



Major Project Report

Chaiblend - <https://chaiblend.guide/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Project Overview	6
Aims.....	7
Objectives.....	7
Methodology.....	8
Concept Report	10
Project Concept.....	10
Description	10
Elevator Pitch.....	10
Problem.....	11
Solution.....	11
Unique Selling Proposition (USP).....	12
Manifesto	12
Conclusion	13
Research Report.....	14
Competitor Landscape	14
Cognate Websites.....	15
Non-Cognate Comparators	15
SWOT Analysis	16
Business Models.....	17
Conclusion	18
Business Report.....	19
Business Rationale.....	19

Business Case.....	19
Niche and Value Proposition	20
Competitor Positioning.....	21
Cultural Context Report.....	22
History.....	22
Trends	22
Cultural Placement.....	24
Commodity Report.....	26
Content Strategy.....	26
Information Architecture.....	27
Personas	28
User Journeys.....	31
Accessibility.....	32
Delight Report.....	33
Branding and Logo	33
Style Exploration	38
Typography.....	42
Color Palette.....	43
Visuals.....	44
Wireframes	48
Mock-ups	49
Integration of Delight with Other Principles	51
Firmness Report	52
Hosting and Domain	52
CMS Choice.....	53

Plugins and Tools	54
Version Control	55
Technical Rationale	55
Prototype Report	57
Prototype Overview	57
Visual Evidence	57
Iterations	58
Schedule of Works	59
Deadlines and Adjustments	60
Value of the Prototype Phase	60
Implementation Report	63
Overview of the Build.....	62
Development Environment and Launch.....	62
Key Implementation Decisions and Rationale.....	63
Problems Encountered and Solutions	65
SEO and Social Media Configuration	66
Conclusion	66
Analysis Report.....	67
Analytics summary and user behaviour	67
Accessibility checks and results	69
Performance insights and PageSpeed	70
SEO performance and recommendations.....	73
Accessibility and performance action plan.....	74
Conclusion	74
Conclusion & Reflection	75

Introduction.....	75
Successes.....	75
Challenges and Lessons Learned	76
Next Steps and Future Plans	76
Final reflection.....	77
Conclusion	77
Reference List.....	79

Introduction

Project Overview

The massive scale of the project serves as a pointer to the final product of MA Web Design and Content Planning programme. It is well developed like a final project which will help to combine all the huge amount of knowledge, skills and techniques that are gained at the course into one inclusive, coherent and professional project. The project will involve conceptualisation, design and development and evaluation of a live working fully operational web site, the project will be supported with comprehensive documentation, the documentation will elaborate the processes and major concerns that were based upon every stage in the decision making process. In the project, creative and technical practices have been brought to the fore. It investigates design/branding and experience of the users whose engagement with the sites is on the creative level. Content architecture, accessibility, usability, aesthetic of the interface, and others are considered to make sure that the site may be not only beautiful but also user-oriented and inclusive. Reality for the actual business processes (including web development) (i.e. CMS implementation), hosting and deployment, performance optimization and evaluation) and analytics are provided at the technical level upon the project. This dual approach reflects the professional reality of web design, which functions simultaneously as creative practice and technical discipline. The integration of these dimensions enables the site to operate on multiple registers: as information architecture delivering structured content; as cultural artefact communicating meaning through design choices; and as technical demonstration of contemporary web standards. The project thus positions web design not merely as technical implementation but as a form of cultural mediation - a practice where code, content, and visual design converge to facilitate knowledge exchange and digital storytelling that respects both its subject matter and its diverse audiences.

Aims

The selected project relates to the building of Chaiblend, a website based on CMS to discuss the cultural, historical, and functional aspects of chai. Although chai is commonly viewed as merely spiced tea, it in actual sense is interwoven in a vast history of South Asia, and has grown into a worldwide trend. The goal of the site is not to sell chai as a product, but to present it as a cultural artefact that bridges tradition, wellness practices, and modern lifestyles.

This purpose places the project in the wider discussions within the academic community and the business sector. Academically, the project interacts with digital content strategy, user centred design and online representation of culture (Baran, Kopniak, & Koziel, 2021). Industry-wise, it correlates with branding, internet storytelling and web community creation. On the basis of the Vitruvian ideals of Commodity (user needs), Firmness (technical execution) and Delight (aesthetic design) there are other factors to be considered such as the business viability and cultural context fact which has led to the designing of Chaiblend in stages: concept, research, planning, prototyping, implementation, and evaluation. The both phases are involved in the creation of a professional, functional, and critically informed digital artefact.

Objectives

1. **To conceptualise, design, and implement a live website** centred on chai as a cultural and lifestyle artefact.
2. **To investigate the historical, cultural, and business contexts** surrounding chai and integrate these insights into the site's design and content strategy.
3. **To create a user-centred information architecture** that prioritises accessibility, intuitive navigation, and alignment with WCAG AA standards and contemporary web design best practices.
4. **To establish a coherent and engaging brand identity** through carefully considered visual, textual, and interactive design elements.

5. **To evaluate the effectiveness of the website** using industry-standard tools including Google Page Speed Insights, Lighthouse accessibility audits, and SEO performance metrics.
6. **To document the development process comprehensively**, from the initial concept through to final analysis, offering both transparency and critical reflection.

Methodology

The methodology adopted combines qualitative research methods with applied design and technical approaches.

- **Qualitative solutions:** these are used to impart the cultural and social expertise of chai. All these primary and secondary works consider their heritage and meaning in numerous situations and anticipations of the possible audience. The competitor websites are also analyzed and much attention is given to define the gaps available in terms of content and presentation. The information gathered at this stage will have an influence on the direction of design taken together with the communication plan of Chaiblend.
- **Different methods of usability design:** These apply the user persona design, create user journeys and create sites map structures and wireframes which forms the basis of the structure design (Sotnik, Manakov, & Lyashenko, 2023). One part of this action is content strategy because it makes certain the text and visual and interactive texts are constructed together and they are inspired to the requirements of the users.
- **Technical methods:** These focused on the practical development of the website. WordPress was used as the Content Management System (CMS) because it offers a flexible and scalable structure for managing content efficiently. A custom theme was developed and various plugins were configured to ensure the site met the project's objectives. The site has also undergone performance, access, and SEO optimisation.

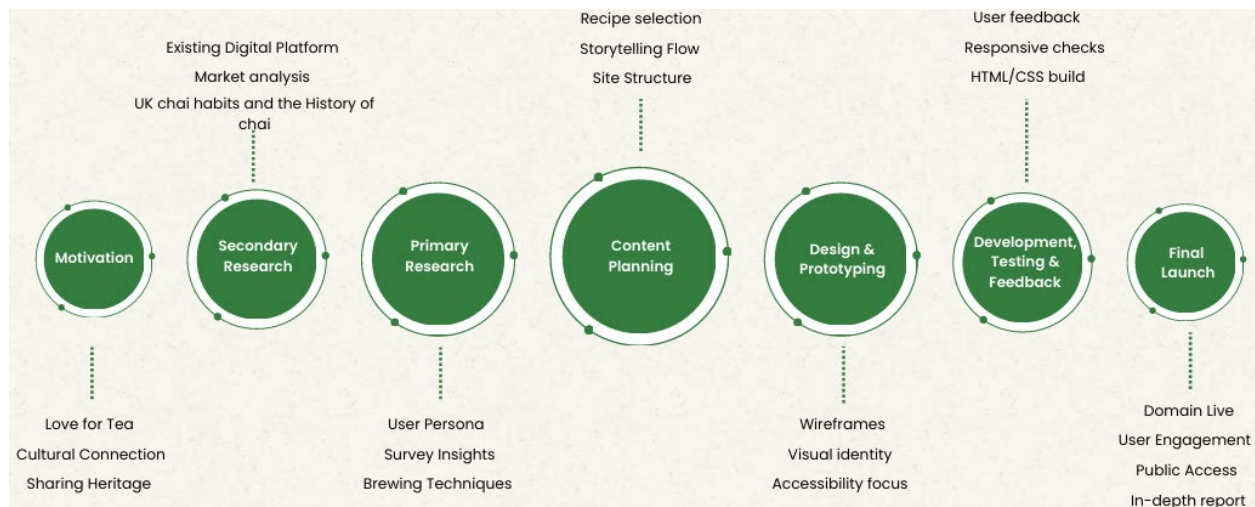


Figure 1: Methodology

(Source: Self-created)

This will make Chaiblend not simply another beautiful eye-catching web site that is finely technological and masterfully worked out but a web page that is culturally sensitive, strategically planned, and critically analyzed. The process is cyclic and allows allocation of control to make possible cyclic dispersion of the research, designing, implementing and testing of the process which is in some way presentation of a professional work with web development and with the help of which the finished product is going to be presented at the end of the year will be a scholarly made and effective one.

Concept Report

Project Concept

The proposed project will consist of developing Chaiblend, a CMS-based website that will be recognised for highlighting the cultural, historical, and meaningful aspects of chai. The idea is to focus on cultural storytelling, providing accessible and useful information such as recipes and insights about the traditions, rituals, and health benefits of chai. The project will not introduce chai merely as a drink but rather as a representation of culture and tradition, showing how it continues to evolve in today's modern lifestyle.

Description

The ChaiBlend website is designed as an online resource combining three main channels of information: curated chai recipes, stories about the history and culture of chai, and content highlighting the health benefits of chai and its natural ingredients. Recipes are chosen and introduced to represent a variety of chai traditions, including traditional South Asian masala chai and new changes in chai around the world (Khaliq et al. 2024). The cultural section explores how chai originated, its role in different practices, and the meanings it holds across various communities. The health-related content draws from studies on the properties of spices such as ginger, cardamom, and cinnamon, making the site especially appealing to readers interested in wellness and healthy living.

The site is focused on a large yet well-defined audience. It comprises culture-loving individuals interested in states of well-being, active well-being persons seeking high-quality health content, and curious readers who prefer clear and accessible content.

Elevator Pitch

ChaiBlend is a digital platform that blends chai tradition with modern wellness, offering authentic recipes, cultural narratives, and evidence-based health insights to

help UK audiences discover the heritage and benefits of Indian chai through an accessible, beautifully designed website.

Problem

Tea is one of the most popular drinks in the world, and chai is one of the most characteristic and culturally relevant ones. However, information about chai is unorganized and scattered over the web. This is because some are more limited in terms of their recipes, where limited or irrelevant cultural or historical backgrounds are provided, whereas others serve chai with the focus on lifestyle that is not deeply subjective or showing the right perspective (Leshchuk et al., 2021). They lack a well-planned and broad platform, which would mean that those who would like to discover chai as a whole, as a culinary, cultural, and wellness phenomenon, would have to shop around.

In the UK, where tea drinking is part of everyday life, this gap is especially relevant. With a population of around 69 million, nearly 98% of residents drink tea daily - equating to more than 66 million people (Tea.co.uk, n.d.). Yet, most rely on tea bags, with fewer using traditional loose-leaf brewing methods. This demonstrates both a large audience of potential chai enthusiasts and a unique opportunity for Chaiblend to introduce authentic brewing techniques, educate users about chai's cultural heritage, and reconnect modern tea lovers with traditional practices.

Solution

Chaiblend provides a single, well-organised platform that combines authentic chai recipes, cultural stories, historical background, and evidence-based information about its health benefits. The site is designed for simplicity and ease of navigation, ensuring that users can explore chai traditions without confusion or fragmentation. By gathering reliable, research-informed content in one place, Chaiblend helps users develop a deeper and more accurate understanding of chai as both a cultural and wellness experience.

Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

The combination of quality content and user-friendly design forms the core of Chaiblend's Unique Selling Proposition. Chaiblend avoids becoming just another generic recipe blog or lifestyle site where chai loses its true meaning. Instead, it stands out as a platform that is both educational and enjoyable, allowing users to learn and engage at the same time.

- **Content depth:** Recipes are contextualised with cultural and historical meaning, while health claims are supported by research, avoiding vague or misleading wellness content.
- **Usability:** The site is designed with a clean interface, responsive layout, and strong SEO optimisation to ensure discoverability and accessibility.
- **Cultural respect:** The platform foregrounds chai's origins in South Asia, acknowledging its heritage while opening it up to global audiences in a respectful and inclusive way.

Manifesto

The guiding principles of ChaiBlend are expressed in the following manifesto:

1. **Contextualisation of content:** Recipes have cultural and historical context, and health claims are backed up by research, without including wellness claims that are broad and mixed up.
2. **Usability:** The site has a clearly defined interface; interactive design and a solid SEO optimisation strategy in an effort to allow uncover ability and accessibility.
3. **Cultural Appreciation:** The platform celebrates chai's South Asian origins, representing it as an integral part of domestic life and cultural identity while making it relatable to global audiences.
4. **Cultural Sharing:** To recognize the cultural heritage of the chai and in an attempt to bring their tradition and folklore to the rest of the world.
5. **Scholarly Presentation:** To put forth the information in a scholarly yet engaging manner

6. **Accessibility and Inclusion:** The website follows accessibility standards to ensure that all users, regardless of ability, can access and enjoy the content.
7. **Authenticity and Integrity:** The project relies on trustworthy cultural and health sources rather than unverified or exaggerated claims.
8. **Blending Tradition with Modernity:** Chaiblend aims to merge the timeless charm of chai with a modern digital design aesthetic, creating a bridge between tradition and innovation.

Conclusion

The concept, design, and development of Chaiblend establish it as a carefully curated digital platform dedicated to the world of chai. It not only fills a clear gap in existing online content but also demonstrates how web design can serve as a powerful medium for cultural representation, storytelling, and exchange. By combining recipes, cultural insights, and evidence-based discussions on health and well-being, the site creates a diverse, engaging, and intellectually meaningful experience that appeals to a wide range of audiences.

Research Report

Chaiblend is a research based on the conditions of defining the location of the site in the already existing digital ecosystem and defining the opportunities of the differentiation. Despite the strong cultural elements and popularity of chai as a product, at present, documented online resources dedicated to the cultural, culinary, and wellness benefits of chai do not exist (Yanney et al., 2023). Available sources either lack comprehensive data or focus on a business agenda at the expense of diversity and comprehensive coverage. Through the competitor platforms analysis, break down into cognate and non-cognate platforms, a SWOT and business model analysis of Chaiblend, there is an apparent target strategic niche, as a user-centred and knowledge-based alternative.

Competitor Landscape

Currently, the majority of the online sources receiving interest in chai are grouped into two general categories: food blogs and commercial tea companies. Food blogs predominantly cover recipes but seldom put them into a proper cultural or historical perspective. Commercial brands on the flipside tell some of the cultures structures in a selective manner as a strategy in the marketing process, although their intention is to make the respective products sell, not to educate or give a holistic answer.



Figure 2: Competitors

(Source: Self-created)

Cognate Websites

Within food blogs and recipe-based cultural websites such as Minimalist Baker and Epicurious, user engagement plays a major role. These platforms are visually rich, well-organised, and effective at building community through storytelling and shared experiences (Khalil et al., 2024). However, they often rely heavily on advertisements and pop-ups, which can disrupt the user experience and lead to fatigue.

What can be learnt by Chaiblend at that time is not to go down the route of over-advertising, centralisation in their categorisation, friendly navigation and searching, and sticking to their brand. It is to be designed to offer a convenient, entertaining and easy browsing experience.

Non-Cognate Comparators

Along with food blogs in niche, large reciprocity blogs, like BBC Good Food and AllRecipes, are worthwhile competitors as well. These sites show that large amounts of content can be efficiently categorised through effective search functions, filters, and content labelling. Metadata and taxonomies also help users access information quickly, regardless of how extensive the database is (Kazemi et al., 2024).

Such practices will support the growth of Chaiblend with a small number of content bases initially. Features such as search options, ingredient grouping, customisation, and health-based categorisation can be integrated into future updates.

Simultaneously, Chaiblend need not duplicate their vices as it is a surplus of choice or being presumed to have a tale about themselves and huge size of their site.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Niche focus on chai gives cultural authenticity and differentiation.	New website with limited initial reach and visibility.	Growing global interest in wellness and mindful consumption.	Established tea brands dominate search rankings with large marketing budgets.
Integration of recipes, cultural narratives, and health insights provides unique content depth.	Limited resources restrict breadth of content at launch.	Increasing popularity of chai in Western markets creates a ready audience.	Competitors may replicate the model once Chaiblend gains traction.
Commitment to accessibility and inclusivity builds user trust and credibility.	Heavy reliance on SEO may pose risks if algorithms change.	Potential to engage diaspora communities and cultural tourism audiences.	Algorithm changes or platform dependency could reduce discoverability.



