



'Hotel Transylvania' review: Cute monsters

Amy Biancolli

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Jonathan (voiced by Andy Samberg) is a human who falls for vampire Mavis (voiced by Selena Gomez).
Photo: Sony Pictures Animation / SF

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Hotel Transylvania



Animation. Directed by Genndy Tartakovsky.
Starring Adam Sandler and Andy Samberg. (PG.
91 minutes.)

The cutest darn thing in "Hotel Transylvania" is the way Count Dracula spazzes into a brilliant red devil-face when provoked. The second-cutest thing is his annoyed response to being misquoted by idiot humans.

"I do NOT say 'blaaa blaaa blaaa!' " he says. He hasn't come to suck your blood - because "human blood is so fatty, and you don't know where it's been."

In fact, humans don't have much to fear from vampires. These days the monster demographic is terrified of humans, the true monsters - or so Dracula (Adam Sandler) believes. Convincing him otherwise is the movie's central narrative challenge, as a young human named Jonathan (Andy Samberg) accidentally backpacks into Drac's Transylvanian resort hotel and promptly falls for the Count's adorable goth daughter, Mavis (Selena Gomez). At age 118, her overprotective dad still won't let her off the castle grounds.

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In the spunky animated 3-D "Hotel Transylvania," the gags fly, the effects whoosh and the friendly ghouls are many and colorful: a henpecked Frankenstein voiced by [Kevin James](#), a blubbery mummy voiced by [Cee Lo Green](#), a pair of tired if fertile parent-werewolves voiced by [Molly Shannon](#) and [Steve Buscemi](#). The film is good goofy fun, even as the plot uncorks a whole lotta nothing. Samberg gives Jonathan a pleasant edge of slacker dorkiness. As Dracula, Sandler delivers one of the best and most endearing performances of his career. The up-with-monsters message is, by now, old news at the movies: "ParaNorman," "Monsters, Inc.," next summer's "Monsters University." Same goes for the sparkly teen phenom of mortal-on-immortal interspecies romance. But at least "Hotel Transylvania" has the wit to pop a decent "Twilight" joke, and at just the right time.

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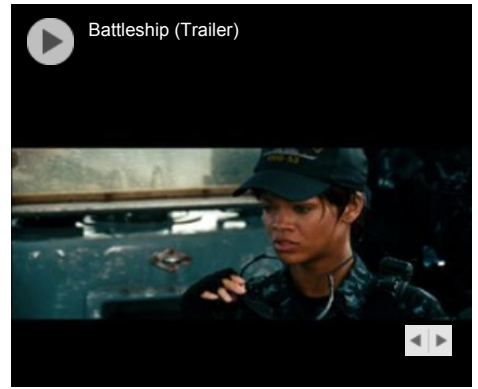


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