

MOBILE

Porter & Sail mobile app gives hotels valuable friend

November 13, 2015



Dandelyan bar in London

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Upscale hotels and their clients have found a new ally in mobile concierge application Porter & Sail.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

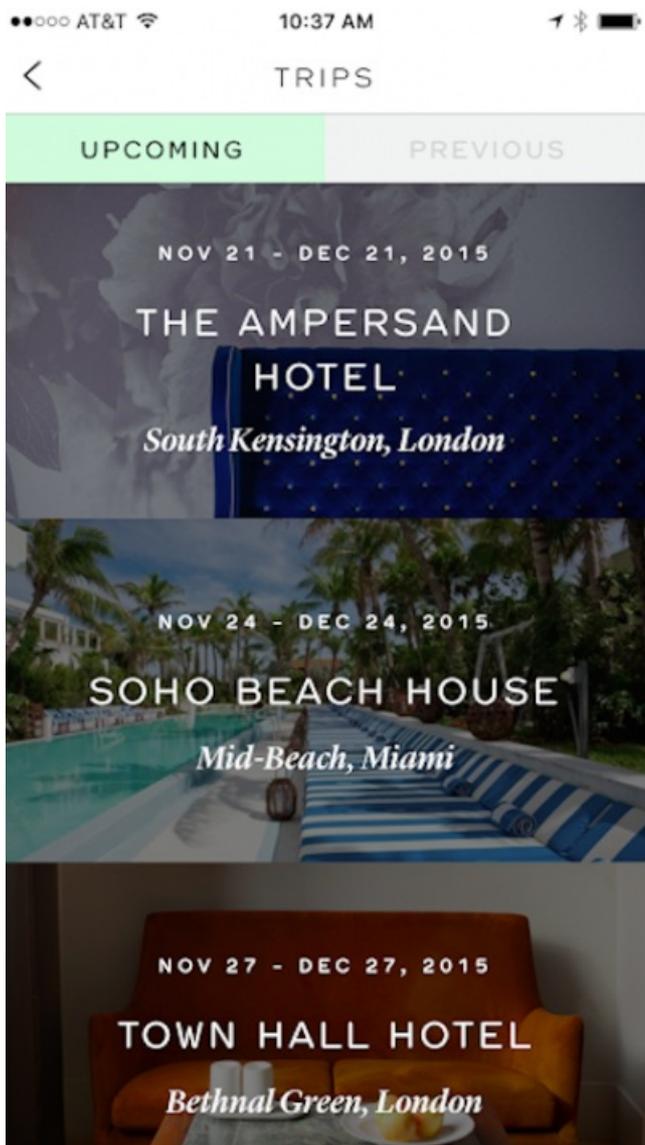
Porter & Sail uses insiders and experts to curate dining and shopping locations, arts and culture experiences and provide original written content and photography. The mobile app will improve a guest's stay by giving her the peace of mind and convenience associated with a hotel even when venturing into the city.

"Porter & Sail empowers hotels to extend their exceptional service to the digital realm," said Caitlin Zaino, co-founder and CEO of **Porter & Sail**. "Great hotels do what they do wonderfully, we do what we do that is, keep a stable of experts in each city with their ear to the ground, then marry that with ahead-of-the-curve technology. Whether a guest is looking for high art evening or a hole-in-the-wall taco, we have the perfect recommendation ready where the guest lives: on mobile.

"We're building a meaningful hotel amenity that guests will recognize and hotels will be proud to offer," she said. "It's not enough to simply have an app; the digital experience should mirror the on-property one and that's what we provide our luxury partners."