Figure 3: SWOT Analysis

(Source: Self-created)

Business Models

The present food-related digital platforms generally have two models as follows:

1. Commercial brands are made to monetise by selling their products, and many of them include recipes and cultural stories in their marketing.
2. Blogs about food and style magazines gain money via advertisements, associate links, and sponsored posts. While this can sustain content production, it often results in cluttered layouts and diminished user experience.

Chaiblend does things differently. First, the site is not going to focus on monetisation. Instead, it will be more focused on establishing credibility, trust, and involvement of the audience through delivery of accurate, culturally competent, and accessible content (Mandiyartha et al., 2022). This makes the site knowledge site, an un-commerce oriented alternative, as it offers its authority in a landscape where branding and advertisement is the order of the day.

In the long term, Chaiblend could explore **ethical monetisation options** such as:

- Collaborations with cultural institutions or wellness organisations.
- Sponsored content that aligns with the site's ethos.

- Carefully selected advertising, introduced only if it does not compromise usability.

Chaiblend focuses on making the right decision by choosing not to monetise until a reputation is built, leaving room to grow sustainably in the future.

Conclusion

The study observes that despite chai's cultural importance and widespread popularity, existing digital sources fail to present it in a holistic, inclusive, and user-centred way. Many related websites focus on tutorials or blogging but tend toward commercialisation, while non-cognate platforms demonstrate strong information architecture yet lack cultural intimacy (Prstačić, 2021). The SWOT analysis highlights Chaiblend's strengths in cultural authenticity and integrated content, alongside opportunities to connect with global wellness and lifestyle trends. Contributing to the reality of threats posed by the existing competitors, the quality and accessibility approach of the project provides a solid baseline. Since it opposes the over-commercialised strategies of existing model Chaiblend can cut a niche as a non-sell, non-commercial knowledge-based and accessible digital platform all about chai.

Business Report

Business Rationale

Chaiblend theoretically makes business sense because it is a content platform utilizing more than the conventional thinking of chai as a beverage. Rather, the project places chai as a means of culture and wellness, and its worth as an object that integrates tradition, culture, and wellness. This would enable the platform to create a unique identity in an online competitive space where businesses predominantly can be classified as both commercial and generic food blogs. In the efforts of establishing itself as a non-commerce but knowledge-based alternative, Chaiblend presents its audience with meaningful interaction with chai beyond recipes and product advertisement.

Business Case

The aim of the implementation of the technique is explained by the necessity to promote the demand of wellness-related material throughout the world. Consumers need an increasing amount of wellbeing-enhancing resources on digital, connecting ordinary life practices with personal wellbeing. A natural product to include in that assortment is chai. Another fact that promotes a health benefit is that chai is common as a symbol of warmth and socialization, and this means that chai is a combination of spices and natural products (Aritonang and Setiawardani, 2023). This stance, thus, is common to Chaiblend despite the fact that two gigantic interests of the audiences are combined to reach: the need to learn about a range of different cultures, the need to find a healthy lifestyle. The effective loading of chai which into effect adapts the conventional with the concept of wellness will ensure that the site becomes a source of information that is trustworthy and can add a bit of information and reality to information already available on the internet.

Niche and Value Proposition

The information about the culture and wellness aspects should be used to position Chaiblend as the targeted niche. Despite the fact that food blogs occasionally highlight the culture of chai, they do it superficially, and it is an individual experience to go with a recipe. Wellness platforms would on the other hand be more nutritional and not consider the cultural richness of the exercise like chai preparation and consumption (Rahmah et al., 2022). Striking the right chord between the two dimensions, Chaiblend provides both real life stories about the origin of chai and the description of its positive properties, one can rely on.

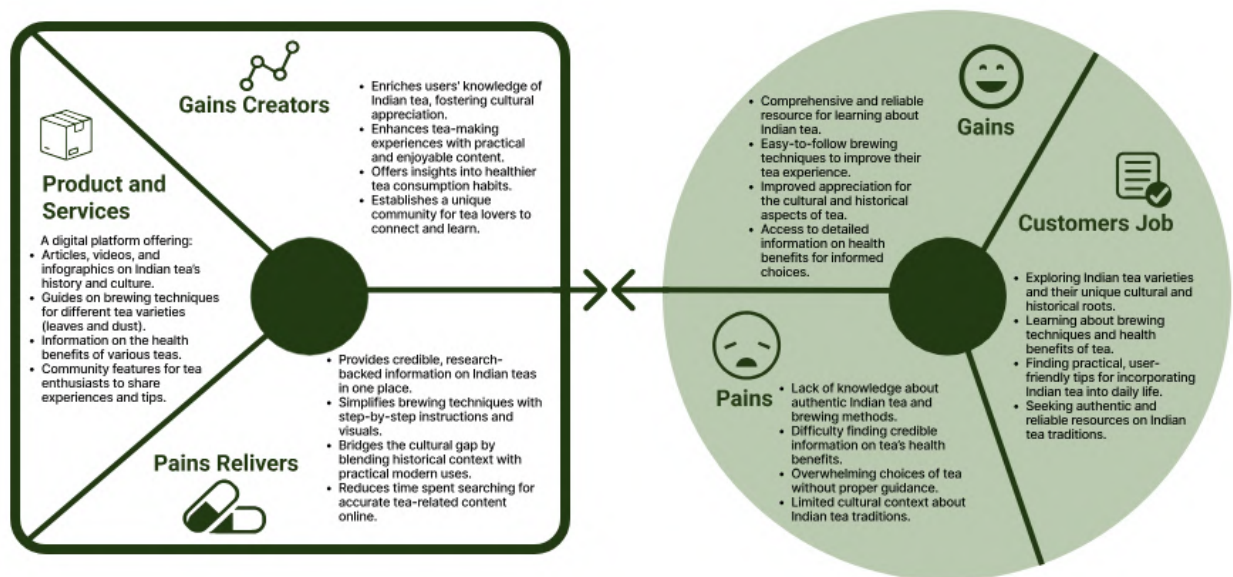


Figure 4: Value Proposition

(Source: Self-created)

Its value provision is commuting in the generation of an accessibility resource, captivating to acquire information i.e. it is not one-sided in educating any entrepreneurial commodity. It is this authenticity in culture and health-consciousness that makes it unique and can appeal to users who will fall across a wide spectrum of curious and health-conscious (or both) users.

Competitor Positioning

As part of competition analysis, it is clear that most of them are operating in two competitive segments. On the one hand, there are commercial chai brands whose main purpose is to sell products and produce brands. They are commonly commercial and shall be superficially brief otherwise than the marketing messages. General food blogs are located on the other side, and chai may be featured in any of the number of recipes but is never given particular or specific attention. Even these blogs contrive to create personal communication with the audience though they lack consistency, chaotic structure coupled with high animation densely covered designs. Chaiblend intentionally identifies herself as near as possible to these two extremities. The next concept scheme can be depicted to show such positioning based on the cultural depth and commercial orientation. At the high-commercial but low-culture blade curve, and at the low-commercial but shallow-focus blade curve are the high-commercial but shallow-focus weblogs and low-commercial but deep-focus weblogs, respectively. Chaiblend would be situated in upper-middle ground that connotes the highly-cultured, low-motivation business ground. This framework shows how the project is distinguished compared with the competitors and made use of the strength that prevailing models possessed.

Cultural Context Report

History

Chai reflected extensively upon the cultural, medication and social practices of South Asia. The use of spices including ginger, cardamom, cinnamon and cloves had been selected as first priority in Ayurvedic form of treatment long before introduction of tea in the specified regions. They are the spices cooked with water, or milk, as tonic in order to digest and to act as means of protection against becoming infected and as scientific guarantee of health. It was only through modification of this image that served the purpose of buttressing the work stipulated by the British colonialists in the nineteenth century with the assistance of tea leaves. Reduction of quantity of imports of tea-China large tea farms in Assam and Darjeeling British East India Company had proposed the depreciation of quantity of imports as a way of decreasing the quantity of imports. Although they intended to encourage the Indians to brew the black tea, the locals swallowed the tea in their culture and in their mouths. (Putri, 2022). The beverage it produced is now called chai since the mixture included a leaf of tea, milk, sugar, and other spices originating in this land. And it was not conformity to the country as a colonial experience but as something that furnished the tradition of natives and changed tastes and preferences. This family that introduced it has become so fond of the lifestyle of the people that it has moved above both the social and economic levels after a very long period of time. It is no more really a constituent of the roadside stand of chaiwala than it is truly a constituent of the kitchens of bourgeois households or of the menu of cafes in the metropolis. Chai is a drink which is still a democratic one and which is one with the total poles the religions and states with many classes.

Trends

The chai has greatly grown in the car industry and local platform in the foreign market. But it is one of the most critical features of South Asia life as well as its

social relations. Hospitality also concerns the fact that the reader visits the house and reads chai to the visitor is the sort of community center where various social groups may meet one another. Chai is something that still preserves the social bonding status and this is achieved due to these practices (Nguyen, 2024). What the world at large perceives is that chai has realigned itself and re-defined itself by the cultural prison which is the consumer condition. The fame of internationalisation and commodification of the tea has been on the fact that the tea as the cafe chain of that of Starbucks are will be selling a drink that is named a chai tea latte. Despite the fact that through this movement chai has spread to new markets, the chai itself is losing cultural specificity and becomes a flavour or hype. Even those rebrands fall under the larger category of the cross-national consumption without much emphasis on the cultural connotation and more emphasis on the lifestyle connotation of a specific food or beverage consumers consume. Meanwhile, it has been instigated by the digital culture that transformed drinks into artefacts of lifestyle. This can clearly be realized and especially, the coffee culture. Thoroughly theorised, commodified and peddled via sophism and cosmopolitan images, via dialogism of productivity. This holds because the all over reaching nature of the aesthetic of coffee, consumed on Instagram photos and coffee shop reviews have led to coffee being not merely a drink but an alternative lifestyle and a symbolic identity. The latter has not been much loved by the internet web media networks compared to Chai because it is alleged to have a very rich culture. It is an invisibility, a consequence of which is the inequality of visibility of beverages in the world of the existence of coffee as one of the generic markers of culture and the existence of chai as one of such markers in this system (Salman et al. 2022). However, wellness dynamic culture can offer approaches of re-branding the chai in the market. As the concern among the consumers about healthy lifestyle and wellness of the whole body increases, marketable appeal of the spices blend used in chai and the Ayurvedic origin of chai is directly appealing to the wellness consumer. That it is linked with comfort and warmth can also be connected to the modern cultural trend whereby the experience should be memorable and essentially authentic. It is a terra incognita, in which a business such as Chaiblend

can enter and convert chai into not a beverage consumed but rather an object of culture, an image of something.

Cultural Placement

To understand the concept of dispossession, as compared to authenticity and balefulness, they may reveal chai cultural placement today. Chai belongs to the identity and the sign of belonging to the South Asian communities. It unites the generations and is, thus, emblematic of hospitality and criminal execution in the age of migration and globalisation. Chai helps the diaspora communities in the first place, to remember about their background and is associated with the recollection about their native practices, group activities and culture. This is the reason chai is not just a food, but an identity, a cultural force symbolism (Medvedeva et al. 2021). Chai, on its part, has long since lost its origins and was re-discovered during commercialized discourses in the eyes of the majority of the viewer's everywhere on the planet. An example of such cultural flattening is the marketing of the latte to be the imperial coffee of the western culture, the culture of the chai latte. This kind of commodification, of course, in a certain way is stretching the boundaries of the chai, but there is also a risk that the chai is eroding many of the contexts and backgrounds under the condition of which the chai does have a meaning. The clash can be considered to meet the general definition of the globalisation of culture on a broader scale where authenticity is freely exchanged in place of more generalized fame. This bargaining has been pro pepo according to the digital culture. Instagram, twitch, Tik Tok has transformed into a significant platform of constructing the image of foodstuff and enjoyment of it. Compared to developing the culture of coffee within these premises the chai culture has been portrayed very badly. It can be understood as the fact that the percentage of attempts to enhance the cultural exposure of chai on the online platform is underrepresented. Trying to fill this gap, Chaiblend establishes a platform and manages to turn chai into a culturally native and globally connoting drink (Akinlabi and Habeebullah, 2022). Chaiblend is also trying to be perceived as heritage and also easier to navigate through its content strategy. With

the combined help of recipes, cultural storytelling, history, and evidence-based health information, the website will make sure that chai will no longer be exploited but will be viewed as an organic tradition. The strategy appreciates the roots of chai and aims at the existing customers that emphasise on wellness, Israel and inclusivity, and online selling. In this manner Chaiblend does not become an observer of the culture of Europe as such but participates in the construction of the digital culture. It reinvents chai, one of the crucial activities to associate tradition and modernity, heritage and globalisation, self and lifestyle.

Commodity Report

Content Strategy

The contents strategy of the Chai blend will involve the following and thus the delivery of cultural narration, recipe directions and health news in a well-planned and convenient fashion. These strands present duality like chai as a culture and as a lifestyle beverage. Strands are designed to be connected in a way that cross-reference and navigate with each other, and also have particular user objectives.

Cultural strand lays chai in the historical and social sphere. Articles will give the reader the colonization of chai, values associated with giving chai in a South Asian home and South Asian culture. This makes Chaiblend appear to be more than an entree in its depth and reality.

The step by step instructions on how to create the chai are available in an extremely wide choice of flavors, such as the traditional Masala Chai and Irani Chai, as well as all local favorites. There are also pictures that support the written directions to ensure that the users are aware of the procedure by heart. Recipes can also be categorised by type and by origin which makes the site culturally oriented.

The health strand underestimates the wish to adopt evidence based wellness details. It prose on common chai spices such as ginger, cinnamon and cardamom providing nutritional benefits and outlines its benefits and potential precautions. The cultural knowledge chain renders it more plausible as it renders scientific research the foundation of cultural knowledge. All these three strands together are unnecessary digital resource. The information is not very comprehensive and written in straightforward language and the data is arranged in a way that people who are viewing can see what elements are present in other parts as well. Intrinsic connections will provide a reader who starts with the recipe with a possibility also to learn more about cultural remarks and health facts so as to draw more attention.

Information Architecture

The information architecture (IA) translates the content strategy into one that is clear and logical. The main menu has the following items: **Home**, **What Is Chai**, **Chai Recipes**, and **Health Benefits**. This is a good, well organized, layout with no over compaction of choices on the menu and the overall points can also be found on the main menu.

Recipes are organised into categories such as Chai with Spices, Chai with Herbs & Leaves, and Regional and Specialty Chai's, making it easy for users to browse different types of chai. The Health Benefits pages use a modular template. The ingredients are listed on different pages with summary, nutritional information, evidenced health benefits or allergies or diet restrictions. This structure allows information to be both searchable and easy to scan.

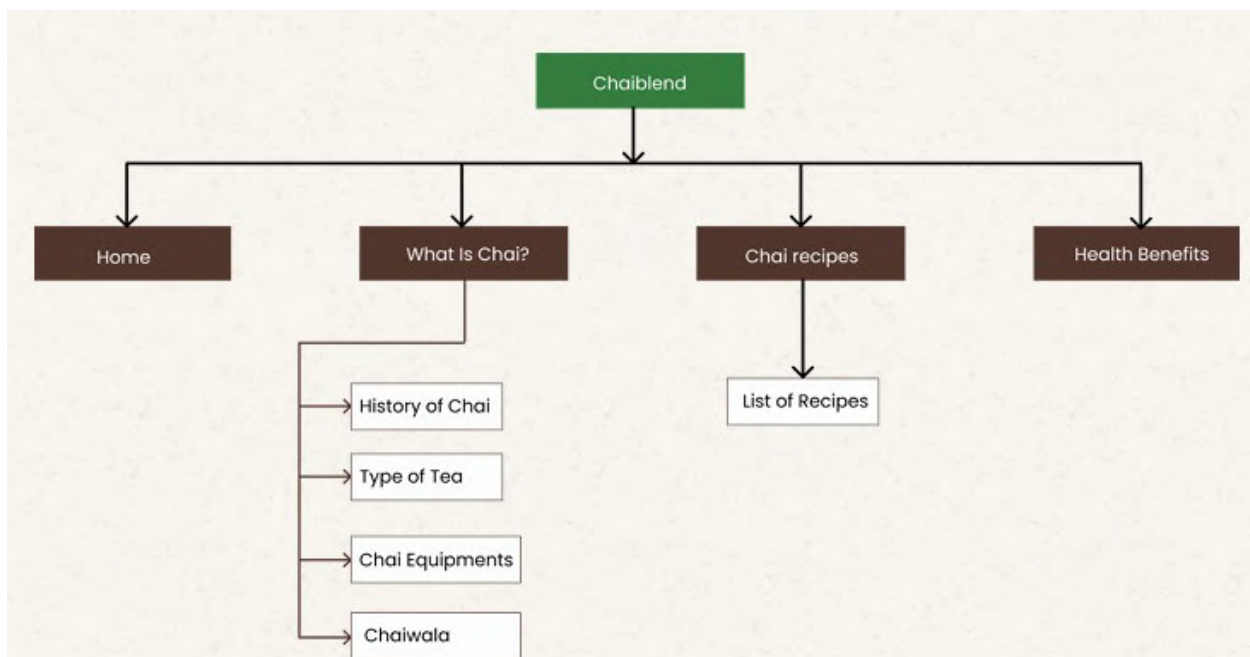


Figure 5: Information Architecture

(Source: Self-created)

The supporting sections render the document clear and add more credibility. References page contains the scholar and credible sources used to be the health contents. The Accessibility Statement expresses the design's commitment to

inclusivity and usability. Taken together these sections imply that credibility is of great significance to Chaiblend and that usability is of paramount importance. All the mock-up and preliminary testing of the navigations took place on the IA. It was observed that to ensure categories are kept simple and to ensure terminology is employed throughout the menus and headings. At least some of these insights were utilized to make some changes such as renaming some of the pages to make it easier to navigate and ensure that in two clicks the recipes are located.

