

# **Case Study: WeEat**

*Team Four Darwin*

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# Overview

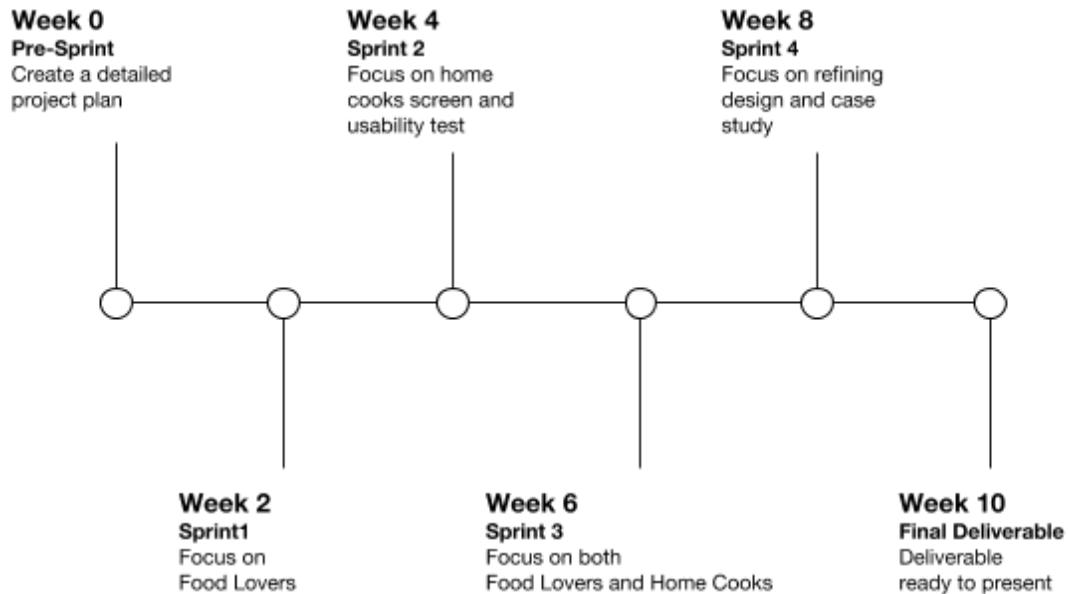
## Vision Statement

We provide unprecedented cultural experiences by connecting food lovers to local chefs that specialize in curating authentic cuisines

## Team Members and Roles

1. Eric Jacobson: Usability Test Team
2. Anushree Shukla: Usability Test Team
3. Yuliya Labaz: Design Team
4. Wynston Hsu: Design Team
5. Estelle Jiang: Design Team
6. Sangwoo (Martin) Song: Design Team
7. Zhiqi Lin: Design Team

## Timeline



# Identify Problems

## Brainstorm & Ideation

It was the first day of Spring Quarter when we picked our team of seven. We sat down and began brainstorming a problem worth solving. But before we knew it, we were all hungry and yearning to finish our evening class. The discussion digressed and we started talking about all the food we wished we could eat. Wynston was craving his aunt's homemade dumplings while Anushree was waiting for her mom to visit and make her favorite homemade Pav Bhaji.

After doing some research, we realized that most ethnic restaurants in town did not offer an wholesome authentic food experience. However, with the increasing diversity of people in the Greater Seattle area, there is an increasing need to introduce better cultural and diverse experiences similar to other global cities like San Francisco, New York and Chicago. Exploring this need and problem space lead us to come up with the idea of WeEat, a service that provides a cultural and authentic dining experience by connecting home chefs to people.

## Competitive Analysis

We began by looking at what is currently in the market. We discovered that most competitors were globalized to focus either on a curated fine dining experience, or offered affordable meals to those wanting a more authentic experience while traveling. After strategizing how we could provide a more seamless yet unique experience compared to our competitors, we pivoted to focused our service solely on providing authentic dining experiences by certified home chefs. Additionally, given that most of our competitors did not operate in the Greater Seattle Area, we decided to make that our target market.

| Major Features              | BonAppetour | EatWith | Feastly | Meal Sharing | Traveling Spoon |
|-----------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|--------------|-----------------|
| Home Dining                 | ✓           | ✓       | ✓       | ✓            | ✓               |
| Pop-up                      | ✓           |         | ✓       |              |                 |
| Food Tour                   | ✓           | ✓       |         |              | ✓               |
| Tastings                    | ✓           |         | ✓       |              |                 |
| Cooking Class               | ✓           | ✓       |         |              | ✓               |
| Themed / Outdoor Experience | ✓           | ✓       |         | ✓            |                 |
| Secret Kitchen              |             | ✓       |         |              |                 |
| Private Events              |             | ✓       | ✓       |              |                 |

