



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Station to Station onboard chef Leif Hedendal. Harvest meal by Govind Armstrong at the Cook's Garden by HGEL. Urban Palate and Pie Hole catered the Arts District salon. Honoree Doug Aitken. Hollywood Forever dinner.

Meals on the Go

A convivial set of dinners salutes design and arts across Los Angeles—and the U.S.



ABOVE Canapés at the Airbnb salon. BELOW The Station to Station feast in Venice.



From New York to California, artist Doug Aitken's multimedia kinetic art installation—a moving Amtrak train—traversed the U.S. this past September with 10 performance-filled whistlestops. The onboard chef vetted for **Station to Station** was Leif Hedendal, who researched urban farms, dairies and farmers' markets cross-country and cooked all day in a minuscule galley. With gastronomic cred locally (Greens) and overseas (Noma), the Bay Area private chef and caterer also throws periodic Dinner Discussions, hosting names like Alice Waters and Ben Kinmont.

In L.A., after **Station to Station** came to a halt, a citywide spectacle had begun. **Airbnb**—like VRBO for the design set—had installed five smartly decorated prefabs around town. There, invited curators—James Franco, Lake Bell, Molly Sims, Moby, Anjelica Huston—hosted events, while top chefs such as Willie Jane's Govind Armstrong and Sqirl Preserves' Jessica Koslow helmed culinary festivities. Airbnb's final event honored Aitken and his project—in his hometown of Venice. Fittingly, Hedendal prepared the intimate Cook's Garden by HGEL post-feast. Atop al fresco tables, blooms and branches were arranged in vases by Humble Ceramics, which also provided bowls, plates and cazuelas. Courses showcased his deference to on-the-fly findings: "I started outlining when I first got to the [Santa Monica] Farmers' Market. I saw a lot of nice mushrooms, and they made up for the lack of meat." The fare was soulful: batter-fried purslane with zesty chile and star anise; cherry tomato gazpacho; fresh lima beans; roasted sunchokes in brown butter. Short ribs sourced from Lindy & Grundy were braised in vermouth, sake and soy, and served on toasts. "I used to make a lot of vegetarian meals, so this was kind of in-between."

Hedendal says **Station to Station** was "one platform to talk about issues." With this experience behind him, he'll return to his salons (next up, Inverness). In the words of the train's onboard manual: "As we travel on, the meals should reflect on our immediate past." •



FESTIVITIES (4): JESSE NARDUCCI. FOOD (2): BETH COLLIER. TABLETOP: MATTHEW REAMER