Personas

The definition was crucial in persona creation in the definition of the content/design. Three pictorial positions were identified.

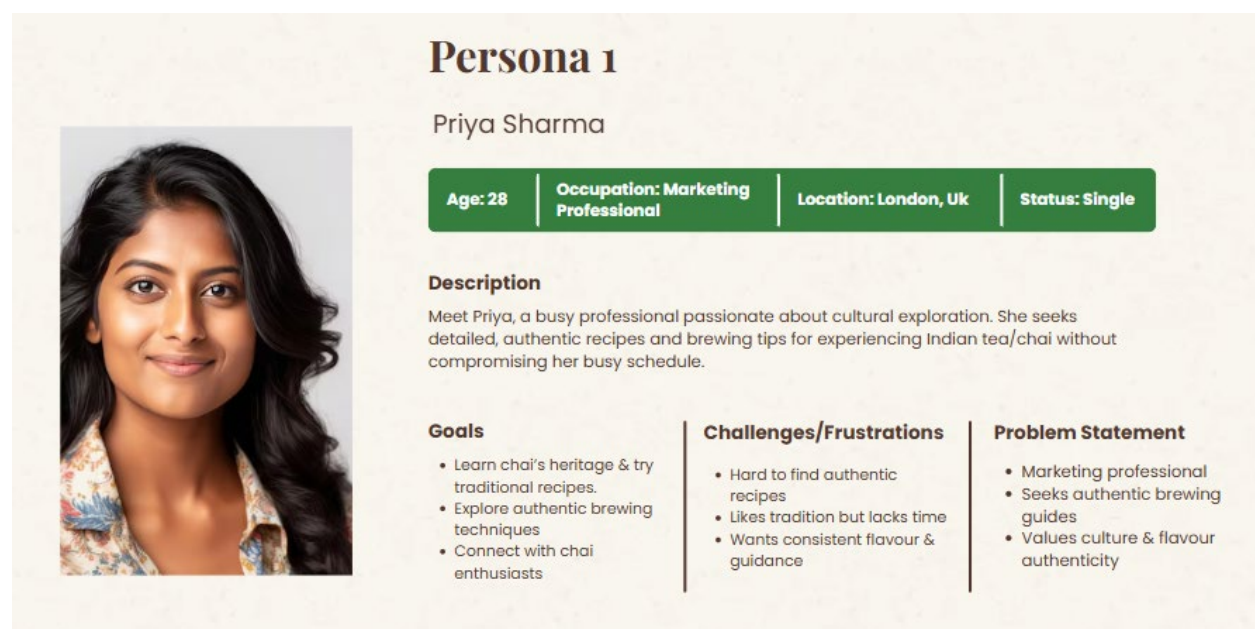


Figure 6: Persona 1

(Source: Self-created)

Priya Sharma is a 28 years old (London) marketing consultant, passionate about culture exploration, but she is short of time. Her recipes and tips on brewing are authentic and they do not occupy her tight schedule. Cultural credibility and clarity

will be important to Priya and she will spend longer time on the detailed guides than informal guides.





Figure 8: Persona 3

(Source: Self-created)

James Taylor is both a 45 years old IT practitioner at Manchester. He prefers having his tea as an exercise in his wellness and his daily routines and family obligations imply that his favorite dishes should be easy to prepare and have a straightforward structure. Accuracy, clarity in steps and practical instruction are some of his priorities.

These portraits directly influenced design and its implementation of contents. The style of writing priya articles is in a narrative manner that is rich in references and relying on heritage. James recipes are short with pictures to be used and numeric instructions. When sharing them with Emily using the communal accepted shareable features, it is structured to meet their demands in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way in some ways. The site is widely relevant as it applies such disparate personas.

User Journeys

The user mapping enabled the site architecture to have a way through which the persona requirements are achieved. Priya prefers to arrive on such cultural pages of the History of Chai and proceed to attached recipes/ingredients pages. The user can land on the home page or on the social media links and read the recipes before going back to reading about cultural or sustainability subjects. Typically, James will locate a recipe, a list of ingredients, open a guide on how to prepare it, and potentially study the health benefits of chai so it becomes an ingredient of his health.

The work of design was encouraged by these expeditions. In the home page, recipes links are made conspicuous. There are also ingredient cards with fast scanning icons in the health section. The continuity of types of communicative contents is given by immediate connections between recipes and cultural and health information.

Navigation is inspired by such cognitive cues as exploring the history of chai and trying this greener recipe.

Stage	User Action	Experience	Pain Points	Scope of Improvement
Awareness	Searches online for chai recipes / information	Finds scattered blogs, YouTube videos	Hard to tell authentic content from generic ones	Provide a dedicated hub with authentic, well-researched chai content
Consideration	Compares recipes or methods	Stressed by conflicting instructions	No single reliable source; quality varies	Offer clear, step-by-step guides and consistent brewing instructions
Preparation	Buys tea bags or basic tea blends	Chooses the easiest option	Misses out on authentic brewing methods and spice combinations	Educate users on traditional ingredients & equipment, with easy alternatives
Brewing	Attempts to make chai at home	Confused or inconsistent results	Struggles with correct steps, proportions, and techniques	Give visual guides, tips, and cultural context to make brewing simple and engaging
Experience	Drinks the tea	Flavour is too strong, bland or repetitive	Doesn't capture authentic chai taste or cultural experience	Deliver authentic recipes for a richer, more satisfying chai experience
Reflection	Thinks about trying again	Frustrated, might give up	Lack of guidance leads to lowers motivation to explore chai further	Inspire users with stories, heritage, and wellness benefits to encourage exploration

Figure 9: User Journey Map

(Source: Self-created)

Journey mapping also revealed all barriers. The surveys carried out showed that the contents about health were concealed under menus and therefore they were eliminated elsewhere where they will be found simply. The recipes were also given the thumbnails to make it more interesting and the comments of the story were also underlined on the culture article to keep Priya interested.

Accessibility

Both Chaiblend design incorporate ease of access. Semantic HTML contains logical tags of heading that are used to help to use by the screen reader and it also includes a descriptive text on all images in the form of the alt text. The text on the links is easy to understand without words, which are vague as click here. The page design is also consistent to not create any confusion to the other pages when the user is using aid technologies.

It was decided to use contrast and aid users with image problems by writing colour palette. No issues with font readability and type legibility, fonts can be scaled, and there is adequate spacing. Responsivity effortlessly guarantees that the mobile, tablet and desktop users are not distorted and forced to scroll unnecessarily in their attempts to reach material.

Access to content is also facilitated by its structure. The recipes will be displayed in numbered format and bullet scannable highlights in the health pages. The commitments on inclusive design are expressed in writing and an Accessibility Statement is also published, asking the user to provide feedback on the site. Accessibility is thus not an attachment to design and development of Chaiblend.

Delight Report

Branding and Logo

Chaiblend brand identity was formulated to achieve a sense of warmth, authenticity and cultural heritage yet still appear clean and modern to consumers worldwide. Even the naming of the (Chaiblend) reflects the cultural meaning and diversity: chai roots the place to South Asian culture, whereas blending emphasizes diversity, inclusiveness, and cultural fusion concept.

1) Initial Exploration

The logo design process began with typographic experiments (Figure 10), exploring various typefaces and arrangements to understand how best to represent the brand's essence. The goal was to achieve a visual balance between traditional charm and contemporary simplicity.



Figure 10: Initial Logo Ideas

(Source: Self-created)

2) Concept Development

Next, two moodboards and concept directions were developed, as the initial logo ideas (Figure 11) did not fully reflect the brand's warmth and cultural essence. They

appeared either too plain or overly decorative, so further exploration focused on achieving a balanced, meaningful design.

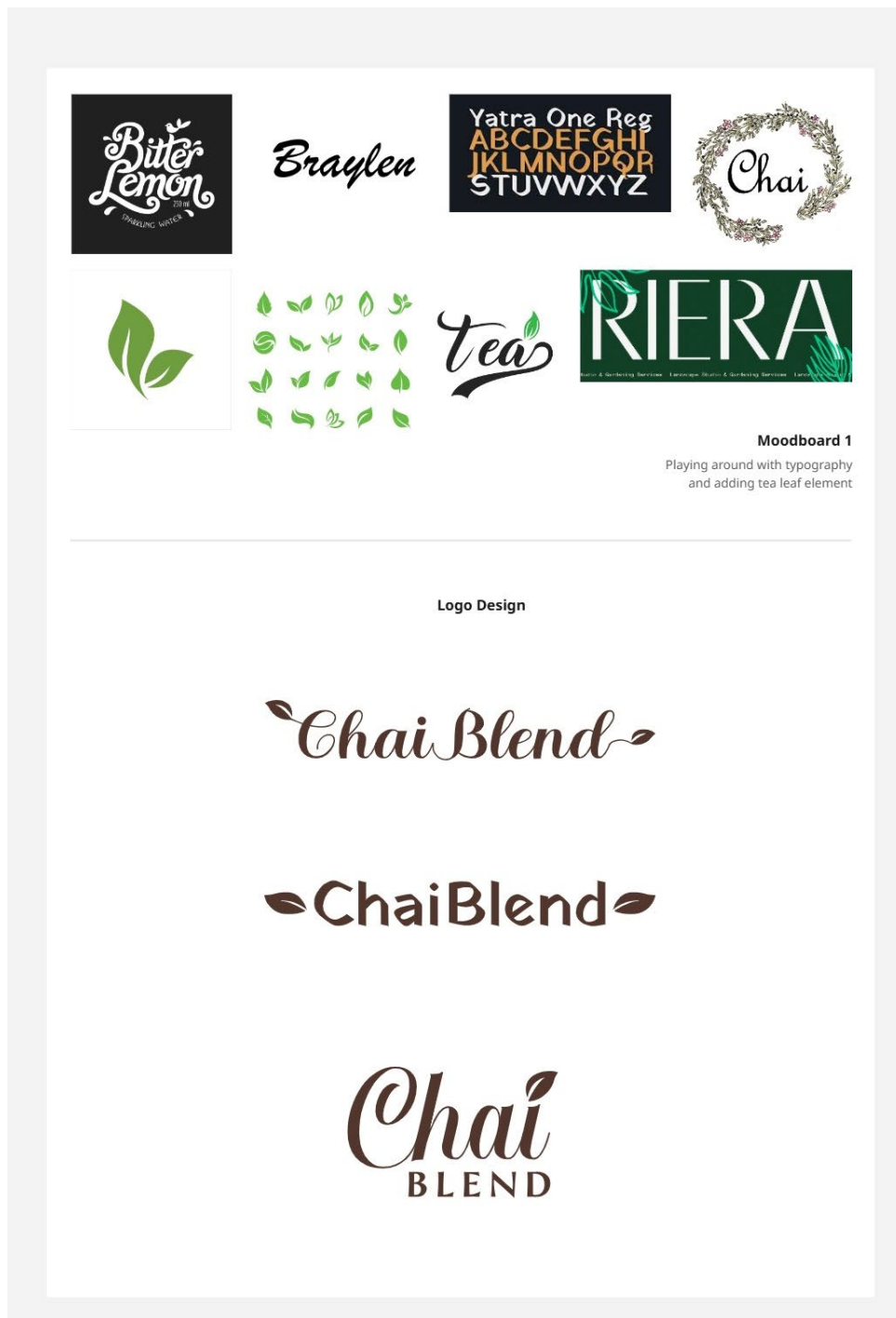
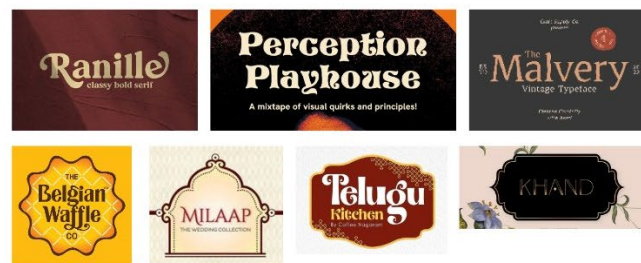


Figure 11: Concept Development 1

(Source: Self-created)



Moodboard 2

Playing around with typography
and different shape elements

Logo Design



Figure 12: Concept Development 2

(Source: Self-created)

- Concept 1 introduced tea leaf elements and flowing script typography to symbolise nature, warmth, and organic wellness.
- Concept 2 focused on motifs and geometric shapes, inspired by traditional South Asian design patterns to convey heritage and structure.

These explorations helped identify a direction that felt both authentic and approachable, avoiding excessive ornamentation. After receiving feedback, the third option from Concept Development 1 was selected; this then guided the stages of iteration, refinement, and the final logo design.

3) Iteration and Refinement

In the first round of iteration, I experimented with different colour combinations and the use of accent colours in the logo. Using these variations, I created four different logo options.

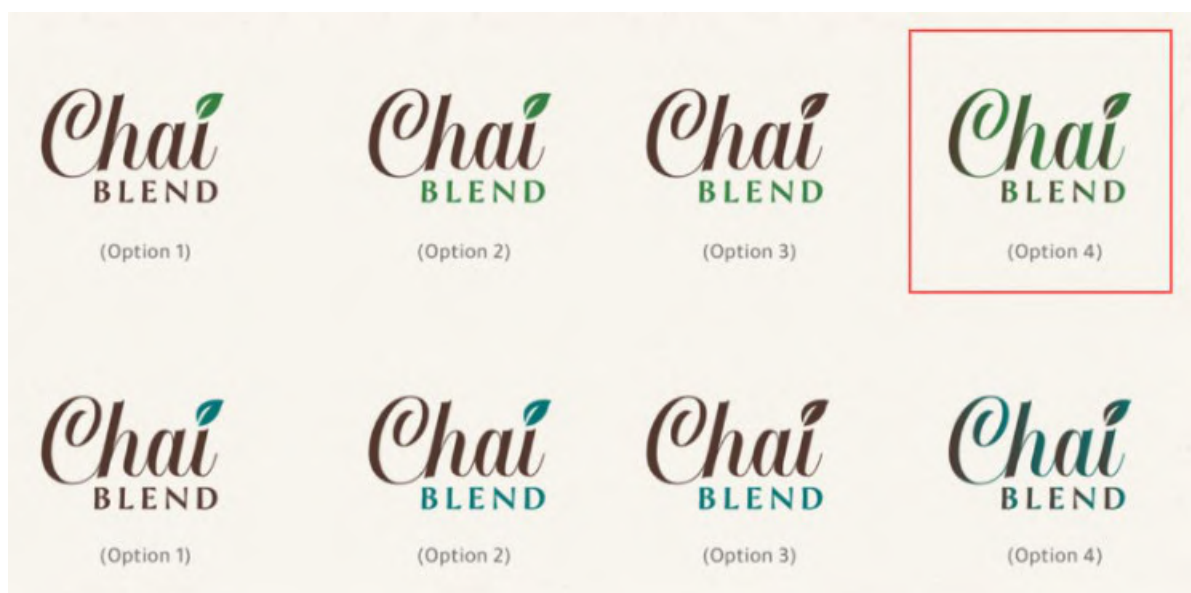


Figure 13: Logo Iteration 1

(Source: Self-created)

After receiving the second round of feedback, the accent colour (**#357E3F**) used in **Option 4** was selected for further refinement.