**Figure 1.** Above chart shows competitors and their features.

## Competitor Interview: Yumso

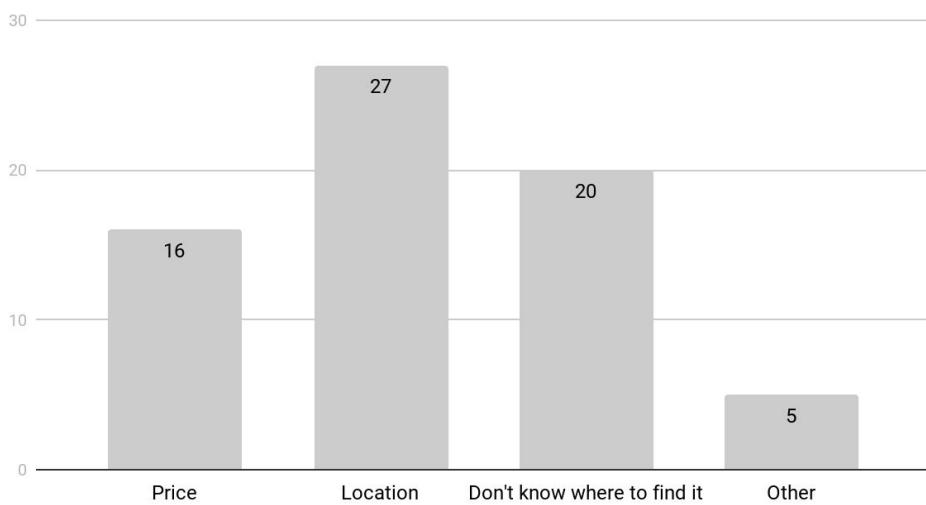
One of our key competitors was a Seattle based meal delivery service named Yumso. While their platform also centered around homemade meals, they focused solely on delivery and not a dine-in experience. After interviewing one of their former employers, we realized that there are a lot of details that we needed to consider when we design the registration process for the home chefs. Not only would the chefs need to have proper licensing, their homes would also need to be verified for cleanliness and safety. Despite these challenges, we decided to move forward with our idea, as we believed our service's potential to provide a unique experience and opportunity that hasn't been explored before. Unlike Yumso, we would focus more on the experience rather than the convenience aspect to authentic homemade meals.

## User Research

### Surveys

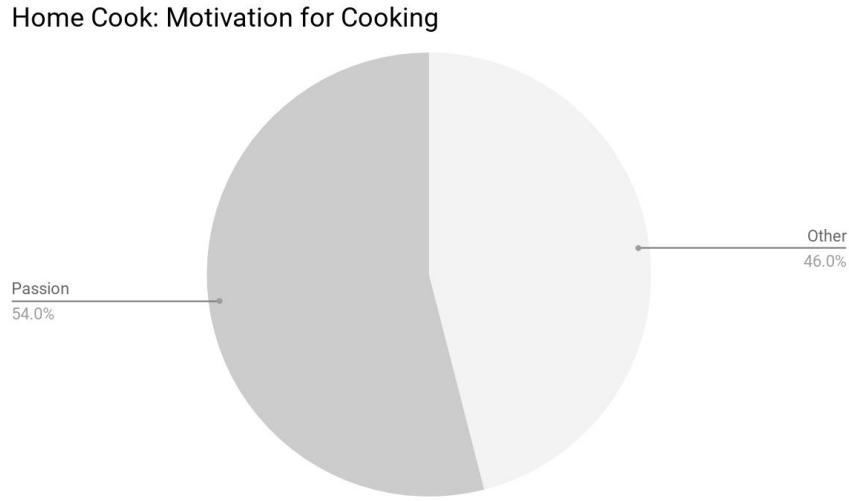
To further validate the need for our service, we conducted agile-based user interviews and distributed preliminary surveys. Based on our survey responses, we found that the majority of our food lover user base actively searches for authentic foods. However, the data showed that the participants were still having a difficult time finding their favorite authentic cuisines. In the chart below, you can see the main reasons that users couldn't find authentic cuisines were based on: location, pricing, or simply not knowing where to look.

Food Lover Survey Results



**Figure 2a.** One of the survey result showing the difficulties of finding authentic cuisines

Following the food lover survey, we also distributed one for our potential home chefs. There was a compelling amount of responses from chefs who shared a passion for cooking and supported the services that we offered.



