



airbnb

Airbnb ECO:

Encouraging sustainability through eco-friendly stays and supporting local businesses

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Challenge

Ryan Scott from Airbnb tasked our Spring ID 460 section with producing a solution with potential to **decrease the enviromental footprint of Airbnb guests** and including all phases of research, design, testing, and prototype development respectively.

Research Goals

Research kicked off the process. Before jumping to solutions we needed to familiarize ourselves with the brand. We looked into what they currently had available to users, and how sustainability could be implemented into the guests experience. Another important aspect of research was understanding the market and what other companies were doing in the realm of sustainability.

Research Insights

Competitor Research

After looking at other hospitality services and digital apps, **Uber** stood out as having a particularly solid plan for reaching zero-emissions. Other competitors offered little to guide guests to sustainable stays, and only a few made attempts to educate their audience on sustainability principles.

Market Research

While guests care about sustainability, it's still "much less important to consumers than things like price, type of destination, convenience and amenities".

Sources: aytm Sustainable Travel Survey, "How the Airbnb Community Support Environmentally Friendly Travel Worldwide" article, STR survey, Skift Travel Habits Survey

Airbnb Research

Sustainable Travel Report from 2017 indicates that **hosts are already doing a good job making their listings greener.**

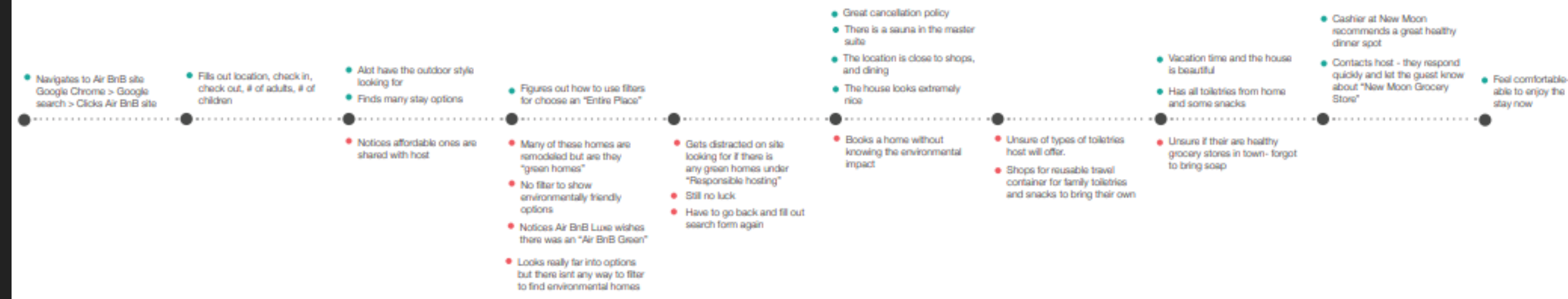
Interestingly enough, Airbnb also has a history of partnering with policymakers and NGO's.

Sources: "Airbnb: Helping travel grow greener" report (2017), "How the Airbnb Community Support Environmentally Friendly Travel Worldwide" article

User Journeys

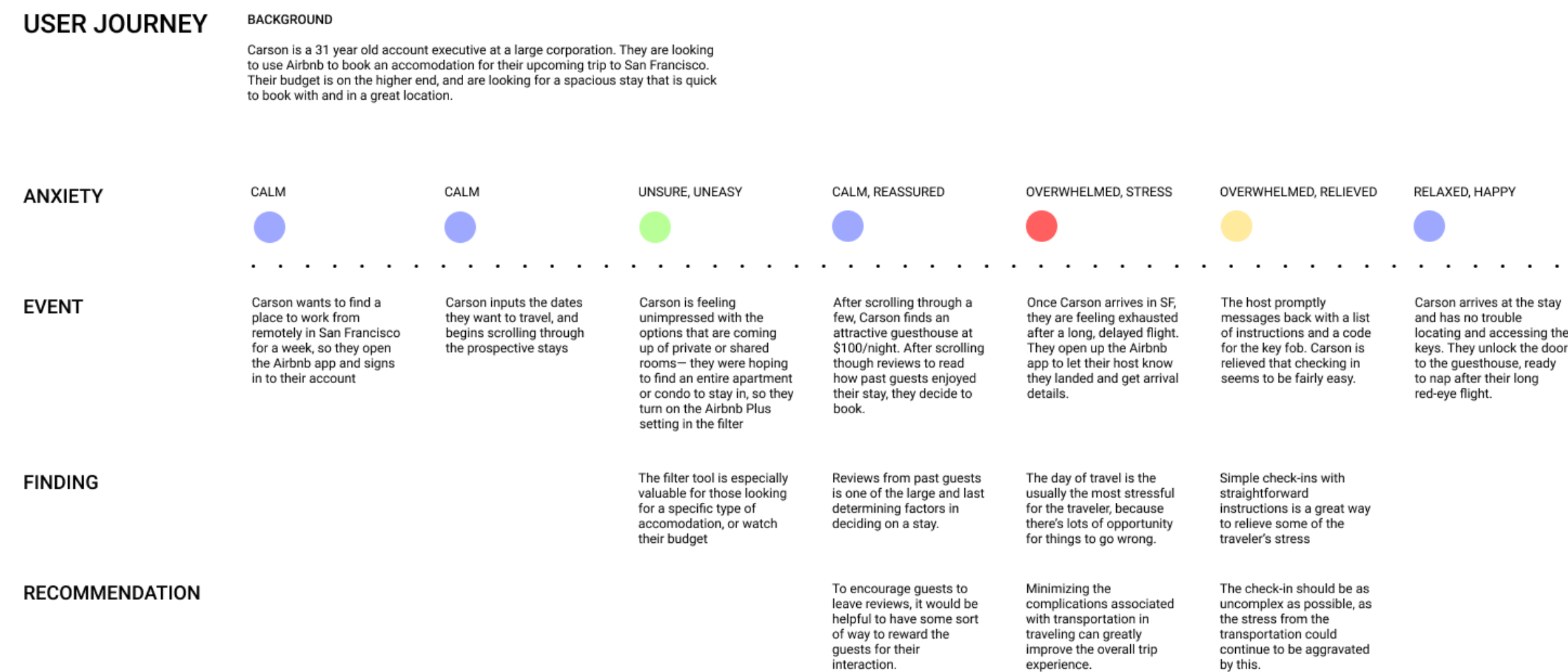
This portion of the research helped us re-expand and think of many different types of users. We discovered more pain points that we had previously overlooked. After branching off to complete this part of the research we reconverged and had some overlapping takeaways. This helped us reassess our previous ideas, and better understand how to move forward.

Environmentally Concious Family - Booking with Air BnB



User Journey 1 & 2

In depth walk through of the amenities and experience - from booking to enjoying the stay, we identified possible pain points.