In the second round of iteration, the following refinements were made:

- The leaf was made a solid green colour to ensure clarity.
- The word “Chai” incorporated a green gradient, symbolising vitality and freshness.
- The word “Blend” was rendered in brown to represent warmth and earthiness.
- Letter spacing in “Blend” was slightly reduced to improve readability and visual balance.
- Three different variations were created based on these updates.

After again receiving feedback, **Option 3** was selected as the **final logo**.

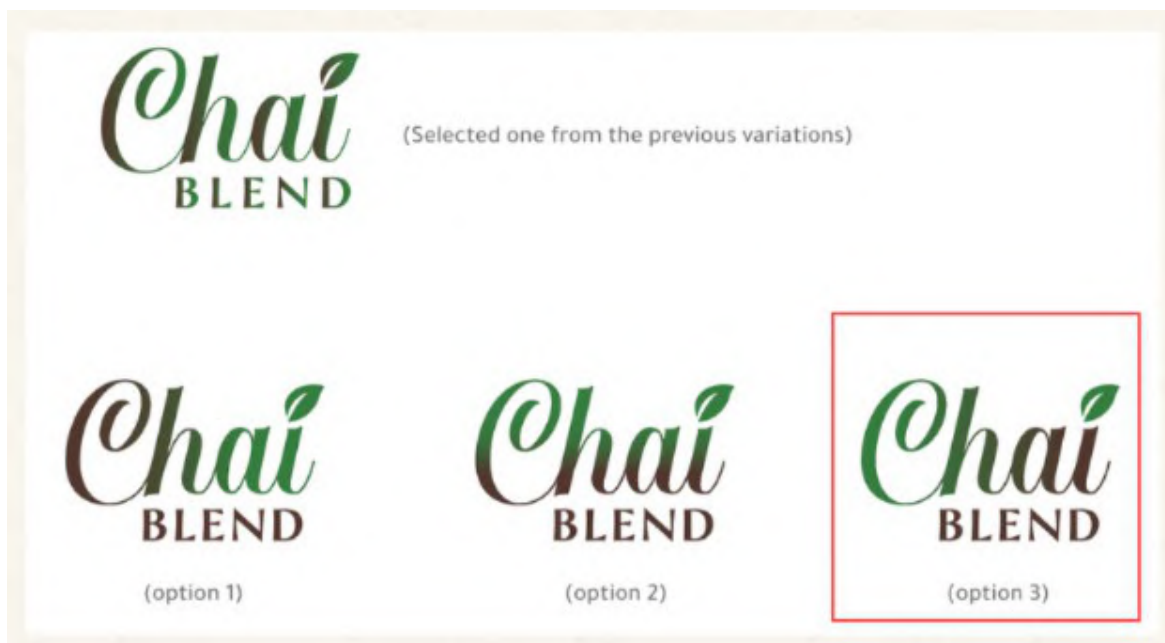


Figure 14: Logo Iteration 2

(Source: Self-created)

The work of the logo design incorporated trial of test versions of the logo in both black and white and colour. This made sure it could be contextualized, including the promotional items of brand applications in print form or social media icons. The branding creates an impression of trust and recognition without an excess of visual details because the design is minimal but tied to the specific culture.

Style Exploration

The development of Chaiblend's visual style progressed through several refinements, aiming to achieve balance between **cultural authenticity and modern usability**. The early style exploration (Figure 15) incorporated warm earthy tones and detailed illustrations, reflecting the ingredients and rituals associated with chai.

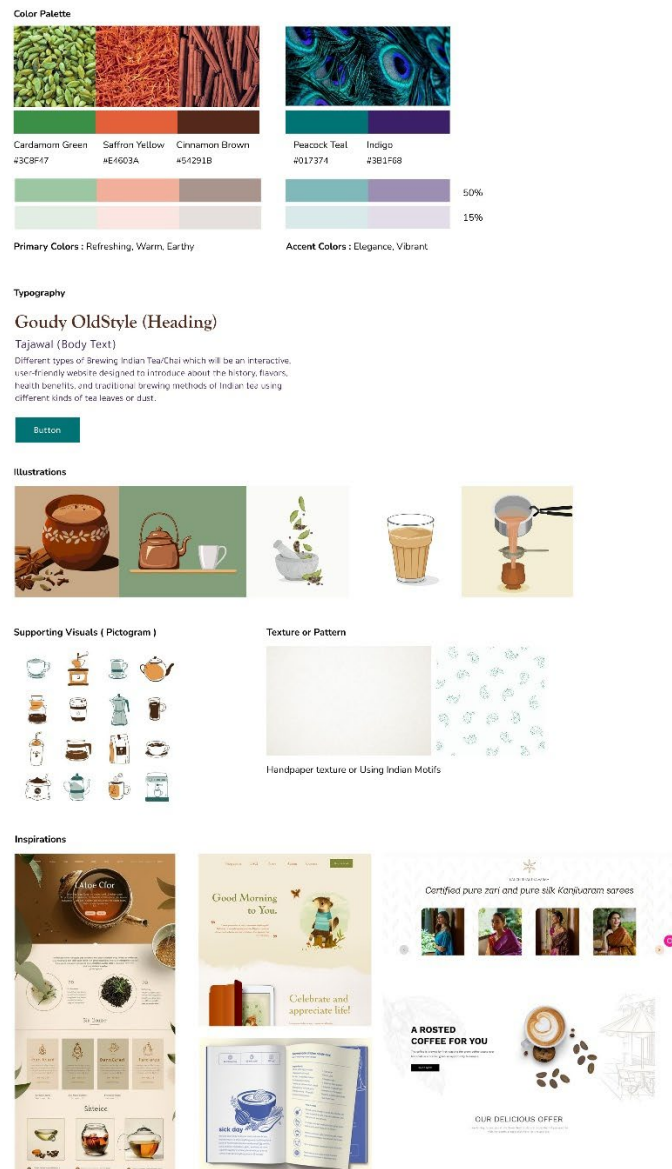


Figure 15: Style Tile 1
(Source: Self-created)

In later iterations (Figure 15-16), the layout, colour palette, and typography were refined to create a more cohesive and contemporary appearance while maintaining a sense of warmth and heritage.

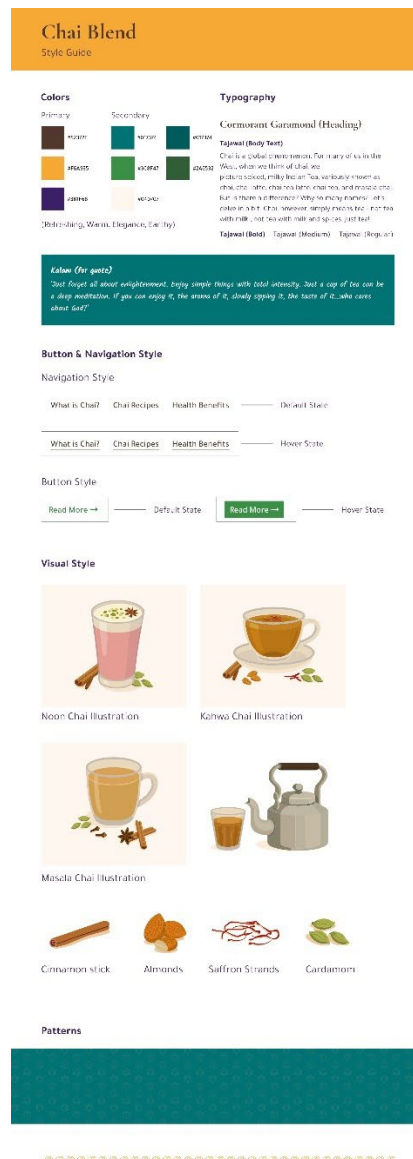


Figure 16: Style Tile 2
(Source: Self-created)

Color



Typeface

Playfair Display
(For Heading)

Karla
(For Body Paragraph)

Background Texture



Visuals



Figure 17: Style Tile 3
(Source: Self-created)

The final style establishes a **harmonious, inviting visual identity** that communicates the brand's essence - rooted in Indian culture yet accessible to a global audience. Every visual element works together to create a consistent user experience that feels calm, authentic, and crafted.



Figure 18: Final Style Tile
(Source: Self-created)

Typography

Typography was chosen to enhance readability while reinforcing the cultural and emotional tone of the brand. **Playfair Display**, used for headings, conveys sophistication and heritage through its serif details. **Karla**, used for body text, provides a clean, geometric counterbalance suited to modern digital interfaces.

Typography

Playfair Display (For Heading)

Karla (For Body Paragraph)

Chai is a global phenomenon. For many of us in the West, when we think of chai, we picture spiced, milky Indian Tea, variously known as chai, chai latte, chai tea latte, chai tea, and masala chai. But is there a difference? Why so many names? Let's delve in a bit. Chai, however, simply means tea - not tea with milk , not tea with milk and spices, just tea!

Karla (Bold)

Karla (Medium)

Karla (Regular)

Figure 19: Typography

(Source: Self-created)

There is regular use of fonts in the whole site. Heading has five levels (H1, H2, H3), which is both navigated visually and adequately interpreted by a screen reader. The lines and paragraphs spacing will be enlarged to make it easier to read, furthermore, on the mobile platform where the mobile phones are associated with vast little bit of space on the screen. Fonts were adjusted in a way that will enable people of all sizes to read it no matter the amount of space the phone screen has or the kind of a resolution that is used (Rautén, 2024).

This is the bi-polar approach of employing a serif theme in the heading and non-serif in the body to achieve the balance between the necessity to communicate a culture

and the necessity to render the design useful and practical. It also introduces a personality into the site and enables the text to be readable and user-friendly.

Colour Palette

The colour scheme was founded on the smell of the chai. The symbolism of spice such as cloves and cardamom is brought out by the use of amber and cinnamon. Such colours are warm, attractive and this causes an immediate sense of erotic association to taste and comfort. Accent colours, including **Teal (#017374)** and **Deep Purple (#3B1F68)**, introduce contrast and sophistication while maintaining cultural resonance. The **Cream background (#F9F6EF)** softens the overall palette, ensuring readability and balance across both print and digital platforms. (Grabska, Grabska-Gradzińska, & Frodyma, 2022).

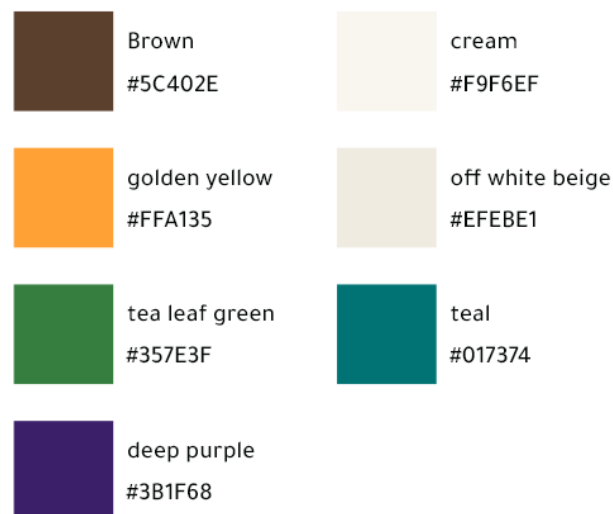


Figure 20: Color palette

(Source: Self-created)

Pairs of colours were contrast checked to establish their user accessibility. Users with vision impairments based on colour deficiency or eye derangements can read the background/text combinations comfortably as they meet the advised WCAG guidelines.

Branding is also coherent with the colouring. The colours create a formal visual identity that binds culture and usability be it in headings, calls-to-action, or in the ornamental icons.

Visuals

Visual elements play a central role in communicating Chaiblend's warmth and authenticity. The illustrations were developed in a **flat, minimal vector style** using Adobe Illustrator to ensure clarity, approachability, and cultural connection. Each illustration represents traditional chai-making tools and ingredients—such as kettles, mortars, cups, and spices - to create an engaging storytelling experience. All visuals were exported in **SVG format** to maintain scalability and crisp quality across different screen sizes. The color choices are directly derived from the brand palette, maintaining visual harmony throughout the interface.



Figure 21: Chai Equipment Illustrations

(Source: Self-created)



Figure 22: Single Chai Illustrations
(Source: Self-created)



Figure 23: Ingredients Illustrations

(Source: Self-created)

To complement the illustrations, a **consistent photography style** was introduced to document the real process of chai preparation. The photos focus on natural light, minimal setups, and a green background that reinforces freshness and authenticity. Each image highlights genuine ingredients and brewing steps - such as measuring spices, melting butter, or simmering chai - bridging visual storytelling between digital illustrations and real-life chai experiences.

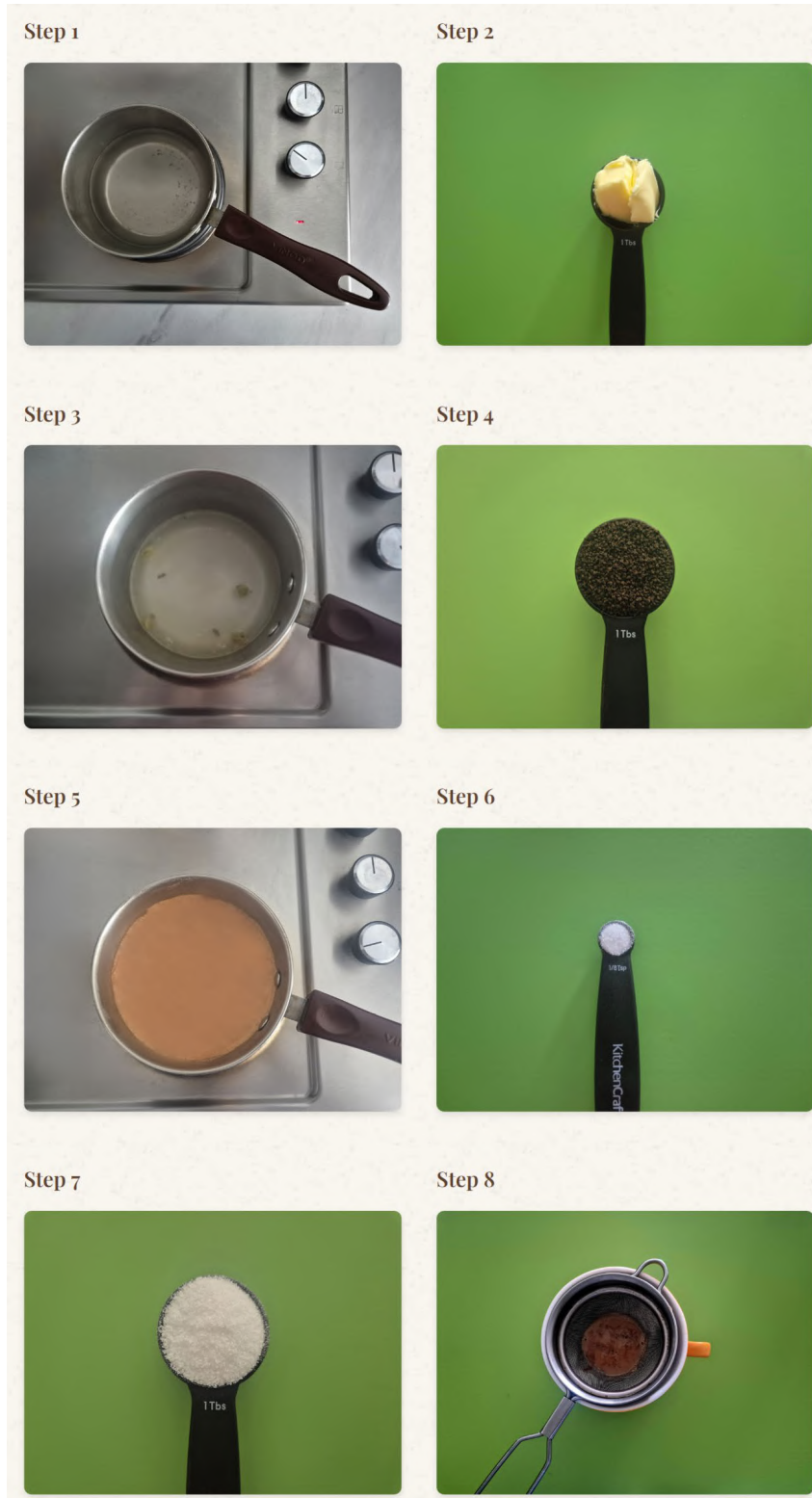


Figure 24: Photography Visuals

(Source: Self-created)

Together, these elements create a **cohesive and culturally grounded visual identity** that balances realism with illustration, making the Chaiblend experience both educational and visually delightful.

Wireframes

The wireframes for Chaiblend were created using **Whimsical**, focusing on establishing the overall structure, layout hierarchy, and navigation flow across desktop and mobile devices. The design followed a **mobile-first approach**, as most users are expected to access the website through smartphones. The vertical scrolling format ensured intuitive interaction and reduced the need for horizontal navigation.