**Figure 2b.** One of the survey result that reveals the statistics for motivation for cooking

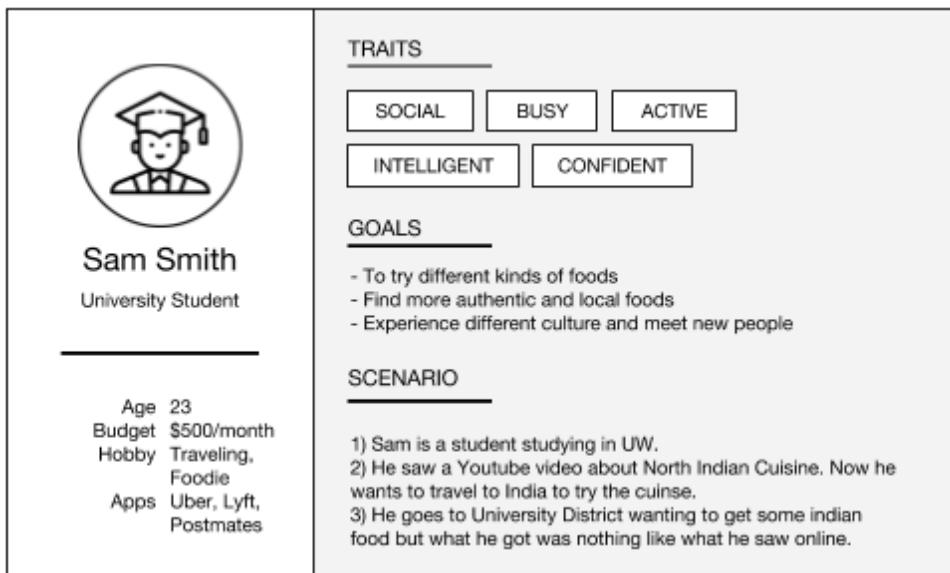
## Interviews

A few biases arose from our survey data, mainly being that we had a fairly small sample size and 93% of our respondents were college students between the ages of 18 and 24. To remedy these biases, we followed up the surveys with more in-depth user interviews. We discovered there are definitely users willing to pay for a dining experience connecting them to authentic cuisines. One user mentioned they would be interested in an application that could provide “more authentic foods than restaurants and cheaper prices”, which is exactly what we aimed to accomplish. However, another user was worried about the quality of food that the local chefs would be able to provide. In terms of chefs, there were initial concerns regarding safety and uncertainty of whether chefs would be willing to invite strangers into their homes. To account for these concerns, we brainstormed and developed solutions to ensure a user’s safety and the quality of cuisines during our design and testing phase.

# Design Process

## User Personas

The two personas developed stems from our research. They allowed us to keep our target audience's pain points, goals, and desires in mind when designing. Since our service aims to provide for an entire dining experience, we needed to have two sides of service users - food lover and home chef.



**Figure 3a.** Persona for Food Lover



**Figure 3b.** Persona for Home cooks or Chef

## Product Hypothesis

Product Hypothesis helped us think about feature that benefits our potential users.

| Top 5 Product Features                 | Benefits for Potential Users  |
|--|---|
| Connect home cooks to food lovers      | Eliminates the costs of renting & maintaining a physical restaurant                                 |
| Curated dining experiences             | Opportunity for guests to learn about the story & culture behind the food                           |
| Interaction with experienced home cook | Opportunity to chat with cooks, learn the recipes, and listen to the personal stories from the chef |
| Easy navigation via mobile application | Facilitates overall process of the application for both food lovers and home chefs                  |
| Flexible event planning                | Home chefs can easily add, remove, and disable events.  |

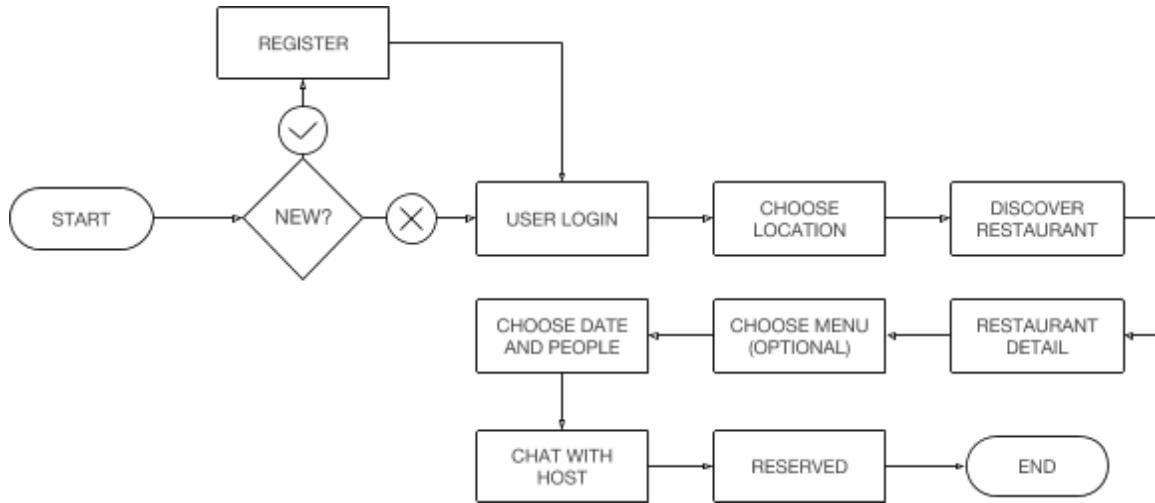
## Dependency Analysis

We came up with dependency analysis to check the factors that can lead our project to success.

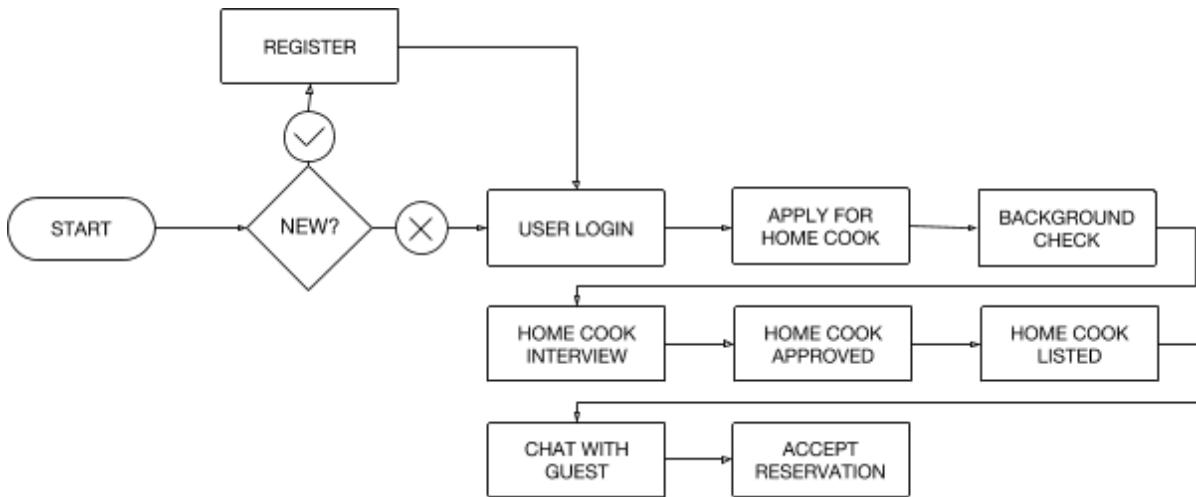
| Category                               | Assumptions  |
|--|--|
| User (i.e. Home cook, Food lover)      | Home cooks are willing to invite people into their homes and cook for the food lover |
|  | Food lovers are willing to pay for a dining experience in another person's home      |
|  | Home cooks and users feel safe serving the food and dining                           |
|  | Users trust our platform (as a startup)  |
| Experience (i.e. Application, Service) | The flow of application/service is logical   |
|  | The service is easily understood by  |
|  | The content of the service is convincing   |

