



# PHOTO REPORT

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## UNDRESSING THE DESERT

Sandy Prikanowski

## Alto Hospicio



Date and time: 24 February 2025, 10:22hrs.

Location: Parapente take off point, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: A view over the central city district of Alto Hospicio. The parque at the border of the cliff directly above the letters is Parque Los Cóndores, which is the southern limit of La Quebradilla.



Date and time: 24 February 2025, 10:24hrs.

Location: Parapente take off point, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: One of the most popular tourist activities in Iquique - Alto Hospicio is paragliding. There are many different agencies offering this experience. They all take off here and end at Playa Brava. A flight lasts a little over ten minutes and provides a spectacular view over the city of Iquique as well as a different view of the cliff side, revealing many 'kuros' situated on flatter parts of the mostly very steep slope.





Date and time: 18 February 2025, 13:46hrs.

Location: Avenida Ramón Pérez Opazo, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Signs against the dumping of trash in public space are common in Alto Hospicio. Some are formal warnings pointing out the risk of getting a fine, like this one. But there are also many graffiti works saying 'no botar basura aquí' (= do not dump trash here).



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:05hrs.

Location: Avenida las Américas, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Goods like (second hand) clothes are sold on markets, but also at 'coleros', which are unregulated stalls that appear in many parts of the city especially near commercial areas.



## El Boro



Date and time: 20 February 2025, 08:17hrs.

Location: Skatepark El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: View over the city of Alto Hospicio from the busstop at the skatepark in El Boro.



Date and time: 13 February 2025, 20:37hrs.

Location: The cross on the hill behind Samaria street, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: View over the city of Alto Hospicio at dusk.





Date and time: 11 February 2025, 14:37hrs.

Location: Inside the cluster of informal settlements south of A-616, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Driving by the cluster of 'tomas', I asked my host about them and she decided to enter and drive around a bit to give me an impression. When I noted the tanks on the roofs, she explained that they are to store water supplied by the municipality. What I had not expected was to see so many cars inside of an informal settlement. My hosts then explained to me, however, that everyone in Alto Hospicio owns a car, even the poorest people, because cars are so cheap due to the Free Zone.



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 14:38hrs.

Location: Inside the cluster of informal settlements south of A-616, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Driving through the cluster, we passed through many gates, separating the different each of the 'tomas'. Noteworthy also, are the many Chilean flags, demonstrating a degree of chauvinism that to my understanding is commonly shared throughout all of Chile.





Date and time: 20 February 2025, 15:22hrs.

Location: Intersection Avenida la Pampa and Tiliviche street, la Tortuga, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: From the bus I could see a plume of smoke rising up from what I estimate is El Boro.



Date and time: 20 February 2025, 15:42hrs.

Location: Intersection Avenida Las Parcelas and A-616, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The Avenida Las Parcelas is a main road within the city of Alto Hospicio. Its clear layout and neat pavement contrast sharply with the layout of the A-616, which will be shown in the following photographs. The facility is one of two electricity stations in El Boro.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:50hrs.  
Location: Pet cemetery at A-616, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: A bit outside of the urban area, there is an apparently clandestine pet cemetery located directly at the south side of the A-616 main road. The cemetery does not have any perimeter marking and it seems to be the source of a really bad smell that we noticed driving by with the car windows rolled down.



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 15:01hrs.  
Location: Pet cemetery at A-616, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The pet cemetery is very poorly maintained. Many of the crosses are crooked and there is a lot of trash lying around on top of and between the graves. Note the contrast between the dirtiness of this sacrificial land plot and the beauty of the untouched desert landscape behind it. By the way, the blurry effect of the photo was caused by sun screen, which I needed to apply several times a day due to very high UV.





Date and time: 11 February 2025, 15:14hrs.  
Location: A-616 near the Autodromo, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The roughly 130 meters between the A-616 and an informal settlement directly south of the Autodromo, a race circuit, are full of waste and ashes. This is also where the road to the former municipal landfill starts.



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 15:15hrs.  
Location: A-616 near the Autodromo

Explanatory note: The 50 meters between the A-616 and industrial parcels on the North side of the road are scattered with waste, attracting pigeon and likely other pests.





Date and time: 17 February, 14:51hrs.

Location: A-616 near electricity station Los Cóndores, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Busstops are often not marked in Alto Hospicio as well as in Iquique. Therefore, busses generally just stop on the side of the road if someone is waiting or wants to get off. As the roadside along the A-616 is full of micro dumps, this means busses here stop right next to piles of waste.



Date and time: 18 February 2025, 16:58hrs.

Location: Bus stop A-616 / Pasaje Ocho

Explanatory note: This is what getting off the bus at the A-616 looks like: a pile of waste being visited by stray dogs and a small open fire of burning waste.





Date and time: 11 February 2025, 15:00hrs.

Location: A-616 across the street from electricity station Los Cóndores, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Micro dump on the spot marked as a bus stop on Google Maps.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:53hrs.

Location: Avenida El Boro at intersection with A-616, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: A few days before I witnessed two men starting this micro dump in the middle verge. I did not manage to take a picture of the act, as were driving by quickly.





Date and time: 15 February 2025, 19:48hrs.

Location: Road connecting Avenida El Boro and Salitrera Domeyko at the level of Pasaje Prosperidad, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Driving through the industrial quarter north of the A-616, my host and I stumbled upon two small open fires. Circling back, we drove by again just when a heavily pregnant woman walked out and a fed a suitcase to the fire, apparently undisturbed by the health risks of smoke from burning materials like plastics and polyester. I was too shocked to take a photo of her. Note also, how this road does not have a clear lay out, or even does not have one at all. I do not recall clearly whether it is a dirt road, or a poorly maintained paved road covered by a layer of dust and sand.



Date and time: 20 February 2025, 15:38hrs.

Location: Intersection Avenida Monte los Olivos and A-616, El Boro, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: On a vacant plot of land between the electricity station and the cluster of informal settlements south of the A-616 some people have established a campment of tents. From my host I understood that they are gypsies and they are frowned upon, although they are harmless. The plot of land they occupy with only seven tents (and at least the same number of vehicles) is quite large in comparison with density of the adjacent informal settlements.



## La Quebradilla



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 13:39hrs.

Location: La Quebradilla at the level of Avenida Esmeralda, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: View over La Quebradilla market. Stands are organized into long rows with wide paths between them. Some stallholders put an extra 'toldo' or canopy on the path in front of their stand to either of shade to their customers or extend their exhibition space a bit. There is a lot of space for parking behind (to the left in this picture) the market. The vacant plot in the back on the left side is the military precinct.



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 12:18hrs.

Location: La Quebradilla parking strip northwest, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The parking strip on the northwest edge of the market is situated on an elevated plateau compared to the market itself, marking clearly the border between parking space and market space. The trucks in this picture are very common among stallholders.





Date and time: 11 February 2025, 12:21 hrs.  
Location: La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The offer at La Quebradilla varies from fruits and vegetables (stall on the right in the photo) to dried fruits and seeds (stall on the left in the photo) and from clothes and shoes to toys, storage boxes and tableware. The ground is rock hard so parasols are weighed down to prevent them from being blown away by the wind.



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 13:18hrs.  
Location: La Quebradilla near Parque Los Condores, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Apart from fixed stalls, there are many ambulant vendors with wheeled carts selling natural juices in a wide variety of flavors, including black corn. Prepared food, such as empanadas, sopaipillas (fried dough planes) and barbequed meat, is also sold on the market at fixed stands.





Date and time: 18 February 2025, 12:46hrs.

Location: La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: SStall specialized in underwear. Prices are as low as 300 CLP (approximately €0,30).



Date and time: 18 February 2025, 12:17hrs.

Location: La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Clothing offered on La Quebradilla is presented either in piles for costumers to dig through or neatly put on hangers in racks. Nicely, presented clothes typically have a higher price and are supposedly of better quality.





Date and time: 11 February 2025, 13:09 hrs.  
Location: Edge of the cliff at the margin of La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The sloping edge of the cliff appears an unregulated no-mans land. I noticed there are even a few 'kuros', precarious improvised homes outside of informal settlements, situated here.



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 13:07hrs.  
Location: Edge of the cliff at the margin of La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: One of the inhabitants of this particular 'kuro' is apparently a child.





Date and time: 11 February 2025, 12:46hrs.

Location: Edge of the cliff at the margin of La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The location of La Quebradilla offers a beautiful view over Iquique, however the edge of the cliff has been transformed into a micro dump.



Date and time: 11 February 2025, 12:45hrs.