Each wireframe outlined key pages including Home, What Is Chai, Chai Recipes, and individual recipe layouts. Essential elements such as the navigation bar, recipe steps, and visuals were clearly placed to maintain usability and consistency. Tablet and desktop versions expanded on these layouts by aligning text and imagery side by side to better utilize screen space and enhance readability.

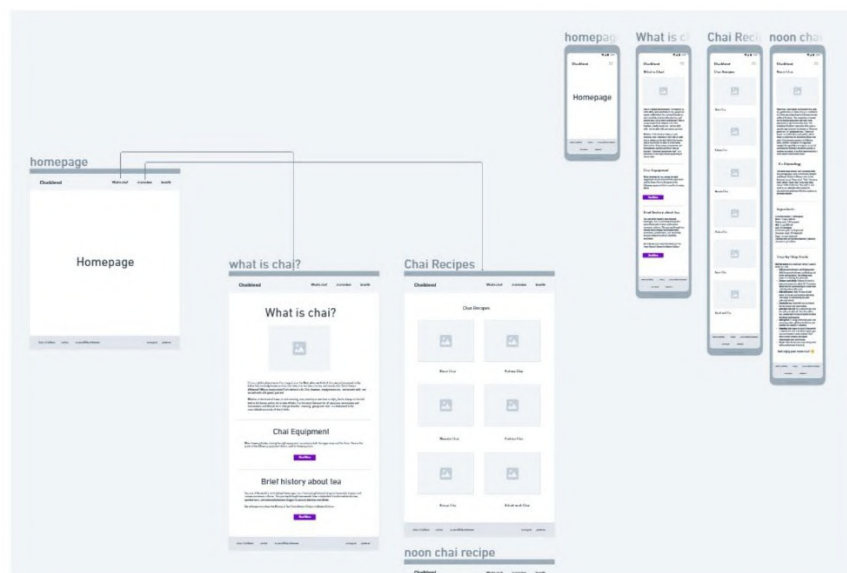


Figure 25: Low-Fidelity Wireframes

(Source: Self-created)

These wireframes served as the foundation for developing a **custom WordPress theme**, defining grid systems, spacing, and user flow before styling was applied. Early testing of navigation logic ensured that recipe pages, cultural content, and health benefits were intuitively connected. Feedback from this stage guided adjustments such as reorganizing the header menu and improving the visibility of related content links.

Mock-ups

High-fidelity mockups were developed in **Adobe XD** to visualise the final interface design before moving into the prototyping and development stages. Creating these mockups was a crucial step to define the layout, hierarchy, and visual consistency **prior to building the HTML and CSS prototype**, which would later be implemented as a **custom WordPress website**.

The process began by applying the finalized brand elements - colour palette, typography, and illustrations - from the style guide to the layout established in the wireframes. The **first iteration** of mockups focused on presenting a clean and structured interface, incorporating illustrated headers, recipe thumbnails, and a clear hierarchy of text. Pages such as What Is Chai, Chai Recipes, and Noon Chai were designed to highlight cultural and health aspects in an engaging, organized format.

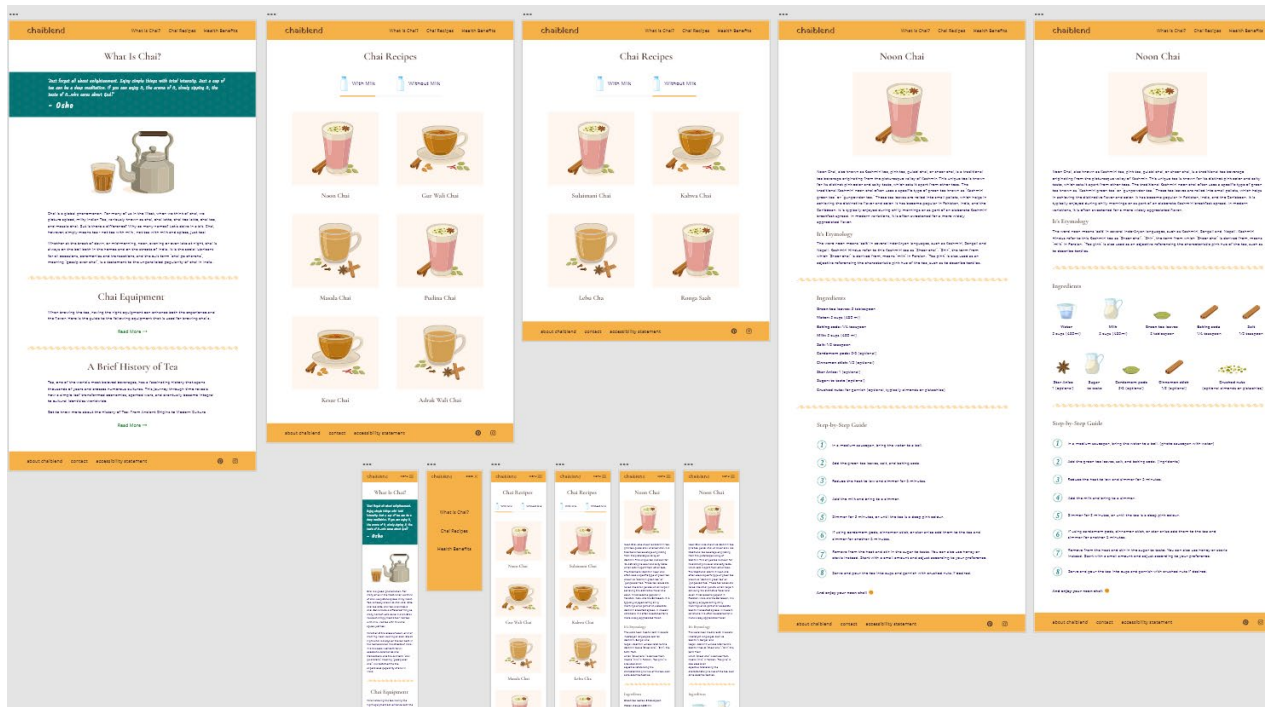


Figure 26: High-Fidelity Mockups – Iteration 1

(Source: Self-created)

After receiving feedback, refinements were made to improve **readability, spacing, and visual balance**. Typography was adjusted for clarity, background tones were softened for warmth, and navigation elements were made more accessible. The refined mockups reflected the brand's essence - **a blend of cultural depth and modern simplicity** - and provided a detailed visual guide for front-end development.

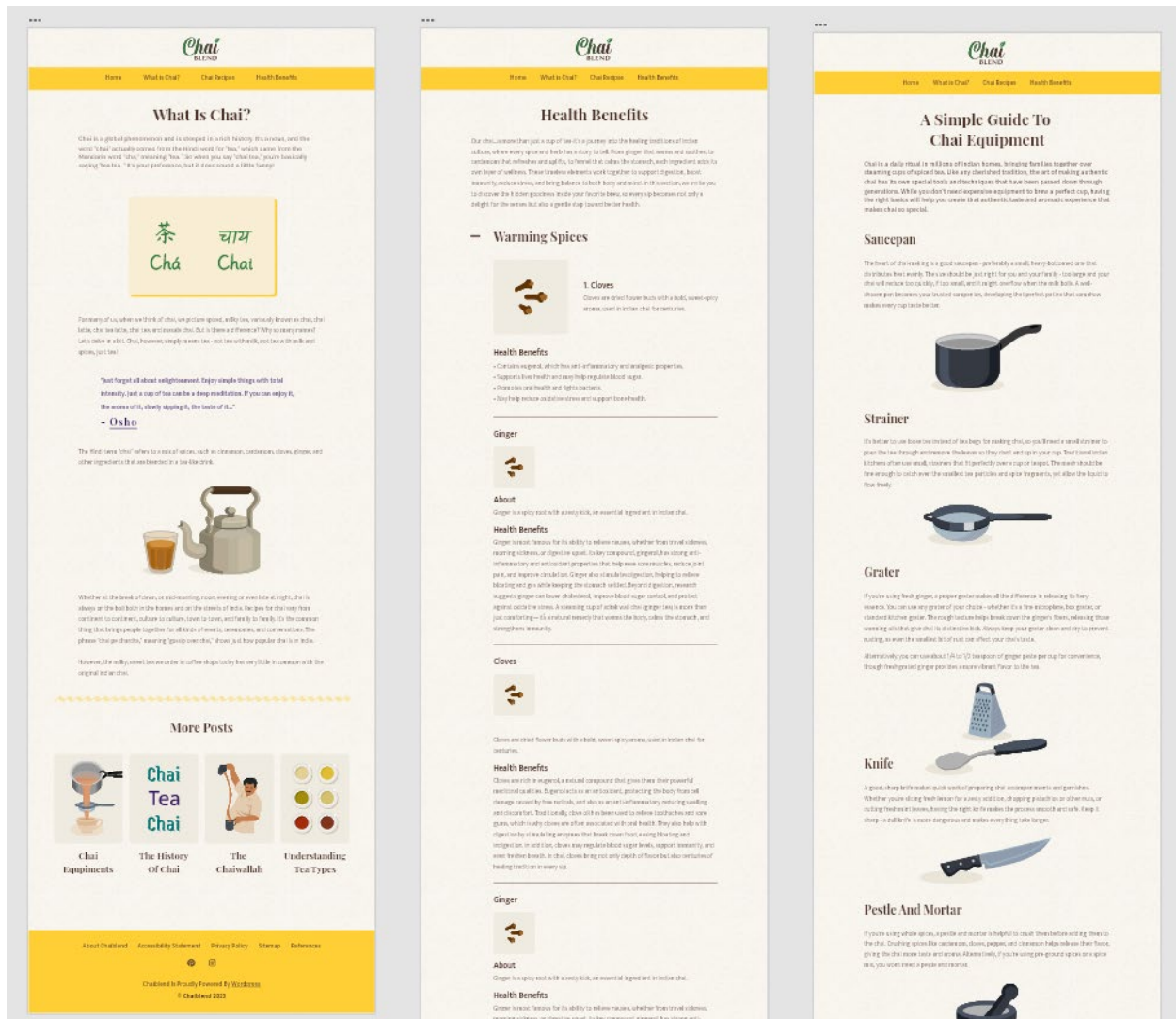


Figure 27: Refined High-Fidelity Mockups
(Source: Self-created)

Integration of Delight with Other Principles

The principles of Commodity, Firmness do not exist all alone as the elements of delight (branding, typography, colour, mock-ups, and wire-frames) are interrelated and represent the bigger concepts. Branding supports content authenticity, typography and colour support affordability, mock-ups and wireframes support technical feasibility. Due to such an approach, the place is not only beautiful to behold, but also democratic, logical, and understandable interculturally.

Firmness Report

Hosting and Domain

Technical basis of Chaiblend begins by hosting database and domain registration. Namecheap is the hosting company and it is a transparent and reputable hosting company that offers excellent shared hosting service at affordable price and is only applicable to small scale as well as medium scale projects only. The selected hosting package will comprise PHP support that is mandatory in WordPress themes and plugins. It also includes MySQL databases, FTP connectivity and also scalability option with the site being expanded further in the future without having to migrate to a different service.

Security is characterized mostly by its hosting feature. The design, which will include inclusion of use of the SSL certificate which will enable the business site operate under plate HTTPS rather than HTTP will be used. This will also enhance the credibility of the users since it will protect data flow and enhance the Google engine rates better than the accredited ranking that is under Google algorithm. PHP versions and server software are automatically updated and make it compatible and less vulnerable to vulnerability (Arponen, 2022).

The name of the project is backed by its registered name, which **chaiblend.guide**. It was by particularly the utilization of top level server of entity bearing the name of guide in order to allow users to know that they in view of a property that offers informative information which is highly educative against a property that is solely commercial in nature. It creates more credibility and is also part of branding as the domain itself will write the sentences that there is going to be guidance and information in getting:

Overall, the hosting and domains infrastructure is cheap, efficient, and scalable, which provides the project both with the guarantee of proper basis and makes sense considering the positioning of the easy-to-use cultural and wellness platform.

CMS Choice

WordPress will serve as a Content Management System (CMS) at Chaiblend. There were certain practical and strategic considerations that informed this decision.

WordPress is a free, well facilitated and customisable website that serves as an appropriate medium to carry out academic projects that ought to be based on functionality and aligned with professional standards.

WordPress has the best strength with regard to the ease in which it can manage content. The non-technical users are able to make modifications, alter, and organize the contents of the platform without necessarily learning and utilizing the direct codes. This will enable sustainability, as the site would be sustainable after completion of the project. The WordPress also comes with an inbuilt media library, content planners and version history among others which have eased the task of managing the blog.

Community support is another efficient factor. Over 40 percent of the world may be using WordPress, meaning that documentation and forums are also plentiful and third-party tutorials, too. It also minimizes the risk of facing technical problems which cannot be solved.

In the case of Chaiblend, a new theme known as **Chaiblend 2025** was designed. The theme is developed on a framework of page templates and direct manipulation of layout, navigation and page designing. This will make sure that branding, typography and accessibility will be completely of technological arrangement. Without the use of pre-made themes the site will not bloat needlessly with codes to achieve good load times as well as performance (Kuosmanen, 2025).

The wide variety of plugins within the CMS contributes to its flexibility. WordPress has thousands of both free and paid-subscriptions in term of plugins, making the site functionality to be expanded to enhance different site features. This is in accordance with the objective of this project which aimed at having a technical but maintainable platform.

Plugins and Tools

WordPress functionality was extended through the use of carefully selected plugins to enhance performance, security, and content management. In the case of Chaiblend, each plugin was chosen for its reliability and compatibility with the project's technical and design objectives.

For search engine optimisation, **Yoast SEO** was implemented. This plugin simplifies the process of adding meta titles, descriptions, and structured data while automatically generating XML sitemaps to improve search visibility. Its built-in readability and keyword analysis tools help enhance both accessibility and communication effectiveness (Cordova, 2021).

Google Site Kit combines Analytics, Search console, and AdSense to the WordPress dashboard. This will give real time data on traffic, user actions, and search performance. With tools integrated into the CMS, the functionality to carry out analysis is not subject to external logins means the process can be linked to content management.

A requirement for protecting and privacy regulations and especially GDPR is supported with **CookieYes**. The cookie blocker is enabled only after consent has been given, which means that the user can use an app without cookies. This is one of the best ethical practices and enhances the user trust.

Backups are by use of **WPVivid Backup Plugin**. It offers alternatives of setting encryption and scheduled cataloging, incorporating of cloud storage, and convenient recovery of data files and databases on the site. This helps guard against mishap, system failure, or a cyber assault.

LiteSpeed Cache was used to improve performance through caching, image optimisation, and CSS/JavaScript minification. This reduces server load and enhances loading speed, contributing to a better user experience and stronger SEO performance (Bollinger, 2021).

Wordfence Security provides active protection through firewall filtering and malware scanning, safeguarding the website from vulnerabilities and unauthorized access attempts.

Classic Editor was installed after the Gutenberg block editor encountered an unexpected error.

All the plugins have been selected with care to prevent redundancy or conflicts. Chaiblend can apply the use of a limited number of supported tools that allows the company to enjoy the power of functionality and stability without undermining performance.

Version Control

Version control for this project was managed locally, with all files stored on the computer and also backed up to an external hard drive. This approach allowed easy organisation and quick access to previous versions during development. Remote version control like GitHub was not used, as local storage and external backups provided a simpler and more manageable workflow for maintaining updates. This method ensured that earlier versions could be restored if needed, maintaining consistency and reliability throughout the project.

Technical Rationale

The overall technical architecture of Chaiblend is a simple, reliable and scalable one. It is quite a simple task to customise WordPress to give the flexibility needed without necessarily requiring the time it would produce CMS. It is sustainable to manage the content thanks to its convenient interface and addresses the academic principle of transparency and flexibility through its open-source.

Namecheap offering hosting is cheap yet reliable services that provide such features as an SSL certificate, server backups and database support among others at an all-inclusive cost. This will ensure that the technical infrastructure is capable not just of responding to the current demand, but is also in a position to increase adequately to respond to the demands with a growing business.

The strategy of minimalism and precision is seen to have been successful as evidenced by the choice of the plugins. It was also made sure that the site did not get too many extensions which could be pursued but basic ones. This guarantees

minimal security vulnerability, reduction of threats of compatibility issues and makes the site lightweight.

