DAY 1 – Sunday, May 17
The entire day will be spent flying from Stillwater to Quito, Ecuador, with stops at Dallas-Fort-Worth and Miami along the route. After passing through Immigration and Customs in Quito, we will spend the night at the airport hotel.

DAY 2 – Monday, May 18: We fly from Quito to Baltra Island at Galápagos. Baltra served as an air base for US military forces during World War II, and remnants of some of the old infrastructure still may be seen. After passing through the immigration station at the airport, we’ll meet our guide and head out to board our ship, the Galapagos Legend (pictured above). It is a first-class ship with many amenities. After we stow our gear in our cabins and have a formal welcome and briefing from some of the crew, we will have lunch and set off to the sea. We will cruise on to Bartolomé Island, perhaps the most familiar vista of the entire Galápagos archipelago (pictured to the right). Its iconic landscape was featured in the movie Master and Commander. We’ll go ashore in a dinghy for a dry landing and climb up a series of wooden boardwalks and 372 steps through a stark volcanic landscape of spatter cones and lava flows for an exceptional view of 120-foot tall Pinnacle Rock, possibly the most photographed spot in the Galápagos. Back down at the landing, we’ll explore the shoreline by dinghy and be on the lookout for sea lions and the endemic Galápagos penguin, the Smallest penguin in the world. Back on board the Legend, we’ll have dinner and then cruise eastward.

DAY 3 – Tuesday, May 19: We awaken to a spectacular view of the Plaza Islets off the east shore of Santa Cruz Island. We’ll make a dry landing from a dinghy amidst lava rocks shimmering from years of sea lions moving about and lounging. Clusters of crimson and gold portulaca plants give the islet a pastel look. We’ll walk across to the cliffs to observe numerous nesting swallow-tailed gulls. Due to the nearby proximity of both land and marine iguanas, this is the only place in the archipelago where we may see a hybrid iguana. After lunch and some rest on board our ship, we will enjoy our first snorkeling offshore of North Seymour Island where we should see numerous colorful fish, sea turtles, and possibly a white-tipped reef shark. In the late afternoon we’ll return here and make a dry landing to walk amidst nesting blue-footed boobies and frigatebirds, and to observe...
their fascinating courtship rituals. The setting sun will provide rich lighting and color for great photography. Back on board, the Galápagos Legend will begin our cruise toward San Cristobal Island after dinner.

**DAY 4 – Wednesday, May 20:** We will be greeted by the spectacular panorama of Pitt Point at the northeast end of San Cristobal Island this morning. After breakfast, we’ll take a dinghy for a wet landing onto a shimmering olivine (green) beach and likely be greeted by several sea lions. Then we’ll ascend a trail through a rocky canyon to the top of an eroded tuff cone with spectacular views along the way. This is one of the few sites where all three species of boobies can be observed; the red-foots perched on small trees, the Nazcas on the high cliffs, and blue-foots on the flat ground along the trail. Frigate birds will be soaring overhead and Chatham mockingbirds, endemic only to this island, will be seen in the Palo Santo trees. Back down to the beach, we’ll have time for snorkeling and a pleasant swim. In the afternoon we’ll cruise to the west side of the island, to Cerro Brujo (Wizard Hill) with Kicker Rock dramatically rising from the sea to the west. We will go ashore in a dinghy for a wet landing on a magnificent white coral sand beach where we can snorkel, swim and relax. Back on board, we’ll take in a beautiful sunset, have dinner, and cruise to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno at the southwest end of San Cristobal Island.

**DAY 5 – Thursday, May 21:** We’ll go ashore after breakfast to Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, the capital of Galápagos Province, where we’ll take a private bus up to the highlands to visit the Cerro Colorado Tortoise Reserve and learn about the program of Galápagos National Park to restore the population of the threatened endemic San Cristobal tortoise, observing several mature ones along the trail and many youngsters in the rearing corrals. Then we’ll visit a coffee farm in the moist highlands where much agricultural activity still occurs, dating back to the era of settlement in the late 1800s. Back down in the port town, we will walk to the interpretation center for Galápagos National Park, and then hike further up to Tijeratas or Frigatebird Hill for a splendid view of the bay where the HMS Beagle first dropped anchor in the Galápagos during its epic voyage in 1835. Back on board our ship, we’ll have dinner and then continue our cruise southward toward Española Island.

