

Why I Practice Immigration, Part 1: How I Imported My Husband

<http://aboutusvisas.com/how-i-imported-my-husband/>

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Now that I have your attention from the title, let me confess that I did not import my husband, per se, since you cannot legally do that. However, because my husband and I survived the immigration process, I know what you are about to go through.

My Personal Experience with Immigration

This is what I tell couples during their consultation with me for advice and assistance with marriage-based immigration. Of course, you cannot really “import” a person, but I did bring my then fiancé here to the U.S. to get married, and then sponsored him for a **green card**, and with all the rules, regulations, and red tape the process felt akin to trying to import a rare and highly-regulated product.

Pitfalls, Booby Traps and Vague Immigration Questions

At the time I was practicing in a different area of law, and this was my first exposure to immigration. As an attorney I thought “surely I can do this myself; it can’t be too complicated.” Boy was I wrong. I found the entire process confusing, misleading, adversarial, and way too difficult for two people in love who just wanted to live together in the United States. Reading the instructions to the forms was not helpful enough – the entire process seemed to be loaded with pitfalls, booby-traps, and ambiguous questions and instructions. On top of that the pressure on me was intense: my then-fiance was relying on me – the native English-speaking American attorney- to understand the requirements and correctly file the necessary paperwork to get him to the States. Sure, no problem, right? Wrong.

“..I, too, had to figure out how best to persuade the government that ours was indeed a love match..”

Even as an attorney, I could not understand all of the instructions and requirements. I, too, got tripped up by the unwritten practical reality of immigration petition and visa application processing. Given the government’s heightened suspicion (unfortunately backed up by statistics) of sham marriages, I, too, had to figure out how best to persuade the government that ours was indeed a love match, and not an attempt to use marriage solely as a means of getting my husband a coveted green card and a ticket out of his country.

Avoid Dangerous Temptations

And I, too, had to suffer from an incredibly-long separation from my love as our case got “stuck” in the infamous immigration processing black hole. We, too, encountered the same temptations that other couples may face, e.g., trying a shortcut like a nonimmigrant student or tourist visa to get the foreign national fiance/spouse to the U.S. quicker, or in some countries, using unscrupulous methods to “ensure” a visa approval, but thankfully we resisted those temptations and kept our eye on the bigger prize of securing the green card without threat of denial (or being taken away) on the basis of fraud or misrepresentation.

Which Country to Get Married for Immigration Purposes?

I also had to tackle and resolve issues such as where (in what country) to get married and how best to ensure that both sides of the family/friends get to participate in the celebration, how to prove the marriage or engagement is bona fide (true), how to show the required financial ability to support my spouse, getting an interim work permit plus social security and driver's license in the U.S. (the driver's license experience was a nightmare), dealing with issues of my husband's adjustment – not of his status, but rather of adjustment to life in the U.S.

Utilize My Experience

So I definitely empathize with the couples who come to me for advice and assistance with navigating through the complex process of obtaining Legal Permanent Residence in the U.S. based on marriage. On [The Law Office of Tanya M. Lee](#), I will continue to share more of my personal marriage-based immigration story, along with lessons and tips I have learned through my legal practice, to hopefully help and encourage more couples in similar situations.