

Q cirbnb

Airbnb ECO:

Encouraging sustainability through eco-friendly stays and supporting local businesses

DANIEL KING, AMY WISEGARVER, JO BLOOMFIELD, ALEX CHANG-LAM





Daniel King

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Amy Wisegarver

GRAPHIC DESIGN





Jo Bloomfield

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Alex Chang-Lam

MARKETING

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 hospitatality 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 reasses our previous ideas, and better understand how to move forward.

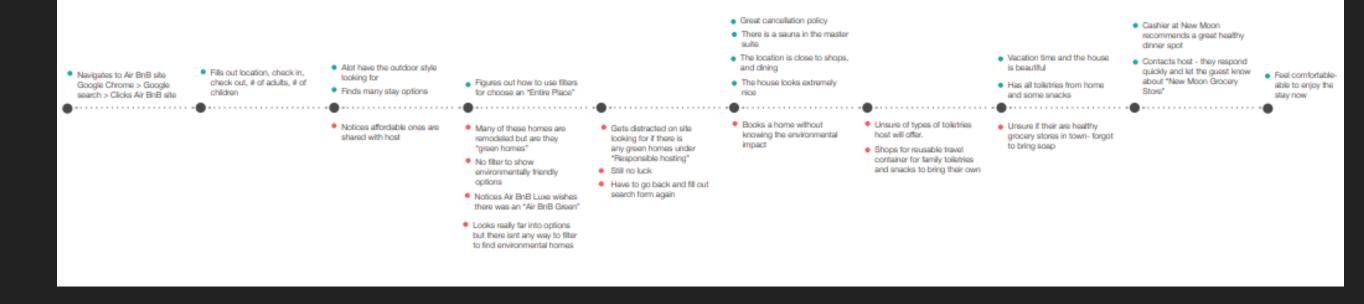
Environmentally Concious Family -Booking with Air BnB

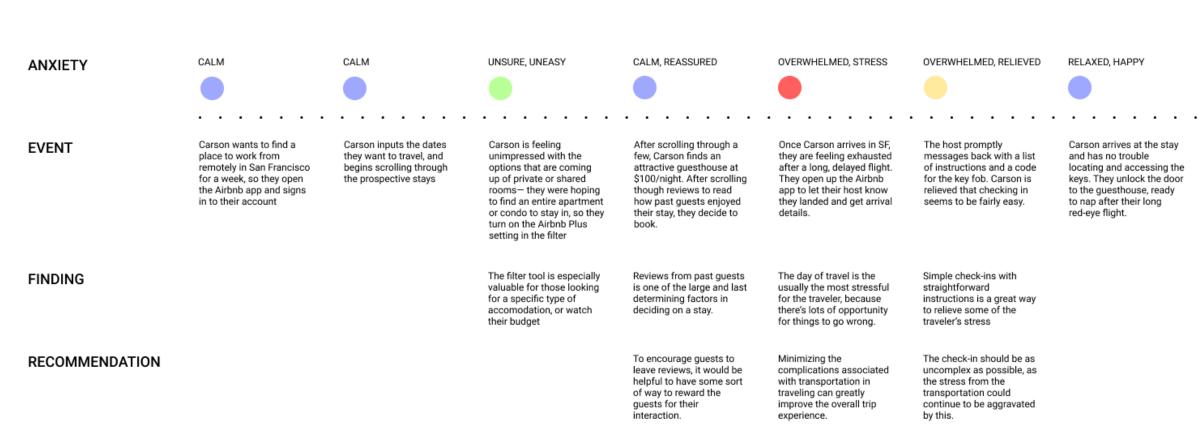
BACKGROUND

to book with and in a great location.

Carson is a 31 year old account executive at a large corporation. They are looking to use Airbnb to book an accomodation for their upcoming trip to San Francisco. Their budget is on the higher end, and are looking for a spacious stay that is guick

USER JOURNEY





RELAXED, HAPPY

Carson arrives at the stay and has no trouble locating and accessing the keys. They unlock the door to the guesthouse, ready to nap after their long red-eye flight.

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.