Friends in low places

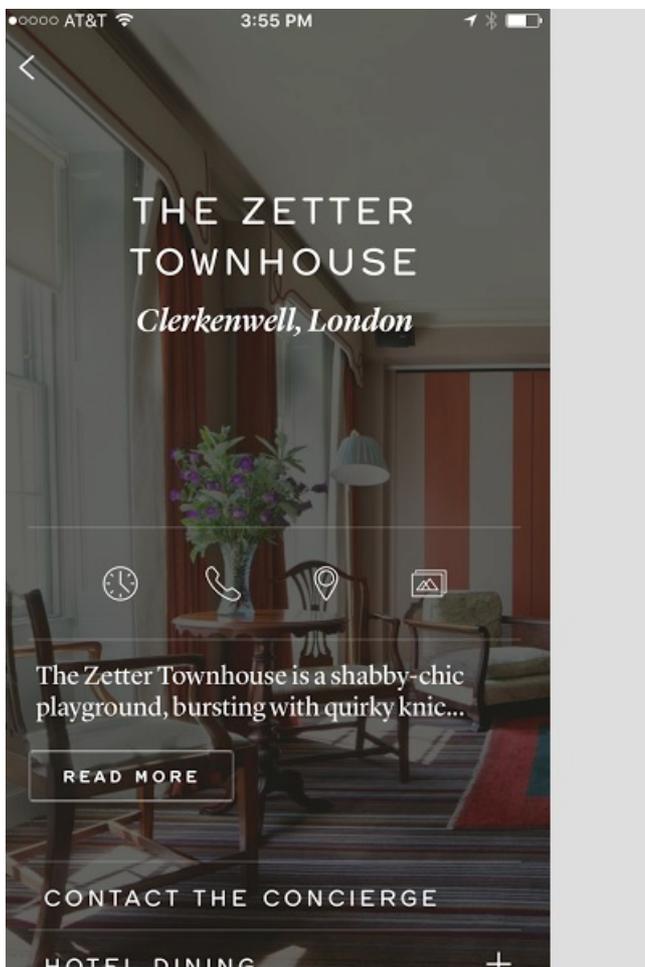
Guests at partnering hotels are given an access code good for the length of stay. Currently, Porter & Sail is available in London, Miami, Los Angeles and Singapore, with New York, Tokyo, Milan and Shanghai coming soon.



Porter & Sail app screenshot

The app prides itself on offering less obvious, unique recommendations, such as a steampunk planetarium that Moby frequents in Los Angeles or a Greek tailor in London whose clientele includes Adrien Sauvage. City guides are readily available online, so having knowledgeable insiders with unexpected and little-known recommendations can help Porter & Sail set itself apart from competition.

Porter & Sail also can push notifications for time- and location-sensitive content. For example, if a user walks by a recommended location, a notification is automatically sent. It can also request and confirm restaurant reservations, run searches, provide maps and connect the consumer to her hotel or to Uber at anytime, among other benefits.



Hotel contact page

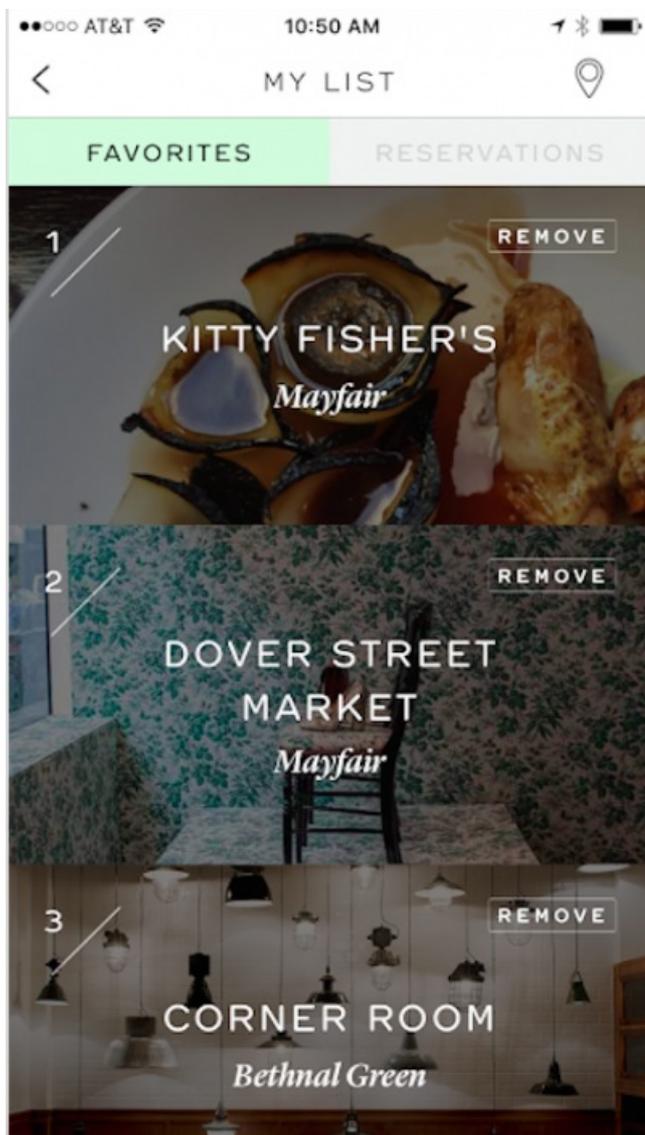
Porter & Sail is equally useful for the hotel, providing a dashboard that lets the hotel staff determine an individual's spending habits and preferences, what restaurants they like and what they are sharing on social media through the app. On a macro-scale, it also forwards aggregated analysis and information regarding what venues are popular among guests.

