did with Roger Wilco and his creators — and the twist itself is a loving, friendly, sarcastic jab at nearly all of Sierra's franchises to that day, though Roberta Williams gets most of the flack for the infamous whale tongue puzzle of **King's Quest IV**. By the time the ending strides in, you almost manage to forget you were playing a game in which the main objective was, at one time, to get laid — and that, by itself, makes **Leisure Suit Larry 3** a very special entry in the Al Lowe canon.

Puzzles

Despite the increased length and the novel two-character perspective, **Larry 3** is not at all difficult — in fact, arguably the most difficult puzzle comes at the very beginning, with the return of «age verification» questions inherited from the first game. These are actually quite hilarious («Pearl Harbor is best known for: a. being a great place to shop for necklaces, b. her five years as a Washington D. C. madam, c. being bombed during World War II, d. her singing voice»), but require *major* familiarity with much of 1960s and 1970s pop culture (Josephine the Plumber? The Dry Look?) which is getting harder and harder as the years go by, let alone trying to play the game in a foreign country (such as the USSR!). Of course, you are allowed to fail — but then you only get to play the game at one of the lower levels of Filthiness, rather than the coveted «Totally Raunchiest» level, and where is the fun in that? (*Note*: you can also cheat, but in those pre-Internet days you could only get the cheat code by word of mouth).

Once you are past the screening, though, the overall puzzle difficulty is slightly below the level of **Larry 2**. Beating the main game is easy — as long as you take your time to carefully survey all the environments and grab everything that is not nailed down, there are, at best, one or two spots which might require, uh, creative thinking (such as producing an authentic Nontoonyt souvenir for the junk-hungry Tawni, or the feral pig encounter in the jungle). What is definitely not so easy is obtaining all the 4000 points in the game (yes, there *are* 4000 points, Al was probably trying to set a Guinness record here): there are many optional things that can easily be missed — in fact, out of the four pre-Patti girl encounters, two are completely unnecessary to advance the main plot, and one in particular, a liaison with the island's stern lady lawyer, can only be triggered by a very particular and odd circumstance which you can very easily overlook.



Frustrating dead ends are not as frequent in **Larry 3** as they were in **Larry 2**, mainly because we are here in more of an «open world» environment, where you can always go back and pick up something you forgot without any serious penalties. You can screw up intentionally (for instance, give away important objects to various people for no reason at all), but the only genuinely cruel device in the Larry part of the game is the gym locker — forget to close it upon heading to the shower and you will be doomed to forever navigating the little locker maze in Adam's costume. As for the Patti part of the game, the important point of no return is when you cross from the «civilized» into the «wild» part of Nontoonyt — forget to pack even one important piece of clothing, and you will never leave the jungle alive.

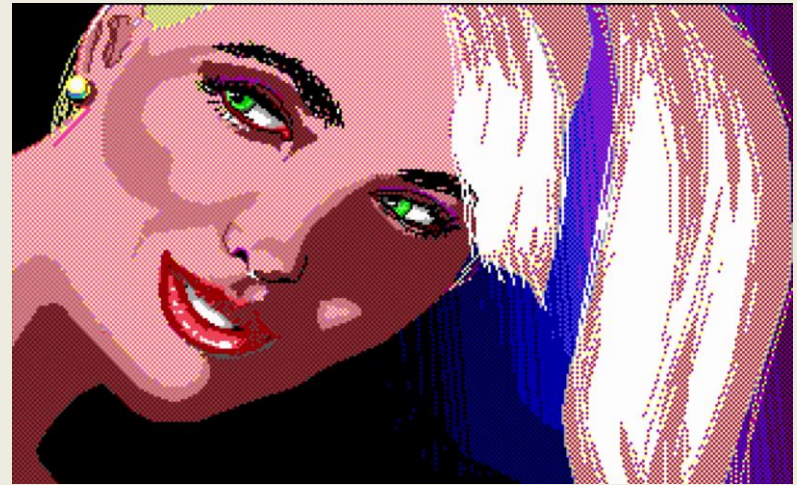
Literally dead ends are just as frequent as in any other Sierra game, though, so it is predictably important to save all the time (there is even an auto-reminder for the player to save which you can turn off and on — a first, I think, in any Sierra game). And while most of the fatalities are predictable (like, don't fall over a cliff or go swimming into the polluted ocean or get trampled by a wild boar), some continue to be unnecessarily cruel — occasionally, even a simple and innocent knock on a closed door can end in tragedy. At least Al has plenty of hilarious messages to send you off into the next world... and yes, that's the Sierra thing, just remember to save before trying just about *anything* other than "take wood from ground" and you shall be fine.