MOOD	Calm	Confusion	Mild Annoyance	Frustration	Desperation
EXPERIENCE	Customer opens the Airbnb app, selects "Where are you going?" and enters in the relevant location, time, and guest list.	Starts browsing list of available places to stay - none of the info present on the base screen indicate whether or not a host is sustainable. Notices options for search filters, but none of the filters indicate sustainability.	Clicks into a few of the listings out of despera- tion, but doesn't find any further information on the sustainability practices of each stay. Amenities don't list their level of sustainabili- ty/environmental impact, and the place's perks ('Enhanced Clean, "Self Check-In", etc.) don't mention anything about sustainability either.	With no mention of sustainability In-App, the customer turns to Google. They then discover a bunch of other problems with the tourism industry.	Distraught with the state of the travel industry, the customer puts off booking a stay until they can do more research and verify that the destination they wanted to visit was a responsible place to visit.
THOUGHTS	Pleasantly surprised at the "I'm flexible" option under "When will you be there?". Animations are nice and the overall expe- rience is smooth so far.		Somewhat annoyed that there's no mention for sustainability. Some hosts have it listed out under the bios that they write for the place themselves, but the customer can't believe there's no way to filter listings for sustainable options.	This customer knew going in the impact of travelling to certain locations as well as the ethical issues surrounding the travel industry as a whole, but are now discov- ering new facts about rental locations and is feeling more jaded than ever.	
RECOMMENDATIONS	Possibly provide avenues to browse for sustainable trips or information on sus- tainability on the home page. Explore avenues for sustainability outside of the core user loop. What can we do before the user clicks "Where are you going" to educate or inform?	Sustainability options within the filters or some way of listing economic impact. At least some iconography or 'tag' (simi- lar to the SUPERHOST tag) indicating a sustainable stay. Requires: - Research validating user interest - Do users value sustainability over other things? When forced to pick be- tween other amenities and sustainability, what do they choose?	If hosts have sustainable practices implement- ed (Energy saving lightbulbs, eco-friendly ame- nities, etc.) then there should be a way to ad- vertise that on the listing for the place. Requires: - Verification that this is an actual user need - Further research about sustainable host prac- tices	It might be a good idea to offer some information in-app on ways to sustain- able, but this isn't very high priority. Users will end up doing their own research if they want to anyway. Requires: - Verification that users want this - Audit of content to determine where to best host sustainability information	Possibly pushing travel to new locations that aren't oversaturated with tourists - issues of over-tourism pushing out local communities might bother certain cus- tomers. Some way to indicate which trips wont' contribute to overtourism could be a good bonus.

User Journey 3 & 4

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.

MOOD	Calm	Interested	Excited	Pensive	Fulfilled
EXPERIENCE	Customer opens the Airbnb app, selects "Where are you going?" and enters in the relevant location, time, and guest list.	Starts browsing list of available places to stay - lovely pictures and clear informa- tion hierarchy makes it easy to browse. No mention of sustainability, but the user doesn't care much about that.	Uses the filters to find "Entire place" - doesn't consider the environmental impact of renting an entire place vs a shared space. Delighted at the amenities, notices the details in the description (WiFi speeds, TV size and streaming services, etc.). <i>Books the trip.</i>	Customer goes on the trip and has a great time as intended. The amenities are exactly as described and the superhosts are super hosts. Uses Uber Pool once during the trip and has a quick thought on sustainability, but the thought doesn't linger.	Wraps up the trip, enjoys their stay. Whil cleaning up, they wonder a little bit abo the trash and recycling policies. They al couldn't find the compost so they dump wasted food in the trash. Other than that, they had a great trip w minimal thoughts about sustainability.
THOUGHTS	The search process initially is super easy to use. It's very painless and accommo- dating for other edge cases.	Airbnb listings are super clear and are already extremely streamlined. There's no mention of sustainability, but as a 'regular' user with no interest in sustainability, that doesn't bother me at all.	Fairly thorough filtering system, robust enough with all the things I want, and just enough so that I don't feel overwhelmed.	Sustainability is a part of travel whether users acknowledge it or not - even out- side of Airbnb, everything the user does has some amount of environmental impact. From travel to energy consump- tion habits, how can we make the user conscious about their decisions?	
RECOMMENDATIONS		Less of a recommendation and more of a thought - how do users value sustainabil- ity against other factors such as availabil- ity, cleanliness, price, etc. How can we make them value sustain- ability more? Requires: - Research on user values - Some places are inherently more sus- tainable (Yurt in the countryside vs energy inefficient townhouse in the city). Should we leverage this at all?	This brings up issues with educating users on sustainability - Airbnb's features seem to be very carefully curated and vetted to provide the necessary information without overwhelming the user. Requires: - Look into the efficacy of out-of-app ways to educate users on sustainability. What systems are already in place? - Gauge user interest in learning about sustain- ability.	How might we inform users on sustain- able travel and eco-friendly habits in a non intrusive way for those that aren't inherently inclined to learn about this? Requires: - Competitor research. Find out how others are approaching this	Habits such as not wasting food or usin eco-friendly products aren't really pos ble to enforce without policing. We hav to find a way to compel users to engage in sustainable behavior and trust that they'll start doing it naturally. Requires: - Find a way to educate users on sustan able practices

