

My Journey to an Unexpected Love Affair
February 10th, 2010

Last year I embarked on what I thought was going to be an impossible dream and a journey way too long to purchase a new puppy. Perhaps I should mention a little of the background leading up to the adventure I will always remember...

I am a single dog owner, Australian, and have based myself in Thailand. My stepson worked for ThyssenKrupp Stainless in China, but, a few years ago, accepted the contract to lead a project to build a new stainless steel plant in the small city of Mobile, Alabama. I also have a daughter and she works for the Australian Consular General's Office in Shanghai.

After a year of working on this project my son had his first introduction to "Toy Schnauzers". We already have a Miniature White Schnauzer who lives with me and his brother, a West Hyland Terrier, here in Thailand. After my son's introduction to these darling little dogs he said "we have to get you one these darling little dogs". Sadly, my stepson passed away before he was able to bring one of these puppies to Thailand. After his passing I thought often about his wish for me to own a "Toy Schnauzer" and so I decided to take up the challenge and get hold of one myself.

I ran with the challenge and thought that the best approach to find a Toy Schnauzer in the states would be by surfing the net. However, this approach was riddled with risks and hindrances. On one hand I desperately wanted to avoid the traps of "Puppy Mills". I knew my research had to be thorough so I wouldn't even support one by "accidentally" buying from them (Puppy Mills are illegal in Australia). On the other hand I had no introduction; no references for genuine breeders to evaluate me. Needless to say I was a bit apprehensive surfing the net.

The most important requirement for me was a healthy strong puppy, and I also hoped for a puppy with a delightful attitude. My search led me to an endearing website called "*Schnauzer Children - Delightful, Chocolate Toy Schnauzers*", easily the most beautiful website I have ever viewed. The images on their "home" page are so charming... I instantly looked for the "Online Purchase" button. What was I thinking!

I had to be unemotional, harness my excitement and make contact through email. I was vetted first by the breeder of *Schnauzer Children*, James and Gayla . I was glad that they asked many questions of me. To buy a puppy just from looking at a very appealing web page was a little unrealistic. Then I stated all of my requests and told them that I live in Thailand.

I got the impression they were both blown away by my statement. The thought of "is this person real" must have crossed their mind. However, that doubt quickly evaporated when my US contact, the Head Executive Personal Assistant of ThyssenKrupp Stainless USA contacted *Schnauzer Children* to confirm to James and Gayla that their precious puppy would be going to a very good home and that he would be treasured and well taken care of. I was very happy that *Schnauzer Children's* main concern was aimed at the wellbeing of their puppies and not just sent to a home because the puppy payment was not an issue. If truth be told, the more questions *Schnauzer Children* asked of me the more confident I became in the fact that I had, by chance, chosen a very good breeder. Thus I committed myself to buy a *Schnauzer Children* puppy despite the fact that I was somewhat intimidated by the logistics that would be involved with my living in Thailand and my new puppy living in America...Houston Texas to be precise.

After confirmation was accepted by both parties the logistical nightmare commenced. The original arrangements, where the puppy would have been flown to Mobile, fell through because the airlines had changed their regulations earlier in that year. The next logical option was to fly the puppy to Birmingham, Alabama. However, the breeders became very concerned that the flight may be delayed at Houston Airport (not uncommon these days) and they would not have a small puppy delayed and unattended in a city where weather conditions can be very hot. Hence the quick-fix was for James and Gayla to accompany the puppy all the way to Birmingham (not exactly around the corner) so that I would have a healthy puppy as promised.

I did not only receive a healthy puppy with an unbelievable thick shiny coat and a fresh haircut, but a much socialized puppy at that. I was told by James and Gayla that all their puppies are treated as they would treat one of their children. So True! ... hence I became the very proud owner of darling little Macchiato.

This little baby travelled all the way from Birmingham to Thailand with a delay of 15hours in LA California due to technical problems with the aircraft in Denver. All in all it took three days for him to finally arrive at his new home in Thailand. Not a whimper, not a cry, absolutely nothing from this tiny creature, just total acceptance of human beings he had already trusted to take care of him. This trust was undoubtedly nurtured by *Schnauzer Children's* James and Gayla. I'd like to add that as we made every attempt to connect with our flight from LA to Thailand Macchiato was a huge hit at LAX. People stopped and asked "what kind of breed is your puppy" or "he is so socialized". Well, young Master Macchiato interacted with complete strangers as if this was the "norm" for him.

I have been meaning to write this testimonial for some months now, but life and its trials sometimes gets in the way of us doing what we should do and another day passes and then a few months pass. I cannot find any more positive adjectives to use to recommend *Schnauzer Children* breeders. I received a puppy of unbelievable strength and courage and with the most endearing character that makes you laugh. He is very healthy, very intelligent (a fast learner), and very affectionate...a puppy to die for.

In April I will travel back to the states to pick up yet another puppy who will be named Nike after Macchiato's attitude (*just do it*). I can hardly wait. Before Nike was born in January, James and Gayla arranged for me to watch the birth via Skype. Secretly I was hoping for a boy, but I would have happily embraced either sex. I got to see the preparation of what is involved in birthing puppies, the sanitary conditions, sterile gloves, etc. etc. and most importantly how the newborns were handled. What an unbelievable and amazing experience I was allowed to witness. I felt bonded to these new puppies from the time they were born and to hear their first cries was out of this world. What other breeder would let you peak behind the curtains and let you watch this intimate and sacred moment.

This testimonial is certainly long, maybe lots could have been cut, but if anything it is true. If anyone out there is serious about owning a *Schnauzer Children* puppy, I am happy to furnish any further details you may require. Please request my email address from *Schnauzer Children*.

Thank you, James and Gayla, for filling the void in my life that was left after the passing of my son. Thank you!

Margaux Sainsbury, Thailand