Finally, there is always the issue of non-adventure components in adventure games — mazes and arcades, in this particular

case. One such «puzzle» is just tedious (at some point, Larry is expected to pump up his pectorals and get ripped, which simply requires pushing the up and down arrows as many times as your CPU requires from you), but when you get to the Patti part, you actually get assignments that require more brain action — such as navigate a lengthy bamboo maze (prepare to die multiple times, it's almost unavoidable unless you cheat) and, later on, float down a lengthy river on a log while avoiding various obstacles (including Patti's "worst nightmare — CHILDREN!"). That sequence, by the way, is relatively well programmed and requires a small pinch of creative strategic thinking — today, it is actually a little more fun to play because you do not have to wait an eternity to restore the game on your slow-ass Intel 286 PC. You can skip it, too, except you shall have to say goodbye to the full 4000 points in that case.

Atmosphere

In contrast with **Larry 2**, all of this game takes place in one location — Nontoonyt Island, recently civilized on the edges but still wild and pristine enough in the middle. This means the overall atmosphere will be weirdly contrastive, with Larry spending most of his walking hours trekking through jungle paths but always ending up in some fashionably modernized office building, showroom, barroom, or entertainment venue in the end. (This would later be lightly reprised with the La Costa Lotta setting in **Larry 6**, but natural wildness in that game would be confined to the utmost periphery). The produced effect is rather unique — *Mogambo* meets *Mad Men*, if you wish — and I remember how it used to sweeten the pill of having to backtrack through parts of that jungle in the old days of super-slow PCs.



Of course, the main atmosphere is provided, as usual, by Al's humor. Sometimes it peeps through in the form of cheap little sexy flourishes (gee, you can spy on a woman undressing in her hotel room!), but just as often it breaks out in a major tidal wave, such as Paul Paul's stand-up cabaret show, brought back from ~~the dead~~ **Leisure Suit Larry In The Land Of The Lounge Lizards**: literally *dozens* of jokes, including lots of ethnic ones in which *you* supply the ethnos to be insulted (no longer will Al Lowe take all the blame for being politically incorrect on himself!). And yes, you do have to sit all the way to the end of the show if you want the full 4000 points instead of some ugly, disgustingly un-rounded number.

Then there are the girls, which are in general a major improvement over the ones in the first game — and no, they have not become less stereotypical, but the stereotypes have become more fleshed out, if you know what I mean. The number of possible dialog interactions has significantly grown, and topics of interest might include anything from the weather to intimate parts of your anatomy — except that, this being a text parser game and all, there are no obvious dialog choices, meaning that you will have to experiment. The AI is still lame, but it is much less lame than it was a couple of years before — one can only guess how advanced it would have become in another couple of years, had not Sierra made the tragic decision to eliminate the parser altogether.

All in all, while this is hardly something to get excited about in the modern age, I do remember the game being significantly progressive in terms of depth back in its time. With **Larry 2**, the emphasis was on looking around and trying to quickly get to the next place. With **Larry 3**, you actually wanted to spend some time in those places, even if there might actually be less to do than in **Larry 2**.

Technical features

Graphics

With only one year separating **Larry 2** from **Larry 3**, it would hardly be realistic to expect serious changes in the graphic aspect, yet things did not sit completely still, either. The static backdrops actually look a bit more detailed and juicy than they did in **Larry 2** — the jungle, for instance, is more dense and colorful than it used to be, giving the impression of a place where it is really easy to get lost. Most of the interiors are also more densely cluttered with (usually recognizable) objects, reaching its peak in the last section of the game where Larry and Patti wander around the Sierra prop storage room.



The biggest achievement, of course, are the girls. Since Larry is back to his swinging ways, this means a return to the world of close-ups, and it must be said that these particular close-ups look quite impressive — if, occasionally, a bit scary — for their age. Most importantly, the faces are now almost fully animated — both the eyes and the mouth have their own independent

dynamics, and some of these look quite realistic as the girls roll their eyes in indignation or pout their lips in admiration. (Do not forget to "make a joke" in front of each of the girls — this is not something most players would probably realize to do on their own, but it does get you an additional hilarious, if a bit disgusting, facial reaction from most of them). So maybe Cherri Tart, the dancer, does look a little like your mother, but this *may* have been intentional (why should every showroom queen look like a 20-year old?), and Suzi Cheatem, the lawyer, does look like she just wants to dominate you, but this most certainly *was* intentional (isn't that what all lawyers do anyway?). I do remember falling hopelessly in love with the green eyes and blonde hair of Bambi, the aerobics instructor, and being seriously disappointed about how the curves of her little sprite never really matched the ideal contours of her close-up face.

Speaking of sprites, though, these, too, have been fleshed out relatively well: our friend Larry comes in two different shapes (pot-bellied and slim) and lots of different costumes (including FULL FRONTAL NUDITY!... if only inside the locker room, shush), and he looks fresher and more inspiring than ever, a little sprightlier and younger even than in the previous game (guess that witchdoctor tonic was still going strong). For Patti, the graphic artists ensured that all the proper curves be in place, though everything in general is very decent. The other girls have been treated with less attention, which is excusable due to their limited presence on the screen. And oh yes, the amount of flesh and lewd posing that you get will be directly dependent on the «filth level» you have earned by answering the opening questions — however, even on the «Totally Raunchiest» level you are not going to be exposed to anything much (I believe there isn't even a single topless scene in the entire game, as compared to **Larry 2** where you did have a quick glimpse at the end of the show).

