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Executive Summary

The Alba thermal springs is recognised for its modern take on the hot springs. Its customer experience is focused on tranquility through prestige and innovation. It attempts to create a luxurious customer experience through personalisation and customer service. However, the customer experience journey can still be improved with customers relaying concerns and pain points. The report below introduces the current customer journey map in the perspective of a young adult Australian consumer accompanied by the pain points. The listed pain points are as follows:

- Lack of social media presence
- Difficulty navigating a summary of product offerings on the official website
- Waiting times during check-in
- Poor dining experience and hardships with payments
- Overcrowdedness and unclear signage in the spa area
- Lack of follow up communication post experience

Then it outlines recommendations and strategic enhancements that could be introduced for Alba to increase the customer experience and build greater customer loyalty.

1. Introduction

The Australian wellness industry stands out as one of the global leaders, ranking 6th in the spending per capita of ~\$5000 a year per person and 10th in the wellness global market with a significant market size (RecoveryLab, 2024). This shows the value and awareness that Australians hold within their health and wellness which relays the opportunities that businesses can innovate and expand within the market. It demonstrates that Australian consumers are less price sensitive when prioritising their wellbeing in order for greater life quality and are seeking for new businesses which are able to offer innovative value and business to their health. Alba Thermal Springs is an upcoming spa retreat within Victoria that indulges in luxurious tranquility through their geothermal pools that invigorate a sense of relaxation (Alba, 2023). Its natural mineral water helps to naturally heal the body with restorative benefits. This report will critique Alba, using the customer journey framework and generate recommendations for enhanced customer experience.

2. Customer Persona

The customer persona is based on a young Australian, urban adult who prioritises health and wellness. Sophie is a postgraduate student, working in the field of marketing and is currently facing a lot of academic stress. She represents the high potential growth segment, fitting in between Gen Z and millennials who have the most commitment to progressive and healthy lifestyles, both physically and mentally. Gen Z and millennials are purchasing more wellness services and products than any other generation, thus is a profitable market to target (Callaghan et al., 2024). Eight out of ten Gen Z, state that overall wellness is their highest priority and are

also most concerned with how they look and feel in the long term (FMCG Gurus, 2025).

Sophie's customer journey demonstrates how young adults are utilising social media to find new trends and places to visit. Social media tools and apps such as TikTok are able to cater to their specific interest, which in this scenario can push wellness related content and marketing of Alba across to wellness conscious individuals around Victoria. Her behaviour exemplifies how Gen Z utilises social media as she is more inclined to be influenced by brand content by social media influencers, due to perceived trustworthiness and is actively looking for advice or discovering new brands through online media (Schaefer, 2025). Sophie also represents the Alba consumer, as she does not just seek health but also has a taste for perceived luxury, hence her behaviour is driven by portraying a luxe lifestyle especially through her online presence to seek validation. Sophie's persona highlights the key attributes of consumer trust, technical reliability, emotional resonance in marketing and luxury being central to retaining and attracting the Alba consumer.

Figure 1

Customer Persona of Sophie.