Sustainability Advocate

Airbnb User Journey - Mobile App

General Background

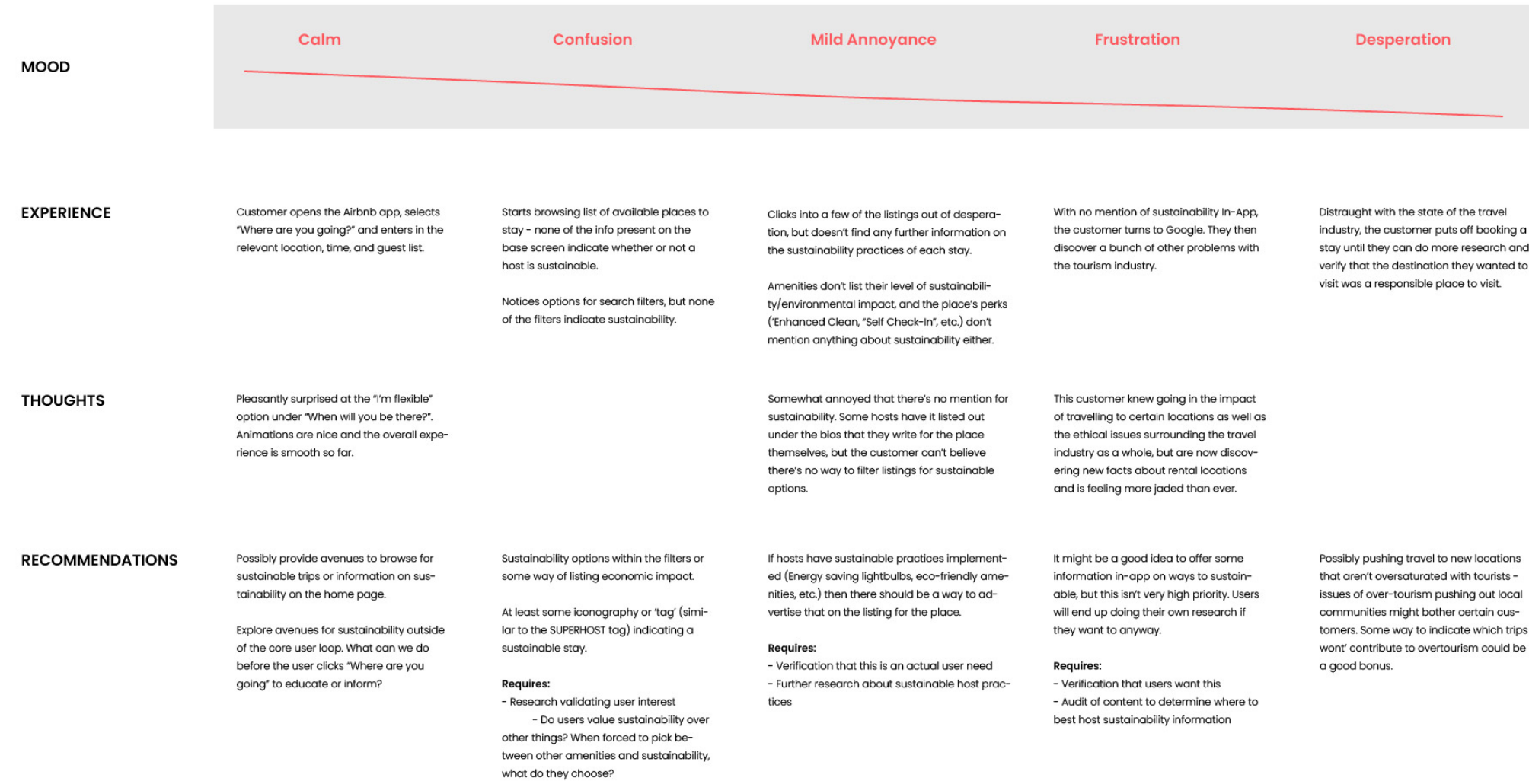
An environmentally conscious individual that's mostly proficient in Airbnb wants to book a stay that's sustainable. They're already motivated to book sustainably, so there's no need for incentivization. All they need is to find out which stays are sustainable or not.

User Needs

The user simply needs to find a stay that's environmentally responsible. This particular user isn't dead set on booking a trip yet, just browsing - they want to see what's available and whether or not any hosts have implemented sustainable practices.

Summary of Pain Points

Inside the core user loop of searching for a place to stay and booking a place, there's largely no indication of which stays are sustainable. Nothing in the listing page indicates eco-friendly product usage, energy saving lightbulbs, etc. Sustainability isn't considered as a search filter as well.



Sustainability Novice

Airbnb User Journey - Mobile App

General Background

The user is an individual in their late 20's looking to book a stay for them and their partner. They don't mind being sustainable, but won't go out of their way to pick a host based on their sustainability practices. They would be more actively environmentally conscious if provided incentivization.

