

FLORENTINE FAMILIES

LORENZO IL MAGNIFICO**STRUGGLE FOR POWER AND INFLUENCE**

The MEDICI family was one of the more politically and economically powerful in Italy and Europe from 1434 to 1737. Giovanni de Medici started the fortune of the Family becoming a banker, initially, and “the” banker of the Pope later. At his death (he was poisoned) the son Cosimo inherited the bank and everything else (there was a younger brother but at that time everything was passed from the father to the elder son) and started a long political fight against the aristocracy of Firenze, led by the family Albizzi. In 1434 he finally succeeded in leading the SIGNORIA (a sort of democratic parliament that decided how to direct the economy and the politics of Firenze) where most of the members were devoted to the Medici. He was able to maintain a very good relationship with the Pope and with all the States near Tuscany, while he invited architects and artists to Firenze to build monuments, churches, etc. that are still visible today (and above all the very famous “Cupola del Brunelleschi” on the Cathedral of Firenze). His son Piero was sick and ruled the city only for 5 years, passing soon the power to his elder son Lorenzo (who was only twenty years old at that time). And Lorenzo pushed the power of Firenze to the top, succeeding also in maintaining peace in all of Italy with visits to the other kingdoms, diplomacy and marriages. He also promoted the arts and this period is known as the “Rinascimento Italiano” (Italian Renaissance). For all that it was called “Il Magnifico” (The Magnificent).

The game LORENZO IL MAGNIFICO brings us back to those times and let us act as one of the rulers of Firenze: the players will send the members of their families all around the town to collect resources that will be then used to finance the construction of buildings, to corrupt other Characters or to pursuit special missions. It uses a nice mix of already known mechanics: worker placements, resource collection and card combos, but the final result is really very pleasant.

Pietro Cremona

A well-working game with a historic topic, good rules and attractive components, which can be absolutely recommended.

A LOOK AT THE CITY OF FIRENCE FROM PIAZZALE MICHELANGELO

The box of *Lorenzo il Magnifico* contains a board with a very schematic representation of the town of Firenze, four smaller boards for the players, five decks of cards, tiles, and a handful of wooden components. Everything is of good quality, but I have a little concern on the “wood” resources, so small and so “round” that they tend to fall from hand when they are used.

Each of the four towers on the board has to be filled with four development cards from different decks: tower “1” receives green cards (Territory), tower “2” the blue (Personalities), tower “3” the yellow (Buildings) and tower “4” the pink (Missions). There are 24 cards for each color, divided in three Ages of 8 cards each: they are the heart of the game which lasts only 6 turns (or 6 times 4 cards, if you prefer)

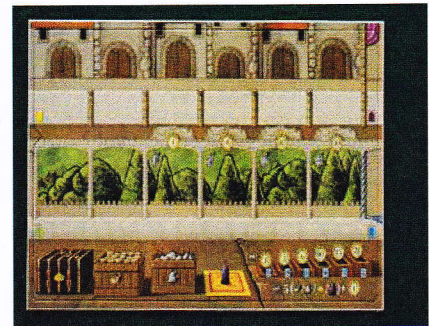


Each card has a drawing that depicts a building, a personality, a place, etc. of that time and three specific characteristics:

- a “cost” (money, resources or military points) that is printed on the left (with the exception of the green cards that are free)
- an “immediate benefit” printed in the middle
- a “future benefit”, printed on the bottom,

that is taken only at certain conditions (as we will see shortly)

Each player gets a personal board to stock the resources gained on the board), four “familiar” (3 colored and 1 neutral wooden cylinder), two “wood” resources, two “stone”, 3 “servants” (wooden pink meeples) and a few coins (depending on the initial turn order). A sticker must be applied to the colored “familiar” (white, black and orange, the same colors as the three dice) while the “neutral” one gets a “0”.



Please note that each player may collect up to 6 cards of each color: yellow and green cards are placed directly on the personal board, while the others are placed on the side of it.

Lorenzo il Magnifico can be played using the “basic” or the “advanced” rules: the only differences are a bonus tile that is placed on the left of the personal board (in the basic game those bonuses are the same for everybody, while in the advanced they slightly differ) and the “leader” cards. After the first game it is suggested to always play the advanced rules, so my review will consider only them: difficulty increases just a little but playing with the leaders allows for a defined initial strategy.