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.

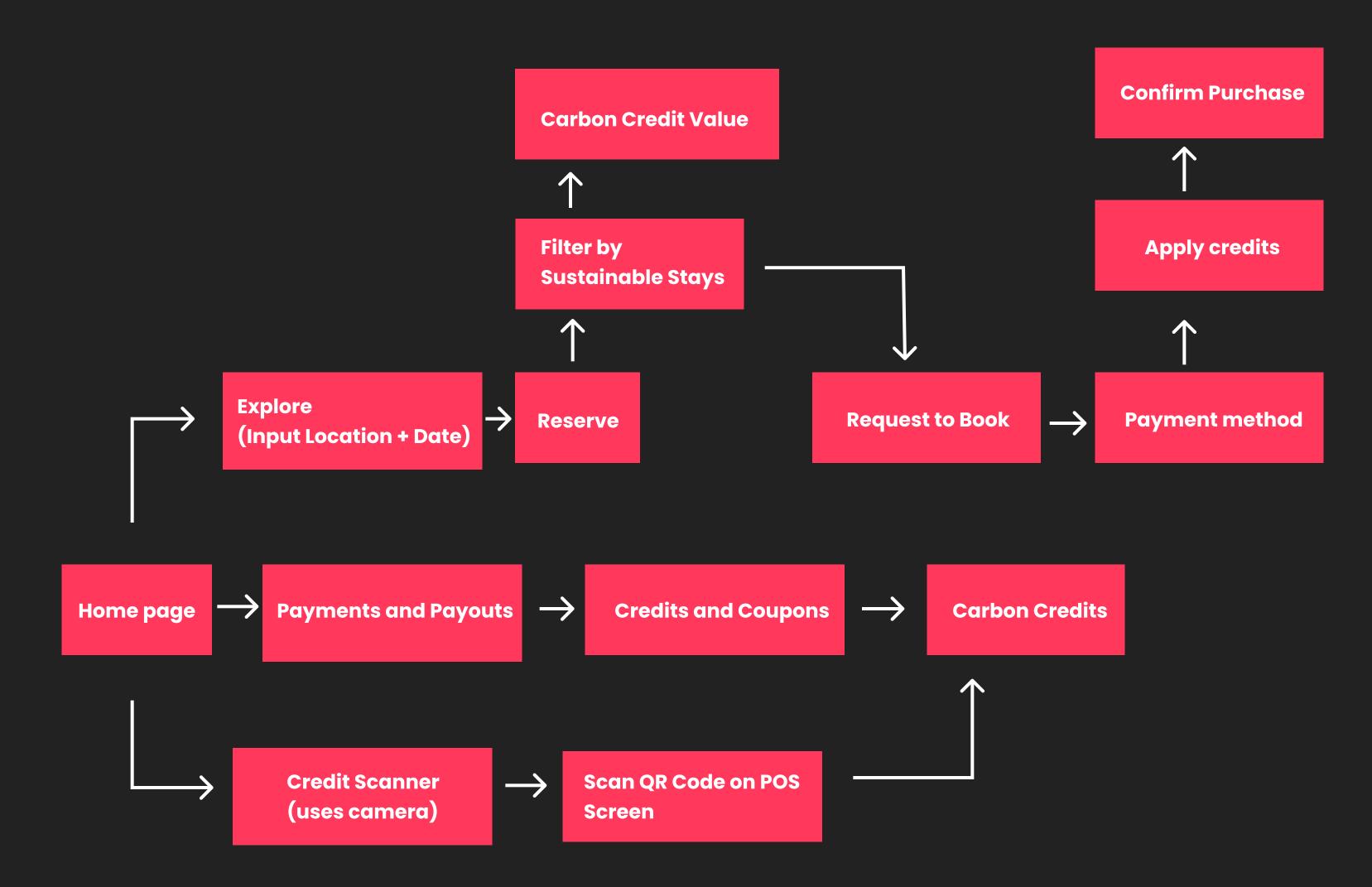
The users journeys helped us gain a familiarity of the Airbnb process and gave us a list of assumptions to validate through research.





