

## BACK TO THE LAND

A globetrotting twentysomething returns home to Newfoundland to help other solo wanderers connect to her community – and themselves

**T**oni Kearney travelled across Canada and as far as Australia to figure out what she wanted to do in life. Eventually, right before the pandemic hit, she ended up back in her hometown of Conche (population 150) on Newfoundland's northern peninsula. She returned to launch Moratorium Children, a retreat for people looking to recharge and reconnect with themselves. By inviting people to Conche and helping them explore the community, culture and landscape, Kearney has been able to reconnect with herself, too.

Like most outpost communities on the island that relied on fishing for the local economy, Conche was hit hard when the moratorium on cod fishing was introduced by the federal government in 1992. People moved to find work and communities were abandoned. "I grew up listening to all these stories about a place that didn't really exist," Kearney says. "People would talk about how the town hall would be packed or there'd be a community centre with dances. We had a really busy hockey arena. All these tales of how lively things used to be. And then you're looking around as if you're living in a bit of an apocalypse."

That nostalgia got the 27-year-old thinking about how to reinvigorate her community – and how to make it a place people would want to visit. Moratorium Children is focused on solo travellers and Kearney's team builds custom retreats for each guest that immerses them in the landscape and community. "You're going to be undisturbed to really allow yourself to connect and engage at your own pace," she says.

Guests hike, zip along the coast in a Zodiac boat, fish or swim in a rock pool, learn about

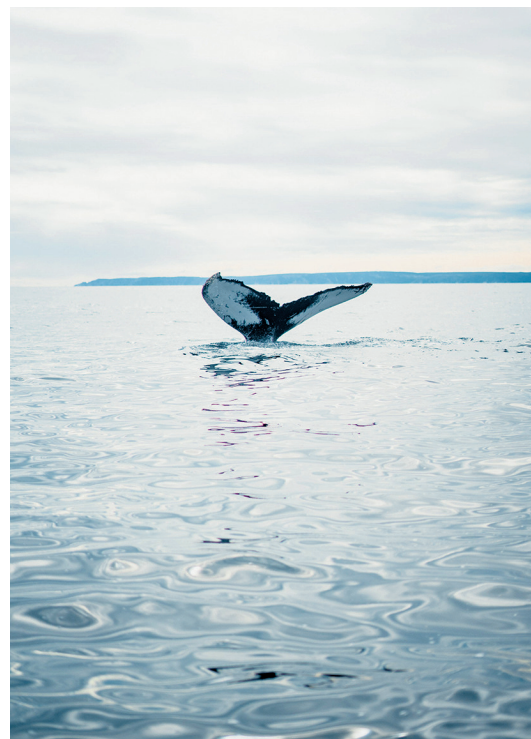


local embroidery traditions or roll up their sleeves for a jam-making session, all while meeting and learning from community members. The retreats are anywhere from three to five days and end with a five-course candlelit dinner and farewell concert by local musicians.

Despite starting up during the pandemic, Kearney has hosted travellers from Canada, New York, New England and Germany. "At the core of it are people who have a really deep interest in local history and making authentic connections," she says. "We want people to not just meet the locals but really meet the land and actually feel what I feel when I come home, which is the sense of complete tranquility."

– MARYAM SIDDIQI

Stays from \$750/night through [moratoriumchildren.com](http://moratoriumchildren.com).



PHOTOS BY MELISSA CHERRY (MORATORIUM CHILDREN)

## GOING SOFT

For its new collection F.A.R., Away brings its minimalist spirit to outdoor gear

The idea of a soft-sided line of luggage from Away, a brand famous for its hard-shell rolling suitcases, was born before the pandemic. But the shift in travel habits over the past two years reaffirmed the company's belief that there was a need for a different kind of bag. Whether spending more time outdoors or visiting destinations anchored in nature, "there is definitely more of an engagement in different types of travel and different end uses," says Cuan Hanly, the brand's chief design officer.

The new line is called F.A.R. (For All Routes) and it features functional and fashionable outdoor gear – totes, backpacks and duffle bags – made from recycled polyester. The goal was to create bags that are technically sound and durable without adding unnecessary weight or features. "A lot of products that exist in the outdoor sector denote durability by the weight of the item, and that's often quite heavy," Hanly says. "We did a lot of raw material research to get that balance of light weight with strength." His team also did away with extraneous straps, loops and laces. "These extras often aren't really needed, but they're used to trigger 'this is an outdoor product.' We really approached this with a minimalist, reductive intent and only put in features and functions that we felt brought solutions to our customers' needs," he says.

Available in playful colours – including Atomic Celery, Red Orange and Vivid Blue – that make finding your bag on a luggage carousel significantly easier, the pieces are designed to maximize space. Completing the collection are organizational cubes and pouches made with recycled nylon ripstop sized to fit "like bricks," Hanly says, within the different sizes of carryalls. – M.S.

F.A.R. bags and accessories, \$35 to \$280 through [awaytravel.com](http://awaytravel.com).