

## CABO'S COMING OUT

If Efren Grano, the owner and general manager of Cabo Gay Vacations, has his way, Cabo will be included as one of the top destinations for gay travel. When asked if Cabo is truly, gay-friendly, his answer is a resounding; Yes!

Grano's opinion is based on experience. He worked in the hospitality industry in Puerto Vallarta before moving to Cabo six years ago, and in a recent poll at *gay.com*, Puerto Vallarta was voted a finalist in the category of top gay resort destinations for 2009. Efren Grano believes Cabo has a lot more to offer than Puerto Vallarta, including a more relaxed attitude towards homosexuality. He is so sure of this that five months ago he expanded his Sun Vacations Cabo Mexico business to include Cabo Gay Vacations and this expansion is already starting to pay off.

So, what makes a destination gay friendly? And who does this term include? According to Grano and a multitude of web-sites, gay friendly travel include lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people, or to shorten the terminology, there is the acronym LGBT, representing a community of anyone who is non-heterosexual. The ingredients that make a place LGBT friendly is a combination of many components.

In Grano's opinion, top on the list for his clients is to be treated the same as everyone else. Following close to this is safety. In his experience the majority of visitors, no matter what their sexual preferences, are travel savvy enough, to show respect for the culture of the country they're visiting and are discreet with public displays of affection. But, if they do want to hold hands or give a hug, they're not likely to be heckled or made to feel uncomfortable in Cabo and that helps a lot towards cultivating an image where everyone is welcomed.

Cabo Gay Vacations is diligently working with hotels, ground transportation and activity employees to not leave anything to chance for the comfort of their clients. The last thing they would want is a couple checking into a hotel and the front desk staff making an embarrassing fuss about there only being one bed in the room, when that was the request at the time of reservation. His company picks hotels that have the sophistication to handle any guest request. Grano anticipates soon to have one hotel in San Lucas that is exclusive to LGBT travelers.

A growing trend that he is seeing is, gay cruise ships. They now come into our port four times a year, and when they do, Grano's staff is there to whisk their guests off to various activities. Some favorite recreational pursuits are the ecological adventure tours at RANCHO CARISUVA located on the Pacific side, or a six hour sailing trip on the TLALOC sail boat, or the ever popular beach volleyball party on Medano Beach.

And what about Gay Bars? So far the selection is limited. We have Las Jarras disco and bar that can hold more or less 100 people, has a dance floor, a strobe-lit atmosphere and a good sound system. They also have live shows and are opening a second location. Another place just starting

up called La Farsante, is already showing promise of being popular. Interestingly, their name translates literally in English to 'The Phony.' Not having spoken directly with the owners, it can only be speculation as to the significance of the name choice.

Cabo Gay Vacations is taking a big leap towards capturing a piece of the lucrative gay travel dollars, estimated to be, by the Travel Industry Association of America in the \$65 billion dollar range, by hosting GAY FEST CABO '09 - June 5th-8th, 2009 to be held at the Hotel Tesoro and Las Jarras Disco Bar.

Grano is optimistic there will be more than 300 attendees at the three day party and he considers this good for the first ever Gay Fest Cabo. So far most of the inquiries have been from local residents, but this doesn't daunt Grano's expectations for the future. He knows the word will spread and he's positive Cabo is going to give Puerto Vallarta a run for the travel money.

For more details about Gay Fest Cabo 09 you can go to [www.cabogayvacations.com](http://www.cabogayvacations.com) or email [sunvacationscabo@gmail.com](mailto:sunvacationscabo@gmail.com)