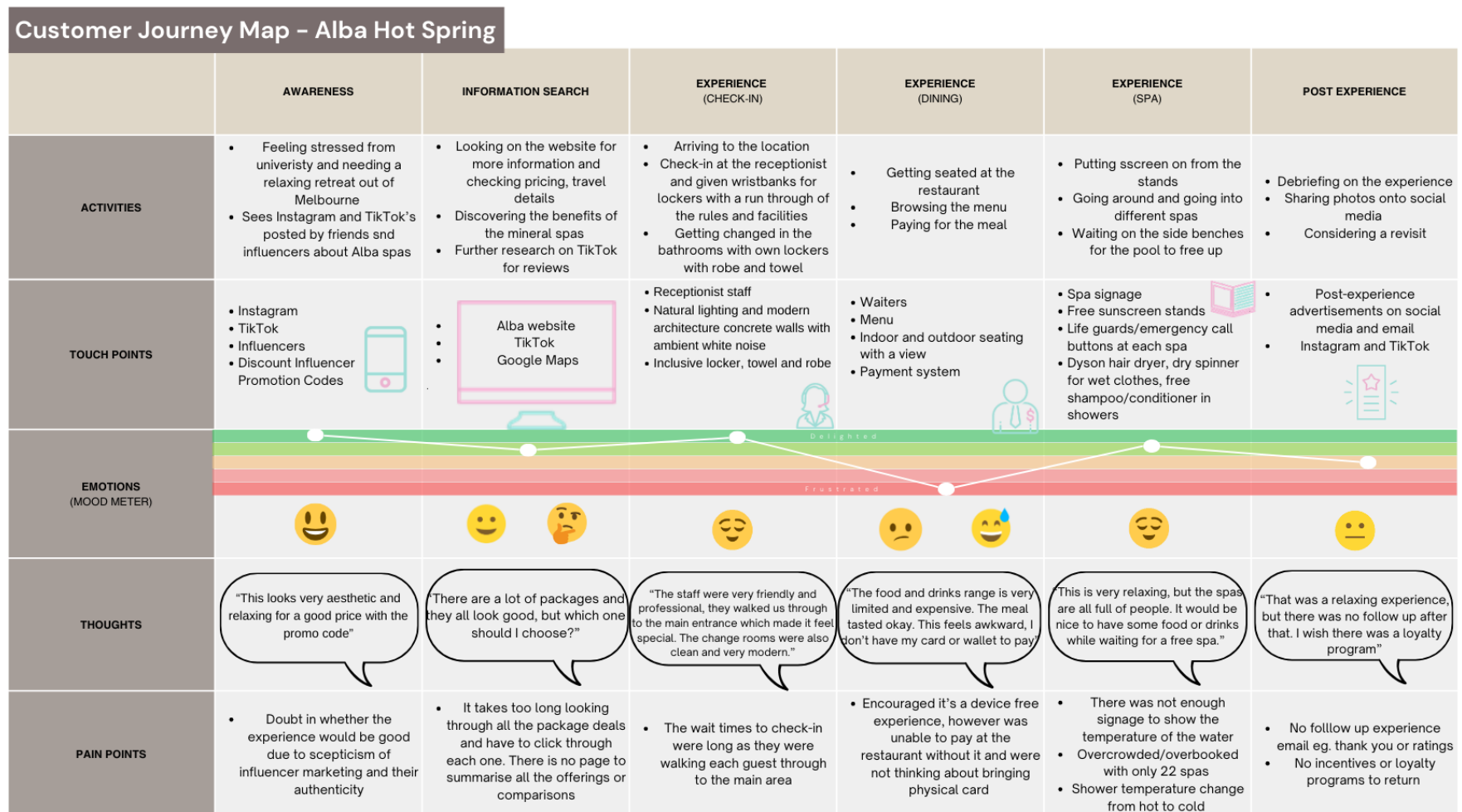


3. Customer Journey Map

The figure below represents the current customer journey map insights.

Figure 2

Alba Customer Journey Map.



The following table summarises the key pain points addressed at each stage of the journey map.

Table 1

Table Summarising Issues and Pain Points of the Customer Journey Map

Journey Stage	Issue/Pain Point
Awareness	- Young consumers have a general attitude of distrust towards brands and branded content (Jesse et al., 2025) - Based on the persona of young adults, their awareness of the brand came from social media platforms (Instagram, TikTok) - When searching about the brand on TikTok there is only user generated or influencer content, without an official account from Alba unlike their instagram which is verified account with blue check mark (Refer to Appendix B)
Information Search	- There are multiple Alba experience packages on the website distinguished by category - To view all packages you have to click through all the different packages shown per web page which is time consuming (Refer to Appendix C) - Should be a more succinct method to understand all the offerings without having to click through each web page
Check-In Experience	- Although the check-in experience is personalised by having guest services walk through the introduction of Alba and the spa treatments booked, it was time consuming waiting for them to bring each guest through to the main area which caused longer wait times