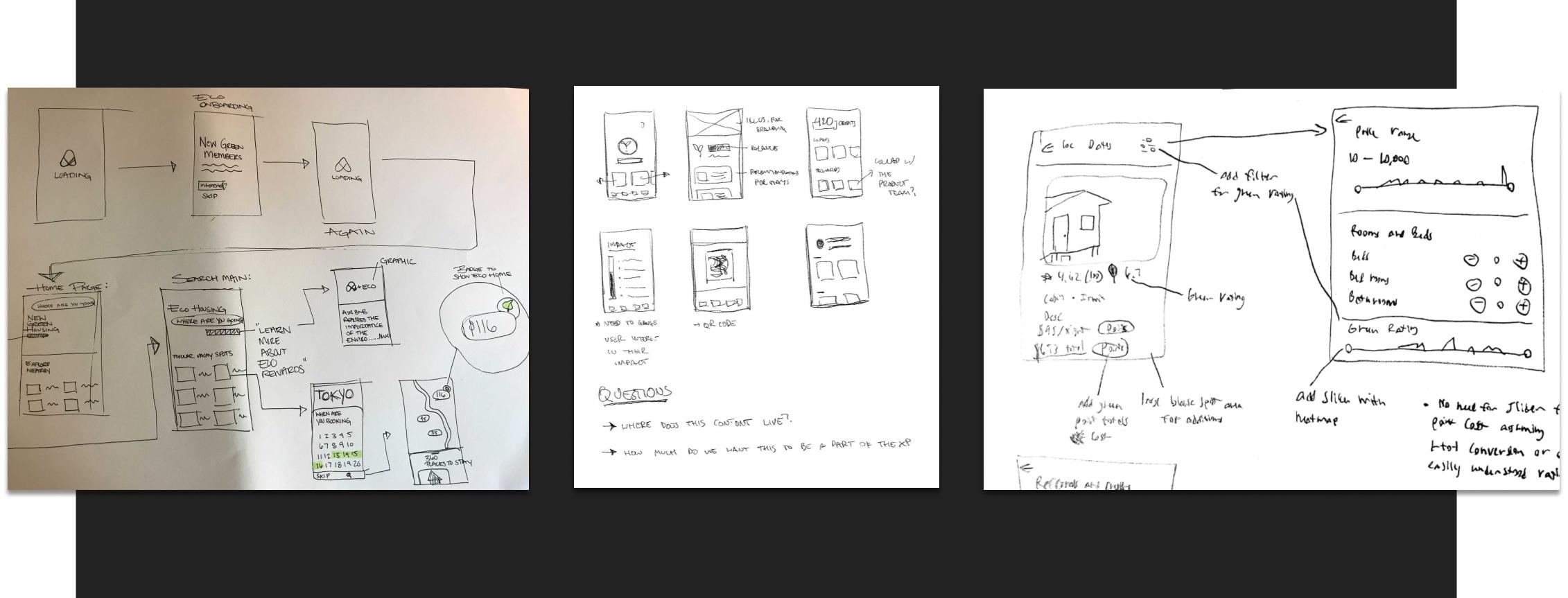
User Flow

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.





