

Lebanese Cookbook Case Study



The **Lebanese**
Cookbook

Designer and Developer:

- Clay Logsdon

Tools Used

- Figma
- Photoshop
- Balsamiq
- Pen and Pencil (wireframes)
- HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, MySQL
- Visual Studio Code
- GitHub
- A whole bunch of plug-ins
- Stack Overflow and other online resources
- Cyberduck

Overview

For this class, IDM-232, we were given the task to create a cookbook site with a host of different features. These features were divided into two types; front-facing (for visitors to see) and admin feature. The former would be accessible to anyone, including the latter group, but the latter group would also be able to access the admin panel and its unique features. Naturally, the admins usage affects the visitors' experience. For example, recipes added or deleted would naturally affect the recipes page since some would either be missing or new to the perception of regular users. This project was very time consuming and challenging, even for me despite being a computer science major until last year, but I think I did a pretty good job with it all despite the challenge.

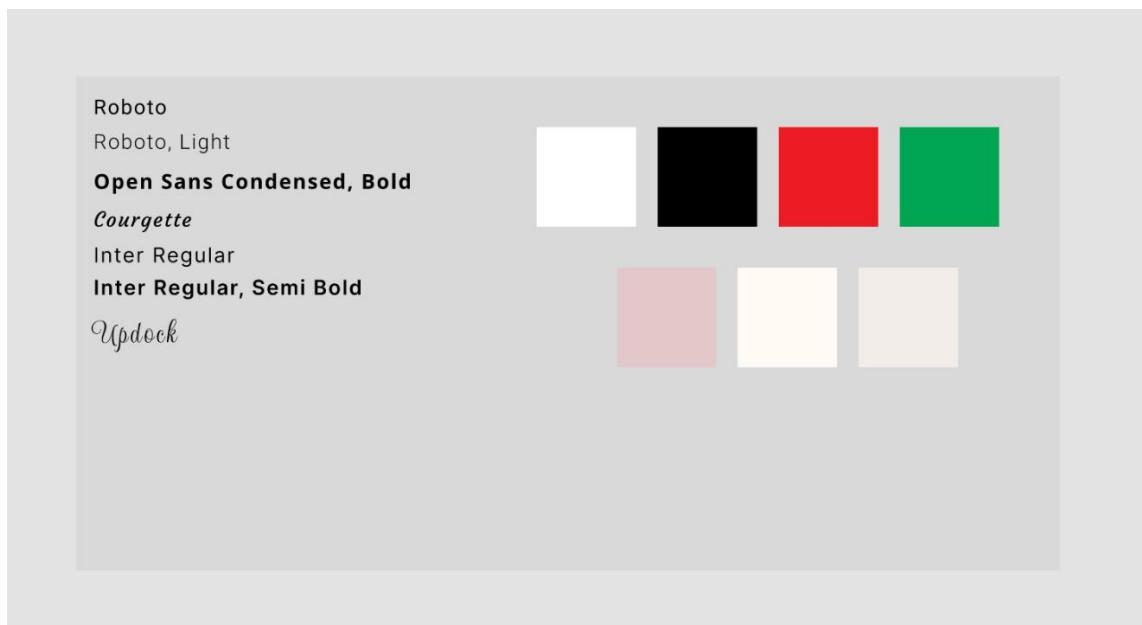
Challenges

I had several challenges with this project, the easiest of which was designing the website. The hardest portion being dealing with all the programming, specifically PHP, though I had used it before this project required more knowledge of it. Outside of these two challenges, another interesting one that I thought would be way harder was using MySQL and figuring out how to use a database. While I've worked with databases before, I never had to actually do the programming for them or interact with them deeply. This was a first for me and so I was naturally very frightened by the concept but it became easier with exposure and with the help of research.