Dining Experience	- Menu options are short without a range of items to choose from - Food quality was subpar compared to the expensive price tag - Lots of friction when trying to pay for the meal. Guests were encouraged to not bring their phones into the spa retreat area however there was no method to pay for the meal. Guests also could not wait until check out to pay for the meals and therefore were told to go back to the locker room and come back to pay. This is a major pain point which could have been more seamless.
Spa Experience	- Lack of clear signages which depicted the spa temperatures, therefore at times did not meet the expectations of guests if they were expecting a hot/cold spa - There was only 22 geothermal spas, however there was much more guests around which caused overcrowdedness in the pools and also had to wait aside for free space
Post-Experience	- No follow up emails or interactions from Alba after the experience. There is no incentive to rate the experience, give feedback or refer friends

4. Recommendations

4.1 Growing Awareness

Launching Alba's own official TikTok page

- This would ensure there is an increase in brand awareness and allow consumers to have up to date information on what events, promotions or general information about Alba

- Post content to express their brand image and display the wellness benefits, reposting user-generated content to demonstrate luxury and wellness
- Helps to validate the information that content creators are promoting with confirmation that current offers are still running and work on consumer distrust
- Host special influencer events during after hours to help promote Alba; whereby the influencers can come film content and post it and be shared on Alba's digital presence

4.2 Improving Information Search on the Alba Website

Include a comparison dashboard on the Alba website where guests can select packages of interest and compare it

- A dashboard would help summarise the information and filter through keywords of choice (e.g. price, massage, spa, duration etc) and take less time to choose the right package and ensure an easier booking process
- The webpage can also include an AI generated quiz that can gather guest preferences and recommend a package. This aligns with the theory of customer co-creation which encourages consumers to customise and be accountable for their perceived personalised experience by contributing labour and decision making (Dabholkar, 1990). This helps reduce Alba's cost in having to provide customer service for customers to find an experience that suits them. Instead this can help increase productivity and perceived control of the customer experience.

4.3 Digital Check-In

Check-in with digital kiosks with a service agent, or check-in at the front desk

- Help reduce the issue of waiting times as customers feel as though their time has been wasted from the experience and reduces the feeling of relaxation because of the waiting agitation (Leclerc et al., 1995)
- Whilst long wait, service agents can control the situation by warm welcomes and giving information about the rules (eg. emphasising the phone-free experience) and then direct guests of where to go
- Concurrently, distract the situation by having sensory enablers such as calm music, aromatic scents and offering complimentary tea or water

4.4 The Dining Experience

Redesign the menu with more options and implement RFID payment system

- Introduce menu items that match the seasonal offerings, which match the high-price point so that consumers feel as though it was worth their money and not a waste
- Payment through RFID wristbands, linked to customer profiles ensure seamless service and increase efficiency (*ID&C*, 2023). It also provides Alba with data on real time tracking information to allow for restaurant flow optimisation.

4.5 The Spa Retreat

Enhance the luxurious and relaxing spa experience

- Putting digital signages that reflect the current temperature of each spa

- On demand food and beverage service to increase the taste placebo such as lemon infused water
- Implement capacity limits to reduce crowdedness
- Implement more sensory enhancers such as speakers playing nature sounds, warm towels, soft blue LED lighting at night and incorporating more natural visual cues such as more plants or water features, especially when most of Alba is described as a ‘concrete jungle’
- Although these sensory cues may act as placebos of wellness it elevates emotional comfort and regulation by preventing feeling overwhelmed through perceived feelings of healing (Riggs, 2024). By playing into these sensory cues through intentional design it can amplify feelings of wellness and increase customer satisfaction.