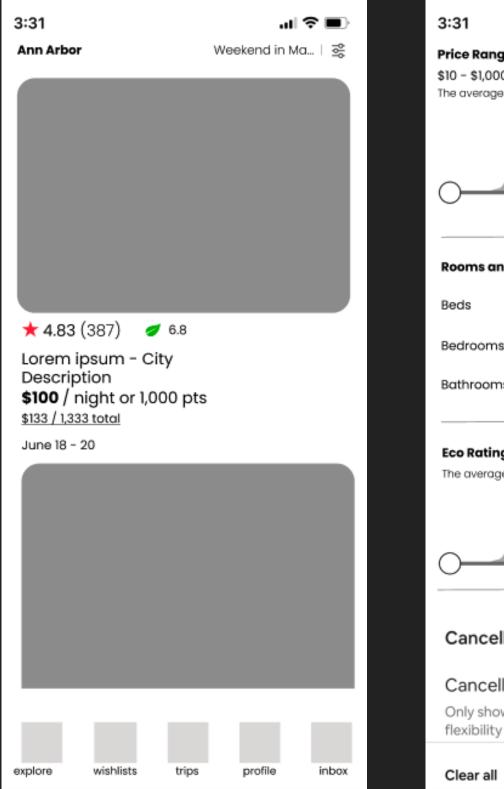
Sketches



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

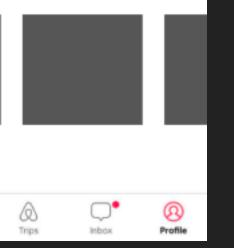


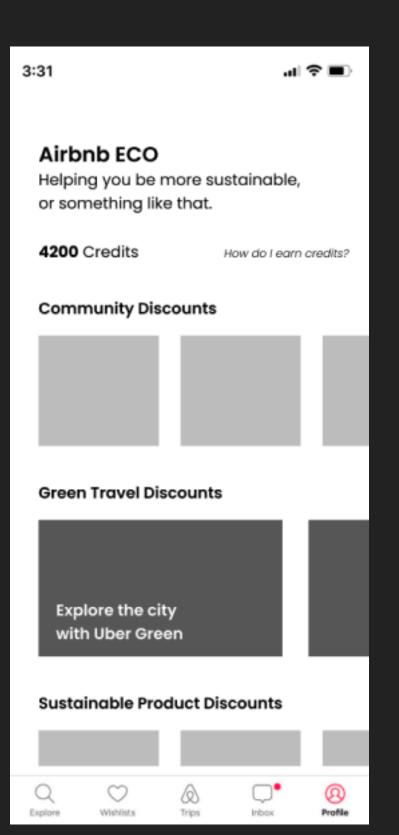
3:31	.ı ? ■	3:31	
Price Range \$10 - \$1,000+ The average nightly price is \$164			
Rooms and Beds	6	Airbnb ECC Helping you be sustainable, or like that.	be r
Beds	- ∘ ↔		
Bedrooms	⊙ ∘ ↔		
Bathrooms	⊙ ∘ ↔	YOUR CREDI	л
Eco Rating The average eco rating is 4.9		Learn more (maybe)e)
0	0	Popular Local S	Sho
Cancellation flexibility			
Cancellation flexibility			
Only show stays that offer ca flexibility	ncellation	~ ~ ~	
Clear all	Show 268 stays	Explore Wishlists	