## User Flows

Before we started our initial sketches, we envisioned how our users would interact with our product and ideated various use cases. Based on these use cases, we began mapping out the user flows for both of our users to show the basic layout and navigation of our application.



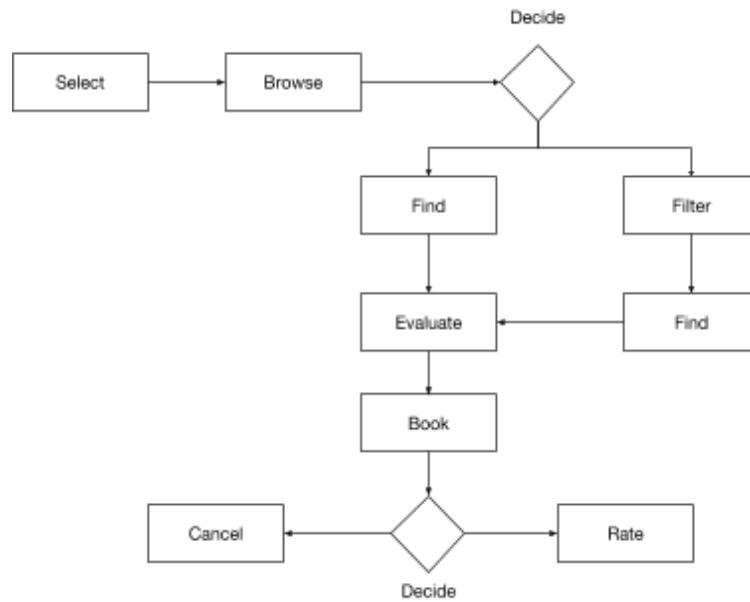
**Figure 4a.** Food Lover User Flow



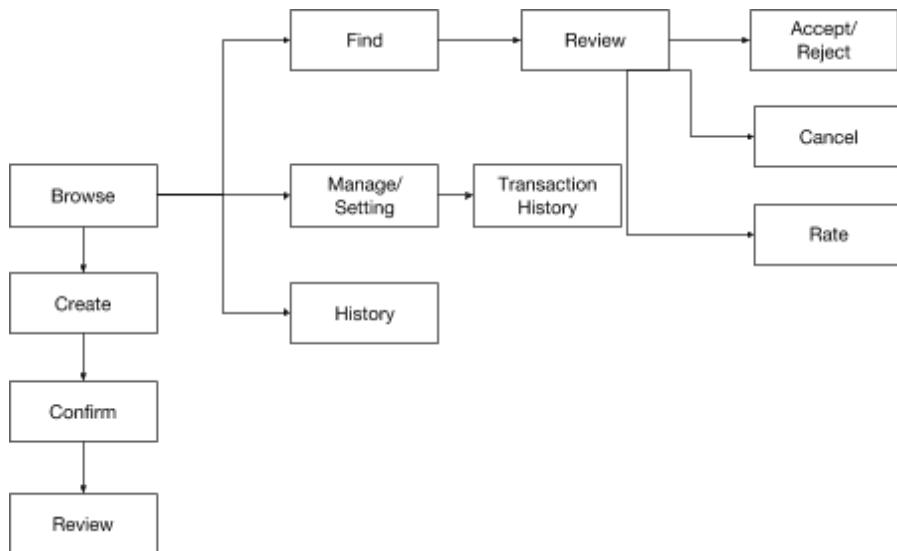
**Figure 4b.** Home Cook User Flow

## Service Maps

Alongside our user flows, we developed service maps to show a high level representation of our application's information architecture.



**Figure 5a.** Food Lover Service Map



**Figure 5b.** Home Chef Service Map

## Initial Sketches

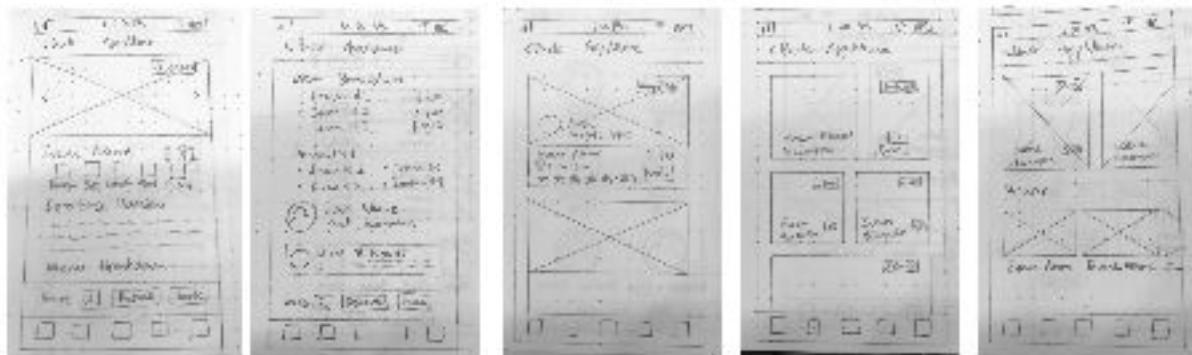
We produced initial sketches to our design based on the user personas and data analysis we had previously completed. We decided we would first take a divergent approach, with each team member producing their own designs, before converging collectively to decide which features would be include in our app.