4.6 Post-Service Engagement

Engaging in post-service experience communication

- Sending follow-up emails to guests after their experience and incentivising them to sign up to Alba’s loyalty program (Refer to Appendix D), rate their recent experience (NPS) and referral programs

4.7 Reinvigorating the Alba Experience

Introduce different Alba programs to entice different consumer groups by generating leads and build customer loyalty

- Go Digital: Ability to use your phones and post content
- Alba Rhythms: Night filled with lo-fi music DJ in the background
- Creative Wellness: Painting program accompanied by wine from Mornington after the spa experience

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Appendix A - Customer Reviews on Google



Carissa Mirra
3 reviews



5/1 a year ago on Google

What a disappointment. My partner and I visited on Saturday morning, which we expected would be busy given the long weekend, however the place was overbooked. We spent 45 minutes walking around trying to even find a spot in one their many tiny pools. **All were full with people in them shoulder to shoulder, with some standing in ankle deep to try make it worth their money!** The only pools with space available were lukewarm. Alba, what is the point of booking a time when these slots do not have capacity limits? Please do better and stop ripping off customers. Would not recommend.



Georgie Alp
2 reviews



5/1 6 months ago on Google

We visited Alba last Sunday and, unfortunately, our experience didn't live up to expectations. When we arrived, there was a sign suggesting to book a table for lunch. However, when we asked, we were told there was no need to book and that we could just walk in. So, we arrived right at lunch opening time only to be informed that all indoor seating was fully booked and we'd have to sit outside.

Our food came out fairly quickly at first, but when we asked for some bread, it took over 30 minutes and never arrived. Later, when we went to order more food around 12:45, we were told that because the indoor area was busy, food service outside would be on hold until 1:30.

Given the price of the food, the delays, and being told we couldn't order more when we were still hungry, the experience was disappointing. The springs were enjoyable, but the high cost didn't feel justified given the issues with food service.



A L
3 reviews · 1 photo



5/1 a month ago on Google

Looks good but isn't good. Extremely underwhelming with all their pools being similar to almost identical. Plunge pool is barely chilled to enjoy. The sauna is probably the best thing... Construction going on all day and being told after arriving, and will continue until the end of April. Food disgustingly over priced with a 350ml juice being \$13. Would not recommend. \$89 for two special was the only reason of going and even that wasn't worth it!



Jess Stephenson
1 review



5/3 a year ago on Google

Mixed Review, I had high expectations for Alba. I came for a day of relaxation, to recharge and enjoy the tranquility. The entry, building and landscaping were amazing. Architecture is stunning.

Change rooms great, added bonus with access to hairdryer's and a spin machine to remove excess water from your bathers.

Phones and smart watches are discouraged, one of the reasons for my visit.

Fluffy robes, however, the pockets on the robes are sown up. With no phone, smartwatch or pocket to store a card how do you pay for a coffee or meal at the restaurant in the middle of the grounds? **There is no option of a tab/bill and paying when you exit.**

Could do better;

- As outlined by other, Signage and Wayfinding is poor.
- Pools don't vary in temperature
- They really need a cold pool (at least one) to balance the very hot thermal pools
- More shade would help for the sunny days
- My wife found the open changing area a little exposing, as did most of the guests. Hence the bathrooms were used as change facilities, blocking up their intended use.
- I appreciate the No-phone request. It's not the purpose of being there. **But similarly, most pay accounts are transacted by phone these days.** It's not convenient to go back and forth to the change rooms to collect your phone to eat or drink.

Cons;

- The staff in the restaurant, by contrast to the desk, were rude, pretentious and treated you like an imposition. This was most disappointing.
- The food is grossly overpriced. Very nice cuisine on offer. But the price point is double what it should be. Especially given Melbourne has a rich culture of food, with locals understanding what foods should cost.



mel Feyz

Local Guide · 41 reviews · 6 photos



5/4 10 months ago on Google

Best massage ever! My daughter booked a package treatment with Alba, for a mother's day present. I have many injuries as not easy for me to go to massage all the time as I have to explain where it hurts, usually takes a bit of pain to go through it. However with, massage therapist called Nicole, everything went so smoothly. She was so gentle with me all the way, same time made all the pains go away during and as if she knew where it would hurt. Explaining my pain areas once was enough and she was focused exactly where I requested in a lovely setting. I can't praise her highly enough. The experience was out of this world for me as it has been a long time since I felt less pain in my joints. Thank you Nicole. **The only set back was waiting in the line at the reception when we first enter but it was worth it at the end.**

I'll be back!



