



Calling gay polo kings and queens

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Boutique gay travel agency Hautes Vacances has announced the first-ever polo tour catering to gay and lesbian polo players and those wanting to try the sport of kings for the first time.

The tour will take place in Argentina on a luxurious polo estancia. It will include tuition and tournaments, among opportunities to party and celebrate victories on the field at some of Buenos Aires' coolest gay nightspots.

Hautes Vacances director Victor Hoeld, himself a keen polo player, said the tour was open to anyone interested in having a go at the sport, whether they'd played for years or never picked up a mallet in their life.

"Some people might expect to learn polo from scratch because they've never ridden a horse before," Hoeld told *Sydney Star Observer*.

"They can expect to improve their skills in that regard. It requires a lot of attention when you do play but it's easy to pick up, and even beginners will have very quick success with it.

"It's a fast game with a lot of adrenaline in it and once people start they get hooked very quickly. There's a high level of fascination once you're in there."

Hoeld has been playing since 2004. Last year he travelled to the US to play with the California-based Gay Polo League.

"A university friend who studied in Buenos Aires for a semester came back a polo player, and told me I had to try the sport. I took a bit of convincing, but since I've started I've been quite committed to it," he said.

"The Gay Polo League was established two years



ago. It's a very fast-growing group with over 40 members now. They play games against clubs with non-gay players and form a part of the regular polo circuit around the California area.

"They enter tournaments and have been very successful. It's a growing sport there and they've entered a team in the most prestigious North American tournament in Miami, Florida, which is an amazing goal for them to achieve. They're the only group that does gay polo internationally."

Hoeld has been doing his bit to grow the sport within the gay community, having started a Gay Polo International Facebook page which now has members in around half-a-dozen countries.

"I would definitely like to see polo become a sport at the Gay Games. There's a lot of movement to make it an Olympic sport again too," he said.