Sound

Larry 3 arrived at a time when it became customary for Sierra to provide full soundtracks for their games, meaning that this time around, you are going to be accompanied by music wherever you are. This meant actually hiring a separate composer, rather than letting Al Lowe himself do all the work; in this case, the composer is a certain Mike Dana, who seems to have absolutely nothing to his name except for this particular soundtrack — but it is still a decent soundtrack, nothing genius but perfectly functional. The music ranges from moody «jungle exotica» (played, of course, in the



jungle) to inobtrusively sprightly elevator muzak (played, of course, in elevators) to repetitively annoying, but catchy jazz-pop (played in office buildings and entertainment venues). Some of the selections are quite bizarre: I still do not understand, for instance, why the Feral Pig Theme is a variation on the classic Peter Gunn Theme, though hearing its boogie rhythm in the middle of all that other tribal-styled ambience of the jungle is quite a hoot.

The classic Larry theme has been modified as well — especially in its full-fledged MIDI version, it is now embellished with extra bells and whistles (additional intro section; thoroughly rewritten bridge section; more and more melodic flourishes throughout), which kicks wide open the tradition of mutating the old theme more and more in each following game until it becomes nearly unrecognizable. I am not sure I fully agree with that decision — a classic is a classic — but at least this time around, the core chords are still intact, and I can live with the extra intro bars, I guess.

Other than the music, there is nothing to talk about: voice acting is still a long way away, and sound effects are kept to a pragmatic minimum (ringing phones and chirping birds). But then, perhaps, the more is left to your imagination, the better? Those sex sounds in **Larry 7** can get pretty annoying (not to mention the relative inconvenience of playing at home with your wife in the next room).

Interface

Gameplay is standard early SCI-era: move around with the cursor (or mouse, still fairly clumsy), pause the game whenever you open the parser to type in a command. The trademark Al Lowe Option, instead of the «trite phrase» of **Larry 2**, is now amended to «expletive» (*son of a bitch!* by default for the Totally Raunchy level), which you can set to whatever you like, from *holy Moses* to *cocksucking motherfucker*, but the puerile excitement wears off rather quickly. As usual, pressing the Boss Key for some reason requires you to restore or restart a game. Also, you can now change the default text color if you wish — gee!

The parser has largely been fixed, so that there will be no annoying bugs such as the ones that plagued **Larry 2**; however, making use of all the extra abilities of the parser is still made difficult by some weird programming decisions. For instance, while the dialog capacity of the girls is significantly enhanced compared to the first game, realising these options is tricky — e.g. in some cases, the parser will recognize something like "weather" but not "ask about weather", or "date" but not "make a date" or "go on date", quite odd compared to the more streamlined and coherent approach in such contemporary games as, for instance, **The Colonel's Bequest** (which placed a huge emphasis on dialog and perfectly knew the difference between "talk to X", "ask X about Y", and "tell X about Y"). Even today, I still come across some of the girls' responses to certain topics inside the game script without having any idea of how to actually trigger them. Alas, it is precisely this blatant negligence towards a

very simple task — slightly enhancing the linguistic component of the game — that ultimately led to abandoning the text parser and switching to the less demanding point-and-click interface.

Verdict: *A generally satisfying conclusion of the trilogy and a respectable goodbye to the «real» Larry Laffer*

It is quite ironic that, while **Larry 2** and **Larry 3** are unquestionably my favorite games in the entire series, they are precisely the ones that are least often talked about even in retrospective-nostalgic surveys on adventure games — people usually discuss either the first game, for its introduction of the character, or about the last two, as the ones that were the most advanced from a technical perspective (graphics, voice acting, etc.). What they forget about is that the best plots, the best atmospheres, probably the best humor, the most daring genre-hopping, and, if I might say, the most social relevance are all to be found in these 1988-89 titles. **Larry 3** might not be as bold and outrageous as **Larry 2**, but it makes a good synthesis of all the strong sides of its predecessors while dropping some of their technical flaws — and while it is not entirely self-sufficient on its own (you really need to play the first two games in order to understand what it is all about), it provides a perfectly satisfactory ending to Larry's story arc, combining elements of lewd satire/parody and sentimental romance tale in such a manner that it really makes you care about the characters *and* laugh your ass off at them and the silly world they live in at the same time. And kudos to Al for coming up with Passionate Patti, one of those Strong Female Characters With A Grain Of Salt which would be pretty much unimaginable in any of today's mainstream video games — hell of a reason to replay a 1989 game thirty years later, I'd say.