Sultan G

Local Guide · 152 reviews · 393 photos



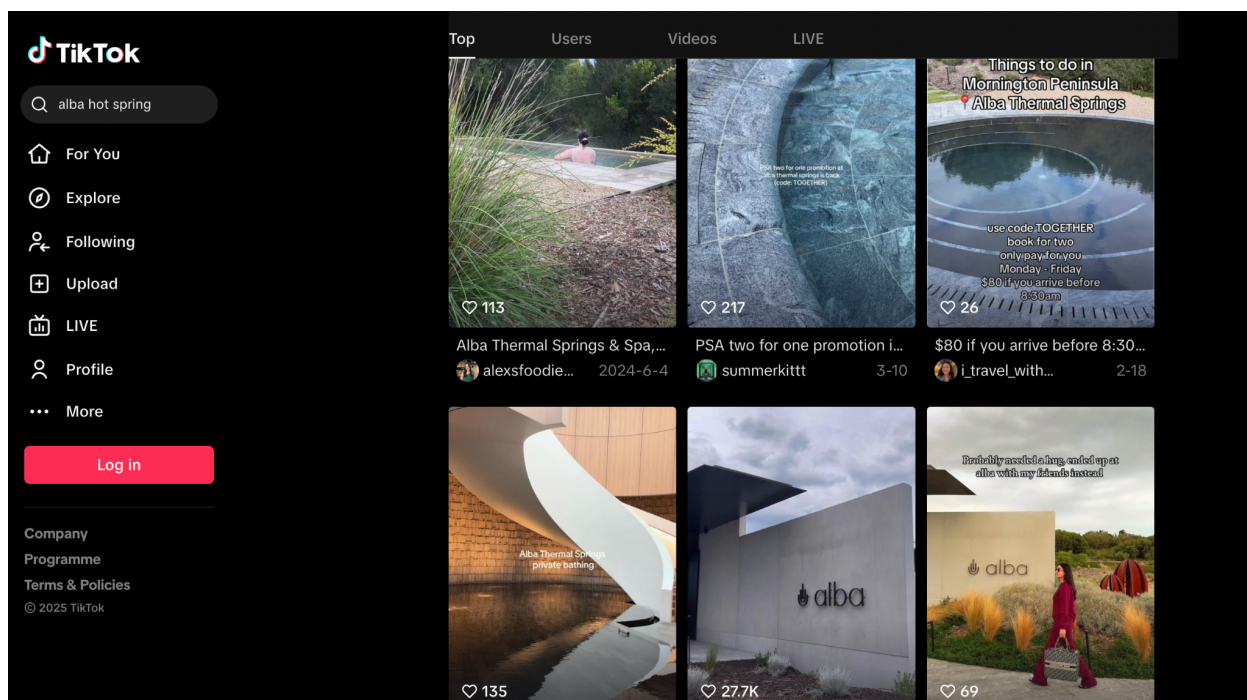
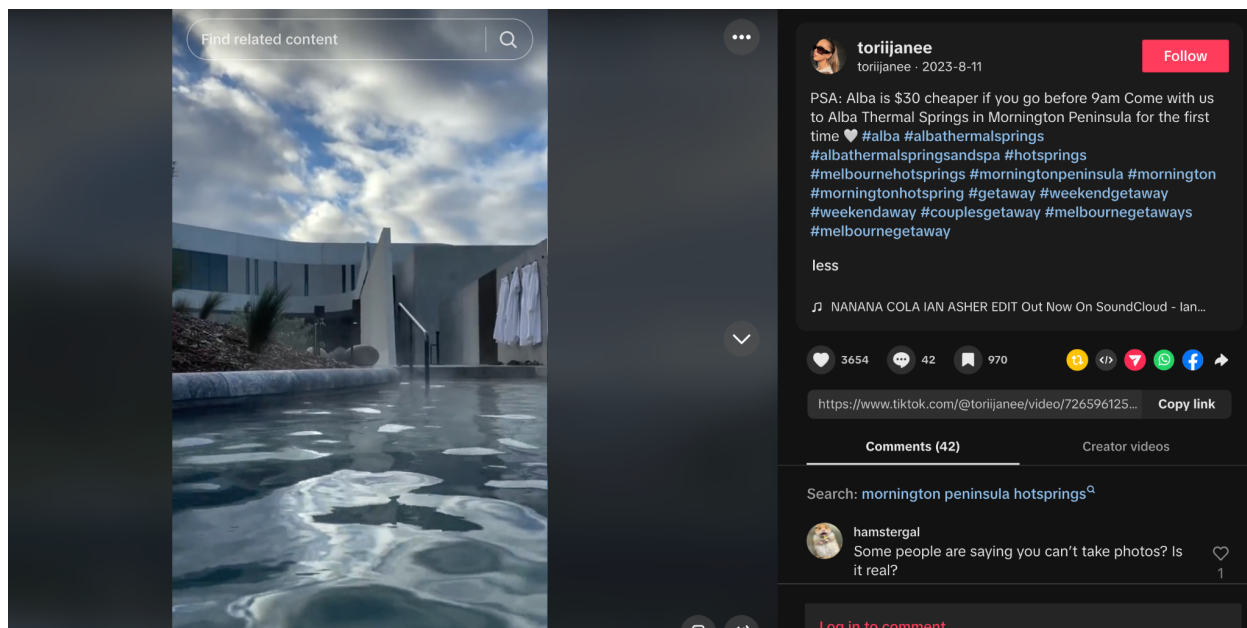
5/1 2 years ago on Google

