

A Mini-Mandriva!

By *srlinuxx*

Created 24/09/2005 - 3:50am

Submitted by srlinuxx on Saturday 24th of September 2005 03:50:34 AM Filed under [Linux](#) [1] [Reviews](#) [2] [-s](#) [3]



[4][MCNLive](#) [5] is a 179MB livecd based upon Mandriva Linux, and [latest release](#) [6] Jordaan is built from a recent freeze of Mandriva Cooker, which is the development branch. Its main features are the Xfce4 desktop environment and uses ad-free Opera 8.5 as its browser. This distro can be burnt onto a regular cdr/cdrw or even booted from a USB memory stick. Due to motherboard limitations I couldn't test the USB option, but I did take a look at the system on cdr. What did I find?

First things first: The boot is familiar in certain ways. The splash screen looks like a customized version of a slightly older Mandriva image. It's a understated attractive splash in purplish-blue highlighted by mcnlive's logo. Also present and handy is the user/root name & password. The booting background is the new one from the upcoming Mandriva 2006, the lighter blue with that great looking penguin and Mandriva Linux logo. The login screen is the same as in the upcoming Mandriva 2006 as well. These Mandriva components aren't unexpected as MCNLive is based on a very recent cooker install. In fact, judging by some of the version numbers, Jordaan is a bit newer than the [RC2](#) [7] of September 15.



[8]



[9]

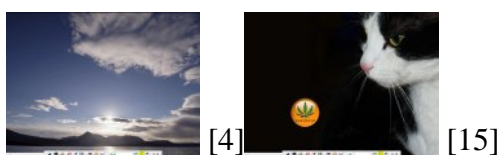


[10]

One can log in as either root (password: root) or mcnl (password: mcnl) and find a wonderful desktop environment from Xfce4. It is said that a KDE edition of "Jordaan" is currently under development.

[Xfce4](#) [11] has matured into a full featured stable environment. It's a great choice for any Linux system. See this terrific [review/overview](#) [12] for a more detailed description. MCNLive comes with version 4.2.2 from Mandriva developers.

MCNLive comes with some great default setups. The panel is a bit large and overlaps the taskbar. That should be taken down to 'small' and then it looks wonderful. But aside from the aesthetics, it has launchers for some of the handiest applications, such as Opera, Emelfm, and the Mandriva Control Center. The mcnl environment is different than the root desktop in some minor ways. For me I found the mcnl environment much more pleasing. One difference is the windec and Opera theme ([mcnl](#) [13] ? [root](#) [14]). Another, one of the most obvious, is the wallpaper. The mcnl user desktop comes with a tranquil skyscape overlooking a placid lake. These types of wallpapers foster a calm environment in which to work. However, the root desktop is a bit of a contrast. One is greeted by a close-up of a large cat, an image of the infamous hemp leaf, and slogan of "cure your pc." Me-ow!



In those teeny 178MB come an application for about any purpose. Among others, they offer abiword for word processing, gimp for image manipulation, graveman for cdburning, and xine for video playback. I found all applications to be quite functional and stable. Their (Mandriva's) version of xine played most of the movie files on hand, although it had trouble with a .bin. Rarely do I find an xine that doesn't lock-up and even more rare are those that actually work. What a treat. There is also a nice little selection of free linux games.



[22]MCNLive comes with the Mandriva Control Center. This is a wonderful tool for system administration and has very few rivals in this area. I'm doubtful anyone reading this review has not seen it in action or at least heard of it. One of the glowing features of MCC is it's software installer that seems to still be present on MCNLive. This would be extremely handy if MCNLive still included a hard drive installer. Then one could theoretically install MCNLive, define if necessary a cooker mirror and then upgrade to a full-fledged Mandriva 2006 in the next few days. However the graphical installer seems abandoned by our heroes, so this would mean a manual install and probably a bit of tinkering. I think for this project to have dropped the hard drive installer was a major loss.

Some version highlights include:

- kernel-i686-up-4GB-2.6.12.12mdk-1-1mdk

- xorg-x11-6.9-1.cvs20050915.2mdk
- xfdesktop-4.2.2-2mdk
- opera-8.50-20050916.1
- [Full rpmlist here](#) [23]

In conclusion, I think MCNLive is a great little distro that performs well and is found to be very stable. The included applications are adequate, but I missed the hard drive installer. Xfce4 is looking good and its inclusion is a wonderful choice, however I think the root desktop look and feel could be revamped. It automounts all partitions and doesn't eject the CD upon shutdown or reboot. One of the advantages of this distro is the small size and of course the main attraction is the option of installing it on a USB stick for easier travel. Another good thing (that I may be utilizing in the next few days) is the boot option of starting a Mandriva http/ftp install. [The website](#) [24] is really nice looking and easy to navigate - informative without a lot of intrusive overkill. I liked this offering and can recommend one try it on for size. I'd probably rate it somewhere in the neighborhood of 7.5ish on a scale of 10. Final thought, this little mini-Mandriva is just fun.

[More Screenshots Here](#) [25].



[26]

[Linux Reviews -s](#)

Source URL: <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/2755>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/63>
- [2] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/101>
- [3] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/102>
- [4] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/desktop>
- [5] <http://home.tiscali.nl/berenstraat/>
- [6] <http://distrowatch.com/?newsid=02916#0>
- [7] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/2639>
- [8] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/boot>
- [9] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/boot2>
- [10] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/boot3>
- [11] <http://www.xfce.org/>
- [12] <http://www.capnkirby.com/Xfce4.html>
- [13] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/mnclopera>
- [14] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/rootopera>
- [15] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/rootdesktop>
- [16] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/editors>
- [17] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/multimedia>
- [18] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/menu>
- [19] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/system>
- [20] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/xineavi>
- [21] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/xinempg>

[22] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/mcc>

[23] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/2754>

[24] <http://home.tiscali.nl/berenstraat/news.htm>

[25] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl>

[26] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/mcnl/18r>