

1. Identify Pain Points

- a. Lack of trustworthy information regarding food safety
 - i. Users struggle to trust the accuracy and completeness of restaurant-provided dietary information. Labels are often vague and fail to address critical concerns (such as ingredient sourcing and cross-contamination) which forces users to seek additional confirmation through calls or external research, with very limited results.
- b. Decision fatigue
 - i. Users often need to go the extra step to ensure options fit criteria for their dietary needs, as filtering through largely unsuitable or ambiguous choices creates decision fatigue and stress, especially when users still cannot be confident that remaining options are truly safe after numerous attempts.
- c. Social stigma and barriers
 - i. Users with dietary restrictions often feel like a nuisance in group dining situations, as their needs can heavily limit restaurant choices. Social pressure can discourage users from advocating for their own enjoyment, leading to compromised decisions or the avoidance of sharing meals with others as a whole.

2. User Persona

- a. Melinda is a 24-year-old professional living in Chicago who has multiple dietary restrictions. She enjoys eating out but finds the process stressful because restaurant information about dietary accommodations is often vague or unreliable. Melinda frequently worries about hidden ingredients and cross-contamination, even at places that claim they can accommodate her needs. Because of this uncertainty, she often researches restaurants ahead of time, double-checks information across multiple sources, or calls restaurants directly.
 - i. When dining with friends, Melinda feels pressure not to slow down group decisions or limit where everyone can eat. She often hesitates to advocate for her own needs, which can lead her to settle for limited or unsatisfying options or avoid group meals altogether. Melinda wants a faster, more trustworthy way to assess whether a restaurant is genuinely safe so she can make confident decisions without stress or social discomfort.
 - 1. "If a place says they can accommodate, I'm still thinking about whether I'll have to call, double-check, or explain myself again."
- b. Key Attributes
 - i. Needs clear, detailed information about dietary safety (not just menu labels)
 - ii. Experiences anxiety around cross-contamination and incomplete information
 - iii. Values efficiency and confidence when making dining decisions
 - iv. Often balances personal safety with social expectations in group settings

- c. Goals
 - i. Quickly rule out restaurants that feel unsafe or uncertain
 - ii. Feel confident in dining decisions without needing extra verification
 - iii. Participate in group dining without feeling like a burden
 - d. Frustrations
 - i. Vague claims like “we can accommodate” without concrete details
 - ii. Having to perform extra research or make phone calls to feel safe
 - iii. Feeling socially uncomfortable advocating for dietary needs
3. Problem Statement
- a. Users with all types of dietary restrictions need an efficient and trustworthy way to assess restaurant safety and suitability so they can make confident dining decisions without unnecessary anxiety or social friction.