Alternatively, with regards to access the stack can even conform to the web standards. The content deployment organized in a traditional way, the implementation of the content management system in WordPress and the CookieYes and Yoast content readability scoring and compliance tool bring with it some characteristics of inclusiveness, and even legal nature to the technical system. It includes caching, minimizing and a custom theme free of unnecessary code with the aim of enhancing performance and stability. These interventions result in the faster loading time, the reduced bouncing rate, and entry to high positions in Search Engine (Kocaleva, Zlatanovska, & Miteva, 2024).

Finally the stack functional can be increased. With the potential future expansion of Chaiblend to larger project then without basic redevelopment new or upgraded hosting packages can be added. This is ensuring that the invested technical base is not only purpose-worthy, but is also up to speed in order to accommodate the demands of tomorrow.

Prototype Report

Prototype Overview

The first Chaiblend prototype was developed as a static HTML and CSS build. This stage served as a functional proof of concept to test layout, navigation, and content hierarchy before transitioning to WordPress. The goal was to validate whether the interface could support intuitive browsing and effectively communicate chai-related content, such as recipes, health benefits, and cultural information. Developing a coded prototype at this stage provided a realistic sense of structure and usability across different devices.

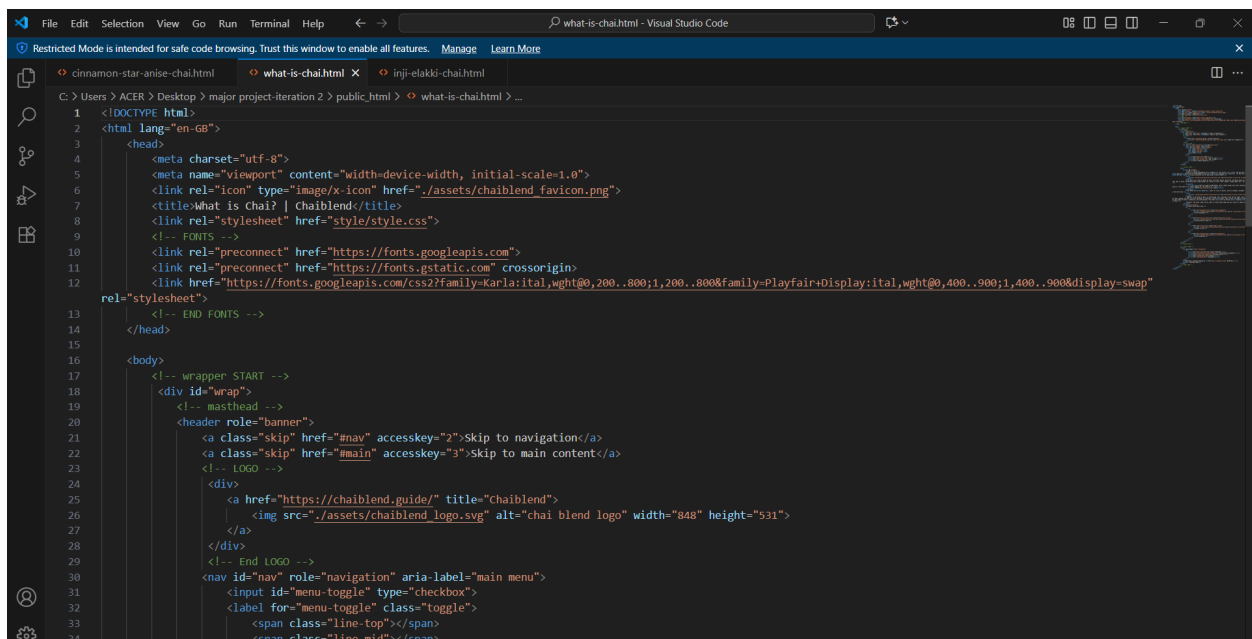


Figure 28: HTML Prototype Development in Visual Studio Code

(Source: Self-created)

Visual Evidence

The HTML and CSS prototype included key pages such as the homepage, recipe listings, and health benefits section. These pages demonstrated the integration of Chaiblend's branding - typography, colour palette, and visual layout - within a

functional interface. The homepage introduced a hero banner followed by featured recipes, cultural insights, and wellness sections, maintaining consistency across all breakpoints.

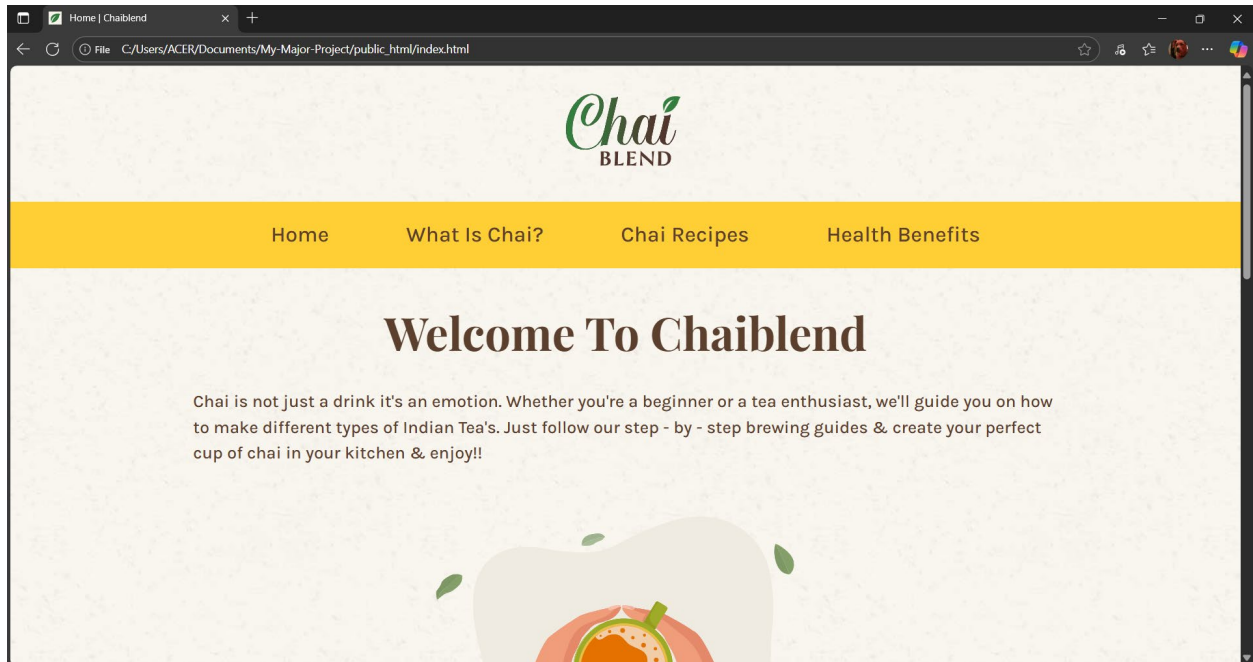


Figure 28: HTML/CSS Prototype – Homepage Preview in Browser
(Source: Self-created)

Iterations

Based on the feedback, several refinements were made in the subsequent iterations. The layout was adjusted to better accommodate content and improve visual hierarchy. A few colour changes were made, visual images were adjusted, spacing between sections was improved, and navigation and footer menus were refined. These changes helped improve the overall readability and aesthetic balance of the website. Additionally, minor changes were made to the logo by adding visual elements beside it.

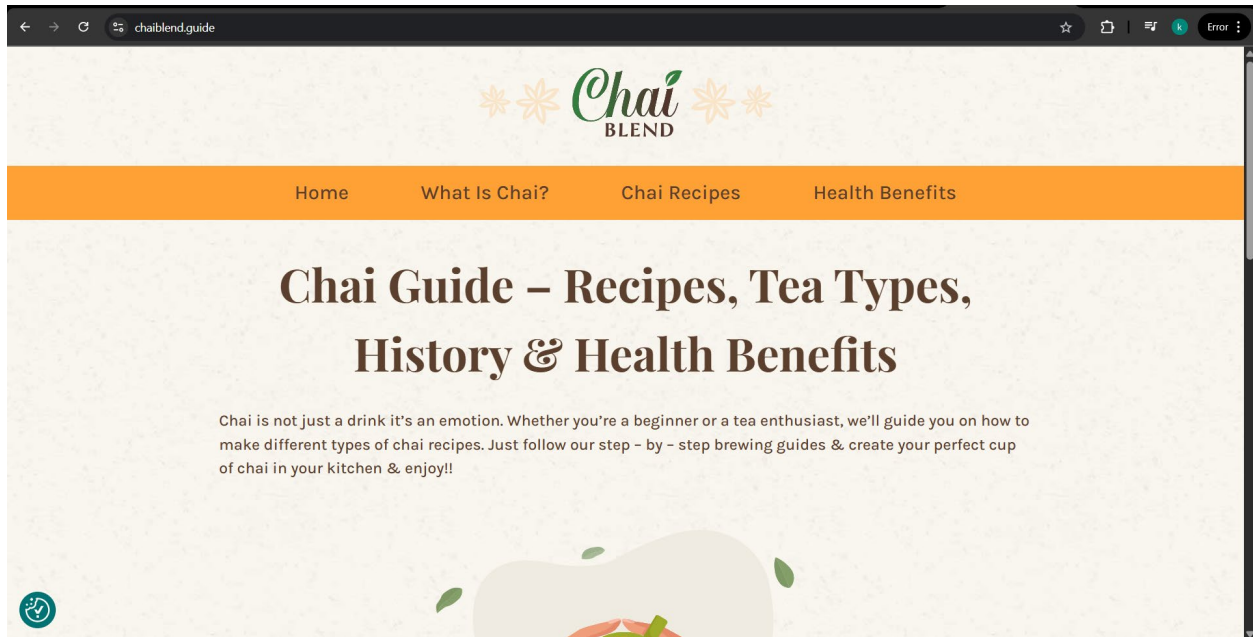


Figure 29: Website Demo
(Source: Self-created)

Schedule of Works

This project development was organized with references to the detailed (Gantt chart) where variant stages and deadlines of varying stages are shown with deliverables.

- **Concept and Research (January–February):** Development of the project idea, initial research, and competitor analysis.
- **Planning and Information Architecture (February–April):** Creation of personas, user journeys, and site maps to structure navigation.
- **Branding and Design (April–May):** Finalisation of logo, colour palette, typography, and visual guidelines.
- **Prototype Build (April–June):** Development of wireframes, mock-ups, and a functional demo to test design assumptions.
- **Implementation (June–August):** Integration of the custom WordPress theme, content population, and plugin installation.
- **Testing and Refinement (August):** Performance optimisation, accessibility testing, and cross-device checks.

- **Final Evaluation (August–September):** Analytics integration, PageSpeed testing, and preparation of the final report.

This structure supplied with this scheduled calendar, support was given where accountability and progress could be tracked. The rigid milestones ensured that the project remained on schedule and that the accomplishment of tasks was done in a logical sequence.

Deadlines and Adjustments

In comparison to most milestones being achieved as foreseen some amendments were need to be effected. The sourcing of good pictures to decorate the recipe pages required more time than expected and contributed to some delays in content population process. To compensate for this, more time was spent in July on improving these pages.

The access measures also required a lot of attention than before. The prototype test with the help of accessibility checker tools revealed the following problems: lack of text contrast and absence of alt text. They were addressed through increasing contrast in the palette of colours and offering any image and link hypertext to describe each symmetrically. Although the changes resulted in the expansion of the testing process, the changes enabled to improve the guideline to the accessibility criteria and make the rest of the site look any more reliable.

It was difficult to adjust to the time schedule suggested to be. Refinements could be made because given that there was much flexibility in terms of the timing of the phases, it would not adversely affect the end of the delivery. The result was efficient implementation which both allocated the functions of the system as well as the design objectives.

Value of the Prototype Phase

The prototype phase was significant in reducing the pre-implementation risk. Out of the possible expenses requiring revisions by the project towards the end of the development, as the navigation issues, performance and accessibility issues could

be detected early in development, the project did not need extensive revisions. The wireframes and mock-ups also provided a means to have ensured that bits of the design were reviewed prior to the writing of the code by the wiring of the design in the form of the demo provided the meaningful evidence of the concept.

In addition to that, the prototype was a communicating device. It allowed the stakeholders to view the visual theming of the site, and equally provided them with an ability to obtain the effective feedback. This collaboration helped ensure the final design aligned with the original vision while meeting user expectations.

Implementation Report

Overview of the Build

Chaiblend was implemented as a custom WordPress theme built on a standard LAMP environment hosted on Namecheap. The wireframes and prototypes were translated into a lightweight, mobile-first theme prioritising semantic markup, accessibility, and fast page rendering. The solution to contain the content of any site can be in the Advanced Custom Fields: they will have plenty of reasons to mobilize the people who write recipes and articles about the health to use them in writing ingredients, recipes and health related articles, and so they do not have to go to the editors who have a habit of creating a bit of a mess by fiddling with the code. Templates separate concerns: header, footer, content areas and custom page templates for recipes, health benefits and exploration pages. Version control and local-to-staging workflow allowed iterative testing. Key technical choices were made to reduce bloat: minimal JavaScript, responsive images served via WordPress image sizes, and careful plugin selection limited to backup, SEO, analytics and consent tools. The focus was practical. Ship a reliable, editable site that respects accessibility and performance while keeping the editorial process simple. The result is a maintainable platform that delivers the project's cultural and wellness goals.

Development Environment and Launch

After completing the local development phase, the Chaiblend project moved from prototype to a functional WordPress theme. Initially, a few HTML pages were created to establish the site structure and test layout and responsiveness. Once the static prototype was stable, the design was integrated into WordPress using the *vanilla* theme as a base. The theme files were duplicated and renamed as **“Chaiblend 2025”**, forming the foundation for the custom theme build.

The existing CSS was then replaced with the Chaiblend stylesheet, ensuring consistency with the visual design created during the prototype stage. After this

setup, **FileZilla (FTP client)** was used to transfer the theme files from the local environment to the **live server hosted on Namecheap**. Once uploaded, the theme was activated within WordPress, and the live testing phase began to confirm that all components and layouts rendered correctly.

Content was gradually added through WordPress's *Pages* and *Posts* sections, allowing for structured updates such as recipes, cultural stories, and health-related articles. During this process, **PHP template files** were modified and refined to align with the desired layout and design flow. Each update was uploaded again through FileZilla and re-tested on the live server to verify performance and stability.

This iterative cycle of uploading, editing, and testing ensured a smooth transition from local prototype to a live, fully functional website. The launch approach focused on reliability, hands-on testing, and maintaining design consistency across environments while ensuring accessibility and responsiveness across all devices.

Key Implementation Decisions and Rationale

Choice of CMS and Theme Structure

WordPress was selected as the CMS due to its ubiquity, editorial affordances, and extensible ecosystem. A custom theme architecture was implemented to avoid page builder bloat and retain precise control over markup, semantics, and performance. Templates follow a modular structure: header, footer, content templates, and bespoke page templates for recipes, health benefits, and exploration. Advanced Custom Fields supplies structured content models for recipes and ingredient entries, enabling consistent output without direct code edits (McGill et al., 2023). Theme supports were registered for thumbnails and custom logos, and template parts were used to promote reusability. This arrangement balances editorial usability with developer-level control and governance.

Accessibility Considerations

Accessibility was embedded as a design constraint rather than an afterthought. Semantic HTML5 elements, landmark roles, and a clear heading hierarchy were used to facilitate screen reader navigation. Skip links were provided and focus states ensured keyboard users can bypass repetitive navigation. Images include meaningful alt text and content driven images are served responsively to maintain readability on small screens. Interactive components, such as accordions and the navigation toggle, were implemented with ARIA attributes and keyboard operability. Colour contrast checks were performed against WCAG AA thresholds and font scaling respects user agent settings (Vankhede & Kumar, 2024). Ongoing manual testing regularly supplemented automated tools.

Performance Optimisation

Performance strategy prioritised speed and resource efficiency. Critical CSS and minimal render-blocking resources reduced first paint delays. Images were converted to modern formats where supported and responsive srcset attributes ensured appropriate sizes for device viewports. Caching and compression were enabled at the server level and nonessential scripts were deferred to after content load. The background illustration was replaced with a lightweight SVG or gradient fallback to lower cumulative layout shift. Lighthouse audits guided iterative improvements and performance budgets were established to limit asset growth as content scales. Monitoring tools were configured to track Largest Contentful Paint and Time to Interactive.