Some of the features we decided on included:

- Filtering through dining options
- Discovering new events nearby
- Viewing event details
- Reserving a seat at a dining event



**Figure 6a.** Initial Sketches from Estelle Jiang



**Figure 6b.** Initial Sketches From Wynston Hsu

# Wireframes

Before transforming our sketches into high fidelity mockups, we spent some time designing wireframes to get a better idea about the structure and layout of varied components for our features.



Figure 7a. Wireframe from Sangwoo Song

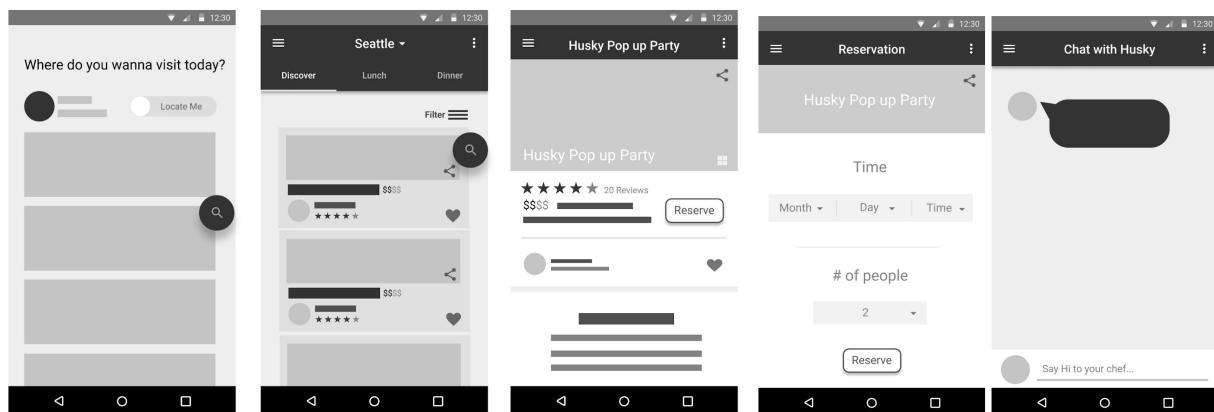


Figure 7b. Wireframe from Zhiqi Lin

# Design Iteration

## Sprint 1

### Goal

- Test our initial designs with users
- Verify our service concept with users

### Usability Test

With our first usability test, we wanted to focus on testing the core functionality of our prototype. While we have verified the marketability and demand of our app through initial user research, we wanted to use this sprint to bring those concepts to the page.

Our test participants acted as target users looking for local authentic cuisines. We started by giving them a contextualized summary of our app and then asked them to explore the overall layout. They were encouraged to walk through their thoughts and provide feedback on the app's experience and flow. For the main task, we had the users attempt to reserve a seat for a designated event. Finally, we had the users go through a set of onboarding questions via paper prototype.