Guests can use this information and a user's profile information to tailor the experience to the guest and provide better service.

"Porter & Sail is very much a tool for the hotel and its staff," Ms. Zaino said. "Through us, the hotel becomes the ultimate city authority, and every staff member is a concierge, empowered to deliver exceptional service at all points of the guest's stay from booking through checkout.

"By keeping the hotel as the central conduit, we ensure they're meaningfully connected to how a modern traveler behaves," she said.

With consumers turning to sites such as TripAdvisor for recommendations and services such as Airbnb for hospitality, upscale hotels need to provide something exclusive and desirable to remain competitive in the future. An app such as Porter & Sail provides benefits online recommendations cannot and helps the hotel to remain a cut above the rest.



Porter & Sail PP screenshot

Although numerous apps function as city guides, Porter & Sail brings together consumers and hotels to their mutual benefit, which may help them stand out in a crowded field.

Porter & Sail can be downloaded for [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices.

Unlikely allies

Other city guides have also partnered with hotels and found ways to distinguish themselves.

For example, global destination experts LUXE City Guides introduced an exclusive, invitation-only mobile application for the travel industry in August that delivers consolidated itineraries, destinations and travel documents directly to clients' devices.

The service, entitled Luxe Concierge, is designed for the travel industry and is meant to benefit hotels, travel agents, high-end conference planners and others with affluent client bases. The app serves as a one-stop-shop for all travel needs and will serve both as a useful tool and as a way of promoting Luxe's Travel Partner Program and strengthening its brand ([see story](#)).

A seemingly never-ending stream of travel-related third party programs has become an obstacle for hotels.

Luxury hotel brands are feeding the insatiable consumer desire for travel research with a number of digital tactics.

While consumer reviews on travel Web sites and word of mouth still hold sway over many travel decisions, hotels are becoming increasingly transparent to reel in the consumers busily browsing for their next trip. Microsites, mobile applications, social media feeds and content hubs are employing enhanced research tools to convince consumers to book ([see story](#)).

Porter & Sail offers a new way for hotels to combat the issue.

"Porter & Sail seeks to complement, rather than replace, the personal connection associated with the concierge at luxury properties," Ms. Zaino said. "In addition to the guest concierge app, we provide our hotel clients with a real time concierge system."

"Our traveler profile information is unprecedented in industry, providing the concierge with access to information about who their guest is so they can further personalize their stay on property and each time they return," she said.

"Travel is stressful. Strange cities present a surfeit of choice; none of us have time for a sub-par experience. We know that the concierge is a true differentiator for a hotel, so we work hard to make sure the concierge is well-informed, ever-present, and where the guest is."

Final Take

Forrest Cardamenis, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.