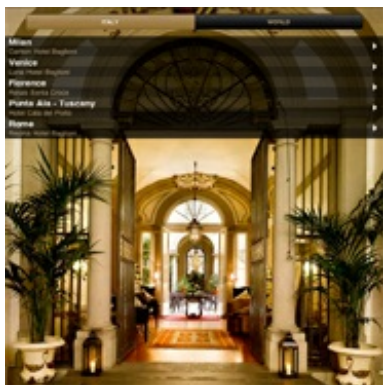


MOBILE

Baglioni steps up app experience through concierge tips

March 12, 2012



By RACHEL LAMB

Relais & Châteaux's Baglioni Hotels is stepping up the traveling experience through concierge tips in its new iPad application that offer the best places to eat, go shopping and be entertained in cities where its hotels are located.

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Luxury Daily

In addition to checking out the concierge tips, users can see high-resolution images of all Baglioni properties, book a stay and explore Baglioni special offers and packages. The app is available for free in Apple's App Store.

"One of the first things that hotel guests do after checking in is to ask the concierge if they can suggest any good restaurants," said Rick Singer, CEO of [GreatApps.com](#), New York. "This also holds true for entertainment.

"Guests that have selected a specific hotel as a their destination are very likely to trust suggestions from that particular hotel," he said. "If you trust the hotel to spend your night there sleeping, then you will most likely receive the top suggestions from them."

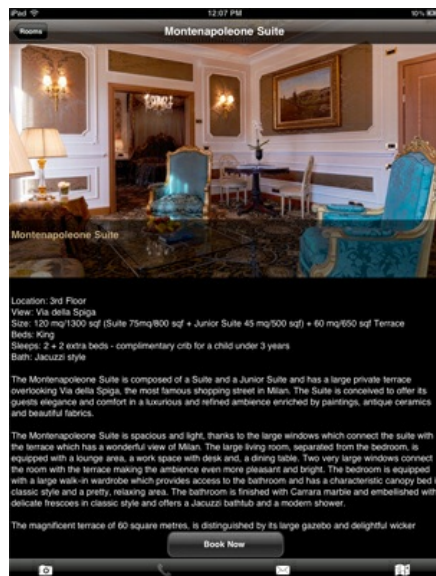
Mr. Singer is not affiliated with [Baglioni](#) or [Relais & Châteaux](#), but agreed to comment as an expert on mobile apps.

Suite deals

The Baglioni app is split into four sections: Baglioni Hotels Collection, concierge tips, book with us and tempting offers.

Tapping on the first section takes consumers to a list of Baglioni hotels split into those in Italy and worldwide.

Choosing a property takes consumers to a section where they can view images of the hotel exterior, rooms and suites, contact details and restaurants.



Property details

Other options are concierge tips, which include information on nearby shopping, art, entertainment, nightlife and dining.

Baglioni's concierges curate experiences complete with contact information, directions and multimedia content for each city including London, Rome, Florence, Milan and Aix-en-Provence in France.



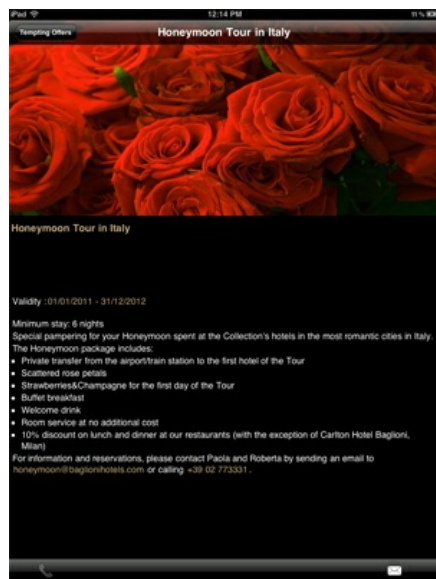
Concierge tips for London

The app also uses the iPad's GPS to find attractions near the user.

Users can view promotions and packages specific to that hotel with contact information.

Consumers can also look at Baglioni Experiences and hotel packages through the app by clicking on that section.

Promotions include sweet suite, Baglioni gourmet experiences, honeymoon tour in Italy, women travelers and babymoon.



Package options

When users click on a specific promotion or package, they can view images and more details on the promotion including cost, the hotels at which the package is offered and what they can expect when they arrive.

The app is commerce-enabled so that consumers can book a stay at a property.

“Despite being a luxury destination, the Baglioni is a brand that is not as popular as other high-end hotels such as The Four Seasons, Mandarin Oriental or Ritz-Carlton,” Mr. Singer said.

“The Baglioni having an app is a great away for people to become aware of them and that they do have other locations,” he said. “It’s a smart branding move and allows them to be just as competitive as other luxury chains.”

In the bag

Many luxury brands are increasing the experience of guests, whether it is through apps or otherwise.

For example, Starwood Hotels & Resorts’ brands including the St. Regis and The Luxury Collection are offering private benefits to loyalty program members through VIP tickets to Cirque du Soleil performances and backstage passes in major United States and Canadian markets ([see story](#)).

In addition, Miami-based Fontainebleau hotel is using The New York Times mobile site to reach an affluent audience with a banner ad for a promotion called the “24/7 delight,” where consumers can save up to 20 percent off a stay ([see story](#)).

Also, Klocke Publishing Co.’s Hideaways magazine released a mobile app that hones in

on luxury hotels, restaurants and experiences in Paris ([see story](#)).



Hideaways' Paris app

Luxury consumers are likely tech-savvy and expect the newest innovations from a hospitality brand, including the pre-booking experience.

Since a vacation is a time for relaxation and no stress, many affluent consumers like to lean back and relax while they are planning their trips.

Therefore, brands should try to make the app experience as relaxing as possible.

“One of the most frustrating things about using an app for a hotel or an airline is the navigation never seems to work as good as we would like,” Mr. Singer said.

“The best practice is to keep it simple [and] use the capabilities of photos to show as much of the property as possible,” he said.

Final Take

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