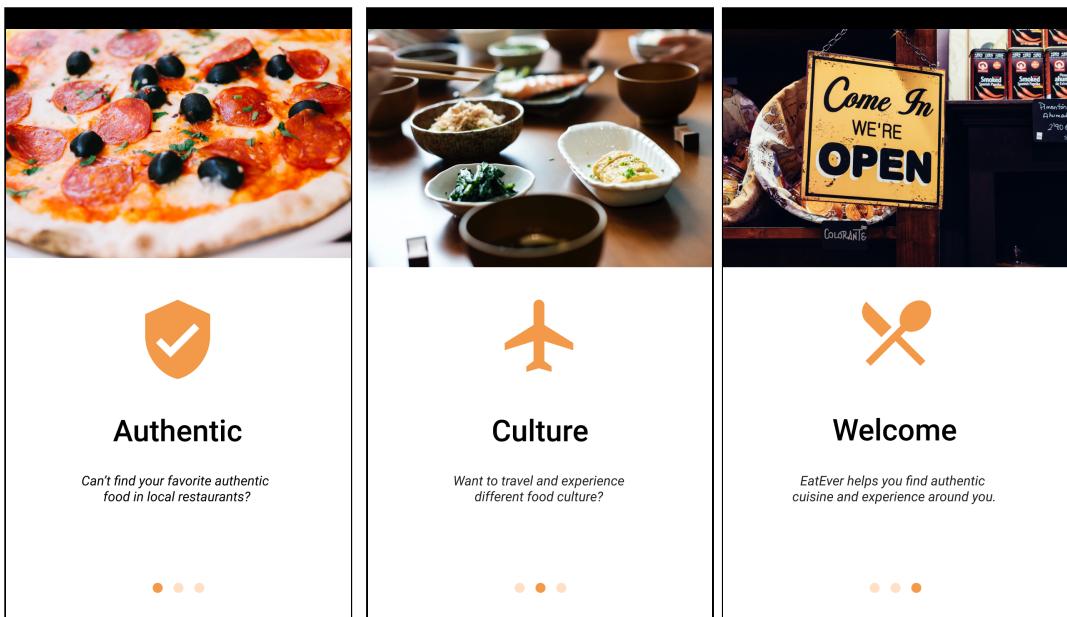
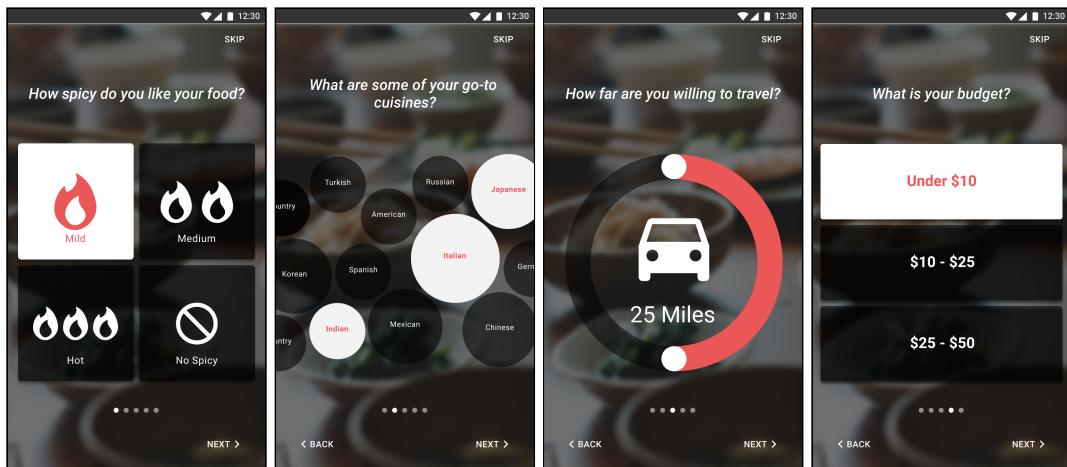
### Feedback

During our first usability test, there were a handful of issues regarding details and flow that our users brought up. Aside from functional errors with the prototype, the general consensus by our users was that the app currently felt like other restaurant finding apps on the market. Our users expected many of the same functionality that other well known apps (like Yelp) provided. None of our users picked up on the fact that these were events created by individual home chefs.

With the onboarding questions, our users thought that the idea was good but the current question set needed improvements. The phrasing of the questions, and the limited number of options available, resulted in confusion and frustration among our testers.

### Challenge

This first sprint allowed our team to experience many of the challenges that comes with user testing. Among them was finding the right target audience. One of our testers was nervous throughout the test and was unable to give us usable feedback. Others tend to internalize their thought process, causing us to ask leading questions in attempt to get the information we needed. Despite the challenges, this experience allowed our team to gain valuable skills in conducting proper usability tests.



**Figure 8.** Ideas for Onboarding Pages

# Sprint 2

## Goal

- Complete chef side designs
- Conduct usability testing with Chefs
- Improve designs based on user feedback

## Usability Test

During our second sprint, we conducted usability testing with potential chefs of our application. We began with several questions regarding the cooking background of the participant. Next, we asked participants to explore the application and give us feedback as they went along. Following that, we gave them a scenario where they were a chef that was hosting a dinner party for a few guests. Participants were then asked to set up the event, confirm the attendees and edit their event details as we observed and recorded their process.



**Figure 9.** Eric Jacobson and Anushree Shukla leading usability test, Wynston observing, Zhiqi taking notes

## Feedback

We received a lot of valuable feedback from our usability testing with chefs. The first piece of feedback we got was to add descriptions or titles describing the information we want the user to input or fill out. We also found that the users had difficulty understanding the navigation bar functionality and unsure of where to go to complete certain tasks. Another thing we learned was that users had difficulty understanding the reservation page and that they were overwhelmed with the amount of information they were presented with. We also realized that our terminology was unclear and participants had a hard time distinguishing an “event” from a “place”. Through usability testing, we were able to find other small things that were unclear to the users, such as the party size of the reservations and various extra features that users did not find necessary in the application.

## Challenge

One of the key lessons we learned from this sprint was to filter out the useful information from the user feedback and how to refine our design based on user feedback. We had several heated discussions while deciding the structure of our design, since our users provide the feedback that they had a difficult time understanding the flow of creating and reviewing events. We had to restructure our app and make the flow easy to understand. What we realized was that as designers, it is sometimes hard to tell whether the design will be intuitive for the users. Our pre-existing knowledge of the app allowed us to make the mistake of assuming that the structure makes sense to everyone.