SEO and Privacy

SEO strategy combined technical foundations with content practices to enhance discoverability. Yoast configured sitemap generation, canonical tags, and meta templates. Title and description templates were applied for consistency. Internal linking connected recipes, health articles, and cultural pages to consolidate topical authority. Privacy measures addressed regulatory obligations in the UK market: cookie consent implemented through a GDPR-aware plugin and analytics gated until

user consent (Kanellos et al., 2024). A privacy page documents data handling and backups encrypted to protect user data and editorial workflows where appropriate.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Image Sourcing and Optimisation

Image assets arrived in mixed resolutions and formats, which inflated page weight and caused inconsistent rendering across devices. The remedy was to standardise the asset pipeline: source master images at controlled resolutions, convert decorative illustrations to optimized SVG or WebP where appropriate. Advanced Custom Fields was reconfigured to return attachment IDs so WordPress image functions can emit srcset and sizes attributes automatically. Lazy loading was enabled for noncritical media and critical hero images were resized and served with appropriate dimensions to reduce Largest Contentful Paint. Filenames and alt text were normalised to improve CMS searchability and accessibility. These changes reduced payloads and improved mobile rendering without sacrificing visual fidelity.

Performance Bottlenecks

There are performance profilers which discovered a monster background image was depriving the first paint too large a hero and inhibiting 3rd-party script. Cumulative layout movement was also primarily the source laid-up ornament extremely heated. Remediations included having lightweight SVG or CSS gradient as a fall back should replace the hefty backdrop, substitution of colossal pictures with responsive WebP report variants and substitution of picture outputs with WordPress functions to demonstrate for outputting srcset. The long delay of unnecessary JavaScript and consent-based blocked analytic script was to shorten the render blocking time. Time to interactive was also improved in the server level that achieved compression on and cache header applied on coupled and object caching.

SEO and Social Media Configuration

SEO and social presence were configured to maximise discoverability while protecting user privacy and editorial integrity. Technical foundations include Yoast for meta templates, XML sitemaps, and canonical control, and Site Kit for Search Console integration and performance telemetry. Open Graph and Twitter Card metadata were enabled so shared links generate informative previews with correct images and descriptions. Internal linking was deliberately structured so recipes, health pages and cultural essays reinforce topical authority. Robots and sitemap submissions were validated in Search Console and coverage issues monitored. Privacy and compliance were enforced by gating analytics until consent is recorded via CookieYes and documenting data handling in a privacy page. Social media assets were prepared with branded templates and alt text for images so posts render well and remain accessible. A modest content calendar and shareable excerpts support gradual audience growth.

Conclusion

The implementation phase delivered a production ready, maintainable WordPress theme that aligns with the project's aims. Technical choices custom theme, Advanced Custom Fields, and a restrained plugin set kept markup lean and editorial workflows straightforward. Accessibility and performance were treated as core requirements rather than optional extras, resulting in semantic templates, keyboardable components, and responsive images that improve real user experience. Practical compromises were necessary: some media and content polish was deferred to ensure timely delivery, and prototype assumptions about hard coded IDs were replaced with portable slug based logic. The site is now stable and editable by nontechnical contributors, with backup and analytics integrations in place. Remaining implementation work is concrete and short term: finalize image optimisation, complete ARIA refinements, and add recipe structured data where missing. With those tasks closed, the platform will be ready to scale content and outreach efforts without major technical refactors.

Analysis Report

Analytics summary and user behaviour

Initial analytics were captured via Site Kit and Google Analytics after launch. Traffic volume is modest, which is appropriate for a new, niche site, but early behaviour patterns reveal useful signals for content and UX priorities. Recipe pages dominate organic entry points and show the highest engagement. Average session duration on recipe pages is notably higher than the site average, suggesting that users arrive with a task in mind and are willing to engage when content is practical and scannable. Landing pages that are primarily cultural essays show lower engagement and higher exit rates, implying a need for stronger visual hooks or more obvious next steps.

Bounce rate is mixed by page type. Recipes tend to have a lower bounce rate because step images, ingredient lists, and clear CTAs encourage users to explore related content. Long-form cultural pages show higher bounce rates and shorter dwell times unless a visible recipe or gallery is placed early in the content. Referral traffic from social channels is small but converts to longer sessions when posts include step images and direct links to recipes.

Device split heavily favours desktop (64.7%), followed by mobile (32.4%) and a smaller percentage on tablet. Desktop users are task-oriented, often seeking quick instructions or single ingredient details. This device distribution reinforces the importance of maintaining responsive performance and concise content blocks, including numbered steps, ingredient cards, and persistent navigation to related content.

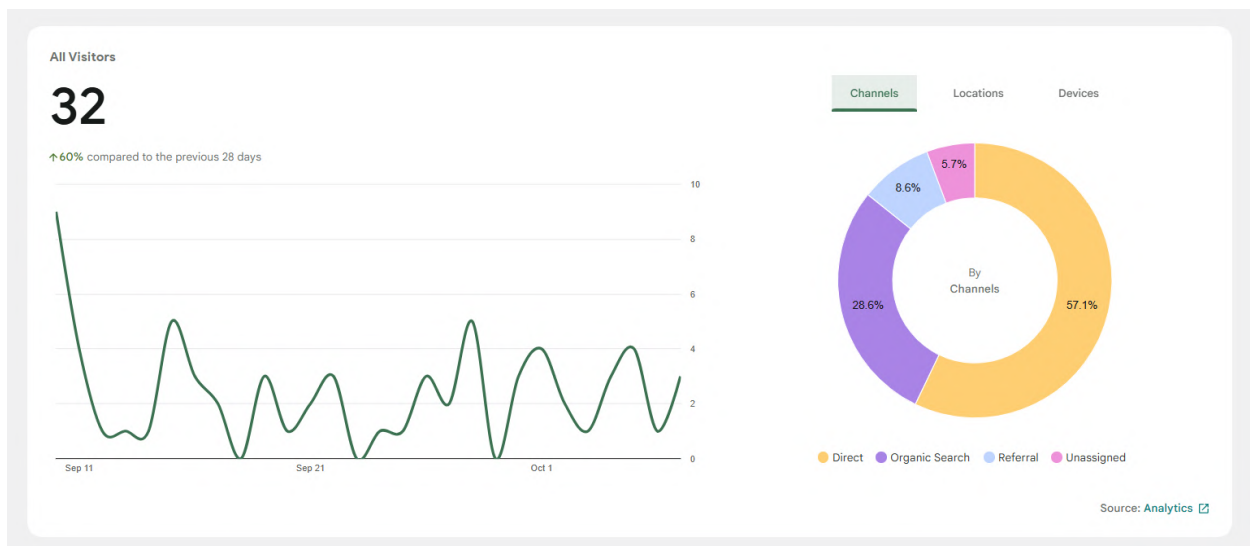


Figure 30: Google Analytics - Visitor Channels
 (Source: Site Kit Analytics)

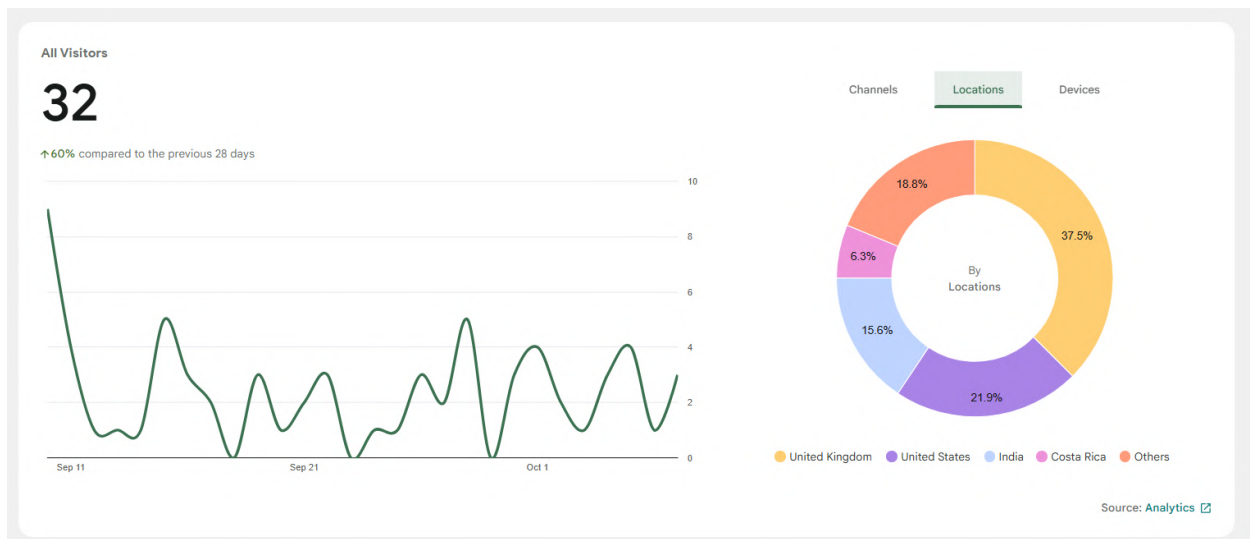


Figure 31: Google Analytics - Visitor Locations
 (Source: Site Kit Analytics)

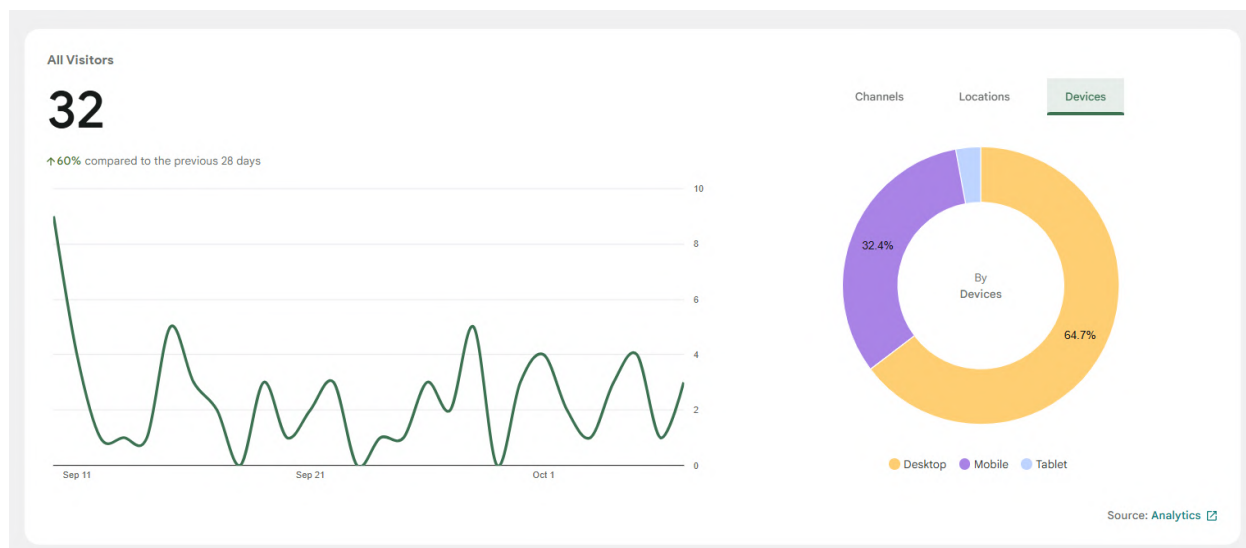


Figure 32: Google Analytics – Device Distribution

(Source: Site Kit Analytics)

Accessibility checks and results

Automated scans were run using Lighthouse and an accessibility-focused toolset, followed by manual keyboard and screen reader verification on representative pages. Automated tests flagged missing focus styles in early builds and a few instances of insufficient text contrast in accent elements. Most of these issues were addressed during development: skip links now become visible on keyboard focus, and colour adjustments were made to meet WCAG AA ratios for body text and interactive controls.

Manual testing validated keyboard navigation through primary paths: jump to content, navigate the main menu, follow recipe steps, and open accordion items using the keyboard. Screen reader checks confirmed that headings and landmarks provide a logical reading order and that dynamic regions announce state changes. Remaining items for improvement include captioning for any future video content and deeper verification with assistive technology users to capture edge cases. Overall accessibility status meets baseline WCAG AA expectations for the present content set, with a plan to re-audit after additional user-generated content is added.

A WAVE (WebAIM) accessibility audit reported zero errors and zero contrast issues, confirming compliance with baseline WCAG AA standards. Minor alerts related to ARIA labels and structure were reviewed manually and found non-critical issues.

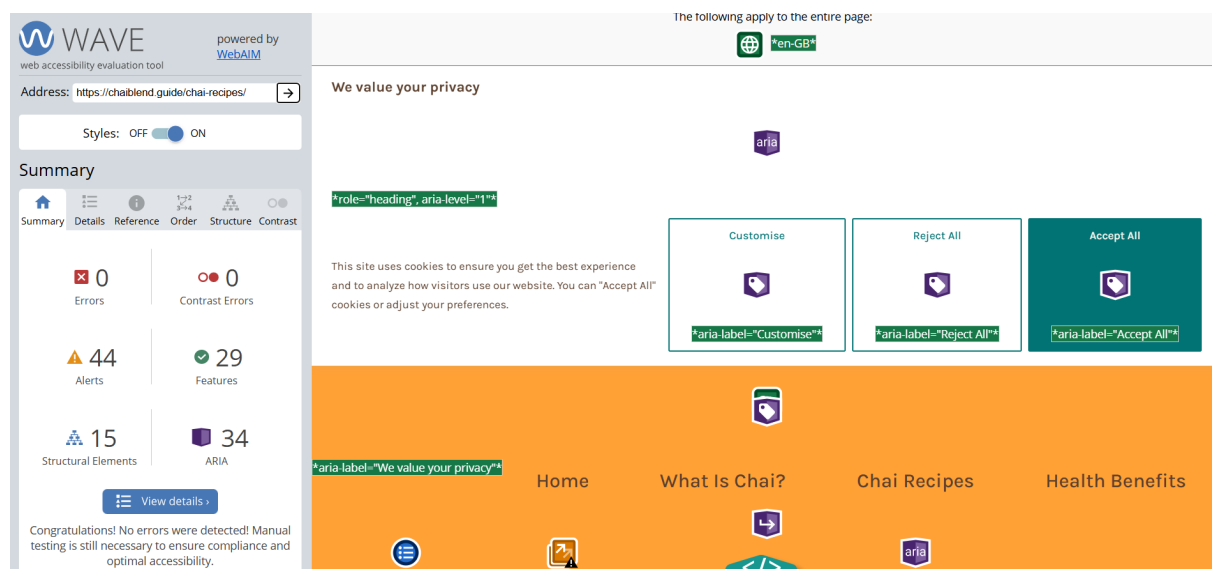


Figure 33: WAVE Audit - Homepage

(Source: WAVE WebAIM)

Performance insights and PageSpeed

Performance was audited with Lighthouse and PageSpeed Insights on mobile and desktop. Desktop scores are acceptable; mobile presents the largest opportunity for improvement. Primary bottlenecks identified include large decorative images and a heavy background asset that delayed first meaningful paint, oversized hero images without responsive sizing in some templates, and render-blocking third-party scripts. Cumulative layout shift was traceable to late-loading decorative assets and images without reserved dimensions.

