

# ALL ABOARD



## AT DTLA ARTS DISTRICT'S WESTBOUND, NEW FLAVORS MIX WITH SENTIMENTAL HISTORY

Waiting like a coquettish paramour at 300 S. Santa Fe Avenue in Downtown L.A.'s Arts District is Westbound. The bar/eatery beckons patrons inside with its train-inspired décor, an homage to its past. "What drew me to the locale was its history," says owner Sarah Meade. "From 1893 to 1939, it was the La Grande Station terminal for the Santa Fe Railroad."



With every step beyond Westbound's threshold, a new delight awaits, resulting in visitors falling a bit deeper and deeper in love. A first encounter occurs at the copper-top bar, behind which Akos Orosz arches a friendly eyebrow, sizing up the thirsty. "It takes three questions," he says of discerning a patron's flavor profile. Rattle off a few answers to watch the Budapest-born bartender's wheels turning. In short order, he'll return with a libation not featured on the extensive menu of sophisticated craft cocktails, but rather something that speaks directly to one's heart.

Like a yellow brick road, the striped hardwood floor lures, "Follow me," to where Pullman-

style booths designate the dining area. After the three-page cocktail menu, the summer food offerings may seem modest. Prepare, though, for a sensory journey courtesy of chef Taylor Persh (pictured right). Where to start? Order one of everything.

Persh often delivers dishes herself: "Try this right now. I need to be able to share this moment with you." She then delivers a tasting road map, suggesting the order in which to consume a dish to fully experience every nuance. These declarations are like listening to culinary love poems.

Later, head to the patio to sip a cocktail beneath the summer moon. Stay until 1 a.m. and

there's the most memorable of goodnight kisses—a Valrhona chocolate, fleur de sel brownie. Sigh. True amour. > BEKAH WRIGHT



## SUMMER NIGHTS

Chef Taylor Persh can't wait to talk about her obsessions on Westbound's summer menu. What would she order on a sultry evening? "A little gem salad composed of heirloom tomatoes, green goddess dressing, crispy shallots, potato chips, and pickled onions," she begins.

The ideal follow-up: Westbound's juicy french onion soup burger—a rib-eye patty with onions and crispy Swiss cheese. "It's everything you want from a burger." Pair this with a boozy milkshake (pictured above) of house-made ice cream for sheer perfection, but definitely save room for dessert. Persh tantalizingly recites the ingredients: "Maple meringue stuffed with praline cream and surrounded by berries and reduced maple." Swoon-worthy. > B.W.