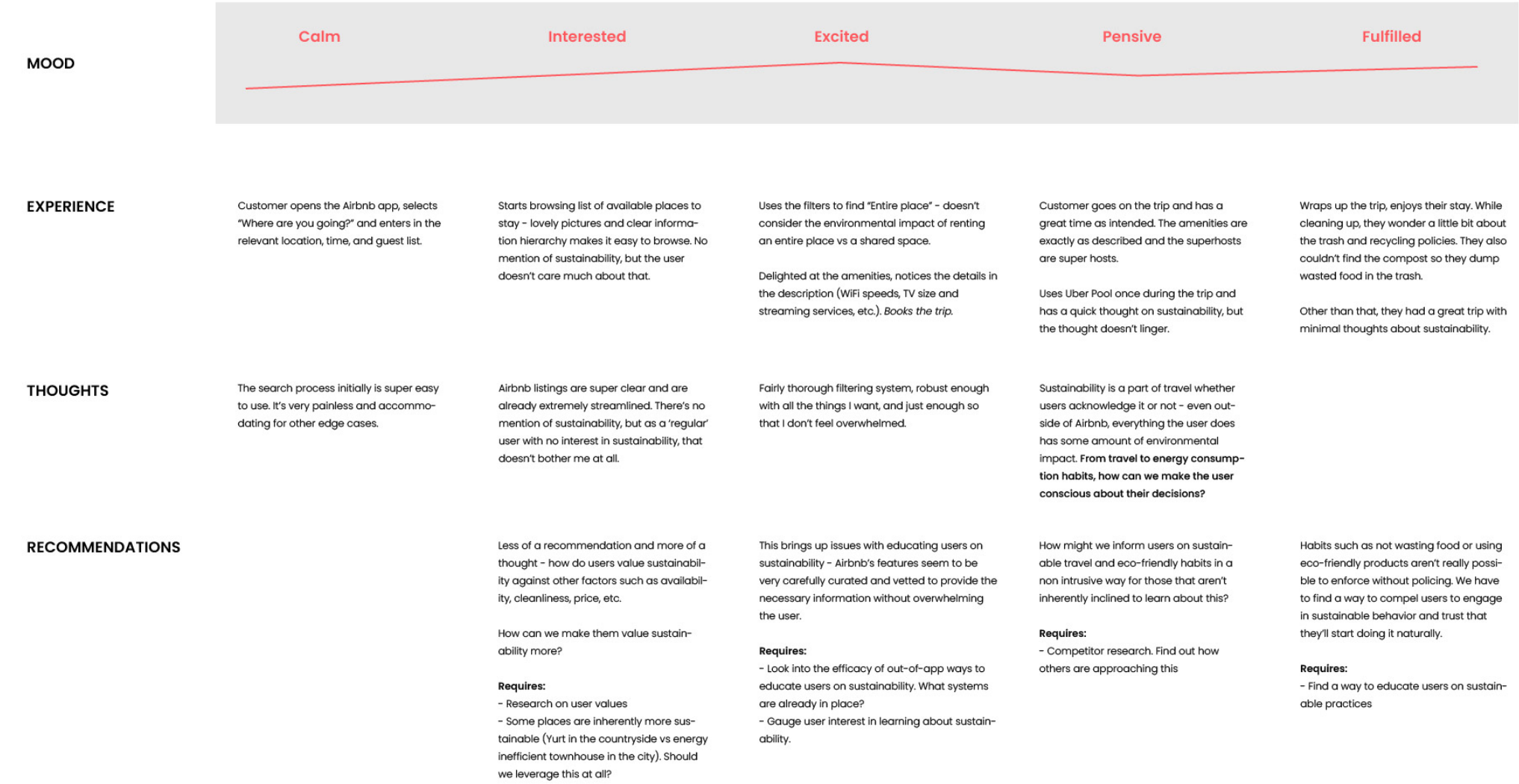
User Needs

The user simply needs to book a stay. They have little interest in going out of their way to make environmentally conscious decisions, and has no idea where to get started on making sustainable travel choices.

Summary of Pain Points

When not explicitly looking for sustainable options, Airbnb is a delight to use.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of sustainability information on the Airbnb app, this particular user model is very unlikely to make sustainable choices.



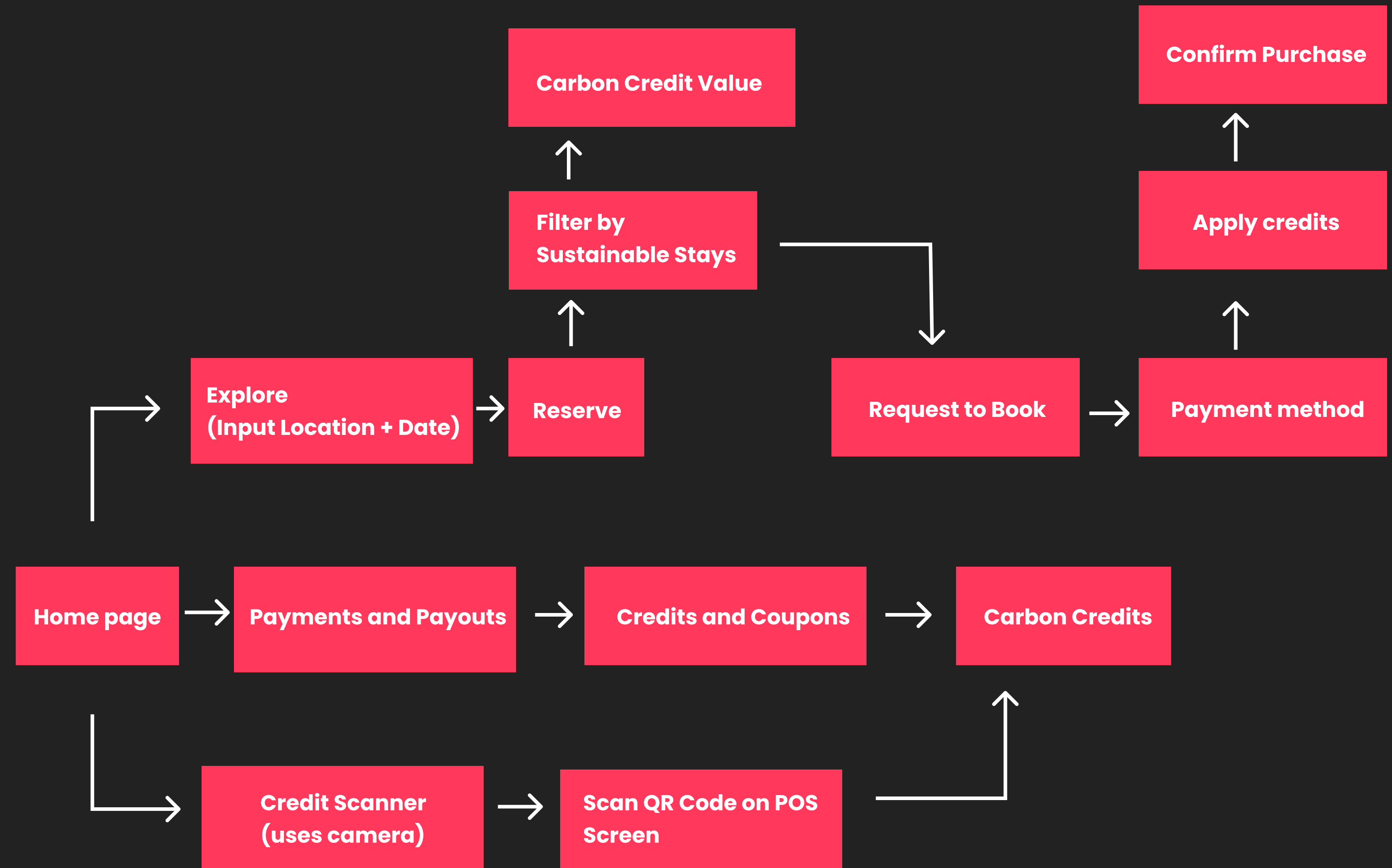
User Journey 3 & 4

Doing user journeys from different perspectives taught us that the problem statement and overall airbnb experience is very different depending on the user's goals and values.