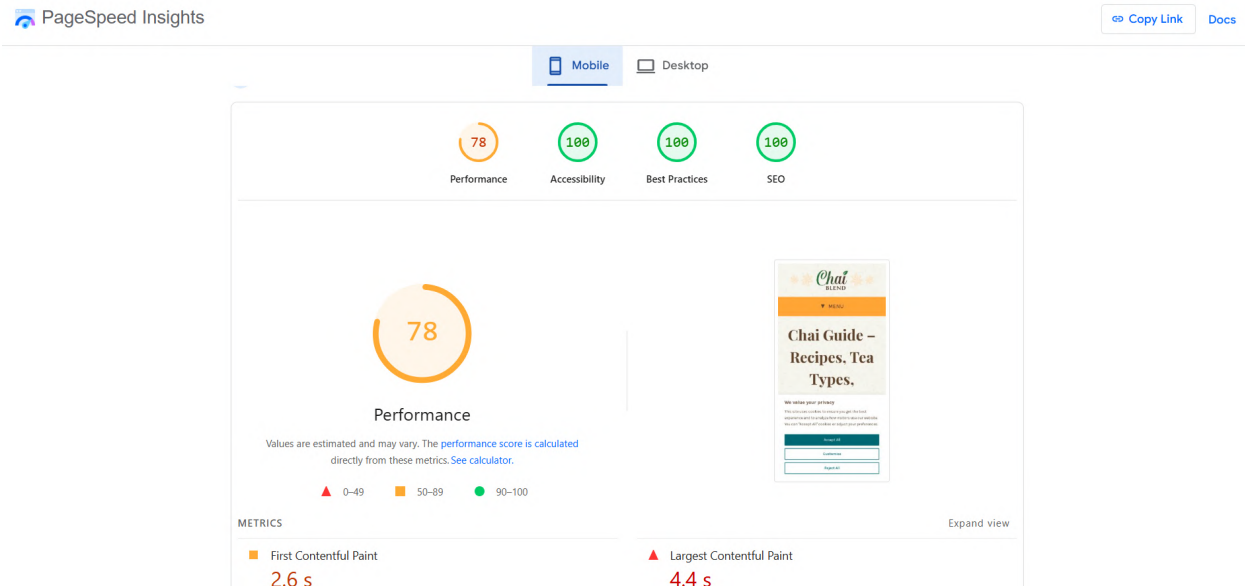


Figure 34: Audit for mobile view
(Source: PageSpeed Insights)

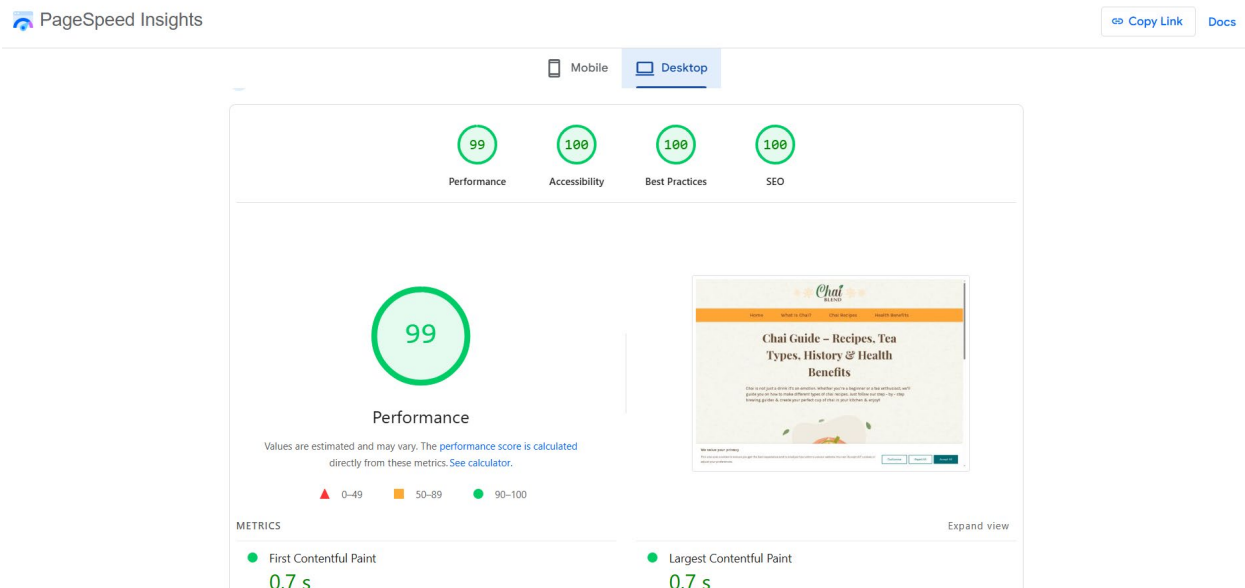


Figure 35: Audit for desktop view
(Source: PageSpeed Insights)

Fixes implemented produced measurable improvements. Decorative background imagery was replaced with a lightweight SVG or CSS gradient fallback, leading to faster first paint. Images were standardized and converted where appropriate to

modern formats such as WebP. Nonessential JavaScript was deferred and analytics scripts were loaded only after consent. After these changes, mobile Largest Contentful Paint improved by a noticeable margin on throttled connections and cumulative layout shift decreased. Continued monitoring is required to prevent regressions as content grows.

A sustainability check was conducted using the Website Carbon Calculator. The site achieved an A+ carbon rating, which is cleaner than 94% of all tested web pages globally. This result indicates strong performance efficiency, low energy usage, and a minimal carbon footprint per visit, reflecting well-optimised assets and lightweight page delivery.

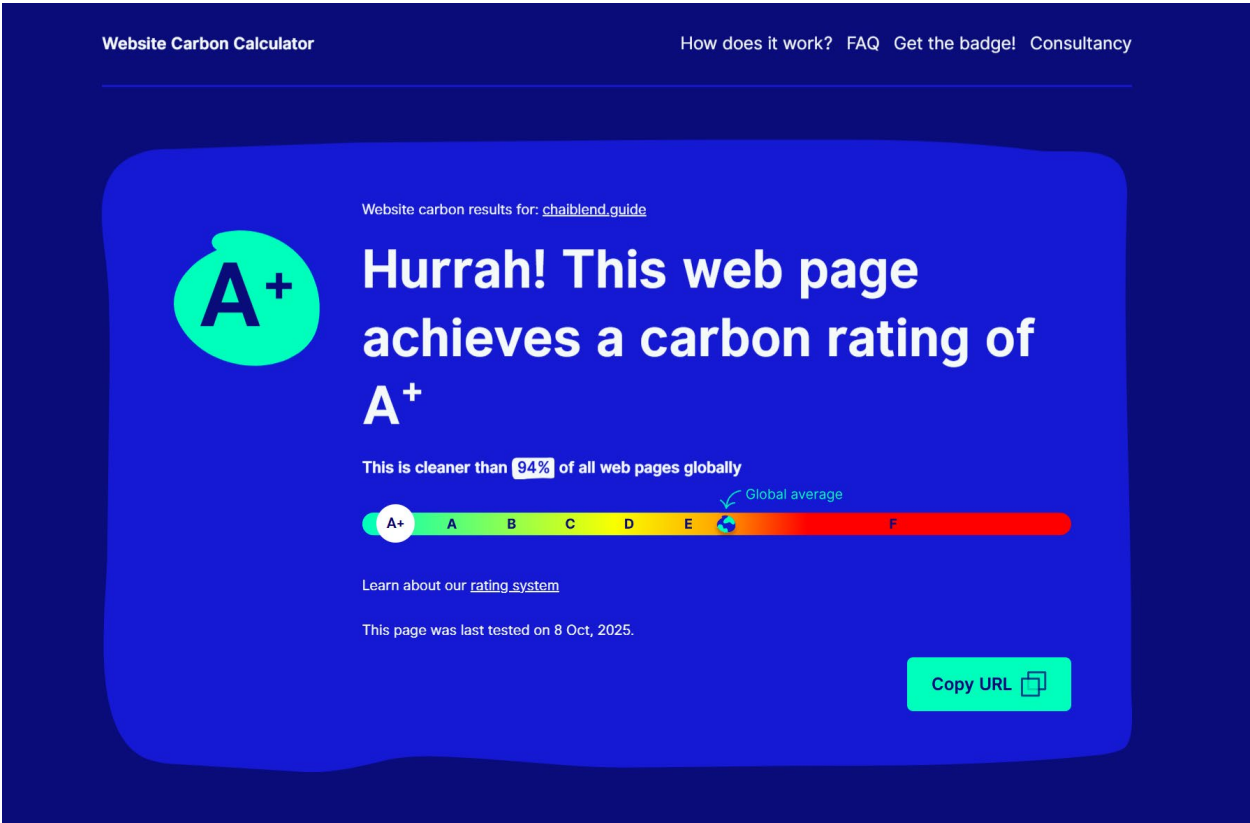


Figure 36: Audit from Website Carbon Calculator
(Source: Website Carbon Calculator)

SEO performance and recommendations

Search Console data shows growing impressions but limited average rankings for broader queries. Recipe posts with structured markup and clear ingredient lists perform best. To improve visibility, focus on three tactical areas: expand long tail content around specific ingredients and regional chai names to capture niche queries; strengthen internal linking so recipes link to relevant health articles and cultural essays, thereby distributing topical authority; and ensure canonicalization across category and landing pages to avoid diluted rankings. JSON-LD recipe markup and Open Graph metadata are active on key pages, which supports rich results and social previews. Continue to monitor Search Console for coverage issues and prioritize pages with click-through rate opportunities for meta description tuning. A supporting audit via SEO Site Checkup was done which reported an overall SEO score of 83/100, which is above the average benchmark (75%). The analysis identified six important issues that can be addressed to further enhance the site's performance and search visibility. This result indicates that the website's overall SEO implementation is strong, with only minor areas for improvement.

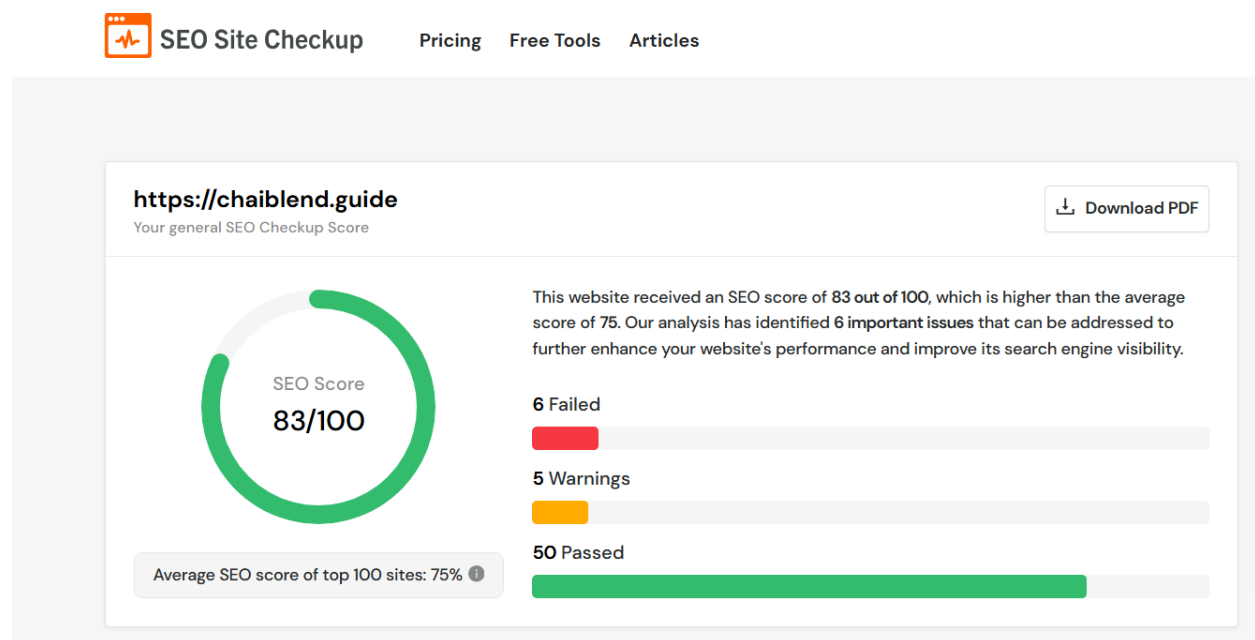


Figure 35: SEO Site Checkup Audit

(Source: SEO Site Checkup)

Accessibility and performance action plan

Short term actions: convert remaining hero images to responsive WebP, ensure all image outputs use `wp_get_attachment_image` for `srcset`, and run a second automated accessibility scan. Medium term actions: deploy a lightweight CDN to serve static assets globally, enable Brotli compression where supported, and schedule moderated user testing sessions with assistive technology users. Long term actions: adopt an ongoing performance budget for new assets, schedule quarterly accessibility audits, and maintain a content calendar that balances recipes with culturally rich but scannable content blocks. Monthly tracking should include mobile LCP, CLS, accessibility error counts, and organic click-through trends.

Conclusion

The analysis phase provided clear signals about what works and what needs attention. Recipes are the strongest asset, attracting longer sessions and higher engagement, while long form cultural content underperforms where visual anchors or navigation prompts are weak. Desktop usage dominates, which confirms that the layout and structure work well for larger screens, but it also highlights the need to maintain responsive performance and usability across smaller devices. Accessibility audits moved the site to AA baseline compliance for current content, yet user testing with assistive technology should be scheduled to catch edge cases. PageSpeed improvements made measurable gains, but ongoing vigilance is required to prevent regressions as content and media volume grow. SEO foundations exist through sitemaps and structured recipe markup, however visibility for broader queries remains limited and requires targeted long tail content and improved internal linking. Action items are straightforward: complete responsive image roll out, run moderated accessibility tests, deploy a CDN, and extend content to capture niche queries. With these adjustments and regular monitoring, the site should convert analytical signals into steady audience growth.

Conclusion & Reflection

Introduction

The Chaiblend project has reached a stage where the conceptual foundations, design intent, and technical implementation converge into a usable, maintainable site that foregrounds chai as culture, recipe, and wellness resource. Across research, design, prototyping, and build phases, the work prioritized clarity of purpose, editorial accessibility, and practical performance. The implementation choices balanced academic rigor with pragmatic constraints, providing a platform that supports consistent content creation and straightforward maintenance. The concluding observations below summarise core achievements, the principal challenges encountered, and a concise roadmap for short term fixes and longer term growth.

Successes

Chaiblend has already realized its primary objective of creating a content-based platform about chai culture. The recipes and evidence-based health information are made available, and the culture is presented in a normal and simple format on which the site posts its components. The technical setup using WordPress helped create a lightweight theme that is easy to manage and update. To make the website more user-friendly and accessible, proper HTML structure (semantic tags), keyboard navigation, and focus indicators were used for better usability.

The logo identity I created, along with the illustrations and photography, kept the site visually clean, consistent, and well-organised. Performance optimisation was achieved through image compression and the use of WebP and SVG formats, which helped the site achieve a score of 78% on mobile and 99% on desktop in PageSpeed Insights, and an A+ rating in the Website Carbon Calculator audit.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

The schedules and cycles decision was made based on numerous strategic issues. Sourcing and image would prove quite hard to optimise. The net poor fit between the assets generated by the originator was the main reason for the enlarged size of payloads and the re-organisation of the formats to make them into normalised, where feasible, WebP formats. There were accessibility problems, such as missing ARIA labels and keyboard support, which were later fixed. Time management was also one of the issues, as learning and adapting WordPress took longer than expected. During the process, the Gutenberg editor got crashed while working; several attempts were made to fix it, but eventually, the Classic Editor plugin had to be installed as a more stable option. There were lots of design layout changes and iterations, which then led to creating layouts on Adobe XD first, followed by HTML and finally in WordPress. This took additional time but helped in maintaining design consistency. At the start, there was also a struggle with choosing good typesetting and colour combinations for the website. After receiving feedback from professors and others, the final colour and typography were selected and refined.

Next Steps and Future Plans

In the short term, my focus is on improving performance and accessibility. This includes converting any remaining large images to the WebP format, making them responsive across devices, and re-running an accessibility audit to confirm compliance. I also plan to add structured recipe data (JSON-LD) where it is missing and fix minor SEO issues such as canonical tags for category pages. For medium-term improvements include deploying a CDN to improve international load times, implementing Brotli compression where supported, and launching a modest newsletter to begin community building. Collaborating with cultural and wellness organisations will help strengthen the site's credibility and provide reliable sources for health-related information. In long term, plan includes exploring multilingual support to reach diaspora audiences, adding moderated user contributions with editorial oversight, and maintaining a quarterly accessibility and performance review

cycle. Governance guidelines will be established to preserve editorial standards and technical budgets as content grows. Through this project, I have also developed strong technical and creative skills - including custom WordPress development, responsive design, and accessibility practices. These skills will be valuable for future roles in web design, digital content management, or UX/UI development.

Final reflection

Chaiblend demonstrates that a focused, culturally sensitive content platform can be both scholarly and approachable when design decisions align with editorial needs and technical realities. The project shows the value of early investment in structured content models, accessibility practices, and performance budgets. Remaining work is primarily incremental and operational rather than conceptual. Continued attention to asset governance, accessibility verification with real users, and measured audience development will convert the current prototype into a sustained cultural resource.

This project also strengthened my ability to balance design creativity with technical precision, building confidence to manage complex web projects independently. It has prepared me to apply these skills professionally in future web and digital design roles.

Conclusion

Chaiblend has transformed this to be running cultural resource that has sound editorial and technical base. The project could take the scholastic work and carve and transform it in a manner that it would be used to take to the fore some of the ideas like cultural and wellness of chai to the center of the limelight. As accessibility and 2-way process have implemented performance testing early enough to track and catch content changes which is a strong point of the work; is custom theme which is also very light in weight and content models are well structured. The following were learnt: media governance An activity which needs to be undertaken initially is media governance, it must not be left till the templates and template logic which must be

finished are final and template logic must not be environment specific. Operationally, the project now requires disciplined asset management, periodic audits, and a modest content strategy to sustain growth. Short term priorities are clear and finite. Medium term plans include CDN deployment and community building via a newsletter and partnerships. Long term expansion could explore multilingual support and moderated user contributions. With the remaining technical tuning and a small, steady editorial cadence, the platform can scale while preserving cultural integrity and usability. This positions Chaiblend to become a reliable resource rather than a transient experiment.

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