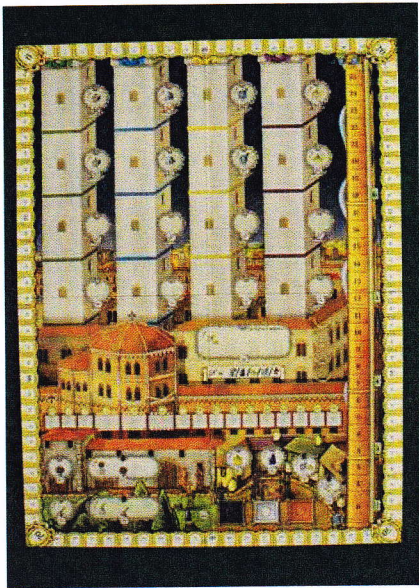
IT IS TIME TO ENTER THE CITY

At the beginning of a game each player receives four leader cards: he keeps one and pass the other three to his left and so on until everybody has again 4 cards in hand. Each card has three characteristics:

- a name and a picture of the leader, shown on a balcony of his palace
- a “cost” to activate it (icons printed above the balcony)
- a “benefit” that may be “once per turn” or “perennial” (printed under the balcony)

The playing order of the first turn is randomly determined, and the players place their tokens accordingly on the board, but in following turns this order may change if the players send their familiars to the

Council. The first player throws the three dice (white, black and orange) and put them on the related cases on the board: please remember that the "familiar" have been personalized with stickers in the colors of the dice and the players use the "pips" of the dice to place their markers.



The board is divided in SIX different zones:

On top we have the four "TOWERS" that will host four cards each at the beginning of every turn. To take one of those cards, the player selects a "familiar" whose "value" (number of pips of the die of his color) is the same or superior to the number printed on the board: for ground floor a "1" is enough, for the first floor a "3" is necessary, a "5" for the second and a "7" for the third. A "Seven"? But dice have a maximum of 6 pips! You are right and really need a little help from your servants: you discard one or more servants and add one or more pips to the die. Also remember: your "neutral familiar" has value "0" (the sticker applied on its top) at the beginning of the game, so you need at least one servant to rise his value to "1" and use it on the board. Placing a familiar on the second or third floor also grants (together with the selected card) some free resources that sometimes may be useful for the programmed action.

Warning: if a tower is already occupied by a familiar you must pay a "tax" of three coins to have the right to take another card from it. Initially money is scarce, so it is very difficult to see more than one or two familiars on each tower, but hopefully Firenze has more places to visit. So, let's go on. Under the towers (that in reality are not a particular characteristic of Firenze, but were useful for the game) there is the "Pala-

zzo del Consiglio della Signoria". All the readers that have looked at the TV series "Medici" in the last months will recognize this palace. Sending a familiar here will always grant one coin and one privilege to select between resources, servants, coins, military points, or "faith" points. The first to visit the Signoria will be also the first player on the next turn, and so on. Being the first to play means, of course, that it is possible to freely decide the next card and the next tower to select, and sometimes becomes a very important action, especially when you need a particular card to form a favorable "combo".

Immediately under the Signoria is the Cathedral of Firenze: Santa Maria del Fiore. Here is located the special track to sustain the Church (and, again, if you watched the Medici series you understand what this means in reality). At the end of the second, fourth and sixth turn the Pope messenger arrives in Firenze to verify if the players were good Christians and, mainly, if they paid the necessary "decime" (a sort of tax that was due to the Church at that time). If you didn't you receive a papal excommunication. In game terms this means that at the end of the second turn you need at least three "faith" points (4 for the fourth turn and 5 for the sixth); those points are obviously collected with cards or at the Palazzo del Consiglio della Signoria. If your faith was good you get Victory Point (but the markers goes back to zero and must start again), otherwise you will get a penalty for the remainder of the game.

On the bottom right of the board we find the Market: four cases that offer a special bonus to be selected between 5 coins, 5 servants, 3 military points plus 2 coins and, finally, two "privileges" from the Signoria. Each case may be used by one familiar only, so first arrived ... first served.

On the bottom left of the board we find two parallel rows of cases that have a similar use: if you place a familiar on one case of the top row (building action) you will get the resources from the yellow cards that you collected. The other row (country action) let you get resources from the green cards.

Finally, we have the Military power track printed on the extreme right of the board. The main use of this track is to allow the players to place the green cards 3-4-5-6 on the personal board: in effect you need a military value of 3 for the third card and up to 18 for the sixth. This is rewarded with VP at the game's end. You may also "pay" some pink cards with Military points, so



My lines for WIN

Dagmar de Cassan, Editor-in-Chief

SPIEL '17 has been played - and again all records have been topped - there were more exhibitors, more visitors, more halls and, of course, even more games - you will find a first sample in this new edition of WIN.

For us, Essen was a huge success; our museum game Tybor der Baumeister by Alexander Pfister and Dennis Rappel sold out Friday noon and we could hand over to Lookout Spiele, where the joint Lookout/Mayfair edition was then available. Thank you for the marvelous cooperation.

I am sorry to say, that our Special Essen Issue on the games exhibited at SPIEL will not be published this year; there are too many games and the inaccuracy factor due to the countless Kickstarter projects is too big, and I must admit, that I cannot do the work on my one quickly enough. But I am sure, that our games handbook Game by Game will give you a very good overview over the new releases presented at SPIEL this year.