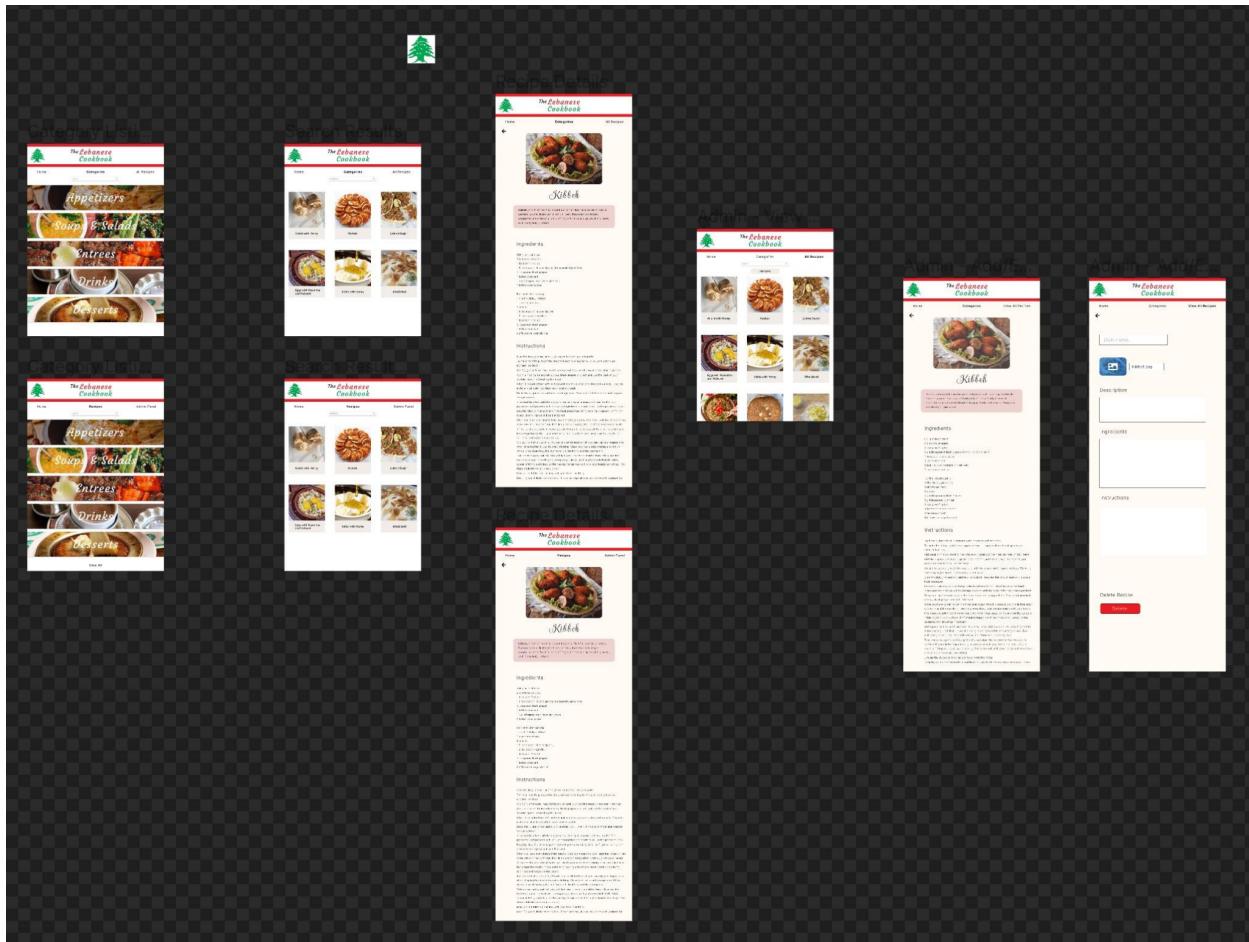
Design Stage

The design stage, as I noted, was the easiest one for me. It's one of my passions and interests. I left my comp. sci degree because, while I was good at it (to me at least), I did not enjoy it and found it quite grueling. I've gotten rusty because of this but had to recall much of those skills for this class. That aside, I liked the design stage and began my work for this stage by making sketches. Once I did several revisions of them I moved onto the main design, skipping wireframes for time related reasons. I did however make a style guide before making the designs. The tools I used in this stage were:

- Figma
- Photoshop
- Balsamiq
- Pen and Pencil (wireframes)



Since the website is all about Lebanese food, I wanted to make that obvious in the branding. All the colors on the site, except the beige background and pink buttons (the bottom row), are from the flag (the top row except for black). Since we required a nav, I took advantage of this for branding and placed the links below the Lebanese flag which I stickied to the top of every page so people knew right off the bat what colors to expect throughout the site and what recipes to expect even if they weren't looking at the name of the site. Even the add, edit and delete buttons match these colors, which actually was partly luck-based since those are the colors used for add, edit and delete as a natural convention. I made the favicon the cedar tree from the flag as well.



Development Stage

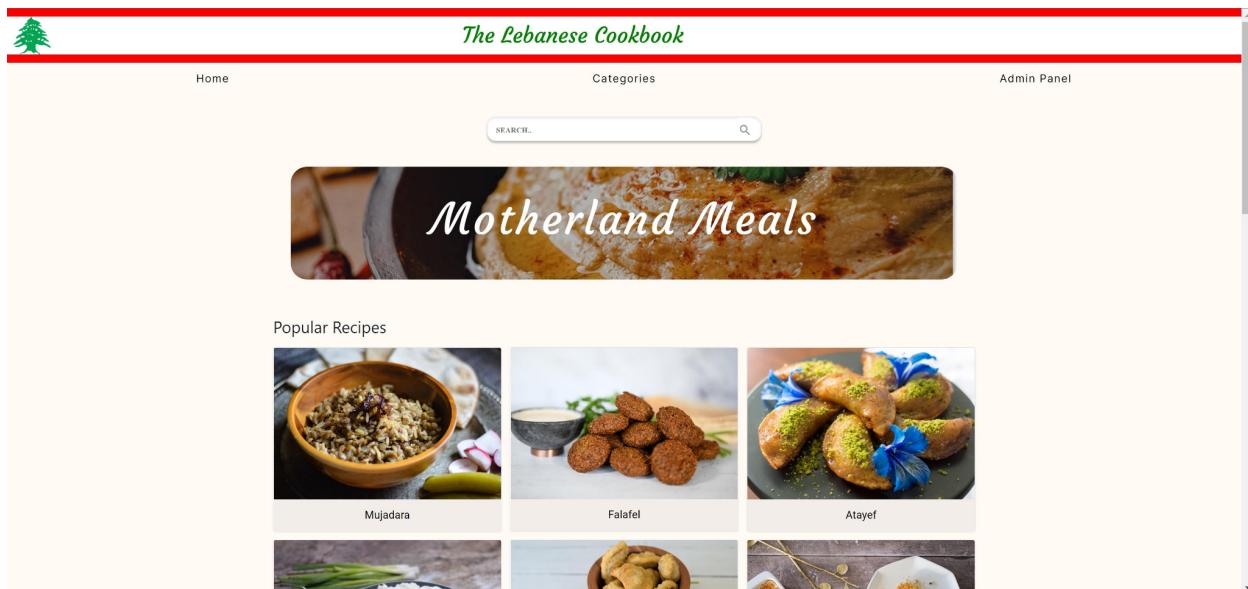
Unfortunately, I had a large set of design iterations I made when actually programming the design. The differences aren't big but they were many which I had partly done since I realized I wasn't at a level in some of the programming to program certain aspects of the design (like a hovering edit button over each image instead of the fixed red and black add/edit and delete buttons. Other things I changed were the logo since I couldn't get the margins to work correctly

on desktop and mobile as just text. I laid the logo out horizontally in the actual site but it is vertical in the design.