ng you be more inable, or something .ul 🗢 🔳

CREDITS HERE

r Local Shops

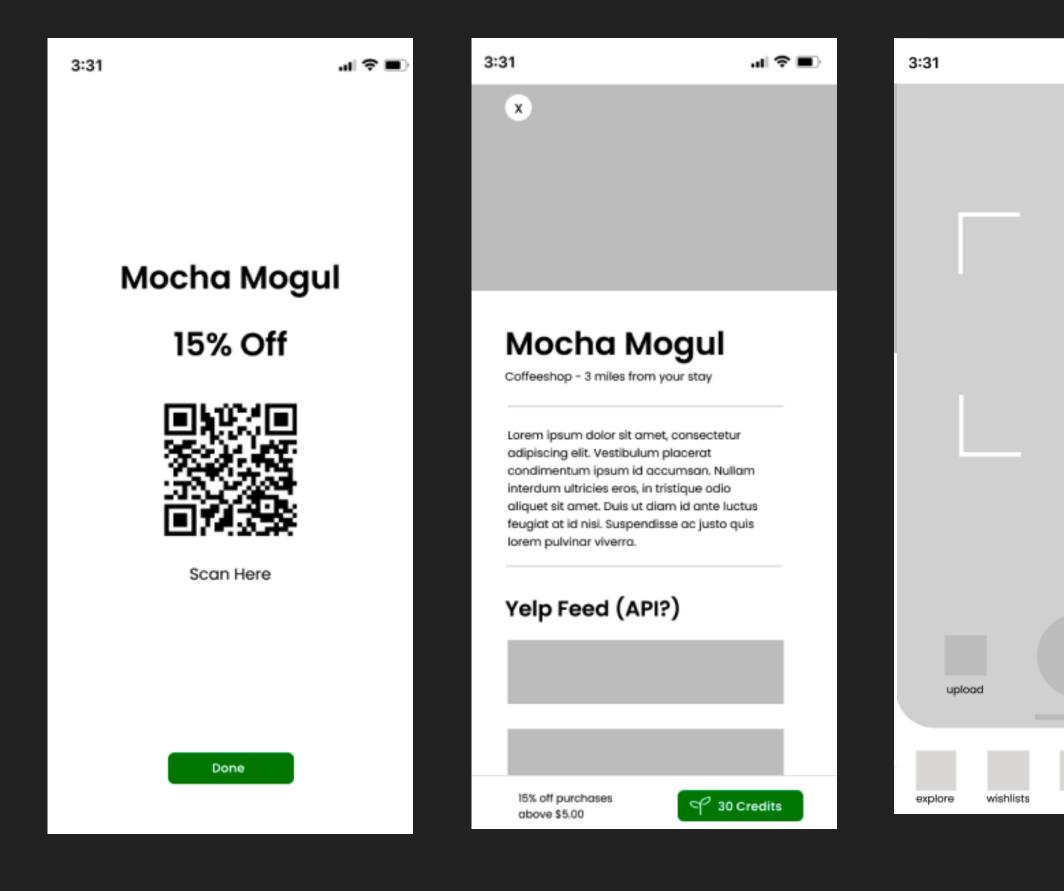




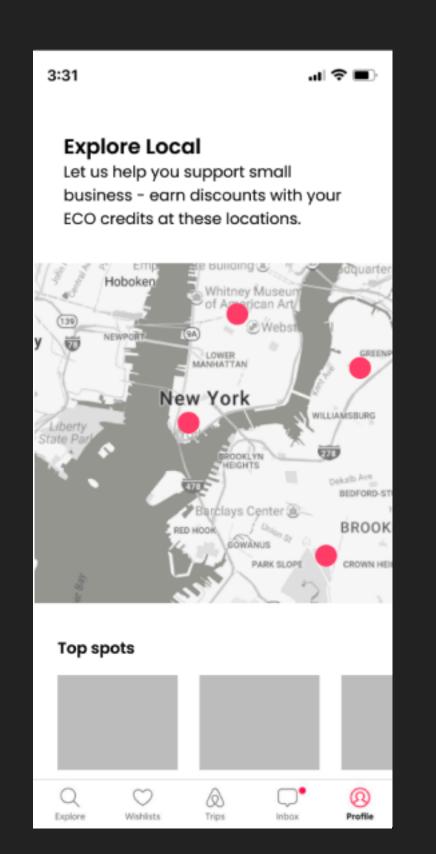
Wireframes testing the use of the "eco" icon and placement of credits earned from booking an eco stay. These wireframes were built off the current apps information architecture.



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 succesfully found when marked with a small icon on the main page.



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

Users were more succesful 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 paticipating businesses and additional information on the Airbnb Eco program.