



# ROLLING STARLIGHT

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2025

*"I've got this berth  
and this roll down blind  
I've got this fold up sink  
And these rocks  
And these cactus going by  
And a bottle of German wine to drink  
Settle down into the clickety clack  
With the clouds and the stars to read"*

—Joni Mitchell



All aboard the Coast Starlight train from Seattle to Los Angeles. It's been years since I last rode this route that threads the Pacific coast. That trip was with my parents for their 60th wedding anniversary. My sister and I shared a "roomette" and Mom and Dad had a Superliner Family Bedroom where we'd all sit together and watch the world flicker past like a movie marathon.



Trees, lakes, strawberry fields, rail yards, the backs of buildings smeared with graffiti all going by like scenes in a dream. Suddenly engaging—and then gone. Frustrating to photograph as the subject disappears faster than you can focus. Best keep your eyes on the window or risk missing the moment. Such as the group of naked surfers north of Santa Barbara, lined up along the tracks waving their swim trunks at us like victory flags. The full-monty flashing by, much like the astonished smile on my mom's face.



This Amtrak flagship could use an update from its 1990's airline-inspired design. Any future makeover should celebrate the rich lore of rail travel, rather than airline austerity in blue-and-grey. Aside from that, my partner and I enjoy our cozy cabin as we recline into the next 35 hours. The view spooling continuously by day—and by moonlight.



Our railway experience is properly enhanced with my signature on-board "bar cart". A small roller bag complete with Campari, gin and vermouth, and of course, smart cocktail glassware! Dehydrated orange slices crown perfect Negronis as happy hour shakes and stirs its way across the twilight landscape.



On this summertime trip along America's left coast, one "settles down into the clickety clack" that Joni Mitchell so dreamily described, watching life glide by, as beautiful as a foreign film—with no subtitles needed.



## TRAIN TRAVELER TIP:

While aboard the Coast Starlight, the timing of one's meals in the dining car become as fundamental to one's day as sunrise and sunset. The sleeper car attendant will come by your cabin to ask what seating time you'd like to reserve. We recommend choosing the earliest time slots, then, after dinner adjourn to the observation car when its always-popular view seats are vacated by the later-hour dining customers.

For more information:

[Coast Starlight](#)



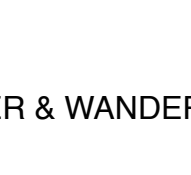
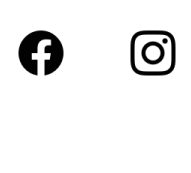
SUMMER TRAIN  
A curated PLAYLIST for train travel.

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\* All photos shot on iPhone by Haines Wilkerson

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