## Sprint 3

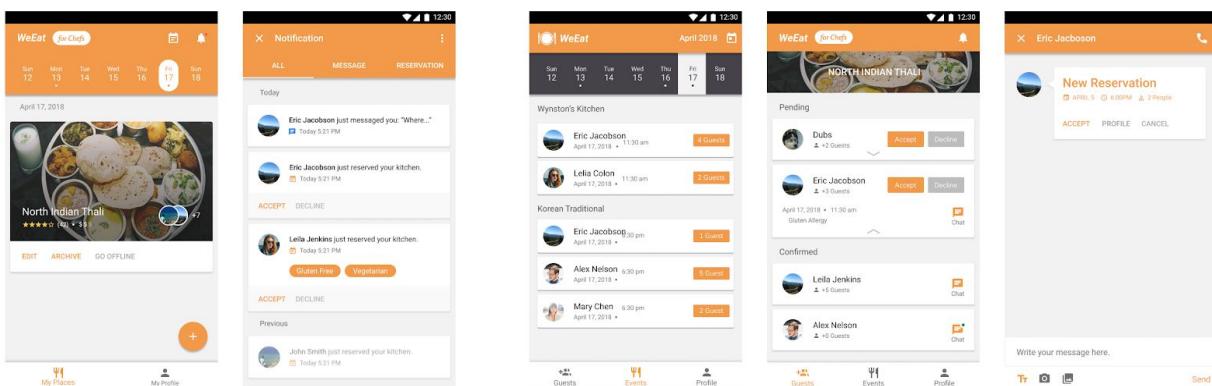
### Goal

- Test our design iterations, this time on both chefs and users
- Reduce potential error in the flow between our two apps
- Establish a standard design language

### Usability Test

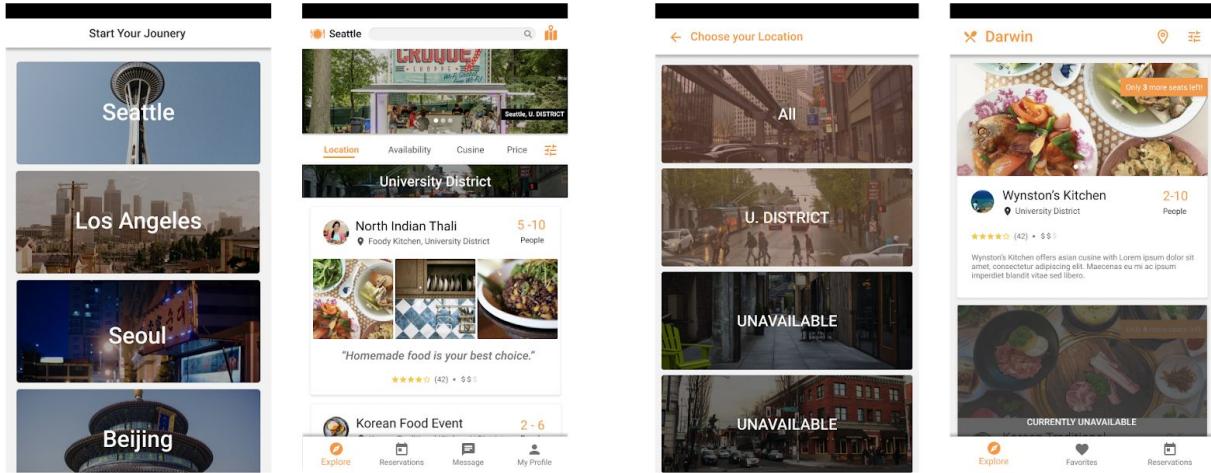
During this sprint we wanted to test our prototypes once again, with different users and chefs, to see if the same issues still persisted.

For chefs, the tasks remained the same with an additional task allowing the tester to create a new event. We made changes to editing an existing event and confirming guests. We also expanded the event edit task to include the process of creating a menu. As for the guest confirmation process, we re-designed the task to be completable through Notifications and on the actual event page. By doing so we were able to eliminate the Guest item on the bottom navbar all together, as well as resolve previous limitations with the confirmation action only being achievable through Chat.



**Figure 10.** New (left) and Old (right) Screen Comparisons for Chef App

For the users, they now have an onboarding process for their first time sign-in. To better organize the way which Events are presented, the Explore section has many more options for which users can filter by. We also added the functionality to write a review for a past event attended, as well as the option for users to select specific items on the menu. From the last user test back in Sprint 1, the main complaint was regarding the flow being off when a confirmed event directly led to Chat. Thus we implemented a screen for users to view their current reservations.



**Figure 11.** New (left) and Old (right) Screen Comparisons for User App



**Figure 12.** Usability test on home chefs (right) and food lover (left)

## Feedback

In general, our users were successful in completing our tasks. On the user app, most feedback was regarding the amount of content on one screen. The UI presented too many options at times, and resulted in our app feeling cluttered and key information being obscured. The user flow and UI of making an event Reservation were well received by our testers. However, the main concern both our chef and user testers had was about the intention of the app. Most thought it was a restaurant finding service like Yelp, and did not pick up on the fact that these were events created and hosted by home chefs.

## Challenge

During this sprint, our team was relatively effective in meeting our goal. We split the team into two groups and worked on the User and Chef apps separately. While this proved to be an efficient approach, isolating the team made it difficult to maintain consistency across the the two app designs. Aside from the design language being different between the apps, some of the connecting functionality such as messaging and event reservation weren't completely in sync. Lastly, since we have so many ambitions about our service, we implemented a lot of planned features into our designs that ended up overwhelming the users.

## Sprint 4

### Goal

- Write a case study showing the design process and final deliverable
- Refine and finalize design based on user feedback

### Final Deliverable

The final design iteration focused on applying final user feedbacks and on keeping consistency by using material design guide.

