

Food & Beverage Update

Amtrak has prepared the below report pursuant to a requirement enacted as part of the full-year FY 23 annual appropriations law for Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies.

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Amtrak has recently implemented or plans to implement the following changes to on-board food and beverage service:

- **Traditional dining on the *Silver Star* and *Silver Meteor*** — Amtrak is working to bring traditional dining service (hot, chef-prepared meals and table service, enjoyed in a dining car) back to the company’s two New York-to-Miami overnight routes, the *Silver Star* and the *Silver Meteor*, in the spring / summer of 2023. With this restoration, traditional dining service will be available on eight of Amtrak’s fourteen overnight routes,⁵⁹ including all routes on which end-to-end passengers spend more than one night aboard. Moving forward, Amtrak will carefully evaluate the results of this change; we will weigh customer satisfaction and cost considerations to determine whether it can be expanded to additional routes in the future.
- **Expansion of traditional dining to all passengers on Western Long-Distance routes** — Amtrak is making existing traditional dining service available to all passengers on the company’s five Western Long-Distance routes.⁶⁰ (Previously, such service was available only to sleeping car passengers; other passengers, most of whom are taking shorter trips, were able to buy food and beverages in a café car.) While café car service continues to be available on these routes, Amtrak’s new approach enables all passengers to add a traditional dining car experience to the base cost of their tickets for a fixed additional menu charge. (Limited seating is available on a “first-come, first-served” basis.)
- **Cart service on *Acela* trains** — Via a new pilot program, Amtrak is testing out cart service for business class passengers on our *Acela* trains along the Boston-to-Washington Northeast Corridor, which would save those passengers the necessity of going to the Café *Acela* in order to order food or a beverage. (Many *Acela* passengers say they value the ability to use travel time for work or other purposes.) This pilot is part of Amtrak’s ongoing effort to differentiate the *Acela*

⁵⁹ One of Amtrak’s fifteen Long-Distance routes, the New York to Savannah *Palmetto*, is not an overnight train and therefore offers only café car service. Note that traditional dining is also available to *Texas Eagle* passengers, but only between Los Angeles and San Antonio (i.e., while they are functionally passengers on the *Sunset Limited*).

⁶⁰ (The Chicago-to-Los Angeles *Southwest Chief*; the Chicago-to-Emeryville *California Zephyr*; the Chicago-to-Seattle / Portland *Empire Builder*; the Los Angeles-to-Seattle *Coast Starlight*; and the New Orleans-to-Los Angeles *Sunset Limited* (including a through-running section of *Texas Eagle* consists that joins the *Sunset* from San Antonio to Los Angeles).)

travel experience and attract premium fare-paying passengers who can help improve the company's bottom line.

Importantly, these changes are steps in an ongoing process. Amtrak is committed to continuing to improve its food and beverage offerings consistent with our congressionally-prescribed mission and goals, which include a directive to "maximize the benefits of Federal investments" in Amtrak by, among other efforts, "offering food service that meets the needs of [our] customers" and "controlling or reducing management and operating costs."⁶¹

Additionally, the food and beverage working group that Amtrak convened pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) continues to meet; we look forward to responding to that group's forthcoming recommendations later in CY 23, as the law directs.

⁶¹ [49 U.S.C. § 24101\(c\)](#).