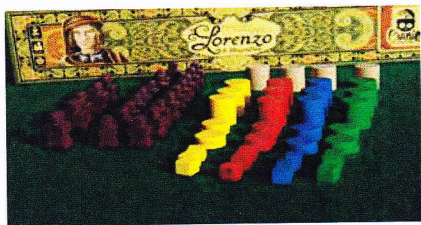
Current issues of WIN can be found at <http://www.gamesjournal.at> and our Games Companion Game by Game at <http://www.gamescompanion.at>

during the game you frankly need to collect some of them.

Each zone may be entered by just ONE familiar per color, but it is allowed to use one colored and one "neutral" marker of the same family.

THE HARD LIFE OF POWER FAMILIES IN FIRENZE

The players, following the turn order, place one of their familiar in the area of their choice and perform the related action. When all the pawns have been used the turn is over and the following one immediately starts. When the sixth turn ends, and the "decima" to the Pope has been paid, the players verify their VP total adding to the points already marked on the "Kramer" track: 1-4-10-20 VP for 3-4-5-6 green cards on their personal board; 1-3-6-10-15-21 VP for 1-6 blue cards; the VP printed on the pink cards and 5-2 VP for being first or second on the Military track. The higher score wins the game.



Lorenzo il Magnifico is a very nice game and every tester liked it even if there is nothing really new in the rules and mechanics. But I think that to design a good game it is not necessary to have only innovative ideas if playing it brings pleasure to the players and if they wish to play it again and again as it happens with this one.

The only real "critics" that I feel is right are the "development cards": they are always the same, so if you do not find a card on the first "distribution" you will be sure that it will arrive on the following one. I think that having some extra cards on each color should be more interesting as you will never be certain to get a "specific" one. Note that the leader cards are already more than the number strictly necessary and the excommunication tiles are 21 (7 per type) but you use only 3 of them in each game. May be that, if the game is successful, we will see shortly an expansion that will add more cards. To win a game of Lorenzo il Magnifico you need to optimize your development cards, especially after having decided your strategic path, probably based on the initial

leaders that you got in the set-up. It is not possible to follow all the possible strategies at the same time.

If, for example, you started collecting green cards you must also keep an eye on the Military track because to place the last four cards you need a precise number of military points. The same for the pink cards, as 6 of them (in 24) may be acquired only with military points and 3 more have military as an alternative to resources.

If you follow the yellow path, you know that 23 over 24 cards will give you an immediate bonus in VP (from 1 to 10) but only three offer direct VP with the "building action", while 7 more produce 1 to 7 VP extra, using resources or money. You need to select the right cards during the game to obtain the best "combo" possible (for example a card produces money that you may then spend to get VP from another one, etc.) and to avoid the acquisition of cards that do not match your strategy.

If you bet on the personalities you know that you must try to go to the end and acquire five or six cards (15-21 VP): but at the same time you need a number of other cards that may grant a constant flow of money not only to pay the blue ones (personalities cost a lot of money, from 2 to 7 coins each) but also to be able to pay three coins tax if you are not the first to select their tower.

It is also suggested to try to pay the Pope "decime" every time: some of the excommunications are not so heavy and you may probably avoid the payment, but many are really annoying: reduction of the pips on your dice, reduction of the money and/or resources that you may get, loss of VP, etc. So, you have to acquire a few cards that give you some "faith points": two green cards, for example, give 1 immediate point and 3 as "country action" bonus; five blue cards have 1-4 immediate points available; four yellow have 1-3 immediate points and two of them 1-2 extra with the "building actions"; ten pink cards have 1-4 immediate faith points. And, of course, you always have the privileges of the Signoria. Grab those points as soon as you can without waiting for the "even" turns when someone else may grasp the right cards before you.

And finally a few clarifications directly from Virginio Gigli, co-designer of the game, who was kind enough to answer the following questions during our initial play-test.

(1) - Some cards give a permanent bonus of 2 pips to a colored die used to purchase new cards. This means, for example, that your "neutral" familiar has now a value of "2" and therefore you do not need to spend a servant to rise its value.

(2) - The excommunication tiles that oblige you to discard a resource are valid also for the "building" or "country" actions. Please note that the tile asks for ONE resource and you may freely select between stone or wood.

(3) - If you use special bonuses, (i.e. Santa Rita who doubles the resources) the excommunication penalty of the preceding point is applied only AFTER the doubling.

(4) - The excommunication tile of level 3 who says that you should lose 1 VP every 5 is applied only on the points accumulated on the "Kramer" track and NOT on the final bonus from the cards.

To summarize I think that Lorenzo il Magnifico is a good game for standard and expert gamers, and I highly suggest it. ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: Gigli, Brasini, Luciani

Artist: Klemens Franz

Price: ca. 46 Euro

Publisher: Cranio Creations 2016

www.craniocreations.it

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
12+

TIME:
100

BEWERTUNG

Development, resources management
Users: For experts
Version: it
Rules: de en it
In-game text: no

Comments:
God mix of standard, familiar mechanisms *
High replay value * Interesting historic topic

Compares to:
Resources management games with historic topics

Other editions:
CMON (de en)



My rating: