

Vizsla "Research"

Research. This word is used frequently by those searching for a puppy. "I've done my research". From the puppy searcher's standpoint, it is to indicate that they have looked into a breed and know what they are considering. That they are prepared.

However, there is a disconnect between *thinking* you know what you are getting into and *knowing* what the red ball of energy actually is going to be like. That disconnect continues in knowing how and why finding a reputable breeder and not necessarily the first available puppy is in not only your best interest but also that of the dog.

Most of us start out one of two ways. 1- We meet a dog of a certain breed. Like it and decide we need to know more. 2 - We find a book about dogs or do an internet search and find a breed or breeds that are intriguing mainly because of how it looks. From there we read a bit about the breed - usually on puppy selling websites or generic breed books and pick out the words that suit us. We look at lots of pictures that confirm how cute, regal, handsome, clownish or impressive we think the breed is. From here it gets a bit dicey. Depending on our desire or sense of urgency we start contacting breeders, often with the immediate point being to get a puppy.

What is missing is the actual research that gives fact-based knowledge and experience of the breed.

What should your research entail?

First is reading:

Breed books. For the Vizsla those books should be: The Complete Vizsla by Gay Gottlieb and The Versatile Vizsla by Marion Coffman are great books for the layperson. The Vizsla by BC Boggs is excellent for even more detail. There are a few others as well, but these are thorough.

Websites by breed CLUBS. For the Vizsla: The Vizsla Club of America (www.vcaweb.org). Most breeder websites are not going to give a lot of educational breed information. Those sites by breeders whose main purpose is to sell dogs are not going to educate at all.

Second (this should be obvious from your reading) is completely understand what the breed was designed to do.

See them in action. If you don't already do what the dog was bred to do you should find out what it takes to do the job. That tells you what the dog is like. Bred to sit in a duck blind then jump into cold water and swim to get prey and return with it? That is a dog who is fairly body insensitive, can't avoid water, and is energetic in spurts. Every Lab owner can attest to this. Bred to run all day, independently find birds, and continue running and hunting some more? This gives you a dog who is busy all the time and lives to use its nose and subsequently its mouth. If not given outlet to this energy and quick mind the dog will find a way. This is a Vizsla.

Third is meeting *multiple* members of the breed hopefully in a variety of situations.

The one 10 yo dog your neighbor has is not enough. There are general characteristics in a breed but it is best to see 3 yo and younger members of the Vizsla breed. This is when they are usually at the stage that many people who are not best suited for the breed find them most horrendous. They are challenging, naughty, busy, destructive and inventive.

This is the research that anyone making their first inquiries about a breed should do. Some of this is difficult to do during our current situation. Finding a breeder is the last piece of the puzzle.

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