Location: Edge of the cliff at the margin of La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: View to the south at the edge of the cliff at the margin of La Quebradilla. The slope of the cliff is used as a micro dump.





Date and time: 13 February 2025, 19:50hrs.

Location: La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: The edges of the market space present an accumulation of waste, especially notable after market hours.



Date and time: 15 February 2025, 18:10hrs.

Location: La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: After the daily dismantling of the market, heavy machinery appears to clean-up left behind waste.





Date and time: 15 February 2025, 18:12hrs.

Location: La Quebradilla, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Every day a clean up team, send by the municipality, arrives after market hours to clean-up left behind waste.



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## The interior



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 09:47hrs.

Location: Route 15, Huara, Tarapacá

Explanatory note: Cerro Unita on which El Gigante de Tarapacá is located, appears like an island in sea of mist.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 10:17hrs.

Location: Cerro Unita, Huara, Tarapacá

Explanatory note: El Gigante de Tarapacá on a cloudy day.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 12:17hrs.

Location: A-565 leading from route 15 down into the Quebrada de Tarapacá

Explanatory note: After visiting the giant, we continued a bit further into the interior to see the small settlements along the Quebrada de Tarapacá, which is one of the few sources of water in this part of the desert. This means it is also relatively suitable for agriculture. These crop fields are an important source of food, which is also being sold at La Quebradilla and Agropecuarios in Alto Hospicio and Iquique.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 12:36hrs.

Location: Town center of Tarapacá (the town)

Explanatory note: The church was renovated a few years ago after it burned down in a fire caused by unattended candles. Now it is closed to prevent people from entering and lighting candles. The white and green flags are left over from recent religious festivities.



## Las Quemadas



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 08:41hrs.

Location: Ruta 16 near Parque Empresarial ZOFRI, Alto Hospicio

Explanatory note: Heading to the interior on our way to go visit El Gigante de Tarapacá, we saw a big smoke plume rising up from sector Las Quemadas.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 08:52hrs.

Location: Junction A-616 and route 16

Explanatory note: A bit further down the road another smoke plume rose up from a site just north of the junction connecting the A-616 to route 16.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:20hrs.  
Location: Ruta A-616 near junction with ruta 16

Explanatory note: On our way back from the interior we drove over the A-616 and drove past the approximate point from where we saw the second smoke plume rising up this morning.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:12hrs.  
Location: Ruta A-616 near junction with ruta 16

Explanatory note: This part of the road curves down a quite steep landscape. The guardrail here is a safety measure to prevent traffic accidents. However, the relative cleanliness of the surface behind it indicates that it is also an effective measure to prevent vehicles from going off the road to dump waste.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:22hrs.  
Location: Ruta A-616 near junction with ruta 16

Explanatory note: Waste and ashes apparently washed out from a higher point in the landscape by (rain?) water.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:26hrs.  
Location: Camino Caleta Buena near intersection with A-610

Explanatory note: Just behind a fenced plot in the narrow angle of the intersection of Camino Caleta Buena and A-610 there is a vast clandestine landfill. For a length of approximately 500 meters the site is restricted with concrete barricades keeping out vehicles. However, the barricades end abruptly leave opportunity to access the site going around them.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:28hrs.

Location: Camino Caleta Buena

Explanatory note: A bit further down the road the landscape encloses the road, resulting in an only narrow strip of micro dumps. Driving up the road we passed by a man walking up this road, which seemed strange. He was accompanied by a dog and dragging with him a container and a heap of unidentifiable stuff on top of it. Where he was going on foot is unclear as this road does not lead to many places other than a clandestine landfill (3km), a sanitary landfill (4km) and Caleta Buena (>40km).



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:31hrs.

Location: Sector Las Quemas at intersection Camino Caleta Buena and A-510

Explanatory note: This is the site from where, presumably, we saw the first smoke plume rising up this morning. It is the largest clandestine landfill in Alto Hospicio and has a high prevalence rate of textile waste. The ground is covered in ashes.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:33hrs.

Location: Sector Las Quemas

Explanatory note: The accumulation of waste traces the road.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:34hrs.

Location: Sector Las Quemas

Explanatory note: A view over the vast contaminated area from higher up.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:35hrs.

Location: Sanitary landfill Cosemar

Explanatory note: The entrance gate of the sanitary landfill run by the private enterprise named Cosemar.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:34hrs.