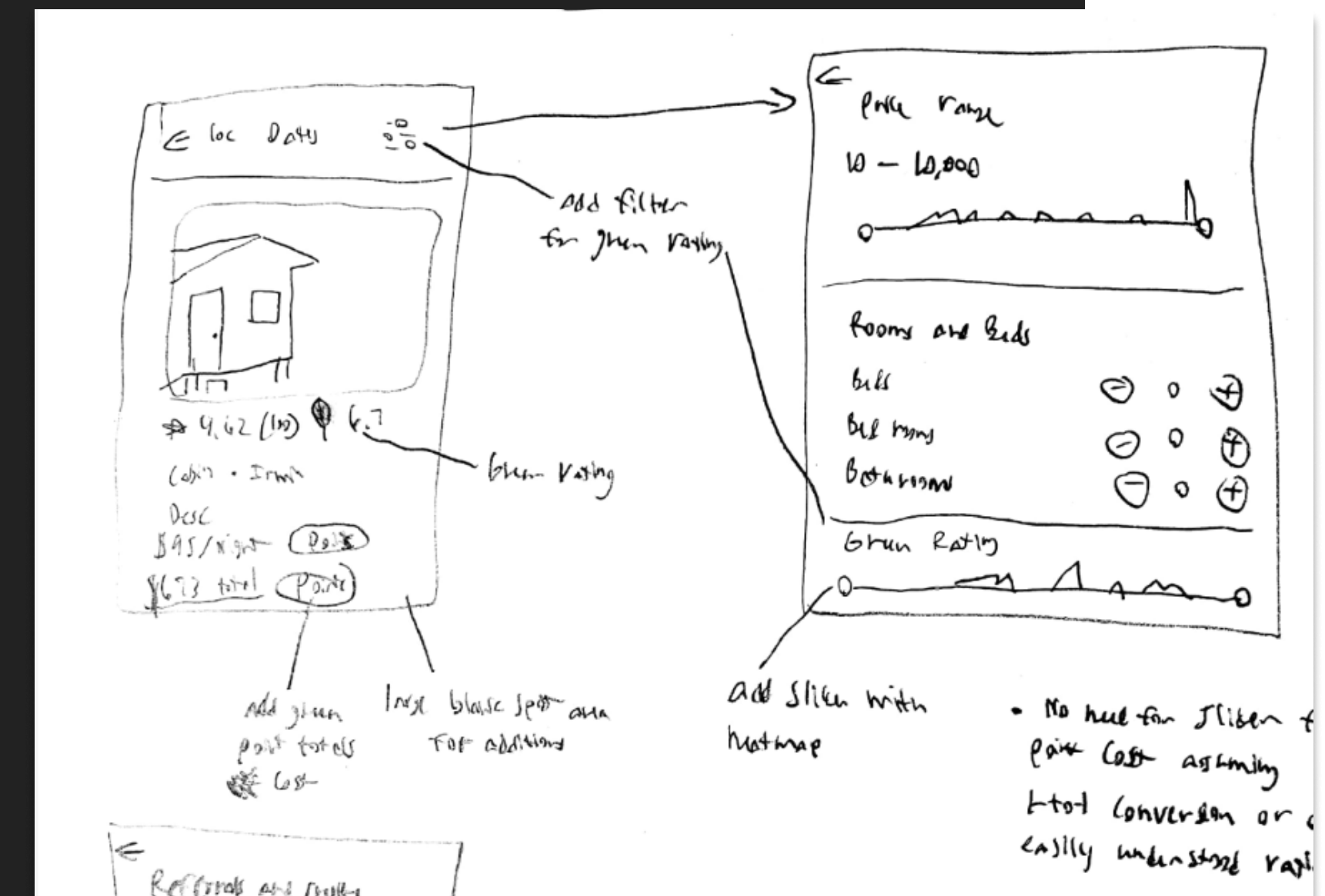
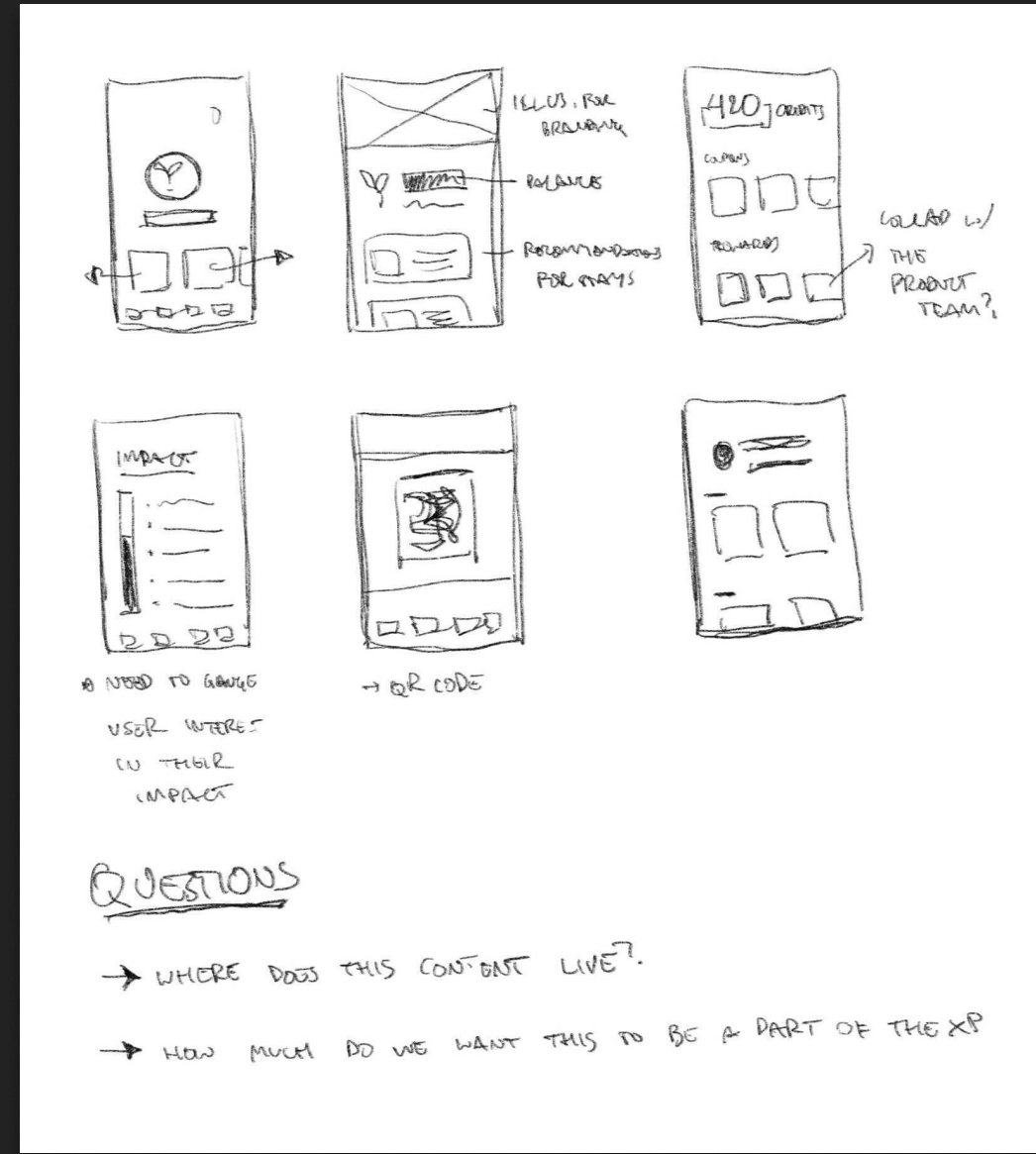
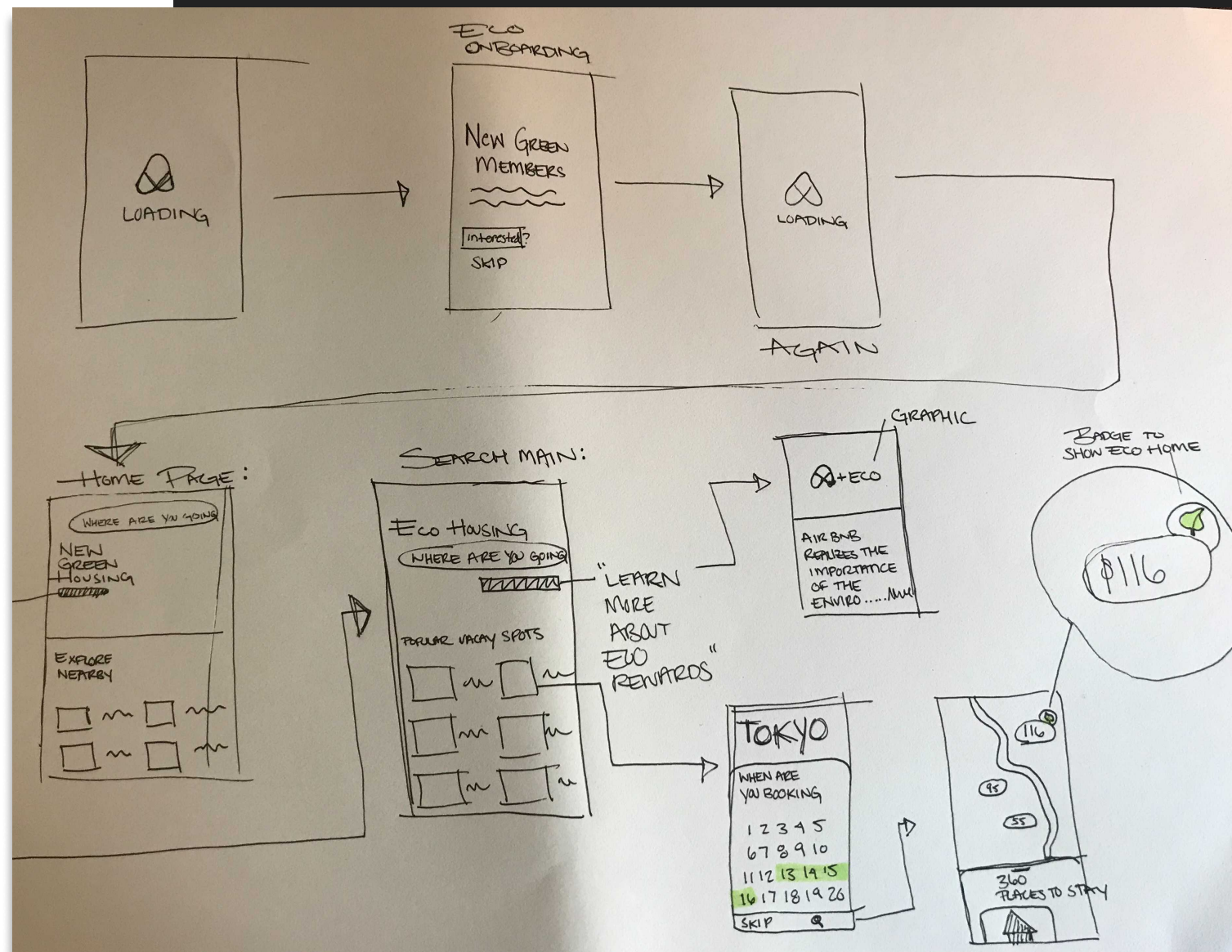
The users journeys helped us gain a familiarity of the Airbnb process and gave us a list of assumptions to validate through research.

