

*The Foodie and the Fashionista*  
**SUSAN &  
ERIN FENIGER**

What could possibly be the bond between one of LA's most famous female chefs and her 37-year-old niece who makes paint-splattered jeans? Both Susan Feniger—cofounder of Santa Monica's acclaimed Border Grill—and her fashion designer niece Erin take creative inspiration from the street. Just two years ago, Erin founded the Rialto Jean Project line, selling hand-painted vintage jeans (Oprah Winfrey wore a pair on a recent cover of *O, The Oprah Magazine*) and jackets, all inspired by seeing a female artist in Venice with “the perfect beach hair and these baggy jeans with paint all over them,” says Erin. The designer paints every piece herself (find them at Barneys New York and Nordstrom), with a portion of sales funding children's art programs, including one at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Erin has even created custom aprons for her aunt, 62, who recently co-opened a fifth Border Grill in Las Vegas and runs her own Mud Hen Tavern in LA's growing arts district near the intersection of Santa Monica and Highland. “I love walking through food markets around the world and seeing all the colors,” says Susan. She and her niece—they come from a family in the steel business in Toledo, Ohio—have a sweetly teasing rapport. “I didn't know you were gay!” jokes Erin when Susan mentions her longtime position on the board of the Los Angeles LGBT Center. Susan has also served for 24 years on the board of the Scleroderma Research Foundation. But Erin turns serious when she talks about her aunt's support: “Everybody kind of looked at me like I'd lost my mind when I started this company. Susan taught me to listen to what makes *me* tick.”

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ON SUSAN: Blazer, Calvin Klein (\$129). Macy's, Beverly Center, LA, 310-854-6655; macys.com. Top, Equipment (\$218). 8459 Melrose Pl., LA, 323-330-8889; equipmentfr.com. Jeans, Erin Feniger for Rialto Jean Project (\$245). Barneys New York, 9570 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, 310-276-4400; barneys.com. Pearl necklace, Samira 13 (\$790). 8661 W. Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood, 310-652-1313; samira13.com. Sneakers, Converse (\$45). converse.com. Chain necklace, stylist's own. Head wrap, glasses, earrings, bracelets, and watch, Susan's own. ON ERIN: Blazer, Helmut Lang (\$595). Nordstrom, The Grove, LA, 323-930-2230; nordstrom.com. Denim top, Erin Feniger for Rialto Jean Project (\$325). Barneys New York, 9570 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, 310-276-4400; barneys.com. Pants, Helmut Lang (\$360). Intermix, 110 N. Robertson Blvd., LA, 310-860-0113; intermixonline.com. Diamond necklace and pumps, Erin's own

Bada assemblage 140929-05-01,02, glazed ceramic stool in gray-blue powdered celadon (RIGHT), Lee Hun Chung, 2014.