Location: Sanitary Landfill Cosemar

Explanatory note: The sanitary landfill is equipped with environmental protection measures such as a cover sheet in the craters for waste disposal.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:40hrs.  
Location: Sector Las Quemas

Explanatory note: View of the contamination driving down from the Cerro Esmeralda. The road running through this sector is rather narrow and has many holes.



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:43hrs.  
Location: Camino Caleta Buena

Explanatory note: On the way back we saw the man with the blue helmet, container and dog again, advancing slowly.





Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:44hrs.

Location: Camino Caleta Buena aproxamitely 1,5km from intersection with A-610

Explanatory note: On a slope by the Camino Caleta Buena we saw a cluster of 'kuros', (precarious and improvised homes outside of informal settlements).



Date and time: 17 February 2025, 14:27hrs.

Location: Camino Caleta Buena approximately 1,5km from intersection with A-610

Explanatory note: A dog lying next to a smaller group of kuros from the cluster.



## Paso de la Mula



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:15hrs.

Location: Main entrance road to Paso de la Mula

Explanatory note: One of the biggest textile dumps is located behind the vast informal settlement at Paso de la Mula. I decided to take the bus there and see how far I could approach, without feeling unsafe. My first impression was this stray dog walking past the welcome sign to Paso de la Mula.



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:16hrs.

Location: Across the road from the bus stop at Paso de la Mula

Explanatory note: After getting off the bus, I was not exactly sure how to approach, so I followed this pregnant woman, presuming she would know the way.





Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:50hrs.

Location: Vacant plot between Paso de la Mula and Circunvalencia Sur

Explanatory note: Not far from the informal settlement Toma Paso de la Mula a multi storey housing project is in construction. The location of this site is disconnected from the built up area of Alto Hospicio further contributing to the discontinuity of urban development in Alto Hospicio. Note also the stark contrast between this project and Toma Paso de la Mula to the right.



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:20hrs.

Location: Vacant plot between Paso de la Mula and Circunvalencia Sur

Explanatory note: Micro dump including hundreds of shoes





Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:21hrs.

Location: Vacant plot between Paso de la Mula and Circunvalencia Sur

Explanatory note: View over Toma Paso de la Mula. Approaching the informal settlement I felt a bit uneasy and decided not to enter much further. I did continue a little further walking around the first cluster of homes to get a closer look at the dumpsite I spotted from here.



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:37hrs.

Location: Micro dump at the margin of Toma Paso de la Mula

Explanatory note: I got a bit closer to the dumpsite I spotted from higher up, but did not get very close, because I saw people on the site. It looked like among them were a few children playing, chasing after each other.





Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:40hrs.  
Location: Mirador Paso de la Mula

Explanatory note: A train track in disuse runs along the side of the cliff separating Iquique and Alto Hospicio.



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 13:40hrs.  
Location: Mirador Paso de la Mula

Explanatory note: The view of Iquique and Alto Hospicio from the Paso the la Mula



Between Iquique and Alto Hospicio



Date and time: 20 February 2025, 15:12hrs.  
Location: Ruta 16 near roundabout El Pampino

Explanatory note: View of the side of the cliff separating Iquique and Alto Hospicio, the Segundo Acceso and the back side of Cerro Dragón.



Date and time: 20 February 2025, 15:11hrs.  
Location: Ruta 16

Explanatory note: A view over Iquique from ruta 16.





Date and time: 27 February 2025, 12:49hrs.  
Location: Ruta 16

Explanatory note: from the bus goin up to Alto Hospicio I spotted a micro dump on a plateau next to ruta 16.



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 14:05hrs.  
Location: Avenida Tadeo Haenke near junction with the Segunda Acceso

Explanatory note: Coming down from Paso de la Mula over the second access I spotted several 'kuros' on the side of the cliff.



## Iquique



Date and time: 26 February 2025, 11:47hrs.

Location: Plaza Arturo Prat, Iquique

Explanatory note: This is the central square of Iquique, with the Torre del Reloj, being its main landmark. Connected to it is Baquedano street, which is the main pedestrian area in the city center. On this street many restaurants and tourism agencies are located.



Date and time: 20 February 2025, 12:45hrs.

