



# Gay cruise filling fast

■ Passenger numbers "amazing"

Melissa Hadley

**A**ustralia's first all-gay cruise charter has sold more than 1200 passengers on its inaugural voyage, which will set sail on March 29.

The P&O Pacific Sun has been chartered by AllGayCruises.com.au for a three-day cruise off Sydney, and only needs 300 more passengers to be at capacity.

AllGayCruises.com.au director Dave Drummond said the organisation responsible for the cruise never expected such a huge response from the Australian market.

"We've taken so many bookings in the last month obviously with Mardi Gras on."

He said negotiations are underway to charter luxury ship Orion for another sailing later this year.

"This has been a great test for us to see if it would work in Australia," Drummond said.

"The response has been amazing and we're now talking to a number of different cruise liners to see what we can do in the future."

He said more than 70 per cent of passengers on the inaugural gay cruise are

first time cruisers, mainly from Australia and New Zealand.

"Because we originally made a group booking with (P&O) and then changed it to a charter we didn't have a say in when the cruise was going to depart," Drummond said.

"We're hoping in 2009 to have it directly

after Mardi Gras to attract some international visitors, and we hope it will be a seven-day one."

The first NavigATion three-day cruise departs March 29 and boasts fashion parades, themed dance parties and bingo with a gay twist.



P&O's Pacific Sun, host of the first-ever all-gay cruise

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