

## Talgo Trainset

**PROJECT TEAM:** Cesar Vergara, Chief Designer, Amtrak (1990-2000)  
Amtrak Rail Design Center  
Talgo Engineering (Madrid)

**CLIENT:** Amtrak West  
Talgo Engineering (Madrid, Seattle)

**COMPLETION DATE:** 1997

**AWARDS:** Smithsonian Institution 2003 National Design Triennial

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design in 2003 recognized the Amtrak *Cascades*, manufactured by Talgo, as one of the most influential designs of the decade in selecting the train for its coveted Design Triennial. Concurrent with the design of the *Cascades*, Talgo commissioned CESAR VERGARA to design a "sister" trainset for the proposed Los Angeles-Las Vegas corridor. As with the *Cascades*, the challenge was to gap the height difference from the pendular Talgo railcars to the EMD F-59 locomotive. This was achieved by installing the now iconic tailfins measuring 25 feet in length by 6 feet in height at the end of the train sets.

Talgo and Amtrak West determined that the various trainsets should be designed with specific relevance to the corridor demographics being served. The Las Vegas trainset's exterior colors were changed from green/tan to silver/blue. The interior configuration and colors feature red/purple and chrome to celebrate the unique character of the train's end destinations. Combined with the sweeping graphic scheme, they created a unique countenance. The Café car produces an upscale design environment through its sweeping black curved bar and ceiling. The ceiling mural is decorated with Hubble Space Telescope images of galaxies and stars utilizing 1,500 fiber optic lights.

The Las Vegas Talgo corridor service did not come into being; the trainset was purchased by the Washington State Department of Transportation and incorporated into the *Cascades* fleet. The silver/blue palette became the color scheme for Amtrak's San Diego-San Luis Obispo *Surfliner* service.