Location: Playa Cavancha, Iquique

Explanatory note: Iquique has two main beaches, both are very popular. This is the Playa Cavancha which is geographically protected from the roughness of the ocean by its inward curve and the peninsula, making the water suitable for swimming, surfing, paddle-boarding. The other beach, the Playa Brava is very long and swimming here would be dangerous. However, there are a lot of activities and sports facilities along this beach. Moreover, during my trip some whales appeared in front of this beach in the ocean very close to the shore.





Date and time: 23 February 2025, 12:53hrs.

Location: Plaza Arturo Prat, Iquique

Explanatory note: A local fashion designer who focusses on working with rescued material invite me to assist at a photoshoot of her work.



Date and time: 20 February 2025, 19:13hrs.

Location: Intersection Avenida Héroes de la Concepción and Las Rosas, Iquique

Explanatory note: The view from my appartement in Iquique, looking out over a densely urbanized part of Iquique, including the only informal settlements of Iquique in the back, and at the side the cliff wherein the zigzag road leading down from Alto Hospicio is marked.





Date and time: 26 February 2025, 10:46hrs.

Location: Edificio Finanzas at Simón Bolívar, Iquique

Explanatory note: A view of the port of Iquique from the office of CORFO.



Date and time: 16 February 2025, 15:41hrs.

Location: Muelle Prat, Iquique

Explanatory note: The port of Iquique is home to not only boats, big and small, but also sea lions. The smell around here was really bad.





Date and time: 26 February 2025, 11:54hrs.

Location: Tarapacá street, Iquique

Explanatory note: On this shopping streets, products are sold not only inside stores but also out on the streets.



Date and time: 26 February 2025, 11:52hrs.

Location: Intersection Tarapacá street and Obispo Labbé, Iquique

Explanatory note: These so called 'coleros' often occupy a large portion of the sidewalk.





Date and time: 27 February 2025, 16:41hrs.  
Location: ZOFRI Mall

Explanatory note: Within the Free Zone, there is a Mall, where products are sold to the greater public free of taxes. This mall is a popular pass time for many people in Iquique. The mall was expanded over time. There is a very clear difference between the older and the newer part. The older part has a rather low ceiling and the shop spaces are very small and overly full with products, making the mall feel very dense and chaotic.





Date and time: 21 February 2025, 18:49hrs.

Location: ZOFRI

Explanatory note: One of many used textile importer warehouses in the ZOFRI.



Date and time: 21 February 2025, 18:48hrs.

Location: ZOFRI

Explanatory note: Inside one of many used textile importer warehouses in the ZOFRI.





Date and time: 27 February 2025, 11:26hrs.  
Location: Punto Limpio ZOFRI

Explanatory note: Situated in a narrow space between two buildings there is a Punto Limpio in the ZOFRI.





Date and time: 27 February 2025, 11:25hrs.  
Location: Punto Limpio ZOFRI

Explanatory note: Here waste materials are collected separately based on their material nature to be able to be recycled.



Date and time: 27 February 2025, 11:25hrs.  
Location: Punto Limpio ZOFRI



Explanatory note: The collected materials are compacted into bales to be transported elsewhere for recycling.



## El Agro



Date and time: 26 February 2025, 13:01hrs.  
Location: El Agro, Iquique

Explanatory note: Terminal Agropecuario de Iquique, popularly known as El Agro, is originally a farmers market. It is a cluster of long, roofed passages that expands over several blocks covering an area nearly 40.000m<sup>2</sup>.



Date and time: 26 February 2025, 13:00hrs.  
Location: El Agro, Iquique

Explanatory note: The roofs are mostly semi translucent allowing daylight to enter.



Date and time: 26 February 2025, 13:13hrs.  
Location: El Agro, Iquique

Explanatory note: In addition to farmers products, many other products are sold here.





Date and time: 26 February 2025, 13:12hrs.  
Location: El Agro, Iquique

Explanatory note: This is a waste collection point at El Agro, however it only collects organic waste, which makes sense considering the origin of the site, although the market offer is nowadays way more diverse.



Date and time: 26 February 2025, 13:25hrs.  
Location: El Agro, Iquique

Explanatory note: The western section of El Agro appears to be focused more particularly on clothes. Passages are narrow. Prices are low.



Date and time: 26 February 2025, 13:35hrs.  
Location: El Agro, Iquique

Explanatory note: In the clothing focused section there is a small space of greenery with a bench, which was very pleasant to find between all the narrow passages overflowing with textile.