THE CIRCUIT REPORT

Inside the Kitchen Before the Lamb Jam Finale at Pier 57

At Platform by JBF, trays, counters and the work before service offer a close view of the November 5 Lamb Jam finale.

By David Shusterman · Editor, The Circuit Report · Published November 06, 2026



Preparations at Platform by JBF before the November 5 dinner. Frame from event footage.

Before the Lamb Jam Finale became a dinner, it was a kitchen getting ready. At Platform by JBF on November 5, trays lined the counter, cooks worked within sight of the dining places, and a printed menu set out the evening ahead. The preparations gave the event a smaller, more immediate scale than the phrase “grand finale” might suggest.

The footage was recorded before the scheduled 6:30 p.m. start. It shows hands working over trays and the close relationship between the cooking area and the counter. A diner at this kind of table can see some of the process that usually remains behind a restaurant door.

Four kitchens meet at Pier 57

The James Beard Foundation’s program brought **Cody Chassar of Gunshow in Atlanta** and **Francis Ang of Abacá in San Francisco** together with **Will Gilson of Amba Cambridge** and **Kareem El Ghayesh of KG BBQ**. Presented by the American Lamb Board, the November 5 finale followed a competition that had taken place across several cities earlier in the year.

The board’s account of the 2026 winners identifies Chassar and Ang as the East and West Coast champions. Their winning dishes approached the same ingredient differently: Chassar’s lamb bellies included boudin sausage and carrot sofrito; Ang’s sinigang lamb ribs used tamarind glaze and bone broth.

The finale’s announced format put signature dishes alongside collaborations between the visiting chefs. That made the evening more than a repeat of the competition menu. It offered a setting in

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which different restaurant practices could meet around one ingredient.



Trays being prepared before service. Frame from event footage.

The counter as a point of view

The photographs here stay with the preparation period. The counter holds menus and place settings while the kitchen remains visible beyond them. In another frame, small items are arranged across trays, a reminder that a multi-course event begins with many individual tasks completed before guests sit down.

The camera's position makes that relationship clear. There is little visual distance between the work and the place where the meal will be served. The pans, shelving and working surfaces remain part of the room, giving the setting a directness that a conventional banquet layout can lose.

The printed program beside the counter gave the preparations their shape. Four chefs, different restaurant traditions and a shared ingredient had to become one service. In that period before the first course, the evening was taking form through the arrangement of trays, tools and places at the counter.

A place to follow the cooking

Platform's Pier 57 program continues with visiting-chef dinners and other food events. The appeal suggested by these preparations is straightforward: the kitchen can become part of the occasion, with its activity visible from the table.



The printed November 5 Lamb Jam Finale menu. Frame from event footage.

Photographs and scenes from the evening

Read the retained Lamb Jam Finale event guide and explore Food & Wine.

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