



Shipload of Fans Sail to the Australian Open

January 19, 2015

It's game-on for 1800 cruise passengers today, as P&O Cruises' Pacific Pearl superliner departs Sydney to sail to the Australian Open in Melbourne.

The special cruise will deliver a shipload of tennis fans to the Victorian capital to enjoy two days of the tournament, in a visit expected to inject around \$1 million into the State economy.

The passengers will represent one of the biggest single groups to attend the Open on any one day.

P&O Cruises Senior Vice President Tammy Marshall said the tennis cruise was now an annual event for P&O, following last year's inaugural Australian Open voyage which visited the tournament for one day.

"Last year's event was a huge hit with our guests but we think this year's will ace it, serving up two full days and one evening of tennis," Ms Marshall said.

The cruise comes as new Tourism and Transport Forum research shows one in three Australians plan to travel overnight to attend a major event this year, with sporting events at the top of the table.

"Australians love big sporting events and they also love cruise holidays, so being able to combine the two is a match made in heaven for many people," Ms Marshall said.

With general admission and transfers to the Open on Wednesday and Thursday already included in their fare, guests on the five-night cruise have also purchased more than 2000 upgrade tickets which will see many of them courtside at the Rod Laver and Margaret Court arenas for their visit.

During their stay in Melbourne, guests will also take the time to enjoy some shopping, dining and sight-seeing - activities which will contribute valuable dollars to the economy.

Now an annual fixture on P&O Cruises' calendar, the Australian Open tennis part of the cruise line's 'main event' offering which also includes cruises to the Melbourne Cup, the 2015 Melbourne Food and Wine Festival and a raft of Christmas and New Year sailings.

"Cruising is the ideal way to attend major sporting events. Not only is it great value, but it also takes the stress out of planning and provides a fun and relaxing experience either side of the action," Ms Marshall said.

Tennis fans wanting to catch the action next year can join P&O Cruises' 2016 Australian Open cruise, departing Sydney on January 19. The five-night cruise is priced from \$699* per person quad share and includes transfers to and from the grounds and general admission tickets with upgrades available.

For more information visit www.pocruises.com.au or call 13 24 94.