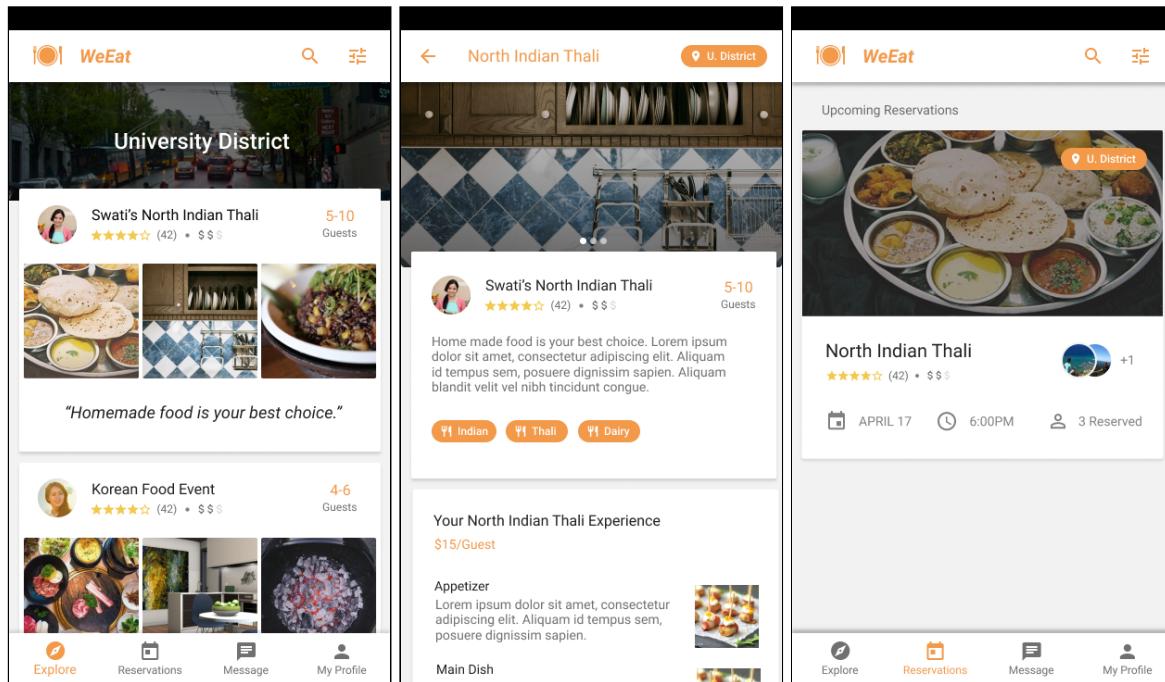
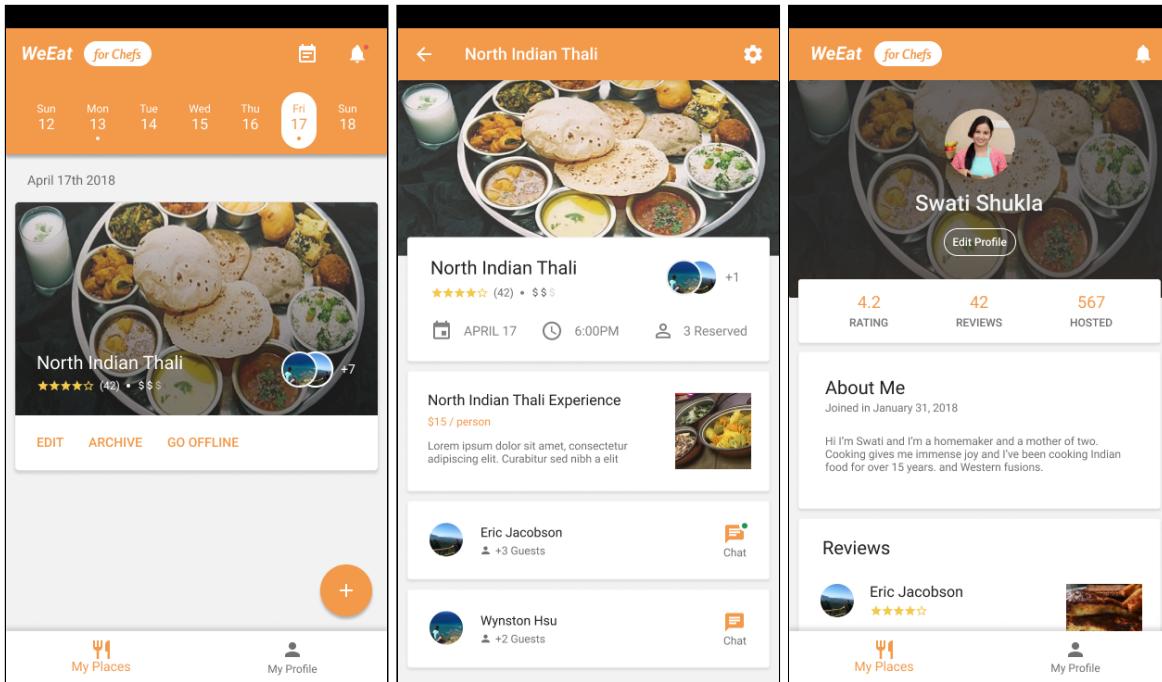


Figure 13. Final screens for food-lovers.



**Figure 14.** Final screens for home chefs

## Reflection

Multiple iterations of usability testing reminded our group of the importance of validating the need for a product with potential users. It was extremely helpful to work closely with users each sprint and adjusting designs based off the feedback we received. Our team also learned the values of working in a large group setting. Aside from delegating responsibilities to each member to ensure everyone's participation, we also had to be understanding of each other's differences of opinion in design. Achieving the perfect balance between incorporating good ideas while tactfully declining those that didn't quite work out, allowed us to create a final product that feels consistent and complete.



**Figure 15.** Team Darwin working on final deliverable