User Flow

Discovering a natural user progression through the App. How could we create a smooth flow from opening the App to booking a sustainable stay. Also, what could be eliminated so there were fewer but more clear steps to better the users experience.

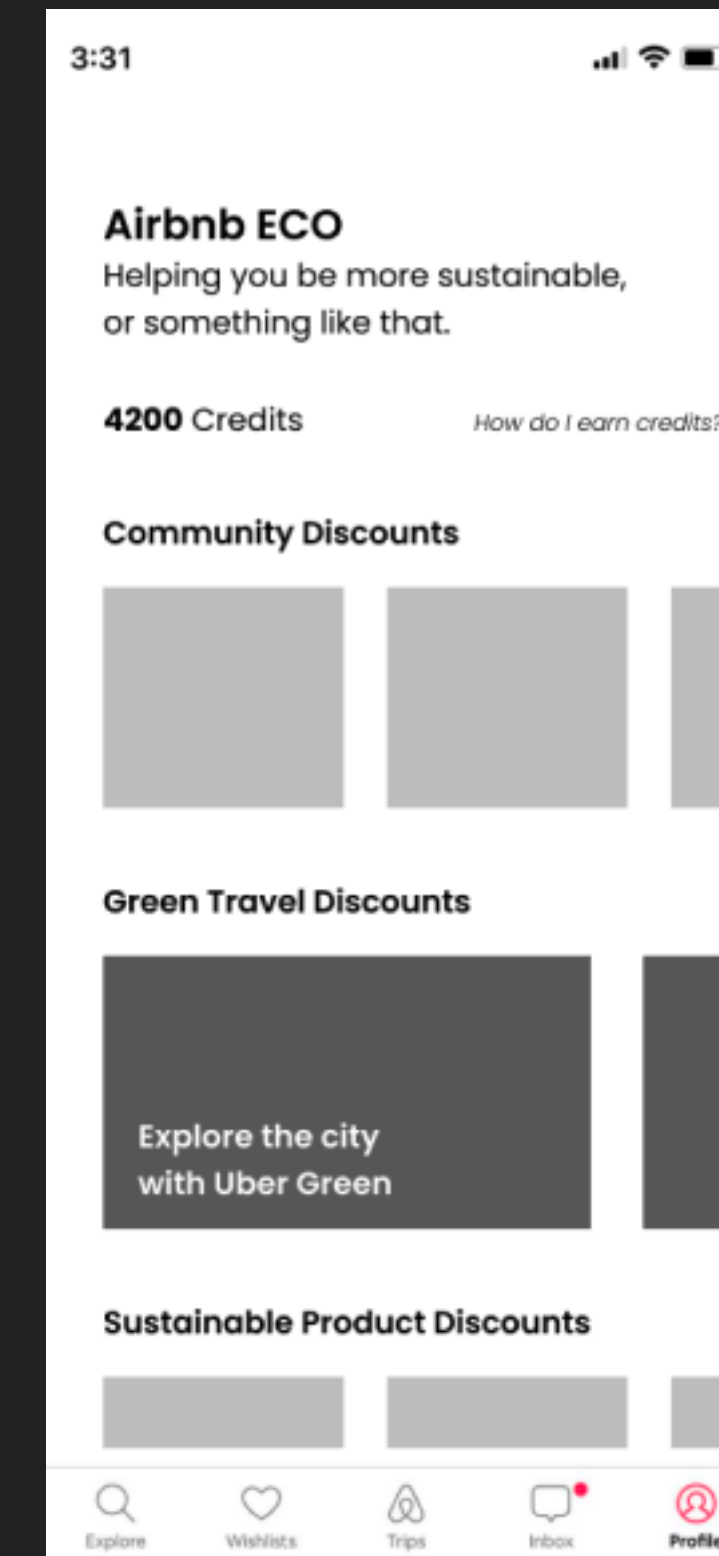
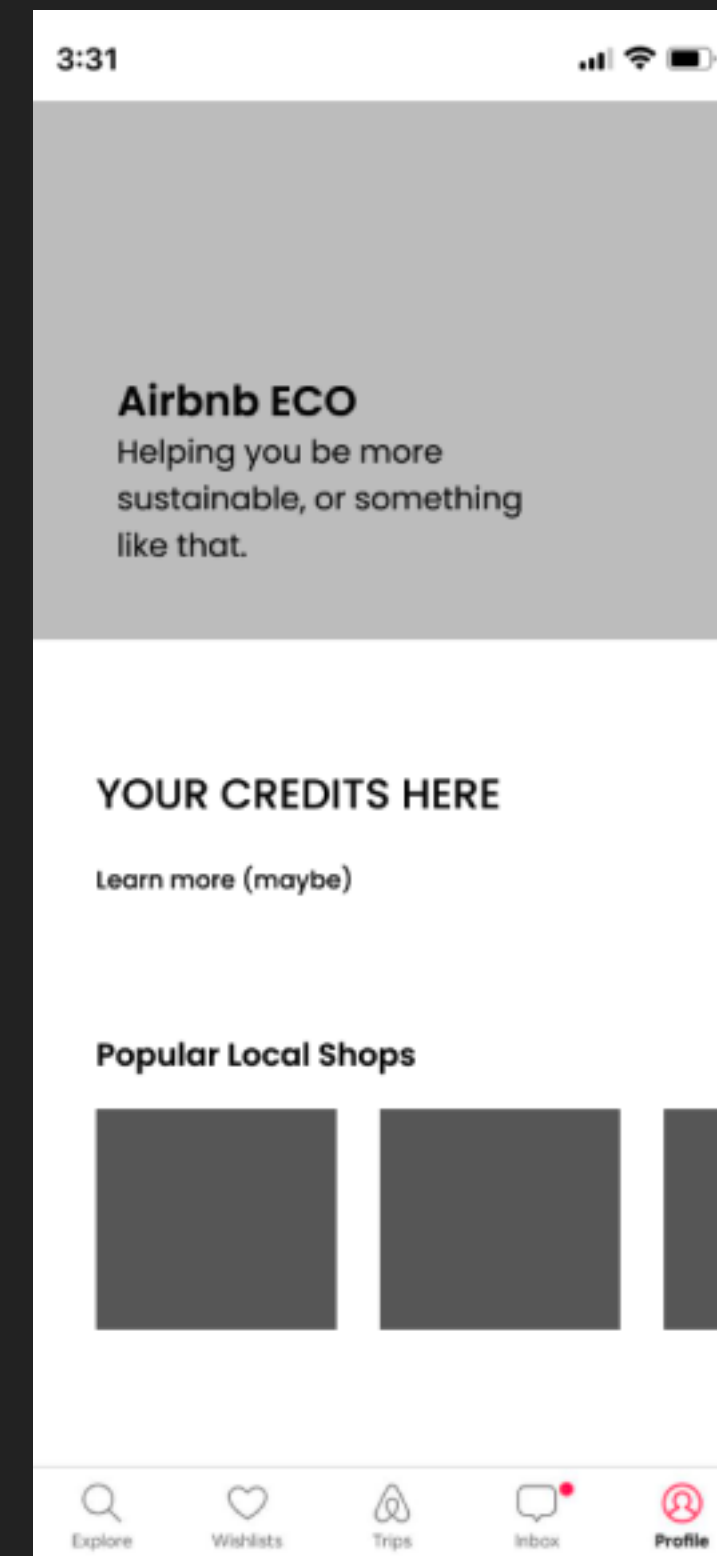
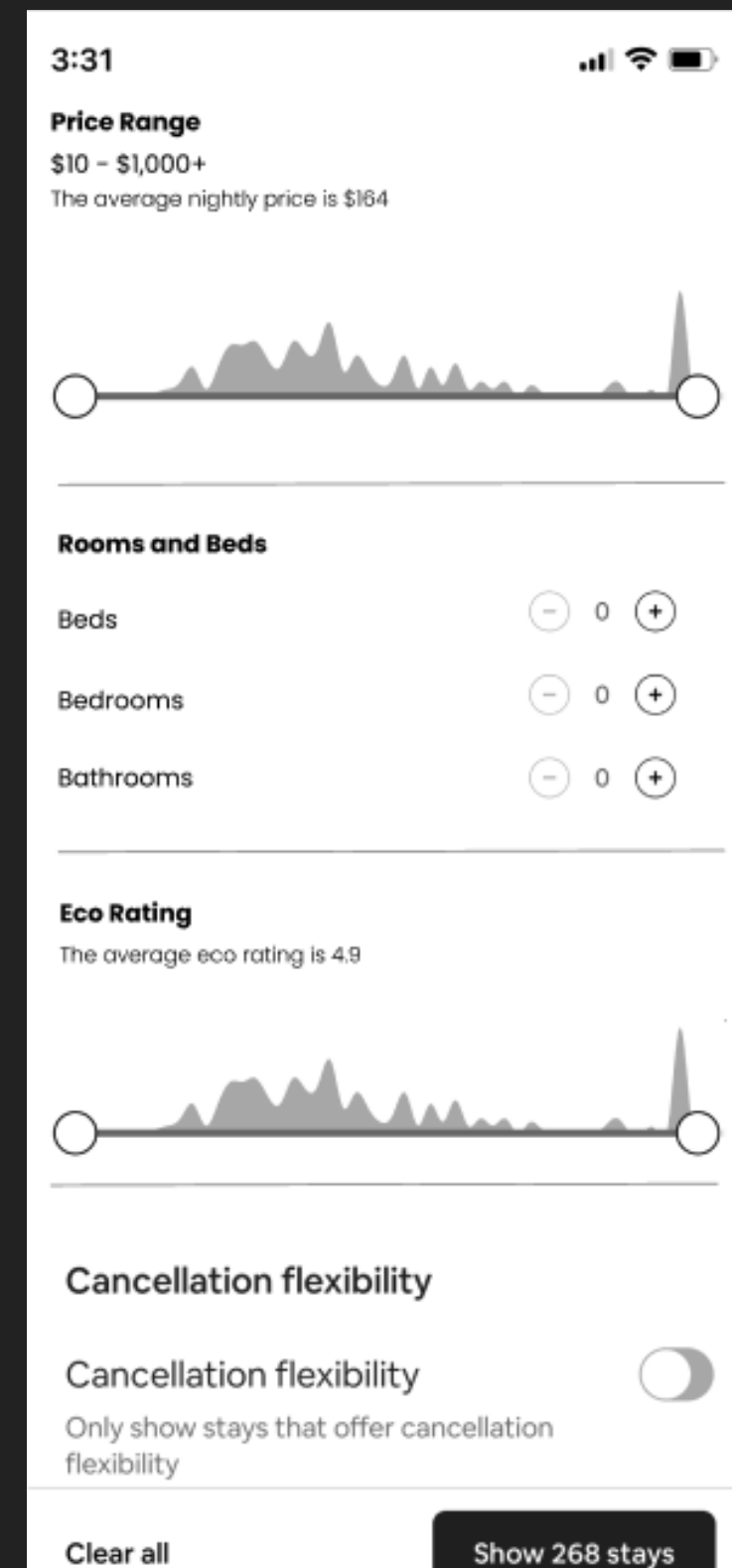
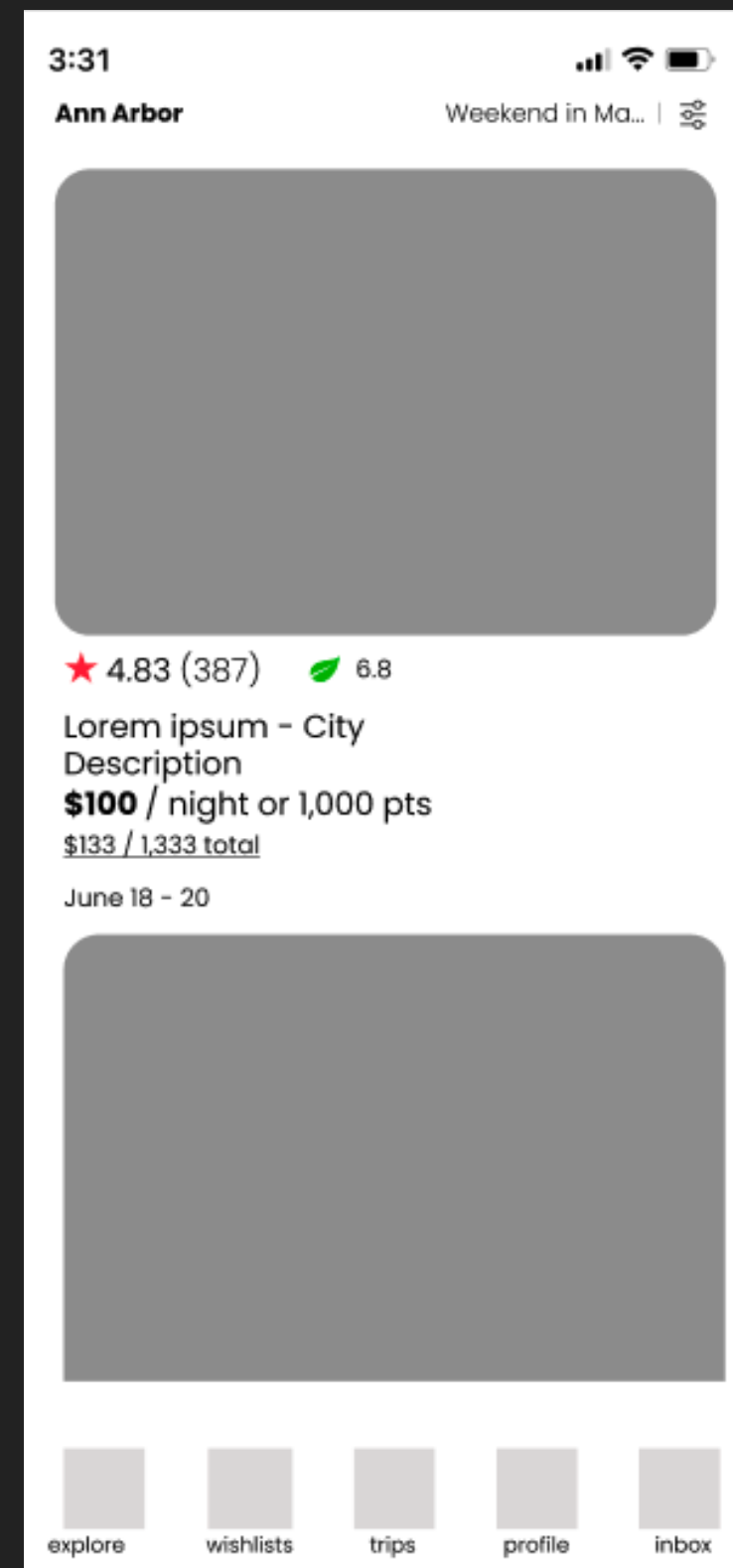