This is an attempt to come up with suggestions for the administration to enhance customer experience in Alba Springs.

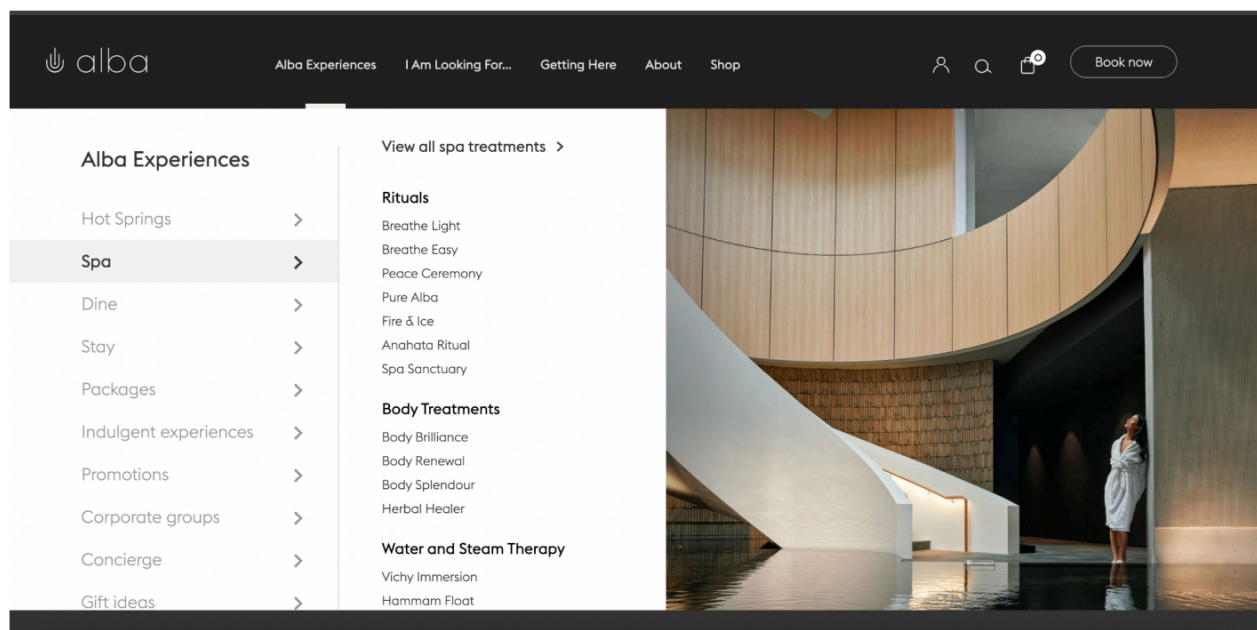
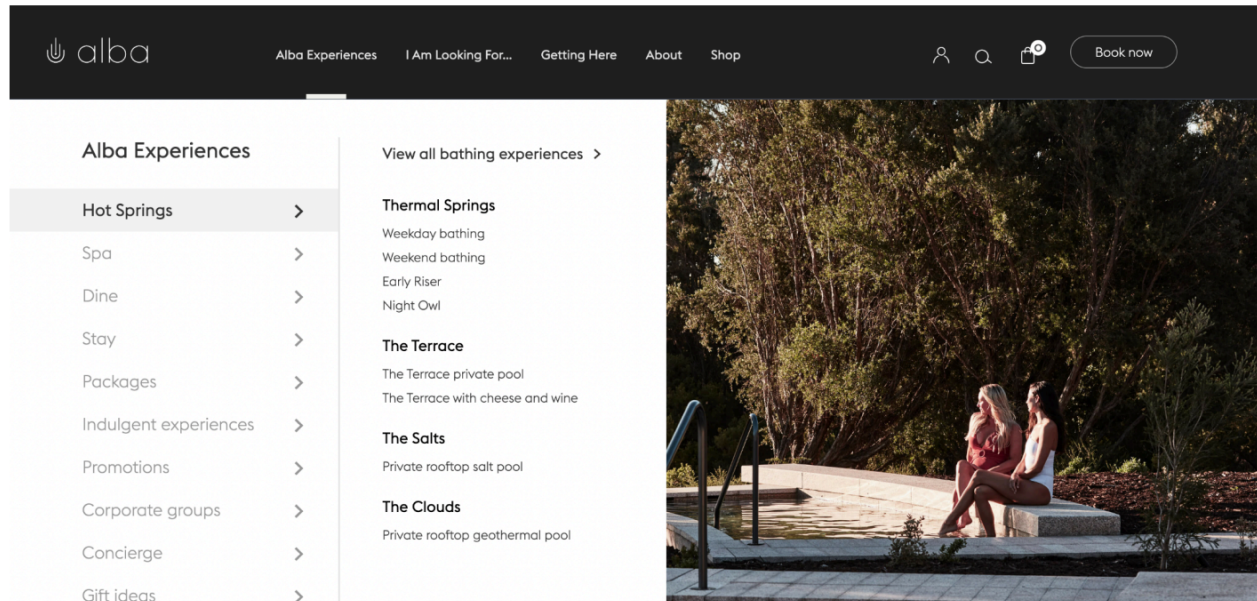
- This could be a great place for festivals and music concerts.
- Allow hookah and designated areas for it.
- parking lot capacity is enormously huge, I think its perfect for an outdoor theatre, picnic, barbecue, fire.
- Activities, art, watching live sport events.

Wish I had the power to do such business in Melbourne.

Appendix B - Alba TikTok Search



Appendix C - Poor Information Architecture





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Hot Springs >

Spa >

Dine >

Stay >

Packages >

Indulgent experiences >

Promotions >

Corporate groups >

Concierge >

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View all packages >

The Coast

The Pier

The Pillars

The Pines

The Escape

The Connection

The Celebration

The Collective

Dine Thyme

Springs Thyme

Tea Thyme

Brunch Thyme



Appendix D - Alba Loyalty Program Guide

Membership Tier

Stages	Points	Reward
Healthy Novice	20 points	\$10 off next visit
Wellness Superstar	50 points	Free add-on Massage treatment
Relaxation Guru	100 points	Access to VIP Spa lounge

Point Redemption

Refer a friend	5 points
Every spa visit	10 points
Complete the survey	2 points
Every meal purchased	10 points
Share a post tagging Alba on social media	5 points