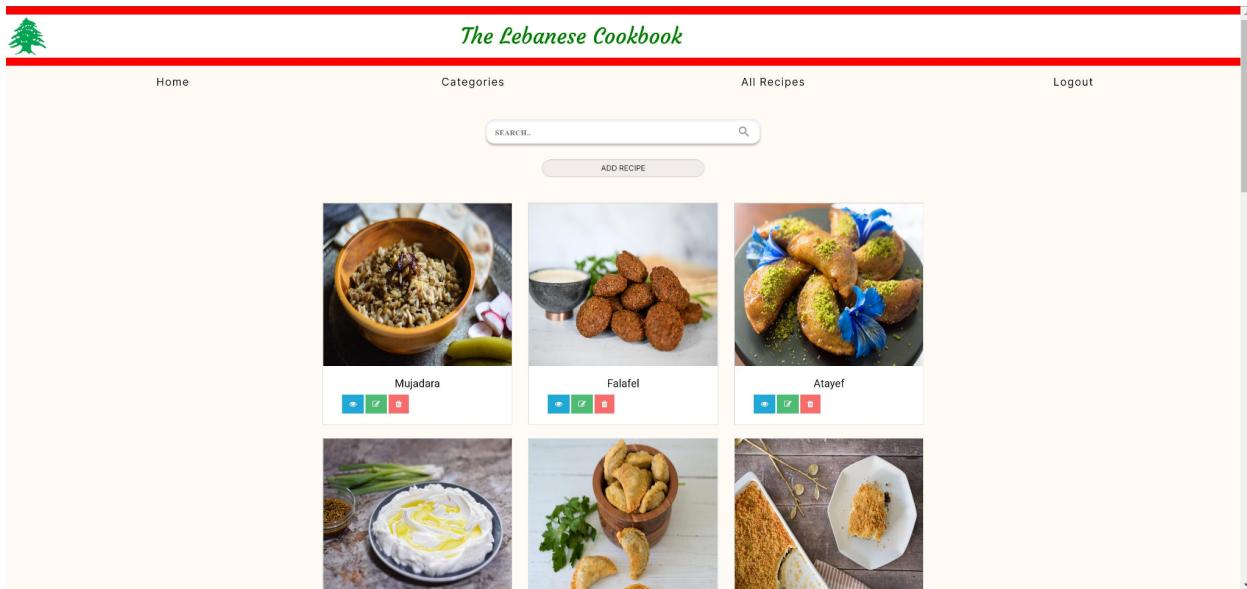
The tools I used in this stage were:

- HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, MySQL
- Visual Studio Code
- GitHub
- A whole bunch of plug-ins
- Stack Overflow and other online resources
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Naturally, I started with HTML, CSS and JavaScript where need be. Then moved onto PHP and MySQL. The front-end didn't take long at all but the back-end, PHP, JavaScript and figuring out how to use MySQL were very time consuming and confusing. I had to use online resources, especially Stackoverflow and W3Schools for more info on them since I'd find myself lost constantly. I'd reach out to friends in my class if googling wasn't helping to see if they understood what to do. This helped a lot actually but still we're all learning together so we can only help each other so much. Hence lectures and lab time. I'd watch recordings with some others and we'd talk it out and test things if we felt lost. This was a great method to use if we were all together in-person.



Homepage (regular user ... zoomed out)



All Recipes (admin page ... zoomed out)

Results and Reflections

Overall, I found this project very interesting. I know there's another PHP class we have to take and so I think I'll be ready for that one with the skills I have now but I honestly don't think I'll continue down the programming path after that. It's very grueling mentally, I think it's just not meant for me.

The only programming I think I'd be okay with doing, but only in tandem with design work, is front-end dev. I am happy to note that I found that my front-end knowledge and thus my skills in that area increased by way of this project. On another happy note, I'm proud of my work on this project, both design and development wise, and will definitely include it in my portfolio.

Link to the final result: <https://clayfarah.com/idm232/final/>