Sketches



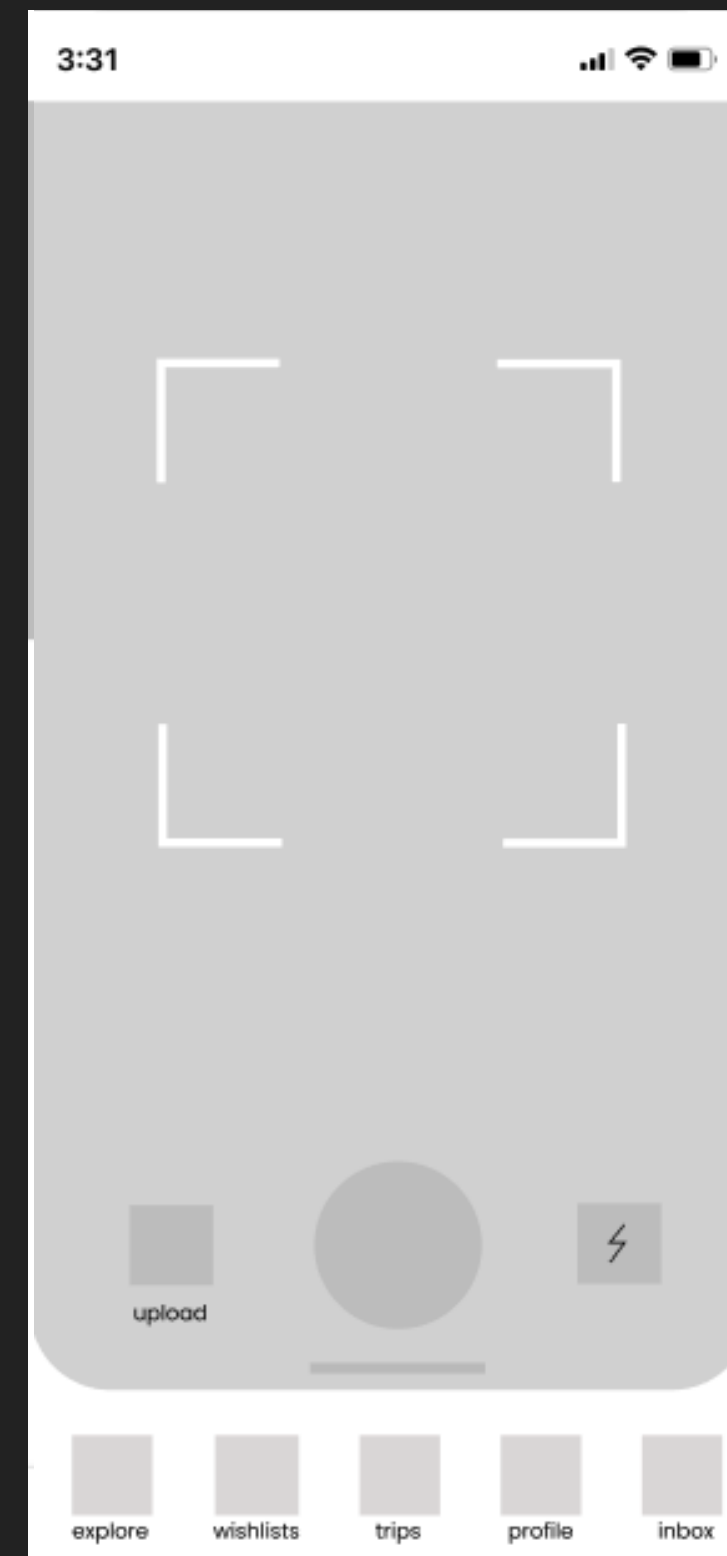
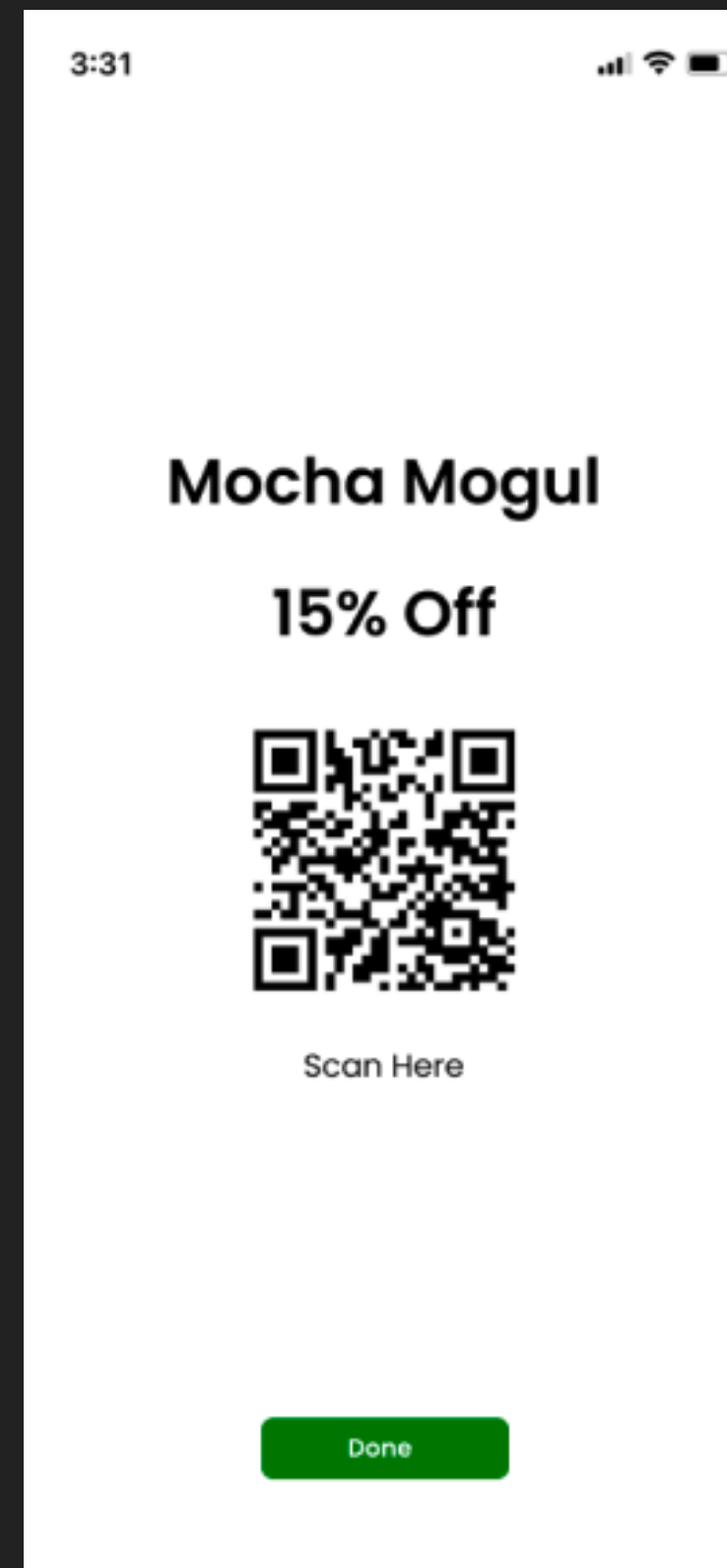
Exploring what Air Bnb app screens could look like including the Eco Credits. The placement of the leaf icon needed to be visible on many screens to help guide users, but unobtrusive to the current flow of the app.

Wireframes



Wireframes testing the use of the “eco” icon and placement of credits earned from booking an eco stay. These wireframes were built off the current apps information architecture.

Wireframes (cont.)



After deliberating how to make the eco credits rewards available to users when shopping locally, we decided on QR codes. These codes would be pulled up by the user through the app, creating a familiar and quick digital interaction for users who already use coupons in this manner.

User Testing

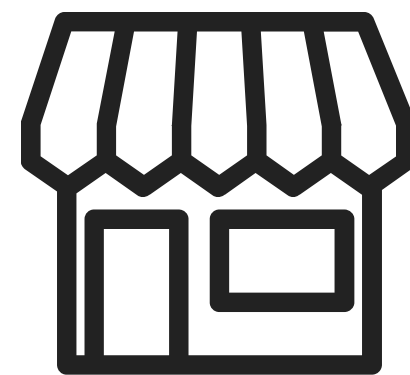
UI prototype testing with users revealed several issues:

- The small business aspect of the reward system was not entirely in line with users idea of Airbnb as a brand, in that it is a place to book stays or experiences and nothing more
- Users rarely interacted with the bottom navigation tabs
- Not all users read the initial description on what eco credits are
 - Informational tooltips would be helpful on multiple pages, such as search results

Results



Eco stays were successfully found when marked with a small icon on the main page.



Discounts earned through eco stays are successful when in a familiar QR code format.



Users were more successful when shown multiple touch points for eco credits.

Final Solution

Our final iteration retained both eco credits and small business reward integrations as the primary features. Users are able to earn the credits by booking participating stays and redeem those credits for the same. There are visual indicators of credit value on the search results, listing details, and booking pages, along with potential earnings as part of each listing. From the Airbnb Eco section users can view their current credit total as well as nearby participating businesses and additional information on the Airbnb Eco program.