**DAY 6 – Friday, May 22:** Española Island, the oldest in the archipelago, awaits us this morning. We’ll take a dinghy across the turquoise waters of Gardner Bay for a wet landing onto a stunning white sandy beach that is home to a large colony of sea lions. After a stroll along the shore amidst endemic Hood mockingbirds and Darwin’s finches, we’ll enjoy a refreshing snorkel in the clear waters of the bay teeming with colorful fish, sea turtles and perhaps one or more white-tipped reef sharks. After lunch and a rest back on board, we will cruise to the west end of Española to Punta Suarez where a slew of sea lions and marine iguanas will meet us at our landing site. We’ll hike along the rugged and rocky shore for close encounters with blue-footed and Nazca boobies, lava lizards, and lava gulls, ultimately coming to a dramatic blow-hole. By now the waved albatross has returned to Española after months of feeding at sea. This is the only place on earth where this large and lanky bird breeds. Hopefully we will have an opportunity to observe its complex and endearing courtship display. Then back to our ship for dinner and time to relax.

**DAY 7 – Saturday, May 23:** A westward evening cruise has brought us to Floreana Island. We will make a wet landing from a dinghy at Post Office Bay where we’ll stroll to the renowned Post Office Barrel first set up by Captain James Colnett in 1793 so that seafarers and whalers could drop off letters to be picked up by homebound boats for hand-delivery to family and friends. The tradition continues to this very day—try it! We’ll also snorkel here. In the afternoon we’ll make a wet landing on an olivine beach at Punta Cormorant and walk to a shallow lagoon where brilliant pink flamingos often feed. Then we will head onward through a forest of Palo Santo trees to a powdery white beach that serves as a nesting site for green sea turtles. We’ll have great snorkeling at Devil’s Crown and Champion Inlet where we should be able to see spotted eagle rays, white-tipped reef sharks, sea turtles, many colorful fish, and possibly have sea lions swimming with us. The nearby rocks are nesting sites for boobies, frigatebirds, noddies, and tropicbirds. After dinner on board, we will cruise northward to Santa Cruz Island.

**DAY 8 – Sunday, May 24:** We will go ashore at Puerto Ayora, the largest town in the Galápagos Islands with over 20,000 residents. The main waterfront street is active with many shops, restaurants, and traffic, which comes as a surprise to most visitors. We’ll take a private bus to the humid forested highlands of Santa Cruz Island to a giant tortoise reserve operated as an ecotourism venture on private land in coordination with Galápagos National Park. Along the way we’ll see agricultural activity which has occurred since the settlement era. We’ll see several giant land tortoises at the reserve, and also a diversity of birds including several species of Darwin’s finches. Also we will descend underground into an ancient lava tube. Then we’ll visit the Charles Darwin Research Station and Fausto Llerena Breeding Center where we’ll learn about efforts to restore native populations of land tortoises on the islands and see the preserved remains of the famous Lonesome George, the last of his Pinta race of land tortoises. Back on board the ship, we’ll have lunch and cruise around to the west side of Santa Cruz Island to Ballena Bay. Here we will snorkel for the last time off a beautiful olivine beach amidst lots of fish, sea turtles, and hopefully some rays and white-tipped reef sharks. Then back on board, we’ll have dinner and enjoy our last evening on the Galápagos Legend.

**DAY 9 – Monday, May 25:** We will conclude our sea-going adventure with a morning dinghy ride along Carrion Point and a nearby turquoise lagoon on the northeast reach of Santa Cruz Island. Here we will explore the mangrove forest with its stilted tree stems laden with many prop roots. It’s a unique place that gives an almost other-worldly feeling as we maneuver through a salt water labyrinth of inundated trees. Back on board, the Legend will take us to Baltra Island where we will bid adios to our guide and the crew, disembark, and transfer to the airport for our afternoon flight back to Quito. With an early evening arrival in Quito, we will remain at the airport for dinner and then relax before passing through Ecuadorian Immigration and boarding our late evening/overnight flight back to the USA.

**DAY 10 – Tuesday, May 26:** We arrive at Miami in the early morning. After passing through US Immigration and Customs, we’ll have breakfast, and then catch our connecting flights to Dallas-Ft. Worth and then Stillwater, and be home by mid-day.