

A glimpse into the daily routine at the dog shelter of Huanchaquito.

In the morning I would wake up at 8 am, put on the dirtiest and stinkiest clothes I find, grab a banana and slip into my hiking boots. Running down the stairs of the apartment, I would find Pongo the black stray dog tail-wagging in front of the door. Accompany me and the other volunteer to the bus station and trying to grab the water bottles out of our hands in a playful manner. Driving 5 min with the bus along the beach, observing the surfers catching the morning waves, I start searching for one sole and scream "bajar control" from the back of the bus in order to get off. At the street, Marjolein the founder would wait and we would walk uphill, passing by a Bodega grabbing each of us a 20 Kg food package on our bag and facing the big black gate in front of us. Soon we would hear loud barking drowning our morning conversations. Getting into the shelter, grabbing a stick and going straight into the main area, where Luna, Tinki, Goldy and the others make it hard to walk through by giving us a good morning hug.



Goldy and me

Fast the tasks are divided, and everybody starts to go to his/her assigned area. Not even in the cage Bonney, one of the smallest dogs will jump right into your face without asking for permission. If I have been awake enough to react and catch her, she would hug me like there is no other morning. Trying to start cleaning the area the ugliest dog of the shelter Violetta



would sit in her funniest position trying to make it impossible for me to empty the waterboxes. Also, Tina one of the puppies, isn't a great help when cleaning the carpets. She tries to grab the brush in a playful manner and wouldn't let it go. Almost finished to clean the carpets, charming princessa tries to catch your attention with her beautiful eyelashes. She knows that nobody is able to resist her lovely look. Thus, she receives a tons of cuddle strokes through her hair that feels as soft as she has just fallen into a pot of hair conditioner. Meanwhile, me and the other volunteers would start a conversation about the last night out, but soon would be interrupted by the famous

vocalist in the shelter: Bayer. Making all day long the prettiest sounds, by laying in the entry of the cage. Done with the cleaning, the feeding follows. Preparing 60 food cups for 60 hungry dogs isn't the easiest task. Surprisingly all of the dogs know their names and would therefore patiently wait for their portion to be served on the ground. Which I personally find very impressive. While Tomi takes ages to eat, Marley would already sneak around and try to steal something of his mates. In the meanwhile, Dude, the tallest dog of the shelter has finished his meal and is ready for the couch. The couch in this sense will be my lab. As soon as you sit down, he will come to sit on your lab pretending to be a chihuahua lab dog.

Pisco and Pablo would sneak in between and try to get off one or two cuddles.



After everyone has finished the food, its time say goodbye and to return in the afternoon for a quick check up. In the afternoon everybody would lay around lazy in the most comfortable position. The waterboxes will be filled up again and the dogs that are the most likely to start a fight will be locked in an extra cage. For an unknown reasons Mama Princessa the smartest dog of the shelter, loves those cages and tries with her special techniques to open them. Well and sometimes she succeeds. Covered in hair and poo it's time to return to Huanchaco, hoping that nobody starts to fight and that the next day will be a 'lets go out for a doggy beach walk day'.



Sunny